



Copacabana Community Association Inc.

Autumn 2026

COPA NEWS

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We acknowledge the Garigal Clan of the Wannanginni Guringai people as the ancestral custodians of Bulbararing Allagai and Tjudibaring and pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

WELCOME TO Autumn

IN THIS ISSUE:

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Dakota Drennan
- Copa Surf Club
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- On The Beach

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WHAT'S ON

MARCH

Saturday 07

Copa Bushcare 2-4pm

Sunday 22

Avoca Beachside Markets

APRIL

Thursday 02

Last day of school term

Friday 03

Good Friday Public Holiday

Saturday 04

Copa Bushcare 2-4pm

Monday 06



Easter Monday Public Holiday

Monday 13

CCA Meeting 7.30pm Surf Club

Wednesday 22

First day of school term

Saturday 25

ANZAC Day Dawn Service

Sunday 26

Avoca Beachside Markets

MAY

Saturday 02

Copa Bushcare 2-4pm

Sunday 24

Avoca Beachside Markets

A word from the CCA President

Autumn greetings to the Copacabana Community. What a stunning summer we had 2025/2026! Thanks to all the volunteers at Copa Surf Club for keeping everyone safe. We are so grateful we have had a great season devoid of some of the dramas experienced by so many other communities.



Copacabana Community Association Inc.

The CCA continues to represent our local community across a range of issues to help preserve our village charm and natural assets. Here are a few updates on local issues we have been working on over the break.

War Memorial:

The Development Application is due to go before the Planning Panel in April.

Cochrane Lagoon:

The CCA has been advised that derelict watercraft will be/had been removed from the Lagoon foreshore after persistent lobbying from the CCA. This will prevent pollutants from seeping into the water.

The Coastal Lagoon Committee – of which I am a member - had its final meeting presenting proposed management plans for the coast's lagoons in February. I will update members at our meetings.

Beach Access:

Thanks to all who wrote to Council regarding the poor state of the southern beach access opposite the bottle shop, which was closed to the public due to the unsafe nature of the steps. Councillor Wright is helping to support the community's requests to get remedial works completed soon.

Clean up Copa Day Thanks:

The annual cleanup day was held as part of the national 'Clean Up Australia' event on March 1st. Thanks to all who volunteered to help keep our beautiful community clean. We appreciate all your efforts. I would particularly like to thank CCA Treasurer, Rob Morgan, for his tireless efforts in making this event so successful each year.

Copa Men's Shed:

See story in this issue. The shed is open, welcoming men on Tuesdays 9 am to 12.30pm and there are women's craft activities on Monday. See contact details on Locals pages.

We extend a warm welcome to the new owners of **Burnt Honey Bakery**, Jay and Amelia, and a fond farewell to Haley and Jo. We know locals will continue to support this terrific local business.

Finally, we would like to congratulate **Tom Tseng** for his recent achievement, receiving the Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the 2026 Australia Day Honours, for significant service to dentistry. Tom has been President of the Copacabana Surf Club for a number of years, and we are fortunate indeed that he contributes so much to our community. .

Bernadine Mitchell



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You're welcome at Copacabana Community Men's Shed



The origins of Copa Men's Shed can be traced back to 2012, when – with the overwhelming support of the community and the CCA – a group of committed locals (including the original Co-ordinator, Life Member, Bob Clancy) garnered the support of local Councillors for the concept. After a lot of groundwork and attempts to find a suitable location, a new committee was set up in 2017, with Dr Mike Mitchelmore as Co-ordinator. The committee set to work to secure a location, draw up plans and investigate funding sources.

The current location was finally agreed upon and Tim Boland designed the building that now sits comfortably within its surrounds. A development application was approved in August 2020. Years of work and dedication by many locals finally paid off: the shed build started in 2021 and was completed in 2023. The community owes all of the people who have contributed to the project (then and now) a debt of gratitude.

The stated mission of Men's Sheds is to "foster community and mental well-being through shared, informal activities in a workshop setting". In 2025 the current committee made a commitment to encourage women to use part of the facility, to facilitate community inclusion. As the shed is somewhat under-utilised at the present time, the committee is keen to take enquiries and ideas from Copa locals. It is hoped that the Shed will be able to be opened more regularly, a place where people can come for good company and shared purpose.

Enquiries welcome:
secretary@copamensshed.org.au



Move your home up the wanted list.

McGrath

Steve Nixon 0403 943 341
stevenixon@mcgrath.com.au





Dakota Drennan

We have another high-achieving local teenager to celebrate in this issue. Dakota Drennan, at just seventeen years old, is a champion hockey goalie who has been working hard at her sport for years, and it has certainly paid off. Dakota is a true 'Copa kid', having lived here since she was born. She attended Copa school and is still friends with many of her old classmates. She has extended family here, including proud grandparents Graham and Noeleen as well as aunts, uncles and cousins.

Hockey is a family affair for the Drennans, with Dakota's parents Gavin and Alicia providing incredible support to help her to achieve her sporting ambitions. Both Graham and Gavin played hockey, and Dakota's older siblings Lara and Zane are apparently also talented players. So it's well and truly in the genes. Gavin coached Dakota's teams for many years and has now handed over the mantle to her Representative coaches.

Dakota's been accorded many Representative honours over the years. When she was playing in the Under 16s for NSW, she was selected in the Australian team to compete in Europe. They played in the Easter Cup with matches in Germany against Ireland, Argentina and other nations. Last year her team won the Gold medal in the Under 18s National team, which played matches all over Australia.

Dakota has now been selected for Hockey Australia's pathway program. She trains in the High Performance program in Sydney, where she attends squad training two afternoons a week. Her ambition is to be chosen to represent Australia in the Hockeyroos Squad for the Olympics in 2032.

We're not quite sure how she has time, but Dakota has taken a job at Sweeney's Pizzas since graduating from Kincumber High last year. She feels right at home here in the Copa community, with her large network of friends and family. But since it seems she is bound for international glory in her chosen sport, she may not be spending a lot of time here in future. We congratulate Dakota on her outstanding achievements and wish her all the very best for the future.



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It has been a busy three months for the Surf Lifesaving Club as the Christmas/New Year season saw many visitors to Copacabana beach. There were 2 rescues and 191 Preventative actions by our Volunteer Lifesavers during the Christmas School Holiday period.

Another Art Show was held at the Club over the Australia Day Long Weekend, and it was very well attended. Our thanks goes to Suzie, Carol and all the Artists who made the Art Show a great success and it raised over \$4000 for the Club through donations and fees. The next Art Show is on the weekend of the 5 Lands Walk so please come along and support the Artists.

Our Nippers, Rockpool Rockstars and Open and Masters competitors have recently been competing at the SLS Central Coast Branch titles. All competitors achieved some great results and brought home a swag of medals. Our Masters competitors finished third overall behind the two much bigger Central



Copacabana SLSC UPDATE

Coast clubs. Many of our Nippers and Masters were due to compete in the NSW State Titles at Blacksmiths beach at the end of February, but their results are unknown at the time of writing. We hope they did well!

Our Weekenders events on Friday evenings at the Club continue to be well attended by our Members, locals, neighbours and visitors to Copacabana. Come on down to the Club on a Friday evening for a drink and various food options over the next two months.

I hope to see you all on the beach soon. Remember to always swim between the red and yellow flags.

Tom Tseng, President



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Copacabana Public School

A message from Naomi White – Principal



Wonderful start to 2026

We have had a wonderful start to the 2026 school year here at Copacabana Public School. I am the proud new Principal, Naomi White, and feel extremely privileged to be leading this incredible school community.

Our students have settled well into their new classes, with productive learning happening and academic, social and physical goals being set. The children enjoyed their free tennis lessons in February, and we've hosted our Class Information sessions for parents. Our Merit assembly was held on February 21, and our first P & C meeting of the year was on February 25. It's been wonderful to see so many members of our school community join us, to work in partnership for our terrific little school.

In 2026, the major focus areas in our School Excellence Plan include:

- Explicit teaching practices in literacy and numeracy
- Quality feedback and assessment practices to support student growth and identify individual needs for continued support, challenge and intervention
- Opportunities for High Potential & Gifted students, across a variety of domains
- Student Voice initiatives
- Continuing to refine our wellbeing practices for enhanced consistency schoolwide

As a school, we are focused on continuing to invite our community in to share in student success and fun and are excited to be hosting an Easter Hat Parade at the end of Term 1. This will be the first of many inclusive community events we aim to host in 2026.

We look forward to a fantastic school year ahead at our beautiful Copacabana Public School.

Naomi White – Principal



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Copacabana RFB

A Summer of Challenges

As we close out the season, the brigade has reflected on what was one of our busiest periods since the “Black Summer” fires of 2019/20. Our crews have been active across a diverse range of emergencies. We responded to storm damage events, motor vehicle accidents and structure fires—including emerging threats like house fires caused by lithium-ion e-bike batteries.

The Koolewong Fire: A Stark Reminder

The defining moment of the season occurred in the very first week of summer at the Koolewong bushfire. The intensity of that day cannot be overstated. Fuelled by hot, dry winds, the fire was aggressive and unpredictable. The Copa crew was deployed into the heart of the firefight. Working alongside 4 helicopters, 2 Large Air Tankers (LATs), and over 50 fire trucks, our volunteers gave everything they had to protect life and property. We were grateful for the support of Strike Teams convoys that travelled from various other districts to assist. While the loss of 16 homes was a tragedy felt by the entire firefighting community, we must highlight a crucial victory: 118 homes were saved. Our crews remained on the ground for days following the initial front, patrolling and blacking out to ensure the fire remained fully contained.

The 5-Minute Lesson: Why You Need a Plan

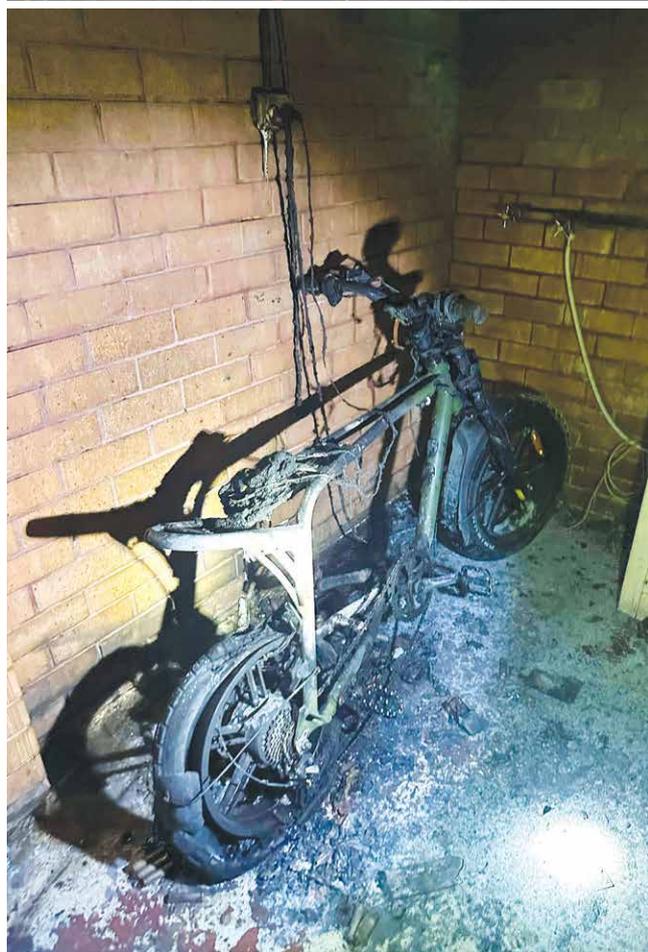
The Koolewong fire taught us a terrifying lesson about speed. Houses were being impacted within minutes of the first ‘000’ calls. This brings us to the most important message we can share with the Copa community: “I will just leave” is not a plan. When a fire is moving that fast, roads become gridlocked, visibility drops to zero, and panic sets in. We urge every resident to sit down now – not when you smell smoke – and complete a Bush Fire Survival Plan. Knowing when to leave, what to take, and where to go before the emergency starts is the only way to ensure your family’s safety.

More than just a fire station: Your Community Hub

While our primary job is response, the Copa RFS station is also built to serve as a sanctuary for our residents during major disruptions. During severe storms, prolonged blackouts, or other community emergencies, the station acts as a Community Hub.

Strengthening the Brigade

We are thrilled with the response to our joint recruitment information night held with Avoca Beach RFS. It was fantastic to see 14 enthusiastic locals step up. We are currently moving them through the recruitment process. This influx of new members is vital. It strengthens both brigades, ensuring that we have the depth and sustainability to answer the call whenever—and wherever—it comes. Thank you to the Copacabana community for your ongoing support. Stay safe.



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NON-SURGICAL FACIAL AESTHETIC TREATMENTS

Dr Hengame Babaei Lakeh (a.k.a. Dr Hanna), now practising at Copacabana Medical Centre, will be commencing consultations for patients considering non-surgical facial aesthetic treatments. Dr Hengame has experience and recognised qualifications in facial assessment and treatment planning.

What are non-surgical facial aesthetic treatments?

Non-surgical facial aesthetic treatments are cosmetic medical procedures intended to address aesthetic concerns such as facial lines, volume changes, or skin quality. While these procedures do not involve surgery they may still alter the structure or appearance of the face.

Your Consultation and Assessment

Dr Hanna focuses on thorough in-person consultations to determine whether a treatment may be appropriate for patients' goals, health status and expectations, with an emphasis on suitability and realistic outcomes. The initial comprehensive consultation includes:

- A medical history and assessment of your individual circumstances
- Discussion of your concerns and expectations
- Consideration of whether treatment is appropriate
- Explanation of potential benefits, limitations, and alternatives
- Discussion of known risks and possible complications

Understanding benefits and limitations

While non-surgical cosmetic procedures may improve certain aesthetic concerns for some individuals, results are not guaranteed. The degree and duration of any effect varies and may depend on factors such as anatomy, skin condition, age, lifestyle, and general health.



Dr Hemgame Babaei Lakeh

(MED0004022372), registered medical practitioner, general registration.

No cosmetic procedure can stop the natural ageing process, and maintenance treatments may be required.

Risks and safety considerations

Risks depend on the treatment and may range from mild and temporary effects to more serious complications. While these risks will be discussed during an initial consultation, Dr Hanna advises patients consider them before making an initial assessment.

See www.copacabanamedical.com.au/aesthetic-treatments

In addition to facial aesthetic consultation, Dr Hanna may also assess and, where clinically appropriate, provide treatment for hyperhidrosis (excessive sweating) and excessive gingival display ("gummy smile").

Dr Hanna and the team at Copacabana Medical Centre are committed to patient-centred, evidence-based medical care and will support patients in making informed decisions that align with their individual health needs and circumstances.

Opening Hours:

Monday - Friday:
9:00am - 6:00pm

Same day appointments available

Contact us to find out more or to
make an appointment:

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or book online: copamedical.com.au



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ON THE Beach

Australia Day

It was wonderful to see a harmonious community turnout of around four hundred people on the beach on Australia Day for an early morning gathering, a smoking ceremony and a truly inclusive celebration. Huge thanks to Tim Selwyn and the people from Girri Girra Aboriginal Experiences for facilitating.



Big seas and wild weather

We are used to seeing the changing shape of our beach and dunes periodically due to wild weather, king tides and the normal forces of nature. Natural erosion works its way into the sands and dunes. These photos show the dramatically different course and extent of our stormwater route over the past few months. The CCA keeps Council up to date with changes and requests remediation works when required. We'd like to remind locals to let visitors know that this watercourse is a stormwater drain and often very polluted. In other words, it's not a place to let kids paddle. Please send us any pics you might like to see featured in upcoming issues.

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Copacabana Men's Shed

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Women's session
Mondays 9am-12.30pm
BYO Craft

Enquiries welcome:
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The CCA always needs new members, new ideas and new perspectives

Come along to a meeting or join up (see back page) and share your thoughts.

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Join the conversation





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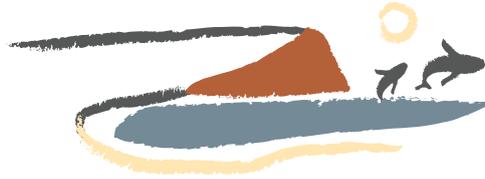
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Copacabana Community Association

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Copacabana Community Association Inc.

THE CCA NEEDS NEW MEMBERS

We are a small team and we need new ideas and fresh insights so we can keep working for the benefit of the community. We have committee vacancies right now!

The CCA is run by a volunteer Management Committee who work on behalf of members and the broader community to improve facilities and advocate for beautification projects in Copa. We make representations and submissions to local Council and State government in order to safeguard the unique, low-rise 'beach and bush' characteristics of our suburb and we keep a close eye on zoning regulations that currently protect our area from over-development.

From time to time we also apply for grants and funding to support important community projects and events.

We co-ordinate events designed to foster inclusivity and often work together with the Surf Club and the Copa RFB to help achieve better outcomes for the community.

NEXT MEETING: Monday April 13, Copa Surf Club, 7.30pm

All welcome.

**Please speak to Rob or Bernadine if you'd like to become a member
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If you are a new member, please email your name and address to info@copanews.com.au

Attn: Treasurer/New member in subject line

YOUR CCA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Bernadine Mitchell **Treasurer:** Rob Morgan **Committee Members:** Greg Maude, Robert Gonda, Lorraine Parks, Pat Farmer

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