



FONNS members (from left) Aiden Thomas, Marcus Mantschaff and Franco Girardi discuss sound amelioration options at Nimbin Skate Park

by Elwyn Paitson

Most of you will now be aware that LCC has given the go-ahead for construction to continue on the Nimbin Skatepark, (at last!), This will consist of soundproofing, completion of the ramps and funbox, and maintenance of the ramp.

Following the community forum in September, at which the community voted to continue with the project, a working group has formed. We have now become the Friends of Nimbin Skatepark, (or the FONNS, as we call ourselves with a snap of the fingers).

FONNS meet every Friday at 5pm at the rear of the Oasis Cafe, and invite anyone interested in becoming involved in the project to please come along.

The group currently has two objectives; to soundproof the skatepark to a level acceptable to all residents of Nimbin, and to raise the \$100 - \$180 thousand dollars required to do this.

We are currently exploring various soundproofing options. The NCDA has proposed enclosing the ramps sides with walls, potentially better-brick, hemp masonry, or recycled bridge timbers. There will be doors on the east and west walls to permit access to the underside of the ramp to perform safety checks.

We have decided against using tyres beneath the ramps, as they may be a fire hazard, harbour creepy-crawlies, and are difficult to remove when accessing the underside of the ramp. Some alternatives include carpet, foam or fabric baffles, tar-paint on the underside of the ramp, concrete spray/foam etc.

It has been suggested that we fill behind the walls with clean landfill, landscaping around the ramp from the tops of the walls to the footpaths on the north and west sides, and to the bank on the south side. We are now investigating the feasibility of this option; it would certainly make it prettier.

We are calling for suggestions and input

from landscapers, builders, sound engineers/people with experience in sound management, concreters, and anyone with practical suggestions regarding the soundproofing. Romany is co-ordinating the construction crew, you can contact him on 6689-1619, or at <romanypike@hotmail.com>

There will be a weekly working bee every Friday from 9am, focusing on rust treatment to begin with. Come along for a chance to hang out on the ramp – even if you can't skate it.

As for the moolah - FONNS have set an initial target of \$100,000. We're confident we'll be able to raise this amount with support from government funding, sponsorship, and of course you, the community.

Become a FONNS member: gold membership costs \$100, Silver \$50, and Bronze \$10 (for primary school kids only). You can also donate at any Summerland Credit Union – the account name is FONNS Friends Of Nimbin Skatepark, or at our collection tins soon to be spotted around town.

We're writing to our new local members requesting their support, and suggest you do the same.

In conjunction with the Upload project we are working on developing the website, where we'll post photos, videos, information and updates produced by local young people. We are also going to produce a DVD to send to prospective sponsors, and would welcome input from anyone skilled in putting DVDs together. If you have any awesome photos or footage of the skatepark that you'd like to publish to the web or DVD, please let us know.

We're also calling for designs for our upcoming range of FONNS t-shirts, stickers and badges, make them funky and skate-park related and see your design in a skateshop near you, (and hopefully far from you too).

You can contact us directly by email at <fons@exemail.com.au> or leave a message at the NCDA 6689-0000.



Janelle Saffin (centre) with Page candidates at a Meet the Candidates event.

## Election analysis

*Rise of Labor & Greens = Demise of Democrats, Nationals, Liberals.*

by Andy Gough

Kevin Rudd's victory winning government means that we now have Labor governments across the board in Australia, federally and in every state and territory. The Liberal/Nationals coalition has suffered a crippling blow at the ballot box and has even seen former prime minister John Howard stripped of his own seat.

The decimation of the Liberal party has been headline news after the loss of Howard's seat of Bennelong, where Maxine McKew kicked his butt (with Green preferences). Amidst the resignation of Peter Costello as leader and the subsequent contest between Brendan Nelson and Malcolm Turnbull for leadership of what is left of the Liberal party, we also saw Mark Vaile resign leadership of the Nationals, who seem to have also hit an all time low in popularity.

Across the nation, more people voted for the Greens than the Nationals in the lower house. The Greens got 7.5% of the vote in total, while the Nationals got 5.56%. Somehow out of this, the Nationals managed to win ten seats, while the Greens won none. A good argument for changing to a proportional representation voting system in the lower house, rather than the 'first past the post' system currently in use.

What does the future now hold for the Nationals? After a seemingly strong vote at the March state election – winning Lismore, Clarence and Tweed electorates – the Nationals have been hit hard at the booth locally in this federal election.

Dr Sue Page, the Richmond candidate, suffered a loss of 7.35 per cent on first preference votes, with ALP candidate Justine Elliot receiving a substantial gain of 8.56 per cent, holding the seat comfortably. The Greens Giovanni Ebono managed to increase the Green vote by 1% to an impressive 14.6%. At the Nimbin booth, the vote was Greens 425, ALP 315, Nats 144 and Dems 50.

In Page, the retirement of incumbent Ian Causley meant candidate Chris Gulaptis had to establish a profile for himself. Unfortunately for him, it was one that was not well received and he earned a swing against the Nationals of minus 6.7 per cent of first preference votes. Janelle Saffin, the ALP candidate, received 42.12 per cent of the primary vote and with preferences from The Greens, 7.84% for Theo Jongen, the seat went to Labor. Janelle is the first woman to represent Page in the federal parliament, but she is experienced in politics having previously served as a MLC for Labor in the NSW parliament and advisor to Jose Ramos-Horta in the East Timor government.

Further south in Cowper, incumbent for the Nationals Luke Hartsuyker has suffered a loss of 3.65 per cent of the primary vote and the seat is on a knife-edge with counting continuing.

The Nationals might have endured the backlash against the coalition a little better had they not been complicit with the Liberals on so many issues that outraged a lot of Australians. Dairy deregulation, invading Iraq, refusing to sign the Kyoto Protocol, the AWB scandal,

selling Telstra, WorkChoices and the promise of a nuclear powered future. If the Nats had shown any backbone and stood up to the Liberals on any one of these issues, they might have earned some respect from their supporters. But they dared not challenge their political masters in the Liberal party, or threaten to split from the coalition, and the electorate has judged them for their lack of conviction.

The Democrats also polled poorly in both Richmond and Page, polling 1.16% and 1.04% and lost all their Senate seats leaving the party with no elected representatives at all in federal parliament. It seems Australians were unwilling to forgive them for their decision to support Howard on introducing the GST, and they never recovered from that decision.

While the votes are still being counted for the Senate, it looks like the Greens, sitting on 9% of the vote, have lost a Senator in Kerry Nettle from NSW, but returned Bob Brown in Tassie. Bob will be joined by two new Senators, Sarah Hanson-Young from SA and Scott Ludlarr in WA, with a possibility of another in Victoria. At the moment it appears the Greens will have at least five Senators and the balance of power. One independent was also elected to the senate in SA, Nick Xenophon.

There was a staggering informal vote across the country with 442,460 ballot papers declared invalid. How many of these were deliberate 'donkey' votes and how many were genuine mistakes is impossible to tell. Imagine what a difference these almost half a million voters could have made to the result.

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## DoCS baby-snatch

Krissy Kramer still gets emotional when she talks about her family's treatment by the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS).

"I just didn't think that sort of thing happened in this country," she said of her experience when two DoCS workers arrived unannounced at their home at dinner time to remove their 9-month old son, Fern.

What followed was also a nightmare - a four-day stay in Lismore Base hospital with Fern, followed by a court appearance to answer a DoCS application for an Emergency Care and Protection Order.

More frightening still was that the report to DoCS had been made by the local community nurse, who Krissy had been dutifully taking Fern to, every week since he was born.

Krissy and partner Simon run the eclectic Perceptio's Bookshop in Nimbin, and like many locals, are living in a cabin on their property while preparing to build their house. They are not vegetarian, but "don't eat much red meat."

"I got all this pressure on me to feed him solids, which I started doing straight away, three times a day. There's nothing wrong with him, he's just small," Krissy said as she breast-fed Fern at Nimbin's e-bar café.

After NGT reporter Mel McMillan broke the story on the front page of The Weekend Star, outraged Nimbin parents staged a protest at the time the nurse was due to run her next session at the Nimbin Family

Centre, but she did not make an appearance.

Instead, two helpful Family Support workers provided information about child protection legislation to the protesters and offered assistance to the family.

Throughout the following week, the letters page of the Northern Star carried tales of similar cavalier treatment by DoCS, all of which had common threads: inaccurate assessments, discriminatory assumptions and lack of communication with parents.

A DoCS worker, who declined to be named, saw the problem as resulting from staff shortages. "It's hard enough to get a community nurse at all in country areas."

The worker also accounted for the knee-jerk reaction in under-staffed DoCS offices: "The week that happened, a DoCS-notified child died, apparently of starvation, and memos were flying around the office like confetti."

Nimbin Family Centre is now without its community nurse, who will not be replaced this year, but Krissy's family ordeal may yet have a positive outcome. "I've been informed that now the Family Centre will have more say in selecting a nurse who may be more sympathetic to alternative lifestyle families," she said.

Whether Community Services Minister Kevin Greene and the Emma government has the bottle to sort out the mess in DoCS is much less certain.

## Nimbin's Yr 12 celebrate new beginnings

by Athena Zelandonii

On Saturday 10th November, after a week of steady rain, Nimbin Central's Year 12s headed for Lismore, under the threat of flood-ins, bogged cars and dreading a damp reception, to our Formal.

We needn't have worried. Hail may have destroyed the rose gardens of the Left Bank Cafe just weeks earlier but mother nature was kind enough to let the sun out over our venue just as a group of 80 students, staff and guests assembled for a night of food, friends and farewells.

We were celebrating not just the end of 13 years of schooling, but the beginning of our self-guided adult lives.

Upon arrival I was confronted with the unfamiliar though not at all unpleasant sight of formal finery at its most varied and elegant, each individual unique, polished and utterly gorgeous. And of course no formal is complete without matching outfits, fashionably late entrances and a bottle of Galliano as a prop!

Photography teacher Cath Marshall worked her magic behind her camera, as did an attending Northern Star photographer and anyone else within arm's reach of such a device.

Soon after being seated, we were introduced and presented to the assembly by relieving Principal Christine Grieves and our lovely year advisor Moira Kenny. Each of us was also given a budding rose as a gift -



girl jesting that perhaps that was why the garden behind us was bare!

Throughout the night we were treated to delicious food, super-friendly service, and projected slideshows of our time at Nimbin with an end of year film prepared for the event by yours truly.

The ambience was formal but not stilted, and with so many present in the small venue, the closeness added to the nostalgic yet excited tone of the evening.

Speeches from staff, students and parents were kept short, sweet and complimentary. Jack Doyle reminded us that this may well be the last event at which all of us were simultaneously present, whilst Moira went so far in her speech as to advise us to live the carefree and joyous lives of dogs; an analogy lost on few.

Personalised awards were also presented to each student, surely

showing the true depth of the relationships and understanding which exists between teachers and students at our school.

The night ended on a very positive note - assisted perhaps by the superb chocolate farewell cake - having run quite smoothly. Credit must be given to the venue for their admirable hospitality, as well as to key organisers Moira, Jack, my personal assistant and fellow school captain Tristan and the wonderful SRC co-ordinator Lishia O'Reilly.

Our collective thanks go out once more to our teachers and the tireless staff of our school, as well as to our parents, friends and peers. We are all essentially who you have made us, through words, actions and reactions we are your children.

## Cool embroidery heads for the hills

Lavina Hemming has relocated her business, Sew Cool Embroidery Services, into the Nimbin valley after 25 years in the industry as an owner operator in England and on the Gold Coast.

She has a farm here with her husband Shaun, and finally made the shift from metropolis after fulfilling contracts for the Sydney Olympics. Lavina has worked for major surf labels including Billabong, Brothers Neilson, Byrning Spears, Coca Cola, Government authorities, large engineering companies, and various sporting codes, all the way down to one-teacher school uniforms and personalised commissions.

Lavina uses a high tech computerised embroidery system that gives perfect results on shirts, caps, hats, pants, anything. With unlimited colour and combination, and with over

5000 generic stock designs and 200 lettering fonts, imagination is the only limiting factor. Lavina can personalise any design, or you can design your own for scanning and embroidering.

Workwear, caps and hats, and sporting gear from Hard Yakka, Bisley or the company of your choice can also be sourced and supplied. Lavina will soon be capable of quadrupling her output with the purchase of another larger embroidery machine due to ongoing demand for her services.

Having established herself nationally over many years, Lavina wishes to support the growing market of the north coast, particularly Lismore, Byron, Casino, Murwillumbah areas. For prompt service and delivery contact Lavina Hemming on 02 6689-7324, 0412-248-554 or <lavina@blueknob.com.au>



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# A big thankyou to our community



by Rebecca Ryall and Kylie Cain on behalf of Nimbin Community Preschool

On Sunday 28th October, Nimbin Community Preschool marked 25 years of service to the Nimbin community with a fete held at the A&I showgrounds.

As promised, the day proved to be a sunny, colourful event with fun and games for the entire family. With your help, we raised over \$3000 for our preschool, allowing us to finally buy a vacuum cleaner and keep the wolves from the door!

We would like to send out a big thank you to all of the local businesses who donated goods and services to us. There really are too many to mention but some we would particularly like to thank publicly.

Nimbin Real Estate donated \$200, allowing us to contract Brian McLean to show us his Reptile Exhibition. This show was instructive and entertaining, and very well received.

Nimbin Australia Post went above and beyond the call of duty in their assistance to us, even loaning us our float money when the entire town was blacked out the Friday before – only in Nimbin would this happen! Special thanks to Dave, our favourite postmaster, for his energy and wit on Sunday.

Marcus, from the Community Centre, proved his passion for promoting community causes by helping out on the day, even though he is not related to preschool, and was sick on the day. We really appreciated your assistance, Marcus.

Croaking Environment is a locally based educational organisation which also sells books, games and material related to environmental and conservation causes. This organisation was incredibly helpful to us, donating towards our show bags and prizes for our chocolate wheel and raffles – despite the last minute blow to their business delivered by the recent hail storm.

Our local Jumping Castle benefactor, who wishes to remain anonymous – you know who you are – helped make our day! Thank you.

We would also like to thank the Nimbin A&I Society, who donated the use of the showgrounds for our event, and helped with readying the grounds, and cleaning up afterwards.

Woolworths supermarkets in Lismore donated \$200 worth of goods which allowed us to place small treats in all the show bags. It was affirming to receive support from such a huge and faceless organisation.

We would also like to publicly acknowledge Coles supermarket who, with astounding generosity, donated us a \$20 gift voucher. Well done Coles, for supporting the community which supports you. Karma will repay you tenfold.

Mostly, though, we would like to thank you – our community – for your support and energy. It was great to see so many local families enjoying the day with us. We are grateful to you for being the aware bunch you are, and minimising the clean up for us. There was hardly any rubbish to be picked up! Well done.

In planning our fete, we envisaged an opportunity for the community to come together to support our vital service. That is precisely what we achieved, and we are truly grateful.

Thanks Nimbin!



## Performances on-song

Emma Curik (left) and Alison McKenzie singing at Virginia Mason's 'Class of 2007' performance afternoon at the Nimbin School of Arts hall.

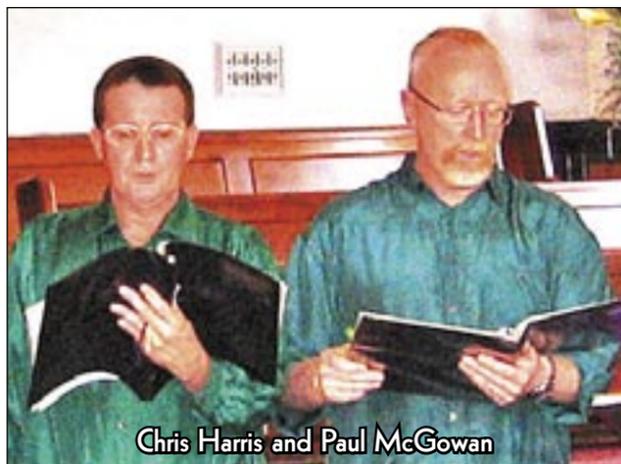
Nine singers, accompanied by Gerard Lynam, provided a veritable treat of wonderful songs, demonstrating a high degree of skill in both sound production and expression.

The age of the students ranged from 18 to 60, four from Nimbin, the others from the Tweed.

Local Williamina Bowers showed her versatility with her performances of operatic arias, and an interesting duet for voice and piano in the classical style.

The attentive, though small audience of friends and supporters, applauded not only the achievements of these serious singers, but also the enduring efforts of their world-class teacher.

Ex-opera singer, dancer and choreographer, Virginia has been Nimbin's singing teacher-in-residence for ten years, but regrettably will be relinquishing her Nimbin studio in the new year.



Chris Harris and Paul McGowan

## Nouveau Choir Concert

by Carolyne

A wonderful concert was given by the Nouveaux Choir at the Uniting Church Lismore on the 18th November.

The choir is made up of singers and musicians from Lismore and surrounding towns including Nimbin.

Our very own man with the golden voice, Chris Harris, was not only in the main body of singers, he also performed a wonderful duet with Paul McGeown.

Chris is well known as the man who helps out at the Coffee House and volunteers tirelessly at the Neighbourhood Centre.

After the concert supper was served, through the generosity of the choir, to top off a wonderful evening, thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

## International pianist to perform in Nimbin

Accomplished international performance artist, Renate Turrini, will give a piano recital at The Nimbin School of Arts on 15th December.

Renate, who is a multi-award-winning musician, will offer a programme of Bach, Schubert, Liszt, Debussy, Gottschalk and Chopin.

A gifted musician and performer already at age 13, Renate was awarded a scholarship to Adelaide Conservatorium. Her studies continued at Rome and Warsaw as well as at USQ. She has given solo performances on several world stages, and has won many competitions.

The Nimbin School of Arts is delighted to welcome this outstanding performer who has appeared throughout Australia both as a recitalist and soloist with most of the Symphony orchestras of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Renate has also appeared as a recitalist and chamber musician at



many festivals. In 2000 she was involved with the Regional Outreach Music Programme (ROMP), NSW, giving recitals and workshops as a soloist and chamber musician throughout NSW and interstate.

Renate has recorded regularly for ABC Classic and she has released two solo CDs, Renate and Rags to Recollections.

After a period of lecturing in Piano and Music History at the University of Southern Queensland in Toowoomba she recently returned to live in Coffs Harbour where she teaches and continues to perform.

A recent highlight has been her involvement in the 'Piazzolla Project' with fellow musicians including Joe Chindamo, Karin Schaupp, Len Grygorian and Trish O'Brien, playing to packed houses in NSW and Queensland.

This rare performance begins at 8pm sharp. Tickets (\$15 & \$10) are pre-selling at Perceptio Books, Nimbin and at Caddies Coffee, Lismore. Refreshments will be made available by The Radical Faeries.

For further enquiries phone Nimbin School of Arts on 6689-1577.

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This interactive museum, designed for visitors to meet locals, has evolved into a full-on educational experience for some people.

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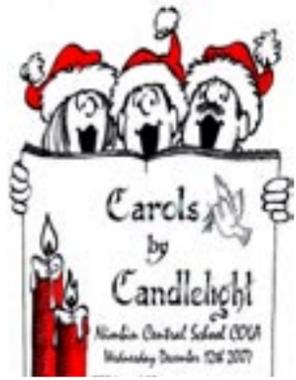
# End-of-year Bahzoooley delights



How do they keep doing it?

Twice a year, despite all the other demands of the curriculum, Nimbin Central students prepare over 20 items for public performance in the school's Bahzoooley nights.

Credit must go to music tutor Val Mace, producer Christine Grieves, primary teachers Diane Whitney and Marc Everingham, and of course the student singers, dancers, actors, fire-twirlers and technical crew for another entertaining evening.



## Want to make a film?

On Monday 10th December at 8pm, as part of the Deckchair Screenings programme at the Nimbin Oasis Cafe, there will be a screening of the short films produced as part of the Lismore TAFE 16 week film production course.

The screening includes films written, directed and shot by Nimbin locals Doug Johnson, Biskit, Adrienne Watt, and Mark Jago. It also features performances from other locals with Vale Mendleson playing a woman with a mysterious past

and Morrigan Biscoe as a vengeful ghost. For a chance to see some new local films come and spend an evening and check it out.

North Coast Institute of TAFE is now accepting applications for its short film production course. It's an affordable and dynamic way to develop skills in screenwriting, acting, editing and directing on your own short digital drama or doco, as well as performing a range of cast and crew roles on other students' films.

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by lecturers with strong professional backgrounds in award-winning shorts and TV series drama, and will run for fifteen hours per week for sixteen weeks Feb

- June 2008 at North Coast Institute, Lismore.

Apply ASAP for an interview. For more info, call 6623-0218 or email <john.stewart@tafensw.edu.au>

## Inaugural Nimbin Village Seed Festival



Parent Helen Hill is working with seeds at the school, being helped by students to plant out six beds in the ag plot, for her PhD research into starch traits in sorghum.

The students of Nimbin Central School will be presenting the residents and community of Nimbin with the gift of seeds at a street parade in Cullen Street Nimbin on Thursday 13th December from 12 noon.

The Seed Festival idea came from Nimbin Green Corps group, who are committed to promoting the growing of native plants to promote healthy ecosystems.

Seeds have been provided by Green Corps and seed companies including Daley's Fruit Trees Nursery (Kyogle), Green Harvest Organic Gardening Supplies (Maleny) and Lindendale Organic Farm (Lindendale).

Species include black bean, brush cherry, grevillea and lilly pilly.

These seeds are native to our area and non-hybrid, and can be planted by

everyone in the Nimbin area. The seeds will then provide:

- Nourishment of everyone's body, mind and spirit as they derive food and pleasure from their planting
- Essential plants for food and maintenance of habitat for our wildlife

Relieving Principal Christine Grieves said, "Nimbin Central School was more than happy to support this local initiative that would enhance students' and the community's awareness of the importance of what we grow in our local area."

"We invite everyone to this special and unique event," she said.

It is hoped that the Seed Festival will become part of a tradition that begins locally but can be extended globally, to have children give the gift of seeds to reclaim and regenerate our land and ourselves.

# Nimbin poets in Sydney slam

Nimbin's poetic reputation was further enhanced by Theresa Biscoe (Biko) and Robin Archbold (Archie) at the NSW finals of the Australian Poetry Slam at the NSW State Library last Friday.

Both performers nailed their pieces and placed highly out of 21 competitors, despite being drawn in the first few contestants which is anathema in the slam format.

Bicko performed 'We Have Become The Ugly American' which had the audience roaring and squirming as she tore apart contemporary political and social mores with her usual fire and erudition - possibly the best writing of the night.

Archie said, 'I am pleased to report that my buttons arced beautifully through the spotlight when I tore apart my shirt as the rutty beast exploded from the breast of the sophisticated



Biko

new age man trying to chat up a liberated woman in 'Call Of The Wild'. Being first cab off the rank, I felt it was important to set the tone of the evening."

The 200 plus crowd was so enthusiastic in response that Archie forgot to look when exiting the stage (OK, he was star-struck) that he may have the dubious honour of being the first medical casualty of the inaugural Australian Poetry Slam after he completely missed the step and severely sprained his ankle.

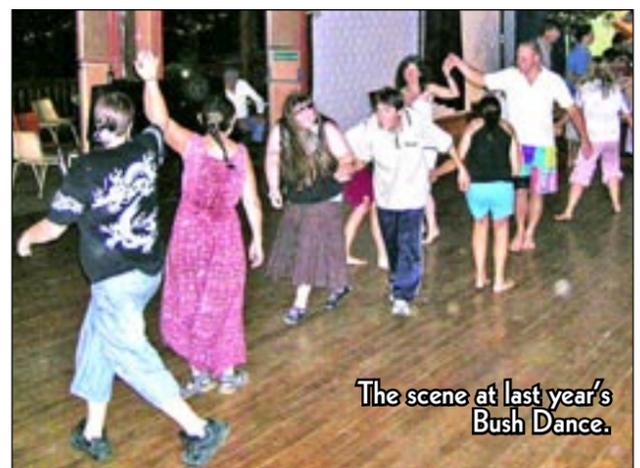
Evel Knievel would have been proud, may he rest in peace, knowing his successor has just announced himself.

Cathy Edwards and Greg North, bush poets both, now proceed to the National final on 7th December. Bicko and Archie would like to thank the Richmond Tweed Regional Library for paying their airfares to Sydney.



Archie

## Tunable bush dance



The scene at last year's Bush Dance.

Get your dancing shoes on, it's time for the annual Bush Dance at Tuntable Community Hall to herald in the festive season, on Saturday 15th December.

Lots of fun for all, with all dances called by Bronwyn, the caller with the resident Tuntable Folk Band, which will be swollen to an acoustic 8-piece for the occasion.

Plenty of food and drink available, so make a date of it.

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