

Nimbin Community Gardens Awarded A Grade Organic Status

by Wal Davies

Last July the Organic Growers Association (OGA) awarded A Grade organic certification to crops grown at Nimbin Community Gardens. The process of certification began in July 2003 and has required careful recording of all inputs to the gardens by our co-ordinators over the past three years (Daniel Sheridan, Neil Morrison, Gandalf Rice and myself).

Our work, like that of all our gardeners and committee members has been entirely voluntary, but we are now hopeful of achieving a paid position for our present coordinator Gavin Limpus, through BETC, a new Work for the Dole provider.

The gardens were initiated and continue to be organised by Nimbin Aquarius Landcare Group. At our AGM in October last year a new committee was elected to oversee the gardens and



to initiate creek restoration projects.

Mark Roberts and I continued on the committee only as project officers for the Envirofund project for Nimbin Rocks and this is now successfully completed.

With the old Sunday school hall on its new site on the Community Gardens land (pictured), and with BETC adopting the gardens as their main Nimbin project, my contribution as an

organiser is now completed, and with your help the new committee will ensure the gardens continue towards their full potential.

If you are concerned about climate change, sustainable enterprise development and community building, please support this homegrown initiative of our Nimbin community.

For more information contact Nimbin Environment Centre 6689-1441.

Clear out those dark recesses

Trash & Treasure Sale, Easter Sunday, 8th April. Nimbin Showground

by Mal Rothwell
A&I Space Cadet

The monthly Trash & Treasure Sale is off to a good start and coming along nicely.

As many will already know, the first few months after the birth of an enterprise are the most difficult. To start with, nobody outside of the word of mouth range knows of its existence. It takes a while for the local advertising to take effect and word to get around.

Nonetheless, the first two of our monthly sales were blessed by good weather and a reasonably good attendance. Most of those taking a look around at the treasure on show arrived fairly early in the day, some eagerly dragging parents and heading for the toy department. There were some interesting things for sale but not enough of it, for the number of lookers.

In order to balance this supply/demand thing, we need to encourage more people to search deep into the dark recesses of their back sheds and spare rooms and



transform these forgotten, unused and neglected items into another's valued bargain. Let those products of human endeavour live again in somebody else's hands. Take the money and figure out what you can do with all that lovely extra space you have created.

The next sale day is Easter Sunday, 8th April, at 9 am. Enquiries will be handled by our Space Steward, Mr Phil Williams on 6689-1583. So load up the car boot or trailer and bring it on down to the Nimbin Showground.



Lismore Council Jottings

by Cr. Jenny Dowell
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Aboriginal Football Carnival

About 80 people attended the extraordinary meeting last Tuesday where Council debated the Mayor's decision not to support a request by the Redfern Merritt-Patten Rugby League Aboriginal Knockout Carnival for the October long weekend. The organisers of the event that has been running for 37 years had previously made a professional and thorough presentation to Council in which they had outlined the procedures in place to support this major event.

Council heard many speakers in praise of the Carnival and received a petition signed by 139 CBD business people also calling for the event to proceed. The 7/5 decision not to support the carnival this year but to develop an Events Risks, Safety and Security Policy which may allow the event to take place in 2008 saw a mass walkout of the largely Aboriginal audience with a request to remove the Aboriginal flag from outside the chambers and many expressions of despair.

Following the second item on the agenda, a rescission motion to overturn last month's recommendation to build a new link road between Snow and Cook Sts in South Lismore against the wishes of residents (lost 5/7), debate returned to the football event.

Fortunately additional information on safety and security particularly for after the event was provided by the events' organisers, which allowed the motion to rescind the earlier decision to be carried unanimously. It was then decided that the staff enter into immediate discussions with the hosts of the event to develop a risk, safety and security plan to be brought back to a Council workshop.

After the earlier vote had taken Council to the brink of the most damaging community decision it has made in recent times, Council stepped back and found a way forward much to the relief of the few community members who had stayed at the meeting.

2007 marks the 40th year since Aboriginal people won through a referendum, the



rights to citizenship as held by non-indigenous Australians.

Sometimes, I wonder if we have learned anything at all. I am still shaken by last week's events in Lismore and sincerely hope that the Aboriginal community here can forgive Council for the terrible error we made. Although the final result is looking positive, considerable damage had been done in the process, and it won't readily be forgotten.

Sewerage system for Clunes

The March meeting of LCC was not the blockbuster I had anticipated but there were still several interesting items up for debate including a late report on the proposed Clunes sewerage scheme. It appears that Councils throughout NSW have been misinterpreting the legislation in applying a special levy to all residents connected to the sewerage system when constructing new systems.

Legal advice is that Council can only charge the residents in Clunes who will potentially benefit from the sewer system thus making it extremely expensive per household. The resolution by Council was to notify the Department of Local Government about the intention to apply a special rates increase for Clunes to meet two years of pre-construction costs and in the meantime lobby to get the Local Government Act provisions reviewed to overcome the difficulties faced by all rural Councils wishing to construct new sewerage systems.

Whaling

My motion to write to the Mayor of Yamato Takada, our sister city in Japan, to express our concern over the continuation of whaling in the Southern Ocean was supported. In the letter, we also asked Masakatsu Yoshida to convey our concerns to his government.

Flying Foxes

Despite a long and convoluted debate, Council decided to approve further applications to the state and federal governments for the relocation of the flying fox colony in Rotary Park. The accompanying report indicates that the estimated costs of the only successful relocation was \$3 million with the Maclean attempt costing \$714,000 not including costs of meetings, travel, legal advice, wages, administration, vaccinations or insurance. It has been suggested that Council should include \$100,000 in this year's budget for the attempt. Council will have another opportunity to discuss the applications when and if they are approved. There was also the good news that \$20,000 will be provided for rehabilitation works at Currie Park and a program will be launched to educate the community about flying foxes and the role they play.

Community Lands

Following the outcry over the proposal to reclassify Lismore Park, the area of sportsgrounds between the CBD and Lismore Shopping Square, the consultant who chaired the public meeting recommended the removal of that land from the reclassification so that it now remains as community land. Several other lots were approved to become operational to allow for some boundary adjustments and legal requirements.

ACON 'Safe Place'

Council facilities will join at least 60 other facilities and businesses in Lismore and carry the inverted pink triangle 'Safe Place' sticker to indicate they are a place of refuge for gays and lesbians faced with homophobia.

Nimbin Visits

It has been wonderful to have several trips to Nimbin this past month for both business and pleasure. The need for a midday bus run to Lismore was the subject of a meeting but I also went to the fabulous Blue Moon Cabaret, took a visiting Canadian friend to Blue Knob Gallery for lunch and attended the Council forum with 5 of my colleagues (see separate report).

Finally, the views expressed in this monthly column are mine and are not intended to be a reflection of the Council as a whole or of other individual Councillors.

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