

Yorkeys Knob Matters

FEBRUARY 2026

Yorkeys knob Residents Association Inc.

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P: PO Box 256 Yorkeys Knob Q 4878



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the first edition of the YKRA newsletter for 2026. We held our first general meeting for the year on January 27th. Management Committee member Amanda Snow has volunteered to run the Festival of the Knob this year. It's a lot of work and relies on the continuing support of sponsors and local volunteers, which hopefully will continue over 2026. Thank you, Amanda.

This issue provides an update on Daniela Vavrova's exciting and unique Living History Project, plus a story about a boat which is truly iconic and lives here at the Yorkey's Knob Marina. Details of the outcome of a meeting held with Ms Bree James at her offices late last year are provided, including good news about funds for updating the Yorkeys Knob Community Hall.

There is an article on the new villas under construction at 21-25 Atherton Street. We desperately need additional housing in this country, however building costs have increased significantly since 2020 and productivity has decreased to the point where housing is unaffordable for many. However, poor development should not be part of the answer. Are the villas being constructed on Atherton Street an example of this? Read on and decide for yourself.

If you are a resident of Yorkeys Knob, please consider taking the time to complete the membership application form at the end of this newsletter and forward it to our secretary, along with your payment.

Dr Michael Powell, YKRA President

Important contacts:



**Police, Fire, Ambulance
Emergency: 000**



**State Emergency Service
132500**



**Cairns Regional Council
1300 692 247
cairns.qld.gov.au**



Ergon Energy: 131670



**Queensland Government
Transport & Main Roads
131940
tmr.qld.gov.au**

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YORKEYS KNOB LIVING HISTORY PROJECT – JANUARY 2026 UPDATE

Tides of Memory: A Living History of Yorkeys Knob will be the 2026 book celebrating our beautiful coastal village. The project is progressing as planned and is currently in its final revision stage. The allocated publishing funds have been successfully used, and we expect to order the first print run in about a month.

The exact date for the official project launch is currently being negotiated with the Yorkeys Knob Boating Club. According to the plan, it should take place at the end of March, before Easter. We will announce the confirmed date and program once finalised. We are very much looking forward to celebrating this important milestone in the life of Yorkeys Knob.

Another outcome of the project, funded by the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF), is the *Tides of Memory Interactive Map* — a true living archive. While the book has reached its current capacity, the interactive map will continue to grow and be updated over time. I presented the map in its current stage at the YKRA meeting on Tuesday, 27 January, and I am still receiving stories and photographs from community members. It has become clear that it is impossible to include everything in a single book, and the map therefore serves as a sustainable, living archive.

The interactive map is still under construction and is not yet publicly available. It will be launched during the official Living History Project celebration and made accessible to the wider public online. The book will also be available for purchase through the map.

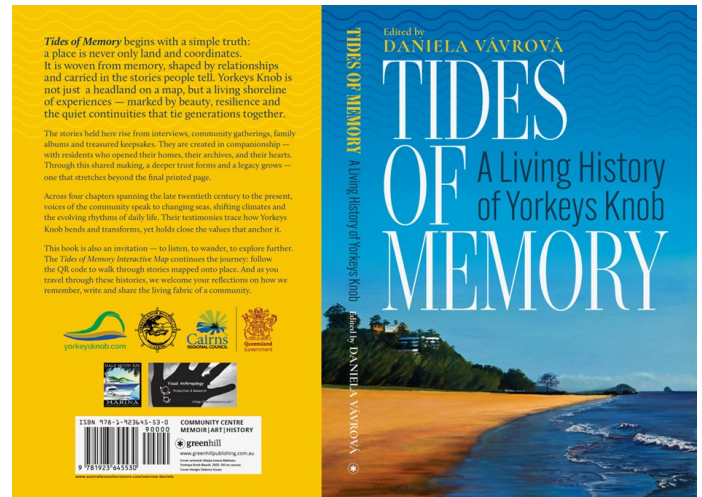
The launch event will include an exhibition of photographs taken during the project, as well as paintings created specifically for the project by Marja-Leena Malinen. Copies of the book will be available for purchase on the day. Once the initial print run is sold out, the book will be available as print-on-demand through online purchase.

We hope to recoup some of the project invest-

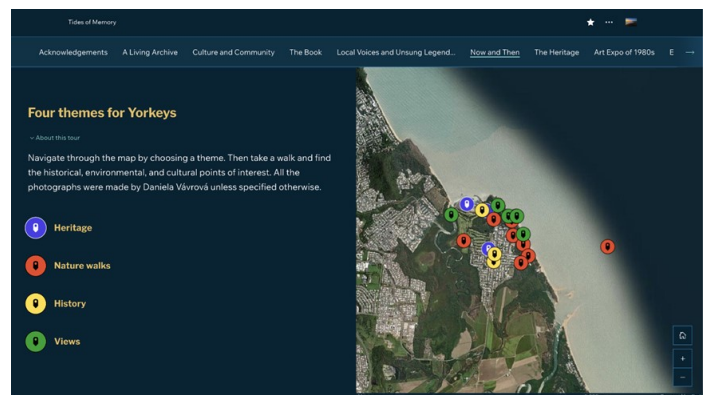
ment through book and artwork sales, as well as donations. There will be more to share as plans develop — please stay tuned to the newsletter.

Sincerely,

Dr Daniela Vavrova, YKRA Vice President



The Living History Project book – final cover design.



Screenshot of the interactive map (29/01/2026)

Motor Vessel *Tropic Seas*

"*MV Tropic Seas*" is a 48-foot steel motor cruiser that is historically significant to the people of Queensland. The vessel was rescued from oblivion by current owner Darren Brice nearly ten years ago and restored by him to fair working condition.

Vince Vlasoff built *Tropic Seas* in Cairns in 1947. Vince was an explorer, adventurer and hunter in the mould of Indiana Jones. Together with fellow adventurers Rene Henri and Lloyd Grigg, Vince formed the Australian Crocodile Shooters Club,

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with the *Tropic Seas* taking many expeditions on hunting trips up the Cape over the next two decades. During this period Vince started taking customers on *Tropic Seas* on big game fishing expeditions out of Cairns. Passengers included celebrities Bob and Dolly Dyer and Lee Marvin. In 1957 David Attenborough made his first dive on the Great Barrier Reef from the *Tropic Seas*. Later, in the 1960's, *Tropic Seas* served as a platform for scientific research on the reef and the making of a documentary film on the Great Barrier Reef.

In 1960 *Tropic Seas* was chartered for a fishing trip in the Cape Tribulation area by Virgil Kauffman, then CEO of a minerals exploration company. During the trip, Vince informed him that Captain Cook's vessel *HMB Endeavour* had run aground in the area on its circumnavigation in 1770, and had jettisoned cannons, anchor and ballast in order to lighten it sufficiently for it to be refloated. Kauffman realised that a new device his company used for mineral exploration called a magnetometer could be employed to locate the artefacts. He returned in 1969, leading an expedition by the American Academy of Natural Science. The expedition, with Vince Vlasoff skippering *Tropic Seas* as the retrieval vessel, was successful in locating and salvaging six cannons, ship's anchor and other artefacts jettisoned from *HM Bark Endeavour* almost 200 years earlier. *Tropic Seas* was used to raise the artefacts from the seabed and transfer them to a mother ship anchored nearby.



The first of the *Endeavour's* cannons found, just after it was lifted on to the deck of the recovery vessel, *Tropic Seas*.

On a charter trip north of Cooktown in 1974

aboard *Tropic Seas*, Vince discovered and retrieved a large (circa 2 tonne weight) ship's anchor off Jewell Reef, which dated from the mid 19th century. This anchor was thought to have been jettisoned to lighten up a ship which had run aground on the reef, however no record could be found of such an event. The anchor was bought back to Cairns by Vince and mounted on a stand on the Esplanade.

This historically significant vessel should be preserved for future generations to enjoy and through it, learn some of the history of the Cook expedition, and the Great Barrier Reef, especially the threats it faces.



MV *Tropic Seas* in Yorkeys Knob Marina

21 – 25 ATHERTON STREET VILLAS

Construction of fifteen single story villas comprising three blocks of five units has commenced at 21-25 Atherton Street. This site had previously been approved for of a seven-story unit block - in a street occupied by single story houses. While the project now under construction would be viewed by most as preferable to a high rise, the building footprint covers 50% of the site, with driveways and parking most of the rest.

The villas are packed in like sardines, just 1.5m apart between pairs reducing to less than 1.0m between the patios, which are only 8m² in area; barely enough room for an outdoor setting and BBQ. Many studies have shown that good house design is fundamental to occupant wellbeing. Well-designed spaces that prioritize natural light,

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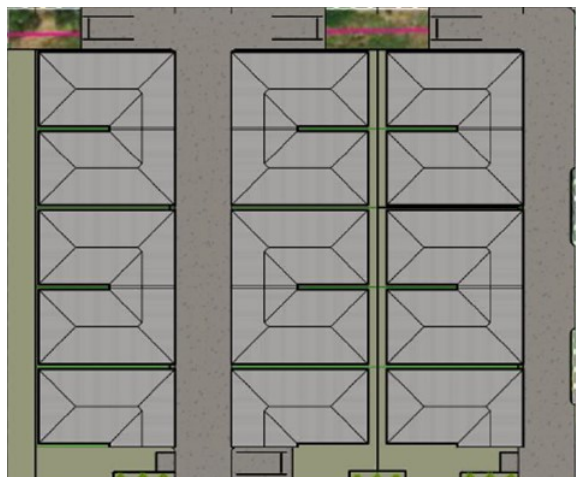
proper ventilation, and comfort can reduce stress, enhance productivity, improve sleep patterns, and prevent illnesses. It seems that these fundamental requirements have been ignored in favour of maximising the number of villas that can be fitted on the site.

The drainage plans submitted as part of the application provided that runoff from the site was via a single outlet on the south side of the site, exacerbating existing local flooding problems and was the focus of the public submissions received. Council Planners ignored the obvious and the project was approved, however an amended plan showing drainage from the upper part of the site being discharged into the reserve across the road was approved on November 21, 2025; an acknowledgement that the problem existed.

The approval of this project is a failure by Council in their responsibility to the community to ensure that development meets criteria for good design.



Villa
Floor
Plans



Site Plan
and Roof
Plan

OUTCOME OF MEETING WITH BREE JAMES, MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER ELECTORATE

Michael Powell, Daniela Vavrova and Thomas Andrej Vavra-Downie met with the Ms Bree James at her offices on Wednesday November 26. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues of concern for YKRA members. These included, social housing, hooning at the new boat ramp, provision of an emergency refuge facility at Yorkeys Knob and the derelict house at 46-50 Buckley Street.

The Department of Housing and Public Works are not required to inform Council or residents of proposed social housing projects; neither Council nor the community were aware of the new social housing units at 45 Best Street until they started construction; even then information on what was proposed was withheld as far as possible.

Ms James acknowledged that there was a problem and undertook to see what could be done and undertook to contact the Department of Housing. Since the meeting, The Department has replied to Ms James advising that they **"may"** choose to undertake non-statutory community engagement, depending on the nature of the project, its location, and local planning considerations.

Nothing was resolved with the hooning problem; the police have increased surveillance; however, it does not appear to have resulted in a decrease in the frequency of hooning. The derelict house occupied by squatters at 46-50 Buckley Street was discussed, however there were no concrete outcomes other than Ms James acknowledging the problem.

On a brighter note, Ms James advised that funds would soon be available for upgrading and adapting the Community Centre in Wattle Street to be used as an emergency refuge facility during extreme storm events. See next page for details.

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Yorkeys Knob Matters – Feb 2026

As we begin 2026, I'm grateful for the opportunity to continue serving our community and working together on the challenges ahead.

I wanted to start the year with some very good news for our community. I am delighted to announce that the Yorkeys Knob Community Hall has been awarded \$150,000 in State Government funding to strengthen its resilience and functionality.

This was one of my election commitments and I know how important this hall is for the community in Yorkeys Knob.

This investment will deliver:

- A new generator to ensure the hall remains operational during extreme weather events
- A secure, weatherproof compound to protect the generator
- A new solar system installed on the venue
- If required following roof inspection: roof replacement or re-screwing to ensure structural integrity

I want to thank the Yorkeys Knob community and the Yorkeys Knob Residents Association for sharing their concerns about the hooning and crime in Yorkeys Knob. I am pleased to share that QPS are now doing regular patrols of the region after persistent advocacy and due to the resident's reporting. It is vital that all crimes are reported so police resources are allocated to where they are needed most.

I also wanted to congratulate Hekili Outrigger Canoe Club as they take their new boats out on the water this month. The two Hydra's represent an investment of \$78,000 in the future of the sport for both grassroots lifestyle paddlers and elite sportspeople. Hekili Outrigger Canoe Club received a \$35,000 grant through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund which was put towards the new Hydras.

It was great to see many of you out and about on Australia Day, well done to TEN06

and Yorkeys Knob Boating Club on putting on a sensational day for locals to celebrate one of the best countries in the world.

Thank you for your continued support, if you have any state issues that you need assistance with, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Until next month,
Bree James MP
Member for Barron River

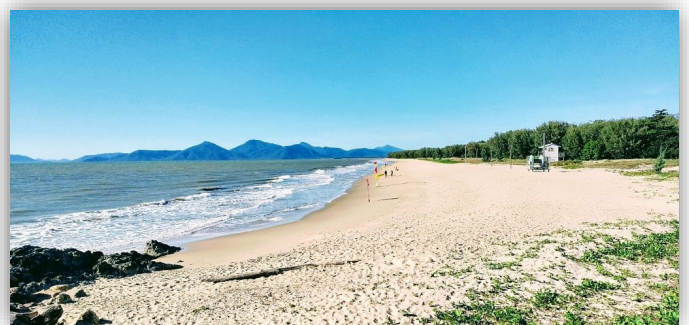


NEXT RESIDENTS MEETING

The next YKRA meeting is on February 24, 2026 at the YK Community Centre.

STOP THE PRESS!!

We have just received an email from Council advising that the derelict house at 46 - 50 Buckley Street will be demolished and removed by mid February 2026. This is a fantastic result, due in part to YKRA relentlessly pursuing this issue. Many thanks to Council officers for their efforts in securing this outcome.



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YORKEYS KNOB RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



Mail: PO Box 256, Yorkeys Knob Qld 4878
Email: residents@yorkeysknob.com

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL / APPLICATION FORM

NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____ Yorkeys Knob
Qld 4878

POST ADDRESS: _____
(if different)

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: / /

Members must be over 18 years of age and a resident of Yorkeys Knob

COST: \$5.00 PER FINANCIAL YEAR

Payment can be made at our monthly meetings or electronically to:

BSB: 633000

ACC: 113530539

NAME: Yorkeys Knob Residents Association

IMPORTANT: If paying by internet banking, provide the name of applicant as a reference and email to residents@yorkeysknob.com with details of the payment. Post or email the completed application form to the address above, or bring it to a monthly meeting

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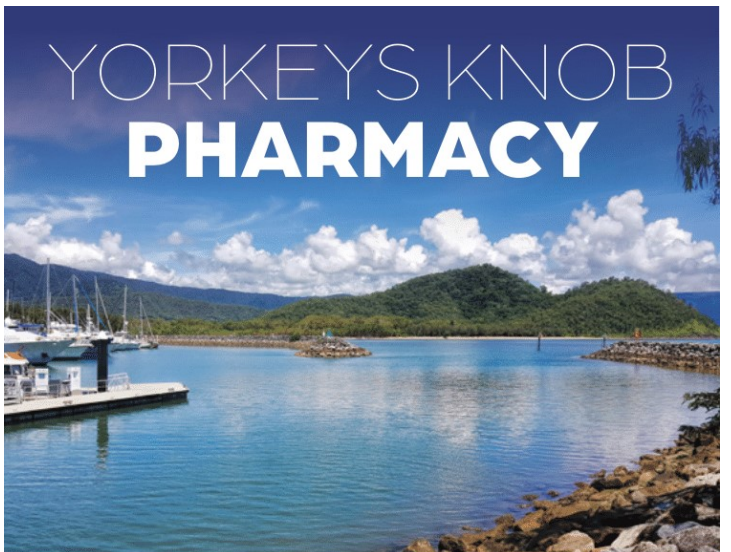
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