

Sharing Our Stories of Resilience



This month we're featuring interviews with some of our resilient local community thanks to funding from Blue Mountains City Council's Community Assistance Program. Read our interviews with Bob Burnett of Rotary, Vaughan Jones who co-designed and built the Permaculture Garden at Headspace, Jeffrey Crompton who's started an Australian music podcast, and Barbara Armitage, former Mayor of Waverley, who's passionate about creativity.



Viken and Kerry of Hat Hill Records and Audio are sponsors of this month's Local News

Hat Hill Records and Audio has moved to new premises next to Gleebooks on Govetts Leap Rd. It is a destination record store specialising in new and collectable vinyl, poster art and Hi Fi with an extensive classical music collection on CD.

The store is open 7 days a week and can be contacted via 0430 858 238 or info@hathillgallery.com.au

District Events in June

UNTIL
... 18

National Parks and Wildlife Service Exhibition: Interwoven

9am - 4.30pm daily until 18 June

An exhibition of works by fibre artists and weavers incorporating invasive and native plant species. Blue Mountains Heritage Centre end Govetts Leap Rd

FRI
4

Top of the Mountains Seed Saving Group Launch

7pm Supper Meeting, then monthly on first Friday of every month.

Join a friendly group of locals building a seedbank of locally acclimatised cold climate seeds. The event is free but ring Lis on 0407 47 553 if you'd like to come.

FRI
4

Linda Mizzi with Glen Skarratt and Alex Kellar at the Bar & Bistro

7.45pm

Free but bookings essential at the Blackheath Bar & Bistro or to 0411049279, 35-41 Govetts Leap Rd

SAT..
5, 13

Landcare and Bonsai Groups at Blackheath Community Farm

Landcare Sat 5 June 1.30pm - 4.30pm; Bonsai Sun 13 June 10am-1pm

Join a fabulous group of people working to regenerate the bushland on the 1st Sat or meet with lovers of Bonsai on 2nd Sunday of the month.

TUE..
8...

Tuesday Trivia and Sunday Open Mic Night @ Gardners Inn Hotel

Trivia is on every Tuesday (register at 6pm for 6.30pm start) and Open Mic

Nights run from 6-9pm on second Sunday of the month at the Gardners Inn.

Contact via FB to book a spot: @villagenightvibes

SAT
12

Blackheath Art Society Winter Open Exhibition

10am - 5pm (4pm close Monday)

Blackheath Art Society Studio, 139a Station St Blackheath

Entry \$2 www.blackheathart.com

SAT
12

Vinnies Soup Kitchen at Blackheath - 6.30pm

Winter is a particularly difficult time for the homeless, forced to "sleep rough".

Join Vinnies for soup and a chat about this important issue, at the Blackheath

Vinnies Soup Kitchen in the Sacred Heart Parish Hall 165 Wentworth Street

Blackheath. Consider making a donation to the Vinnies Winter Appeal.

Following the Soup Kitchen, members of Blackheath Vinnies will be "sleeping

rough" to get first-hand experience of what it's like to have no warm bed to sleep

in on a cold Blackheath night. Ph. John Tweedie for more info on 0407 288 957

SAT
12

Art Play with Lindena

10am-2pm

Playing with paint and luscious art materials with gentle guidance and support.

BYO apron and lunch. Bookings to Jade at BANC on 4787 7770

SUN
13

Blackheath Crafty Beggars Markets

8.30am-1.30pm at the Presbyterian Church Hall on Wentworth St.

This market is on every 2nd Sunday with craft, colour, cookies, collectables and more. All made with love by local artists and artisans.

SUN
13

Blackheath Growers Market (CWA rooms open this Sun too)

8am-12pm

Supporting local and regional farmers and producers on the 2nd Sun of the month - Cnr Great Western Hway and Gardiner Crescent, Blackheath.

District Events in June/July

SUN

13

Japanese Language and Culture

10.30-12.30

Japanese language lessons plus your choice of calligraphy, origami, ikebana or cooking. Contact Harumi on 0417 681 277

SAT

19, 26

Zoe Fletcher Soft Pastel & Watercolour Workshops, Sat 19 & 26

10am - 3pm

Zoe Fletcher Art Studio Blackheath. Ph. 0497 766522 or email zoeffletcherart@gmail.com

SUN

20, 27

Mountains Marketeers - Blackheath Craft Market

9am-2.30pm at Blackheath-Mt Victoria RSL Sub-Branch, 2 Bundarra St.

3rd and 4th Sunday of the month. Bookings and enquiries to Rahim Isa on 0409 339473

SUN

20

BM Rhodo Society of NSW Speaker: Liz Benson on Wollemi Pines

2pm

General Meeting open to the public at The Lodge, Campbell Rhododendron Gardens

THUR

24

Tai-Chi and Chai Tea with Ling Halbert

10 - 11.30am

125 Wentworth St Blackheath. Cost \$25 (\$20 concession) Bookings to Virginia Field on 0412 729 088 or vffield@gmail.com

THUR

24

Open Mic Night at Blackheath Bar and Bistro

2nd and 4th Thursday of the month; register at 6pm, kick-off at 6.30pm

Full PA and speakers with guitar and bass amp. Register via gigs@blackheathbarandbistro.com.au or at the venue.

SAT

3 July

Gigs on Govetts - Dan Challis & Stephen Grady

7.30pm Free Entry

Acoustic folk by two Australian singer songwriters with new albums. Booking recommended. Blackheath Bar and Bistro 35-41 Govetts Leap Rd

FRI

16 July

Nigel Westlake and LIOR's collaboration, 'COMPASSION'

7.30

Phillips Hall Blackheath. Booking and info at blackheathchambermusicfestival.org.au

R.E.A.C.H. - 9 week wellbeing program for anyone living with a mood disorder

9.30 - 11.30am on Tuesdays 6 July - 31 August

This is a psycho-educational program run by a qualified Black Dog Institute trained facilitator and is suitable for over 18s - Contact Virginia on 0412 729 088
Old Presbyterian Church Hall, 125 Wentworth St Blackheath

All details are correct at time of printing.

Please contact event organisers to confirm details.

Send events to events@thebigfix.org or phone Lis on 0407 437 553

Barbara Armitage's passionate dedication to family, community and creativity



Barbara while Mayor of Waverley, 1993. Photo: Robert Pearce

Annabel Pettit, a participant in the inaugural BM Pluriversity who's now studying at Sydney University, interviewed Barbara about her history as Mayor of Waverley and how she stood up to corruption; as Chair of the Sydney Coastal Councils working to protect our coastline; as a mediator helping people to communicate in a non-combative way; and as a creator whose passion for creative problem solving has helped her manage life's challenges.

“You have to have some creativity in everything you do”, she tells Annabel.

“When I go to bed at night I dream of how to solve problems and it can be anything from making jewellery to cutting up a piece of wood, or solving a personal problem somebody's got, and you get lost in, just completely lost, in what you're doing and the whole world seems good.”

Here's a snippet from Barbara's career. You can read the rest of this article and the ones that follow at our website: www.thebigfixblackheath.org

Over the course of ten years, she researched, meticulously gathering evidence that developers and the town planner were accepting bribes. It was enough to convict them, and thus make herself the enemy of an entire network of Sydney's most wealthy and powerful. This ICAC file is now the unusual badge of honour that lives in Barbara's downstairs cupboard in Blackheath – a spot where one would more typically find an ironing board.

Her transition into local government followed the realisation that fake eviction notices were being sent to members of her community, many of whom were vulnerable and unable to interpret them as fraudulent. Barbara explained the situation in plain english, dropping letters into every mailbox to reassure those affected that they could sit tight in their homes.

In 1988, Barbara won the local election in Waverley, overturning approval for the 'Bondi Babylon' project that would have lead to the beachfront's high rise development.

Barbara responded to the gaping hole in community services by setting up centres for intellectually disabled locals and childcare, women's refuges and homeless shelters, as well as ensuring that the Bondi Pavilion remained a council-owned space open for free public use.”

Bob Burnett, Rotary and a life well lived

In May 2020, in the early months of the pandemic, I spent time with Bob Burnett in his home at Mount Victoria. He and Peter Buckwell, his neighbour, were nightly dinner companions to support each other through the Lockdown. As we've seen over the last few years, life has a way of up-ending everyone's plans. As it turned out, by the end of the year both men had left the Mountains and moved to Sydney to be nearer to their Sydney friends and families. In May, however, they were both doing well in Lockdown.



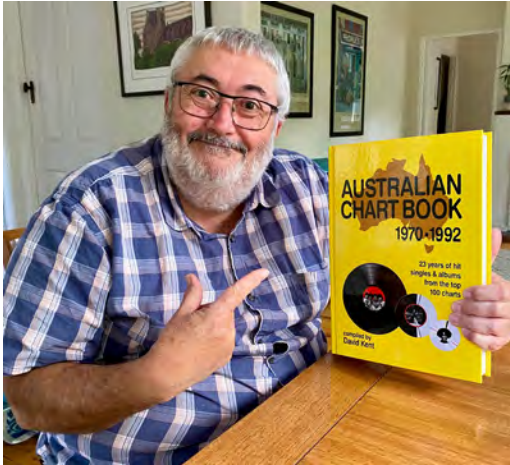
Bob started his working life as a chartered accountant with Price Waterhouse but then, after a trip to Melbourne to see the Olympics in 1956, opened his first shoe shop in Turrumurra. It was simply called The Shoe Shop and specialised in shoes for mothers and children.

During this period he was overcome with worry and turned to Dale Carnegie's book "How to Stop Worrying and Start Living". It helped him understand that he was just like most other people ... who also worried! Carnegie's words, like "Every day is a new life to a wise man", struck a chord and he never looked back. The business grew until he eventually had a number of shops.

After 5 years in business he was invited to join Hornsby Rotary. Five years later they asked him to start a club in Turrumurra and he became its inaugural president 52 years ago. It grew to become one of the biggest and strongest clubs in the District. One of the consolations of leaving the Mountains is his return to his old Rotary Club and the friendships there. In 1978-79 Bob became the District Governor of Rotary and helped to establish Probus Clubs in Australia. He felt this was a particularly good year to be a District Governor because Clem Renouf became the 2nd Australian President of Rotary International in that year. Renouf helped establish the Rotary Foundation's "3-H" Grants Program focusing on Health, Hunger and Humanity. The first 3-H project was the immunisation of six million children in the Philippines against polio and in 1979, the Rotary International Board agreed to set the eradication of polio as a primary goal of the 3-H program.

Bob was on the first 3-H Committee. After meeting UNSW Professor Ron Huckstep, who'd been in Uganda working on polio, Bob played an instrumental role in Rotary's decision to work to eradicate polio: "I rang Clem and said, next time you're coming through Sydney I'd like you to meet Ron." They all met at Sydney airport and Ron was able to discuss with Clem how Rotary could help to tackle polio. "The End Polio Now campaign has become the biggest thing we've ever been involved with." - **Lis Bastian Read more at our website ...**

Mick and the Phatman Talking Music



During the Pandemic Lockdown, Jeffrey Crompton and his friend Mick decided to take their many decades-worth of accumulated music knowledge and fashion it into a rollicking podcast called 'Mick and the Phatman', which is filled with deceptively casual banter inspired by satirical commentators Roy and HG. Although it may feel at times like eavesdropping on a pair of warm and witty friends at the back of the pub during a taping of Rockwiz, there's no hiding the expertise of Mick and Jeffrey, as they poke and prod into obscure music trivia, the likes of which you wouldn't find on Wikipedia.

There's no hiding their passion either – and an excitement for detail which is somewhat contagious when Jeffrey is telling me about his days playing bass in a Carlos Santana cover band, then happening upon a demo tape by a little-known group called Cold Chisel. At some point during our wonderful meandering chat at his kitchen table – which starts with me defending Jeff Buckley and ends with speculation about how Mama Cass actually died – I ask Jeffrey what all this means to him; what role has music played in his life. His answer is pretty straightforward: “well, whenever we moved, the first thing we set up was the record player, so that we could finish unpacking while listening to music.”

His podcast is an ode to this relationship with music as an ever-present companion and basic priority in life – a sentiment which resonated with me and I imagine anybody who tunes in to the show. It is a sentiment which tapped into the zeitgeist too – in isolation across the world, people were drawn back to the songs, books and films that shaped them.

We recognised pieces of art as the conduits back to the moments that delight us and the memories that sustain us.

But for Jeffrey, starting the podcast wasn't just about diving into nostalgia, but rather was a project to stay present. It is a project to keep his mind active, keep connected to Mick, as well as to the things they both love most.

And anybody who would argue that there's something self-indulgent about recording yourself talking about these things, will soon find a rare generosity in Jeffrey's podcast. In a particularly alienating period, he and Mick are offering up a wealth of shared experiences, humorous anecdotes and facts. Did you know that Monty Python's Life of Brian was almost singularly funded by George Harrison? I certainly did not. - **Annabel Pettit**

Follow Mick and the Phatman on Instagram, FB and wherever you get your podcasts. Read more ...

Vaughan Jones and Designing the Headspace Garden



Annabel Pettit, Vaughan Jones and Alex Young at Headspace

Vaughan Jones is a young local Blackheathen, very much born and raised. We caught up in the permaculture garden behind Headspace Katoomba, which he played an integral role in designing and planting. Sitting down on the wooden stumps that he salvaged to adorn the garden's pond, we chat and figure out how to make the space more habitable for the frogs. His green thumb is seemingly inherited from his grandfather, who was “always in the garden”. This inclination towards horticulture led Vaughan to study a Cert III in Natural Area Restoration and work for the council doing bush regeneration in the Nepean River area. It was through Headspace that he then found out about the Blue Mountains Pluriversity's free Permaculture Design Course (PDC). This began back in January, on the very same site where we now sit, when ten young locals were weeding out a sloping patch of lawn in the pouring rain. With Vaughan's help, it's become a fully mulched, thriving edible and native garden, boasting a worm farm, fire pit, compost bay and raspberry patch.

We talk about how he maintained this during emotionally volatile periods like Lockdown, when his ritual outdoor time became all the more vital. His long-running relationship with Headspace Penrith was reaffirmed, and he adapted to their video-chat services, which provided a sense of consistency despite universal uncertainty. Some other of Vaughan's own endearing personal rescue remedies include: listening to metal music, doing some good old-fashioned people-watching on the train, or recalling his most serene memory – which was to watch the sunrise over Uluru a few years ago.

Since the Headspace Katoomba launch in February, Vaughan doesn't have to travel as far to receive support and hang out with other people his age. This launch coincided with Vaughan's graduation from the PDC, as well as the public opening of the garden, which he was involved in creating at every turn. The event was a truly local celebration, and a foreshadowing of all that Headspace will bring to the Upper Mountains – complete with a sausage sizzle, a stage for young bands, and information stalls such as for Family Planning NSW. - **Annabel Pettit**

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BANC: The Stories We Tell

Stories are being gathered from the community to transform the last few years of bushfires, floods and COVID into a community theatre performance. If you'd like to share a story, poem, song or have a chat contact Liz Barclay at liz.barclay@banc.org.au or leave a message at BANC on 4787 7770 to receive a questionnaire or arrange a time to meet.

Liz is also looking for performers over the age of 15 to be involved in the performance/film/multi-media process

Thanks to funding from Family First Credit Union we're able to offer a free Youth Mental Health First Aid workshop

The workshop, for young people aged 18-24, will be at the Lithgow Transformation Hub on Thursday and Friday 1st and 2nd July.

It will provide young people with the skills to be first responders to provide mental health first aid when they see younger people (aged 12-18) struggling with mental health issues.

Numbers are strictly limited, so get in early to book a place by ringing or texting Lis on 0407 437 553 or emailing lis@thebigfix.org



Food Donations needed by BANC

Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre is seeing many more community members experiencing food insecurity. Please donate to BANC's Emergency Food Pantry at 41 Gardiner Crescent.

The Big Fix is a registered charity and umbrella organisation for The Big Fix Media, Blackheath Local News, The Lithgow Sprint, BM Permaculture Institute, BM Pluriversity, and Blackheath Community Farm. You can support us with donations or by advertising in this newsletter.