

# Birubi might be off limits for best mate

## EDITORIAL

By **ETHAN WELLING** and **SARAH MEGAHEY**

COMMERCIAL operations seem to have priority over private residents on Birubi Beach, with dog owners potentially being banned from taking their pets for a walk along the beach, while businesses using camels and horses are still permitted.

Recently, the Port Stephens Council created a section on its Facebook page to allow public discussion about proposed changes to dog walking areas as part of a local review.

These submissions closed on August 19, but it raises the question why the council felt it needed to do the review in the first place.

When a post asked the same question, Ranger Ralph, the administrator of the site, responded that submissions had been made to council regarding this issue, but he did not explain what these submissions covered.

When the council was contacted regarding the submissions, the response was that they were confidential and could not be discussed in public.

So what happens now and why would the council want to ban dogs?

Currently dogs are permitted to walk on a leash after 5pm and before 9am on council land and on a leash at any time further south in the Worimi Conservation Lands.

Bagnalls Beach, which is the only off-leash beach in the local area, is becoming more and more crowded, so it seems surprising such areas are not being opened up, rather than closed.

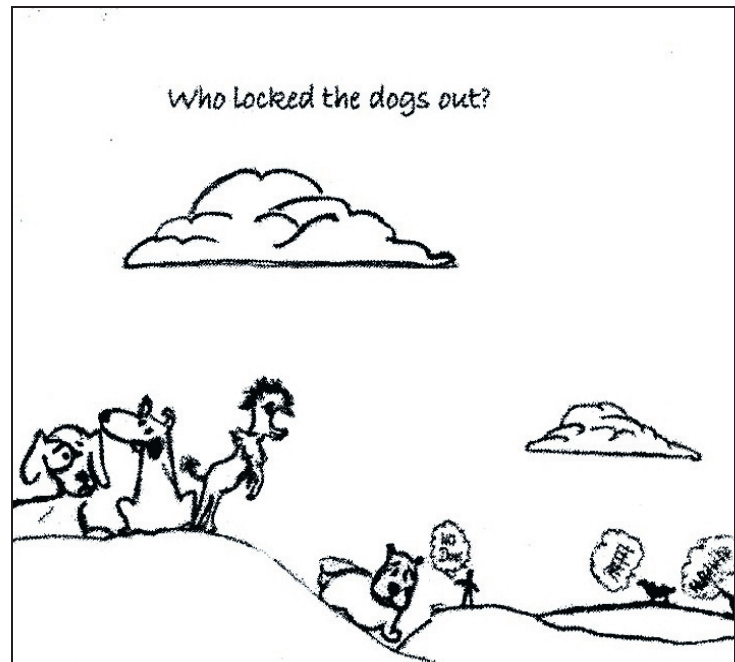
Beaches are a wonderful environment for dogs to run, swim and socialise with other dogs and, with summer coming and the tick season already started, it also provides a safe environment.

While everyone deserves to be able to use the beach and feel safe and healthy, it can be argued most dog owners and their pets leave less rubbish and do less damage than a lot of other beach goers.

On occasion, broken bottles, plastic bags, fishing line, tyre tracks and camel poo have all been visible on the beach.

It seems everyone has a responsibility to pick up after themselves (or their dogs) and behave sensibly around others.

Why are dogs the only ones being banned and who is applying the pressure on Port Stephens Council to change?



Cartoon: George Flaherty, Jake Hill, Olivia Hampton



COLLECTION OF A LIFETIME: Mick Kershaw with his surfing souvenirs.

# Malibu Mick's memorabilia

By **CHARLIE ROBINSON** and **SCOTT RUDGE**

MICK Kershaw is a surf memorabilia collector and has filled his house with anything surf-related.

Passers-by know his collection by the unique Thong Tree, a large palm tree covered in colourful thongs of all shapes and sizes at his front door.

Mick's collection does not only include surfboards; his shed is filled to the brim with vintage boardwax, surfing movies, magazines, foam surfboards, flippers, old skateboards, T-shirts, old wetsuits and posters.

His board collection has surf craft from over 80 years ago and his couch - covered in surf material - invites

visitors to sit and watch surf movies from days past.

In the back yard, Mick has boards and surf craft all over the garden. He even has a surfboard toilet.

Mick said many local people had donated and lent him memorabilia for his surf museum.

He is also a well-known surfer at the local beaches. Most locals know Mick and often ask how the surf is today. He always replies, "I had the best waves of my life today!"

Mr Kershaw doesn't charge visitors an admission fee, "I just like the 'wow' factor when they walk through the door," he said.

Mr Kershaw's collection has been compiled throughout the time he has lived in the Anna Bay area.

# Steered to learn with horse class

By **SOPHIE CLISSOLD** and **TYLER REGAN**

RECENTLY, Tomaree journalism students were invited to join their fellow students who attend Irrawang Park horse riding for the disabled.

It is a peaceful place where students can ride in quiet. Each student is matched with a horse that they remain with from then on, unless the horse is sick or becomes too small.

The school offers a range of programs such as therapeutic riding, dressage and carriage driving for the students with disabilities to learn.

"It's about behaviour, concentration and persistence," said Mrs Jenkinson, a riding for the disabled teacher.

It is also about fun as the students all enjoy their time there. The students sometimes feed the horses before getting into the community bus and heading back to school.

Other school groups also participate in the riding programs, which are only made possible by the support of 137 volunteers and community donations. Taking care of a horse costs about \$1200 a year, but the generous support of the volunteers helps to keep costs down.

As well as horses there is also a sensory garden in the park that students can visit.

The Tomaree cub reporters all enjoyed their visit to the riding school.

# When age and youth combine their skills

By **ELISHA PHILLIPS** and **OLIVIA HAMPTON**

TOMAREE Public School has a selection of students who go to Regis - an aged-care facility in the area that caters for active low-care residents to those with higher needs.

Once a week, the students walk over to "The Gardens" to talk to the residents, help them out and learn about their life stories.

Students are usually given a theme to discuss on their visits and they use

the information gathered from the residents to create a booklet about their life history, past and present.

Every time the students go, they always come back with plenty of facts and stories to write about.

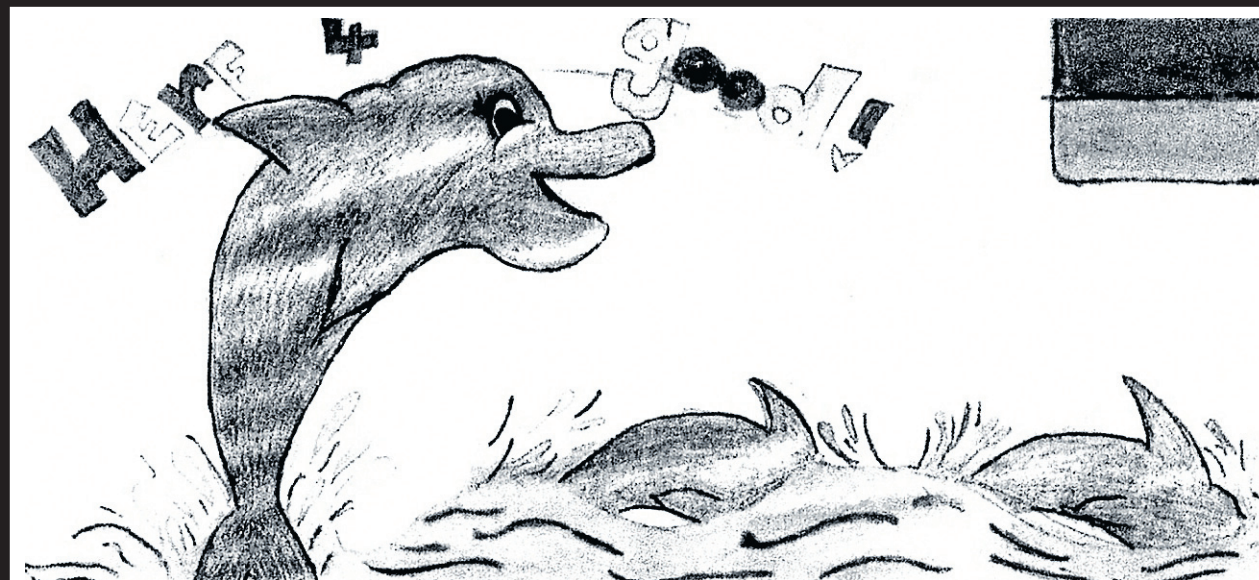
At the end of the year, the school's vocal ensemble usually goes to Regis to sing for the residents.

Tomaree students get a lot out of their visits and the elderly residents seem to enjoy the activity as well.



LEARNING IS ABOUT SHARING: Students find out about the past achievements of the Regis residents.

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