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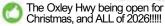
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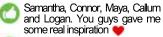
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### thumBBBs







My credit card for never arguing when I really need "something..."

That guy that looks exactly like me who always sneaks in and messes up my workshop... Hate that guy!

Eating way too much food over the holidays!

The person who shrinks my pants while they're hidden in the drawers.

Barb McHattan for supporting every local business all the time!

Walcha - being 10 degrees cooler

Humidity. Go back to

Queensland where you belong! Greta Thunberg 😡

2025 - never show your face around these parts again!

2026 - We have big plans for you!

thebigblackbuilding for being closed on Christmas day:(

The black shed for being open every day of the holidays:)

### 0411 713 566

# Our Taxi is back!!



The taxi is now owned and operated by Angus and John Burnell, who have been working hard behind the

scenes to get everything set up and ready to go. With visitors in town and locals on the move, the return of the service has already been welcomed, and the New owners of Walcha Taxi Service drivers are once again being kept busy, particularly at John and Angus Burnell.

Currently, the business is operating with two drivers and two vehicles on the road. Importantly, one of the vehicles is fitted with wheelchair access, ensuring the service remains accessible for all members of the community and providing peace of mind for those

Angus and John have expressed their sincere gratitude to Cameron and Peter Norbury for their assistance in helping get Walcha Taxi up and running again. Their support and guidance throughout the process has been greatly appreciated and has played a key role in bringing the service back to life.

has reopened under new ownership, bringing an

essential service back to the community just in time

for the busy end-of-year season.

this time of year.

who rely on this support.

The taxi service is available immediately; however, it will not be operating on Christmas Day or Boxing Day. The phone number remains unchanged, making it easy for locals and visitors alike to book a ride.

At present, there is no EFTPOS available due to a technical glitch, so passengers are asked to note that the service is cash only for the time being. In addition, council cards will not be accepted until January once systems are fully up and running.

For bookings or enquiries, Walcha Taxi can be contacted on 0436 131 008.

The return of Walcha Taxi is a welcome boost for the town, restoring a vital transport option and supporting both locals and visitors as the busy holiday period

### **BUY 2 X Q-DRENCH 10L OR \$2000 OF ZOETIS PRODUCTS**

### AND RECEIVE A **BONUS FREE CARTON OF BEER**

\* Limited to customers 18 years and older







# VALCHA LAW

### **THANK YOU**

To our wonderful clients, we have enjoyed helping you reach your goals, find solutions or work through problems.

To my staff, your loyalty, hard work and sense of fun (when appropriate) is greatly appreciated by me. Have a wonderful break, see you in the New Year!

Closed from 5.00pm Tuesday 23 December 2025, reopening on Monday 12 January 2025

Sophie Thomson

Director/Solicitor

6777 2066

info@walchalaw.com.au

- Local lawyers for over 76 years -

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# around the traps



### By SIMON NEWTON

Our season looks to be slowly improving as we head into Christmas with last week's storm fronts dropping anywhere from 40 - 50mm. Isolated falls of 80mm were recorded and you wouldn't of known by Monday that we'd even had rain. The ground has soaked up the moisture and I reckon we could handle 50mm per week at present with these warmer temperatures and relentless winds that keep coming. Christmas looks warm and stormy at present, and I hope the rain keeps up for everyone throughout the Christmas break. The district looks good, but it won't last if these regular storms don't keep coming.

La Nina is now in full swing and has Queensland in its firing line for heavy rain and possible flooding over the summer months. The La Nina is set to hang around until the end of March and could cause major flooding to areas that experienced flooding earlier in the year. No matter how you look at it, there is plenty of moisture building in the northern part of Australia, monsoonal winds will push moisture south into Queensland and hopefully further into NSW. Tropical lows, cyclones and major flooding have all been forecast if these conditions keep up and remember those major flooding events and our extreme rainfall totals all came from these weather events this

The horrific scenes from Sunday evening in Bondi will be forever etched into Australian history, a display of Anti-Semitism against the Jewish religion saw multiple people lose their lives. We live in a multicultural country, with multiple religious beliefs and it is shocking to see conflicts from other countries around the world happening here in Australia. The government have a lot to answer for, these men had already been flagged on their system, and they want to talk about tighter gun laws to fix this issue. It's just ridiculous that people like these have guns - why would they need registered guns living where they do? If the government tighten gun laws then expect more gun thieves and black market sales to go through the roof. If this happens I'm sure you will have people, like the two men in Bondi on Sunday, looking for guns and sadly they will find one way or another to obtain them. It's a horrendous act on the verge of the Christmas period, and flags a major concern for authorities with multiple events set to take place throughout the summer months.

Southern weaner sales are on the verge of kicking off with 100,000 weaners set to go under the hammer in the first few weeks of January. The markets look to be firm with sales of weaner steers hitting 600c/ kg and heifers 500c/kg heading into the Christmas break. The final saleyards sales are being held this week with reduced yarding's meeting softer markets. Majority of the processors have filled their direct consignment orders well into January and we saw cows drop by as much as 70c/kg in Tamworth on Monday to top at 340c/kg. Feedlots are booking space into late January, early February which will put January prices under a bit of pressure with feeder steers top at 484c/kg on Monday in Tamworth, down 20c/kg. Sheep and lamb markets look to be holding firm with processors still acquiring stock for slaughter pre-Christmas. Lambs topped at \$400 in Tamworth on Monday while mutton made to \$290 in what was quoted a dearer market by as much as \$10/hd. Livestock markets look extremely strong for 2026, especially lamb with store lambs currently selling for 550-600c/kg liveweight at present. The normal run of store lambs out of the tablelands will start to run in January but I reckon we will see more suckers as conditions look right for ewes and lambs. Personally, the lamb numbers just aren't here anymore compared to a few years ago and I would say even our district would be back at least twenty percent, hence why figures of 1300c/kg for kill lambs have been spoken about for 2026.

I hope you all have a safe and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I think we all owe it to ourselves to take a break; it's been a busy 12 months. Enjoy time with your family and friends. Lets hope 2027 is a little kinder to us all.

# The Oxley Highway reopens



The Oxley Highway reopens to traffic from 18 December 2025 (4:30pm).

No more weekly full road closures in 2026, weather permitting, while we plan for restoration work at the remaining major slip sites.

From 4.30pm Thursday 18 December the Oxley Highway will be opened with no full road closures in 2026, weather permitting. Transport for NSW (Transport) will continue to work with the Council and keep the community informed of any future road closures.

Transport is continuing major restoration work on the Oxley Highway at Mount Seaview to return the road to pre-2021 flood condition. Since the community update in August 2024, Transport has completed restoration work at Slip 1 and Slip Segment 740 between Stockyard Creek Road and Knodingbul Road.

They also started work at three large slopes at Pooks Lookout, Stopping Bay and Slip 3. Transport would like to thank the Walcha community for their patience during this important work. Their progress would not have been possible without your support and understanding of the required weekly road closures.

Transport for NSW encourage locals to register for SMS alerts to receive notification on emergency or planned road closures on the Oxley Highway. To register, please go to the website: <a href="mailto:nswroads.work/oxleyrecovery">nswroads.work/oxleyrecovery</a>.

While the highway is reopening tomorrow, Transport is continuing with major restoration work on the Oxley Highway at Mount Seaview to return the road to pre-2021 flood condition.

### letters to the editor



I attended school in the Wauchope area and in 1965 I took the big step of commencing studies at Armidale.

Several times a year I would go forth in my primitive vehicle (no air conditioning and heaters in those days) and travel the Oxley Highway. In those days the Wauchope to Walcha section of the Oxley Highway was just a dusty, corrugated, very pot-holed strip of curving gravel that followed the profiles of the land, dipping down with a wooden culvert at every little gully and up and down over every minor ridge.

The scenery was good but the drive was tiring. It was always a relief to arrive at Walcha and take a rest at that small park near the river with its soft green grass and clean facilities, maybe buy a milkshake and some petrol and then commence the easy bit, the bitumen road to Armidale.

At that time and in the many decades since then I have stopped in Walcha countless times and always found it to be a clean and friendly town and I appreciate the certainty of knowing I can stop there and always feel rested. I say thank you to the people of Walcha for Walcha being what it is.

David Johns, Canberra



# **Stock and Property Watch**

www.nutrienharcourts.com.au

# CLEARING SALE 'BINOWEE'

(Property sold) A/c D & R TREVENEN

Saturday 17 January 2026 commencing at 10.00am

PLANT: 5101E John Deere Tractor 3691 hours with FEL & bucket. John Deere utility mower, Unregistered Toyota Landcruiser 1992 model, 1 x diesel Polaris Ranger side by side 7078 klms, 1 bulker bin container, 1 x 5"slasher, 1000L Diesel fuel tank, hose reel, Pilot air compressor (petrol), Hafco heavy duty drill, weldmax mig welder, battery charger, calf pullers, grinder, timber bench, Husqvarna chainsaw, magnum 660 stihl chainsaw, stihl MS2012C chainsaw, plastic Rhino box, step ladders, polymaster 2000L tank plus honda firefighter pump, 12"1 pencil auger (electric), rotary hoe (needs work), steel bench, Qty shovels, woolpack holders, Birmingham scales, spotlight, Cigweld welder/generator MPM8/2551/HE, pressure washer, toolbox, cattle crate (2.9 x 2 metres with stands), old plough, post hole digger, 3PL Jib crane, approx. 6 Tonne cattle nuts, shed posts, Qty iron, 3PL super spreader, 2 bag feed mixer, crate 2120 x 1750, Isuzu car rims, tipping trailer 3650 x 2200 runs off tractor, crate 1670 x 1620, plastic round trough, electric bore pump plus pipe, Qty 2nd hand steel posts, cattle panels, Registered Raymond Terrance trailer 2900 x 2000, 4 x Boyd hay feeders, Qty gates, Qty hay trough feeders, Harrows & bar, dog kennels, 3PL pipe ripper, Hydraulic Log splitter (Tractor), poly pipe, Qty netting, wire spinner, silvan spray tank & hose, numerous smaller items. Outside entry: Lincoln Arc welder/generator.

### Outside entries welcome

**Terms:** Eftpos available, cash or approved cheque on sale day; Numbers system to apply with ID required. **Catering:** light refreshments & BBQ on site. **Directions:** "Binowee" 481 Aberbaldie Road, Walcha.

Contact: Office 6777 2044 | Miles Archdale 0428 660 326 Dan Coulthurst 0419 879 793

# New branch opening in 2026

We are excited to announce that Nutrien Boulton's will be opening a new branch in Inverell.

We will be selling from the Inverell Regional Livestock Exchange from Tuesday 13 January 2026. Weekly fat sales, fortnightly sheep sales and paddock sales.

WALCHA • WAUCHOPE • INVERELL

# Christmas Trading Hours

The team at Nutrien Boulton's would like to wish all our valued clients a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Closing
24 December at 1.00pm
Reopening 5 January



Nutrien Boulton's Walcha ■ 3n Derby Street Walcha ■ 6777 2044

# Mayoral Column

Eric Noakes, Walcha Mayor



#### THE 3R's

Local Government has always been referred to as looking after the 3Rs; roads, rates and rubbish. But it appears a new one has been added – that being renewables.

Climate change has been the driver of a transition from fossil fuels to wind, solar, pumped hydro etc and has been a point of contention as it spreads its tentacles outward from the Hunter Basin and Sydney. With the release of

a new route for two powerlines from Bayswater to Black Mountain in October, Walcha became embroiled in not only generating electricity but transmitting electricity.

The two have massive differences in impact. Generation is State Significant, whereas transmission is State Critical which brings in far stronger powers including compulsory acquisition of land.

Nearly every council that is impacted by this transition struggles to keep abreast of the pace and implications of what is happening. To financially assist in the extra work this is creating EnergyCo have given impacted councils \$250,000 for three years. Part of this funding in Walcha is being utilised to employ a Senior Renewable Energy Advisor whose role will be to provide strategic advice to the General Manager, Councillors and community on renewable energy and transmission projects.

On Thursday the General Manager, Deputy Mayor and myself will meet with Minister Penny Sharpe to continue to push for fairer and better outcomes for our LGA. A poor rollout can have devastating consequences for communities and we need to continue to advocate strongly in this area.

#### **AUSTRALIA DAY**

Our Ambassador for Australia Day has just been announced and it is internationally renowned flautist Jane Rutter. Known as a trailblazer in classical music, I believe Jane will be a fascinating guest. The organising Committee is planning another delicious breakfast along with entertainment. This should be an important event in your calendar.

#### **AUSTRALIA DAY**

Christmas and then quickly following New Year mean so much to most people for varying reasons. To the young Santa Claus tends to be the focal point. Family reunions and catch-ups and maybe a few days off work as we get older become the main priorities.

With everything that is going on nationally and in the world, it is a great time to reflect on how lucky we are to live where we do. We are safe, have a caring community, most of the services we need and access to those we do not. The seasons are currently kind to us and from a rural perspective prices are buoyant. On the negative, we are not exempt from the cost of living crisis and the Oxley Highway having been closed is frustrating. Many of our businesses have been heavily impacted by this, with Council constantly driving for a quick resolution to the issue.

As we close off 2025, your Council is fulfilling the commitment we made during the Special Rate Variation process and becoming more financially stable and Riverview Aged Care Facility is operating well both from a financial and clinical perspective after nine months of Council control.

On behalf of Councillors and Staff I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year.

However, you choose to celebrate and the reason behind this, may it be an opportunity to reflect on our blessings and plan a positive 2026.



# Walcha embroiderer wins prestigious state award

Loal embroiderer and embroidery teacher Yvette Stanton has been awarded the Embroiderers' Guild of NSW 2025 Roma Field Award for Traditional Embroidery, recognising excellence in historically based embroidery practice.

The Roma Field Award was established in 2022 as a companion to the long-running Margaret Oppen Award for Contemporary Embroidery. Roma Field, who was only ever known as Miss Field, was a founding member of the Embroiderers' Guild of NSW and was known for her commitment to teaching and encouraging traditional embroidery techniques.

Yvette shares Miss Field's dedication to traditional embroidery through her specialist work in historic whitework techniques. She has written multiple books on traditional embroidery styles and teaches workshops locally in Walcha. A tutor for the Embroiderers' Guild of NSW, she was the inaugural winner of the previous Roma Field Award in the Tutors category in 2022.

This year, Yvette entered two works and

was again awarded the prize in the Tutors and Past Winners category for her piece Starlit Windows. The work is stitched in Hardanger embroidery, a traditional Norwegian technique for which Yvette is internationally recognised. Her second entry, Dutch Heart, is a sampler in Frisian whitework, a white-on-white embroidery tradition from Friesland in the Netherlands. Both works are currently on exhibition at Gallery 76, Concord West, Sydney, alongside all competition entries, until 25 January 2026 (gallery closed 20

Yvette will be teaching a beginners' Hardanger embroidery workshop in Walcha in February, followed by a workshop in March, teaching the Dutch Heart project. Bookings and enquiries can be made by calling 02 6714 4708 or via www.vettycreations.com.au.

December to 1 January).

Those interested in joining the Embroiderers' Guild of NSW can contact the Armidale group, which meets monthly. Enquiries to Judith on 0409 300 572.



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### Subdivision Potential

~~~ 2 Hectares ~~~



Lovely clean block on edge of town

\$250,000 \$200,000 ONO

# MERRY CHRISTMAS and one HAPPY NEW YEAR

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Thank you for your valued support throughout the year.



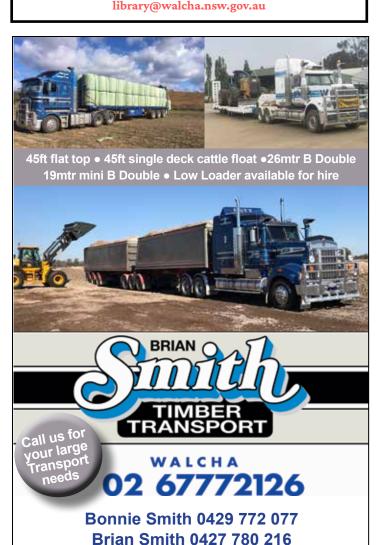
Best wishes from the Pitt Sons team - Sam, Ron, Ryan & Julie

Locally owned and operated



Book now! Limited places in most activities. Contact Walcha Library to book 67742550 or

All ages



# Next week Carols by Candlelight in the Presbyterian Church

Next week a fantastic night of carol singing, Carols By Candlelight in the Presbyterian Church on Hill Street, will take place on Tuesday 23 December at 7.00pm.

The community choir will present several items with the theme 'Shepherd's watch.' The Church's high vaulted ceiling and acoustics will reverberate the sound and music beautifully, and the community choir will present several items within the theme.

This year we welcome back Rev. Ben France, who will reflect on hope, rest and peace for a weary world. Join us as we celebrate Christ through music, followed by a light supper. Those who have attended previously agree it's a truly special evening not to be missed.





- To Essential Energy workers who spent the night restoring our power.
- To the receptionist at Walcha Council for being friendly and very helpful.
- To Maddie Lance at M L Massage therapy for a wonderful remedial massage, looking forward to seeing you in the new year.
- To Brian and Katie Smith for being so generous and community minded.
- To Johnathon at Cross Bros. Butchery for his super generous donation of sausages to the Rotary Christmas Carols and BBQ at the park.
- To Rebecca Taiki for taking an elderly person a hot meal during the black out. So very thoughtful.
- To Khan for her kindness, compassion and going above and beyond. You will be missed by patients, staff and friends.
- To a great St Patrick's school concert last Wednesday night.
- To Rhian and Bruce for their awesome help after a fall. Thank you.
- To Sonia and Tim for hosting the Walcha CWA Branch Christmas Party at 'Wombolano'. A wonderful venue and very enjoyable day.
- To Lloyd Levingston for organising the Lions Christmas Cakes.
- To Paperdolls for having great Christmas present options.
- To employees that park outside businesses and take up customer parking.

Contributions will be received in person, by phone or email and must be accompanied by your name and contact details. They will be printed at the discretion of the editor.

Free BBO!

# Don't miss out!

Walcha Lions Club have their Christmas cakes and puddings for sale around Walcha. Going by their popularity in past years, get in quick before they sell out.

They have a 1kg cake for \$16, a 900g pudding for \$16 or a bite sized cake available for \$2. These are available at Walcha Telecottage, Post Office, Cross Bros. Butchery, Coffee Window, Commonwealth Bank and Regional Australia Bank.



Next Apsley Advocate
14 January 2026

# 35 years of Toys for Treatment

Sam Goor and her staff at Walcha Chiropractic are always amazed by the generosity of the Walcha Community. Once again locals have donated to the annual Toys for Treatment. This year they received toys, games, books, clothes, puzzles, boogie boards and money.

The gifts were collected last week by Carmel the regions Salvation Army Manager. Carmel will ensure they are distributed to kids around the region to help make their Chrismas special.



Sam Goor with Kylie Dunn and Jenny Latham ready to deliver the toys to the Salvation Army.



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Contact us - 67725300

Email admin@afdc.org.au





Wishing all of our valued customers a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Closed: Thursday 25 December, Friday 26 December and New Years Day.

6 Aberbaldie Road Walcha. Ph 6777 2588. www.wvs.com.au



Would like to thank the residents of Walcha and district for all your support and wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Closed 20 December 2025 - 5 January 2026

### THE OFFICES OF New England Accounting Will close on

Tuesday 23 December 2025

Re-open Monday 12 January 2026

WISHING EVERYBODY A HAPPY AND SAFE CHRISTMAS AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

# ---- Christmas Message

### A Weary World Rejoices

from Rev. Ben France

Are you looking forward to some down time over Christmas? Work slowing down, time away, catching up with family and friends? Life can make us weary. The ending and start of another year often finds us rethinking life and our priorities.

The first verse of the Christmas hymn Oh Holy Night starts like this:

'O holy night, the stars are brightly shining: it is the night of the dear Saviour's birth... A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!'

forgiveness through Jesus' death and rising to life again.

The Bible records for us the birth of Jesus Christ of Nazareth and as this hymn suggests, His coming into the world was a source of hope, a new perspective, and a fresh start.

Do we ever pause and consider what really matters? What if we are made for more than just this? The Bible shows us the thrill of hope, the rejoicing, the fresh start and new perspective that comes through Jesus. It doesn't take us out of the grind of life, but in Jesus we find perspective, including

that our greatest need is to be at peace with God. The good news of Jesus coming into the world as Saviour and king is a message of God's care and love at great cost. It's the reality of God Himself making the way back to Him possible by achieving

Hope, rest and peace in the midst of life that can make us feel so weary.



Wishing my customers all the best for the Festive Season

Thankyou for your business in 2025

Unavailable from 24 Dec - back 5 Jan



# CROSS BROS BUTCHERY

### TRADING HOURS CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR



| Thursday 25 December                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | CLOSED  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Friday 26 December                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | CLOSED  |
| Saturday 27 December                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | CLOSED  |
| Sunday 28 December                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | CLOSED  |
| Monday 29 December                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 9am-5pm |
| Tuesday 30 December                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 9am-5pm |
| Wednesday 31 December                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 9am-5pm |
| Thursday 1 January                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | CLOSED  |
| We wish all our customers a<br>Merry Christmas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |
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Telecottage Christmas Trading Closing 12.30pm Wednesday 24 December Re-opens 9.00am Monday 5 January



First Advocate for 2026 will be Wednesday 14 January. Bookings and editorial required by Monday 12.





Services Australia Trading Closing 12.00pm Wednesday 24 December Re-opens 9.00am Monday 5 January

Walcha Telecottage 6777 1111 wtc@walchatelecottage.com.au

### **Visitor Information Centre – Volunteers**



Last week our wonderful Visitor Information Centre volunteers enjoyed a day out visiting some terrific tourism businesses as part of our annual tour.

We are extremely fortunate and grateful to have such a dedicated team of Walcha ambassadors, who volunteer their time on weekends at Walcha Councils' accredited Visitor Information Centre. This allows the centre to remain accredited and open to visitors every day of the year except Christmas Day.

If you have some spare time and would like to be a part of the Visitor Information Centre volunteer team we would love to hear from you. Phone Lisa or Patrick on 6774 2460 or email tourism@walcha.nsw.gov.au

Please remember to support our fantastic local businesses this festive season. We are very lucky to have such a great range of retail, services, eateries etc. to choose from in Walcha.

If you are hosting visitors these holidays and are looking for things to do, please come in and see us at the Information Centre. We have an excellent range of maps, brochures, handouts and information to assist visitors. The Walcha Tourism website is also a wealth of information www.walchansw.com.au

Lisa Kirton – Tourism and Visitor Information Centre Coordinator







would like to wish our customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and extend our best wishes for 2026!





### MOBILE FIX

Pat, Nicole and staff would like to wish their valued customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Closed from Friday
19th
December and
re-open Monday
5th January 2026



Page 9 ... 17 December 2025



**WALCHA COUNCIL** 

### CHRISTMAS CLOSEDOWN 2025

**Council's Office** will be closed from 12:00pm on Thursday 18 December 2025 until 9:00am on Monday, 5 January 2026 for the Christmas New Year period.

**Council's Work Depot** will be staffed with a small crew available to carry out emergency work as required from 19 December 2025.

In cases of emergency after hours, please ring 0427 774 544.

Water & Sewer: in cases of emergencies after hours please ring 0427 774 544.

**Service NSW** will be closed from 12:00pm on Thursday 18 December 2025 until 9:00am on Monday 5 January 2026.

Garbage & Recycling Collection Services to Walcha, Walcha Road, Woolbrook and Summervale will be on Thursday, 25 December 2025. Collection run and times may differ to usual collection times. All bins to be placed on the kerb on Wednesday evening for collection on Thursday morning.

Waste Depot will be closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day – Public Holidays. It will be open on its normal operational days throughout the Christmas New Year period.

Walcha Library will be closed from 12:00pm on Thursday 18 December 2025. The Library will then be closed from 3:00pm Tuesday 23 December 2025 until 8.30am on Monday 5 January 2026. It will be open Friday 19 December, Monday 22 December & Tuesday 23 December 2025 as per its normal operating bours.

Walcha Community Care Office (WCCC) will be closed from 12:00pm Thursday 18 December 2025. From Friday 19 December 2025 until Friday 2 January 2026 WCCC will be open between 10:00am until 2:00pm, excluding public holidays and weekends. WCCC will be open as normal on Monday 5 January 2025. The team will be available via phone on 6774 2471 during this time.

**Walcha Visitor Information Centre** will be closed Christmas Day.

Walcha Council Stephen Parry – General Manager PO BOX 2, WALCHA NSW 2354

# Walcha Golden Gate Campdraft returns with a new look in 2026

Walcha is set to welcome competitors and spectators for the much-anticipated Walcha Golden Gate Campdraft and Stockmans Challenge. Running from Thursday 15 January to Sunday 18 January, 2026 promises four days of top-quality action and strong community spirit.

In a first for the event, the 2026 Golden Gate Campdraft will be held without a rodeo alongside it, allowing the focus to shift entirely to campdrafting and the newly introduced Stockmans Challenge. Campdrafting enthusiasts can look forward to three full, action-packed days of competition, showcasing some of the best horse and rider combinations.

The program will feature a strong line-up of events, with outstanding prize money and support from generous sponsors, reflecting the continued strength and popularity of the Golden Gate Campdraft. From novice and maiden drafts through to open events, competitors of all levels will have the opportunity to compete across the weekend. A major highlight of the weekend will be the Stockmans Challenge, set to take place on Saturday night. The challenge will feature ten teams, each made up of one female and two male competitors, who will put their skills to the test across three disciplines, steer ride, dog trial and cutting. Combining horsemanship, teamwork and stock handling ability, the Stockmans Challenge is expected to provide fast-paced and highly entertaining viewing for spectators.

With strong sponsorship, a full schedule of events and Walcha's reputation for hosting quality campdrafts, the 2026 Walcha Golden Gate Campdraft is shaping up as a must-attend event on the summer calendar.

The Golden Gate Campdraft continues to be a significant event for the Walcha community, attracting visitors who contribute to the local economy by supporting accommodation providers, cafes and local businesses. Volunteers play a vital role in the success of the event, with many local residents contributing their time and effort behind the scenes.

Competitors and spectators alike are encouraged to mark the dates and come along to support what promises to be an outstanding weekend of campdrafting and stockman skills in Walcha.









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## Christmas cheers shines at Walcha Markets

Grey skies didn't dampen spirits at the Walcha Christmas Markets last Sunday, with the town buzzing with festive cheer from start to finish. Organised by the Walcha Business Group, the day even delivered a little Christmas magic in the form of playful bursts of 'fake' snow.

Families and friends wandered through a mix of stalls, children enjoyed face painting and cookie decorating, while live music added to the festive atmosphere. Shoppers were spoilt for choice with coffee and baked treats, handcrafted gifts, plants and antiques-ideal for last-minute Christmas presents.

Local businesses joined the celebration by extending trading hours, cafés and eateries were humming, as visitors arrived from Tamworth, Armidale, Uralla and beyond to soak up the festive fun and support Walcha's economy.

The Walcha Business Group, a member-based organisation supporting both large and small local businesses, has delivered a strong calendar of activities this year, combining business education, networking and fun events to bring customers to town. The group looks forward to building on this momentum in 2026. Highlights can be found on Instagram or Facebook at WalchaEvents.







Left: Stirling, Riley and Mackenzie Larkings very proud with their awesome faces. Above: Jodi Boyd with her outstanding pottery stall. Right: Local children very keen to decorate cookies







Far Left: The face painting was a huge hit with the children Left: Robert Hayes at his stall Right: Howard setting the atmosphere at

the park.

# CWA celebrates a great year

### From Megan Marchant, Walcha CWA

Our final meeting of the year was held last Wednesday, followed by a Christmas gathering and lunch, which was filled with beautiful food, laughter, friendship and cheer. We had a productive and wonderful time reflecting on 2025, the year that was, with the focus on how we can support women, children and our community.

Walcha CWA has 22 adult members and one junior. Our next meeting will be held at the Caretaker's Cottage, Walcha Pioneer Cottage on 11 February. Join us at 9.30am for a cuppa, with our meeting to follow - it would be great to see some new faces. All ladies are invited to come along and see what CWA is all about! To all our members, thank you for your hard work and dedication this year. We are looking forward to continuing to make a real difference in 2026, all whilst having fun times. Wishing you all a a safe and peaceful Christmas.



Walcha CWA ladies enjoying the end to a successful year

# what's the goss 😜

with A.I Cross

As this will be the final column for the year may I take this opportunity before the Big Red Suited, White Bearded, Jovial Chap bearing gifts arrives to wish everyone a Happy, Healthy Christmas and hopefully 2026 goes just the way you want it to. A gentle reminder, especially throughout the Festive season, 'moderation is the key' ... well not ALL the time.

My Apsley Advocate boss Anthea Macpherson will tie the knot with former long time Walcha Jockey Club President Jim Nivison next Monday in his North Ohio garden, witnessed by family members. Congratulations guys and hopefully the weather will be kind to you both.

**Sorry I just don't get how someone** can produce a gun and then shoot innocent victims randomly, as what happened at Bondi Beach last Sunday turning into Australia's second worse mass killings. Extremely sad at anytime, let alone around Christmas.

A big thumbs up to John Burnell and his son Angus for returning the Taxi Service to Walcha, which kicked back into gear last Friday. According to Gus the Taxi was well supported last weekend and hopefully it will

continue that way. Well done to drivers Dianne Stackman and Graham Reeves also for their involvement in the service, as you wouldn't have to be a 'Rocket Scientist' to work out some driver operating hours wouldn't suit a lot of people. Great to see the Taxi back!

Best of luck to former Walcha Rough Rider Tyson Smith when he competes in the Trans Tasman Cup in New Zealand this Friday and Saturday. The competition has the top ten Australian Bull riders competing against the top ten from across the ditch, where the Aussies hold a 1-0 lead after winning the opening round of the series in Townsville earlier this year. Tyson, who is still recovering from surgery, will be riding with a injured wrist, would like to thank his sponsors Transwest Fuels, Brian Smith Transport and Cowboy Cartell Clothing for their support. Go Gettum Tyson.

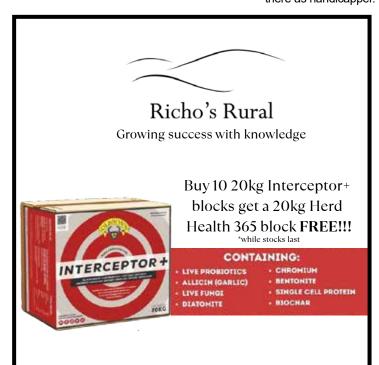
Still on Transwest Fuels or Apsley Motors long time employee Don Brooks will be calling it quits today after over 46 years working at that business. Good on ya 'Brooksy' it will free up a bit of time to concentrate on your other long time job as Walcha Golf Club Handicapper. Not that the pay would be all that substantial there as handicapper.

Saturday morning golf organisor John McCormack is greatly concerned about where the weekly 9 hole competition is heading. Going on the lack of numbers turning up especially last Saturday when playing conditions were ideal last weekend. 'Macca' mentioned he would see how things are going after the festive season settles down before making a recommendation on whether the competition continues. Suppose the ball is in the players court – so to speak.

A few blokes were sitting around the 'Table of Knowledge' at the Bowling Club last week, when the subject of suffocation came up for some reason. We all knew what David 'LJ' Hooker meant when he entered the conversation using the term 'smoothercation'.

The Newie staff Christmas party was held last Sunday which lawn maintenance man Anthony Douglas Martin wasn't going to miss. In fact 'Marto' turned up on Saturday dressed up for the occassion as Charlie Chaplin. By all accounts on Sunday he changed to a 'flamingo' theme as his party continued after the dissappointment of the 'No Show' on Saturday.

Finally but far from least, a big thank you to the girls at the Telecottage who transform my 'WTGoss?' and sports stories into print each week – I'm fully aware translation would be a job in itself. Good on ya girls.



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### Cricket

Both Walcha/Uralla cricket games in the Armidale District competitions were called off last Saturday due to the heavy rain at the end of the week.

Play will resume for Walcha/Úralla 2nd Grade on Saturday 10 January in the 1st Grade T20 competition against Armidale City/UNE at Peter Fenwicke Oval.

They currently are sitting in fourth position on the points score ladder.

Play resumes a week later for Walcha/Uralla 3rd Grade as they have the bye in Round 4 and are drawn to play Ex Services at Peter Fenwicke Oval on Saturday 17 January. They are in fifth position on the points score ladder.

Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy 2026 to all cricketers and supporters.

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### **Ladies Bowls**

Last Thursday, under threatening skies, The Women's Bowling Club were joined by the men to kick-off their Christmas Party and Presentation, with a game of two-jack bowls. This interesting version of triples had a few bowlers scratching their heads at first, but by the time the storm broke, we had some clear winners with the team of Marg Tickle, Rosie Aitken and Brian Goodwin. The wooden spooners – Noel Goodwin, Phyllis Hoy and Pam Makeham – are still wondering why their bowls couldn't find at least one of the jacks.

In the cheerful company of members and guests, which included our Patrons Pat Laurie and Val Wall along with the Walcha Bowling Club President Adam Hall, our club champions for 2025 were presented with their badges.

The minor singles this year was played as a round robin and proved to be a very close competition with a 3-way tie on wins. On a countback of ends, it was still close, but Marg Morris is the Minor Singles Champion for 2025.

Sari Andrews earned the title of Club Champion in the Major Singles after defeating Wendy Moore in the finals, while the partnership of Carmel Ryan and Lee McCoy claimed the title of 3-Bowls Champions after a very close final against Wendy Moore and Lyn Burnell. Carmel again had success when she partnered with Pam Makeham to be the unbeaten 4-bowls Pairs Champions.

Finally, the Ivy Makeham Memorial Trophy was convincingly won by Pam Makeham after defeating Lee McCoy in the final.

After a successful 2025, we look forward to recommencing social bowls Thursday 15 January, and would welcome newcomers to join us.



Val Wall and Marg Morris



Pam Makeham, Pat Laurie and Carmel Ryan

### Tennis News

Last Thursday, under threatening skies, The Women's Round 8 of the 2025 Spring Comp was played out on Bowling Club were joined by the men to kick-off their Tuesday 9 December in great conditions for Tennis.

Goolagong: H Locke (floating for E Blomfield), A Barillaro, M Luchich and W Hayton defeated Court: H Carter, M Matapakia, S Ireland and A Blomfield (floating for M Hayton) 32 to 25.

Purcell: M Lockyer, D Clark, J Burgess and M Bird defeated DeMinaur: H Thomson, A Blomfield, P Tape and K Cummins 26 to 20. See you all at the net soon.

### Bowls

Pairs championships: Stephen Goodwin has progressed to the A grade semi final with a hard fought 31 to 28 win over defending champion Mat Hamel. It was a high quality game that could have gone either way. Normie will now play Greg Carter to decide who will play Barry Kliendienst in the final.

Twilight bowls will play the last game for the year this Friday. This is the washout game from last week the winner will then be decided.

Several men joined the lady bowlers for their Christmas party last Thursday. Congratulations to Lee and her committee for a great day and a successful year.

Draw for this weekend: Saturday- semi final A grade-Steve Goodwin v Greg Carter marker Mat Hamel. Sunday - Pairs final: Graham Marshall & John Byrne v Mat Hamel & Ross Ballinger. This has been a great effort from these players to make it to the pointy end, good luck to all.

Walcha President's day is the 10th January 2026. Put in a team and support Adam. Sheet is on board.

Thursday bowls 12.30 for 1pm. All welcome. Merry Christmas to all.

### At the Nineteenth

The monthly Stroke Medal Round was contested last Sunday where the 'Mayor of Waterloo', Ross King, was in charge of supplying the prize which was collected by Angus Warden after he carded a 68 nett.

Gus also won B Grade thanks to his 85 shots off the stick. His son Zac took out C Grade with a 69 nett, whereas Michael Stackman got the job done in A Grade on 70 nett courtesy of the Best Scratch Score on the day 77 off the beater.

Sweepstakes went to Will Nicholls 70, Jock McLaren 71, Simone Sweeney and Anne Martin on countback from David Sweeney and John McCormack after all four players finished on 72 nett.

Heavy hitters in the Long Drive competitions sponsored by Tony 'Backhand Larry' Asmus were creamed by Michael Stackman (A), Jock McLaren (B) and Andrew Robertson (C).

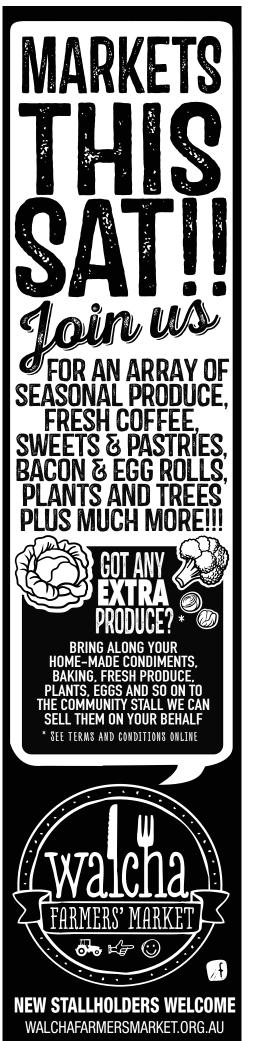
Sharpest Shooters at the Pins were captain Willy Brennan (16) and Jack McLaren while none of the 22 players were accurate enough to reach the beach on 3 and 9.

Best putting performance was handed in by Jock McLaren after he engaged his flat stick on 23 occasions, whereas the coveted 'Pink Shirt' for most putts was eagerly accepted by Robert Smith following his 33 jabs.

The next three rounds are Stableford for trophies donated by Jamie Bowden (21 December), Allan Laurie (28 December) and Barry Hoad (4 January), while the opening Stroke Medal Round of 2026 is scheduled for 11 January for the AJ Cross trophy.

Merry Christmas and a happy healthy New Year to all Golf Club members and supporters.

At the 19th resumes Wednesday 14 January.





# DESIGN + PRINTING

6777 1111 wtc@walchatelecottage.com.au

# Last minute gifts at Markets on Saturday

Christmas craft, music and treats will be on offer at the Walcha Farmers' Markets this Saturday morning in McHattan Park.

Children will be kept busy with craft activities hosted by Bec Partridge, and there'll be a sneak-peak performance by the Presbyterian Christmas Choir. There's also rumour a big, jolly fellow may be arriving mid-morning in a large, noisy vehicle.

Come down and support our local makers, bakers and growers with your last minute Christmas purchases.

Gardeners and farmers are encouraged to bring their surplus to sell on the community stall.

The market is on from 8.30am till 12.30pm in McHattan Park. The next market will be on the third Saturday in January.

# advocate **classifieds**



### In Memoriam

### **Pam Fairweather**

19/12/2024

A year has passed, sadly missed Graeme, Gary, Tracey, Mutsy, Natalie and Boyd.

"Death leaves the heartache that no one can peel. Love leaves a memory no one can steal."

Mekinley Jayne Hobbs 26/12/2011

On Angel's wings you were taken away, But in our hearts you will always stay



### **Public Notices**

### DR GENEVIEVE FREER

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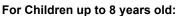
**Shoreline Oysters** are now taking orders for Christmas. Drop-off Tuesday 23 December at McHattan Park between 10.00 – 11.00am. Please phone or message 0447 520 604.

A Candlelight Vigil for those who lost their lives at Bondi will be held at 8.00pm Friday at the Walcha Caravan Park. All welcome.

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### Public Notices cont.

### Walcha Australia Day 2026 Colouring In and Story Writing Competitions for Kids!



Come to the Walcha Council and pick up a **colouring in sheet** featuring one of five adorable Australian animals. Colour in your favourite! One entry per child. Colouring in sheets are also available on our website under Public Notices.

### For Children Aged 8 to 16:

Write a story on the theme "What Living in Australia Means to Me". Keep it to one A4 page maximum. One entry per child.

Submit your entries by Friday 16 January 2026 at the Walcha Council Office.

Winners will be announced at the Australia Day Breakfast

McHattan Park - 26 January 2026

### Walcha Council

### Walcha Australia Day Award Nominations – NOW OPEN



Nominations for Walcha Australia Day Awards are available in the following categories:

- Citizen of the Year
- Young Citizen of the Year Age 24 or younger
- Senior Sportsperson of the Year
- Junior Sportsperson of the Year Age 18 or younger
- Walcha Community Group, Organisation or Community Event

Nomination forms are available on our website: <a href="https://walcha.nsw.gov.au/public-notices/">https://walcha.nsw.gov.au/public-notices/</a> or from Council Office or the Post Office. Please post, email or drop them into the Council.

Nominations CLOSE Friday 9 January 2026.

### Position Vacant

**Casual after school** and school holiday work available in Walcha local office. Looking for a friendly, patient, reliable, honest student able to learn communication, telephone, filing, computer, first aid and willing to follow instructions.

Please forward your resume to opole@bigpond.com or post to

The Manager, 63W Hill Street, Walcha. Or Call (02) 6777 2068.

### Tamac Stud

### Two positions available for starting the second week in January

**Position one:** Stud hand working 2 to 3 hours per day in the mornings. Duties include feeding horses and general maintenance ,holding horse for the farrier, mowing etc. This position would suit a person with school aged children, as you could start at 9 am. Must have horse experience and be confident around horses, must have drivers licence and own transport to get to work.

**Position two:** Weekend feed person. This position is for a weekend feed up person working 1.5 hours per day on Saturday and Sunday morning. Must be reliable and have horse experience and own mode of transport. Duties include mixing feeds and feeding farm, able to drive side-by-side feed cart.

Please apply by email to: <a href="mailto:mgw.taylor@bigpond.com">mgw.taylor@bigpond.com</a>.

### For Sale

Purebred Mini Dachshunds available from 10 January 2026. Will be vet checked, vaccinated and microchipped. BIN B001096999. Contact Dan on 0419 879 793 for enquiries.

# trade and professions



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**DEADLINE MONDAY 4.30PM** Editor: Anthea Macpherson, Susie Crawford. Advertising/ Sport: Megan Scrivener, Joscisca Matapakia and Kate Connors.

# church notices



### **ANGLICAN**

December 21: 9.30am Walcha

Service December 24:

7.00pm Walcha Christmas Eve Service

December 25:

9.00am Walcha Christmas Day Service in Old Stone Church

December 28: 9.30am Walcha

Service January 4: 9.30am

Walcha Service No Niangala Service January 11: 9.30am

Walcha Service 2.00pm Nowendoc Service

**January 18:** 9.30am Walcha Service

**January 25:** 9.30am Walcha Service

Anglican church Phone 6777 2543 or email:

walchaanglican@ gmail.com

#### **PRESBYTERIAN**

Walcha: every Sunday 9:30am

December 23 Carols by Candlelight 7.00pm

**Christmas Day** 9.30am

Youth Group every Saturday 5pm -7pm, during term. All welcome. Phone 6777 2539.

### **CATHOLIC**

**Sunday Mass** 10.00am

**Christmas Eve** Bendemeer 6.00pm

Uralla 6.00pm **Christmas Day** Walcha 8.00am Uralla 8.00am







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# WALCHA BOWLING & RECREATION CLUB WHAT'S ON? Thursday 18 12.00pm - Close BOWLS 9.00am Ladies, 1pm Social Friday 19 2.00pm - Close 2.00PM BINGO 6.00PM BISTRO

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Japanese crispy prawn noodle

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Dianna - 0412 536 760 or 5722 6003

Saturday 20 11.00am – Close 5.00PM BISTRO

Sunday 21 11.00am - Close

12.00PM BISTRO

Raffle tickets from 12pm, drawn 1.00pm.

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salad

wedges

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### This Friday 19th, Christmas Mega Raffles!

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