

SE news

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LP

9.00AM

That's a wrap! Thanks for joining us for your Wednesday morning news fix. We'll see you tomorrow morning for all the latest local, national and international news. Have a good day!

TD

8.57AM

8.54AM

SPORT: THREE Highlands rugby league players have a big opportunity to impress.

Mittagong Lion Pat Brown has been selected in the Western Suburbs Magpies' 2015 Harold Matthews train-on squad, while Moss Vale pair Ray Stone and Tom Angel have been picked in the Magpies' SG Ball train-on squad. [Read more here.](#)

8.51AM

NATIONAL: When Gough and Margaret Whitlam were caught up in an earthquake during a visit to **China**, a cartoonist took the opportunity to have some fun with the incident. [Read more here.](#)

8.48AM

8.45AM

INTERNATIONAL: Charlie Sheen is single again after breaking off his engagement to adult film star lover Scottine 'Brett' Rossi. [Read more here.](#)

8.42AM

SPORT: Cronulla are in negotiations to sign Ben Barba as a replacement for sacked superstar Todd Carney.

Fairfax Media can reveal the Sharks have earmarked Barba to fill the vacant No.6 jersey and are hopeful Brisbane will grant him a release in order to join the wooden spooners next year. [Read more here.](#)

8.39AM

NATIONAL: WHAT WHITLAM DID FOR YOU

The Whitlam government lasted less than three years but its legacy endures almost four decades later. [Read more here.](#)

8.36AM

SPORT: HIGHLANDER Lauren Cheatle captained the under 18s women's combined Southern/Illawarra zone team at the recent NSW Country Cricket Championships. [Read more here.](#)

8.33AM

POLL: Have charities taken fundraising too far? [Vote here.](#)

8.30AM

SPORT: HELLO to all the Marlin Fishing Club members and families and also to the club's sponsors Spiro and Paul from the Marlin Hotel.

Thank you Vicki and Spiro for again providing the awesome entertainer Jacii, on the day of the club's barbecue.

8.27AM

NATIONAL: Two men have been charged with murdering truck driver Keith Cini during a home invasion at Badgerys Creek in May. [Read more here.](#)

8.24AM

INTERNATIONAL: In a city awash with blood and gore, it borders on precious for the perpetrators of some of the brutality to demand that we slice and dice words in depicting their actions for a foreign audience. [Read more here.](#)

8.21AM

LOCAL: Yesterday we asked if you thought Australia was ready to deal with a potential Ebola case and just 25 per cent of you said it was. 75 per cent of you said Australia was not prepared.

8.18AM

SPORT: ALL summer Independent Sporting Association (ISA) competitions are now underway. [Read more here.](#)

8.15AM

LOCAL: THE Southern Highlands will host the Tough Mudder competition on November 15 and 16. [Read more here.](#)

8.12AM

SPORT: BOWRAL cyclist Tirian McManus is aiming to grab **gold** for Australia. [Read more here.](#)

8.09AM

8.06AM

INTERNATIONAL: **Hong Kong's** political crisis shifted from its city streets to an austere university lecture theatre as student protest leaders faced off with government officials in a much-anticipated televised debate after more than three weeks of an unprecedented civil disobedience campaign. [Read more here.](#)

8.03AM

LOCAL: AN EAST Bowral man had his licence disqualified for two years and was fined \$600 when he faced Moss Vale Local Court last month. [Read more here.](#)

8.00AM

EDITORIAL: IS it time for some charities to review their fundraising approach?

The list of charitable organisations seems endless. [Read more here.](#)

7.45AM

7.42AM

EXETER Public School students will soon be able to put their green thumbs to good use.

The Highlands Garden Society recently donated \$3500 to the school to help with a new kitchen garden. [More here.](#)

7.40AM

SOUTHERN Branch Football Club's trials for its 2015 Skills **Acquisition** Program (SAP) continue on Thursday, October 23. [More here.](#)

7.38AM

ROADS from Mittagong to Moss Vale were lined with trucks on Saturday, all for a good cause. [More here.](#)

7.37AM

7.33AM

7.32AM

Today's forecast in the Highlands is for cloud clearing during the morning to a mostly sunny afternoon. Winds N/NE 15 to 20 km/h tending N/NW 25 to 35 km/h early in the morning then tending N/NE in the evening and a Daytime maximum temperature of 21.

7.27AM

YET another koala has come out of the eucalypts in the Highlands.

A juvenile koala was sighted by residents on Elsworth Avenue, Mittagong on Monday morning as he made his way up the side of their houses. [More here.](#)

7.23AM

THE fate of the Mittagong Bowling Club is set to be decided tonight.

Councillors will address the latest response from the NSW Government Police and Justice about the future of the old bowling club. [More here.](#)

7.19AM

BOWRAL and District Hospital staff members now have a place to unwind at work. [More here.](#)

7.14AM

Geoff Goodfellow shares his stories of days gone by in this week's Across the River. [More here.](#)

7.10AM

BOWRAL cyclist Tirian McManus is aiming to grab **gold** for Australia. [More here.](#)

7.08AM

RAISE your heart rate and awareness for diabetes at the same time with Anytime Fitness in Bowral. [More here.](#)

TRAFFIC: All Southern Highlands roads are open and clear.

TRAINS: There is a good service on the Southern Highlands line this morning.

Here's a look at what the local weather is doing right now.

7.00AM: Good morning and welcome to the Southern Highlands Rise and Shine. Over the next few hours we will be bringing you as much information as possible from across the Southern Highlands and nationally.

Weather, road conditions, breaking news, we will have it all - and we'd love to have your help! If there's anything happening in your part of the world, drop us a line! Email jackie.meyers@fairfaxmedia.com.au

Good morning. Need a [national news](#) snapshot first thing? Well, we have you covered.

Could it be that The Bachelor saga is finally drawing to a close?

Even The Project's Carrie Bickmore announced she was passing on the baton as The Bachelor correspondent after Tuesday's show failed to milk any more drama out of Blake Garvey and his romantic debacles.

In a brief five-minute segment on Tuesday's show, following Monday night's tell-all interview with Blake Garvey and his newly revealed lover Louise Pillidge from their Thai hideaway, very little emerged to spark any new fuel for The Bachelor gossip juggernaut.

In fact the biggest sign that The Bachelor barrel was well and truly beyond any more scraping was that The Project's producers had to resort to padding out the segment with soundbites from celebrity fixer Max Markson, who is apparently now Garvey's manager. [More here.](#)

6.58am: BALLARAT: A teenager has penned a heartfelt letter to Prime Minister Tony Abbott, imploring him to change his stance on same-sex marriage to allow her two "loving and beautiful" mums to marry.

In the three-page letter written by Natalie Shaw, 15, she called on the federal government to legally recognise the love between homosexual couples.

The Mount Helen resident told Mr Abbott she had only ever known a life with two mothers " her biological mum Jacki Colmer and her loving partner Nicky Bell. [Read more.](#)

6.55am: TAMWORTH: A Tamworth medical marijuana crusader has launched a scathing broadside at the Australian Medical Association (AMA) amid fears cannabis medicine legalisation could be "many years away".

The NSW government this month announced it would conduct clinical trials into marijuana's effectiveness in treating a range of conditions, a move some are viewing as a delaying tactic to legalisation due to pressure from the powerful doctors' lobby group.

Just 10 weeks out from its trial report deadline, the government is yet to even publicly announce who is on its working party.

The AMA is staunchly against legalising " or even trialling " the raw plant or any of its oils for medical use, instead backing only cannabis-based pharmaceuticals. [Read more.](#)

6.50am: ILLAWARRA: The mother of two young girls molested by Albion Park Public School assistant principal Mark Forbes says she hopes his lengthy jail term gives him time to reflect on his crimes.

Forbes, 54, was accused of inappropriately touching the girls' genitals at his Keiraville home in March last year, but repeatedly denied the allegations and elected to take the case to trial.

However a 12-person jury ultimately failed to believe his claims of innocence, finding him guilty of five charges of aggravated indecent assault of a child and one charge of aggravated sexual assault of a child following a five-day hearing in June.

On Tuesday, Forbes was sentenced to a maximum 11 years' jail, with a non-parole period of five-and-a-half years. [More here.](#)

6.45am: MAITLAND: A lack of infrastructure main-tenance is to blame for poor internet service in the Maitland area, an -information technology expert says.

David Campbell works in computer network security and has spent time as an employee of a small internet service provider in Melbourne.

He now lives in East Maitland, about 100 metres outside the boundary of the National Broadband Network rollout.

Mr Campbell said every time it rained, his internet service became unreliable. "It's a bit rough. Every time it rains, the internet drops out," he said. [More here.](#)

6.40am: NEWCASTLE: Miner Anglo American says it will consider all options to keep its Drayton South mine proposal alive but admits the project has been dealt a "shattering blow" in the form of rejection by the Planning Assessment Commission.

The state's planning system came under fire yet again in the wake of the decision published on Tuesday, with about 500 full-time jobs and more contractors at the existing Drayton mine, who were expected to transfer to the new operation, likely to lose their positions from as early as next year.

But the Hunter's thoroughbred horse breeders were celebrating after a long campaign to fend off the proposal near major studs Coolmore and Darley. [More here.](#)

6.35am: BLUE MOUNTAINS: The biggest search in Australia couldn't find aviator Max Hazelton's small Auster when it crashed in the Blue Mountains and 60 years later this week all efforts again failed to find the site.

Fellow aviator and businessman Dick Smith set up the search because he said Mr Hazelton was an icon and the only pilot to survive a crash in the rugged mountains. Mr Hazelton walked out of the bush six days later.

He was covered in scratches and caked in mud. His clothes were ripped by brambles and his feet were bruised, cut and bleeding.

Mr Smith said he wanted to find where the plane had ploughed through the top of trees in low cloud before flipping on its back. [Full story here.](#)

6.30am: DUBBO: A pilot executed a safe emergency landing at Dubbo Regional Airport on Tuesday afternoon. Emergency services surrounded the plane to confirm all passengers were safe about 2.25pm.

Emergency services converged on Dubbo Airport after reports a light aircraft may have problems with the undercarriage of the plane.

The plane, with four people on board, circled the airport for about 40 minutes before it landed. [Video and full story here.](#)

6.25am: ROCKY CAPE: Several properties came under threat from a fire in the Rocky Cape National Park yesterday.

More than eight Tasmania Fire Service crews and Tasmania Parks and Wildlife helicopters monitored and eventually contained the blaze.

TFS crews were stationed at five houses in the area deemed to be under threat from embers.

Crews were first alerted to the fire just metres from the Bass Highway near the Rocky Cape Roadhouse about 1.30pm. [More here.](#)

6.20am: ARMIDALE: Water could be restricted to debtors' households after a spike in unpaid water bills spurred Armidale Dumaresq Council into action.

Up to 80 households face having their water supply capped to just two litres a minute because of outstanding bills.

General manager Glenn Wilcox was forced to act after the rise in overdue water rates.

Armidale Dumaresq services about 8700 water users and it now had an "unacceptable level of debt" building up on overdue water rates, Mr Wilcox said. [More here.](#)

6.15am: BENDIGO: Nine Christian leaders have been arrested in Bendigo after a peaceful protest in Senator Bridget McKenzie's office.

About 10 people were outside the office, singing in support of the nine leaders on the inside.

The group was targeting the Bendigo senator as a plea for asylum seeker children and refused to leave until the senator offered her public support. [Read more.](#)

6.10am: BOMBALA: A woman who went missing from Rockton, near Bombala, in December 2008 has officially been declared dead by the NSW Coroner's Court.

Magistrate Mark Douglass handed down his findings on Tuesday, stating that while the manner and cause of her death was unknown, it was suspicious.

The finding states that Sylvia Pajuczok, a 53-year-old grandmother from Eden, died on or about December 23-24, 2008, in the vicinity of Rockton.

"Sylvia's death occurred in suspicious circumstances," the coroner said.

Her death will be the subject of an active and ongoing police investigation. [More here.](#)

6.05am: GOULBURN: Police expect more than 100 charges to be laid against 12 people arrested in dawn drug raids on eight properties in Goulburn and Sydney on Tuesday morning.

Eight search warrants were executed between 6.45am and 9am in the raids conducted by Strike Force Coull officers and detectives from the Hume Local Area Command Drug Unit, with the assistance of Strike Force Raptor, Dog Unit and Southern Region detectives.

An ounce and a half of methamphetamines, believed to be the drug Ice, was seized along with an estimated two kilograms of cannabis.

A firearm, a sum of cash, minor drugs and other property were also seized for investigation according to Hume Local Area Command Detective Inspector Chad Gillies in a statement to the media. [Read more.](#)

6.00am: REGIONAL: Let's start your day with a spin around Fairfax newspaper front pages today. [Click here.](#)

" Six former prime ministers helped **lead** tributes to Labor legend Gough Whitlam on Tuesday, highlighting his contributions to Australian life in the arts, civil society and on the international stage.

Former Liberal prime minister Malcolm Fraser, who replaced Mr Whitlam in the dramatic days of the 1975 dismissal, credited his former rival with opening new doors in Australia and helping "to show the possibility of a new and perhaps better future" after leading the ALP out of the political wilderness of 23 years of conservative rule.

"He is in some ways almost a mythological figure, he is revered, whatever the success or shortfalls of his government, he has played an enormously important part in Australians' life and that can't be taken from him," he told Fairfax Media. Click here for [photos of Mr Whitlam's life](#) and here for [photos of readers with the former PM.](#)

" Consumers are complaining that they cannot easily access free copies of their credit reports. Queries rolled in after a story recently about the new regime that came into effect in March, where monthly payment histories on loans and credit cards will be shown and reports will note any missed payments of more than 14 days.

Before March, credit reports, which credit agencies provide to lenders when they check on applicants, held only negative information, such as missed payments of more than 60 days and bankruptcies.

Credit agencies have to make available to consumers a free copy of their credit reports at least once a year. But readers have contacted Fairfax saying they were unable to find the free reports. More than 2 **million** people, or 13 per cent of the estimated 16 **million** Australians using credit, are at risk of credit default. [More here.](#)

" An Antarctic station leader, a humanitarian aid worker caring for refugees fleeing Syria, a medical innovator who has drastically cut sepsis mortality rates, and an adoption advocate with a Hollywood sheen " the group of NSW finalists for Australian of the Year 2015 is both eclectic and worthy.

The four NSW finalists are Narelle Campbell, a station leader in the Australian Antarctic Territory, actor Deborra-lee Furness, who has two adopted children and is working to overhaul the adoption process in Australia, Andrew Harper, a former Australian diplomat who is chief of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Jordan, which deals with a daily flood of people seeking asylum from the Syrian crisis, and professor Brendan Smith, who made a medical discovery that tests whether a person is suffering from septic shock or blood poisoning. Professor Smith's discovery has helped to cut sepsis mortality rates from almost 40 per cent to less than 7 per cent. [Read more.](#)

" Will we get an inside out building like the Pompidou Centre in Paris, an organic swirl like the Roche Tower in Basel, or something totally different?

Some of the world's most innovative architects including Renzo Piano, who first came to fame with the Centre Georges Pompidou, will compete to develop the winning concept for a \$450 **million** expansion of the Art Gallery of NSW.

The project, Sydney Modern, is expected to double the size of the gallery. It will also create a great cultural plaza that connects the gallery with the Domain and the Royal Botanic Gardens of NSW. [Read more.](#)

" The owner of a Rozelle convenience store destroyed by a fire that killed three people was too ill to appear in court on Tuesday morning.

Adeel Khan, 44, has been charged with three counts of murder and two of attempted murder, three counts of manslaughter and 17 charges relating to the damage to property caused by the fire in Darling Street on September 4.

One of those charges is setting fire for a financial gain, with police alleging the fire was deliberately lit.

Bianka O'Brien, 31, her baby son Jude and their neighbour Chris Noble, 27, all died in the fire. [More here.](#)

"Oscar Pistorius has been sentenced to five years in prison over the shooting death of his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp.

The South African athlete was last month found guilty of culpable homicide after Judge Thokozile Masipa acquitted him of the more serious charge of murder over Ms Steenkamp's death on Valentine's Day last year.

On Tuesday evening (Australian time) she sentenced the double amputee sprinter to the maximum term of five years on the count of culpable homicide.

On the second charge of violating the firearms act, she sentenced him to three years, wholly suspended.

The sentences will run concurrently.

"An Australian teenager who ran away from his Bankstown family home in June has surfaced in a chilling Islamic State video threatening Tony Abbott and vowing to fight until the militant group has conquered the West.

Abdullah Elmir, 17 appeared in the video posted on the internet on Monday night under the nom de guerre "Abu Khaled from Australia". He is dressed in military gear and holding a rifle, standing among several dozen fellow jihadists.

Speaking for a little under two minutes directly to the camera, Elmir baits the United States, Britain and "especially "Australia" to throw everything they have militarily against the Islamic State group, which has seized large tracts of territory across Syria and Iraq.

He then vows the group will keep fighting until it has raised the black flag of the Islamic State above the White House and beheaded "tyrants" "apparently referring to Western leaders including Mr Abbott. [More here.](#)

"Ocean temperatures are again warming in the Pacific, helping to drive global temperatures to new highs and also leaving conditions primed for an El Nino event to be declared in coming months.

The Bureau of Meteorology said sea surface temperatures in the central equatorial Pacific had warmed closer to El Nino-threshold levels in the past fortnight.

"They're at the warmest levels they've been since the build-up [for an El Nino] started in March," Andrew Watkins, manager of climate prediction services, told Fairfax Media.

However, meteorologists are yet to see the signature elements of such an event, such as a sustained stalling or reversal of the east-west trade winds, Dr Watkins said. [Read more.](#)

"Fairfax journalist Matt Wade has won the 2014 ACFID Media Award for excellence in reporting on international development issues. The award acknowledges Wade's efforts to highlight the 'forgotten famine' in South Sudan with a series of articles published in The Herald in August.

Sam Mostyn, the President of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), said Wade's coverage of the plight of the people in South Sudan was both powerful and compassionate.

"His stories articulated, in a dignified and accessible way, the personal struggles of those affected by food shortages and the complex historical and political situation in South Sudan," she said. [More here.](#)

"Yesterday's death of former Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam reminded me of this classic Norman Gunston interview from 1975's dismissal. Enjoy!

With a terminal cancer diagnosis meaning only months left to live, Belmont woman Stephanie Powell is focusing on what matters most to her: family.

However in such heartbreaking circumstances this has been far from easy because her husband, Blake, lives five hours away in Orange.

A project manager with experience in **mining** and engineering, he has been unable to find work in the Hunter despite attending numerous job interviews.

"He's used all of his holidays up," said Mrs Powell, who is a mother of two. "It's really tough not seeing him but we speak on the phone several times a day.

Mrs Powell, now aged 46, was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 2008.

She was only 22 days away from making the five-year milestone of having no cancer recurrence when she found out it had re-emerged in her liver, lungs and bones.

[Read more here.](#)

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