

THE APSLEY Advocate

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5 August 2026

WALCHA
GARDEN CLUB

Annual Luncheon

FRIDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER

Walcha Bar & Grill
at 9:30am

Guest Speaker: Colleen Southwell

Cost: \$40

Bookings at Paper Dolls
From Friday 7th August

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Nail biter sees Ramettes claim victory

It was an exciting day for Walcha Rugby Club on Saturday, with the Walcha Rams Ladies creating history by claiming their first-ever Rugby Union victory in front of a strong home crowd on Ladies Day.

The Ramettes defeated Robb College 26-24 in a thrilling contest, capping off a memorable afternoon that also saw Walcha's second and first-grade sides record convincing wins to complete a clean sweep for the club.

While the result was significant, the occasion itself meant just as much. In only their second season, the Ramettes have continued to build both their numbers and their confidence, and Saturday's victory was a reward for the commitment the players have shown both on and off the field.

For several members of the side, it was also their first experience playing Rugby Union. Despite their lack of experience, the team played with determination showing the benefits of their training and the strong culture developing within the group.

The match was played in front of a fantastic Ladies Day crowd, with supporters filling the sidelines to celebrate the women and girls involved in the club. The annual event also raised



funds for Friends of Riverview.

Adding to the occasion was the opportunity for siblings Robyn Broadbent and Andrew Kelly to represent Walcha Rugby Club together, with Andrew taking the field in the first grade.

The celebrations certainly continued well into the afternoon as first grade completed the club's clean sweep with a 62-31 win, following second grade's dominant 53-12 victory earlier in the day.

The Ramettes win was the perfect way to cap off Ladies Day. It was a reward for their hard work and a proud moment for everyone involved with the team and another milestone in the continued growth of women's rugby in Walcha.



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around the traps



By SIMON NEWTON

The weather over the weekend was superb but didn't the frosts hit hard over the consecutive days and showed how vulnerable the country is. The big frosts took their toll on our crops and pastures and within a fortnight, the district colour has changed. The days are getting longer, and the sun has been fantastic, but it would be nice to see some more widespread rain. If you were lucky enough on Monday night, a few storms rolled through the district dropping 11mm on some very isolated areas, but you best also make sure someone isn't playing games with you. The week ahead looks fine, few frosts ahead but a chance of rain during the middle of next week has increased my optimism about the season. Yes, the BOM has released its forecast for the months of August to September, being a 40-70% chance of being below average rainfall, but we live in a high rainfall area and we are coming into our rain cycle which I would be more than happy to snag our average rainfall.

A controversial carbon neutral certification scheme that had commercial beef supply chains accredited to underpin the brand name is now set to be discontinued. The Federal government set up *Climate Active*, a brand which beef industry companies agreed to primarily sell carbon neutral products. Now, because of the government's indecision, multi large scale agricultural companies who had invested a ton of money are pulling out of the scheme due to their inability on how to legislate the Carbon market. The problem is that we as producers have once again been led down the garden path by our government, invested money we don't have into a scheme they have no idea about, but it sounds good and created new jobs. We can sell Carbon credits to those who produce emissions from production, they don't necessarily need to reduce it, just offset your emissions by purchasing credits, no one is changing their ways we are just paying for it.

Pulverised recycled glass is being used to boost farm productivity through improving soil health, plant and animal health. The pulverised glass is rich in silicon, which is a chemical component of the glass. Silicon protects a plant against pests, diseases and drought by stimulating its natural defences. Research has shown that the silicon will also unlock elements in the soil that have been locked up and unavailable to plants reducing fertiliser input which we all know is a major cost, especially urea at present. Silicon just might be the way forward and I would like to hear more from anyone who is using it, not only are we recycling but we are using it to our advantage in Agriculture which might be another way forward in being more self-sufficient.

Seventy eight cases of the newest H5 bird flu have been reported nationwide. The incredible part of this whole thing is how quickly it spread from the west coast to the east coast. Looking at how the H5 bird flu has spread, it concerns me that if we were to get a disease such as foot and mouth entering our country, we would have no chance of stopping the spread. The wild animal populations through the north including buffalo, wild pigs and even wild cattle would be near impossible to isolate. Yes, our NLIS system would do a great job at being able to track domestic cattle or sheep in a disease outbreak but even these systems have their faults, like its poor accuracy.

The poor forecast and the current dry weather have the cattle on the move again with southern QLD yarding huge numbers week after week such a Roma yarding more than 10,000 head week on week. The extra numbers have put downward pressure on prices with Angus restocker heifers at least 50-100c/kg cheaper than a fortnight ago, Angus steers that were hitting 700c/kg are now 600-650c/kg while the best of the Angus feeder steers grids are sneaking back under 600c/kg. If you're concerned about the forecast ahead then there is no better time to be selling your livestock with weight, dropping your DSE and buying back in on a falling market. Currently you can buy restocker cattle below parity to feedlots and kill markets which is just another way of drought mitigation. Forward thinking, being proactive and using the market to your advantage is how we survive, utilising the right information is invaluable but there is also way too much loaded information in our industry.



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Welcome Helene

International exchange student now in Walcha

Last Monday the Rotary Club of Walcha with friends were at the Armidale airport to welcome their new Exchange student from Germany. A group waving Australian flags and placards were on hand to welcome Helene Schmorl as she touched down.

Helene travelled from her home in Hollern-Twielenfleth Stede, Lower Saxony, Germany which is about 60kms west of Hamburg for 30 hours to reach Walcha. Helene will be staying with families in Walcha for the next 12 months and will attend Walcha Central School.

As well as learning Australian culture and language, Helene will take part in Rotary programs in the district and act as an ambassador for her home country of Germany. She will be engaged to speak at dinners and conferences to showcase the Exchange Program and her country. This year the Rotary district will host 11 students from around the world, and Walcha even has a student who will be travelling to France for a year starting next January.

The Rotary Youth Exchange program has been running officially for 51 years, and students from around the world come to Australia to enjoy our hospitality, natural beauty and our environment, and Walcha has all of those things in abundance. The Rotary club of Walcha has hosted students over the past 40 years.

Helene has a good grasp of English and communicates well with people. Please welcome Helene to Walcha and help her better understand our Australian culture.



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letters to the editor



Upcoming Community Forum

This week, Walcha Council and neighbouring landholders were informed that EnergyCo intend to build a workers accommodation camp at the proposed Central-South Hub site, approximately 10 kilometres west of Walcha on the Oxley Highway.

EnergyCo has not said how many workers the camp will accommodate, but estimates range from 550 to 1,200 people.

EnergyCo claims the camp will reduce pressure on local housing and accommodation while supporting local employment, skills and training, local businesses and local suppliers.

This is certainly not what we are seeing in the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone.

There have been two trips from Walcha to visit the 1,200-bed Merotherie workers accommodation camp in recent months: the first by impacted Walcha landholders to speak directly with local residents and landholders, and a second visit by Walcha councillors and council staff.

What we learned during those visits was in stark contrast to the picture being presented by EnergyCo.

The Mid-western council mayor and general manager spoke about chaotic planning, steep rent increases, shortages of housing and short-term accommodation, pressure on tourism, unknown water supply, road disruption and damage, and few of the promised opportunities reaching local people or businesses.

We were told the workforce was heavily reliant on overseas labour and was strongly unionised, while local employment and procurement had fallen well short of EnergyCo promises. Residents described constant water-truck movements but said they could not obtain satisfactory answers about where the water was being sourced.

They also spoke of poor compliance with consent conditions and little accountability from either EnergyCo or the network operator, ACERZ, when problems arose.

Mid-Western Regional Council's outgoing general manager, Brad Cam, has now gone public with the same warnings. He said the region had been used as a "guinea pig", that promised jobs had not materialised, roads had been damaged, rents had spiralled and farmers were reporting that bores had dried up.

"There has really been no benefit for the community other than disruption," he said.

A newly released NSW parliamentary inquiry has confirmed many of the concerns regional communities have been raising. It found that the REZ rollout had produced "predictable and avoidable harm", that EnergyCo had failed in its central coordinating role, and that local councils had been left to manage the consequences without sufficient authority, resources or strategic direction.

It also found that the burdens of REZ development were being concentrated on host communities while the benefits were unevenly distributed, and that the promised economic benefits were not consistent with the lived experience of some regional communities.

So why should we expect anything different in Walcha?

Where will the water for a camp of this size come from? How will its wastewater be treated? What pressure will hundreds of additional people place on our roads, health services, emergency services and other limited infrastructure? Will local workers and businesses genuinely benefit, or will the contracts and jobs largely go elsewhere while Walcha carries the disruption?

It will be too late to ask these questions after construction has started and the camp is operating. We need to learn from what has already happened in the Central-West Orana REZ and act before the same problems are repeated here.

Walcha High Country Guardians and Voice for Walcha are hosting a community information session (Thursday 13 August 5:30pm at Walcha Bowling Club) with speakers from communities already experiencing REZ construction and workers accommodation camps.

We encourage everyone to attend, support our community, hear what others have experienced and learn what we can do now to protect Walcha's interests.

Cameron Greig








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It Takes a Village

On Monday morning, I sat in the MPC at a school assembly watching our 7 year old daughter, a little girl who has already experienced more than any child should stand in front of more than 200 people and confidently deliver a speech about someone who inspires her (Kimberlee Pascoe).

I don't know about you, but there is absolutely no way I could have done that at seven years old. As I watched her, I couldn't help but think about how different her story could have been. Instead, through the circumstances that brought her to our family and to Walcha, she's been surrounded by people who have loved her, encouraged her and helped her grow into the confident little girl standing on that stage.

In that moment, I wasn't just proud of her. I was incredibly grateful for our community.

People often say it takes a village to raise a child. I think that's true for every child, but when you're caring for children who have experienced trauma, that village becomes even more important. While Josh and I are the foster carers in our home, we certainly don't do it alone. Our village is Walcha.

Being foster carers is most definitely not for the faint-hearted. The system is broken. There are frustrations at every turn. Everything moves at a snail's pace, and there are decisions regularly made that are clearly not in the best interests of children.

But despite all of that, we get to see something really beautiful. We see people show up.

It's our family and friends. It's the friendly faces at our local businesses who know our kids by name. It's the doctors and medical staff who go over and above. It's the incredible teachers and support staff who invest in our kids every day. It's our neighbours. It's the beautiful couple who regularly drop off morning tea.. It's the coaches who take the time to encourage and build our kids up. It's the people in our churches. It's all of the little acts of kindness that we are thankful for.

In life it is easy to focus on the negatives. We see division in our community and hear stories of people letting each other down. While that's never okay, I also get to see another side. I get to see a community that quietly does good.

Our girl was there because a whole community has invested in her life.

So first, thank you, Walcha. You have really blessed us, and secondly, I'd love to challenge you to look beyond your own family walls. Who could you encourage? Who could you help? Who could you make feel seen?

If foster care has taught me anything, it's this: it really does take a village, and Walcha is an incredible one.

Rachael Wellings



👍 A big thank you for my 84th Birthday lunch held at the Commercial Hotel. We all enjoyed the Wauch family get together.

👍 To all the golfers for their encouragement on my return to golf. A great bunch of people.

👍 To Lisa Kirton and Susie Crawford for their years of committed service at the Visitor Information Centre. Your friendly smiles will be missed.

👍 To Ian Bird, heart of gold and problem solver extraordinaire.

👍 Jo Jo, thank you for all you do. The birthday celebrations were great.

👍 To the amazing staff at the hospital as well as Dr Deng for loving and caring for my dad for 21 months.

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.

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RUGBY REPORT WALCHA V ROBB

LADIES DAY

By Erica The Spider

2nd Grade

The Walcha Rams hosted their annual Ladies Day on the weekend, with three grades taking the field against Robb College. It was an excellent community-supported event on a perfect day weather-wise, with the club raising funds for Friends of Riverview.

The day started with Walcha's second grade delivering a commanding 53-12 victory over Robb College in the first match of Ladies Day, producing their most complete performance of the season so far. The Rams are starting to find real connections across the park and are playing excellent rugby. The pack laid a strong platform, the backs ran with width and purpose, and the defensive effort stayed aggressive for the full 70 minutes. Ben Fussell set the tone up front with a series of powerful runs that repeatedly punched holes in the Robb defence. Alongside him, Harry Partridge was immense in the second row, producing a string of heavy hits that shut down attacking opportunities before they could develop. Nick Rogers directed proceedings smartly from halfback, keeping the Rams organised and on the front foot, while Joe Calleja enjoyed his best game in the red and white jersey, finishing with a well-deserved double and looking a constant threat out wide. It was a dominant 53-12 display that underlines the progress this second-grade side is making. With the connections continuing to improve, the Rams will head into the next round full of confidence.

Womens

In a landmark moment for Walcha Rugby, the Ramettes claimed their first ever victory on Saturday, defeating Robb College 26-24 in a tense and thoroughly entertaining Ladies Day fixture. For a club and a town that has long supported rugby through thick and thin, seeing a Walcha women's team take the field carried real significance. The pride felt across the club and the wider community was unmistakable. Players, partners, parents, and long-time supporters all turned out in force, and the atmosphere around the ground reflected just how much the occasion meant.

The Ramettes squad was a genuine mix of youth and experience. Some players were new to the game, while others brought years of local knowledge and physicality. What bound them together was a clear commitment to the work they had put in over recent months. The lengthy training schedule the group has stuck to was evident from the opening exchanges. They looked organised, communicated well, and refused to take a step backwards when the contest became physical.

Bonnie Brown was central to that organisation. From the base of the ruck and around the fringes, she directed her teammates with calm authority, keeping the side structured and ensuring the ball was moved to the right places at the right times. Her decision-making helped the Ramettes stay composed even when Robb applied pressure. Alongside her, Robyn Broadbent produced a tireless all-round performance. She seemed to be everywhere — linking in attack, carrying hard into contact, and then scrambling back to make defensive efforts. Her work rate set a high standard for the rest of the team and was a constant source of momentum. In defence the Ramettes were particularly impressive. Ella Lynch threw herself into every contest, tackling everything that moved and giving the opposition very little time or space. Ali Jones produced one of the standout moments of the afternoon with a massive hit that is a genuine contender for tackle of the year. The collision stopped a

dangerous Robb attack in its tracks and lifted the entire Walcha side. Ellie Clarke embodied the attitude of the group. She threw every part of her body into the contest — including her head — and never took a backward step. Her physicality and willingness to put her body on the line repeatedly disrupted Robb's rhythm and gave her teammates belief. The try that ultimately proved decisive came through excellent teamwork. Jodie Martin finished off a well-worked movement that had been built through several phases of patient, accurate rugby. It was the kind of score that shows a side is starting to understand how to construct opportunities rather than relying solely on individual effort. The final minutes were tense. Robb refused to go away and the Ramettes had to dig deep to protect their slender lead. They did so with the same resolve that had characterised their performance all afternoon. When the final whistle went, the celebration was pure and well-earned. A 26-24 win in a first-ever outing is a result worth remembering. More important than the scoreline, though, was the statement it made. Walcha can field a competitive women's team, and the community stands firmly behind them. The foundation has been laid. If the work rate and attitude shown on Ladies Day continue, this group has every chance of building something lasting.

1st Grade

Walcha first grade completed a clean sweep on Ladies Day with a high-scoring 62-31 victory over Robb College, making it three wins from three for the club. It was a contest full of excellent attacking rugby. Both sides looked to move the ball and play with width, producing a free-flowing game that kept the large Ladies Day crowd entertained throughout. The Rams controlled large patches of the match and showed their ability to manage a game with a simple, effective game plan. Robb College's attack was dangerous and they scored some excellent tries of their own, but Walcha kept the scoreboard ticking over and always seemed to have an answer.

Billy Porter was at his destructive best again. He kept punching into the Robb defence with those big carries that force the opposition to commit numbers and open space out wide. Matty Tisdell ran the show well from halfback, keeping things simple and making sure the Rams stayed on the front foot for long periods. Hamish Heeney looked a bit frustrated early on but put it behind him and got stuck into the game. Once settled he was very hard to stop and finished with a couple of barnstorming tries. Chaden Hawkins had one of his better games for the club. He carried hard all afternoon and the more he got involved the better he looked. When his work rate is high he becomes a real handful and that was on show against Robb. At the other end of the park Nathan Cullinan did a solid job organising the defence. He kept the line connected and made sure the Rams didn't switch off when Robb started throwing the ball around. Overall it was a good day for the firsts. They scored plenty of points, stuck to a simple plan, and finished the Ladies Day program with another strong win.

Walcha Rams enjoyed a perfect Ladies Day on the weekend, sweeping all three grades against Robb College. Second grade dominated 53-12, the Ramettes claimed a historic first-ever win 26-24, and first grade finished strongly 62-31. The day was well supported by the community on a beautiful afternoon, with funds raised for Friends of Riverview. A strong all-round result for the club

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Brendan Moylan MP
MEMBER FOR NORTHERN TABLELANDS

Rural medical students betrayed

The Commonwealth Government's decision to exclude medical students from its new Commonwealth Prac Payment scheme is a shameful betrayal of the next generation of rural doctors.

The updated scheme, only announced last week, provides financial support for students completing mandatory practical placements, but explicitly excludes medical students, despite the fact that medical placements are among the longest, most expensive, and most disruptive of any profession.

This decision is mindboggling, it is a slap in the face to every young person in regional NSW who dreams of becoming a doctor. The Commonwealth is happy to talk about rural doctor shortages but when it comes to backing regional students, they've walked away.

If the Commonwealth is serious about rural health, it must stop punishing the very students we need most.

I've called on the Commonwealth Government to immediately extend the payment to medical students and commit to a rural loading to reflect the higher cost of placements outside metropolitan centres.

Our communities cannot afford another decade of workforce shortages. The Commonwealth Government must reverse this decision now.

Funding Available

Applications are underway for the Local Sport Grant Program, offering \$2,000 to \$20,000 for grassroots clubs to boost participation, purchase equipment, upgrade minor infrastructure and improve player safety. This program is very valuable for volunteer-run clubs that prop up our communities with minimal resources.

At the same time, the Clubgrants Category 3 Infrastructure Program is open, with \$50,000 to \$300,000 available across four streams: community infrastructure, disaster readiness, sport and recreation, and arts and culture. Past rounds have delivered major benefits to local sports infrastructure and I encourage local organisations who are planning infrastructure projects to put your hand up for funding.

Both programs close 17 August, please contact my Armidale Electoral Office if you have any questions.

Brendan Moylan MP

MEMBER FOR NORTHERN TABLELANDS

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Walcha Photography Club closes

From Sue Harrison

After many years of encouraging photography and bringing together people with a shared love of capturing the world through a lens, the Walcha Photography Club has officially disbanded.

While the club has come to an end, our passion for photography certainly hasn't. A number of former members will continue to meet informally as a group of photography enthusiasts, enjoying outings, sharing ideas and encouraging one another in our hobby. Although we will no longer operate as an official club, our friendships and love of photography remain as strong as ever.

Importantly, the photography competition at the Walcha Show will continue. Former club members remain committed to organising and running the photography section, and we look forward to seeing the wonderful entries that the community submits each year. The photography competition has always been a valued part of our local show, showcasing the talent and creativity of photographers of all ages and experience levels, and we are delighted that this tradition will continue.

We would like to sincerely thank everyone who has supported the Walcha Photography Club over the years. Whether you attended meetings, entered competitions, shared your knowledge, volunteered your time, or simply appreciated the photographs on display, your encouragement has helped make the club a rewarding part of our community.

A special thank you goes to everyone who purchased our annual photography calendars. Your support not only celebrated the work of our local photographers but also helped us give back to the Walcha community. Funds raised through the sale of the calendars were donated to local community organisations and projects, and we are grateful to everyone whose generosity made this possible.

Photography has changed enormously over the years, with many people now using phones as well as cameras to capture special moments. What has never changed is the enjoyment of preserving memories, telling stories and seeing the beauty in everyday life.

We encourage everyone to keep taking photographs, to continue entering the Walcha Show photography competition, and to enjoy this wonderful hobby. We look forward to seeing many familiar and new faces through the photography section of the show for many years to come.

On behalf of the former members of the Walcha Photography Club, thank you, Walcha, for your friendship, encouragement and support.



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Walcha cattle producers invited to have their say on cattle transaction levy review

Walcha cattle producers are encouraged to take part in an upcoming face-to-face consultation meeting as part of the Cattle Transaction Levy Review.

The Cattle Transaction Levy Review Committee will visit Walcha to hear directly from grassfed cattle producers about the current levy arrangements, how levy investments are performing, and how the levy system can best support the industry into the future.

The in-person consultation meetings are scheduled for:

- **Next Tuesday 11 August 3:30pm to 5:30pm at Walcha Bowling Club.** Register and find out more information at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/1994758852425?aff=oddtcreator>

The review is examining whether the current \$5 cattle transaction levy remains fit for purpose, delivers value for levy payers, and continues to support a profitable, productive and sustainable Australian beef industry.

This consultation provides producers with the opportunity to hear about the review, ask questions and share their views directly with members of the Levy Review Committee.

Cattle producer and Levy Review Committee member Harry Youngman said the in-person meetings were an important opportunity for producers to contribute practical feedback and local perspectives to the review.

"The cattle transaction levy review needs to be shaped by the producers who pay the levy and understand what is needed on the ground," he said.

"We encourage producers to attend a local consultation meeting, ask questions and share their views on how levy funds can best

support productivity, profitability and the long-term future of the cattle industry."

The consultation process will help inform recommendations to be developed by the Review Committee for levy payers to consider later this year.

For more information, please head through to the <https://cattleaustralia.com.au/the-cattle-transaction-levy/>. It has all discussion papers, events and contact details.



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What's next for Walcha businesses?

After a year of growing membership, advocating for local businesses and delivering initiatives that support business and promote Walcha, the Walcha Business Group is inviting the business community to help shape its next chapter.

The group's Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 13 August at 5.30pm at the Walcha Bar & Grill, 67W Fitzroy St, Walcha. The AGM marks the first since the organisation became an incorporated association. It is an opportunity to reflect on the past 12 months, hear about the year's activities and discuss priorities for the future.

Attendees will also hear from Katrina George from the Welcome Experience, who will outline how the recently expanded program will support people relocating to Walcha and the opportunities this creates for local businesses and the broader community. Following the meeting, attendees are invited to stay for dinner at the Walcha Bar & Grill at their own expense.

With all board positions becoming vacant, the meeting offers an opportunity for new and existing members to become involved in guiding the direction of the Walcha Business Group and ensuring it continues to represent and support local businesses.

All business owners and operators are welcome to attend. Anyone wishing to nominate for the board must be a current financial member of the Walcha Business Group.

For membership enquiries, nominations or to RSVP, contact Fiona Barden on 0429 690 679 or email info@walchabusinessgroup.com.au.

New Thunderbolts Way rest stop complete

Walcha Council has completed works on a new rest stop about 50km south of Walcha on Thunderbolts Way, giving truck drivers and motorists another place to pause between the Topdale Road intersection and Walcha.

The amenity is the latest addition to this stretch of road, made possible thanks to \$240,000 in grant funding from the Federal Government's Safer Roads and Infrastructure Program, and \$60,000 from the NSW Government.

The rest stop features a table and chairs, rubbish bins, and dedicated parking spaces for two B-Double trucks and three cars.



100 days of Kindergarten



Mrs Laurie, Ms Wilson and the Kindergarten students celebrating their 100th day at St Patrick's

At St Patrick's Primary School, a recent milestone brought extra smiles and grey wigs to the school!

Congratulations are in order for all of our Kindergarten students and their leaders, Ms. Wilson and Mrs. Laurie, who fully embraced the spirit of the day last Monday by dressing up as 100-year-olds to celebrate their very first 100th Day of School. From walking canes to oversized glasses, the creative costumes showed that while these young learners may only be five or six, they certainly know how to age with style!

To mark the special occasion, the class treated themselves to a very enjoyable morning tea at Cafe Graze, taking a well-deserved break to celebrate how far they have come since stepping through the school doors for the very first time.

A huge "well done" goes out to Amelia, Ava, Dougal, Eleanor, Isabelle, Kolby, Marlie, Ollie, and Rudy for reaching this exciting milestone. It will certainly be intriguing to see how this lively group chooses to celebrate their 200th day of school—which, by our calculations, should land early in the 2027 school year!

Warmest congratulations to everyone involved for creating such a memorable celebration for our youngest school community members.

COMMUNITY FORUM

New England REZ, Workers Camps and implications for the Walcha Community

THURSDAY 13TH AUGUST | 5:30PM
WALCHA BOWLING CLUB

Everyone welcome, and encouraged to attend

Come and hear about the New England REZ updates, and what this means for our community.

- **Workers camps announced around Walcha** - what will this look like?
- **Water for construction** - what the REZ needs, and where will it come from.
- **Update on the approval process** for the NE REZ.
- **Emma Bowman** from CWO REZ - a lived experience of a community dealing with the Central West Orana REZ

EnergyCo and Penny Sharpe have been invited - their attendance TBC

Be informed, understand what is happening, and show support for your community. *See you there!*



Seven Walcha Central teams through to State Finals

From Walcha Central School

Our students enjoyed an outstanding two days of competition at the Central Schools Regional Netball and Rugby League Gala Days, held in Inverell last week. Across both sports, teams represented the school with determination, teamwork and excellent sportsmanship, producing several impressive performances against schools from throughout the region.

The Rugby League teams experienced tremendous success, with the U14s, U16s and Open's boys all qualifying for the Central Schools State Finals. The U14s were particularly dominant, finishing undefeated with four wins from four matches and an impressive points differential of +40. The U16s completed their competition undefeated, recording three wins and one draw. They finished at the top of the standings with a points differential of +32. The Opens also remained unbeaten throughout their competition, recording a win and a draw to finish on top.

Our netball teams also competed strongly. The Under 16s recorded two wins from their three pool matches, finishing second in Pool B. This required a finals match against Uralla, the winners of Pool A. It was a very close hard-fought match, and Walcha came away with the win, securing their place at the State Finals. The Open Netball team produced some excellent performances to finish third overall, recording two wins from four matches and a positive goal difference.

Congratulations to our four successful teams, their qualification brings our total number of teams progressing to the Central Schools State Finals to an outstanding seven teams.

The State Finals will be held in Dubbo early next month. We congratulate all students and coaches involved and wish our qualifying teams the very best as they prepare to compete against the strongest Central Schools teams from across NSW.



Public Education Week 2026

3-7 August
Inspiring Excellence



This week is Public Education Week, a time for all of us to come together and celebrate our commitment to inspiring excellence. Let's take pride in being part of NSW public education and the endless and far-reaching achievements of our students and staff.



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a journey of learning from K-12



Former Niangala grazier David Moore was farewelled at the St Andrew's Anglican Church last Friday after leaving this world at the age of 73 years. Condolences to his wife Jane, all other family members and friends. May David Joseph Moore Rest in Peace.

...

Sad to hear former Werris Creek footballer Peter Rodden departed this world the last day of July, 10 days before his 71st birthday. Not only was Pete a bloody good Rugby League player he was a champion bloke. Back in 1984 Peter was a member of the Northern team selected from Groups 19 and 21 where Walcha Roos Rodney Natty and AJ Cross were two of his teammates. May Peter Francis Rodden Rest in Peace.

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Certainly hits home considering I celebrated my 70th Birthday last Sunday. A sincere thank you to the overwhelming number who reached out to acknowledge the milestone where I had great day at home enjoyed with family. A Big Thanks to one and All.

...

The Walcha Ramettes hung on long enough to defeat Robb College 26-24 in a nail biter when they played their womens match at Peter Fenwicke Oval last Saturday on Rams Ladies Day. Walcha trailed 10-7 at halftime but got the job done in the second half. Good

on ya Girls.

...

Former Walcha Jillaroos League Tag player Lacey Newton had every intention of taking the field for the Ramettes - well up until she broke her leg playing Squash against Johnno Byrne last Tuesday. Jillaroos teammate Robyn Broadbent was desperately unlucky not to score a 50 metre try when she was pulled down centimetres from the try line in the Can Van corner but Bonnie Brown did touch down on the next play. Players Player and 3 Best and Fairest points Robyn Broadbent, 2 - Matisse Pascoe and 1 - Emma Ellis.

...

Veteran Allround Sporting Legend Steph Sweeney is currently representing North Haven in the NSW Division 3 Pennants finals this week at his home rink and also Lake Cathie. The 'Golden Haired Wonder Child' has been selected as lead for the No.1 team while former Walcha Copper Shane Harper is skip of the No. 2 North Haven side.

...

Doesn't it make you proud to be Australian when the final Commonwealth Games Medals list was announced where Australia racked up 171 including 70 Gold, 45 Silver and 56 Bronze. Next best was England on 110, (29 G, 45 S, 36 B). Go the Aussies it's always great to get around the

Pommies no matter which sport!

...

Well done to the Walcha Pearls who continued on their winning way with a resounding victory over TAS 6 in Round 9 of the Armidale District Netball Association Division 4 competition last Saturday. The Pearls currently lead their division on 36 points well ahead of nearest rival ACSC Mavericks on 24.

...

Good job also to the Walcha Opals who rounded up VIP Dragon Flies 16 to 9 in Primary Division 1 and Walcha Pacifica on downing VIP Funbags 33 to 20 in the Ladies Social Division. Although Walcha Sapphires were defeated by ACSC Giants the girls were out there having a go. Best of luck to all teams this Saturday.

...

Big Wigs of the Week - B.C -Matty Hamel, Johnny Watts; T.B.WCafe - Cindy Swanton; Vet Supplies - Apie Fontanella, Pete King, Tahlia Bird; Apsley - Jess Litchfield, Karrin Scott, Jim Bob Smith; Newie - Paul Hicks, Josh Gollan, Mitch Foster, Billy Fletcher, Dave Campbell, Pete Steep, Tom Donnelly, Rodney Newman (All 17 Picked the Card).

...

If you like a punt and someone offered you 69^{1/2} points start to take the North Queensland Cowboys against the Sydney Roosters last Thursday most would have no hesitation getting on. It would have been a bad decision though the Roosters won 82 to 12.

Yalgoo Poll Herefords Bull Sale

Yalgoo Poll Hereford 65th Annual Bull Sale

Monday 10 August 2026

"Yalgoo" Thunderbolts Way, Walcha

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Tennis

The next Walcha District Tennis Club meeting will be held on Monday 10th August at 6.30pm. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Ladies Bowls

The Lady Bowlers welcomed two new players last week on a beautiful sunny morning. Amanda and Jo enjoyed their game and we hope to see them again tomorrow. Debbie Richards, Pam Makeham and Amanda won against Esther Hunt, Lee McCoy and Jo. In a closely contested game Jan Cross and Wendy Moore had a win against Janice Rizzi and Marie Spink 16-14. The AGM is on 20 August and nominations are to be in by 13 August. Nomination forms are on the board. There will be social bowls tomorrow 9.00am for a 9.30am start.

Wednesday Golf

Last Wednesday was the first round of the 2 Ball Stroke Aggregate Championship playing for the Drummond Golf trophy.

Our winners for this first round were Julie Olrich and Pauline Carter who combined to come in with 143 points.

Sweepstakes were won by Maddie Lance and Jill Burnell with 146 points, closely followed by the pairs, Margaret Davidson and Simone Sweeney, and Jenny Lisle and Lorraine Walshe, both finishing with 147 points.

There was a second shot on Hole 7, which was claimed by Simone Sweeney, and the second shot on Hole 16 went to Penny King who cleverly putted her ball in the hole.

This Wednesday is the second round of the 2 Ball Stroke Aggregate Championship, with the trophies being donated by Davidson and Cameron and Co.

The overall nett winners for the two days will receive a trophy donated by Katie Smith.

Bowls

Thursday results: Greg Carter, Warwick Hogan & Tony Batterham were too solid for Brian Goodwin, Darrell Brazel & John McCormack 19/7.

Ross Ballinger steered his side of Mark Hogan & Denis Makeham to a commanding win over Barry Kliendienst, Noel Goodwin & Peter Halliday 15/11. Greg Warwick & Tony won the chooks. A great afternoon was had by all.

Good luck to bowlers playing competition games this coming weekend.

At the Nineteenth

A stableford round was contested last Sunday for a trophy donated by Billy Fletcher which attracted 26 players to tee off before Lorraine Rennie ran out the winner after accumulating 43 points.

Runner up was Andrew Crawford on 42 whereas the remaining sweepstake prizes went to Tim Baumer 41, Margaret Davidson, Anne Martin and Pauline Carter (all 39), Daniel Boyd, Rose Baumer and David Sweeney (all 38).

Sharpest shooters at the Pins were Sue Partridge (9) and Tim Baumer (16).

Last Saturday nine players competed in the weekly 9 hole competition where the consistent Anne Martin racked up 19 points to win the event after she snuck home by a point from Jock McLaren who counted out his father John on 18 points.

No player was clever enough to reach the beach on 3.

This Sunday is the Mixed Foursomes Championship Mr and Mrs T.C. Fenwicke Memorial where Col King is in charge of supplying the prizes.

Captain Willy Brennan reports the Foursomes was rescheduled to a week before what is listed in the Program Book through necessity and hasn't got anything whatsoever to do with weather forecasting. The Monthly Stroke Medal Round programmed for this Sunday for Ollie Crawford's trophy now goes back a week to Sunday 16th.

Polocrosse

Merriwa

This past weekend, Walcha Polocrosse members Dan and Patrick Daley travelled to Merriwa to compete in their annual carnival. Dan joined ranks with the Lake George club in the A Grade and Patrick teamed up with players from Merriwa, Bunnan and Muswellbrook in the Sub-Juniors. Dan's team ran undefeated on the Saturday, beating Gulgong and Muswellbrook. Unfortunately, their luck ran out on Sunday afternoon in the A Grade final, the competition was tough however Bunnan 1 ultimately took the win.

There were only two teams in the Sub-Junior competition and Patrick's team dominated all weekend, winning all three of their games. Patty also came home with a prize for Best Number 3, recognizing his fantastic defensive skills. Adding to his accolades from the weekend, Pat's team came second in the team barrel race on Saturday afternoon as well. Congratulations to both of our players and we look forward to seeing how the team goes this weekend at Bunnan.

Netball

The sun came out after a chilly morning for another epic day of netball last Saturday!

ACSC Giants 33 def. Walcha Sapphires 2

The scoreboard definitely didn't tell the whole story for the Sapphires this week. The girls showed determination from the first whistle to the last, never giving up and making sure they enjoyed every minute on court. It's never easy for little people to lose, but these girls do it with such a lovely spirit—and it never dampens the excitement of the lolly grab at halftime!

I'll let Hattie Laurie from the Sapphires sum it up:

"The scores did not show how we really did on the day. It was great that it was lots of fun and we all did our best. Our coaches Kelly and Amanda never give up on us and neither do we!"

Walcha Opals 16 def. VIP Dragonflies 9

The Opals were in for a great contest, with the game staying close right through the first half. After halftime, though, the girls and Hugh found another gear. Their defensive pressure was outstanding, not allowing the Dragonflies to score a single goal in the second half.

With great teamwork, strong passing and patient play, the Opals streaked ahead to finish with a well-deserved 16-9 win. Another fantastic effort from a team that just keeps getting better every week!

Walcha Pearls 69 def. TAS 6 - 7

The Pearls were outstanding from the first whistle. Despite a huge week that included a netball carnival just four days earlier and Northwest Athletics the day before, the girls showed no signs of slowing down.

Xaphyn and Veja-Lee were relentless in defence, creating plenty of turnovers, while Maddie, Bell and Emily worked tirelessly through the midcourt to keep the ball flowing. Arly and Puna continued their fantastic partnership in the goal circle, reading each other beautifully and converting their opportunities with confidence.

Coach Thea Dunn even mixed every player's position up in the final quarter to give the girls an extra challenge, but it didn't faze them one bit. They adapted brilliantly and finished with another dominant win.

Walcha Pacifika 33 def. VIP Funbags 20

The Pacifika girls put together another strong team performance, coming away with a fantastic 33-20 win.

The girls fought hard from start to finish, backing each other every step of the way. Their determination, teamwork and never-give-up attitude saw them control the game and finish strongly. They're playing with so much confidence at the moment that it makes watching from the sideline incredibly exciting!

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Death Notice

Kenneth Houghton (Aged 97)
Passed in Tamworth Hospital on 23rd July 2026. Private cremation. Resident of Elizabeth Crosse Wing Walcha MPS, formerly of "Timber View". Father of Chamayne.

In Memoriam

Cathie Brennan
31.07.1967 - 06.08.2018
Love you Forever
Miss you always
Wayne and Andrew

Public Notice

Due to the cancellation of this week's rose pruning demonstration at Apsley Riverview Aged Care hostel it is now being held at Jackie Fletcher's garden 'Cairnie' Emu Creek Rd, Walcha commencing 9.30 am on Wednesday, 12th August. Walcha residents are most welcome to attend. RSVP: Diana Lisle 0429 799 083.

Church service at Woolbrook Church, 2pm, this Sunday. For info Graham Barnes 6777 2539.

Walcha Council

Changed traffic conditions for hazardous tree Removal - Derby Street



Changed traffic conditions are expected during the removal of a hazardous tree located between the Walcha Council Apsley Riverview Aged Care Facility and 54N Derby Street.

The works are scheduled for **Tuesday 11 August 2026**, weather permitting. Traffic diversions will be in place while the works are being undertaken.

Residents are advised to follow all traffic directions during this time.

Council thanks the community for their patience and cooperation.

Stephen Parry, General Manager
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Position Vacant

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Public Notice (cont)

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Meeting Notice

Walcha & District Historical Society - Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 15 August at 11am at the Walcha Bar & Grill, followed by lunch at 12.30pm. New members are most welcome. For catering purposes or any enquiries, please contact Shelley Marchant 0408 020 791, Secretary, by 13 August.

Walcha Farmers' Market AGM & general meeting. Tues August 11, 6.30pm, Apsley Arms Hotel. New members with a passion for local produce very welcome.

Walcha Ladies Bowling Club AGM Thursday 21st August, 1pm at Walcha Bowling Club.

Walcha Garden Club AGM and monthly meeting Friday 7th August at the Walcha Tennis Club commencing 9.30am. Enquiries: S.Law 0467 450 243 or Diana Lisle 0429 799 083.

The next Walcha District Tennis Club meeting will be held on Monday 10th August at 6.30pm. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

DEADLINE FOR
STORIES, ADS AND
CLASSIFIEDS

Monday 4:30pm



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DEADLINE MONDAY 4.30PM Editor: Anthea Nivison. Advertising/Sport: Joscisca Matapakia, Kate Connors and Kersten Wall.

church notices



ANGLICAN

August 9 - 9.30am Walcha Service
2.00pm Nowendoc Service

August 16 - 9.30am Walcha Service

August 23 - 9.30am Walcha Service

August 30 - 9.30am Combined Service
with Presbyterians at Walcha Anglican Church

Anglican Church

Phone 6777 2543

or email: walchaanglican@gmail.com

PRESBYTERIAN

Walcha: every Sunday 9:30am

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Thursday 6 12.00pm – Close

BOWLS 9.00am Ladies, 1pm Social

BINGO 12.30pm

Friday 7 3.00pm – Close

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5.00PM BISTRO

Sunday 9 11.00am – Close

12.00PM BISTRO

Raffle tickets from 12pm, drawn 1pm.

MEMBERS DRAW

DRAWN AFTER THE RAFFLES

FRIDAY \$1100

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Can all bowlers please ensure any outstanding games are played prior to the next scheduled day of play.

Line Dancing is on every Wednesday, except the 1st Wednesday of the month from 6pm.

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