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Drenched in Aussie pride

Cooya Beach lads Noah and Jonah Field are all set for Douglas Shire Australia Day celebrations which include the Australia Day Awards Ceremony in Port Douglas on Friday, January 24 and a

free community pool party at Mossman Pool on Australia Day.

There's also the return of the Low Isle Launch Rally on Australia Day, the 50th such event which has delighted locals. More details Page 2

VILLAGE TROUBLES

Byron Filmer
Reporter

A "training village" for at-risk youth has been proposed by the Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation for a 200ha parcel of land directly across the river from Daintree Village.

But concerns have been raised by multiple residents of the tight-knit Village community, with one saying the project will be "detrimental" to the region if it goes ahead.

Plans for the Daintree River Station project submitted to Douglas Shire Council show as many as 17 buildings, including 12 accommodation suites, an education centre, rooms for families to stay overnight, and a two-room "chillout refuge unit".

One of the stated aims of the centre is to "address a range of issues, including mental health challenges, substance abuse, and behavioural concerns".

"The proposed training village by Jabalbina Aboriginal Corporation represents a comprehensive approach to addressing the complex needs of young Aboriginal

people and their families," the plans state.

"By providing vocational training, cultural programs, and therapeutic support, the village will offer participants the opportunity to rebuild their lives and contribute meaningfully to their communities."

A carpark is planned on Upper Daintree Road on the southern side of the Daintree River, with staff, occupants and families then catching a barge to access the site on the other side.

The land will likely have to be rezoned from its "rural" status to allow the development.

Long-term Daintree Village residents spoken to by Newsport said they were angry that locals were given less than two weeks to object to any possible reclassification of the land.

They also said they were unhappy about possible negative implications they believed the development may have on the region.

"It will absolutely ruin our area," one said.

Another said: "The impacts this

Continued on Page 5

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Ready to Launch

After years of absence, the beloved Low Isles Launch Rally is set to make a triumphant return on Australia Day, Sunday, 26 January, celebrating its 50th edition in grand style.

Presented by The Port Douglas Yacht Club with support from The Tin Shed, the rally will once again see motor launches, motor yachts, and sailing yachts set sail in celebration of this iconic Australia Day tradition.

Home values hold strong

Shaun Hollis
Journalist

Home prices are remaining strong in Douglas Shire despite national property values falling last month for the first time in two years.

The average Port Douglas house price has stayed steady at \$1,210,000 across the past two months and the average house

value has risen by 13 per cent in the past year, according to realestate.com.au.

In Mossman the average house price is \$460,000, slightly up from \$450,000 the month before and a rise of more than 6 per cent on the same time last year.

The average unit price in Port Douglas is \$425,000, a slight increase from \$420,000, but a 2 per

cent drop from the previous December.

Port Douglas real estate agent Raine and Horne's director David Cotton said he had noticed prices steadying out in past months.

"Interest rates will determine a lot, but I reckon, probably in April, we should see a little bit of a kick again," Mr Cotton said.

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Sharks stalk fishermen

Sharks have been eating fish from commercial fishing lines in much greater numbers since control nets were removed from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in 2019, Port Douglas fishers say.

Trout fisherman David "Foota" Lewkowski said this week bull shark numbers were now "out of control", with packs of sharks often following his boat looking for food.

"The sharks are a massive problem and they're getting worse," he said.

"Everyone knows there's a major shark problem out there."

He said the sharks seem to know when a fish is hooked and they attack straight away.

"If we get sharked out we have to leave the area," he said.

Fellow Douglas fisherman Gallagher Harbisher Thomson said the problem had been worsening since shark netting was removed.

"They're out of control," he said. "They're eating everything."

Mr Harbisher Thomson said he



Port Douglas fisher David "Foota" Lewkowski says bull sharks are a big issue. Picture: Shaun Hollis

had seen several different types of shark taking commercial fishing catches, including bull sharks, bronze whalers and whitetips.

In 2019 a Federal Court decision backed major changes to the

Federal Government's permit allowing Queensland to operate its shark-control program.

Shark nets in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park were removed as part of the changes, with then Queensland Fisheries Minister Mark Furner saying the restrictions meant it was no longer possible to carry out control measures legally and safely.

He said the changes had turned Queensland's program from a "catch and remove the risk" program to a "catch and release the risk" program.

An ongoing study by the University of Sunshine Coast, started in 2023 and set to wrap up later this year, has tagged more than 60 bull sharks in that region and has taken genetic samples from nearly 300 bitten fish in an effort to better understand how they operate.

The Queensland Primary Industries Department is also conducting a two-year project to identify better ways to stop sharks from taking fish.

Slinky's amazing survival story

Bryan Littlely
Editor

Dachshunds aren't really built to survive the wilds of rugged rainforest country, but 10-year-old Slinky the 'sausage dog' has shown it's not the dog in the fight but the fight in the dog that matters most.

Amanda Haines had given up hope her boy would return after disappearing into the rainforest around her Julatten home on December 17.

But miracles do happen, and can come in small packages, with Slinky hobbling hurt but alive into a neighbour's yard on 13 days af-

ter going missing.

"The chances of a tiny, 5kg Dachshund surviving out there weren't really in his favour," Amanda said.

"But somehow he has been able to Bear Grylls it!

"Our area is home to cassowaries, snakes and large pythons and goannas and as the days passed, it seemed impossible that he could still be alive.

Something has had a go at him... it looks like a goanna possibly.

"On Monday December 30 at 10.30am, we got a call that changed everything. Our lovely neighbour's daughter spotted



Slinky home with brother Domino Picture: Amanda Haines

Slinky wandering into their yard,13 days after he went missing."



To read the full story scan this QR code

DISEASE WARNING OVER MUDDY WATER

Far North Queenslanders are being asked to be extra vigilant when coming into contact with soil and muddy water, following a spike in cases of a dangerous disease in the Cairns region after recent rainfall.

There have been eight cases of melioidosis notified in the Cairns and Hinterland region in a week.

This is a high number of cases and a concern considering the wet season is not in full swing.

Melioidosis is a serious disease found in ground water and soil. It causes death in up to 50 per cent of untreated cases and up to 20 per cent of treated cases.



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10 YEARS AGO

Too many super yachts

Port Douglas is such a popular destination for superyacht operators that the Reef Marina is being forced to turn away vessels for lack of berthing space.

Marina Manager Rob Cruz said he'd already been forced to turn away three of the opulent vessels since the start of 2015.

The Marina has six berths for yachts over 30 metres, three of which are owned outright, with the remaining three 'nearly always full', according to Mr Cruz.

The Marina also features seven smaller berths that can accommodate 21-metre vessels, but these are usually too small to be considered superyachts.

Mr Cruz put down the crowding to Port Douglas's increasing popularity as a destination and also to the increasing numbers of large superyachts.

"The main industry trend at the moment is the growth for larger boats in the 24-30-metre range,"



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Service that sparkles

Adrian and Angela Whittaker, well-known fixtures in the Port Douglas community, have earned a strong reputation with Angel Construction.

But their ambition and entrepreneurial drive extends to Port Douglas Windows & Glass, a thriving glazing business that has grown into an independent leader in custom glazing solutions.

What started in May 2021 as a small extension of their construction business has since taken on a life of its own. Initially operating out of the storage unit at Angel Construction, the business grew rapidly to meet soaring demand.

Today, the business operates from a spacious facility in Mossman, perfectly equipped to deliver high-quality glazing services across residential and commercial sectors.

Their skilled team crafts sleek aluminium windows, durable doors, robust security screens, and bespoke pieces like mirrors, glass table tops, and frameless shower screens. From custom designs to emergency glass repairs, they provide reliable, top-tier solu-



The team behind Port Douglas Windows and Glass, driving its rapid growth and industry leadership in the region. From left to right: Travis Gooch (Manager), Kane Gray (Apprentice), Sam Folker (Workshop Manager), Jason Simiona (Storeman), Shanise Picton (Admin Officer), Angela Whittaker (Managing Director). Picture: Newsport, Jamie Jansen

tions, with all products made in-house or sourced within Australia.

As the only company north of Smithfield offering a full suite of custom glazing solutions, Port Douglas Windows & Glass has become a vital partner for homes and businesses throughout the Douglas Shire and beyond, including Julatten, Cooktown and the Daintree.

Their commitment to quality shines through in every project,

from everyday glazing needs to standout developments like Nathan Verri's Kaya Villas on Warner Street in Port Douglas.



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Local legends retire

After an incredible 45 years of service with Meals on Wheels, local volunteers Maree Crees and Carmen Bolton have officially hung up the car keys, marking the end of an era in community service.

It all started in Mossman around 1979 - though the exact year is a little fuzzy now - when Maree and her close friend Carmen decided to lend a hand to those in need.

With young children at home and a shared desire to make a difference, the pair joined the newly launched Meals on Wheels program, quickly becoming a reliable team delivering meals to elderly and vulnerable members of their community.

"I had a car, I could drive, and I had the time," Ms Crees said. "It was something I could do to make a difference."

In the early days, the meals were prepared in what is now known as the 'chook shed' at the Mossman Showgrounds - a humble yet functional space where volunteers would gather, cook, and package meals for delivery.

For 45 years, Ms Crees and Ms



Carmen Bolton and Maree Crees proudly hold their award from Meals on Wheels, recognising their remarkable 45 years of dedicated volunteering. Picture: Jamie Jansen, Newsport

Bolton delivered meals once a month on Wednesdays, forming a bond that went far beyond their volunteer shifts.

"If I couldn't go, Carmen would go with her husband. And if she couldn't make it, I'd go on my own," Ms Crees explained.

"We had plenty of chit-chat in the car, bowled together, and even volunteered at the school tuck shop, which gave us more time to catch up," Ms Bolton added.

But their efforts went beyond just delivering meals, their presence often became a lifeline for those they visited.

"Some of the people we visited were just so happy to see someone walk through the door," Ms Crees recalled. "Those smiles made every visit worthwhile."

For Ms Bolton, the greatest reward was the connections they built over the years.

Village Troubles

From Page 1

will have on the Daintree will be detrimental".

The Corporation has already been awarded State Government funding to build the centre through its "Intensive on Country" program.

"Funds have been granted for the planning, purchase and installation/construction of infrastructure, which is envisaged to occur by May 31, 2025," the application stated.

The Corporation is a community-led organisation that works to improve the lives of Aboriginal people through cultural revitalisation, economic development, and social empowerment.

Briefs

FLYING COP SQUAD

The new State Government is flying headlong into the task of trying to curb youth crime.

Queensland Police on Sunday (January 12) announced the "State Flying Squad" would be increased to close to 60 by adding more than 40 full-time officers who can be rapidly deployed to "strategically target" some of the state's worst offenders.

The Government said \$32.4m would be spent on the squad across the next five years.

"The State Flying Squad will bolster the police frontline across Queensland and have the firepower to ensure teenage criminals are held to account through the Making Queensland Safer Laws," Premier David Crisafulli said.

He said improving Queensland's crime offensive was one of the ways the Government was delivering on its commitment to help improve safety.

"This squad will strike at the heart of crime," Premier Crisafulli said.

Fiddling while Douglas burns

Lawrence Mason

Contributor

As we roll into 2025, I am sure everyone has done a bit of reflecting. I did. Especially because this time last year we were unloading helicopters and barges! So surreal it seems like a dream now. But it showed that we can and do work together in times of need and get the job done.

Part of my reflecting was to analyse business performance; we actually did not get business inter-

ruption insurance for the shop in December 2023, such was the thirst of locals. By this time last year there was I think a couple of lonely six packs in a cold room that can hold a hundred cases.

But then I started going back. Way back. Go back to 2009, or even 2014 and revenue was higher. I am talking the shop/bottleshop here, not the cafe. But wait I thought, didn't PK's build a shop?

They did but it was around 2003 so no factor. There are simply less

people staying here overnight, and less staff to service them.

The effects filter down. When Bresnahan/Voyages/Ocean Hotels had Ferntree and Coconut Beach pumping, there was a thriving staff village, and that was worth at least \$365k/yr in takings to us alone.



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SOCIALS

Sunday Market magic. Newport's Bryan Littlely was there, were you?



Giovanni Favaro is a famed face at the markets.



Digby, Campbell, Spencer and Bonnie Parsons from Melbourne.



Cousins Ida, River and Eli.



Erin Dagbert and her Issy Rose Creations.



Eva Ahnefeld.



Marie Keating and Gallara McInnes.

WHAT'S ON

STAY UP TO DATE

Scan this QR code to stay up to date with the latest events in the region



JANUARY 24

Friday Night Sound Healing, Time: 7pm - 8pm, Location: Port Douglas Yoga Studio

Wet Season Indoor Golf League, Time: 10am - 9pm, Location: Daddyshack PD golf shop, bottom of Grant St, Port Douglas. Opposite the Quicksilver building.

JANUARY 17

Friday Night Sound Healing, Time: 7pm - 8pm, Location: Port Douglas Yoga Studio

Drewboy @ Ellis Beach Bar & Grill, Time: 5:30pm - 8:30pm, Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

Wet Season Indoor Golf League, Time: 10am - 9pm, Location: Daddyshack PD golf shop, bottom of Grant St, Port Douglas. Opposite the Quicksilver building.

JANUARY 25

Community Food Gardening at Circle of Plenty, Time: 7am - 8.30am, Location: Circle of Plenty, Mossman Botanic Garden, Foxtan Ave, Mossman

JANUARY 18

Mossman Boat & Fishing Club Sign-on Day, Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm, Location: 33 Rankin Street, Newell Beach

Aussie Comedy Pub Show, Time: 6:30pm - 8:30pm, Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

Nicole Nighthawk @ Ellis Beach Bar & Grill, Time: 2:00pm - 5:00pm, Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

JANUARY 25

Tim Ellis GLIMPSES, Time: 10am daily - 4pm daily except Sundays 2pm, Location: Cairns Art Gallery, Cnr Shield and Abbott Streets, Cairns

JANUARY 19

Silent Yoga Retreat, Time: 9 am - 3.30 pm, Location: Niramaya DaySpa Cabana - 1 Bale Dr, Port Douglas

JANUARY 21
Food Gardening at Circle of Plenty, Mossman Botanic Garden, Time: 7am - 9am, Location: Circle of Plenty, Mossman Botanic Garden

JANUARY 26

Josh Kenwright @ Ellis Beach Bar & Grill, Time: 1:00pm - 4:00pm, Location: Ellis Beach Bar & Grill

JANUARY 23

Bingo, Time: 7pm - 9pm, Location: Club Mossman

Easy As - Free social media workshop for small business, Time: 6pm - 7:30pm, Location: Lean Her Gym - 1/11 Warner Street, Port Douglas

FEBRUARY 1

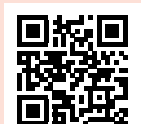
Takeover Dinner: Lagoon House Restaurant x Lúic Lác with Shaw + Smith, Time: 6PM - 9PM, Location: Lagoon House Restaurant Port Douglas

REAL ESTATE

OPEN HOMES
9/31-39 Murphy St, Port Douglas
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AUCTIONS
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Ray White



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YOU SAID IT! Opinion Page

LOTS OF LOVE FOR LOCAL LEGENDS

Cheyne Sellwood

So awesome!! Thanks you ladies for your community involvement and support!!

Kay Pike

Well done to you both. Such wonderful service to our community.

Racheal Pace

Amazing ... you both are a credit to the human race.

Rebecca Warland

Wow...what legends!! How beautiful and amazing!!

Allen Richard Lavender

HEROS is an appropriate description. Two wonderful people. RESPECT.

Anthea Crees

Local Legends

SHARKS STALK COMMERCIAL FISHING BOATS

Duncan Faichney

Sharks are out of control! You sometimes lose more fish than you keep due to the shark tax.

Richard Coxs (name not verified - Ed)

Sharks are in plague proportions out on that reef, we would have lost 10 good fish the other day due to sharks, They seem to be getting more brazen every trip we go on. I might add, they're of a monstrous size some of them. It's only a matter of time before they get a taste for human flesh.

Harry John Frazer

Start eating the sharks

Chrissy Geyer

Everything in the world's oceans are suffering, including sharks. Too much rubbish out there now and real food is becoming scarce. Why wouldn't they hang around fishing boats!

Sandy Lee

It's the sharks home they're fishing in.

Bret Deuble

Removing commercial nets has made it worse. They used to be controlled to some degree. Fish populations are very healthy, which has led to an increase as well.

Gordon Smith

Maybe stop stealing their food then?? Or eat flake?

SHIRE HOME VALUES RESIST NATIONAL SLOWDOWN

Tom Patts

Won't be long. There is fast nothing to do but retire and Airbnb and with backpackers leaving... residents will have to make their own coffees and brekkies.

Ryan Fudala

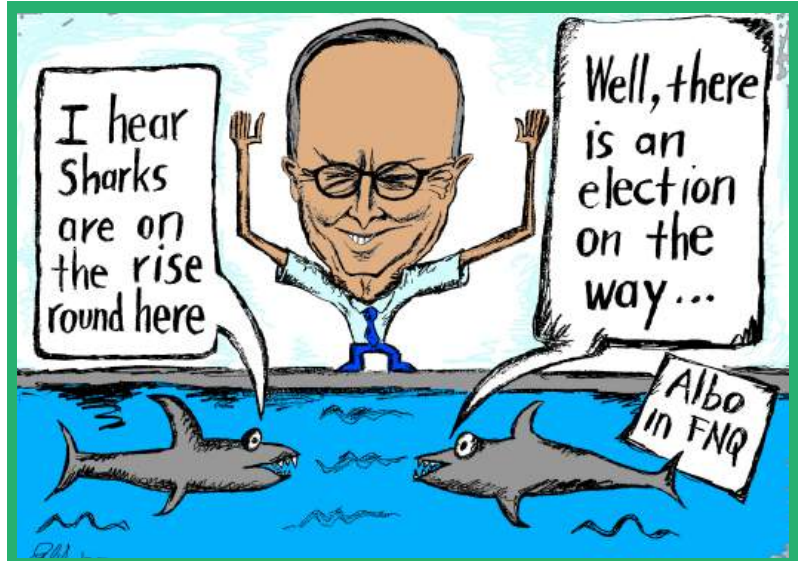
House prices won't drop in Port Douglas, not when we have more people moving here and no new land releases.

Michelle Simone (response to Ryan Fudala)

Yes they will. Look at Reef Resort, they are already selling lower. Things will never drop to where they were in 2020 but they will come down.

Maureen Fraser

Don't know what bush you're



How We See It!



Shaun Hollis and Bryan Littlely bring you a lighter look at local news online every Saturday

hiding under but property sales value dropping not upping in Port Douglas... so much so that we were thinking of selling but changed our minds as will not sell undervalued.

Christopher Saint

Don't forget all these real estate experts and economists said the house prices would fall between 10-30 per cent in 2020 when COVID hit and what happened? The exact opposite!

YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE NEAR DAINTREE VILLAGE

Corey Seaton

Ahh...NIMBY! Everyone wants it somewhere else! Lefties don't want them in jail but they don't want these sort of facilities in their areas. Righties want them in jail but don't want to have more jails in their area... Perhaps we just need to ship them overseas like we do with everyone else?

Yvonne Ruth

Is this the correct vibe for opposing???? All for rehabilitation of youth and complain about youth crime but I don't want that type of place near me even though it will be barge only access on the other side of a river few people choose to swim across.

Wayne Opie

So a bridge is coming then too?

David Connor

I think this can be a fantastic idea. Properly run rehabilitation, teaching multiple disciplines to enable educated access into the workforce. Go for it.

Josie Muller

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Crocs are back on track

The Port Douglas Crocs have impressed early in 2025, launching into the season with a solid first pre-season training on Monday.

The Crocs recruited well in the off season and a reinvigorated committee full of fresh faces alongside seasoned leaders has new club president Rusty Bradley enthusiastic for the season ahead.

With the 2023 Premiership and the launch of a women's side in 2024 the highlights of his four years involvement at the club,

Rusty says the Crocs expected big numbers at training from the get go to put them in the best position going into round one in April.

And the women's pre-season start will be not too far away from the men, with announcements to be made soon.

Crocs pre-season training is held every Monday and Wednesday at 5.30pm.

"2025 is our year but we need to put in the work first," Rusty said.



Coaching staff Shannon "Snowie" Gleeson, senior coach Nick Salter and Daniel Moore at the first pre season training for Port Douglas Crocs. Picture: Bryan Littleley

SPORT RESULTS

Results

Mossman Men's Bowls

Results Saturday, January 11
Derek Franklin & Mike Sims +1; Goe Girgenti, Dave Blain & Eric Smith +1; Bernard Savage, Terry Richards & Steve Cue +6; Warren McCoist, Ranad Edwards & Bernie Wolland +7; winners on the day Bill Allison & David White +8.

Cricket

Port Douglas Muddies 2nd grade, Sunday, January 12
Muddies 1/82 d North Cairns 10/81
(A. Bannerman 7/13, Ethan McCullough 39no)

Port Douglas Muddies 3rd grade, Saturday, January 11
Muddies 7/204 d Norths Cricket Club 7/178
(C. Williams 47, K Nyko 32no, D. Harris 30)



Port Douglas's Shaun Anderson is dismissed by Mareeba's Brett Stallan for two runs. Picture: Shaun Hollis

Holy Duck... that's outrageous

Port Douglas Muddies 4th Grade team had a heartbreaking loss on Sunday in a match for the ages.

After posting just 89 against Mareeba Bandits, Muddies opening bowlers Daniel Davidson and Don Naveen proceeded to wreak havoc, quickly having the opposition in big trouble at

9/23. The collapse included six ducks and a top-score of five. But, just when it seemed victory was there for the taking, Bandits number 10 Brett Stallan and number 11 Ray Watkins put on a 67-run last-wicket stand to get across the line for a stirring win. Davidson 5/13, Naveen 4/14.

Heat turns up

For any young basketball hopefuls in our region, playing in the State Championships is a massive achievement in their young basketball careers.

For four young Port Douglas Heat kids, that dream has become reality as they represented Cairns from January 8 to 12 on the Gold Coast.

Young Douglas Heat prodigy's Max Bohm, Khyjuan Walker, Sam Jones, and Kobi Teasdale all represented the Cairns basketball rep teams from December 13 to 15 at Trinity Ford Stadium in Cairns. The boys played in the NQJBC tournament used to grade the teams for their State Championship campaign.

Max Bohm led the way for the Cairns Sharks, leading them to a perfect undefeated run and winning gold.

Khyjuan and Sam played a pivotal part for the Cairns Stingers, also winning gold, while Kobi Teasdale put on a clinic.

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