



ABCA wishes everyone a happy and safe Easter



Loccy Tame and Riley Fitzsimmons, happy to be selected for Rio

Paddling Past the Pain

When Lachlan Tame is going full tilt in his kayak across Avoca Lake, he's travelling almost as fast as a sprinter. Loccy, as his friends call him, prefers racing as a pair in K2 events and has been chalking up some huge successes with his teammate, the Gold Coast Beijing Olympic champion, Ken Wallace.

Together in May last year they won the opening World Cup event in Portugal. Then they picked up the silver medal in the K2 1000 metre final at the World Cup meet in Duisburg, Germany. Now, Loccy Tame and Riley Fitzsimmons are bound for Rio.

Loccy, training on our calm lake, has been competing since 2011. He's actually been paddling since age 16 and in 2010, bet a friend he'd one day make the Olympics. Not yet, but then early successes made him decide to have a go for the national team for the K2 200 sprint and for the punishing K2 1000 races.

As well as his kayak achievements, Loccy's won 4 Open Surf Ski titles, an Australian Open Double Surf Ski title and he was recently inducted into the Surf Lifesaving Hall of Fame.

Paddling the K2 1000 is incredibly painful. Lactic acid builds up in your body, coursing through the muscles. Unless you can make the pain your friend, it can stop you in your tracks. In spite of that, Loccy says he actually enjoys paddling the K2 1000. That's what great coaching does for you.

He and Ken Wallace apparently make a great team. "I'd die for a mate", says Loccy, which is probably the mindset you need to effectively compete. They complement each other. Loccy's known for his powerful starts and Wallace for his charging finishes. Says Loccy, "I give him a good start and then I just hang in there and trust him with the power at the right times till the end".

Loccy's presently training for Rio, happy to be partnering with his gold medalist mate. It all began on Avoca Lake. And guess who he competes mixed K2 with? Avoca's own Kaitlyn Matuschka! Our town is proud of you both, Loccy and Kaitlyn. We will be watching!

M.R

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ABCA NEWS...



Carol Fortey - Pres. of ABCA

- The Avoca Beach Community Association is a community group that works towards protecting the relaxed lifestyle that Avoca's village character and natural beauty offers. We support and initiate plans which promote this lifestyle and oppose proposals that threaten it.
- The Avoca Beach Community Association currently has 75 members. Thank you to everyone for your support and interest in our great community. If you are interested in joining please contact us – avocabeachca@gmail.com (preferred) or P.O. Box 105 Avoca Beach 2251.
- Congratulations Avoca boys Lachlan Tame and Riley Fitzsimmons. They have both just qualified in kayaking for the 2016 Rio Olympics !
- Congratulations to our local surfers, Ace Buchan, Wade Carmichael, Macy Callaghan, and Matt Wilkinson, all champions !

Gosford Council Land Sales Update.

- On 9/2/16 Council voted to continue the process of reclassifying properties from “community” to “operational” with the aim of selling many “surplus” properties on the coast.
- Included are 2 lots in Warren Ave. Avoca Beach, known locally as “The Lookout”.
- The move was opposed by hundreds of protesters on the night, who gathered outside and then packed the meeting.
- Before proceeding the Council must hold a public meeting for each suggested land sale site with several weeks notice.
- More information can be found online at Community Environment Network and Save Our Reserves.

Avoca Beach Theatre Recent Inquiries.

- Following inquiries to Council we can report that at the end of the year the owners of the theatre appealed against the rejection of their DA. Resubmissions from residents are now pending. The owners also applied to the Land and Environment Court in December 2015.
- Amended/different plans for the proposed development have been submitted to Council. Council believes it is important to publicly notify these plans to obtain community feedback.
- The amended plans are currently on public exhibition both at Gosford Council and online.
- Council encourages public submissions which can be made until 25th March, 2016.
- Lodge your submission online - www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/building-and-development/da-process/da-submissions.
- Or in writing to - Chief Executive Officer at PO Box 21 Gosford NSW 2250 and quote the relevant development application number: DA42661/2012.
- Several online sites give more information, visit: #Friends of Avoca Beach Theatre- old and new, #Say No to the Overdevelopment of Avoca Beach Theatre, # Avoca Beach Picture Theatre, #Friends of Avoca Beach
- Gosford Council is calling for public submissions regarding the listing of the Avoca Theatre as a place of heritage value. Details at: 4325 8222

Our next ABCA meeting is on Monday April 4th, 2016, 7.30 pm at the Surf Club.
We would love to see you there! C.F.

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Mike Rubbo:

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Gosford Printing is on the Move!

Up on the hill at Gosford Printing, a large black and white photo, probably from the 1920's, hangs on the office wall. A young woman in a white dress stands in what is now Avoca Drive where the roundabout near the Bowling Club now is. She's looking up the hill to where the printery will one day be built. She's probably seeing citrus groves beyond the photographer like the ones behind her, down the slope on the bowling club site. Also behind her, a motor cycle is coming up the rise, one assumes by chance. Her gaze is calm. She seems to trust the photographer will not allow her to get run over.

The photo has fascinated many locals, wondering who she is. It belonged to Ted Poole who lent it to the bowling club where it hung above the bar for many years till they remodelled in the mid eighties. Then Ted gave it to Bob Pickett and the mysterious lady moved up to his printery.

Now Gosford Printing is itself moving to a more accessible location at South Kincumber, but the woman in white will stay with Bob on the hill with many still wondering what her story is.

Gosford Printing has had a long and colourful history serving the Central Coast. Forty six years, in fact. Gavin Edwards, who runs it, has been in printing all his working life. After leaving Woy Woy High School and being taught by some local Avoca teachers (Quentin Riley, Steve Fortey, Ava Bourke and Paul Salmon) he was apprenticed in printing machining. After many years in the industry he was employed by Bob Pickett who started Gosford Printing back in 1969.

Gavin took over the business in 2006 from Bob and has led the business to where it is today. In Gavin's words, "not only has Bob been a huge mentor for me but he has always been a good friend. "

They print so many different items - business stationery, promotional brochures, books, posters, cards and of course this newsletter you are reading now.



Gavin Edwards and John Taylor



They can even supply printed items on archival paper that is rated to last 100 years.

Now if this newsletter was in email or electronic format it can be almost guaranteed that it will not be able to be read in the next century. So print is still the way to go!

So if you didn't know that was Gosford Printing up the long driveway at the roundabout near the bowling club, you can note it will only be a stones' throw over the hill at Kincumber.

Most locals probably know the Kincumber Industrial Centre.

That's the one with the Block and Tackle Brewery, and Lulu's coffee warehouse. Gavin and the boys look forward to seeing you there soon. M.R



Gosford Printing's old premises at Avoca



Gosford Printing's new premises at Kincumber

The House of Curiosities – Avoca’s Antique Shop



Have you ever heard of a Stanhope peep? No? Neither had I. I was talking to Lynley at Avoca’s antique shop about the various curiosities in the glass display cases when three peeps were produced for me to see, all more than 100 years old.



One was a small cross with what looked like a tiny lens in the middle. Another, a letter opener with a lens, and the third, a miniature barrel from which unravelled a tape measure. It too had a small lens, but on a stem like a snail’s eye.

Here’s the story which this intriguing shop, open in Avoca since 1983, had to tell me about these peeps. Late 18th century, the Earl of Stanhope invented a tiny microscope, a cylinder of glass, which you could hold over small objects to magnify them.



A Frenchman, Rene Dagon, found a way to mount tiny photographs at one end – photography was then a huge novelty – so that you could hold up the Stanhope peep and squint at souvenir scenes of churches, famous people, etc.

The peeps were forerunners to the post card and like post cards, might hide naughty pictures, though edifying scenes were more common.

Rene Dagon set up a factory in Paris and in 1862 was making 12000 peeps a day. They were half jewellery, half curiosities and great conversation starters. “You show me your peep and I’ll show you mine” might have been a cheeky line of the time.

The antique shop now specializes mostly in jewellery because tastes have changed and people don’t collect

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The House of Curiosities – Avoca's Antique Shop

big things like silver and porcelain as much as they did. Some people come in with items to sell and in this case the shop either buys from them outright, or more rarely, sells on consignment.

They're so well informed, the ladies who work there, that it's a bit like walking into a miniature version of The Antiques Road Show.

What else did I see in the cabinets? Closer to home was an intriguing brooch that gold miners might have given families or sweethearts. It featured a tiny pan with gold nuggets, a pitchfork and a shovel, all designed to bring the giver luck, perhaps, and keep him in heart and mind whilst off digging.



Trench art, a bracelet made in the First World War from threepenny coins diggers had in their pockets.

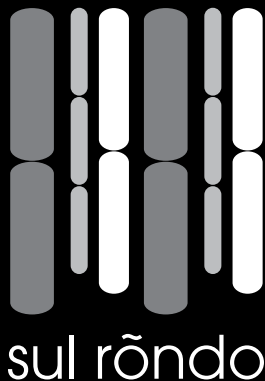


Then there were Nanny brooches which looked just right for Downton Abbey. They come apart to reveal inside a needle and thread for nursery emergencies.



The staff of the shop love telling these stories and so we might run more in the newsletter. I'd like, for example, to tell the touching story of the Staffordshire flat back pottery seen here, the figure of a maid in the woods with a wolf threatening her. All is not what it seems, but you'll have to either wait for the next ABCA issue for the story, or if you can't, pop into the shop to find out more.

M.R



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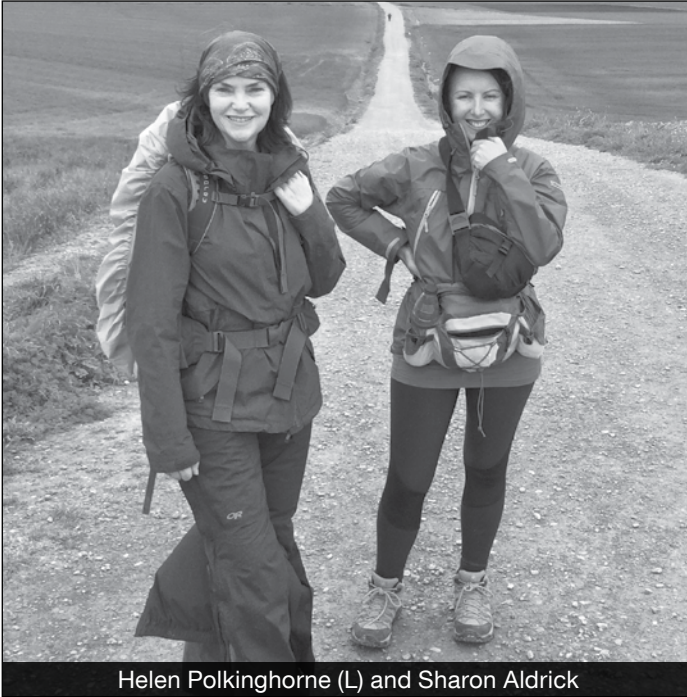
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From Avoca to the Camino

Last year, Helen Polkinghorne left Avoca to do Europe's most famous pilgrimage. Here's how it went.



Helen Polkinghorne (L) and Sharon Aldrick

It's half light when I wake. I use the gloom to dress as quietly as I can, shielded by my sleeping bag. Avoca seems very far away. When decent, I grab my pack and bedding and head for the bathroom. I'm first to rise, leaving 9 people still asleep, some of them beginning to stir.

My shared room shook with snoring and coughing last night. There'll be churches in my path today and I'll have a chance to pray that I don't catch whatever is going around.

I'm walking the El Camino de Santiago del Compostela, a Catholic pilgrimage. While there are many routes to the Camino, they all end at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Myth has it that Saint James, one of Christ's apostles, is buried there.

This is a very old walk, once pagan, now Christian. The pagan pilgrimage was about a hundred kilometres longer, past Santiago de Compostela, to a town called Finisterre.

The Camino is currently hugely popular with hundreds of thousands of people walking annually. It was popular in the 12th Century too when more than 100,000 people did it each year. There is a belief that it can expunge sin. My fellow walkers don't seem like a particularly sinful bunch.

Who walks? Time-rich retirees, exercise lovers, religious and spiritual people and those at a crossroad in their lives. Indeed, you soon find out that everyone is doing the walk for their own reasons. These are the stories we share as we walk together, or contemplate as we walk alone.

I am on the most popular route, Camino Frances, about 800 kilometres long. It starts in the French village of St Jean Pied de Port, and then heads off over the Pyrenees, across plains and two other mountain ranges.

The countryside is always changing, except when it doesn't for weeks on end and the sameness takes its toll.

The different faces of Spain, show themselves to us – like the stand-offish Basque and then the gregarious Gallicians.

As pilgrims however we have a different rhythm to the townspeople. We leave villages before the locals rise and are often in bed before the night-owl Spaniards hit the streets. We are our own ambulatory community.

This morning I woke in Vitoria de Rioja, nearly 300k from St Jean Pied de Port, and leaving me with more than 500k to go if I am to make it to the end.

Having showered last night, I'm quick in the bathroom.

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From Avoca to the Camino

Everything you use you carry. The weight of each item matters. I've been on the Camino for 14 days and my pack is getting lighter by the day.

My liquid soap began leaking so I ditched it. It was my only soap but I have a plan. I'll stay in a hotel in a few days and wash there. I'll wash my hair with shampoo. Fantasies of the hotel will keep me happy as I walk.

My blister kit? Band-aids, bandages and tea tree lotion. I rub the lotion on my feet each night. It's a preventative strategy and so far it's working. The blisters I have dressed so far have not been my own.

The number one tip in all languages is "Look after your feet". Strategies for doing this include: "keep your pack light" and "walk your own walk". This can mean many things of course, but last night I took it to mean walk at the pace that suits you.

Eventually I will find companions I am 'in sync' with, but this morning I leave alone. It is cold and raining. My pack is very light. I am wearing almost every item of clothing I have. Visibility is low. Almost immediately I see one of the yellow arrows that mark 'the way'. I am filled to overflowing with confidence and gratitude. It is a beautiful day for a walk.

H.P



Footcare was the number one topic of conversation at dinner last night. As we 12 ate our vegetarian meal prepared by our Jacobean host, we shared survival tips.

The meal, the bunk bed, together cost just 6.50 euros by the way.

Helen Polkinghorne lives in Avoca. There's a link between this story and our 5 Lands Walk. Previously, Helen walked the famous Cinque Terra in Italy, Cinque Terra translating as Five Lands. Later as Manager of Community Development at Gosford Council, she was able to kickstart what was to become our own 5 Lands Walk. She is currently thinking about a walk from Avoca to Kincumber, inspired by walks in the English Cotswolds.

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Follow the Bouncing Czech!



It was 1969 when Jiri Krepac, a refugee from Communist Czechoslovakia, was on a flight to his new home, Australia. He was feeling pretty good about things, what with a new life ahead and getting there only costing him \$25.00.

So when the flight attendant brought around pamphlets with tips about Australia, Jiri was in a receptive mood. One pamphlet had colloquial expressions that would go down well in Australia, it promised. Jiri, who spoke no English at all, decided to learn one expression and make it the first thing he'd say in Australia..

So, there he was on Aussie soil for the first time, handing over his passport to the customs officer when he said, with no idea what it meant, "Time and tide wait for no man".

A bit taken aback, the customs guy, no doubt feeling it was a bit too early in the morning for such wisdom, waved him through to his new life, saying "Next!"

These days we best know Jiri in Avoca village for his band, Jiri's Harlem Swing which has been playing at our local Pizzeria, usually Thursday nights, for the past six years.

How did you get the name, the Bouncing Czech? I ask. "I was playing with a band at some gig south of Sydney when another player came up to me and said 'I hear they're paying us by cheque. I hope it's not like you, Jiri, the Bouncing Czech'. The name stuck"

Jiri was born in the town of Brno, Czechoslovakia in the middle of the war. Four years later something which would prove important happened. In 1947, the Australian jazz pianist, Graham Bell and his band came to play at sell-out concerts.

Later, when Jiri was in his teens, an aunt gave him records of Bell and his band which he played incessantly and which he still has. "I became a one man band, a cornet in one hand and the other on the piano".

Jazz was tolerated in Communist Czechoslovakia, but barely. By age 15, Jiri had developed another passion that would eventually become his ticket to freedom. This was slot car racing, building his own cars and becoming the Czech National Champion in 1968. In that same year the Russians invaded and Jiri worked out a plan to escape.

Finding news of a slot car event in Vienna, he somehow worked up a convincing letterhead and wrote himself an invitation from the organizers to this Austrian event. It was enough to get him an exit visa. There was actually no event but with two slot cars in his luggage to make things look proper, he left and never went back.

His one great regret was that the authorities punished his family for his defection. He remembers that the children of his aunt were denied university places because of him.

But this resourceful aunt, who had no Communist sympathies, joined the party and quickly got herself made the mayor of a small town, all of which helped to smooth things over and get her kids back on track.

In Australia, Jiri worked at many things, music on the back burner. He married, had kids and became a hippie on a hobby farm at a place down south called Nethercote.

Gradually he got back into music, joining various bands, practising his trumpet every day to keep his embouchure. That's from the French word, bouche, mouth, the way the mouth muscles form for a wind instrument.

Was he ever tempted to go into music full time? "No. I wasn't selfish enough. I had two kids and it was always the family first. I couldn't just say see you, I'm on the road for two months".

These days he's a happy man, loves Avoca and is married to Pauline Wright whom we hope to feature in a future issue, there being so much to tell about her.



“Richard’s love for the ALLMALAY is so strong, we get jealous sometimes”, laughs Sylvie, his wife and partner who does most of the talking. “Richard’s too modest to boast about how hard he works and how well we’re doing, thanks to our loyal customers”.

Both food and family are in the blood here. Before opening in Avoca seven years ago, Richard and Sylvie had a restaurant at Empire Bay where for many years, Richard’s mother cooked. “Most of our recipes we got from her” says Sylvie. “You see, it’s all in the family”.

Sylvie’s the vivacious one. She and her staff take your booking over the phone and seat you if you are eating in. Richard speaks through his food. He’s ready to whip me up half a dozen of their most popular dishes just to show why customers have followed them from Empire Bay and come from Sydney too!

I suggest that the six dishes he says he’ll cook might tempt me into over eating or at least over tasting and we settle for my nibbling a leaf from his curry tree. Is it like his secret weapon? I ask. He nods. The leaf has an intriguing taste.

What’s the overall character of your cuisine, I ask. “We’re between Chinese and Thai, tending towards the spiciness of Thai”. What should I take home to try, I ask. “Maybe Beef Rendang, chunks of slow cooked beef in a creamy sauce, spiced with that curry tree and many other spices Mum taught me to use”.



“You really have to book” warns Sylvie. “We can be packed and all you’ll be able to get is take away”. Who’s your most famous customer, I ask Sylvie. “When the sinking of the Adelaide was supposed to happen, Guy Sebastian popped in for a take away. I’m still kicking myself I wasn’t here but we have his photo and an autographed menu. He’s half Malaysian you know”. Really? “Yeah, any time, come again Guy!” The Beef Rendang was amazing. I may have a new craving to deal with.

M.R



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Kaitlyn does the Hard Yards

Her Dad, Craig, said to her, “why don’t you try for Fire and Rescue? You probably won’t get in, the competition is fierce, but you’d be good.” Indeed, it was fierce. Kaitlyn Matuschka (she thinks her name might be Polish) checked it out and found that there were 8700 applicants for 100 places in the new intake.

But being very close to Dad and knowing how much he loved the work being in Fire and Rescue himself, she decided to give it a go. “He’s always been there for me”, she explains, “always there during my sporting career, which has been mostly surf lifesaving. Mum too, and so of course I listened.”

“The first tests were online. Somehow I got through those to the interviews and amazingly, at 18, I was chosen to be part of FRNSW. Even more amazing with me just finished my Green Ps, I found myself sometimes driving the truck for our 4 persons crew, based at Cabramatta. At first, it was terrifying, but now I love driving the huge pump, racing to the call whatever it is.

People are surprised by how much we do. Friends say to me that there can’t be that many fires, can there?

It’s not just fires. We attend car accidents, we break into houses when someone’s fallen down and can’t get to the door. We rescue animals. It’s amazing the range of stuff we do. I wasn’t long on the job before there was a very confronting situation, someone who had committed suicide in front of a train.

We are taught to quickly assess each situation and think through the implications of everything we do. For example, if there is an oil spill, you can’t just hose it off the road because that puts the oil in the storm water drain or on someone’s lawn.

“One reason that people are attracted to Fire and Rescue, are the hours. I am on 24, off 24, on again 24, and after that I have 5 days off. That gives me plenty



of time to pursue my other interests which are mostly sporting and perhaps further study. I’m in all sorts of surf lifesaving competitions and have done quite well, won a bunch of stuff. Avoca is an amazing place. It just feeds you into the sporting life. Everyone is doing it so your friendship circle, your family, everything feeds into this healthy lifestyle. I find I have no reason to leave Avoca except to go to work. We are very lucky here.”

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"There is a kitten that is lucky too. When we got a call at work that an animal was trapped in a drain, I said to my boss, 'if it's a kitten I want it'. Some walkers had heard plaintive cries coming from a pipe. When we got there we found a five-month-old ginger kitten and he's now at home with me. Flash is his name."

"I never imagined I'd be with Fire and Rescue but now it feels so right. Leaving Kincumber High School, I got all sorts of advice and support. I was actually accepted for a Sports Science Degree at Newcastle Uni and Occupational Therapy on the Sunshine Coast. But really, I wasn't that keen and everything changed when Dad said 'why don't you try for Fire and Rescue?'"

M.R



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