

community connect

the newsletter of ballina shire council

BALLINA SLSC – A BUILDING FOR EVERYONE



1.

1. The new surf club building due for completion next month, Historical photographs courtesy of Ballina Lighthouse & Lismore Surf Life Saving Club:

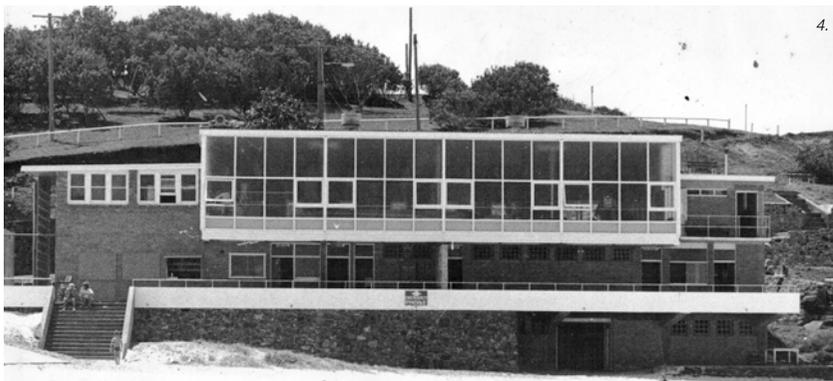
2. The original clubhouse opened in 1933, after the addition of a kiosk,
3. Clubhouse No.2 officially opened in 1935, and
4. Clubhouse No.3 officially opened 1961.



2.



3.



4.

The next chapter in the history of Ballina Shire will unfold with construction of the new Ballina surf club building expected to be finished by July. Other important works such as the realignment of Compton Drive, additional car parking and the construction of a new storage shed will commence shortly. Even with these works, on-going access to the building should be possible from July onwards.

This \$5.8 million project will provide the community with extensive space and dedicated training rooms for our surf life saving volunteers, a kiosk, meeting rooms, substantial storage space and a café with panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean, and the Richmond River.

With Council providing \$3.2 million and the Federal Government \$2.3 million to the project Council wishes to ensure that the entire community has access to this landmark building for Ballina Shire.

Council's Community Facilities Team will be managing the bookings for the upstairs meeting rooms to maximise the community use of these facilities and if you are considering a function or meeting in Ballina contact our Team on 6687 6291 (Monday to Friday 8.30am – 5pm) to discuss a forward booking.

Council is also in the process of calling expressions of interest to operate the café, which has generated a lot of interest. Once opened the new café will add further variety to the wide range of eating experiences available in our Shire.

The evolution of this building, from the original surf clubhouse to what will be a modern and well utilised community building, is an important part of the history of Ballina Shire, as illustrated in these photos.



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FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

Cr David Wright

Council staff and Councillors have recently been working hard on preparing the 2013/14 budget. As always, this has been a very difficult task trying to provide funds for the maintenance and renewal of items such as roads, sporting fields and streetscapes while trying to balance the requests for new infrastructure. In 2013/14 large ticket items, such as the replacement Marine Rescue Tower, new Animal Pound and the commencement of the refurbishment of the Ballina and Alstonville swimming pools will rely heavily on land sales from Council's industrial estates and residential property portfolio. We are also seeking grant funds from the State and Federal Governments and I am hopeful that all of these projects will come to fruition as we secure the various funding sources.

One of the best things about being the Mayor is being invited to celebrations in recognition of our large numbers of volunteers. Recently I attended the Ballina Lighthouse and Lismore Surf Life Saving Club's Annual Presentation Night. It is no wonder the club



LAND SUBSIDY FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ballina Shire Council continues to be one of the leaders in the affordable housing market in the Northern Rivers, securing another \$5 million in funding from the Federal Government's Building Better Regional Cities (BBRC) program.

The funding will provide 120 blocks of land at the Ballina Heights Estate and Cumbalum Urban Release Area A (CURA A) at Cumbalum specifically for people on low to moderate incomes.

Last year Council received \$4.5 million from the BBRC program allowing it to provide 96 blocks of land at Wollongbar to people who meet income criteria set by the Federal Government.

The Federal Government grants allow Council to fund the cost of infrastructure works at Wollongbar Sportsfields and Ballina Heights Drive such as stormwater drainage and street lighting. Council is then able to pass the savings on to home buyers resulting in a rebate of approximately \$25,000 on the purchase price of a block of land.

So far 16 applications have been approved for the Wollongbar area, with five settled. The people who have taken advantage of the subsidy include singles, couples, sole parents and families.

The BBRC initiative is part of a \$26 billion investment in programs to address housing affordability in Australia. The Federal Government is investing in regional areas like the Ballina Shire where population growth is forcing up house prices and rental prices.

It is important to realise this is not a first home-owner scheme; rather it is a genuine rebate on the price of land for people on low to moderate incomes. Applicants must meet strict criteria set by the Federal Government. For more information phone 6686 1239.



Nathan Bryant, photo courtesy of the Northern Star

Our first applicant - Nathan Bryant

Nathan Bryant was our first applicant under the Building Better Regional Cities subsidy. He has bought an 800m² block of land at Wollongbar and has lodged plans for a three-bedroom home. Nathan said the \$25,000 subsidy he received on the cost of his block of land, coupled with a First Homebuyers grant, meant he had a 20% deposit to buy the land and build his home.

All going well, Nathan will be moving in before his birthday in November.

received the Australian Club of the Year with its myriad of skilled trainers, educators and support staff all working for a common cause. I commend the club for its efforts and I am sure that with Council providing a new clubhouse on Lighthouse Beach, that membership and success will continue into the future.

I am also looking forward to attending many of the Service Club changeover functions in the coming months.

Local Government in NSW is set for changes in the next few years with the State Government planning to reform the Local Government Act while also making changes to the ways in which councils work together and how they are funded. Whilst no amalgamations for our Shire have been foreshadowed, a greater degree of co-operation could be forthcoming under the overarching guidance of a county council based on membership of all councils in this region. Ballina Shire Council recognises that change will occur, but it will do everything it can to ensure that its entrepreneurial portfolio is protected so that public infrastructure can be funded and built for our residents into the future.

Councillors have been researching ways of enhancing the functioning of the Mayor's Dredging Taskforce Committee. We have been looking at dredging other areas of the river as well as the bar, exploring opportunities for a marina and formulating ideas to promote our existing marine industries. Hopefully, the dredging of the bar to a depth of eight metres will be undertaken by the State Government as this is expected to be much more cost effective than the original proposal of dredging four times a year to a depth of four metres.

I was pleased to be at the opening of the new village entrance treatments at Alstonville and Wollongbar. They were developed using community ideas presented at meetings that took place during the initial discussions on the Alstonville bypass and even though the bypass has been open for nearly two years, the Roads & Maritime Services should be congratulated for finalising the projects. The treatments feature historical elements of post and rail fences, rock walls and timbers from the old Teven Bridges.



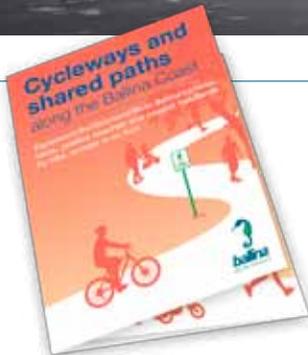
Destructive winds caused damage in Fawcett Park, Ballina

CALM AFTER THE STORMS

After the storms in January and February this year the last several months have been relatively calm. There are some spectacular photos, like these taken by Tony Partridge (tonypartridge.com), to remind us how wild the weather was.

The cost to clean up after the storms was more than \$500,000 and the Ballina Shire was declared a natural disaster area. These storm events are random and, in some cases, some normal Council activities have to be postponed while clean-up work such as emergency repairs to roads, clearing debris from open spaces and repairing damage to beach accesses, is undertaken.

Foam build up on Shelly Beach, East Ballina



YOUR GUIDE TO THE CYCLEWAYS AND SHARED PATHS ALONG THE BALLINA SHIRE COAST

Discover Ballina's river, creeks, lakes, beaches and coastal headlands by bike or on foot. A map of the cycleways and shared paths along the Ballina coast can be downloaded from ballina.nsw.gov.au, or pick up a brochure from a bike shop in the Ballina Shire, or the Ballina Visitor Information Centre and get moving.

MEET OUR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR - GERRY BURNAGE

Gerry is the Controller of the Ballina Shire unit of the NSW State Emergency Service (SES). He has been a volunteer member of the SES for 28 years, and has been the leader of the unit for 25 years.

Anyone who has met Gerry knows he is passionate about his role at the SES. During times of crisis he has been an inspiration to those around him. He attained his authority and credentials as the head of the Ballina SES through hard work and dedication and is admired and respected by his peers and colleagues and treasured by the many people he has helped.

Ballina Shire Council is thankful we have someone like Gerry, with his skills and personality, managing a vital community service. In recognition for his efforts, Gerry is the 2013 Ballina Shire Citizen of the Year.

What does it mean to you to be named the 2013 Ballina Shire Citizen of the Year?

I have enjoyed more than 28 years serving the community with the Ballina SES. To receive this award was a great and unexpected honour knowing that there were so many other deserving people in the community. It is a wonderful feeling knowing that my work has not gone unnoticed.

The best thing about the Ballina Shire is?

We are very lucky to live in such a wonderful part of Australia. I have found that Ballina Shire is a very supportive community in all that we do.

I have travelled extensively and always love to come home to Ballina. It is the best place to live and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else.

How important are volunteers in our local area?

Without volunteers the community would not be the place it is today. So many people give so much time willingly, without looking for reward or recognition for what they do. I am very proud of the members of the Ballina Shire SES unit and their dedication.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I don't have a lot of free time but when I can I love to be in the garden. I also love to go out for a good coffee with my partner at our favourite cafe. We are looking forward to an overseas trip in May and that will be nice to have time out and really relax.





Photo courtesy of Classic Aero Adventure Flights.



PASSPORT TO BALLINA COAST AND HINTERLAND

The new **Discover Ballina Passport** marketing campaign, which is a joint project between Ballina Shire Council and the Ballina Chamber of Commerce and Industry and, features our new tourism ambassador, Paralympic swimming champion Jacqueline Freney (pictured above, right).

The campaign targets the “self drive” market in south east Queensland and regional NSW, and offers visitors a tourism passport that includes redeemable specials from businesses throughout the Ballina Shire.

We are very pleased to welcome Jacqueline as a tourism ambassador. She is a national hero following her success at the London Paralympics last year where she won eight gold medals. Jacqueline is the face of the new campaign.

Tourism Passports are available at the Ballina Visitor Information Centre in River Street or deals are redeemable from **discoverballina.com**.

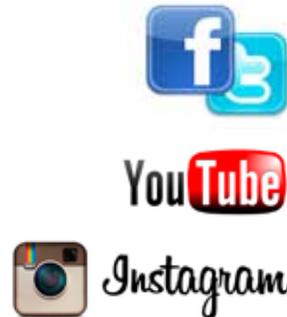


HELP US PROMOTE BALLINA SHIRE - TELL THE WORLD VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

You can help us spread the word about the Discover Ballina Passport campaign, and promote our own backyard by connecting with the Ballina Visitor Centre via social media.

Send in your adventures, and we'll upload them to our YouTube account (youtube.com/discoverballina) or “like” our Facebook page (facebook.com/ballinacoastandhinterland). You can also email your photos of the beautiful Ballina Shire and we'll upload them to Instagram.

Email the Ballina Visitor Centre
balinfo@ballina.nsw.gov.au



WELCOMING MOTORISTS TO BALLINA

Following the completion of the **Ballina Bypass** and the changes to the old Pacific Highway, Council is now looking at how to enhance the approaches to town and entice the travelling public from the bypass into Ballina.

A draft Master Plan for this project is now on exhibition. It covers approximately eight kilometres of road corridor of the former Pacific Highway, extending from the Teven Road roundabout in the south, along River Street, Kerr Street and Tamarind Drive and out to Bicentennial Park in the north.



Key concepts of the draft Master Plan include “attention grabbing”, bold visual elements (including vegetation and sculptures), that say something about Ballina. Ideally, these will be designed and made by local people.

The implementation of the Master Plan will be staged depending on funding, and will include comprehensive tree planting and sculpture programs.

To view and provide feedback on the Draft Ballina Landscape Entry Treatment Master Plan visit **ballina.nsw.gov.au**. Submissions close 14 June 2012.



VOTE 'YES' IN FEDERAL REFERENDUM ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Federal election is to be held on 14 September 2013. As well as voting for our federal elected representatives for the next term, we will also be required to vote on a referendum to formally recognise local government in the Australian Constitution.

Ballina Shire Council is urging the community to stand up and vote 'Yes' to the referendum question to protect the Australian Government's ability to directly fund councils for local road and community facility upgrades.

For the past ten years the Australian Government has provided billions of dollars to councils nationwide through the Roads to Recovery, Regional and Local Community Infrastructure and Black Spot programs.

Since 2009 Ballina Shire Council has received \$2,863,655 in vital Roads to Recovery funding. Roads that have been upgraded under this program include:

- Yellow Creek Bridge at Wardell
- Intersection of Pearces Creek Road and Rifle Range Road
- Roundabout at Southern Cross Drive and North Creek Road
- Contributed to the reconstruction of Park Lane, North Teven Road and Gibson Creek Bridge on Eltham Road.



Other local projects that have been made possible due to Federal funding include:

- Kentwell Community Centre
- Lennox Head Cultural & Community Centre
- Pat Morton Lookout Stairs
- Crane Street Memorial reinstatement
- Ballina Byron Gateway Airport extensions
- Building Better Regional Cities Project at Wollongbar and Ballina Heights.

Unfortunately, due to recent High Court cases, the Australian Government's capacity to provide grants straight to Council for important community-building projects is at risk.

A simple change to the Australian Constitution will allow direct funding to continue and will protect crucial grant programs for councils and communities.

While the change to the Constitution will only be minor, its positive impact on Council finances and road infrastructure will be far-reaching in the long-term. This year alone, Ballina Shire Council has received \$572,731 for road upgrades. Without the Roads to Recovery funding, Council would have had to draw funds from other services it provides or postpone the road upgrades to another year.

The proposed change to the Australian Constitution will not alter the existing relationship between State and Local Governments, and councils will continue to be accountable to their communities as is currently the case.



From left: Duck Creek, Killen Falls and EnviTE staff are Dan Cox (kneeling) and Adam Kostrz (standing)

BALLINA SHIRE'S HIDDEN TREASURES RESTORED

Killen Falls near Tintenbar and Duck Creek, between Alstonville and Ballina, are two of Ballina Shire's natural treasures. They boast beautiful waterfalls and are a remnant of the ancient Big Scrub rainforest.

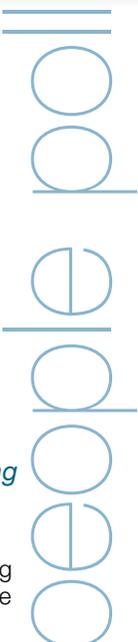
Like the few remaining parts of the Big Scrub, Killen Falls and Duck Creek are critically endangered, lowland rainforest remnants and, until recently, were extremely degraded and infested by weeds.

Recognising the importance of the two waterfalls, the Ballina Shire Council successfully lobbied the NSW Environmental Trust for a \$99,000 grant.

Council engaged EnviTE, a community-based, not-for-profit professional bush regeneration organisation, to undertake the work and over the last three years weeds have been removed and replaced by the new growth of native species, improving habitat for threatened plants and animals.

Without this work, weeds would have eventually destroyed the rainforest at Killen Falls and Duck Creek.

Ballina Shire Council has also invested additional resources to continue restoration work beyond the end of the NSW Environmental Trust project.



Andrew McGinley

What do you like about living in Ballina Shire?

Well, I like to enjoy the outdoors, the opportunities to exercise and the natural beauty of the Shire. I like to live in a place where it is clear that people care about the place and their community. Ballina seems to have that.

What is the one thing that you think the Council should do to improve the lifestyle you have in Ballina Shire?

My view is that I'd like Council to continue to do the things it's doing and do them well or better if possible. Compared to other places, in respect to the amenity of our Shire, I think Council does a good job.

Council's Response

Thanks Andrew, we appreciate your positive feedback. One of the toughest issues for any council is to concentrate limited resources on the core amenity issues for a community. Ballina Shire Council has traditionally had a reasonable track record of focusing on core services but as our community grows we recognise that demands for new or expanded services also increase. That is why we are investigating new facilities such as an indoor sports/events centre, and improvements to the Ballina and Alstonville swimming pools. However, in considering any improvements for expansion, we need to ensure our existing service delivery does not decrease.



Stuart Tarrant

What do you like about living in Ballina Shire?

I like the way people say "Hi", when I go for a run around the bike paths and I think the beaches are fantastic.

What is the one thing that you think the Council should do to improve the lifestyle you have in Ballina Shire?

There has been a lot of talk about the bikeway between Ballina and Lennox Head. I would like to see this built along the top of the headland on the existing walking track. It should be built in such a way as to enable people in wheelchairs, and families with little kids on bikes, to use it. It is a spectacular piece of northern NSW coastline and should be enjoyed by all.

Council's Response

Council has endorsed preferred route options for a proposed shared pathway between Lennox Head and Ballina with this information available on our website. For the past 12 months consultants have been preparing all the necessary documentation to obtain planning approvals for the preferred routes. The applications have now been submitted and Council's planning staff are in the process of assessing those applications. If Council is able to obtain planning consent for those applications we should be in a position to start work on some of the missing links within three to six months. Ultimately you will be able to ride or walk on a series of shared paths that will link Ballina and Lennox Head. This is a high priority project for the Council and one we want to complete in the next few years.



Liz Denley

What do you like about living in Ballina Shire?

Beautiful beaches and river, family-friendly lifestyle, great sense of community.

What is the one thing that you think the Council should do to improve the lifestyle you have in Ballina Shire?

I would like Council to consider an indoor pool facility at the Ballina Memorial Swimming Pool, to increase the options in the Shire for families seeking swimming lessons for their children all year round.

Council's Response

Council's 2013/14 budget includes \$250,000 in funding to evaluate options and obtain planning approval for the provision of an indoor facility at the Ballina Memorial Swimming Pool. This funding is subject to Council selling land it has for sale, and we are hopeful that if the land sales do proceed that by the end of 2013/14 all the necessary approvals will be in place to allow for the construction of an indoor facility. The actual construction will be dependent on further land sales or Council obtaining Federal or State Government grants to finance the development.



Garry Beresford

What do you like about living in Ballina Shire?

I like the laid back lifestyle, the climate and the nice walks along the coast. I also like being close to the airport.

What is the one thing that you think the Council should do to improve the lifestyle you have in Ballina Shire.

I swim at Shaws Bay regularly and access points to the bay are closing off with weed. This is the only safe salt-water swimming hole in the Shire and the weed is spoiling the recreational amenity of Shaws Bay. I would like the weed removed to regain what the bay used to offer and the sand, that is now muddy, replaced.

Council's Response

The vegetation within Shaws Bay is native seagrass. Seagrass is a fundamental component of a healthy water environment providing fish food, habitat diversity, improved water quality and reduced erosion. Seagrasses are protected under the Fisheries Management Act and are a listed endangered ecological community under the Threatened Species Conservation Act. This legislation has restricted Council from obtaining State Government approval to remove sections of the seagrass.



ARTS NEWS

FROM THE NORTHERN RIVERS COMMUNITY GALLERY

29 May - 23 June 2013

Michael Chapus *Drawing into wet paint*
Clare Urquhart *Container of Dreams*
Bronwyn Russell-Collins *Homage*
Jacqueline King & Leah Thiessen *Inter-connected*

26 June - 14 July 2013

NAIDOC Exhibition A dynamic exhibition of artworks by Aboriginal artists associated with the Ballina Shire.
Launch Event Sunday 7 July 2013, 11am - 1pm

Workshops for kids

Thursday 4 July, 10.00 - 11.30am or 1.00 - 2.30pm
For kids 5-10 years \$12 each (non-refundable). Bookings essential.
Listen to a Dreamtime story by a Bundjalung elder Aunty Nancy Walke.
Enjoy the sounds of the didgeridoo and sculpt and paint your own Dreamtime animal with Bundjalung artist Emma Walke.

Fun for all ages - Collage, draw, stamp

During Gallery opening hours from 26 June - 14 July
Large blank cards with envelope \$3 each.
Draw, collage and stamp your own cards inspired by the artworks in the NAIDOC exhibition. Use stamps of original designs by Bundjalung artist Emma Walke.

17 July - 11 August 2013

Ballina Arts and Craft Centre Incorporated (BACCI)
The Annual Grace Cruise Memorial Exhibition.
Launch Event Friday 19 July 2013, 6pm - 7.30pm
\$5 at the door, includes one complimentary drink.

14 August - 1 September 2013

Andrew Hmelnitsky *Ballina to the Border*
Karen Stone *Paper-pulp paintings*
Melissa Wright *Frolic*

Contact the Gallery for launch event details and painting workshop opportunities with Andrew Hmelnitsky.

Pictured: Works from Jacqueline King, Melissa Wright, Clare Urquhart, Karen Stone, Bronwyn Russell-Collins and Leah Thiessen



Northern Rivers Community Gallery
44-46 Cherry Street Ballina **Ph 6681 6167**
Wednesday to Friday: 10am - 4pm
Weekends: 9.30am - 2.30pm
Closed public holidays
Subscribe to Gallery e-news at ballinanews.net/newsletters



SHINE THE SPOTLIGHT ON...HEALTH WORKFORCE AUSTRALIA

Are you among the 21.5% of people living in the Ballina Shire who are over 65?
Would you like to be involved in a project

that is investigating how to keep people healthier, independent and resilient as they age?

The Ballina District Community Services Association Inc. (BDCSA) is working with local public and private health partners (across residential aged care, community health, allied health, hospital, transport, home care etc) on two exciting action research projects looking at ways we can reduce the burden on the health system by

taking a more proactive approach to the needs of the older person.

The projects are called 'Stronger Longer' and 'Working Together' and they are funded by Health Workforce Australia. The projects aim to:

- help older people remain healthy, resilient and increase their independence through strategies that prevent functional decline and help them to remain at home for longer.
- improve the co-ordination of health and community services for older people who are receiving a number of different services from health providers.

The BDCSA is interested in your views and experience. Please contact the project team on ph 6698 4270 if you would like to be involved.



LOOKING AFTER OUR COASTLINE

Our coastline is one of the Shire's most significant assets but, as we saw during the storms earlier this year, our beaches are constantly under threat from natural elements. In order to protect our beaches Council has prepared a Coastal Zone Management Plan.

The Plan is based on studies that identify the current erosion of our beaches as well as projected erosion for the years 2050 and 2100.

Generally there is a low risk to private or public land from coastal erosion, so the recommendation for most of our beaches is to allow natural processes to occur under monitoring.

More significant works are recommended for Seven Mile Beach at Lennox Head, and to a lesser extent, Boulder Beach, as outlined in the table below:

Beach	Recommended Works
Lennox Head north of Byron Street	Primary measure – beach nourishment (sand import) Secondary measure – rock seawall
Lennox Head south of Byron Street	Maintain existing rock seawall and constructed dune (at the Bream Hole)
Boulder Beach	Install rock wall to protect and upgrade part of an existing path

The plan recently came off public exhibition. It will be resubmitted to a future Council meeting so that public submissions may be considered before formal adoption of the Plan. The Plan should allow Council to apply for funding assistance from the NSW Government.

OUR COMMUNITY: OUR FUTURE

Submissions close 17 June 2013.

Our Draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2012/13 - 2016/17 is now on exhibition and we are seeking your feedback. This key document outlines Council's major activities and capital projects planned for the next four years.

As a Council, we are the closest level of government to the community. Many of the services we provide such as water, wastewater, waste, open spaces, footpaths and drainage are all critical components of our day-to-day lives. It is therefore essential that we provide the services that our community desires.

The next four years promise to remain challenging as our Shire continues to grow and we strive to maintain our essential infrastructure and provide new infrastructure, as and when required.

Please take the time to look at the document and provide feedback. For more information visit Council's website ballina.nsw.gov.au.



NORTHERN RIVERS CAR POOL

- The smart way to travel

Join today online or download the app, available in iPhone via the iTunes App Store and Android via Google Play.

You can add plans, search for matches and browse current people travelling to where you want to go, and get an instant calculation of your travel costs and CO² savings.

Scan the QR code for more information or visit nrcarpool.org



IS IT EASY TO LOCATE YOUR COMMUNITY GROUP?

Do you run a community group, service or organisation in the Ballina Shire?

Ballina Shire Council hosts an online Community Directory that provides easy access to information about local community groups and services.

The Community Services Directory is a valuable resource, particularly for new residents, providing information about sporting, social, welfare and not for profit interest groups.

It's free to register. For more information look under Online Services on the homepage of Council's website ballina.nsw.gov.au

GOOD ACCESS GUIDE

Business owners looking to ensure their premises are more accessible to people with disabilities should download Ballina Shire Council's Good Access Guide from ballina.nsw.gov.au.



The Guide was developed through the Council's Access Reference Group.

EAST BALLINA CEMETERY DRAFT MASTER PLAN ON EXHIBITION

Many people may not know that the Ballina Shire Council is responsible for five cemeteries in the Shire. The Draft East Ballina Cemetery Master Plan is currently on exhibition and public comments are welcomed.

Among the improvements planned for the cemetery are new burial areas, the closure of roads and the installation of bollards. There are also plans for the development of a terraced niche wall and the preparation of a new ANZAC burial area.

The closing date for submissions is 14 June 2012.

community connect



WIGMORE ARCADE UPGRADE

Council has resolved to move forward with further design work and preparation of a development application for the remodelling of the Wigmore Arcade, in Ballina, as part of its overall strategy to rejuvenate the CBD.

There are 22 shops in Wigmore Arcade, making it one of the largest commercial sites in the Ballina CBD. The property was bequeathed to Council more than 40 years ago by the late Mrs Florence Price.

Council has engaged the services of a specialist retail architect, the BN Group, to transform the arcade into a bright open space in keeping with the latest retail trends and create a food emporium with cafes and a meeting place within the CBD.

The elected Council agrees Wigmore Arcade needs to be remodelled and it is anticipated that the development application will be ready for lodgement within six months.

An important design feature will be to stage construction works to minimise disruption to tenants and maintain rental income.

Council staff have continued to liaise with current tenants on the progress of the project.

Council believes that the remodelling of Wigmore Arcade will complement the recent upgrade and beautification works in the CBD. Woolworths has demonstrated its confidence in Ballina with its decision to build a new, larger supermarket in River Street which should be open by the end of the year.

Council has also recently acquired two properties in Tamar Street which will be redeveloped to provide 60 car spaces and new public toilets.



Transform Community Art Project

Several plain coloured electricity transformer boxes have been truly "transformed" into works of art thanks to a project between Essential Energy, Ballina Shire Council and a number of community-based organisations.

The Transform Community Art Project is an anti-graffiti strategy that offers opportunities for amateur and emerging artists to work with mentors to design and install artwork on selected transformer boxes in the Ballina Shire.

Artists associated with local community organisations including INTRA Youth Services, Brain Injury Support Services Inc, Life Without Barriers and Southern Cross K-12 School have completed artwork on boxes in the East Ballina, Ballina Island and Lennox Head areas.

Thanks to Essential Energy for providing the money for the paint and materials.

TRACE YOUR FAMILY TREE AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

Have you ever thought about researching your family tree? Perhaps you are looking for a new hobby or interest? Do you wonder about your heritage, or maybe your children are curious about past generations?

If you visit any of the branches of the Richmond-Tweed Regional Library, with your library card, you can access Ancestry.com, to start finding out something about your family's heritage. Seven billion searchable family history records are accessible. Library membership is free to all Ballina Shire residents and access to all the databases is also free.

The library's website is rtrl.nsw.gov.au. Have a look at the online resources to discover lots of things you may find useful, such as Encyclopaedia Britannica Online.



Keeping drivers safe during floods

In the event of floods, information about road closures can be found on the Ballina Shire Council's website ballina.nsw.gov.au or by phoning 6686 1498. If you have a smart phone or internet access go to myroadinfo.com.au for information on all regional roads.

King tides = salt water over roads

On a number of occasions each year high tides can result in salt water flooding of some roads. Roads known to flood during high tides include:

- Tamar Street, Ballina
- Canal Road, Ballina
- Riverside Drive, West Ballina
- River Street, West Ballina
- Burns Point Ferry Road, West Ballina
- North Creek Road, North Ballina
- Uralba Road, Uralba
- Old Bangalow Road, Tintenbar
- Tamarind Drive, Cumbalum





Nominate for the NSW/ACT Regional Achievement and Community Awards

Nominations for the Regional Achievement & Community Awards

for NSW and the ACT are open. This is an opportunity for community groups, businesses and individuals to receive recognition and acknowledgement for a job well done.

Previous finalists from the Ballina Shire include the East Ballina Lions Club Inc and the Ballina Chamber of Commerce & Industry Inc.

Nominate now for a chance to win a share in \$40,000 (thanks to the Commonwealth Bank), or an advertising package on PRIME7.

For more information or nomination forms contact the Awards Office on 1300 735 445 or go to awardsaustralia.com.

Nominations close Friday 2 August 2013.



Solar lights make parks safer

Solar powered LED lights have been installed in Bicentennial Park and Saunders Oval at Ballina, Elizabeth Ann Brown Park at Alstonville and Pat Morton Lookout at Lennox Head.

The \$90,000 project was funded by a Crime Prevention Grant through the Safer Suburbs program. The lights have been installed in areas that were previously hard to light because of their lack of access to mains power or 240 volt underground cabling.

Each light unit is solar powered and requires no connection to the electricity grid. The installation of these lights will make it safer for people using the parks and sports fields at night.



Above: Jason Vidler (team leader), Danny Gordon, Angela Green, Paul Hickey (General Manager), Leon Weston and Kel Harvey, pictured after the presentation of certificates and plaques celebrating their achievements.

10TH ANNIVERSARY FOR REGIONAL WORKS CREW

Congratulations to Danny Gordon, Angela Green, Leon Weston and Kel Harvey who are celebrating ten years of service with the Council's Regional Works Crew. This is a significant achievement.

Many people may not know Ballina Shire Council is one of the leaders in NSW in providing job opportunities for people with disabilities.

Council currently has 13 people with disabilities working in its Open Spaces and Reserves Section. They undertake general horticultural maintenance duties such as hand mowing, operating ride-on mowers, weeding and mulching. This allows the staff to develop work skills and encourages independence. Importantly, the opportunity to work and earn money improves their self-esteem and confidence.

Ballina Shire Council started the program in 2003 and is one of only three councils in NSW providing this type of employment for people with disabilities. The program is funded by the Federal Government's Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Council is very proud to be involved in this program. We congratulate Danny, Angela, Leon and Kel for their service to Ballina Shire Council and the community.

RIVER STREET - NOW SO MUCH EASIER TO GET AROUND

Not only has the recent upgrade and beautification work in River Street, Ballina improved the "look" of the CBD, the area is now much more accessible for prams, older people, and people with restricted mobility.

Linda Vick, a Ballina resident and member of Council's Access Reference Group, said the improvements have made it much easier for her to get around in her electric wheelchair.

Linda can now easily get into the centre of town from West Ballina using the shared path along River Street and is no longer navigating narrow paths and rough ramps.



"Since the upgrade I can now get access to more shops, because of the removal of steps into stores," Linda said.

"Crossing the road is so much safer now the pedestrian crossing near Woolworths has been relocated.

"It is easier for drivers to see and they have plenty of time to slow down," she said.

"When the new Woolworths is completed, access and shopping in River Street will be even better," Linda said.

Left: Linda Vick, of Ballina, appreciates having easier access to businesses in River Street



KNOW THE RULES OUTSIDE SCHOOLS

The **'Travel Safely around Schools' project** is a joint initiative between Ballina Shire Council and local primary schools to improve road safety outside schools.

Recent inspections of local schools have revealed parents are frequently endangering the lives of children by:

- stopping and parking in bus zones and 'No Stopping' zones;
- double parking;
- stopping longer than two minutes in a 'No Parking' zone; and
- stopping on or within 20m of a pedestrian crossing or children's crossing.

Illegal parking in school zones puts children's safety at risk and Rangers patrol school zones regularly. Parking offences in school zones carry heavy fines and loss of demerit points.

Children are extremely vulnerable road users because of their size, unpredictability and inability to judge speed and distance. Until they are eight years old, you should always hold a child's hand when crossing the road, in the carpark and when you are on the footpath or shared path.

If you experience a problem with illegal or dangerous parking at your school, please phone Ballina Shire Council on 6686 4444.



Old Pacific Highway Handover

Now that the Ballina Bypass has been completed the Roads & Maritime Services (RMS) has handed over the job of maintaining the old Pacific Highway to Ballina Shire Council. Council will upgrade the degraded section of the road at West Ballina shortly, with the North Ballina section to be undertaken in 2013/14.

All works will be funded by RMS.

Breeding Osprey stop work on Wardell boat ramp

Work on the Wardell boat ramp is currently on hold due to the early breeding season of Osprey. Osprey are a vulnerable species found along our coastline. A pair of Osprey nest near the Wardell boat ramp and the birds are generally sensitive to disturbances around their nesting sites. Work on the boat ramp will resume after the breeding season.

Sportsfields

As part of the Open Spaces and Reserves Capital Works Program lights have been installed at the Kingsford Smith enclosed ground.

Works are underway at Saunders Oval to provide additional playing fields as a result of a land swap with TAFE.

State of the art sporting facilities for Wollongbar

State of the art sporting facilities are planned for Wollongbar. The \$6.2 million project will include two senior and two junior rugby fields, a cricket field, four netball courts and six tennis courts along with lighting and associated club house facilities. Works commenced on site in November 2012 and are expected to be completed by April 2014.

Playground upgrade



The playground in Missingham Park at Ballina continues to be a popular meeting spot for parents and children. People can now use the playground during wet weather with Council spending \$110,000 on new roofing which provides protection from the sun and the rain.

Playground equipment has also been installed in the following parks:

- **Chickiba Playing Fields, East Ballina** - twin swings, net hammock and basket swing with soft fall (\$40,000)
- **Kelli Anne Crescent, Lennox Head** - basket swing with softfall (\$20,000)
- **Commemoration Park, Ballina** - softfall upgrade (\$20,000)
- **Campbell Avenue Park, Wollongbar** - swing relocation and softfall (\$20,000).

Bridge and Road Projects

Current major road projects include:

- **Midgen Flat Road**
- **Upgrade of Pimlico Road**
- **Resurfacing of Cawarra Park Boat Ramp.** This is jointly funded by the NSW Government's Better Boating Program which aims to provide recreational boating infrastructure.

Upcoming works include:

- **Linking of footpaths** along Chickiba Dr and Tuckaroo Dr, East Ballina.
- **A \$9 million contract** has been awarded for the main access road to Ballina Heights. The project will include improved connection between Tamarind Drive, the Ballina Bypass and the Cumbalum Urban Release Area 'A' (the area earmarked under the Building Better Regional Cities (BBRC) Program).

Works in the Ballina CBD:

- **Root guards** will be applied to the remaining trees in the CBD.
- **Fig trees** adjacent to the main pedestrian crossing have been removed. This has allowed more natural light to fill the arcade. Magnolia trees have been planted in place of the removed trees.



MYTH BUSTERS

Council approves speed zone requests

Council does not have the authority to change speed zones on any roads, excluding the zones for temporary road works. Only the NSW Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) can determine speed zone requests. Residents are able to make requests for a review of a speed zone through the RMS website rms.nsw.gov.au or alternatively Council can lobby the RMS on behalf of residents.

Council should be providing similar signs to Ballina, Lennox Head and Wardell as has recently been undertaken on the approaches to Alstonville and Wollongbar

The new signs and associated landscaping, which cost approximately \$250,000 were funded by the RMS as part of the Alstonville Bypass project. Council does not have this level of funds available to undertake similar works for any of our other towns. We are pursuing improved entrances to Ballina by upgrading the northern and southern road infrastructure but unfortunately the RMS has not allocated the same monies for Ballina as part of the Ballina Bypass.

Council constructed the ugly concrete blocks that have been installed at the end of North Wall

The Crown Lands Division of the NSW Department of Trade and Investment undertook the repair works on the Ballina North Breakwater, by installing concrete armour blocks to stabilise the wall. Council has made representations to the State Government to either provide a viewing platform or to raise the existing pathway to allow pedestrians to access the magnificent view that was previously available from the end of this wall. Our representations are on-going.

Council used to spray for mosquitoes

Council has never undertaken any broad-scale spraying of mosquitoes in the Ballina Shire. The feasibility of mounting a control program was investigated by a medical entomologist in 2002, but given the extensive and diverse nature of mosquito habitats within the Shire, and the substantial cost to undertake a mosquito control program, it was considered that this was not a sustainable strategy. Conservatively it would cost over \$500,000 to set up the program followed by just under \$1 million in annual operating costs. Control programs are conducted in South East Queensland, but they have greater populations in their local government areas to support the cost, and in many cases treatment is in open salt marsh areas that are much easier to access than Ballina Shire's wetlands.

If you have any other stories you would like clarified please email Council at mythbusters@ballina.nsw.gov.au

UPCOMING EVENTS

BALLINA LIONS FUN RUN WALK

9 June: Fun Run in aid of childhood cancer research
Missingham Park Amphitheatre, Ballina
John Grant 6686 0412

RUN WITH THE DOGS

30 June: Fun run/walk to raise money for the Northern Rivers Animal Services
Missingham Park Amphitheatre, Ballina
Caroline Ladewig 6681 1860
nras.org.au

SKULLCANDY OZ GROM OPEN

4 - 9 July: Premier junior surfing competition
Lennox Head
Steve Condon 0402 432 884 or Tony O'Brien 0428 410 253
skullcandyozgromopen.com.au

NAIDOC WEEK

7 - 14 July: Celebration walk and full program of activities
Ballina
6686 4444
ballina.nsw.gov.au

ALSTONVILLE WOLLONGBAR FUN RUN CHALLENGE

28 July: 10km Run, 5km Run, 1km Junior Dash and 5km Walk.
Alstonville High School
0428 824 626
alstonvillewollongbarfunrun.com.au

BALLINA FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

18 August, 12pm to 4pm: An opportunity to sample some of Australia's finest wines accompanied by a delicious variety of tastings of locally produced delicacies all in one convenient location.
Ballina Jockey Club Racecourse Road Ballina
Milton Colburt 6686 8870, milton@radicate.com.au
ballinafinefoodandwinefestival.com.au

RRDBC INAUGURAL REGATTA

24 - 25 August: Dragon Boat Regatta hosted by the Rainbow Region Dragon Boat Club
Shaws Bay (Pop Denison Park), Ballina
Juliette Sizer 0421 550 335
rainbowdragons.com.au



community connect

Water talk

A community newsletter for the Ballina Shire Urban Water Management Strategy

BALLINA'S NEW RECYCLED WATER PROJECT OLD TREATMENT *VERSUS* NEW TREATMENT

The old primary sedimentation tank's filtering screens were coarse and used to get blocked regularly, especially during storm events. To pre-empt this from happening they were manually raked free of solids twice a day, allowing solids to pass through whilst this was happening.



The old trickling filter treated effluent through microorganisms attached to the rocks, processing the water. These trickling filters struggled during storm events as the nozzles blocked up regularly.



This old oxidation ditch performed intermittent oxygenation. This removed dissolved organic material and nitrogen but there was no phosphorus removal. This process was difficult to control and could lead to odour.



Old Ultra Violet disinfection lights got dirty quickly and had to be manually pulled out and cleaned individually. This was difficult to do during high flow periods which sometimes meant less than optimal performance.



Old license conditions meant less stringent water quality controls. Effluent contained more nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus which was discharged into Fishery Creek.



PRIMARY TREATMENT

SECONDARY TREATMENT

SECONDARY TREATMENT

TERTIARY TREATMENT

WATER DISCHARGE



The new drum screens filter solids as small as 2mm and drop them straight into small bins for easy transport. The second vortex chamber does a second screening of finer grit and sand.



This new plant will have improved nutrient removal. One of these tanks is for nitrification, the other is for de-nitrification. Phosphorus is also removed here.



These new membrane tanks contain hundreds of membrane filters lined up next to one another for maximum water filtration. Solids and fine particles are excluded from passing through the membranes. Air is pumped into the tanks to scour the membrane filters ensuring only clean water passes through.



New Ultra Violet disinfection equipment is enclosed and self cleaning. This makes it safer, less labour intensive and much more efficient in killing microorganisms (protozoa, bacteria and viruses).



Stricter quality controls for recycled water mean much higher contamination removal is required. It is now safe to be used in new house's toilets, gardens and cold water washing taps. Excess treated water which is released at low tide is much better for our waterways.



RECYCLED WATER TREATMENT PLANT HITS SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE

Meet the construction team and Council staff (*pictured above*) who have been working tirelessly on Ballina's new Recycled Water Plant.

They gathered in March to celebrate a significant milestone in the two year project which will allow the remains of Ballina's old waste water treatment plant to be demolished to make way for the construction of the final stage. The new treatment plant in the photo is now up and running with more than twice the capacity of the old plant and a significantly improved treatment performance.

Wastewater from the Swift Street pump station on Ballina Island was recently diverted from the Lennox Head plant and is now flowing smoothly into the new plant. The changeover will dramatically improve the quality of treated water being discharged. When the final stage is completed, the water will be of a high enough quality to supply recycled water to houses and businesses which have 'dual reticulation'.

Dual Reticulation simply means two pipes. The recycled water pipes will be coloured purple and will carry high quality recycled water to gardens, toilets and cold water washing taps in new homes. This will take pressure off the Shire's fresh water drinking supplies.

The project should be fully completed by September this year which will mean high quality recycled water will become available for alternatives to disposal into the environment.

It's part of Ballina Shire Council's long-term Urban Water Management Scheme which will help to accommodate future population growth demand.

WATER PRESSURE & LEAKAGE PROGRAM Council is investing \$1.7million in water loss infrastructure

This may sound like a costly exercise but this will be paid back within 6 years with the majority of the investment being returned in 3 years through savings in detecting water loss in the water mains.

The infrastructure consists of meters being installed along the water mains to detect where we have leaks. The program also includes the installation of valves that help in reducing leaks along small cracks in the water mains.

Council has trialled the meters for the past 3 years in 3 different locations. The most recent trial in West Ballina detected leaks, saving 134 mega litres (ML) of water per year. This is equal to filling 54 Olympic pools.

Current water usage in the Ballina Shire is approximately 3600ML per year, with an estimated 22% lost in the system through leakage (or 316 Olympic pools).

KINGS COURT RECYCLED WATER RESERVOIR CONSTRUCTION

The construction of the small reservoir up at Kings Court in Lennox Head marks one of the final stages of Ballina's long awaited Recycled Water Scheme. It will act as an 'emergency back-up' to the main larger storage reservoir located at the Recycled Water Treatment Plant.

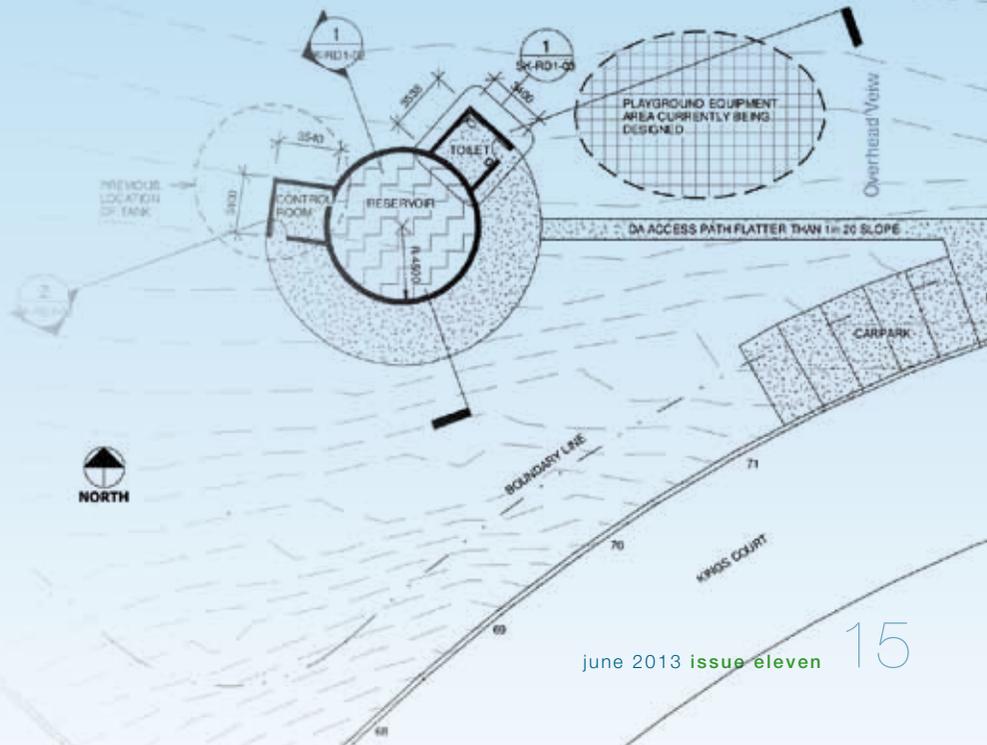
This reservoir is part of Ballina Shire Council's long term Urban Water Management Strategy. Recent and new housing developments in this area have been fitted with 2 separate pipes known as Dual Reticulation. This will allow recycled water to be used on gardens, in toilets and cold water washing machine taps and will reduce demand on the Shire's drinking water supplies.

The works will be undertaken as per designs previously developed in consultation with the Lennox Head Chamber of Commerce, Lennox Head Residents' Association and the Kings Court Reserve Protection Group. The design aims to minimise the impact of the reservoir on the amenity of the area, and will include a playground and barbecue area. Further design work for these amenities is currently being undertaken, and will be subject to further community consultation.

The main recycled water pipe from the Lennox Head Recycled Water Treatment Plant is being laid underground along North Creek Road up to this new reservoir.

The current construction work will take place over a period of three months from Monday to Friday (7am to 6pm) as well as Saturdays (8am till 1pm). Residents should expect minor noise, traffic and other building related disruptions during this period. Sundays and public holidays will remain work free.

If you have any further queries relating to this project, please phone the Water Communication and Education Officer, Kate Pye on 6686 4444.





WHAT'S ON AT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY CENTRES?

Lennox Head Cultural and Community Centre

1 Mackney Lane Lennox Head, Phone 6687 6291
Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 8.30am – 5pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bookfest – Saturday 8 & Sunday 9 June. Club Lennox will be hosting a huge book sale to raise funds for the local Club. The Bookfest has over 1500 books on sale, face painting, ice-cream and more. Come down and grab a bargain!

Lennox Head Kidz Klub – July School Holidays. Professional child care - Serious fun! Designed to cure holiday boredom and perfect for working parents. Activities include sports-based games like football and ping pong; clowning games; parachute games; team building games; art and craft activities; board games; ultimate dress ups and more! Choose between either a Morning or an Afternoon session or stay for the Full Day. Only \$20 per child per session or \$40 per child for the full day. Wednesday, Thursday & Friday of both weeks of the July School Holidays. For bookings phone the Centre on 6687 6291.

Grace Department and Grooming School Holiday Program – This course is open to children and teenagers of all ages from 5 – 18 years, with participants organised into age appropriate lessons and groupings. The program covers Mini Manners and Modules 1, 2 and 3 of the Grace Department and Grooming's course. For more information contact Libby on 0427 918 400 or visit gracedepartment.com.au

North Coast Kids and Babies Market – Saturday 20 July. Discover the clever way to shop and grab a bargain



at the North Coast Kids and Babies Market! Come along to purchase necessities or come to sell your own pre-loved goods. Over 40 stalls of pre-loved, new and beautiful

locally hand made items. \$2 entry (for adults). For more information visit northcoastkidsbabiesmarket.com.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Lennox Head Playgroup, Lennox Head Residents Association, Community Health Nurse: Early Childhood Clinic, Lifeball: Sport for Over 50's, Ballina Netball Association: Netball Competition, Yoga, Wheelchair Sports, Futsal, Registered Psychologist & Psychotherapist, Angelina Ballerina Dance Academy, Physical Culture, Stepping out With Confidence Programs, Heart of Dance, Healthy Lifestyles (older adult gentle exercise class), Boxation (a free weekly youth boxing activity run by BDCSA), Guitar Classes and Tuition.

Kentwell Community Centre

(Formerly Ballina Community Services Centre)
20 Bangalow Rd Ballina, Phone: 6687 6291
Opening Hours: Mon to Fri: 8.30am – 4.30pm

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Breast Cancer Support Group (new day – Thursdays), Sing Australia, The Silversmith's (singing group), Ballina Camera Club, SOL North Coast Nutrition, New Ways International, INTRA – Buttery's Drug & Alcohol Outreach Program, Cannabis Clinic, Interrelate Family Centres, Tarmons Health Mental Health Service, Northern Rivers Gambling Counselling Service, AMORC and Broadband for Seniors: Free Internet Training.

The Richmond Room

Regatta Ave, Ballina, Phone 6687 6291
Conveniently located, fully equipped kitchen, hosts up to 200 people.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Australian Red Cross Blood Service – Various Mondays & Tuesdays each month. Blood is vital to life and for many people blood donors are their lifeline. Currently only 1 in 30 people give blood, but 1 in 3 people will need blood in their lifetime. Modern processing techniques mean that a single blood donation, when separated into its components, can help at least 3 different patients and contribute to making up to 22 different products (including potentially life-saving immunisations for chicken pox, hepatitis B and tetanus). This regular donation event is scheduled across both the afternoon and evening to allow everyone a chance to attend. Pre arrange an appointment by contacting the Australian Red Cross Blood Service on 13 14 95

Go4Fun® is a FREE program for kids to become fitter, healthier and happier. The program is designed for children aged 7-13 years and their parents, with a focus on making improvements in families' diet, fitness levels and overall health in a fun, practical way. The program will run every Wednesday at the Richmond Room 4pm – 6pm. The next session commences on Wednesday 17 July 2013. Places in the program are limited, so call Graeme on 02 6620 7504 for further details.



Looking for a great venue for your next meeting, concert, event, function or party?

Ballina Shire Council has community facilities offering meeting rooms, interview rooms, dedicated children's area and a large multi-use auditorium for hire. For more information call 02 6687 6291 or visit our friendly on site staff at the Lennox Head Cultural & Community Centre to inspect the facilities.



NSW SWIMMING POOL REGISTER – HAVE YOU REGISTERED YOUR POOL?



NSW State Government initiatives have now been introduced to reduce the risk of pool drowning of very young children. Under the new Swimming Pools Amendment Act 2012, all pool/spa pool owners are now required to complete a self assessment checklist and register their pool on the NSW Government Swimming Pools Register. All pools and spa pools are to be registered by the 29 October 2013 and penalties apply for failure to register your pool.

Council's website, ballina.nsw.gov.au, contains information including the NSW Government links regarding the registration process and other material relating to the Act and its requirements. Alternatively, you can access the NSW Swimming Pools Register directly at swimmingpoolregister.nsw.gov.au. The NSW Government website also contains a "Frequently Asked Questions" section which is also available on Council's link.

The legislation also addresses certain requirements owners must follow if they are leasing or selling their properties and the need to provide a valid Compliance Certificate for their pools, where copies are to be attached to lease agreements or vendor sale contracts.

These particular requirements don't come into affect until 29 April 2014. Businesses involved in leasing properties or property conveyancing should familiarise themselves with these requirements.

Under the Act, councils are also required to develop a pool barrier inspection program ready for commencement on 29 October 2013.

Our website can help you with any queries you may have. Alternatively phone our Building Services section on 6686 1415.

Having trouble registering your pool?

If you live in the Ballina Shire and do not have access to the internet, or you are not in a position to register your pool, our Building Services staff can register your pool on the NSW Swimming Pools Register for a fee of \$10.00.

You will be required to provide your details to us by completing the applicable registration form. The form is available at our Customer Service counter or on our website.



Born: Penrith

Favourite food: Bacon and eggs

Time with Ballina Shire Council: I've been with Council for six and a half years. First I worked as a cleaner for three years, and then got other roles in the Civil Services group. Although I started out as a cleaner, which is an important job in itself, I wanted to do something more. I got my truck licence, but when opportunities became available I volunteered for extra duties, and undertook any extra training that Council made available. With these extra skills and my determination to prove I can do these jobs as well as any other employee I've been able to work in various areas in the works crew including concreting, footpath construction, roadworks, truck driving and traffic control. I now work on the roadside slasher.

What the job entails: I operate the roadside slasher to keep the vegetation low on the main approaches leading into South Ballina, Pimlico and Wardell. I also slash the roadside north of Lennox Head up to the Byron Shire border. I make sure the roadside vegetation is kept low so that drivers have a clearer view of the road and bends and have a safer place to pull over if they need to, without driving down a drain or gully. Keeping the vegetation low also reduces bushfire hazards. It makes the approaches into our towns a bit tidier as well.

Best part of the job: Council providing me training and allowing me to drive machines. I get a lot of people pulling over to thank me for keeping the roadside well mowed; and that is encouraging and makes the time on the job so worthwhile. It's great when members of the public take the time to write in or ring the office to thank you for doing a great job – that sort of feedback from the supervisors is always nice to hear.

Worst part of the job: Rainy days.

On my days off: I love to spend time with my granddaughters.

If I won the lotto: I would help my kids to get out of debt and my friends who have stood by me.

Special mention: Vee helped improve Council's relationship with shop operators in Alstonville during the Main Street upgrade. Vee would clean the shop fronts and windows early each morning to remove the debris spray from the construction work undertaken at night. When Vee was on the cleaning crew, Council received letters and calls of appreciation from the public. We commend Vee for her excellent work ethic and contribution to the Ballina Shire.

staff member profile





waste watch

There's been a lot happening in Ballina's World of Waste since the last Community Connect. Have a look at some of the activities that have taken place.

Greenhouse Waste Education at Ballina, Alstonville & Southern Cross Public Schools



Waste Watch School Visit – Ballina Public students with Elley E Waste

The 'Green House' is a Ballina Shire Council funded mobile marquee that travels around the Northern Rivers educating primary school students about sustainable waste practices.

Partly funded by Ballina Shire Council, the 'Green House' visited both Ballina and Alstonville Public Schools and plans to visit Southern Cross in June.

The program involves fun characters and games which teach students how to adopt simple waste-avoiding practices such as smart-shopping, reusing, composting and recycling. Students are encouraged to get involved in the presentations and have an opportunity to play on instruments made from recycled materials amongst other fun activities.

Green to Gold Organic Bin checking wraps up for now

Over the last 3 months the Green to Gold Competition has seen over 3,000 Organic Bins checked in the Shire with 30 good recyclers winning

fruit and veggie hampers. So if you got a 'well done' or 'oh no' sticker on your green lidded bin recently, you were right to suspect we were watching you.

Judy Parker of West Ballina was one of the lucky hamper winners. "We try hard to only put the right things in our green bin and only use compostable bags so it's nice to be rewarded" she said.



Judy Parker of West Ballina with her \$30 fruit and veggie hamper

The results were encouraging with Lismore Composting Facility seeing a large drop in contamination levels during the campaign period. "As a council we get charged for contamination in our organic waste which the competition was designed to reduce in order to stop us having to pass that cost onto ratepayers" Waste Education Officer Kate Pye said.

The competition also aimed to get residents thinking about what happens to their organic waste once it leaves their bins. "The 'green (organic) waste' gets turned into 'golden compost' over a controlled twelve week period. This is why plastic bags are not allowed." Kate said.

Ballina's Pyrolysis Treatment plant to be first in Australia

By 2015 Ballina Shire Council will be leading Australia in the processing of wood waste, organic waste and biosolids, operating the country's first full scale commercial pyrolysis processing plant.



What is pyrolysis? Pyrolysis is a new technology that heats organic waste (like the waste we put into our organic bins) without oxygen, turning it into two main substances called biochar and a gas called syngas. Biochar (pictured above) is a carbon-based material that can be added to the soil, while syngas can be used to generate renewable energy and power the plant.

The Department of Primary Industries has been trialling Biochar with local coffee, sugar cane, macadamia, rice and avocado farmers for over five years and the positive results are well documented. It increases agricultural production and its ability to store carbon means it could well be the region's secret weapon against climate change.

The project has received \$4.25 million from the Federal Government's Regional Development Australia Fund and Council has matched this contribution. The total value of the project is \$8.5 million which will allow for a slow pyrolysis processing plant to be built at Ballina's Waste Facility near the airport.

Compostable Nappies approved and available in Ballina Shire

Did you know most babies will use up to 5000 nappies in their first few years? According to Choice Magazine, Australians contribute 5,000,000 per day, that's 2.1 billion nappies each year to landfill. That's enough nappies to cover 21,000 football fields each year.





There are many studies around that estimate that normal disposable nappies will take over 100 years to biodegrade. This is due to the fact that they contain plastic, and even the thin sheets of plastic used in products like nappies and plastic bags can take over a hundred years to break down in landfill.

Sadly there are only a few compostable products on the market which will break down in a 12-week open row composting system like the one in Lismore. This will definitely change though, as more councils will be required by the state government to introduce a 3 bin system like ours. This is ultimately in an attempt to reduce the amount of waste we all unsustainably send to landfill.

When it comes to compostable bags, there are a number of brands currently available online or from local stockist "Nourish All of You" on Cherry Street, Ballina.

Saving loads trucking to Queensland



This may sound strange, but it is currently cheaper for Ballina Shire Council to send our waste to Queensland for disposal rather than put it in our landfill. Even taking into account transportation costs, Council is still saving money by:

- reducing operational requirements at the Ballina Landfill
- avoiding NSW Government levies
- accessing competitive private sector landfill markets
- access to large landfills provide economies of scale

The environment is also a winner, with a review demonstrating enhanced leachate and gas management available at the larger landfills more than compensates for the emissions and energy consumption associated with the truck transport.

The major advantage of this decision is that it will extend the life of our landfill capacity, delaying the need to fund future expansion. The long-term disposal of waste in Ballina Shire is a major issue for Council. While we obviously have an operational waste facility near the airport, its life is limited and Council must find a new site for the future. This is a long-term plan that requires a lot of investigation and approval from the NSW Government.

For any questions regarding waste, please call Waste Education Officer on 6686 1458.

LOOK LEARN ACT

Become a Weed Warrior!

LOOK at the website looklearnact.com
LEARN which weeds are a threat, and
ACT quickly to report them

By becoming a Weed Warrior you will receive up to date information about new weed species and upcoming information seminars.



Scott McGregor 'Look Learn Act Ambassador'

Weeds affect our production, our environment and our way of life so help keep the North Coast beautiful, productive and weed free.

To sign up or report a high priority weed go to: looklearnact.com or call 02 6623 3866 or find us on Facebook at **Look Learn Act. Be Weed Free**






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...and stay connected with *your* council

Community Connect eNews is Ballina Shire Council's electronic newsletter designed to keep people abreast of issues of interest and importance. It's free and is distributed via email.

You can even select which topics interest you most:

- Documents on Public Exhibition
- Jobs@Council
- Meeting updates and items of interest

visit ballina.nsw.gov.au and follow the links to subscribe or call 6686 4444 for further information



Don't dispose of me yet

Use this issue of Community Connect to wrap kitchen waste and dispose in the green organics bin.



CONTACTING YOUR COUNCILLORS

Councillors are here to represent your view. You can contact councillors in person, by phone or email.

Mayor



David Wright
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phone 0415 965 403
davidwright@ballina.nsw.gov.au

A Ward



Susan Meehan
Deputy Mayor
phone 0431 685 666
smeehan@ballina.nsw.gov.au



Robyn Hordern
phone 0410 562 758
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Council's Community Access Points:
Meeting agendas and documents on exhibition can be viewed at Council's Customer Service Centre; Alstonville, Ballina and Lennox Head Libraries; Kentwell Community Centre and Council's website ballina.nsw.gov.au

Council publishes public notices weekly and Community Notices on the fourth Thursday of the month in the Ballina Shire Advocate. Council also distributes "Community Connect eNews" via email on a regular basis, visit ballina.nsw.gov.au and follow the links to subscribe.