



The Cricket Net is Back!

For decades Avoca's beloved cricket net has been an integral part of Heazlett Park, used daily by kids of all ages, arriving on bikes or on foot. But over time the net deteriorated and posed a safety hazard.

Who was responsible? Central Coast Council has had an agreement with Central Coast Cricket Association that, in return for providing free use of the cricket net to cricket clubs, the CCCA would be responsible for maintenance and upgrades to the facilities.

When in 2013 Council asked the CCCA to upgrade the net, primarily due to safety concerns, both Council and the CCCA sought grant funding but were unsuccessful.

The CCCA then decided that due to improved cricket facilities at Kincumber's Frost Reserve, the Heazlett net should be removed. This shocked local resident Quentin Riley who told Council he would seek sponsorship to upgrade the facility, prompting a grateful Council to halt demolition awaiting word from the community.

But in January 2015 Quentin sustained serious injuries in a surfing accident which left him unable to pursue the project. As Council had received no response they removed the net in September 2016 with no plans for replacement due to lack of funding. The community was

outraged, especially when green space and recreational facilities in Avoca are already so lacking.

But all was not lost. Despite his poor health, Quentin wrote to local political representative Adam Crouch and the Avoca Beach Tennis Club asking for financial support. \$25,000 was needed. Half that came from the State Government's Stronger Communities Fund and the Avoca Beach Tennis Club chipped in the rest, agreeing to pay for ongoing maintenance costs.

Unable to run the reinstallation, Quentin got help from Trevor Reynolds, an executive member of the Avoca Beach Tennis Club and so it's thanks to Trevor and the Club for their enthusiasm and financial support which has led to the net coming back.

The new net was completed in December 2017 and the official opening took place on 24th March 2018, attended by Adam Crouch, Kincumber Avoca cricket club officials and lots of grateful kids, all happy to see the net back where it belongs. Well done to all those who helped and especially to my dad Quentin. We're proud of what he he's achieved in very difficult circumstances.

Virginia Riley.

Avoca Beach Community Association Inc.
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RUMBLE at the ROCKPOOL



When you visit our beautiful beach after April 30th you will likely find yourself confronted with site sheds, barriers and 3.5 meter-wide pipes. Traffic and parking conditions will also be disrupted when the Avoca Drive car park east of the surf club is closed to become the centre of a construction site as Council starts 6 months of work.

All of this will be part of the implementation of Stage 1 of the **Southern Foreshore Masterplan** which was first adopted in 2012.

The purpose of the \$2.8 million plan is to stabilize the foreshore and to improve the whole area for beachgoers. Community consultation was held in 2015 and 2016. Changes were made to the plan after the foreshore was damaged in the devastating storm of 2015 and a decision was made to use stronger granite rock in the repairs.

Work in building a stronger rock wall next to the rock pool aims to prevent future erosion from storms and strong surf. **The storm water outlet** which is currently in the middle of the rock pool will become part of an upgraded, larger system and moved to the eastern end of the pool. Work will also be done to repair the storm-damaged walkway between the surf club and the rock shelf and the area will be given a landscaping facelift.

Mums of toddlers will be sad to hear that the **rock pool will be completely closed** from April 30th to October

When the work is completed we will have a rock pool that will be reduced in size. It will be narrower mainly because the drain running alongside the rock pool needs to be some distance from the roots of the adjacent large pine trees and the revetment wall will be stepped further out into the rock pool.

Locals were pretty unfazed when asked how they would cope with the changes. The early morning swimmers were taking it in their stride. "Nothing much stops us,"

said Neil Shannon with Pauline Wright and Con Ryan in agreement. "And," Con added "**the 5 Lands Walk is definitely going ahead in June.**"

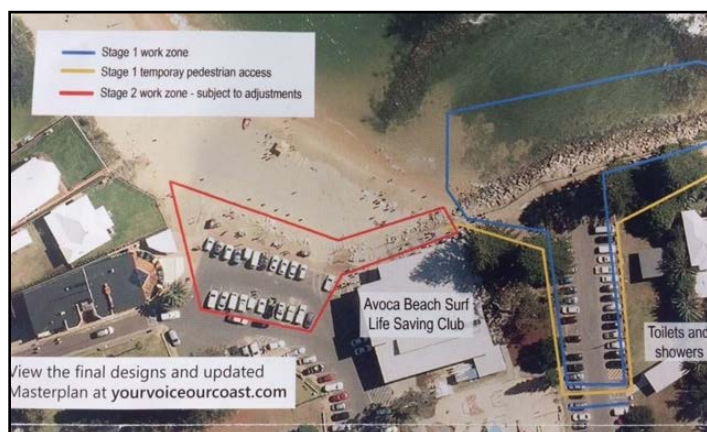
For the **local cafes** too it will be business as usual. Lyn at the Kiosk and Kerry at the Point Cafe will be at work. Their motto: "carry on and have a coffee."



At the ABCA's February meeting some members had concerns about aspects of the work. ABCA President, Steve Fortey, wrote to Council presenting issues raised at the meeting, asking whether the outflow pipe could be taken further east to the area near "Mugs" and whether the surface of the pool could be cleared of loose rocks, leaving it safer for children.

Talking to the ABCA at the April 5th Information day. Dave Medcalf from the Dept. of Roads and Drainage answered the first question saying that taking the outflow further east would not only be much more expensive but that it would be environmentally damaging. Council manager, Ben Fullagar said that there is a naturally rocky substrate in the pool usually covered by sand. Where rocks have been dislodged by large waves Council is able to move them back to the wall of the rock pool.

More information can be found at the Council website: **yourvoiceourcoast.com**
Angela Kennedy



ABCA PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Steve Fortey

As we come into the cooler months of the year its good to reflect on what a fantastic summer we've had this year. So many beautiful beach days and the water has been superb. I've lost count of the number of locals who have in conversation said something like: "how good is this" or "how lucky are we" on yet another amazing day. I'm only one of the crowd who just love Avoca Beach which is why we must be careful to preserve, protect and improve what we have. It's special.

At present there are proposals and public works that may have a significant impact on community life. These include Stage One of the Southern Foreshore Master Plan, the planned development on the old Bowtell's caravan park site, the amendments to the development on the E & H garage site and the proposal by Robert Pickett to donate land for public recreation requiring Council approval and co-operation. To make life even more interesting there has been a revival of interest in the conversion of the rock pool into an ocean pool.

Stage 1 of the Southern Foreshore Master Plan and the controversial development of Bowtell's caravan park are dealt with elsewhere in this issue and I thank our two committee members, Angela and Ian, for their illuminating comments. It's also wonderful to see Ellen Rubbo bring the flavour of youth to us with her article.

We are lucky to have many quiet achievers among us and clubs like the kayak club and their stories will be an important part of future issues. Our surfboard riders continue to do well on the international scene

and our surf life savers once again are prominent at national level. Avoca Beach Rugby can be very proud of Ben Francis and Eden McQueen's selection in an invitational XV to represent Australia in an international tournament in South Africa. It's a privilege to be in such company.

It was a small but significant ceremony to mark the official opening of the new cricket nets at Heazlett Park. Sometimes we take such facilities for granted without realizing how much effort goes into their creation and maintenance. A heartfelt speech from Quentin Riley, a man with Avoca blood in his veins, made the occasion even more special.

The ABCA continues to support Bob Pickett's marathon attempt to donate some prime land to the community for recreational use. At present many of our junior sporting teams lack a home ground and travel big distances to play and train. Future developments locally will only lead to more people and recreational green space will be even more badly needed. This sort of opportunity will possibly never come to Avoca again and we wish Bob all the best in his endeavours.

At the time of writing ANZAC Day is on the horizon and in recent years the Avoca Beach Dawn Service has become a heart-warming community event that has grown significantly. A huge thank you on behalf of the community to Vietnam veteran Gary Hoare for the wonderful job he has done over the years in initiating this event and encouraging it to grow tastefully and appropriately.

Finally, the role of the Avoca Beach Community Association is to work with the community and represent its interests. It's a very diverse and vibrant community and we try to reflect that in our newsletter. If you feel there is an issue that needs addressing in the interests of Avoca Beach please let us know. Likewise, if you would like to contribute an article to our newsletter please contact us. Thank you once again to Mike Rubbo for his invaluable efforts as editor.

Our Resident Raptors

The term raptor refers to a bird of prey that feeds on meat taken by hunting or on carrion and it includes hawks, eagles and kites along with nocturnal species such as owls. Avoca Beach is fortunate to have three species of large, diurnal resident raptors that regularly patrol our skies, the most conspicuous being the White-bellied Sea-Eagle.

With a wing span of approximately 2 metres, the White-bellied Sea-Eagle is one of Australia's largest raptors, second only to the Wedge-tailed Eagle. White-bellied Sea-Eagles can be spotted most days soaring between Avoca's southern headland and Avoca Lagoon. They watch over their hunting grounds from the cliffs or large trees where they feed primarily on fish and waterbirds but they will also take mammals and reptiles. During breeding season (June to September), a pair will engage in an impressive display of mutual soaring, tandem flying and mock attack-and-parry so keep your eyes on the sky during this time.

From below, adult White-bellied Sea-Eagles have a mostly white belly with black and white underwings. They build a huge stick nest in a tall tree and at the start of the breeding season the nest is lined with fresh green leaves and twigs. A pair of White-bellied Sea-Eagles has successfully nested in Avoca Lagoon for many years. The female carries out most of the incubation while the male will fill in from time to time (typical). Despite their impressive appearance, they have a somewhat embarrassing call, which sounds like squabbling geese, not at all what you'd expect from such majestic looking birds.

The call of a Whistling Kite is also very distinctive but way cooler. It starts as a bomb like whistle, followed by rapid chatter sounds. It brings to mind gun fights in the Wild West - you'll know what I mean if you've heard it... The Whistling Kite is our second resident raptor that looks down on us while we flightless species hang at the beach. A pair of Whistling Kite are the proud residents of one of the larger Norfolk Island Pine trees along the beach where they have successfully bred and reared young for many years.

From their vantage point, they rule the skies and can often be seen taking on their larger counterparts – the White-bellied Sea-Eagle. The slightly smaller (wingspan up to 1.2 m) and more agile Whistling Kites harass the Sea-Eagles as they travel from the lagoon to the ocean. It's mostly bluster to keep the Sea-Eagles moving away from the Whistling Kites nesting area and while the White-bellied Sea-Eagle will mostly oblige, they occasionally retaliate, providing a spectacular aerial show where both species will swing in mid-flight and lunge at their opponent with their talons (claws). The Whistling Kite can be identified by its distinctive "W" underwing pattern.



White-bellied Sea-Eagle being hassled by a Whistling Kite and an Australian Raven



Eastern Osprey fishing

Our third resident raptor is another large bird of prey - the Eastern Osprey. The Osprey has a wing span up to 1.7 m and is a large fishing hawk that unlike other raptors is not afraid to get its feet wet for a feed. It hovers then plunges spectacularly from 10-50 m up, feet -first into the water, then as it takes flight, it shakes water from its plumage and torpedos its prey away to its roost or nest site.

The Osprey can be recognised by its white head and black eye mask. This species is more commonly seen from Heazlett Oval looking towards the lagoon where it also has been observed in the past nesting on Bareena Island in Avoca Lagoon.

Both the White-bellied Sea-Eagle and the Eastern Osprey are listed as vulnerable under NSW legislation.

Threats to these awesome birds include loss of large nesting trees near the coast, poor water quality in feeding areas and ingestion of fish containing discarded fishing tackle or plastics.

So remember, always Take 3 for the Sea when you're at the beach, be mindful of what you wash down the drain and look up!

By Kristy McQueen

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“I was always just a shower singer”



We're sitting here with **Rose Callaghan** and **Luke Fabila** at Wise Foods café in Avoca. Its late afternoon and I'm sipping coffee, talking to these two musos who may be headed for the heights. “If we are,” says Rose, “I hope we stay the way we are.”

Rose and Luke have been a couple for seven years, bound not only by their love but their passion for music. The pair met through a percussion internship provided by the famous local Rhythm Hut, joining that raw tribal band **The Rhythm Hunters**, led by the talented Rendra Freestone.

Luke has lived in Avoca his whole life, going to Avoca Primary then to Kincumber High, whilst Rose, originally from Mangrove Mountain, has been here six years. Rose waves her hands as she tells her stories. “I didn't want my singing ever to leave the shower,” she says as I laugh. “I was petrified of singing in public, I would have panic attacks. It was Rendra who said I had to sing. There was no backing out.”

It was at The Festival of Folk, Rhythm and Life that Rose overcame her fear. She was on stage with **Nicky Bomba**, ex drummer for the **John Butler Trio**, jamming. It was a great moment, musos chiming in left, right and centre as Nicky drove the energy.

Rose was on percussion, feeling so comfortable that she whispered in Nicky's ear, “I can sing if you like.” I meant later. But he counted me in on 1...2...3... and I had to just go, improvising scraps of words, flourishes, anything, hundreds of people there watching”

We asked about the moment of connection. “You lock eyes with somebody in the crowd. That spreads; eyes and more eyes lock onto yours. It was an amazing session and the moment which cured my fear of singing on stage for good.

Luke, the quieter one of the pair, nods. “Being on stage prepares you for other areas of your life where you wouldn't expect. “Sometimes at Uni I give a presentation and I notice that I don't have that shake in my voice like I used to. ” Luke is doing a Master in music teaching at Newcastle University, inspired by the idea that music education is essential for everyone.

Luke, who's indigenous, has his own projects. He plays with his uncle's band, **Yarwah**. Tapping into their indigenous ancestry, they sing songs, for instance, in a nearly extinct language from Fraser Island.

Combining electronic and traditional instruments, his uncle does amazing things with a didgeridoo. Check out the sound. They'll be playing at the Commonwealth Games shortly. Despite all this buzz, Luke and Rose seemed very grounded, unmoved by any desperate desire to become famous.

“It would be nice to live off our music,” they say. “But success isn't about how much money you make, how big your following is. It's those moments when you lock eyes with someone in the crowd and they are so enthralled by what you're doing, that's what makes it all worth it.”

Our conversation starts exploring the dangers of fame; we agree it can destroy a person, the money that comes with it and the loneliness. “I can't think of anything more isolating than everyone knowing you,” Rose says. “My main fear would be losing touch and getting swept away by it all.” Rose quotes Bob Marley, her favourite being, “*Some people are so poor, all they have is money.*”

They end with a story about a gig somewhere west of Shepparton. The gig fee is miserable and they have to drive all night from Bright to play at 10.00 am. Finally, arriving at three in the morning, there's nowhere to sleep. So they're poking around in tents in the Glamping section, disturbing sleepers till finally they find an empty one.

Dragging themselves awake the next day, they find there's none of the equipment they need on stage, typical, so they go on, improvising with what they can find, including a Japanese drum. Hardly anyone is up but then the music starts to pull sleepers from the tents and before their session is over, it's going great. "A lesson," said Rose, "that you always just have to keep on going, that you can make anything work if you don't give up."

Moving towards the big-time in tiny steps, they've played the Woodford folk Festival, Earth Frequency.

Between the two of them they've mastered numerous instruments and launched a marvellous variety of new musical projects like **Rosie and the Quest**, a six-piece band which brings them together on stage. Rosie and the Quest has already done a few live shows and is currently recording a single. Check them out.

Ellen Rubbo



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Ian Hancock sits smiling in his D type Jaguar, looking like the cat that got the cream. But this bowl of cream has been a long time coming. Ian, who loves restoring old cars and has done quite a few in his seventy-one years, has dreamt of owning this particular beauty since a boy, according to his wife Dorothy.

It's a very rare 1956 Jaguar racing car. There were only around seventy built, the car having been wind tunnel designed specifically for the racetrack in the mid 50's. In fact, the car competed at Le Mans and won three times. Ian estimates that there are about fifty surviving in the world with one right here in Australia.

I thought at first that Ian's car was that original but what he has is an exact replica. "An original would set you back \$7 million, even more if the car had a racing competition history and so that wasn't an option. I'd looked at a couple of replicas but they had fibreglass bodies and finally I found a company in New Zealand that had been making them as per the original with all aluminium bodies and I managed to get one of those".

"I was always looking on the Internet for this car and one night I found it on a website similar to eBay. It was exactly the same profile as the original, a shell designed to accept E-type components."

It was an exciting night as Ian bid late, his wife Dorothy urging him on. She was saying, "Just keep on bidding, Ian. It doesn't matter what costs, keep bidding." He was up against two New Zealanders but finally won out at \$34,500.

"Wow, that sounds a lot," I say. "Well, each of the panels is handmade. An incredible amount of work went into what I bought."

Then began the drama of getting it back to Australia. Ian went over to assemble the body and mechanicals so that the shell could be rolled into a shipping container. But having got the car ready for export, he found that the car was not on the list of approved imports.

So back he went to NZ to take it apart again, separate the body, which was allowed, from the components and consign them separately. That was in late 2010 and he's been working on the restoration ever since. "Why seven years, Ian?" "Well, many parts you can't just buy off-the-shelf. I had to rebuild the engine, the gearbox and the differential. I had to mould the windscreen."

"Tell him about the headlights," chimes in Dorothy. "The headlight covers took two moulds each to form."

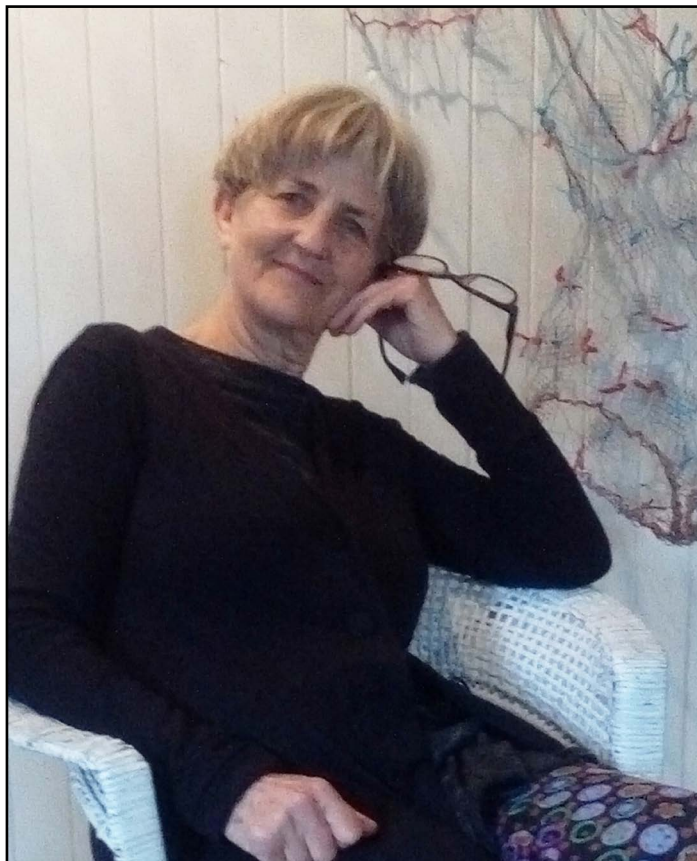
Now the green machine just awaits upholstery and then registration. Ian will enter it in races organised by historic sports and racing car clubs, and expects a top speed of around 270 KPH.

"Do you think there are still wonderful old cars to be found in the back blocks, Ian?" "Not a lot. I used travel in the country for my work on drilling rigs. You'd see a car in a paddock. It'd still have tyres on it and you'd say to the farmer, "Are you interested in selling it?" And he'd say, "No, my son is going to fix it up one day. Five years later you'd go past that same car, the tyres'd be rotted. Same question. "No, we're going to do that up one day. Another five years and the chassis would be sitting on the soil and that'd be the end of it. People think they'll make big money restoring an old car but they've no idea what it costs. My Jag, for example, I kept track of costs until I reached about \$70,000 and then I just stopped counting."

I'm sure we'll see his masterpiece in British racing green around Avoca village. "It's just such a beautiful car," says Ian and I have to agree. Dorothy has the final word. "I'm in total admiration of his skills. What he's done to build this car is amazing." When you're really passionate about something, it makes life worthwhile doesn't it?

Mike Rubbo.

Willemina Villari - Working with Wire



She loved the courses in the historic former jail but loved best the hands-on and down-to-earth approach of those teaching sculpture and perhaps as a result, became primarily interested in working with materials in three dimensions though she has also always painted and drawn.

Soon after coming to the coast she entered the Gosford Art prize in 2008 and was surprised to see how beautifully her work was displayed. It was well lit, on a wall of its own, she not guessing as to what that might mean. She went to the launch and was about to leave when the winners were announced. She was amazed to hear her name read out as the overall prizewinner.

Willemina's had quite a bit of success, especially with her sculptures. She's been accepted several times for Sculpture by the Sea and other outdoor sculpture exhibitions. As for Avoca, she loves the place and gets her inspiration from living near the ocean and the bush. She conducts art workshops in 2D and 3D from home but also gets her city fix by teaching in Sydney one day a week.

Willemina, one of our most interesting local artists, grew up in the centre of Holland, one of a large family. Her early working years she spent as a tour guide, taking Dutch tourists to Scandinavia, summer after summer. It was great fun, she said. Sailing through the fjords of Norway was especially wonderful. She did that for about twelve summers.

After that, she started taking travellers of a very different sort to the US. These were Dutch cattle breeders who she took across to check out the daughters of the bulls from whom they were importing semen. "Running semen-ars," I asked? 'It was quite funny," she admitted "because the Dutch word for breeding is fokken and so as I was translating, our American hosts were very puzzled or amused by my language. "

After doing this for some years, she found herself one day in Australia thanks to a boyfriend. Life took a completely different turn when she enrolled at the National Arts School in Sydney in the late 90's to do a Bachelor of Fine Arts.



SLIP SLIDN' AWAY

So rang from the Griffiths family car the chorus to the popular Paul Simon song about disappointment and hope, as they arrived from Sydney thirty-five years ago at Bowtell's caravan park on the Avoca lagoon shore.

Great was the excitement at the prospect of time there with old family friends but soon torrential rain found them sheltered together attempting to BBQ. That connection led to two of the Griffiths making their homes in Avoca Beach. Since then, some of what they sought in Avoca has indeed, like the song, slip slid away.



(Old photo of Griffiths family and friends at Bowtell caravan park. 1983)

For example, the caravan park today lies abandoned and derelict. The land now owned by a developer who has a DA lodged with Council proposing a \$20 million estate of houses manufactured offsite and assembled on site.

The original DA a year ago caused huge concern across the Avoca Beach community – well over one hundred objection submissions were lodged. The amended proposal now before Council is slightly smaller in scale – eighty two-storey, three- bedroom homes crammed onto 2.8 hectares.

So what are the main concerns being expressed by Avoca Beach residents? In essence, even though beneficial use needs to be made of this special site, this particular proposal represents excessive development carrying a range of negative consequences for the community, residents and the environment.

A principal developer argument is that these homes will provide needed affordable housing. The definition of affordable is a matter of individual interpretation. However, these homes on prime, scarce lakeside property can be expected to sell at a handsome price – well beyond the reach of those with low income and seemingly no provision for disabled access. Unsurprisingly, the Central Coast Regional Plan 2036 does not include Avoca Beach as one of the zones in which to concentrate infill development.

Two-storey, 8.5 metre high blocks of intensive terrace development is out of all character compared to the surrounding residential areas, including the single storey Palms estate across the road.

The provision for on-site parking is better in the amended DA, but still has insufficient common visitor spaces. There should be full parking self-sufficiency on-site, since already The Round Drive is crowded with parked vehicles along those stretches allowed. This is a narrow and winding road for much of its length and parked cars along the kerb can make it difficult and dangerous when vehicles approach from two directions.

Peak traffic periods on The Round Drive include the ends of the primary school hours and this housing estate is projected

by the developer to increase peak traffic load by 30%. This has major implications for congestion and safety on The Round Drive, including near the school and queuing at Avoca Drive.

State planning policy requires adequate community services available to service the residents of manufactured home estates. Already, Avoca Public School is bursting at the seams, with demountable classrooms gobbling precious recreational space for the children. ABS census results indicate this housing estate is likely to inject an extra twenty to thirty onto the student population – requiring another demountable classroom (although the DA claims it will only be about nine children).

Council hazard maps show this is flood prone land, due to storm flow from the steep surrounding ridges and raised lake water levels. The DA proposes extra storm water drainage and raising home floor levels to the Council standard above severe flood height, leaving

underfloor areas, garages, estate roads and land subject to flooding. Residents can evacuate or sit out flooding. No allowance is made for the projected greater flood risk due to intensifying climate changes. There may be questions here regarding Council's legal risk if it allows intensive development on a known hazard site; and if ocean storm surge is a factor in flooding then the general exclusion provisions of home insurance policies likely kick in.

The site contains areas of ecologically important rare tree species, riparian vegetation and important bird and animal habitat. Under this DA the critical treed areas would be preserved. However, seventy- three mature trees spread across this small site will be lost.

Contaminants in runoff from the site into the lake are another concern. Neighbours adjacent to the site are concerned about effects of noise and loss of privacy from the housing estate.

Is this going to be another case of excessive development causing features of Avoca Beach so loved by its residents to go Slip Slidn' Away? Or can the community persuade Central Coast Councillors only to approve development on this site commensurate with enhancing and sustaining the urban form, liveability and the environment of Avoca Beach?

Ian Carruthers.

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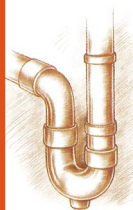
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PLUMBING**

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daniel.ogrady.plumbing@gmail.com

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