

# Today



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WELCOME

# SHOWCASING *plenty of quality*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

Following the Bundaberg Business Women's Network since its inception has showcased an interesting journey.

One of dedicated women, who welcome the opportunity to support fellow local business women, organise a wealth of different events that provide both a social and educational opportunity to come together.

The EmpowerHER MarketFest has continued to grow since it began and if you take

a step through the door of this event, you can understand why.

It is one of those places where you see women who are so passionate about what they do, have your breath taken away by the creativity and ingenuity of some of these creators and just want to do lap after lap and speak with them all.

I congratulate the Bundaberg Business Women's Network on their commitment to making this happen and hope it brings many a visitor through the door.

Angela Norval, Today editor.



## Content

AUTUMN 2026

**Editor/writer:** Angela Norval  
**Photography:** Supplied  
**Advertising & Editorial Inquiries:**  
 Bundaberg Today 07 4167 0620  
**Published by:** Bundaberg Media Pty Ltd (ABN 83 643 012 579) at Shop 2, Building 2 IWC Complex, 184 Barolin Street, Bundaberg QLD 4670. Printed by ACM 159 Bells Line of Road, North Richmond NSW 2754

**Publisher's indemnity:** Today Magazine is published by Bundaberg Media Pty Ltd. Those who make advertising placement and/or supply copy material or editorial submissions to the magazine, undertake to ensure that all such materials do not infringe the Trade Practices Act or other laws, regulations, or statutes. Further to the above mentioned, these persons agree to indemnify the publisher and/or its agents against any investigations, claims or judgments.

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# EMPOWERING WOMEN IN *business*

Empowering women in business at The Bundaberg Business Women's Network is thrilled to invite the community to the 2026 EmpowerHER MarketFest – a vibrant celebration of women in business, connection, and community spirit.

EmpowerHER MarketFest brings together an exciting mix of product-based and service-based businesses, giving visitors the opportunity to shop, book, taste, learn and discover the incredible talent we have right here in our region. From boutique retail and handmade goods to professional services designed to support your life and business, there is truly something for everyone.

The atmosphere will be buzzing, with roving entertainment from Baylando Latin Fusion adding colour, rhythm and energy throughout the event.

Families are warmly welcomed, with free face painting by Frivolous Faces, to keep the little ones smiling while parents explore the stalls.

When it's time to relax and recharge, visitors can enjoy delicious food and barista-made coffee while soaking up the festival vibe.

One of the highlights of the day will be the half-hourly prize draws, featuring pamper experiences and services that can be enjoyed on the spot, by Zen On Elliott & Silent Dream Beauty By Jelena – the perfect excuse to treat yourself while supporting local businesses.

Be sure to arrive early, because the first 200 guests through the gates will receive a free goodie bag packed with fantastic promotional items and offers from our generous sponsors.

EmpowerHER MarketFest is more than a market. It's a showcase of innovation, collaboration and the power of women supporting women in business. Whether you're looking for unique products, expert services, or simply a fun day out, this is an event not to be missed.

### Inside BBWN: Why It Matters:

Strong business communities do not happen by accident.

They are built through connection, shared experience, and a genuine willingness to support one another.

That is exactly where the Bundaberg Business Women Network (BBWN) continues to play an important role in our region.

BBWN exists to bring women in business together, not just to network, but to learn, collaborate, and grow with confidence.

In a regional community like ours, those connections matter.

They provide access to shared knowledge, encouragement during challenging periods, and opportunities that may not otherwise exist.

At its core, BBWN is about creating an environment where women feel supported at every stage of their business journey.

Whether someone is launching a new venture, growing an established business, returning to work, or stepping into leadership for the first time, the network offers a space that is welcoming, practical, and inclusive.

What sets BBWN apart is its focus on meaningful engagement rather than transactional networking.

Events and initiatives are designed to foster real conversations, professional development,



The Bundaberg Business Women's Network EmpowerHER MarketFest is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the wealth of local organisations and businesses.



Shu Ying Massage founder Jing Webster welcomes the opportunity to share the benefits of massage at the EmpowerHER MarketFest.



Roving entertainment by Baylando Latin Fusion dancers will be a wonderful addition to the event. (Solana Photography: 492724\_12)



Tracey Sergiacomi is the roving MC at the event and welcomes the opportunity to chat with stall holders.

and long-term relationships.

Members are encouraged to share insights, ask questions, and support one another openly.

That culture of trust is fundamental to the network's success.

Signature initiatives such as EmpowerHER MarketFest further reflect this purpose.

They showcase local women-led businesses while creating visibility, confidence, and community connection.

These events are not just about promotion.

They are about celebrating capability, creativity, and collaboration.

BBWN also recognises that business ownership and leadership can be isolating at times. Having access to a supportive peer network can make a significant difference.

The ability to learn from others who understand the challenges, pressures, and responsibilities of business builds resilience

and perspective.

Beyond individual benefit, BBWN contributes to the broader strength of the Bundaberg business community.

When women are supported and empowered, businesses grow, partnerships form, and the local economy benefits.

The ripple effect extends well beyond the network itself.

As BBWN continues to evolve, its focus remains on inclusivity, relevance, and impact. Creating opportunities, encouraging leadership, and strengthening connections across industries will remain central to its purpose.

Ultimately, BBWN matters because it is about people.

It is about building confidence, fostering collaboration, and creating a business community where women are supported to succeed, together.

# EmpowerHER MARKETFEST a boost for *our community*

BY FEDERAL MEMBER FOR HINKLER  
DAVID BATT

When women thrive, so does our community.  
Welcome to EmpowerHER MarketFest 2026.

I'm proud to support this annual celebration of women entrepreneurs and changemakers.

I congratulate and commend the Bundaberg Business Women's Network for their commitment to this event and ongoing support for women in business.

Together, as a community, we can and must 'Accelerate Action' – a fitting theme.

We need to promote and support women in business as this will enable community growth and amplify the message of empowerment.

Progress doesn't happen when we talk about opportunity.

It happens when communities create it.

Success for our region depends on everyone having a pathway to participate.

The Bundaberg Business Women's Network creates connections with likeminded women.

These markets offer a level playing field

allowing women to share their strengths, challenges and opportunities.

Ahead of this year's event I met with BBWN president Elisa Mayberry who said the interest from stallholders is growing fast.

With hundreds of customers also tipped to support the 2026 market it is promising to be the biggest yet following the disappointing weather disruption of TC Alfred in 2025.

To the stallholders and sponsors, thank you for commitment to EmpowerHER MarketFest 2026.

Empowerment is not a buzz word.

Here in Hinkler, our part of regional Australia, it's a business plan.

Bundaberg Business Women's Network president Elisa Mayberry with Hinkler Federal MP David Batt who are both excited for the EmpowerHER MarketFest. (Supplied)



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# BELIEF IN *supporting women*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

For Helen Blackburn, to be able to serve her community and represent the region's residents as Bundaberg Region Mayor is a real honour.

Helen was born and raised in Bundaberg, has raised her own family here, and said having the opportunity to enact positive change in this region is incredibly rewarding.

"Our region has so much to offer, but there is always more that can be done," she said.

"Every day I meet with people who are working hard to make this region a better place – be that by enhancing our farming sector, investing in our local businesses or developing our growing housing or commercial markets.

"I also get to meet with everyday people - our local residents - to discuss the things that matter most to them, which is how the Safe Spaces, Thriving Places initiative came about.

"Each day brings a new opportunity and that's what gets me out of bed each morning."

Showcasing how it can be done for future generations, Helen is also proud to take on the role of mayor as a woman.

"Women have so much to offer when it comes to improving community.

"We have the unique ability to balance common-sense decision making with empathy and compassion – two skills desperately needed in the world today. While men are great at providing logical and analytical input, it's wonderful to see women entering previously male-dominated industries to provide this balance.

"I encourage all women to pursue their passion no matter what their desired profession or role might be.

"I am very proud to be a female leader in the Bundaberg region, and I hope other women feel as though they can also belong in roles of leadership should they choose to go down that road.

"As Mayor, being informed is my greatest asset, and multitasking is my greatest skill, which is how we've gone from effort to impact.

"Council is such a complex organisation that involves a lot of moving pieces and high-level conversations.



Mayor Helen Blackburn enjoying a stroll along the Bundaberg Botanic Gardens Boardwalk. (Supplied)

"While at times you can be pushed out of your comfort zone, it's something I've come to embrace.

"There are skills I had gained prior to being elected mayor, such as business and financial management, social networking and interpersonal relationships, and experience in local governance, but those have certainly been honed further over the past two years in my role as mayor.

"Every day is varied, but the days I enjoy most usually involve receiving positive outcomes directly related to my hard work and networking efforts."

Welcoming the opportunity to support this local organisation and all they do, Helen said the Bundaberg Business Women's Network provides such a valuable service to Bundaberg women in business, and she hopes to see that continue well into the future.

"As a former business owner and long-time member of BBWN, having first joined in 2015, I know how difficult it can be to navigate that space.

"For a local group to dedicate their time and knowledge for the betterment of other women is really special and worth supporting.

"The BBWN's mission is to provide a supportive and informative environment for businesswomen of all ages while encouraging networking and mentoring activities, and events such as the EmpowerHER MarketFest are proof of that.

"Not only do they organise events to showcase their members' business offerings, but the organisation also provides professional development workshops, networking and mentoring opportunities, safe spaces to practice business pitching, and most importantly they foster connections between women in business, whether large or home-based, who are facing or have overcome similar challenges.

"Being new in business can be daunting, especially for women who have to self-promote and talk about their products with potential buyers.

"Knowing there are people in your corner to support you can make all the difference."

**Bundaberg Region Mayor Helen Blackburn**

*"Supporting women in the pursuit of greatness"*

**E:** helen.blackburn@bundaberg.qld.gov.au **f:** @Helen Blackburn - Bundaberg Region Mayor

# RELAX INTO *overall wellbeing*

Buoyant Bodies is fast becoming one of Bundaberg's favourite places for relaxation, stress reduction, full body pain relief and overall wellbeing.

Floatation therapy is one of those wellness practices that sounds almost too simple to be effective – yet somehow it is.

Some of the key benefits of float therapy is the deep calm and relaxation the magnesium rich water provides, easing muscle tension.

Many people use it to recover from chronic pain, sports and workouts or physically demanding jobs.

When you float your body and mind get a rare chance to decompress and switch off from today's crazy full-on world.

It lets your nervous system shift into a calmer state, reducing anxiety, cortisol levels and it can help lower stress, quiet brain chatter, and help with deeper, easier sleep.

It's not a cure all, but it can be a powerful addition to your wellness plan—especially for people looking to manage stress, recover physically, or carve out intentional time for themselves.

Buoyant Bodies currently has two large individual float tanks and a spacious two-three-person full spectrum infrared sauna with light therapy.

The business can host intimate events including engagements, pre/post wedding sessions, pregnancy sessions and other celebrations – complete with share platters and other refreshments.

In April, it will also open a brand-new floatation pool, designed for those who cannot step up into a tank or require a carer to provide support getting in and out of the pool.

It will also be available for couples float sessions, allowing couples to float together and reconnect in a quiet, relaxing state.

Buoyant Bodies is located on Bargara Road near the Bundaberg Ginger Beer factory, is open seven days a week from 7am to 7pm.

Overnight sessions are available and bookings can be made by calling 0456 499 773 or visiting Buoyant Bodies on socials.



Buoyant Bodies provides the perfect place for relaxation and some time out for yourself. (Supplied)



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The new float pool adds to the variety of options available at Buoyant Bodies. (Supplied)

# ELECTROLYSIS

Unwanted hair is often spoken about as cosmetic. In clinic, it rarely feels that simple. For many people, persistent facial or body hair carries emotional weight. It affects confidence, identity, and the way someone moves through the world. Daily tweezing, shaving, or waxing becomes a private routine of management rather than choice. Electrolysis is different because it is permanent. It works by delivering a controlled electrical current directly into the hair follicle, disabling the cells responsible for hair growth. Each follicle is treated individually. It is precise. It is methodical. It is permanent hair removal, not hair reduction.

This matters, particularly for clients experiencing hormonal hair growth, post menopausal changes, or hair patterns linked to conditions such as PCOS. Laser can reduce bulk hair growth, but electrolysis remains the only treatment recognised for permanently destroying the follicle regardless of hair colour or skin tone. Over time, consistent electrolysis treatments reduce regrowth until the hair simply does not return. There is something deeply relieving about that. In consultation, clients often tell me it is not just about the hair. It is about no longer planning their week around concealment. No longer checking mirrors in certain lighting. No longer feeling that a small area of hair controls their confidence. What this means for you is clarity. Electrolysis is not a quick fix. It requires patience and commitment. But it offers something few treatments can promise in a sustainable way. Resolution. When the follicle is treated properly and consistently, the result is not temporary control. It is freedom from ongoing management. And for many people, that shift is far more significant than it sounds.



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Buccal massage approaches the face from a perspective many have never experienced before. It works both externally and internally, releasing the deeper facial muscles that traditional massage simply cannot access. These are the muscles responsible for expression, chewing, bracing and often, holding.

When these structures are tight, lymphatic flow slows. Fluid stagnates. The lower face can feel heavy or compressed. Jaw discomfort becomes normalised. Fine lines deepen not only from age, but from contraction patterns.

By gently releasing the inner and outer musculature of the cheeks and jaw, buccal therapy restores movement. It supports lymphatic circulation, which helps reduce facial congestion and encourages healthy tissue function. It softens overactive muscles that contribute to lower face tension and jaw discomfort. It also supports age-aware skin health by reducing chronic contraction that can etch lines over time.

This is not a cosmetic trend. It is functional facial therapy. In clinic, I often see clients visibly exhale once the deeper layers of the face are addressed. The shift is not dramatic or theatrical. It is subtle, but meaningful. The face looks less guarded. The jaw sits more naturally. The tissue feels mobile again. What this means for you is simple. If you have a face, you hold tension. And if you hold tension, your skin and underlying structures will reflect it.

Buccal massage is not about changing how you look. It is about restoring how your face functions.

**And when function improves, appearance follows.**



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**Inside Vanish Skin & Laser Clinic  
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The Ballantine Law team has grown, providing an even more dedicated experience base for their clients. (Solana Photography: 535425)

## GROWTH AND SOLIDARITY CONTINUES *at Ballantine Law*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

Starting as a team of five in 2023, boutique law firm, Ballantine Law has continued to grow and is now based around a dedicated team of eight.

This modern, all female law firm prides themselves on being both approachable and supportive to their clients, practicing in wills and estates, residential conveyancing and retirement living.

Principal Lawyer Amelia Ballantine said with the growing market and increasing workload, the team at Ballantine Law were looking forward to where this year takes them in supporting the growing community of the Bundaberg region.

“For a short period of time, we drastically

reduced the amount of conveyancing matters we took on, however we want the community to know that we are well and truly back in the swing of residential conveyancing assisting buyers and sellers with their homes and investments,” she said.

“Add to that we work well together with real estate agents and brokers to ensure a smooth transaction.”

As well as fulfilling the needs of their customers through their firm, Ballantine Law also continues to show support for the community through events such as the Bundaberg Business Women’s Network EmpowerHer MarketFest.

“We’ve been the major sponsor for three years now and being an all-female law firm, we

consider this to be such an important event in our community to support and showcase other women in business.

“Being present at the EmpowerHer MarketFest allows us to meet and mingle with the members of society and removing the stereotype/stigma/fear of going to a law firm and chatting to a lawyer.

“Being a part of the Bundaberg Business Women’s Network continues to be such a pleasure, knowing that we are able to support other like-minded business women, but also knowing that the support is reciprocated.

“Showing the community the solidarity of the BBWN and the continued dedication to supporting each other every year.”



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# AZZOPARDI FINANCE FOCUSED ON *strong future*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

It has already been a strong start to 2026 for the team at Azzopardi Finance, celebrating their one-year anniversary of the business in February.

Azzopardi Finance principal broker/director Trudy Azzopardi said after just one year of business it was gratifying to have established Azzopardi Finance as a market leader in providing mortgage and business finance brokerage in Bundaberg.

“We have shown ourselves to be a small but mighty team, specialising in home and business lending, and supporting business owners in particular,” she said.

“We have been overwhelmed with members of the community who are specifically coming to Azzopardi Finance as we are the team that are trusted and seen as contributing to the community consistently.

“We have been thrilled to also have local businesses such as real estates, financial planners, accountants and media outlets referring their clients through to us for lending, which is a reflection of the reputation we have amongst the business community.”

When it comes to Azzopardi Finance, this isn't simply about a business surviving in a tough economic world, but instead positively thriving and ready to expand in 2026 to meet increasing demand.

“In a business like ours, we continue to value the connections and support of the community and local businesses, which remains one of the big benefits of being part of a regional city like Bundaberg.”

When asked about the trends she's seeing in the region, Trudy noted rising demand for refinancing in recent months, as Bundaberg region property values continue to rise.

“Business owners are also coming to us for business financing more consistently, particularly for lending to enable growth and expansion, such as purchasing new equipment, purchasing or expanding premises and other business lending.

“It's particularly heartening to support so many business owners to move from leasing into purchasing their own business premises, as this is such an important milestone for them.



Azzopardi Finance principal broker/ director Trudy Azzopardi is proud of what she and her team have achieved. (Supplied)

“We've also helped numerous customers to purchase businesses, which has allowed them to make the move from employment to self-employment, contributing to regional economic growth and development.”

Trudy and the team are excited for the year ahead, and look forward to supporting even more customers with their lending needs.

Until then, Azzopardi Finance is continuing to support the EmpowerHER MarketFest, describing it as a brilliant event organised by the Bundaberg Business Women's Network.

“This event is always a great opportunity to connect with people face-to-face, answer their questions about financing and our services.

“It is also important to support an event that's



Azzopardi Finance is a local success story that is continuing to grow.

specifically created for women entrepreneurs and change-makers, and this aligns brilliantly with Azzopardi Finance, given we have an all-women team ourselves.”

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# STAFF HAPPY *to provide*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

When it comes to dedicated female staff, locally owned and operated family business Moores Homemakers is a store that has stood out for generations.

Isabel Moore first paved the way as a friendly and well-respected name around the Bundaberg region, always being a strong female lead when her husband Kevin retired.

Many a customer and staff member remember calling her Mrs Moore as she made it a real family business, working for 32 years, retiring when she was 63 and barely having a day off.

One of the next valuable female team members was Leigh Clarke, who has now been at Moores for approximately 30 years and worked with Isabel before replacing her as head salesperson when she retired.

Leigh continues to have a remarkable way of being able to remember customers names and faces that have been shopping in the store for years.

The amazing women to grace the Moores



Jayne, Leigh and Amy proudly display some of the Moores Homemakers award wins. (Supplied)

Homemakers team continue with Janice Datlen continuing to enjoy her role after 15 years, managing all the deliveries and customer service issues.

It is appropriate considering her role, that Janice loves to chat and continues to connect

with customers, giving service above and beyond.

She will even go so far as to include removal of customers' existing lounge or mattress if needed – now that is next level service.



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FURNITURE AND HOMEWARES



Amy continues to welcome showcasing the store's range of styles, colours and fabrics to customers. (Supplied)



Jayne continues to enjoy sharing just how good the different ranges are in store.

Known for her flair for fashion, after 10 years Jayne Legge still hasn't lost her friendly and warm approach to customer service every time.

The newest member of the team rounds it out well.

Bringing with her a wealth of sales and social media experience, Amy Hussey has been with Moores for three years and is looking forward to many more.

Owner Michael Muchow said there was nothing better than seeing generation after generation continue the exceptional service that Isabel had long associated with the Moores name.

"Our team are very dedicated to what they do

and it is for that reason that Moores has proudly won a number of awards throughout 2025 and already into 2026," he said.

"These include the La-Z-Boy Queensland and Northern Territory store of the year for exceptional customer service sales and after sales service.

"Add to that the Furniture Court platinum award for growth in sales range and delivery excellence and also the BEDS R US award for sales growth service and delivery.

"We have many a customer comment that Leigh, Janice, Jayne and Amy provide friendly, no pressure sales advice, actually listening to what the customer is wanting and continuing to provide well after the sale real advice and professional expertise."

Moores Homemakers as well as having exceptional staff, provides the advantage of bigger chain stores by being able to access independent buying groups to get the best range options and products but at a much lower price without franchise fees overheads huge overheads and massive national advertising budgets.

"We have developed a number of strong partnerships over the decades partnering with some of the best furniture brands in the world including La-Z-Boy and IMG Norway in addition to the very best of Australian manufacturing like Sealy and Sleepmaker.

"We encourage anyone new to the region and looking for quality service to visit us at Woondooma and Woongarra Streets opposite Target."

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LA Z BOY

# BEAUTY OF FLORAL DESIGN *embraced*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

For Posy Mae owner and florist Kristin Mae Anderson, being self-taught has shaped her style in a very organic way, with her love of flowers and nature her source of inspiration.

It is remarkable to see how Posy Mae Floral Studio has grown, encouraged by a floral workshop gifted to Kristin by her mum Karina in Tenterfield at the beautiful Glenrock Gardens.

From here, Kristin was inspired to change careers from studying nursing to floristry in 2024, originally running the business from her bedroom, before moving to a little shop front on Walla Street, Bundaberg.

Kristin said as she works alongside her mum Karina, she was drawn to the finer details, the art of knowing where each bloom belongs that adds that extra touch of elegance.

“In June 2025 we relocated to The Laneway on Woongarra in Bundaberg’s CBD which is our current studio space and since relocating we have begun greening and adding flowers to the laneway for the community to enjoy,” she said.

“My floral arrangements are unstructured and beautiful, the flowers we use are sourced from local flower growers, Sunshine Coast and home grown by mum and myself.

“They stand out both in their whimsical style and how I combine seasonal flowers, plus we only create with Australian grown flowers.”

Through Posy Mae Floral Studio, Kristin has been able to see firsthand how flowers express so much, from love to congratulations, brightening up every space and creating a beautiful environment.

“My flowers stand out both in their whimsical style and how I combine seasonal flowers as well as my boutique wrapping, flowing ribbon and unique gift cards.

Each flower is unique and I love that from a tiny seed, tuber or bulb something so beautiful grows.

“Flowers express so much, from love to congratulations or I’m thinking of you.

“Specialising in whimsical weekly flowers and gifts as well as dreamy wedding and event florals. Posy Mae floral designs are known for their unstructured, delicate & beautiful style.



Floral design is something that is very special to Posy Mae owner Kristin Mae Anderson, who has developed her own special style. (Supplied)

“Each floral creation is made by Kristin, her artistic eye and love for detail is what clients love.”

At Posy Mae, family and friendships is at the heart of everything, with Kristin leading floral design, supported by her mum Karina.

Close friend Chantal helps out in the studio and with weddings.

Local business Katelyn Mae Paper Studio stocks her hand painted water colour cards and home sewn items in store.

Matthew, Kristin’s dad lends his hand from renovations to deliveries and Kristin’s fiance, Lachlan, helps out as well, making Posy Mae a true family and friends affair.

Kristin said they were grateful to know many wonderful women business owners through the Bundaberg Business Women’s Network.

“The friendships and support we share in business mean so much to us.

“We also love including fellow BBWN members’ products in our gift hampers, such as beautiful blends from Ettie & Dorrie tea.

“Being a female led business we understand the importance of relationships and community, the EmpowerHER MarketFest allows us to showcase our wonderful business amongst other wonderful female led local businesses.

“We encourage visitors to see exactly what we do – flowers, gifts, gift baskets, DIY gift baskets,

“Our hampers and gift baskets are beautifully curated and ready to grab and go or you can create it yourself.

“They range from our baby hampers to birthday celebrations, congrats, I love you or just because.”

Kristin encourages customers to keep an eye out as they are also launching new workshops at Easter.



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# JANE FINDS BEAUTY *in many places*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

An artist, illustrator and bookbinder, Jane Marin has a way of finding beauty in so many different things.

Following her autism/ADHD diagnosis last year, she appreciated the need to reshape her business in a way that was more aligned, sustainable and true to who she is and be recognised by her name, not simply her business.

Creating has always been a major part of Jane's life and she can't remember a time when she wasn't creating something. Jane said simply, it was how she processes the world, explores ideas, expresses emotions and connects inwardly.

"Even as my focus and mediums have evolved and changed over time, creativity itself remains constant, it is simply part of who I am.

"Oracle card illustration remains a large part of my business; however, I am no longer creating original paintings on canvas for sale

"My creative energy is now primarily focused on illustration, handmade journals and teaching."

Jane shared that she was challenged by not being able to find suitable journals for her art journalling students.

"I have always loved making books, so returning to bookbinding felt like a natural solution and it has allowed me to combine art, paper, structure, storytelling and function into one form," she said.

"People are often fascinated by how much is involved in each handmade journal.

"From cutting, folding and stitching signatures to constructing covers and occasionally incorporating artwork, every stage is done by hand.

"I also love the sense of lineage in this work — my paternal grandmother was a bookbinder in the 1920s, and my maternal grandmother was an artist."

2026 has started out well for Jane, who has her own shop at the Perfectly Imperfect Collective inside the Paragon Theatre in Childers and an online presence on Madeit Australia a platform for Australian handmade businesses.

"Being part of a collective is like a dream come true for me and is something I feel very grateful for.



Artist, illustrator and bookbinder, Jane Marin has found a special place in the world surrounded by art and beauty. (Supplied)

"However, workshops are perhaps one of the most rewarding parts of my business.

"Nothing gives me greater joy than seeing the smiles on participants' faces when they realise what they have created, whether it be a painting or a handmade journal.

"Witnessing that moment of recognition and pride never gets old.

"Being part of the Bundaberg Business Women's Network is to be part of a supportive group that provides encouragement, connection, learning and a sense of belonging.

"It reminds me that none of us are doing this alone, and that shared wisdom and support make the journey richer."

As a stall holder at the BBWN EmpowerHER MarketFest, Jane will be showcasing her handmade journals and field books, along with a selection of published works including books

and oracle cards.

"It is always meaningful to meet people who may not have encountered my work before.

"People who are outside of my usual circle.

"These connections often spark wonderful conversations about creativity, journalling, and personal expression.

"Last year I had the absolute honour of being featured in Artist Mother Proud & Serious, an international art publication by the Women United Art Movement, alongside 25 female artists from around the globe, so can appreciate just what women can do when they have passion and dedication."

"I feel deeply grateful to be creating a business that reflects who I truly am, supported by a community that values creativity, authenticity and connection."

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# MAKING LIVES BETTER IN *Bundaberg*

Since launching March 2023, Nurse Next Door Bundaberg has been guided by a core purpose of Making Lives Better.

Led by local registered nurse Sarah Dufty, the team is passionate about making a difference in how their community receives care.

As a Government Registered Provider of Support at Home, they provide premium caregiving and nursing services, so locals can continue living in their own home, on their own terms.

Since the start of her care 12 months ago, local resident Lorna, says Nurse Next Door has brought a profound sense of genuine connection and companionship.

Lorna shares that she looks forward to their company and counts the days until they come next time.

This transformation began with a specific need for qualified nursing and clinical care.

Lorna explains that the support has changed her outlook significantly, stating that she is loved, has never had so much love, and feels as though she is alive.

Sarah and her team focus on complimentary six weekly supervisory visits by registered nurses.

Sarah explains the team focuses on these regular visits so that clients with multiple health conditions feel safe and secure knowing they have that care.

“These regular clinical check-ins ensure each individual feels truly supported with expert care monitoring their health and wellbeing,” she said.

“The team has built a network of associate providers ensuring a holistic approach to wellness in Bundaberg and Agnes Water.”

Participants can access in-home Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Occupational Therapy, and specialised Wound Care Nursing, alongside gardening services.

By bringing clinical and lifestyle services directly, Sarah ensures clients can stay at home on their own terms.

Every interaction delivers a heart led wow customer experience.

For Lorna, this means a 24/7 care team for hospital advocacy, shopping, and shared lunches.



There is a special bond between Lorna and her carer Donna. (Supplied)

Caregiver Donna describes their relationship as beautiful and bubbly.

Whether providing care or clinical oversight, the team looks to Find a Better Way to bring joy.

Through this dedicated local support, Bundaberg residents are empowered to maintain their independence and positivity.

By focusing on a sense of purpose and

exploring every possibility for health and happiness, Sarah's team ensures that every individual can continue living their life to the fullest.

To learn more about how Nurse Next Door Bundaberg is Making Lives Better, visit the website at [nursenextdoor.com.au](http://nursenextdoor.com.au) or call their friendly local 24/7 team on 1300 600 247.



## We Believe the *Best Care* Happens at *Home*

Nurse Next Door Bundaberg delivers reliable home care services in Bundaberg to help your loved ones stay at home. We offer support in personal care, meal preparations, 24-hour home care and more. Our custom in-home care model allows your loved ones to stay healthy and happy at home.

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[www.nursenextdoor.com.au/location/bundaberg](http://www.nursenextdoor.com.au/location/bundaberg) or 1300 100 247

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# REAL ESTATE CONTINUES TO BE *Cheryle's passion*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

What does it mean to not only have years of experience behind you, but also a network of fellow agents in excess of 850 throughout Australia and New Zealand...

This is the reality for independent licensed real estate agent Cheryle Rayson who is now part of the @Realty network and thoroughly enjoying it.

Cheryle said after running a large real estate business for over 10 years it offers a sense of freedom and flexibility.

"I have all the resources of a large office, compliance, legal and marketing, and I am free to collaborate with any other agents," she said.

"This network gives me back time that is stolen from small business owners by the onerous reporting to government agencies.

"@Realty has a great operational platform and great resources which allows me to spend more time to work with clients.

"The collective presence of multiple @Realty agents looks to the outside world as if it were the same as any other large franchise."

Cheryle continues to be pleased that the local Bundaberg market is still very strong with more buyers than sellers out there.

"One of the reasons for this is that owners are hesitant to put their property onto the market because due to the limited stock available they find difficulty in being able to secure their next property.

"In my opinion this is really been constraining the market for quite a while.

"Years ago, people had the attitude that they could sell and if they hadn't found anything they could easily rent, the rental market has certainly changed and not as available or as flexible as it was years ago, so most people don't see this as an option.

"A recent article I read said that the listings of the most recent year was down by 18 per cent of the previous year – that's like one house in every five are not being listed or sold and we are in the middle of a housing crisis with more demand for housing with less supply."

With many of her clients trapped in the chain of needing to sell to buy their next home, Cheryle is happy to spend a lot of time working



Cheryle (right) has welcomed being an integral member of the Bundaberg Business Women's Network. (Lee Ann Wilson Photography)

with them on how to manage that transition, as this is where over 15 years in real estate and 15 years as a finance broker definitely assist in facilitating that process.

"It is very interesting watching the migration from south – Brisbane, Gold Coast areas, NSW and Victoria, we sell to them, but recently I have just sold a property for people going back to Victoria for family reasons and I'm about to list another for someone returning to be closer to family in New South Wales.

"It is a cycle that exists – if you have been around in the game for a long time you know it, to those newer to the industry they maybe more aware of those coming in than those leaving again."

Real estate continues to be an extension of Cheryle's commitment to the community, both as a member of Toastmasters, but also the Bundaberg Business Women's Network.

"Real estate is a people's business – everyone you know lives somewhere! Being out and about in the community allows people to know and trust you and when they need your services they feel confident to reach out for a chat.

"I am happy to help educate people about the process and let them know there are often solutions to many of the complex issues that can arise when selling and buying.

"Sellers are often overwhelmed at what they perceive as a problem – when I can offer a quick solution you can see the weight lifting off of

their shoulders.

"I also find that being part of these networks allows me to stay connected with other like-minded business owners and people in the community that I may not otherwise know, and I enjoy the energy I get from just chatting with them.

"I've also just spent three years on the committee for Chamber of Commerce, and I've been with BBWN and Toastmasters around 10 years."

Through the Bundaberg Business Women's Network EmpowerHER MarketFest, Cheryle likes the opportunity to see the businesses that showcase themselves at this event and have the opportunity to catch up or to introduce herself and have a chat.

"I also think that for some businesses it is an opportunity to showcase themselves often for the first time which helps them to grow as a business and crystallise their message to the market.

"The event offers growth in multiple ways.

"For me, I'm really proud to be a business operator in the Bundaberg region – Bundy has a lot to offer from being a large regional agri-food hub, tourism destination and a large regional centre with great weather.

"I was also proud to receive a Fellow of the REIQ for over 15 years as a professional in real estate."

## Selling or Buying? Cheryle's Got You!

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# ELISA COMMITTED TO *region's future*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

While 2025 was a very rewarding year professionally for First National Real Estate Bundaberg co-principal Elisa Mayberry, she is still looking forward to continued growth with purpose in 2026.

Elisa said that means strengthening the businesses systems, developing their people, and continuing to evolve how they serve their clients in a changing market.

"I am particularly excited about refining the client experience and supporting the next generation of leaders within our business," she said.

"What continues to energise me is the ability to represent our region with pride.

"Bundaberg has so much to offer, not just in lifestyle, but in opportunity.

"Being able to showcase quality homes, support families through important life decisions, and promote the strengths of our community makes the work deeply rewarding."

One thing is always clear when it comes to First National Real Estate, the results are very much a team effort.

Elisa and fellow co-principal Justin place strong emphasis on communication, shared standards and mutual respect with every role within their office mattering.

By working collaboratively, the First National Bundaberg team are able to deliver consistent, high-quality outcomes for their clients with a culture that is built around trust and accountability, showing in the results they achieve together.

As a dedicated member of her community, and as a business owner, Elisa said she finds serving as the Bundaberg Business Women's Network president incredibly meaningful.

"Both roles allow me to champion connection, confidence, and collaboration.

"Supporting women in business is not just about advocacy, it is about creating genuine opportunities, encouraging resilience, and helping others see what is possible.

"I feel privileged to contribute to that in both capacities.

"What I continue to also love about the



For Elisa Mayberry, she appreciates the opportunity to be able to work with a variety of different women both in her career and also through the Bundaberg Business Women's Network. (Lee-Ann Wilson Photography)

EmpowerHER MarketFest is the energy and connection it creates.

"Each year it brings together women who are passionate, creative, and supportive of one another.

"Seeing relationships form, businesses grow, and confidence build is incredibly fulfilling and reinforces why the event matters.

"Overall, I am grateful to work within a community that values collaboration and supports local business.

"Whether through real estate, leadership, or community initiatives, my focus remains on contributing positively and creating lasting impact."

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# QUALITY AND RELIABILITY THE KEY WITH *Whistle a Cleaner*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

Affordable, reliable and professional, that is what customers of Whistle A Cleaner Queensland can always count on.

Proof that hard work, dedication and a clear business vision leads to success, Whistle a Cleaner began as a business in Bundaberg in 2008 (originating in Victoria in 1998) and now provides services across the Wide Bay Region providing in-home cleaning, care and respite services.

Whistle a Cleaner has been providing exceptional commercial cleaning services to business and workplaces across the state for over 20 years.

Owner Kathy Bellman said the Whistle a Cleaner specialise in the cleaning of office/workplaces, gyms or day spas, warehouse, in fact, any business space that requires their professional touch.

“We believe that our experienced team of friendly, local people provide the highest quality and most reliable business cleaning services in Queensland,” she said.

“Regardless of the size of your premises, we can organise a cleaning schedule that perfectly fits the requirements of your business and operational needs.

“All cleaning services can be carried out at your premises at any time of the day or evening on any given day of the week.

“Our amazing team of office cleaners are trained in the appropriate occupational health and safety measures and are covered by our current Work Cover and Public Liability Insurance Policies and all hold current Queensland Police Security checks.”

Whistle A Cleaner QLD is also a registered NDIS Provider and has a large service team, who are not only very well experienced but also dedicated to supporting the individual needs of their clients, helping to prolong independence in their own homes.

“At Whistle A Cleaner QLD each client is treated with dignity, respect and care, catering to their own individual needs and preferences.

“The team find it very rewarding when they are able to provide the much-needed help and support a client requires and know they have made a positive difference to their day.”

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Whistle a Cleaner provide a reliable, affordable and dedicated cleaning service. (Supplied)



The Whistle a Cleaner team are always friendly whether cleaning a commercial space or home.

your work place or home, by contacting the admin team on 0439 069 553 or check them out on the website at [wacqld.com.au/](http://wacqld.com.au/)

As a member of the Bundaberg community, Kathy appreciates having the opportunity to give back to the community.

Kathy is also a member of the Bundaberg Business Women's Network, and the Bundaberg Chamber of Commerce, attending their business showcase events, embracing and supporting other business people in the Bundaberg region.

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This International Women's Day, Rebecca Beer and the team at Raine & Horne Bundaberg proudly celebrate the strength, dedication and leadership of women in real estate and in our local community.

As a female-led team, we understand that success is built on confidence, collaboration and care. Every member of our team brings professionalism, insight and genuine empathy to each client relationship, ensuring every property journey is guided with integrity and expertise.

At Raine & Horne Bundaberg, we believe great results come from strong foundations, trust, clear communication and a commitment to exceeding expectations. Whether buying, selling or seeking advice, our clients know they are supported by a team that listens, advocates and delivers.

**This International Women's Day, we celebrate the women who inspire us, the clients who trust us, and the community we are proud to serve.**

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## Rebecca Beer & Team

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# Red Shed Seafood

Easter is just a Hop away



Tony Mills, Marguerite Conroy-Mills and Bobby Boon. (Elka Scherer: 518483)

FRESH IS BEST

## at Red Shed Seafood

While chocolate eggs may steal the spotlight for the children this Easter, there's another indulgence that brings the whole family to the table — fresh, delicious seafood.

Whether you're honouring the traditional religious customs of the season or simply looking to serve something special that everyone will love, seafood remains a timeless Easter favourite.

At Red Shed Seafood, owners Tony Mills and Marguerite Conroy-Mills are already preparing for the busy Easter rush.

Behind the scenes, the team is working hard to ensure their customers enjoy nothing but the freshest, highest-quality seafood for the long weekend celebrations.

Marguerite, who loves entertaining herself, says Easter is one of her favourite times of year.

"Seafood is such a beautiful way to bring people together," she said.

"At Red Shed Seafood, you can always count on top quality at the best prices — that's something we're proud of."

With plenty of fresh deliveries arriving in time for the holiday, customers can expect an impressive selection to suit everything from Good Friday feasts to relaxed Easter Sunday lunches.

For those who like to plan ahead — or who may be travelling — Red Shed Seafood also offers a wide range of locally sourced seafood that has been cryovaced and snap frozen, locking in freshness and flavour without compromising quality.

If you're unsure what to choose or how best to prepare it, Bobby, their number one employee and the in-store seafood expert who knows absolutely everything there is to know about seafood, is always on hand with advice, cooking tips and serving suggestions to help customers make the most of their Easter feast.

From premium seafood and flavour-packed sauces to friendly advice in store, Red Shed Seafood makes Easter entertaining easy.

This Easter, swap some of the chocolate for something savoury — and gather around the table for a celebration that everyone can enjoy.

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## RED SHED GARLIC PRAWNS

Cooked & ready to serve in under 10 minutes.

### Marinade:

- Red Shed large Green Prawns - 500 grams peeled
- Olive Oil - 1 tablespoon
- Salt - 1/2 tablespoon & Pepper

### Butter Sauce:

- Olive Oil - 2 tablespoons
- Garlic - 3 teaspoons chopped
- White Wine - 1/4 cup
- Butter - 3 tablespoons
- Lemon Juice - 1 tablespoon

### To Serve:

- Lemon Wedges.
- Crusty Bread.

### Method:

- Marinate prawns with olive oil and salt and pepper for a maximum of 20 minutes.
- The salt will draw the moisture from the prawns if you leave them any longer.
- Heat olive oil in a large pan on high heat. Add prawns one at a time & sear each side for

about 45 seconds.

- Do in batches if need be, do not overcrowd the pan.
- Add garlic and toss for 30 seconds.
- Add wine, it will sizzle & steam when it hits the pan which is good. It will reduce down very quickly, which is exactly what we want - fast cook = juicy prawns.
- Once the wine has mostly evaporated, add the butter and lemon juice and swirl the pan to make it melt.
- As soon as the butter has melted, quickly toss through the parsley and transfer the prawns and all the butter sauce onto a plate.
- Serve straight away with lemon wedges and crusty bread.

### Wine Tip:

You can use any white wine for this recipe. Dry or sweet or sparkling is especially delicious, you can even use Rosé. You can substitute with liquid stock if not using wine. This recipe is an old classic that never goes out of fashion, never disappoints, and is so quick and easy. Bon Appetit.

# THE ANSWER FOR QUALITY DINING IS ALWAYS *Rick's at Bargara*

BY ANGELA NORVAL

From social media blogs, to dining reviews and holiday happy snaps, Rick's at Bargara is the type of cafe/restaurant that is able to be featured across them all.

Rick's at Bargara is the perfect place to visit if you are simply looking for a relaxing coffee overlooking the water, a fun lunch with friends or an absolutely delicious dinner with the smooth sounds of local musicians in the background.

The growth of Rick's at Bargara is not something that has happened overnight, but is a result of the hard work and complete dedication of owners Rick and Trish Johnstone, who truly love what they do and the region they serve.

For both Rick and Trish, it has been about providing an experience that will make their customers keep coming back for more, because they appreciate the simple touches including a morning coffee brewed to the right temperature using quality beans, a lunch menu that allows for a dining experience that lasts all afternoon or a quick bite between appointments and of course incredible dinner and view that makes



The extra indoor dining option at Rick's at Bargara gives diners plenty of choice. (Supplied)

diners never want to leave.

Rick said there was nothing better than being able to know locals by name and their specific order, while also having the beauty of welcoming some holiday makers back for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

"We are always looking at ways we can make our customers more comfortable, whether it is

placement of the umbrellas on days of sunshine, keeping our menu updated to ensure we are always able to have seasonal freshness in every meal or the inclusion of an air-conditioned room ideal for special events.

"Rick's at Bargara is a place that we are proud of and hope that our customers will continue to want to visit time and time again."

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