



Guyra Gazette

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Wednesday January 14, 2026

Gearing up for milestone Lamb and Potato Festival

Guyra is set to come alive from January 14th to January 26th with the 2026 Guyra Lamb and Potato Festival getting underway. Organisers are promising a bigger, brighter celebration as the iconic event marks its 40th anniversary.

Held annually, the festival has become one of the New England's signature events, drawing visitors from across the region and beyond to experience the best of Guyra's world-class lamb and potatoes, alongside live entertainment and strong community spirit.

Festival president Steve Mepham said reaching the 40-year milestone was a proud moment for the town and everyone who has contributed to the festival's success over the decades.

"Forty years is a big milestone for the Lamb and Potato Festival," Mr Mepham said.

"It will start with a special dinner on Tuesday night to celebrate the anniversary and to thank the many people who have been involved over that time."

A number of new and enhanced features will highlight the anniversary celebrations. The festival pavilion has now been fully lined and the photo montage has been updated to showcase the



In its 40th year, new murals by Kay Smith will feature at this year's festival

Julie Gittoes, Steve Mepham, Chris Bell and Gwyneth Pearson were busy setting up for the festival on Tuesday.

festival's history across all 40 years. Adding to the visual appeal, local artist Kay Smith has been commissioned to paint three murals, which will adorn the pavilion throughout the festival.

At its heart, the festival continues to celebrate Guyra's proud agricultural heritage. The district is renowned for producing premium lamb and high-quality potatoes, and the event provides an opportunity to recognise the dedication of local producers while promoting the region as a key agricultural hub.

Despite a challenging season,

Mr Mepham said organisers had worked hard to ensure the festival could go ahead as planned.

"Lamb prices are almost double what they were last year and potatoes are in short supply and have also doubled in price," he said.

"We only secured our potato supply last week, but we're committed to keeping any price rises to a minimum for festival goers."

Visitors can expect a full complement of stallholders, with plenty to browse across food, crafts and local produce. A packed entertainment program

will run throughout the festival, with stalls, food and music on offer every day for the 12 days of celebrations. Live performances will feature mainly local artists, with music scheduled for both lunchtime and evening sessions.

Popular attractions are also set to return, including the car show and shine in Guyra's main street on January 24th, the antique machinery field day on the final weekend, and the much-loved model trains, which will make a comeback this year after a few years away.

continued page 2>>>



Scholarship Exam & Principal's Tour

Thursday, 19 February 2026

Book now and equip her for a life of significance



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PLC
PRESBYTERIAN LADIES' COLLEGE
ARMIDALE
1887



Preschool Class of 2025 celebrate graduation



EnergyCo

Have your say on the New England Renewable Energy Zone



EnergyCo is inviting feedback to help shape the delivery of the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). Feedback will be used to inform how the government responds to potential impacts and delivers benefits for communities that are hosting critical energy projects.

Complete the survey on our new online portal

Visit energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerez (or scan the QR code below) to explore how we're working to balance project impacts and benefits for local communities, then share your feedback through a survey. The survey is open until Friday 30 January 2026 and will take around 10 minutes to complete.

You can also contact our team on the details below if you prefer to receive a paper copy.

Your input will help shape our plans – now and into the future – and ensures the REZ delivers real and lasting benefits for the region.

View the New England regional major infrastructure studies

To support the consultation period, EnergyCo has released a series of studies which address priority topics for REZ delivery including workforce accommodation, water and wastewater security, training and skills, local supply chain and waste and circular economy.

They consider the impacts of major projects in the New England region, including renewables and other industries, as well as opportunities that may arise from this significant investment in regional NSW. These studies are not intended to provide all the answers. They provide a common data point that will inform future strategies to address challenges and maximise opportunities.

The studies are the result of several months of consultation with councils, government agencies and industry to assess existing conditions and priority issues for the region.



For more information

To read the studies and complete our survey, visit the online portal at energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerez or scan the QR code. You can get in touch with our team at nerez@energyco.nsw.gov.au or by calling 1800 061 114 (toll free). We look forward to hearing from you.



JL0263

On Wednesday, December 3rd, Guyra Preschool and Long Day Care Centre proudly celebrated the graduation of its latest cohort of students ready for big school.

"We had a delightful celebration for our precious children who are now ready to embark on their exciting journey to big school," said Preschool Coordinator Flick Williams.

"The evening was filled with smiles, laughter, and a few happy tears as we gathered to honour our little graduates. The children were beaming with pride, and it was truly heartwarming to see their excitement and eagerness for the adventures that lie ahead," she said.

"We enjoyed a slide show of their journey through preschool, heartfelt speeches, and of course, delicious treats to mark this special milestone.

"A huge thank you to everyone who made this day so memorable from the educators who have nurtured and guided our children, to the parents who have supported and encouraged them every step of the way. This celebration was a beautiful reminder of the strong and loving community we have built together."

Gearing up for milestone Lamb and Potato Festival

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The Guyra Craft Group will again be a feature, setting up in the Anglican Hall and opening daily from 9am to 4pm. Devonshire teas will be served each Saturday during the festival, adding another reason for visitors to stop and stay awhile.

Mr Mepham said the festival's success continues to rely heavily on volunteers, local businesses and community groups. "This festival isn't just about lamb and potatoes," he said. "It's about the people behind it - the farmers, families, businesses and volunteers who make Guyra such a vibrant and welcoming town."

With its unique blend of agriculture, entertainment and community connection, the 2026 Guyra Lamb and Potato Festival is shaping up to be a fitting celebration of 40 years of tradition in Guyra.

Guyra Central wraps up memorable 2025



Year 6 Farewell Dinner - **Back I to r:** Jasper Eddy, Jakodah McKellar, Zion Torrens, Labron Joyce, Jake Artz, Elanor Hall, Alexia Towler, Samantha Bussie, Indica Hoiland, Aoife Collins, Sophie Rumbel. **Front:** Jacob Jones, Leslie Birch, Samuel Ashman, Hamish Brown, Gavin Little, Elayna Bennett

Guyra Central School has wrapped up a busy and memorable year, with the school community coming together to celebrate a period of growth and achievement for both students and staff.

Relieving Principal Tim Lloyd said 2025 had been a year to be proud of, with students showing dedication and resilience across a wide range of academic and personal pursuits.

"Throughout the year, our students have worked incredibly hard and achieved success in many different areas," Mr Lloyd said. "Every achievement, whether large or small, has contributed to making 2025 a truly rewarding year for our school."

One of the highlights of the year

was the school's official Presentation Day Ceremony, which recognised outstanding achievements from Kindergarten through to Year 12.

"Our Presentation Day is a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge the efforts, commitment and growth of our students across all year groups," Mr Lloyd said. "Congratulations to all award recipients—you should be very proud of what you have accomplished."

During Term 4, Guyra Central School also ran its Transition to Kindergarten program, helping prepare the school's youngest learners for the start of their educational journey. This was followed by a Transition Graduation

on Tuesday, December 16th.

"It was a special moment celebrating our future students as they take their first steps into school life," Mr Lloyd said. "We look forward to welcoming them back as Kindergarten students in 2026."

A Primary Celebration Day Assembly was also held to farewell Year 6 students, with each receiving a graduation certificate marking the completion of their primary education.

"While it is a farewell to their primary years, many of these students will continue on with us into secondary school, which is something we are proud to offer as a central school," Mr Lloyd said.

At the assembly, Indigo-Grace Atkin and Hugh Kliendienst, cur-

rently in Year 5, were announced as Guyra Central School Captains for 2026.

"We wish them every success as they take on their leadership roles next year," Mr Lloyd said.

Mr Lloyd said staff and the wider community felt privileged to witness students grow from their earliest days in the Transition program through to becoming confident young adults ready to graduate from Year 12.

"I would like to congratulate all our students and staff on a year filled with growth, dedication and outstanding achievements," he said. "We look forward to continuing this journey together in the years ahead."

Update on water quality issues

Guyra's ongoing water quality issues have taken an important step toward a permanent solution, with Armidale Regional Council confirming that specialist consultants have been engaged to investigate ozone water treatment — a key missing element in Guyra's treatment system.

Councillor Eli Imad said water safety remains Council's top priority, with more than \$1 million invested in upgrades over the past 12 months and further funding planned.

Once all current and scheduled works are completed, Council's

total investment in Guyra's water infrastructure is expected to be in the order of \$5–6 million.

"This is not something that can be fixed overnight, but it is a major step in the right direction," Cr Imad said.

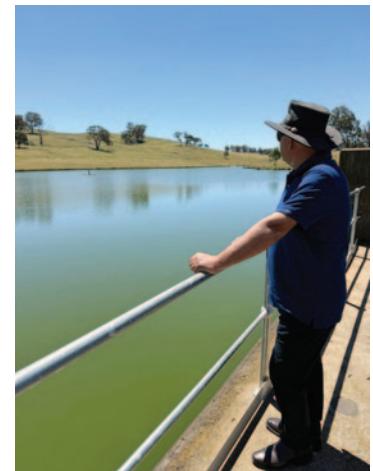
"Ozone treatment is widely used to tackle algae, taste and odour issues and to improve drinking water safety."

Several major upgrades are already in place or underway, including a fully automated powdered activated carbon (PAC) dosing system and a destratification bubble flume system, both of

which significantly improve Council's ability to manage algae events.

Council is also planning to upgrade raw water pumping capacity, which is essential to support modern treatment processes such as ozone and ultraviolet disinfection.

Over the longer term, Guyra is planned to receive a modern advanced treatment system incorporating ozone, granular activated carbon and UV disinfection, housed in a new purpose-built facility with full automation and solar-supported power.



Cr Imad visited Malpas and Guyra Dams last week to see the conditions first-hand

What's HOT

- 40 years of lamb and spuds in January - what a great effort by the volunteers who make this happen!!!
- Local craft group will be set up in the Anglican hall during the festival - call in and show your support
- Tickets to the Australia Day awards dinner are on sale at GALA
- Community groups supporting MPS residents with Christmas gifts

JOKE of the week

Why did the lamb sit next to the potatoes?
Because they were a classic roast couple.

Bureau of Meteorology

Weather

WATCH

Guyra MPS

Date	Day	Min	Max	Rain
6	Tues	9.6	24.7	5.0
7	Wed	10.2	26.0	0
8	Thurs	8.8	28.1	0
9	Fri	8.0	29.9	0
10	Sat	11.2	29.1	0
11	Sun	12.6	29.9	0
12	Mon	12.5	21.3	1.8

Rain this week	6.8mm
Jan. rainfall	34.2mm
Rainfall YTD	34.2mm
Rainfall last YTD	80.2mm
Ave. rain YTD	119.2mm

Information supplied by Jeff Martin,
Observer for Bureau of Meteorology

Kids keen to learn sewing

The first course held at the New England Community College (NECC) in Guyra for 2026 was a Kids Sewing workshop on January 6th and 7th.

The enthusiastic group of children learned how to make their own bags using donated fabric, while developing valuable skills including operating a sewing machine and using an overlocker.

The students showed great eagerness to learn and a strong interest in sewing. A special thank you goes to Tim Bell for generously giving his time to assist in the classroom, his help was very much appreciated.

Robin Godlonton oversaw the class and said it was wonderful to see such a keen group, wanting to learn to sew.



Back I to r: Poppy Post, Arlie Rosser, Catie Furphie, Lachie Rosser, Freddy Post Front: Grace Schaefer, Jaidee Masuk- Purvis, Elsie Post

Thank-you from Guyra MPS



Above I to r: Michael Wilson, Randy Mulligan, Patricia Gartner, Karen Garth, Sandy Sebastian, Jason Campbell and Abby Walls.

On behalf of the Residents and staff at the Guyra Multi-Purpose Service, I sincerely thank the Guyra Fire Brigade, Guyra CWA Evening Branch and members of the community who kindly do-

nated Christmas gifts to our Residents this year.

This kind thoughtful gesture helped make Christmas extra special and brought immense happiness to our residents on

Christmas Day. They are all very grateful for your thoughts and gifts. Once again, a huge thank-you to everyone involved.

Karen Garth
Health Service Manager
Guyra Multi-Purpose Service.

PLC Principal's Tour and Scholarship Day

PLC Armidale continues to set the benchmark for academic excellence in the New England North West, with outstanding outcomes across both NAPLAN and the 2025 Higher School Certificate (HSC), reinforcing its reputation as one of the region's—and state's—leading schools.

In the 2025 HSC, 46 per cent of PLC Armidale students achieved an ATAR above 85, with 27 per cent above 90 and 19 per cent above 95, and the College's Joint Dux, Amelie van der Werf, achieved the highest ATAR in the region (99.1). PLC Armidale was ranked 69th in NSW on The Daily Telegraph list of high-performing schools and was the highest-ranked school in northern NSW.

Recently released 2025 NAPLAN data on the ACARA MySchool website confirms that PLC Armidale is the strongest-performing school overall in the region, with students achieving



PLC Armidale's bespoke Explore Serve Journey program takes full advantage of the surrounding World Heritage National Parks.

results above the national average and those of similar backgrounds across most tested areas in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9.

Principal Mrs Nicola Taylor said the results reflect a consistent, personalised approach to learning.

"These outcomes are the result of academic rigour, strong pastoral care and a culture where every girl is known, supported and challenged to do her best," Mrs Taylor said.

Head of Senior School Mrs Kate Lynch said success across

academic, creative, sport, outdoor challenge and vocational pathways demonstrated the breadth of opportunity available to students, supported by expert teaching and small class sizes.

Families are invited to experience the PLC Armidale advantage firsthand at the Principal's Tour and Senior School 2027 Scholarship Examination on Thursday, 19 February 2026. The day offers an opportunity to tour the College's 17-hectare campus, meet staff and students, and learn more about academic pathways, boarding, the five-year bespoke Explore Serve Journey outdoor education program and scholarship opportunities.

With a long tradition of educating young women to lead lives of significance, PLC Armidale offers a nurturing all-girls environment where academic excellence and personal growth go hand in hand.

Submitted

Authorised by
Brendan Moylan,
Member for
Northern Tablelands,
Funded using parliamentary
entitlements, January 2026



Gun laws

In the days leading up to Christmas, Premier Chris Minns recalled Parliament to make unnecessary changes to firearms laws in NSW. I voted against these changes, as did the rest of the NSW Nationals.

The Government played politics as it combined the firearm provisions in a single bill which contains anti-protest provisions. Farmers, professional and sporting shooters, gun clubs and regional businesses already operate under some of the strictest gun laws in the world. In regional NSW, firearms are essential tools for biosecurity, animal welfare and livelihoods.

People in regional NSW expect governments to respond to tragedy with honesty, restraint and clear thinking. While grief and accountability matter, rushed policy designed to deflect from government failure does not.

Responding to terrorism by targeting law-abiding firearm owners undermines public trust and does not improve safety.

The changes to the gun laws were not required and penalised lawful firearm users for an act of terrorism.

Lamb and Potato Festival

Guyra's Lamb and Potato Festival begins today and continues for 12 days. I encourage the local community to get behind this important event to see what the region has to offer.

Portfolios

NSW Opposition Leader Kelly Sloane unveiled a new Shadow Cabinet last week and I am pleased to be taking on the Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Prevention of Regional Crime portfolios. These portfolios give me an opportunity to continue delivering for the Northern Tablelands by leading important discussions around two areas which are fundamental to the electorate.

In terms of regional crime, the issue goes beyond the regional crime rises above the usual argy-bargy of politics, and I intend to keep working constructively with the Attorney General and others to ensure it remains firmly on the agenda. There is so much more that can be done in this space. While our opposition crime bill was ultimately defeated, it contained many



The changes to firearms laws in NSW were unnecessary

strong measures, and my job is to keep prosecuting those ideas, particularly around giving victims a greater voice and tightening bail conditions. On agriculture, it's the old saying: when farmers are doing well, small businesses in town do well too. It's a significant challenge and a portfolio everyone in The Nationals wants, and I'm genuinely looking forward to it. I've already reached out to NSW Farmers to start identifying where we can make real improvements.

Meals on Wheels

Jan 15	Bec Broughton
Jan 16	Steve Norris
Jan 19	Wendy Laidlaw
Jan 20	Bea Velthuis
Jan 21	Wendy Laidlaw

Street Stalls

No street stalls in January

Church Notices

St. Mary of the Angels Catholic

Church Vigil Mass 6pm Saturday 9am Sunday. Weekday Mass Monday – Friday 9am. **Contact:** 6779 1036

St. James' Anglican Church

9am Sunday, followed by morning tea. Doors open from 8:30am. All welcome!

Contact: Rev. Tim Stevens 6779 1111

Anglicare Chaplain: Rev. Daniel Hayes (0428 828 852)

St. Columba's Presbyterian Church

9am Sunday followed by morning tea. **Contact:** Session Clerk Howard Schaeffer 0267791067

The Chapel: 66 Llangothin Street:

Sunday Service: 10am

Food Pantry Fridays 9am -12pm

Contact: Pastors Linden & Kerrie Pollard 0455 232 073.

Seventh-day Adventist Church:

Aboomala Street. Sabbath School 10.00am Saturday Divine Service 11.30am Saturday. **Contact:** Minister Luke Reeves 0410 761 320 Church Clerk 6779 1587

Uniting Church: 57 Ollera Street:

Regular Sunday Service: 9.30am **Contact:** Di Burey 0428 791 742

Church of Freedom (Cnr. Boorolong & Nincoola Sts.) Sunday worship: 10am Prayer meeting: Tuesday 6.30pm Bible discussion: Wednesday 6.30pm **Pastors:** Jeff & Sharon Ritchie 0421 847 973 Chaplaincy services: Dan McGinty 0409 399 270

Black Mountain Baptist Church

Service 3pm, second Sunday of the month. Next Service, Sunday Dec 7th

Contact: Robert Dewhurst Armidale District Baptist Church 0409 723 522

Service Clubs

LIONS CLUB 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month at Guyra Bowling Club, 7pm. Ph: Geoff Reeves 6779 1257

ROTARY CLUB 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month 6pm at The Blind Chef Ph: Hans Hietbrink 0402 044 891

ACROSS

- 1 Sit on eggs (of a bird) (8)
- 5 Male deer (4)
- 9 Venomous snake (5)
- 10 Very eager to get something (7)
- 11 Not capable of reply (12)
- 14 Degenerate (3)
- 15 Mountain range in South America (5)
- 16 Mature (3)
- 17 Devoted to music (12)
- 20 Young children (7)
- 22 Hackneyed (5)
- 23 Clothing (4)
- 24 Lightest chemical element (8)

DOWN

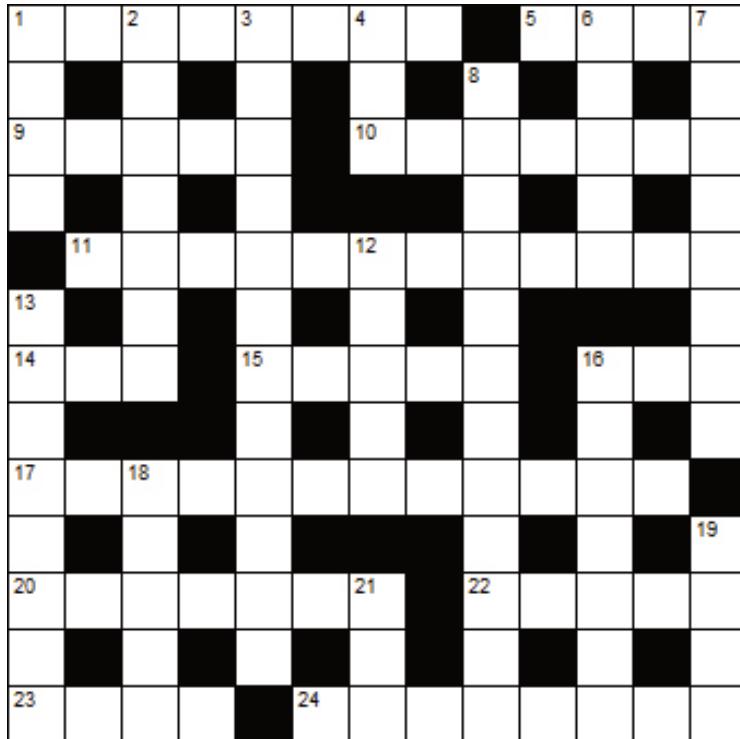
- 1 Unit of length (4)
- 2 Piece of furniture (7)
- 3 Forcible indoctrination (12)
- 4 Popular beverage (3)
- 6 Beat (5)
- 7 Assembled (8)
- 8 Marksman (12)
- 12 Less narrow (5)
- 13 Extremely wet (8)
- 16 Enduring (7)
- 18 Conclude (5)
- 19 Blood vessel (4)
- 21 Home for a pig (3)

SUDOKU - Hard

7					9	6
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2	8					
4	1	3			8	
			5	7		
2	7	6				9
	6		3	4		
3		4	2			
9						

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1	7	6	1	8	3	4	9	2
5	2	7	6	2	5	4	6	7
8	3	9	2	7	9	1	4	6
4	6	1	3	7	9	2	8	5
2	5	8	9	3	6	7	1	4
6	9	3	7	4	1	5	2	8
7	1	4	8	2	5	9	3	6

QUICK CROSSWORD



18 Infer 19 Vein 21 Stry

shearer 22 Widger 13 Drippling 16 Abiding
4 Lea 6 Throb 7 Gathered 8 Sharp-
DOWN: 1 Inch 2 Cabinet 3 Brauwashine
22 Title 23 Graft 24 Hydrogen
Answers 16 Age 17 Philharmonic 20 Infants
Athirst 11 Unanswerable 14 Rot 15
ACROSS: 1 Incubate 5 Stag 9 Cobra 10

**Guyra Lamb and Potato Festival
NIGHT Duty Roster 2026**

Tuesday January 13th

Pony Club

Wednesday January 14th

Guyra Catholic Church

Thursday January 15th

Guyra Rural Bushfire Brigade

Friday January 16th

Guyra SES

Saturday January 17th

Guyra VRA

Sunday January 18th

Guyra Gun Club

Monday January 19th

Tenterden Bushfire Brigade

Tuesday January 20th

Guyra VRA

Wednesday January 21st

Seven Day Adventist Church

Thursday January 22nd

Guyra Pistol Club

Friday January 23rd

Guyra SES

Saturday January 24th

Guyra Soccer Club

Sunday January 25th

Black Mountain Bushfire Brigade

NIGHT WATCH REQUIRES A MINIMUM OF 2 ADULTS PER SHIFT.

You are required to walk around every 10-15 minutes during the night.

NIGHT WATCH

STARTS : 8.00pm

FINISH: 6.00am

Council News

Water update

Council is pleased to share that water quality in Guyra's dams has improved. The orange colour in the bottom dam is gone, and the green colour in the top dam is much lighter. Currently, there are no noticeable accumulations of dense green algae present. Our team is keeping a close watch on the dams since algae can reappear rapidly. The water levels in both dams are nearly at capacity.

At the water treatment plant, things have improved a lot over the past two weeks. The water coming out of the plant is clear,

and there have been no taste or smell issues for the last three to four days.

Council is also working with NSW water regulator Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) to improve treatment and deal with manganese in the water. This year, important upgrades will take place which includes installation of a new automated Powder Activated Carbon (PAC) system for better water treatment to combat taste and odour. In February, we'll start the tender for a new unit to mix water in the bottom dam and have it installed by December. We're also looking into options for an ozone system in Guyra. We'll service or replace the raw water pumps so they can handle future demand and systems like ozone and UV.

Longterm, Council plans to build new treatment systems with ozone and UV



technology. It will be fully automated with power supplemented by solar and batteries.

Council is committed to providing safe, clean water for the Guyra community. We'll keep monitoring the dams and share updates with residents.

Council Meetings

The next scheduled council meeting is 18 February 2026.

All meetings will be held at 4pm in the Armidale Council Chambers unless stated otherwise. The public is welcome to watch live streaming over YouTube, or attend in person.

Current Vacancies

[Elsa Dixon School Based Trainee Opportunities](#) - Closes 18 January.

[Chief Officer-Assets and Services](#) - Closes 26 January.

[Casual Swimming Pool Job Register](#) - Closes 1 March.



Ryanda Street reconstruction

Preliminary works commenced last week on the reconstruction of Ryanda Street in Guyra. The \$1.9 million Ryanda Street Road Reconstruction and Stormwater Drainage Project will include upgrades to footpaths, improved pedestrian crossings, and enhanced connectivity between key areas of the town.

Works include:

- Installation of piped stormwater drainage from South of Urandangie Street to North of Tenterden Street, designed to support future road upgrades towards Urandangie Street.

- Stormwater drainage improvements
- Complete reconstruction of Ryanda Street between Ollera and Tenterden Streets, which will include new kerb and gutter, subsoil drainage, new property accesses
- Creation of 28 angled parking spaces along Ryanda Street next to the sports field.
- A new shared path from Dutton Parade to Ollera Street, alongside the tennis court and sports field – this will ultimately connect to the shared path in front of Guyra High School and supports Council's Active Transport Strategy.

Guyra Library Program

[Virtual Reality](#)- January 16 10.15 am-4.30pm, ages 10+ booking required. Search '[Guyra library program](#)' for more information.

Free entry at Guyra Pool on Australia Day-26 January

Community dig deep to preserve wetlands

More than 2,640 native seedlings have now been planted at the Little Llangothlin Nature Reserve near Guyra as part of revegetation works being carried out by the NSW Government's Local Land Services, alongside local Aboriginal organisations and community members.

The reserve is the only site of its kind in the Northern Tablelands and is Ramsar listed, providing critical habitat for many native species.

The Highland Wetlands Conservation Project is funded by the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust and delivered by Northern Tablelands Local Land Services, a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel.

Since the project began in 2023, 1,560 New England Peppermint (*Eucalyptus nova-anglica*) seedlings have been planted, with another 720 seedlings to be planted by 30 June 2027.

"The wetlands provide an important ecosystem for a diverse range of native, including threatened, plant and animal species," said Anya Salmon, Senior Land Services Officer, Northern Tablelands Local Land Services.

"They also provide refuge during drought for waterbirds such as the Pacific black duck, grey teal, Australasian bittern, Australasian shoveler, blue-billed



Banbai Junior Rangers and students from Guyra Central School helped at each planting

duck, magpie geese, Eurasian coot and white-faced heron," she said.

Key to the project's success is the partnership with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, which is assisting with site preparation, along with the Guyra Local Aboriginal Land Council and Banbai Rangers, who are supporting the planting program.

"A highlight this year was having Banbai Junior Rangers and students from Guyra Central School helping at each planting session," Ms Salmon said.

"They applied themselves fully to the task, learned valuable skills and got to spend time on Country. They were a pleasure to have around and we hope they're able to be involved in remaining

planting activities."

To support seedling survival, plantings are being monitored throughout the project, which runs until 30 June 2028.

Revegetation works are just one component of the project, alongside Bell's turtle preservation, water quality and plant surveys, and invasive weed and pest animal control activities.

OPINION: Silencing ratepayers will destroy local democracy

Across New South Wales, a quiet but serious change has taken place in how local councils operate. Under amendments to the Model Code of Meeting Practice, ratepayers are now barred from speaking during council meetings, even when decisions directly affect their lives, properties, and communities.

This is not a minor procedural tweak. It strikes at the heart of local democracy.

Ratepayers fund councils. They live with the outcomes of council decisions every day. Being present in the chamber - able to speak while issues are de-

bated and decisions made - is not a disruption. It is transparency in action.

Supporters of the changes argue that councils can still hold public forums before meetings. But separating public input from the actual debate removes immediacy and accountability. It turns community engagement into a box-ticking exercise, safely distanced from where power is exercised.

Worse, the changes rest on an unfair assumption: that community participation is inherently disorderly. Councils already have powers to manage meetings

and deal with genuinely abusive behaviour. Silencing everyone to manage a handful of bad actors is neither proportionate nor democratic.

Representative ratepayer groups exist to streamline engagement—not inflame it. Excluding these voices does not reduce tension; it fuels frustration and mistrust. When people feel shut out, confidence in local government erodes.

This issue has been formally raised with Ron Hoenig, Minister for Local Government, by Save and Grow Guyra Ratepayers Inc, calling for the govern-

ment to reconsider these changes and to consult genuinely with the communities affected.

Local government works best when it is open, accountable, and connected to the people it serves. Restricting ratepayer participation moves us in the opposite direction.

If councils are meant to be the most accessible level of government, then shutting the public out of the room where decisions are made is a step too far.

Rob Lenehan
Chairman - Save and Grow Guyra Ratepayers Inc.

Australia Day Ambassador announced

Celebrated French-born chef David Bitton will visit Guyra as part of his role as an Australia Day Ambassador (ADA) for the Armidale region, bringing with him a powerful story of resilience, gratitude and community spirit.

For David, the ambassador role is a great honour, with 2026 marking his 11th year representing the Australia Day Ambassador Program.

David proudly celebrates the resilience, diversity and generosity that have shaped his journey and continue to inspire communities across Australia. His story is one that reflects the opportunities this country offers and the values it upholds.

Arriving in Australia from France on Anzac Day in 1991 with just two suitcases and one thousand dollars, David embraced his new home with determination and optimism. He quickly built a life that exemplifies the very best of Australian values—hard work, generosity

and a strong sense of community.

David's culinary career began in some of Australia's most prestigious establishments, including the Ritz-Carlton, Hayman Island, The Windsor Hotel and Sheraton on the Park, where he became Head Chef and cooked for royalty, premiers and international icons. It was during this time that he met his wife and business partner, Sohani, who has been by his side for more than 35 years.

In 2000, David and Sohani opened a small six-table café in Alexandria, which they grew over 25 years into the much-loved Bitton Alexandria, renowned for its quality, warmth and strong community connection. In 2025, David announced the sale of the flagship venue, marking a proud milestone and closing an important chapter in their journey.

The Bitton legacy continues through Bitton Rose Bay, now led by David and his daughter, and through the Bitton gourmet product range, which is stocked nationally, including in



David Bitton will be in Guyra in his role as Australia Day Ambassador

Woolworths, ensuring the Bitton name remains firmly part of Australia's food landscape.

Beyond his restaurants, David's

work has extended into consulting, teaching, industry collaborations and international product launches. In recognition of his contribution to hospitality and cultural connection, he was honoured in 2025 with the Culinary and Gastronomy Award at the French Australian Excellence Awards.

A passionate supporter of charitable causes, David has long been a leading contributor to major fundraising efforts for organisations such as the Mental Wheels Foundation, Lifehouse, and Ronald McDonald House. His commitment to giving back is driven by deep compassion and a genuine desire to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

David Bitton's visit to Guyra as an Australia Day Ambassador offers a chance for the community to hear firsthand a remarkable story of perseverance, gratitude and the enduring spirit that makes Australia home.

Rural Market Reports

Guyra Sheep and Lamb

Guyra yarded a total of 1,521 head at the January 6th sale, comprising 705 lambs and 816 sheep, with strong competition evident across most categories, particularly for heavier and well-finished stock.

Lambs were well supplied, with crossbred lambs (214 head) selling to a top of \$310 and averaging \$212.62. Heavy lambs were very strong, while lighter lines eased back to trade values. Merino lambs (311 head) reached \$230 and averaged \$135.68, with solid demand for heavy weights but softer competition for lighter lambs. Exotic lambs (180 head) topped at \$262, averaging \$156.84, with premiums paid for heavier lambs and easing prices for lighter types.

The hogget yarding (64 head) sold to \$202, averaging \$161.47, with stronger competition for heavier hoggets and lighter

weights easing. Wethers (301 head) sold exceptionally well, reaching \$284 and averaging \$204.56, with heavy wethers attracting strong buyer interest.

Ewes saw mixed results. Cross-bred ewes (53 head) topped at \$220, averaging \$192.49, with moderate competition and better returns for heavier ewes. Merino ewes (325 head) sold to \$229, averaging \$153.81, with strong demand for prime Merinos and lighter types easing. Exotic ewes (48 head) reached \$234, averaging \$211.17, with good demand for quality lines and steady prices overall.

A small yarding of rams was offered, with crossbred rams (7 head) selling to \$140, while Merino rams (37 head) reached \$184 and averaged \$176.22, with stronger demand for prime rams. Ram lambs (24 head) sold to \$180, averaging \$171.88, with limited supply supporting a steady trade.

Guyra Lamb and Potato Festival Canteen Duty Roster 2026

Wednesday January 14th
Tenterden Bushfire Brigade
Guyra Central School Seniors
Thursday January 15th
Guyra CWA
Guyra Bowling Club
Friday January 16th
Tenterden Hall Committee
Can Assist
Saturday January 17th
Guyra Show Society
Guyra Gun Club
Sunday January 18th
Seventh Day Adventist Church
Guyra Junior League

Monday January 19th
Veterans Golf
Polocrosse
Tuesday January 20th
Ben Lomond Hall Committee
Women's Catholic League
Wednesday January 21st
Guyra Central School P&C
Guyra Rotary Club
Thursday January 22nd
Save and Grow Guyra
Guyra Neighbourhood Centre

Friday January 23rd
Pathfinders
Guyra Memorial Hall
Saturday January 24th
Guyra Show Society
Guyra Lions Club
Sunday January 25th
Golf Ladies
Save and Grow Guyra
Monday January 26th
Committee
Guyra Pony Club

EACH COMMUNITY GROUP NEEDS TO PROVIDE A MINIMUM OF 10 WORKERS PER SHIFT

**FIRST SHIFT:
7.30AM – 2.15PM**

SECOND SHIFT: 1.45PM- 8.30PM



Classifieds Tradies & Services

AUSTRALIA DAY

Australia Day Dinner & Awards

Sunday, 25th January
6.30pm, Bowling & Rec. Club
Tickets \$30 from GALA

Ben Lomond Breakfast - 7am

Ben Lomong War Memorial Hall

Morning Tea - 9.30am

Guya Historical Museum

Flag Raising - 11am

Lamb & Potato Festival

RAFFLE RESULTS

HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

December Christmas raffle: 1st Bertha Reeves, 2nd Chris Thornbury. Thank you to all who supported us.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM

GUYRA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

is open on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays 10.30am to 2pm.
188 Bradley Street, Guyra

FOOD PANTRY

Food Pantry at The Chapel 66 Llangothlin Street, Guyra

**OPEN this FRIDAY
9am-12pm**

Contact: 0455 232 073

COURSES AT NECC

First Aid

Sunday, 15th February

Chemical Course (Full & Refresher)

Wednesday, 11th March

Bookings essential at

New England Community College

(RTO#90145)

Phone: 6779 2132

E: admin@gala.org.au

MEETING ROOM FOR HIRE

Conference/Meeting Room

available for hire

- Reasonable rates
- Zoom meetings arranged
- Smart Board or Data Projector
- Catering arranged on request
- Air conditioned

For your function or meeting

Contact: The GALA Centre

136 Bradley Street, Guyra

Ph: 6779 2132

E: admin@gala.org.au

POSITION VACANT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTREACH SUPPORT OFFICER

Permanent Part-Time – 0.8 PTE (30.4 hrs/week) - New England Community College (NECC)

New England Community College (GALA) is seeking a motivated and community-minded person to join our team as a Community Engagement Outreach Support Officer.

The role supports disadvantaged and vulnerable learners across the region by promoting Adult and Community Education (ACE) and Foundation Skills programs, strengthening referral pathways, and engaging with local community groups, services, and organisations. Regular travel throughout the New England region is required, and applicants must have access to a reliable, roadworthy vehicle.

Key duties include:

- Attending community events, expos, and interagency meetings.
- Building culturally respectful relationships with local communities.
- Promoting learning opportunities to disadvantaged groups.

- Developing and maintaining partnerships and referral pathways.
- Recording outreach activities and completing required reports.
- Supporting culturally safe learning approaches.

Essential criteria:

- Experience in community engagement, outreach, or partnerships.
- Strong communication and organisational skills.
- Cultural competence, including working respectfully with Aboriginal and CALD communities.
- Ability to work independently and manage competing priorities.
- Digital literacy (email, Microsoft Office, reporting systems).
- Strong written communication skills.
- Current Working With Children Check and driver's licence.

- Access to a reliable, roadworthy vehicle for work use.

Desirable:

- Knowledge of ACE or Foundation Skills programs.

Employment conditions are under the Educational Services (Post-Secondary Education) Award.

A 3-month probation period applies.

Travel expenses are reimbursed in accordance with organisational policy.

How to Apply:

Please submit a resume and cover letter addressing the selection criteria to:

Kelso Looker, Executive Officer
kelso@gala.org.au

For a detailed Position Description, please visit: www.gala.org.au

Applications close:
COB 30 January 2026

CLAIM THE DATE

WED- MON 14th-26th JANUARY

Lamb and Potato Festival

FRIDAY, 6th FEBRUARY

7pm at Aust. Poetry Hall of Fame

**Gwyn Ashton presents
"A Night of Guitar"**

An upmarket theatre show from acoustic folk roots, blues to electric blues, rock and beyond.
www.trybooking.com/DGKEE

FRI-SAT, 20th & 21st FEBRUARY

Guya Show

WEDNESDAY, 25th FEBRUARY

Save & Grow Guyra Ratepayers Inc
AGM 6pm at Guyra Bowling and Recreation Club

FRIDAY, 20th FEBRUARY

Guya Lamb Show and Sale
at Guyra Show Ground

FRIDAY, 27th MARCH

2pm at Aust. Poetry Hall of Fame
Life & Rhymes of Banjo Paterson
125th anniversary tour feat Gregory North www.trybooking.com/DGWQO

9 - 12 JULY 2026

Guya SnowFest

Visit www.guyrasnowfest.com to subscribe for information.

Signs on ute need replacement.

Community is the lifeblood, strength and success in all its interests.

Thanks for acceptance of the signs.
New laws will influence return.

Tradies & Services

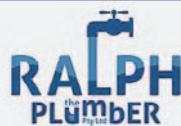
- Odd Jobs done
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- Gardening ... + more

Call Roger 0473 656 686
ABN 027 27 859 269

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nathanjusher@outlook.com



If I say I will be there, I will be there.

Licence No. 346186C

Ralph Luo

• 0431 277 450

✉ : wolfunec@yahoo.com.au

Guyra
Carpet
Cleaning
Steve

0404 485 585

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- Solar Hot Water • Gas Heaters • Gas Fitters
- Septic Systems • LPG Supplier • BOC Agents
- Bobcat & Backhoe Hire
- Excavator & Scissor Lift Hire

RJ & KA Hammond
HAMMOND PLUMBING
67 Ollera St, Guyra
Ph: 6779 1434

Men's Bowls

Results from recent bowls play saw R. Walls claim victory in the Handicap Singles, defeating A. Bull 31–9. In the Open Pairs, R. Moore and P. Johnson combined well to secure a 20–18 win over A. Bull and J. Varco in a closely contested match.

Looking ahead, next weekend will see the club host the Steven Sole Memorial Fours Car-

nival, with all proceeds from raffle sales going towards melanoma research, supporting an important and worthy cause.

Members are also reminded that a meeting for all bowlers will be held on Sunday, February 1, to elect new selectors for pennants, appoint a new match committee, and conduct the presentation of club championships. All bowlers are encouraged to attend.

CWA Guyra Evening Branch PRESENTS

ART EXHIBITION

IN CONJUNCTION WITH

GUYRA LAMB & POTATO FESTIVAL

January 16-25 2026
10am-4pm daily
GALA 136 Bradley Street Guyra

Opening Night

Friday, 16th January - 6pm
Tickets \$10 from GALA
Includes complimentary drink on arrival and canapes.
Raffles & lucky door prize



Email:
news@gala.org.au
advertising@gala.org.au



Phone: 6779 2347 or
6779 2132



Post or call in:
136 Bradley Street, Guyra



Online:
facebook.com/guyragazette/
Full edition can be read online at:
www.guyragazette.com.au

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Editor: Janelle Stewart **Advertising:** Martha Weiderman

Junior Golf Ambrose

On Saturday December 20th a group of juniors turned up for a fun 7 hole Ambrose event before Christmas.

This will be something in 2026 we will be looking to do a lot more of, not only Ambrose but some fun individual events as well.

The winners for the day were Indigo Atkin and Noah and Kayne Brennan. Shot of the day went to Indigo Atkin. Nearest the pin went to Ashton Hutton.

Well done to all the kids, there was a lot of potential shown from all of them.

Thank you to the grown-ups who came along for a bit of fun as well.



Plenty of golf action over the break

Hams and Turkeys were up for grabs on Sunday December 21st and the competition was fierce. It was a glorious day and the course was in immaculate shape, all made for good scores.

The winners for the day with a score of 45 were Dick Burey and Ray Sweeney. Runners up were Robert Moore and Steve Kliendienst with a score of 42. A great day had by all.

This was followed by an awesome turnout for the Boxing Day Ambrose. Over 80 members and visitors took part in a great day of fun before, during and after the golf.

All winners for the day are as follows.

Nearest the pins 7th- Braith Kliendienst, 9th-Kerry Bull, 10th-Wayne Johnson, 18th-Matt Bull. Longest drive for Men was Mick (not Matt) Bull and Longest drive for Ladies was Kerry Bull.

Ladies winners for the day were Sheree Clark and Heidi Newberry with the Runners Up Nat Mendes and Annabelle Lenehan. Mixed Winners were Ian and Leonne Taylor with Runners Up Mick and Wendy Jackson.

Nett Winners for the Men were Bob Burey and Kyle Oehlers with Runners Up Trent Mendes and Les Perrett. Runners up in the Gross were

Mick and Matt Bull. Major Winners for the day with a brilliant score of 68 were Braith and B.J Kliendienst.

Thank you to the Guyra Bowling Club for sponsoring and supporting such a popular event for the town.

The 3rd round of Matchplay must be completed by Sunday the 25th. Matches are Beau Orchard v Robert Moore, Matt Jackson v Peter Jackson, Mick Purvis v Darrin Towells, Neil Paine v Trent Mendes, Noah Brennan v Taylor Brennan.

HAPPY GOLFING FOR 2026.



Left: Mixed winners Ian and Leonie Taylor
Above: Men's Gross winners were Braith and BJ Kliendienst (Braith with Steve Kliendienst)

Right: Men's Nett Winners Bob Burey and Kyle Oehlers

