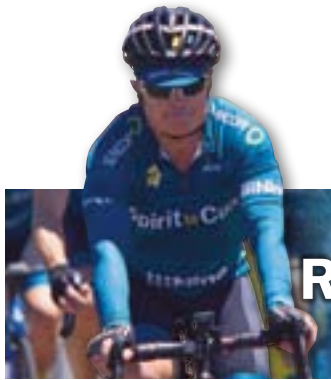


# CooloolaCoastToday



**Riding for a cause**  
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**Art escape hits Coast**  
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## Cheeky campers

Who can blame the poor campers from across Australia who arrive at the foreshore at Rainbow Beach and decide it's the perfect spot to pull up their van and call it a night?

Unfortunately, this salubrious area is a no-camp zone but there are only a couple of small easily ignored signs and little deterrent for tourists in this, and other parks in the area with police saying its national parks job who say its council who say its police.

With little reason not to camp, and the promise of a good wave in the morning, locals wonder why they bother to pay rates, water fees and home loans when they too could take their van to the foreshore to enjoy the million-dollar views and free showers.

STORY PAGE 4

## In safe hands

The future of the turtle population is in good hands with the dedicated team from Cooloola Coast Care -Turtle Care Rainbow Beach.

It's Turtle Nesting Season and the local Turtle Care group are seeking public help to report any turtle track sightings from Inskip Point, Rainbow Beach, Double Island Point and along Teewah Beach. They recently relocated 88 eggs which were laid in the sand drift at Middle Rocks. Because of the cyclonic weather, another nest along the beach near Rainbow Shores was in danger of being lost with severe erosion and king tides.

STORY PAGE 5



## Cyclone Seth surges in

Cyclone Seth caused beach closures and king tides right across the Cooloola Coast with the main beach closed at Rainbow Beach ringing in the New Year in an unexpected way.

Roaring winds with massive swells lashed the sand dunes along the Coloured Sands causing havoc for those wanting to cross from Teewah Beach to enjoy the northern side.

Mudlo Rocks were exposed catching out some 4WD enthusiasts and ending in disaster with several top end vehicles being trashed by the sea and having to be towed away.

STORY PAGE 2

Cyclone Seth blew in for the new year, causing beach closures across the district as a combination of king tides and strong winds made the going treacherous.

# Cool on school

By Lee McCarthy

The announcement by the Queensland Government that schools will re-open two weeks later than planned this year has been met with concern by many working parents in the region.

The start to the 2022 school year for all students from kindergarten to year 10 will now commence on Monday 7 February however,

from 31 January year 11 and 12 students will undertake remote learning for a week, until the revised formal start of the school year.

Government has announced schools will be open earlier for "students experiencing vulnerability and those whose parents are essential workers will be able to attend school and will be provided supervision on school sites."

Concerns have been raised within the Cooloola Coast community with several parents

choosing to home school this year due to the mandates.

They held an information session on Tuesday at the Rainbow Beach Community Centre Hall for parents wishing to know more about home schooling and find support for each other.

Organiser Tina Goodwin said some parents were choosing to leave mainstream schools, because as unvaccinated parents,

they can't volunteer or be involved in their children's activities including school excursions, tuckshop, P & C meetings, school help or sporting events.

She said with the late start planned for the school year, it has put parents in a difficult position, so the idea of the community meeting is to support parents within the community and learn more about home schooling options.

STORY PAGE 3

**TRAVIS COLLINS, JAMES BLUNDELL, THE VIPER CREEK BAND, THE BUCKLEYS, LINC PHELPS MUSIC, MANDY COLLINS & DEE JAYE BUX**

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If ever there was an exciting start to a New Year on the Cooloola Coast this, was it. 2022 will be remembered for the wonderful fireworks display ringing in the New Year then being battered by king tides, Cyclone Seth and wind that would whip the froth off your cappuccino – stolen quote that from Tuppy Modin.

While visitors quickly turned their attention away from swimming, they swapped it for a spot on the rocks to watch the trail of four-wheel drive vehicles negotiating the rocky black road which even at low tide, was treacherous leaving several vehicles demolished.

Only the brave tried their luck to reach Double Island and Teewah from the Rainbow Beach side with many using the Freshwater track and timing their trip so they wouldn't get caught by the king tides on the southern side of Double.

While the beach and bay did have some excitement for a few days, the coast was lucky not to receive any boating or beach casualties with people recognising the danger of the cyclone as it battered the coastline.

Local businesses again rose to the occasion with food for the holiday hordes and how grateful we are to live in the only part of the world which has toilet paper and fresh produce thanks to our incredible local business owners!

Thanks to our readers and advertisers for all your support and positive feedback in 2021 and we look forward to bringing you more great stories of our local Cooloola Coast in 2022. We live in a great part of the world.



- Lee McCarthy

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# Seth's beach blow

By Lee McCarthy

Cyclone Seth caused beach closures and king tides right across the Cooloola Coast with the main beach closed and swimmers left high and dry.

Roaring winds with massive swells lashed the sand dunes along the Coloured Sands causing havoc for those wanting to cross from Teewah Beach to enjoy the northern side and Double Island Point.

The infamous Mudlo Rocks were exposed ending in disaster for several 4WD enthusiasts with some top end vehicles trashed by the sea and towed away.

Travellers going to K'gari, Fraser Island on the tour buses got more than they paid for with water covering the peninsular on high tide forcing the buses to drive through water to reach the barge.

Other holiday makers heading to the island waited until low tides to take their turn reaching the barge forcing long queues along the Inskip Road.

Traffic was slowed also due to damage to the road at the northern end of the point with Council bringing in an excavator to build up the road to allow two-way traffic again over the holiday period.

Those taking the Freshwater Track to reach Double Island and Teewah were also forced to queue as king tides reached the banks at southern entrance to the track.

Holiday makers made the most of the weather taking prime position on the sand dunes above the rocks to view the parade of 4WD's negotiating the stretch of beach well known for catching out vehicles for decades.

Tin Can Bay reported King Tides covering parks, gardens and the boat ramp which didn't slow the boaties from slipping in their tinnies for a fish in the protected creeks.

As always, the beach will repair and in a short time the rocks will be covered again and the crowds will be streaming along unaware of the dramatic scenes only months before.



Cyclone Seth caused beach closures along the eastern coast including Rainbow Beach



One of the 4WD's who braved Mudlo Rocks and lost and had to be carted away after being thrashed by Cyclone Seth's fury.

Picture: CLAYTONS TOWING



Carey Wallis snapped this photo of 4WD thrill seekers driving across the exposed Mudlo Rocks at Rainbow Beach on low tide exposed by Cyclone Seth and the accompanying king tides



The Inskip Peninsular went underwater forcing the tour buses to negotiate the barge access through salty water.

Picture: RAINBOW BEACH HELICOPTERS



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Authorised by Llew O'Brien MP, Liberal National Party of Queensland, 319 Kent Street, Maryborough QLD 4650



# Parents go cool on school

By Lee McCarthy

The announcement by the Queensland Government that schools will re-open two weeks later than planned this year has been met with concern by many working parents in the region.

The start to the 2022 school year for all students from kindergarten to year 10 will now commence on Monday 7 February however, from 31 January year 11 and 12 students will undertake remote learning for a week, until the revised formal start of the school year.

Government has announced schools will be open earlier for "students experiencing vulnerability and those whose parents are essential workers will be able to attend school and will be provided supervision on school sites."

According to the Education Queensland website: "An essential worker is someone who provides essential services and who is unable to work from home. This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses and other front-line medical staff, retail workers, haulage drivers and police officers."

Teachers and workers entering education settings, including schools, kindergartens, and childcare centres, will need to have received two doses of the Covid-19 vaccination by 23 January 2022.

Parents who are volunteers or workers attending a school site must be fully vaccinated for Covid-19 by 23 January 2022.

However according to Education Queensland "students of all ages are able to attend school regardless of their vaccination status".

Concerns have been raised within the Cooloola Coast community with several parents choosing to home school this year due to the mandates.

They held an information session on Tuesday at the Rainbow Beach Community Centre Hall for parents wishing to know more about



Tina Goodwin with husband Adrian Van de Vorst is home schooling her children this year and helping other parents negotiate the process

home schooling and find support for each other.

Organiser Tina Goodwin said some parents were choosing to leave mainstream schools, because as unvaccinated parents, they can't volunteer or be involved in their children's activities including school excursions, tuckshop, P & C meetings, school help or sporting events.

She said with the late start planned for the school year, it has put parents in a difficult position, so the idea of the community meeting is to support parents within the community and learn more about home schooling options.

Tina said they had heard from about 10 families who are interested in the home-schooling option and while the schooling is done at home, they have the community centre and local church as venues to connect and swap ideas and give each other support.

Prior to the meeting Tina said: "Our children are six and four and we are holding the meeting to connect with other families and support each other to give our children the

best learning experience while they are young. We want to keep them grounded."

"We like to be a part of our children's education but if we can't do tuck shop, P and C, excursions, and a good solid part of their education as parents, then we can't be parents to our full capacity."

"We don't want to be drop and run parents and we want to be involved in our children's education and part of the school community as a whole."

"We are choosing not to vaccinate as it is a trial vaccine, it has not been tested even though the TGA and FDA say it has been. I have heart disease in the family and I not taking a chance of getting pericarditis or myocarditis from the trial vaccine."

"We will not be getting our children vaccinated. Queensland health have actually said in the past, these children are not at risk and now they are saying children are susceptible to getting Covid and my husband and I are against a trial vaccine for our children."

"There are too many inconsistencies with what Qld Health and the Government are telling us. At the end of the day, that is my biggest issue, we need truthful and consistent facts."

"We have had such good feedback about the community meeting, and this is not about vaccinated and unvaccinated, there is a much bigger picture."

Tina said families from Rainbow Beach, Tin Can Bay and Cooloola Cove have expressed interest and said home schooling is easily accessible now with a lot of website information and options available.

Tina and husband Aido, have home schooled previously with Riverside Christian College in Maryborough and the enrolment includes sports day and excursions so children can mix and socialise.

While they were happy with the school, they wanted to have a 'goal set plan' where you set your goals depending on the child's abilities, strengths, and how they learn.

Tina said: "For one of our children, we set plans for a dive course, bronze medallion, photography course, surfing, and then used the curriculum link for maths, english, science and physical education."

"It is part of the Queensland Curriculum, and we get the templates and information from the Education Queensland website to set short- and long-term goals for their education."

She said there are checks and balances for parents before commencing home schooling including a suitable study area and learning environment, and you must sign off on a program.

She said there are now a lot of education providers offering home schooling options with Distance Education which send programs which you follow, or Nature Study Australia where you follow the curriculum links.

You can also keep up to date via the Department of Education website [education.qld.gov.au](http://education.qld.gov.au)

## Covid checklist - five things you should know if positive

By Lee McCarthy

Only a few short weeks ago, prior to the border opening, there was the odd unconfirmed whisper that 'someone' 'somewhere;' had received a positive test for Covid and it was reason to hide.

Now, it is common talk and many people claim to know people who have had a confirmed positive diagnosis and casually say they know several people who have tested positive.

According to the Gympie Police Service, cases of Covid-19 are increasing significantly across the state including in our local community.

"Most people will be relatively well and will only have mild symptoms. This means they will be cared for at home."

**If you become positive with Covid-19 here are five things you should know:**

1. Isolate and ask anyone who lives with you to get tested and isolate.



The free drive through Covid testing clinic is now located behind the Gympie Hospital with access from King Street.

2. You'll be contacted by Queensland Health. They'll ask you about your symptoms and determine if you can care for yourself at home or if you need care in hospital.
3. Tell people you've recently had contact with. It's important they get tested too.
4. You'll most likely be isolating for up to 14 days at home, so organised contactless delivery of food and medications by family or

friends or ordering online.

5. Look after yourself. Keep a symptom diary, look after your mental health and stay healthy and active at home.

At the time of print there is a free public drive-through clinic at the Gympie Hospital from 8am to noon daily with the entrance from King Street.

You will need to book in your appointment by phoning 1300 163 044 prior to attendance.

You don't need a doctors referral unless you require a test for reasons such as overseas travel or work in which case you will need to visit your GP for a referral to a suitable clinic.

To check for other locations go to Queensland Government, Health Testing Clinics where you can enter your postcode and the site will show the closest testing clinics to you and all the details.

There has been a scarcity of Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) which can be done from home, however the Queensland Government have

assured us they are on their way.

You should get a RAT if you have Covid-19 symptoms, find out that you are a close contact or if you need a negative test to leave home quarantine (e.g. as a close contact or overseas traveller)

You should only get a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test if you have Covid-19 symptoms and cannot get a RAT, are a close contact and cannot get a RAT or if you need a Covid-19 test to leave home quarantine and you cannot get a RAT.

If you have any of the following Covid-19 symptoms, no matter how mild, get tested, stay home and isolate until you get the result and your symptoms resolve: fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, headache, fatigue, diarrhoea, vomiting or nausea, loss of smell and/or taste. Other symptoms people may experience include muscle or joint pain, and loss of appetite.

Detailed information is available at [www.qld.gov.au/health/ihavecovid19](http://www.qld.gov.au/health/ihavecovid19)

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# Cheeky free campers

By Lee McCarthy

Who can blame the poor campers from across Australia who arrive at the foreshore at Rainbow Beach and decide it's the perfect spot to pull up their van and call it a night?

Unfortunately, this salubrious area is a no-camp zone but there are only a couple of small easily ignored signs and little deterrent for tourists in this, and other parks in the area with police saying its national parks job who say its council who say its police.

With little reason not to camp, and the promise of a good wave in the morning, locals wonder why they bother to pay rates, water fees and home loans when they too could take their van to the foreshore to enjoy the million-dollar views and free showers.

With caravan parks booked out, the much talked about RV Park strategy still in progress, and similar issues in Tin Can Bay and Gympie, what option do they have when they want to visit one of the best beaches in the world?

Over the current holidays, the cheeky visitors didn't even bother to pretend they weren't camping with tents still up and tail gates open long after 8am when the morning surfers took off for Double Island.

The issue isn't that locals and visitors don't

want to make the 200 metre trek from home to get their morning swim, it is the rubbish and effluent left behind according to reports.

We have been told council has now undertaken an audit of parking signage at the lower beach car park and noted several missing signs which will be reinstated in the near future.

Whether this will make any difference is unknown, but you can understand the frustration of the two caravan parks in town who pay huge rates, water fees, staff and maintenance costs and must be Covid safe getting a bit peeved off if they have space available.

The problem is not new to the eastern seaboard, with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) locking up the public car park at Noosa National Park overnight to deter overnight visitors.

In Byron Bay, camping in streets and parks is prohibited, with fines from \$110 but to initiate this regularly in Rainbow Beach would require officers on duty through the night and with many campers from overseas, the high possibility of fines not being paid.

There may be another solution so if you have one, write to council with your suggestion at [council@gympie.qld.gov.au](mailto:council@gympie.qld.gov.au) and include a photo if possible.



Over Christmas illegal campers didn't even try to hide their million dollar camping spots.

## Chance to have your say on the region's RV Strategy

By Lee McCarthy

The Gympie Regional Council is finalising its Recreational Vehicle (RV) Strategy and if you would like to have your say, you will need send your feedback in now.

This is not a new initiative as any traveller knows, with RV Parks across the land, but they have the added value of offering regions a great opportunity for to promote themselves as a destination of choice for travellers.

There has been much discussion in the Rainbow Beach Chamber of Commerce meetings for more than 12 months regarding RV parks with proponents strongly for or against the idea.

The draft strategy, which is available on council's website, focuses on current and potential RV sites established on Council-owned or controlled land and focuses on self-contained recreational vehicles to minimise on-site impacts associated with the use.

In locations where public amenities exist in relative proximity, self-containment is less of an issue, provided any grey water and black water (wastewater) is not discharged to ground.

The definition of a RV is a 'A caravan, motorhome or campervan that can hold fresh water, grey water and black water and has on-board cooking, sleeping and toilet facilities.'

The strategy identifies several sites for self-contained RVs and the required standards.

"Recommendations are based upon the availability of space, the number of sites, existing facilities, proximity to other sites, attractions, townships and minimising environmental impacts."

"There is a trend toward self-containment, supported by the 'leave no trace' code of conduct promoted by the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) and the 'Leave

no Trace Australia' principles to minimise impacts in natural areas."

"Research indicates those who use commercial sites are generally a different group of travellers from those who use non-commercial sites. Accommodation options to meet the needs of both types of travellers are required."

"Free camping already occurs on an informal basis within Council reserves and on roadside areas. To ensure that free camping areas are adequately managed to avoid adverse social and environmental impacts, some framework is required to be established to define the nature and intensity of the activity."

"This strategy focuses solely on the low cost and free options available on Council owned or controlled land. In recognition of



The possibility of an RV park is getting closer with feedback required now for suitable locations - have your say

the limited infrastructure existing at these sites, it is necessary to limit the use of the sites to self-contained RVs to ensure the environment of the sites is not degraded.

Feedback on several locations was provided during the public consultation phase, including possible parks in, Chatsworth Park, Elgin Vale Sawmill, Gympie Showgrounds RV Park, Kandanga RV Park, Kilkivan, Rattler Precinct RV Park and Tin Can Bay.

The proposed Tin Can Bay RV Park site is the central-eastern portion of Lot 69 CP910971 adjacent to the Gympie Road/Pennycuik Road frontage.

The Tin Can Bay feedback centered on the need for a free or low-cost RV park at Tin Can Bay and other parts of the Cooloola Coast all year round along, an access and maneuverability issue with the Tin Can Bay dump point and it was suggested an additional dump point should be located on the foreshore, which could also accommodate yacht nomads.

Several possible sites were considered in the Rainbow Beach area however none were regarded as being suitable due to a range of factors including the proximity to, and availability of, a range of camping and accommodation options within the Rainbow Beach area, the proximity to surrounding sensitive land uses and the extent of works required to make the sites suitable for vehicle traffic.

The argument for RV parks is caravan parks provide a high level of services such as powered and non-powered sites, showers, toilets and laundry facilities, communal

areas, kiosks, as well as potable water and dump points for the disposal of wastewater. A number provide extra facilities to attract tourists including swimming pools, playgrounds and organised activities.

The draft states that there is evidence that a trend toward higher density accommodation such as cabins in caravan parks has contributed to a reduction in the number of available casual camping/stopover sites in some caravan parks.

"This is not the case for all commercial parks and there are many parks that have retained sufficient capacity for RVs and have the ability to cater for larger vehicles or have specifically targeted the RV market by providing large spaces, easy access and high-quality facilities."

However, within the regions, commercial caravan parks often booked to capacity during peak holiday periods and the utilisation of council controlled land for the 'drive tourism market' would be a bonus for the tourism industry.

According to the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) Dollar Wise Park Network there is a growing trend for travellers seeking lower cost options with minimal facilities who may ordinarily avoid caravan parks if other free or low-cost options are available.

While there are national parks within the Gympie Region for RV vehicles to park which are economical, pets and generators are not permitted in most camping areas within QPWS managed areas.

A bone of contention with Cooloola Coast locals is the unauthorised roadside camping which is prevalent across the Coast, both within the residential and commercial areas of the Rainbow Beach township and on the foreshore areas at Tin Can Bay. These campervans are usually not self-contained not in designated locations and with no access to public amenities.

The recommended action by the Council is to "Progress actions proposed in this strategy to assist with occurrences of unauthorised camping, such as increasing awareness of designated camping facilities available, including RV sites, the installation of consistent signage with clear duration of stay limits, and regular monitoring and enforcement programs."

The draft says this should assist in managing the occurrence of unauthorised camping in this area.

Other recommendations including wastewater disposal, dump points, water fill stations, long vehicle parking, legislative requirements are all comprehensively covered in the draft strategy.

Several comments received were in support of low-cost RV sites, rather than free sites indicating most travellers are happy to pay a small fee where services are provided,

Feedback is required by Monday 31 January 2022, and can be submitted via mail to PO Box 155, Gympie Qld 4570 or via email to [planningprojects@gympie.qld.gov.au](mailto:planningprojects@gympie.qld.gov.au)

View the draft strategy at [www.gympie.qld.gov.au/residents/have-your-say](http://www.gympie.qld.gov.au/residents/have-your-say)





A beautiful sight to those who use the Bullock Point boat ramp which now has bins.

## Bullock has bins!

By Lee McCarthy

To many, it might not seem too exciting however to those who use Bullock Point regularly the addition of two wheely bins is a cause for celebration.

The area is used daily by families, boaties and the Manta Ray Barges and for too long the cry has been where are the bins?

Unfortunately due to a battle of responsibility, between who owned the road, who would service the bins and whose pocket it was coming out of - it has taken a very long time.

The boat ramp and car park at Bullock Point were upgraded in May 2018 to include a three-lane boat ramp, floating walkway and parking facility to replace the original facilities which were past their used by date.

The Department of Transport and Main

Roads, in conjunction with the Queensland Government's Building in Regions Program and Gympie Regional Council built the ramp and car park to relieve congestion at Carlo Point and offer boaties and families other options to enjoy the region.

The facility offers improved access to the stunning waterways of the Cooloola Coast and has increased the safety for boaties.

The upgrade also included additional piles for intermittent barge operations and solar-powered lighting to illuminate the area at night.

Now that common sense has prevailed, the well used area now has bins which will ensure this beautiful area stays pristine and those who use it will not have to continue to report the issue.

Thanks Gympie Regional Council for the bins!

# Turtles safe

By Lee McCarthy

The future of the turtle population is in good hands with the dedicated team from Cooloola Coast Care - Turtle Care Rainbow Beach.

It's Turtle Nesting Season and the local Turtle Care group are seeking public help to report any turtle track sightings from Inskip Point, Rainbow Beach, Double Island Point and along Teewah Beach.

They recently relocated 88 eggs which were laid in the sand drift at Middle Rocks.

Because of the cyclonic weather, another nest along the beach near Rainbow Shores was in danger of being lost with severe erosion and king tides.

The team relocated 80 eggs from this nest to the dunes further toward Inskip.

Jan from Turtle Care is asking everyone to share the message to 4WD drivers to stop driving on our dunes.

"If you drive the beach this should only be done at low tide so you don't have to drive on the dunes."

"If you see a turtle nesting or find eggs, please don't relocate, as only those authorised are able to relocate turtle eggs."

"Senseless driving on the dunes not only adds to erosion but endangers the turtle nests."

She said because Mudlo Rocks are impassable more people are driving along the Inskip beach.

"It's great to enjoy but drivers have to look after it too. It's a very fragile shoreline."

"Each day I drive this beach at low tide to check any turtle activity and collect the debris washed ashore."

Jan said it was great to see people collecting rubbish along their daily walks.

"There's a wonderful couple who also walk part of this stretch of beach each morning and collect rubbish - great job!"

Any track sightings please call Joan on 0407 810 510 or Jan on 0429 481 490 from Turtle Care



A meticulous operation from dedicated turtle enthusiasts Murray and Joan collecting the eggs from the nest at Middle Rocks.



Relocated and safe turtle eggs looked after by volunteers. Pictures: JAN WATERS



Murray, Joan, Pam and Jan from Cooloola Coastcare-Turtle Care turtle egg relocation team.



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An incredible effort by Mark Cull one of 60 cyclists who raised \$175,000 riding 400 km over three days for the Suncorp Tour de Cure.



Mark Cull proud to be able to help raise vital funds to support the researchers, surgeons and clinicians who dedicate their lives to finding a cure for cancer.

# Incredible effort for the ill

By Lee McCarthy

Dedicated cyclist and local businessman Mark Cull entered Queensland's three-day bike ride for Spirit to Cure late last year, run by Tour De Cure to raise money to support cancer.

Organised by Suncorp, the event included riding through stunning scenery from Toowoomba to Brisbane via Warwick and Ipswich.

Attracting 60 riders and an entourage of safety specialists the entire team were transported from Brisbane to Toowoomba ahead of day one of the tour.

The riders covered from 315km to 400km each with 2900m of elevation raising \$175,000 with Mark raising \$4800 thanks to his generous supporters.

Mark said there was stringent testing of each rider's health and fitness in the months

prior to the ride, with entrants required to complete a 16-week training program in the lead up.

Each rider was tested to ensure they had the necessary fitness, skills, and ability to complete the course safely with an emphasis on hydration, nutrition, training, and skill to complete the grueling ride.

"I have done a lot of racing, but this is by far the most organised event I have been in, and we had so much support," he said.

"They tracked our training, and we did assessments before the event and it's very controlled to ensure safety to us and others.

"There were 25 riders in each group with a support car in front and behind with three medics and radio operators to hold traffic, so they made it immensely safe for us and we were able to just concentrate on our riding.

"Our group took the longer route which is for more experienced and faster riders who completed the challenge rides and rode up to 140 km a day."

Mark said they had a big compliance list including new tyres and a pre mechanical before the event and had a mechanic on the support team.

"We had early starts, with some of the crew and a minivan going ahead to set up morning tea and visits along the way to promote the ride and we even had a coffee van.

"Each night there were speakers and we donated money in each town including a \$10k donation to the Toowoomba pediatric hospital and donations to the Warwick and Ipswich hospitals."

He said on the final day they rode from Ipswich to Brisbane's Southbank where an event and roadshow had been organised for the rid-

ers and back up team.

"I was bit tired, but it was exhilarating being with like-minded people from all walks of life and it makes you realise how widespread cancer is.

"Everyone on the ride had a personal story to tell. A lot of sad stories but some great stories too."

Tour de Cure raises vital funds to support the researchers, surgeons and clinicians who dedicate their lives to finding a cure for cancer.

According to Tour de Cure, to date they have raised \$75 million, funded 563 cancer projects, educated 175,000 school children on how to prevent cancer and contributed to fifty scientific cancer breakthroughs.

If you wish to help or be involved the website is Spirit to Cure website <https://spirit-to-cure.com.au/>



Council fixed the scouring from the recent king tides /cyclone event at Inskip Point last week and are asking for feedback if you notice flood damage which needs repair.

## Roads needing repairs?

By Lee McCarthy

As flood waters recede the true extent of the damage to the regions infrastructure will be revealed.

While crews will spend the next couple of days assessing damage it may take some time to reach some of the more remote locations.

To help Gympie Regional Council out, and to capture damages in our isolated locations, Council has set up a dedicated email address for residents

in those areas to send images and information about infrastructure damage. This includes damage to roads and other assets.

If you wish to send something in, send it to [floodingdamage@gympie.qld.gov.au](mailto:floodingdamage@gympie.qld.gov.au).

It is Council's responsibility to ensure your infrastructure is safe. You may see road closed signage up for several days after flood water recedes.

Please remember to follow road signage and drive to the conditions.

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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The Inskip Point Recreation Clean Up Australia Day crew will be camping at Natone again this year for the weekend.



Jump in and get involved by helping to clean up the beach and bush around your home this year by registering with Clean Up Australia Day.

# Help clean up the Coast

By Lee McCarthy

Clean up Australia Day is held each year on the first weekend in March, with many community groups jumping in to help.

This year, in the Cooloola Coast Region you can join in with the Inskip Point Recreational Clean Up, the Cooloola 4WD Club or the Rainbow Beach Surf Club.

The Inskip Point Recreational area clean-up team are meeting on Saturday 5 March at 8am at the MV Natone campground and Site Super-

visor is Peter White.

The team come every year to help remove rubbish from Inskip Point and they will be on-site all weekend.

The clean-up starts on Saturday at 8.30am with lunch at 11am followed by afternoon clean-up for late arrivals and whoever is keen to help in the afternoon session.

They start again Sunday 8.30 to 11am and this is followed by thank you barbeque.

Organisers will be camping from Friday night to Sunday at MV Natone with a signpost

on the roadway pointing to the camping area and registration desk

The Cooloola 4WD Club, are a local, community-minded group of 4WD enthusiasts based in Gympie who are again helping clean up the region's beaches

The meet up time is 8am on Sunday 6th March at 8am at entrance to the Freshwater Track on the Rainbow Beach Road.

A barbeque and sausage sizzle will be held at the rest area before the beach and the Site Supervisor is Meredith Vincent

The Rainbow Beach Surf Life Saving Club will this year concentrate on Teewah Beach and will meet on Sunday 6 March from 9:30am to 2.30pm at Teewah Beach.

Site Supervisor is Deidre Seeley, Surf Sports /Youth Development Officer, Rainbow Beach Surf Club

For further information on joining a group for Clean Up Australia Day or co-ordinating your own team go to [www.cleanupaustrialiaday.org.au/join-a-clean-up](http://www.cleanupaustrialiaday.org.au/join-a-clean-up) where you can connect with each site supervisor.

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Oh what a night and what a capture by Garry Hewitt of the New Years Eve fireworks at Rainbow Beach sponsored by the Gympie Regional Council



The blustery wind made it hard to capture according to photographer Garry Hewitt

# 2022 arrives with a bang!

By Lee McCarthy

There are not many better ways to say goodbye to 2021 than with a fantastic fireworks display over the water, live music and lots of great food and cold drinks.

The excitement was contagious and it wasn't only the little ones who had the best time.

Hundreds of locals and tourist lined the parks and the beaches looking for the best spot to enjoy the entertainment while others enjoyed the show from balconies and nearby restaurants who were all booked out.

The fireworks were sponsored and organised by the Gympie Regional Council and the consensus amongst onlookers was that it needs to be an annual event.

The main street was closed giving businesses the opportunity to use the space for patrons until the fireworks finished at 9.30pm when the guards came down and the street returned to normal.

The Rainbow Beach Hotel took advantage of the street closure to host its street party from the back of a truck facing the pub with live music from Cool Lula.

A great night with fantastic vibes and a huge amount of gratitude that Rainbow Beach got to enjoy such a fine show!



Live entertainment from Cool Lula from the Rainbow Beach hotel



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# Art escape hits the Coast

By Lee McCarthy

Belinda Williams is a delightful soul with a passion for painting, a desire to share her skills with others and is about to launch her second online art academy.

Now based in Cooloola Cove, Belinda's online Outback Art Academy begins on 24 January and features eight modules within the course teaching a range of methods to whet your artistic appetite.

Belinda has been painting professionally for 23 years and is predominantly a watercolourist who paints on a private commission basis working to a brief.

A farmer's daughter from Moree, Belinda said she had a dream from a young age of becoming an Australian artist and while she didn't tell anyone she knew she was going to do it.

Belinda said last year her world changed when she saw a post by a friend on social media detailing how she was feeling with the onset of CV-19.

"When I saw her post, it was my call to action and that night I started writing the body of the work, the content, and I delivered an online painting course, called 'IsoArtEscape' 12 days after this conversation."

"I always relish time alone in my studio, so it was a perfect time for knuckling right down with few interruptions. If it hadn't been for CV-19 I would not have had been gifted the opportunity to write the content and create online learning."

"I couldn't believe how by choosing to do one painting to relieve the stress, anxiety, and depression, she was able to take away her worries and feel instantly better for being creative on that one chosen evening."

"It was amazing to witness her evolve, as she felt she was very much a contemporary abstract artist and surprised herself as she did not know what she had inside herself."

She said so much goodness, expansion, and courage came from IsoArtEscape with complete strangers feeling comfortable to share and exchange conversation around mental health.

"I have always loved teaching, both adults and children in-person-workshops and adore nurturing children who want to be creative."

"People were contacting me to learn to paint online, and I enjoyed the growth of 52 students online during the course who were ready to paint and overcome their fears and become more comfortable with their brushes, paper, colour and application."

"They developed the belief that they could produce beautiful paintings with practice and guidance."

Belinda said for her, teaching is such a beautiful experience where she is able to witness the artistic transformation of her students which was truly extraordinary.

Although a full-time practicing artist Belinda said she wanted to give people the opportunity, if they are ready, to paint as she really sees creativity as an opportunity for people to have more of a relationship to self.

"I wanted this course to be affordable to ev-



The girl from the bush loves the outback and Australian scenes are her passion in Outback Art Academy.

everyone and people be able to step into if they felt the need to create art but didn't know how."

The course costs \$197 for the full course of eight lessons where you will be creating fun artworks with subjects relating to Australia.

You will learn how to mix colours, draw with charcoal, mixed media, water colour and acrylic and classic pen and ink once you have purchased you can come back and revisit any of the lessons at any time.

Belinda said it is an achievable step-by-step guidance suitable for beginners or for those who have their box of paints stashed in the back cupboard and want to get their confidence back.

This is the first delivery of Outback Art Academy, and the programs will continue if you wish to increase your knowledge.

"I love connecting to country which is part of my outlet and remote travel continues to inspire me."

"I have designed this course for those who are time poor. The lessons are designed to allow you to step into gaining confidence, having fun, and leaning into a style of painting that suits you."

All you need to bring is your openness to play, so if you are a beginner, are seeking a refresher or looking to learn new techniques, these classes are for you.

Find Belinda at [www.outbackartacademy.com](http://www.outbackartacademy.com)



Artist Belinda Williams will be starting online art courses next week and can't wait to inspire others.



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# Fishing

## Cooloola Coast

# And that's a wrap...

By Drew Gardiner and Ash Little

Queensland summers! Hot, stormy, windy, king tides and as I type – flooding rains across the greater Wide Bay Region. For some, this almost feels like a normal summer weather pattern that's been absent for many years.

December started with the expected steady increase in quality crab captures that only improved over the month. The most successful crabbers were those that maintained fresh baits and continually moved their pots, alternating from the upper reaches of creeks and drains to the deeper ledges and drop offs.

Our four pot bags of mullet heads and fresh fish frames have been a hands down winner as the go-to-bait. We recommend using heads and frames rather than heavily fleshed baits like whole mullet or fillets. Fleshy baits are an attractant for baitfish and toadfish and in only a few short hours, your fleshy bait will be nothing but a skeleton at best. Perfectly 'cut' holes in the pot mesh and an absence of bait can almost always be put down to those pesky deep-sea toads that love a good flesh bait.

We had numerous reports of people claiming to have had pots raided, stolen and slashed. While it is disappointing to hear this, we remind everyone to ensure your pots remain covered on the low tide. There isn't much we haven't seen in our thirty years commercially fishing, and often, our trail cams have captured the culprits as big eagles (tend to tear pots open from the top), while wild dogs, and feral pigs will drag your pots well into the mangroves.

King tides, combined with increased tidal surge create massive currents and will drag lighter pots well away from their set point. For those very few people that may be doing the wrong thing, be prepared to smile for the many cameras that are set. QLD Fisheries Officers conduct regular monitoring as do many locals.

The persistent hot, humid days and afternoon storms, saw the Mangrove Jack feeding very aggressively in the lead up to Christmas and again after New Year's. We time our annual Mangrove Jack competition specifically around a two-week window commencing from Boxing Day. Many of the Jack's caught this season have been from land-based locations and fisho's that have never hooked up to a Jack before. Customers that took the time to listen to our advice on bait and tackle selection, bait presentation and locations, have been pleasantly rewarded.

Soft plastics like Zman Pop Frogz and Zerek Prawns have worked well when combined with weedless jig heads to minimise snag ups. Fishing structure is key. Mangrove roots, pontoons, pylons and under moored boats will al-



Amy with a solid 46cm Mangrove Jack on 8lb line.

ways be a haven for quality Mangrove Jack. If you are catching bream, then there is a good chance you are in the zone. It might be time to upsize your bait to get past the bream pickers.

Dead baits floated whole such as diver whiting, pilchards, flicker mullet and herring have been getting smoked. Common by-catch for those targeting Jack's include Barramundi, quality cod and big grunter. Be aware it is currently a closed season for Barramundi. There are several ways to rig up for Mangrove Jack and our team are always happy to discuss your options based upon the gear you have and your experience level. Our goal is to put our customers onto the fish.

The lead up to New Years and the New Moon saw the fishing slow down a little. Cooler temperatures and minimal tidal run can require a change of strategy. Walking sand flats around Carlo and Inskip produced some qual-

ity whiting and flathead. Making the effort to walk away from the holiday makers enjoying a swim definitely improved catch rate. MMD Splash Prawns, NOMAD Dart Wings and BASS-DAY Sugapen surface poppers all worked well for the lure fishos.

If you've never tried flicking surface lures to target whiting you might be very surprised at just how aggressive big summer whiting can be. Bait fishos had greatest success using freshly pumped yabbies and our live beach worms. One little tip worth trying when using our live worm is to increase your hook size. Step up to a larger long shank hook and load it up with a whole worm. There's no need to make it look pretty! In the estuary this can be an irresistible take for big flathead and even pelagics like trevally. This same strategy is very popular with seasoned fisho's targeting Jewfish in the surf.

Offshore fishing and beach fishing was completely shut down as we welcomed TC Seth. Despite lingering almost 500km's off the coast, the powerful easterly swell combined with King tides, caused rapid beach erosion. Wide Bay Bar wave rider buoy was recording average wave heights of 3.5 metres and peak waves exceeding 7 metres. The short respite will see offshore fishing fire and we look forward to providing all the updates as our charter operators get back to doing what they do best.

If you're in the market for a new Alvey Reel, be sure to come into Gardiner Fisheries. Continuing until the end of January, every purchase of an Alvey Reel gives you a chance to spin up our 'Alvey Deck Winch of Fortune'. We have over \$1000 in store vouchers and prizes on the wheel, including Alvey Spotters sunglasses and an Alvey Akubra hat both valued at \$300 each.

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Barry with elbow slapper whiting photographed by Gardiner Fisheries, Rainbow Beach.



Tin Can Bay Locals Mick and David AKA The Gaff twins trying their luck on the 'Alvey Deck Winch of Fortune'.



Dan, Norm and Matt with a Boxing Day Mud crab.

Is catching Tailor your thing? Well stay tuned in to our Facebook page. 2022 will see Gardiner Fisheries hold our Inaugural Tailor Championship. The interest from eager fisho's and sponsors has been HUGE, and the prize pool will make your eyes pop. After an awesome 2021 tailor season we know the competitive rivalry will be fierce.

We hope all our customers, visitors to our region and our readers had a safe, healthy, and relaxing New Year. Thank-you to everyone that has supported our family business grow during testing times and we look forward to seeing you throughout 2022.

For the best local bait, product range and genuine local knowledge drop in and see the team at Gardiner Fisheries. 6AM – 5PM 7days. Find us on the corner of Carlo and Karoonda Roads, Rainbow Beach, on the way to the Carlo Point boat ramp. Just look for our orange flashing light.



Jason with his monster mud crab.



Kevin's Rainbow Beach Barramundi.

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# Big Australia Day planned

By Lee McCarthy

Australia Day seems to have been a little overlooked this year with Christmas and New Year celebrations, floods, Covid and associated school holiday festivities.

Traditionally the day has been one of over-the-top exuberance with an abundance of Aussie flags flapping up and down the beach and snags and lamb flying off the shelves.

While the real meaning of the day is not lost on most who celebrate with heartfelt pride, it is also fantastic to have a public holiday in the middle of the week to chill out after the back to work drudge. Of course, an important part of the day is The Australian Honours and Awards which recognise outstanding service and contributions of Australians in our region.

Recipients of the awards come from all walks of life and while some are well-known, the majority are unsung heroes.

The awards being presented this year by the Gympie Regional Council are Citizen of the Year Award, Young Citizen of the Year Award, Creative Award, Sports Award and the Community Group, Event or Organisation of the Year Award. In entertainment, most venues contacted were having a quiet one however the Rainbow Beach Sports Club will be celebrating this year with free barefoot bowls, live entertainment, free entry to the Aquatic Centre, free tennis court and equipment hire (one hour play only), prizes for best dressed and random giveaways and raffles and a BBQ lunch out on the deck. Keep an eye on the Gympie Regional Council website for the regions Australia Day Awards event.



Join in the FREE fun at the Rainbow Beach Sports Club this Australia Day with free bowls, pool entry, music, tennis and lots of giveaways.

## Kids welcome to join the Summer Reading Club

By Lee McCarthy

If you are looking for a distraction for your children, the Gympie Libraries Summer Reading Club is on again, and it is a fun, free program where you can keep reading through the summer!

I Spy a roomful of stories for you to choose from. Join the challenge and read a variety of books and discover new authors, genres, or illustrators.

Visit one of the Gympie Regional Libraries and sign up to the Summer Reading Club. Get a bookmark to start your challenge. There are regular prizes to be won. Simply read, read, read, come into one of our libraries, show your reading bookmark or reading challenge check sheet, and fill out an entry form.

**Here's how you can join:**

- Visit one of Gympie Regional Libraries

- Sign up to the Summer Reading Club
- Get the Summer Reading Club pack
- Get reading!
- Visit one of our libraries again and show staff your reading bookmark or challenge sheet to get a prize entry ticket
- Fill out and return the entry ticket
- Keep reading for more prize entries
- Download the Reading Challenge here or collect from your local library.
- Entry and prizes are open to children only.

A breakup party will be held at the Gympie Library at 10am on Friday, 21 January 2022. Visit <https://library.gympie.qld.gov.au/kids-and-youth/summer-reading-club> for further information.

Families can also register at Summer Reading Club to join in online competitions.



Dive into the Rainbow Beach or Tin Can Bay Libraries for some summer reading. Pictured is Dr Suzie Starfish entertaining children with her latest book.

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Have fun, meet friends and save lives while learning water safety with the Rainbow Beach Surf Life Saving Club.

# Surf club bronze camps

By Lee McCarthy

The Rainbow Beach Surf Life Saving Club is holding its Intensive Bronze/SRC Camp this weekend with participants gaining the credentials to skills to rescue and save lives on our beaches.

The aim of these courses is to provide an intensive, structured, and fun training program for those interested in becoming an active member within the Rainbow Beach Surf Life Saving Club.

Participants will gain Surf Life Saving and Nationally recognised awards and allow them to become part of a valued community organisation.

**The awards available to participate in are the:**

- Bronze Medallion: Certificate 11 in public safety (Aquatic Rescue) for boys and girls 15 years and older. Participants in this course need to complete a 400m pool swim in under nine minutes.
- Surf Rescue Certificate for boys and girls with a minimum age of thirteen years of age who need to complete a 200m pool swim in less than five minutes.
- Those participating in either course, and who are fourteen years and over, will also receive a Senior First Aid Certificate.
- If your child is keen to be involved the full bronze/SRC live in camp cost is \$325 Cost
- Full Bronze/SRC 'live in' camp - \$325 and includes a new Electronic Training Manual, full patrol uniform, patrol cap, club togs, hi-vis safety rash shirt & 'graduation dinner plus all food and accommodation for the week.

Without volunteers' these courses would not be possible as they require a significant amount of time commitment from our volunteer trainers, assessors, and water safety officers.

The club is asking that all participants commit to a minimum of two seasons of rostered patrols/water safety duties for Rainbow Beach Surf Club upon completion of their respective awards.

If you are interested in being involved in life saving, as a member, a volunteer or a nipper please contact Kelly at the Club Office on 07 5486 3249 or email [surf@rainbowbeachsurf.com.au](mailto:surf@rainbowbeachsurf.com.au)



Putting on their patrol gear for the first time are some of the 2020 new bronze medallion holders.



Learning to drive the IRB is just one of the fun things you get to do once you are qualified.



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