

April Fools Day in Nimbin



It was a busy morning in Nimbin even before 50 police raced into town at 11.15am. The police were executing search warrants at the Hemp Embassy and the Nimbin Museum, and they went to great lengths to make sure no-one got in the way, even cordoning off large sections of footpath.

The operation comprised officers from Richmond, Coffs/Clarence and Tweed Byron Local Area Commands as well as the OSG, the Dog Unit and the Public Order and Riot Squad, their dozens of vehicles parked in every available 'No Standing' zone.

The obstruction caused a good deal of consternation amongst shop-keepers particularly when their delivery vans could not get to their shops.

Chamber of Commerce secretary Gerard Dwyer said, "This is the greatest public

safety issue we've ever seen, blocking footpath access so people have to walk down the centre of the road, women with prams, everyone, and they just don't care."

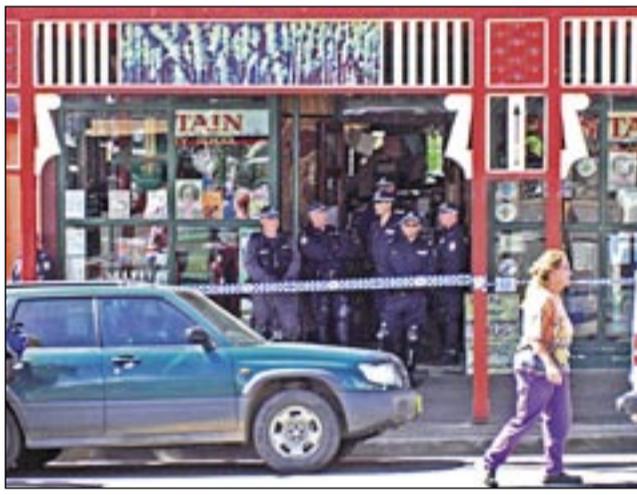
The stony-faced Riot Squad officers certainly didn't seem to care, and requests to re-open footpaths fell on deaf ears.

British tourists Emma and Gary thought they'd walked into a war zone. Emma said, "We couldn't believe it, we expected a quiet, peaceful little village."

Gary said, "I was looking forward to seeing the museum and buying a few souvenirs. Surely a bit of pot shouldn't require the whole police force."

Eight charged, 5kg of pot and "hundreds" of cookies and implements seized, good result, says Spt. Lyons.

This costly action has only intensified calls by the Hemp Embassy for a legal cannabis trial.



The Bush Theatre - a Nimbin institution - back in business

Nimbinites old and new turned out in force for the re-opening of the Bush Theatre, bathing collectively in the multi-coloured glow of the iconic performance venue.

Stories of good times had in the place were told and re-told, stories of great bands, strange movies and stranger relationships.

New leasee Mahnah had her stories too. She met Neil Pike on her first day in Nimbin in 1984, and on her second night went to a gig at the Bush Theatre where Neil's band Secret Society were playing, plus the Blues Brothers movie.

"This place has a really nostalgic vibe for me," she said.

The theatre had been closed for several years. "Getting the place up and running has taken a lot of effort, a lot of things needed fixing," Mahnah said.

Many people came forward to help, including Neil Pike, who is co-ordinating the live music nights that are planned as a monthly event.

The first of these was certainly impressive,

with bands, DJs, dancers, acrobats, food and professional lighting and sound rocking the old place, to the delight of the large crowd.

"I'm blown out by the community response," Mahnah said. "It was jam-packed, there were bums on every seat."

The evening began with a smoking ceremony at sunset conducted by Uncle Lewis Walker. "It was beautiful, and it was important to do it. It meant a new beginning and lifted any bad vibes remaining."

A new optimism pervades the place, driven by Mahnah's hard-working enthusiasm, and it's undeniably contagious.

The Bush Theatre will open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and there are plans for film screenings, BBQs, kids matinees, film festivals and possibly plays as well as the live music events to showcase local talent.

To find out more, check out the new website at myspace.com/nimbinbushtheatre or phone Mahnah on 0434-254-710.

