

Stone the crows, an alien attack?

from Bucolic Ambulant

Forget about 'No Fishing in the Potholes' sign on Stony Chute road. That was many moons ago. Forget about bills for exhaust pipes, shock absorbers and other sundry busted suspension bits passed on optimistically (but fruitlessly) to the Council by aggrieved Stony Chute Road users.

Slowly (very slowly) Stony Chute is being coloured with a thin blue layer of bitumen.

Forget about the road. I'm looking at the mass of trees that were planted on the once-upon-a-time logged-landslip hillside. The same hillside where sceptics said; 'nothing useful will ever grow up there. Just a few weeds.'

I feel so proud today to walk past this LANDCARE demonstration site, seeing no better proof of what can be achieved in just a few years of planting. It is a credit to the landholder who had enough guts to say 'let's do it.' This was not without cost, and not without many meetings to ensure it was done right the first time.

The beautification and creation of Sub-tropical microcosms is evident for quite a few hectares of valley and hills. Mixed species of hardwoods are interspersed with rainforest timbers, native palms and she-oaks holding the banks right up to the steep and tenuous slopes of the roadside verges. And this particular stretch of the road was once renowned for landslip!

The Council should acknowledge this work by volunteers for having saved them a heap of money. Was this once, before clear felling overcame our environment, an important rain catchment, another water path leading to the great rivers? Perhaps a subsidiary path, yet nonetheless a watercourse? And now? Just a gully.

Weeds
From outer space, this would be a mere speck on a map, but how would our weeds look?

According to Australia's chief weed scientist, Rachael McFadyen, "over 27,000 alien

species have been introduced to Australia since European settlement." (*New Scientist* magazine, 19th March 05). I wonder how many pages of *The GoodTimes* it would take to list them all. Don't forget to leave extra space - to list the sleeper weeds lying in wait for some rubbish dumping over the fence.

It absolutely appalls me, when I visit a garden centre, looking for the right native for that special spot. Sometimes I identify "a plant out of place" with no label. I mean, I can deal with a Hybrid Rose. At least they don't spread their thorns further than arms length, and the song about Rambling Rose is fair warning.

Lets face it. We need informed and environmentally friendly nursery staff who have been educated to the uniqueness and vulnerability on which we are landed today. Just because the Government decides we are in drought, doesn't give the horticultural industry the right to start invading us with Echeverias and Sempervivums. We already have them. Called "Mother Of Millions." Yes indeed. Got the picture?

Unfortunately, there is no legislation within the Horticultural industry to halt these unethical practices. From my research, the spread of imported plants is further exacerbated by "backyarders" who sell on a regular basis at markets, school fetes and garage sales. It's rubbish mostly, and the sellers are equally ignorant of where their plants came from.

It is also, I've noted, the innocent little indoor plant, such as Rubber, Umbrella plants, Asparagus ferns, that get ousted to the great outdoors. Size, or lack of maintenance, usually precedes their introduction to the so-called garden bed. They are a bit like pets. Dump the unwanted litter, and bingo-presto! Instant FERAL! Thank-you-very-much - now we can really go berserk!

Well it's been great for the chemical companies hasn't it? How many different

Glyphosates are there on the market? Plant specific for flat weeds, bindii, couch grass, nutgrass, Parramatta grass. You name it, they've made it. They really made money out of Vietnam, didn't they?

Inspiration
I am gobsmacked daily by the blind, ill informed and 'I don't care' attitude of so many plant providers & consumers. For those looking for change and inspiration, I thoroughly recommend Nan and Hugh Nicholson's Australian Rainforest Plants, which are issued in small and affordable volumes. They were once Tuntable folk, with the best native nursery in the district. The book is a tribute to nearly 20 years of their dedicated work. It is an exquisitely photographed documented compilation of our beautiful plant species. So far, there are six issues and I can't wait until the seventh.

Well the bitumen has run out, and I'm heading towards the bridge over Webster's Creek. Where is the sign saying NO SKATE BOARDING OVER THE CORRUGATIONS?

Is someone in your family in prison?

Do you know someone whose partner/parent has gone to prison and needs support?

At the Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre, we have support packs for families of prisoners.

Information includes:

- Transfers
- How to deposit money into inmate accounts
- How to get transport to the gaol
- What to do if you're concerned about a prisoner's risk of self-harm
- Info for kids about the visit

The pack includes a CD and a newsletter.

We also have a book, *My Dad's in Prison* for kids.

Just ask to see the Welfare Worker or ring 6689-1692 and ask the Welfare Worker to send you one.

Loser Howard????

by David McMinn

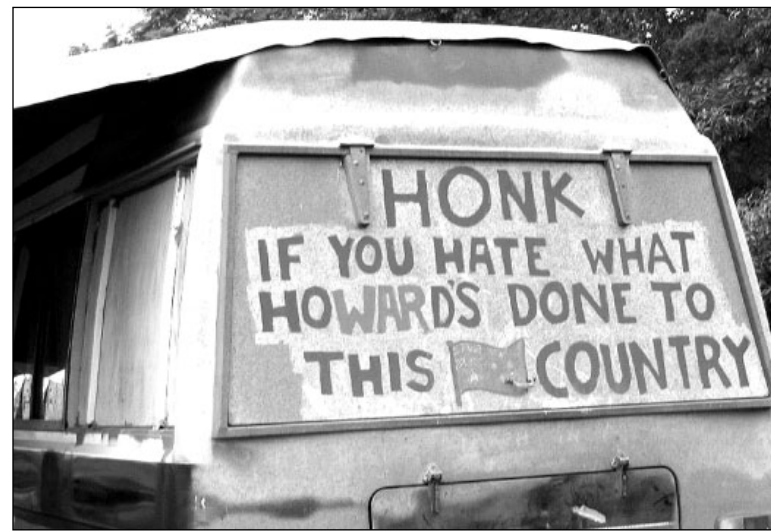
The common consensus is that we will have Howard for at least another two terms, what with the less than favourable showing of bomber Beasley and his Labor associates in current opinion polls.

However, this defies history and the Labor Party does have a good chance of winning the next election. According to Peter Brent (*Aust Fin Rev*, p 63. June 25, 2005), "young governments find re-election easy, while old ones find it increasingly difficult". He assessed all federal and state governments (excluding those currently in power) for the past 35 years and found that there were only 3 one term governments, 8 two term governments, 7 three term governments, 2 four term governments, one five term governments and no six term governments.

At the extremes, short and long term

governments are scarce and two and three term governments were the most common. The average tenure of all governments elected since 1970 is 7 years and Howard's will have been in power for around 11 years and will be facing its 5th election. He should be afraid, very afraid, but, in his arrogance, he firmly believes that he will be Prime Minister for as long as he wants to hold the position.

Time will tell, as a lot can happen between now and the next election in around 30 months. Much will depend on how the Labor Party shapes up, the outlook for which is not that good.



China tour

Local schoolteacher Lishia O'Reilly has been awarded a NSW Premier's Teachers Scholarship to go on a five-week trip to China.

Lishia, who teaches Chinese at Nimbin Central School, will use the "King Gold Chinese Bridge" Scholarship to fund travel, meals and accommodation for a two week language course in Beijing, followed by a two week study tour.

Applications for the single scholarship were open to teachers across the state who could meet stringent requirements, and show how the scholarship could benefit their teaching when they returned.

School principal Margie Hayes said, "It's wonderful to see our quality teachers being recognised at a state level."

Lishia flies to Beijing on 15th July. What's Chinese for bon voyage?



Community TV opportunity

LINC-TV is back on air. Lismore's own community television station is now broadcasting each night from 5pm to 11.45pm.

The signal is not strong enough for reception in Nimbin, but if you live in or close to Lismore you can find it at UHF-68, just up the band from NBN.

LINC's programming policy leans towards non-mainstream documentaries and "grass roots" programs.

Station co-ordinator Mark Jago said he was keen to develop production of local content. "There's lots of easy-to-use equipment around, including at the CTC, and it's feasible for individuals and groups to become content

providers," he said.

Airtime will be leased out on a weekly basis at \$80 per hour, or \$40 per half-hour program, which would be played four times through the week. Mark Jago saw this as an opportunity for Nimbin groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, alternative schools and environmental businesses.

"It's a great way to get your own stories, about all the positive things that are going on here, to the Lismore public, to give Lismore an alternative to the *Northern Star* view of Nimbin," he said.

Anyone interested in becoming a content provider for LINC-TV, email mashj@aapt.net.au or phone Mark Jago on 6624-3795.

NIMBIN
DRUG EDUCATION
and
INFORMATION CENTRE
Just say "Know"
HEMP EMBASSY
Phone/fax 6689 1842
www.hempembassy.net

RAINBOW
Cafe
www.cafe-rainbow.com
Home-made Food and Music in the Heart of Nimbin since 1973
Home of the Marijuana Music Award
Check blackboard for weekend performers

Blue Knob Hall
gallery and cafe

Relax with the Mountain
Open Wed - Sun
10am till 4pm
Lunches
Cakes
Mountain Top Coffee
Ph 6689 7449