



by Lorraine Vass

Thankfully, on the Northern Rivers, fire-damaged koalas are not common. While Friends of the Koala is celebrating its 20th anniversary of becoming a licensed wildlife rehabilitation group, our colleagues in Victoria and the vets who support them are struggling to keep on top of the steady stream of burnt animals still being found and treated. There have been road hits as well.

Koalas Sam and Bob engaged world-wide compassion for the plight of native wildlife and other animals in the horrific bushfires of Black Saturday. The badly burnt koalas are in the care of one of Victoria's foremost burns specialist volunteer wildlife rehabilitators, Colleen Wood at her Southern Ash Wildlife Shelter at Rawson in Gippsland.

15,000 copies of the photo (above) of Sam taking water from Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteer firefighter, Dave Tree have been sold by the Sun Herald, raising \$350,000 for the CFA. The Authority is directing the money to the Volunteer Fire Brigade Victoria, the division that looks after members' welfare and interests.

At the time of writing, the anticipated flood of burnt and injured wildlife which totally overwhelmed Victorian veterinary facilities and rehabbers after the 2007 fires has not occurred. There is real fear that the intensity and the magnitude of these

Sam (who turned out to be female) and Bob, their burnt feet bandaged, take comfort in each other.

fires has meant there was nowhere for animals to take refuge. Many millions will have perished.

Colleen and her team are caring for some 50 koalas and more are coming in. She has been quoted as saying that it costs about \$50 a day to care for a burnt koala in the early stages of care. This is without overheads such as equipment and accommodation. (Southern Ash Wildlife Shelter is a member of Wildlife Rescue and Protection, Inc. – see below).

Colleen gave evidence to the Environment and Natural Resources Committee's Inquiry into the impact of public land management practices on bushfires in Victoria which followed the 2007 fires. Part of her evidence focused on attitudes to wildlife in the firefighting effort.

In essence she said that wildlife deserves closer attention than it gets for reasons of the pain suffered by individual creatures, the devastating impact that fire-damaged animals can have on some people who are themselves traumatized by fire and because wildlife is an integral element in biodiversity; that all creatures "...are here for a



Spiny Rainforest Katydid

by Peter Hardwick

Sage Cartwright, aged 10, of Blue Knob, got a shock when he put his hand on a mossy tree trunk in his backyard. He was pricked by a spectacular camouflaged insect.

Sage snapped a few pics of the minibeast, and sent the pics off to an entomologist (insect expert)

for identification. It turned out to be a Spiny Rainforest Katydid, or *Phricta aberrans* for budding insect lovers. Katydid has over 4,000 species worldwide and are related to crickets and grasshoppers.

The Spiny Rainforest Katydid hides on mossy trees and shrubs during the day – coming alive at night to feed on a broad range of plant

material. The long antennae are a prominent feature, being up to four times the length of the body.

The male of the species also have a washboard-like structure that they rub with their legs to make a loud chirping sound – part of the rainforest night chorus.

The katydid in the pic taken by Sage is a female near maturity.

What to wear during bush fires

Before you can confront an oncoming bush fire, you must protect yourself and all others with you from radiant heat. You should wear:

- sturdy leather footwear with woollen or cotton socks;
- long pants and a long sleeved shirt or jumper (pure wool or cotton offers the best protection from sparks and embers);
- a broad brimmed hat or hard hat if one is available;
- wet towels to drape over neck (leave the ears uncovered, they warn you of heat levels);

- goggles for eye protection;
- handkerchiefs to tie over nose and mouth to prevent inhalation of smoke and embers;
- gloves, if your hands are not used to working with tools;
- bottles of drinking water;
- Do not wear synthetics – wear wool, cotton or denim.

For more information on what to wear during bush fires, see the RFS Guide to Bush FireWise Action Plan.

From www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

reason and if we keep wiping them out, we are wiping out ourselves..."

If you would like to make

a donation to assist the wildlife recovery effort in Victoria, the following organizations are some which are running appeals:

Ballarat & District Greendale Animal Rescue Inc.

Cheque or money order to Greendale Wildlife Shelter Inc. 103 Long Gully Road Greendale Vic 3341 or go to www.wildlifeshelter.org.au and click on donations.

Help For Wildlife

Cheque or money order to PO Box 181 Coldstream VIC 3770, Phone 0417-380-687, or on the web, see

www.helpforwildlife.com

Wildlife Rescue and Protection, Inc.

Cheque or money order to 1540 Turtons Creek Road Woorarra West Vic 3960, phone 1300-223-427 or go to www.wrap.org.au and click on donations.

Wildlife Victoria

Cheque or money order to Suite 3, 288 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy Vic 3065 Phone: (office) 03 9445 0310 or go to www.wildlifelifevictoria.org.au and click on donations.

Australian Wildlife Health Centre (Healesville Wildlife Sanctuary)

OBSERVING NATURE



WITH MICHAEL SMITH

March happenings:

- * Persimmons ripen;
- * March flies start biting;
- * Blackberries ripen;
- * March, the month of rain;
- * Goannas shed flakes of skin;
- * Bandicoot babies are out of the pouch;
- * Leaf-curling spiders are active;
- * Vinegar flies are at their peak;
- * Crickets call from the grass at night;
- * Brushtail possums have the first of two litters of babies;
- * Fruit bats mate;
- * Autumn equinox 21st March, day = night;
- * Late March puffballs form on the ground;
- * By the end of the month the mornings are 'cool';
- * On the last night of the month, and for that night only, the southern cross can be read as a 24-hour clock as it rotates around the south celestial pole. For example the cross is vertical at midnight, and by 6am it is lying horizontal (on its side).

Michael Smith has been observing nature's cycles for over 25 years, and shares his knowledge each month in the *Nimbin GoodTimes*.

Cheque or money order to Zoos Victoria Foundation 2009 Bushfire Appeal, PO Box 74 Parkville Vic 3052 Phone 03 9285-9406 during business hours, or donate online

Information about koalas and Friends of the Koala is available at: www.friendsofthekoala.org or email info@friendsofthekoala.org Friends of the Koala's 24/7 Rescue Hotline is 6622-1233.

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When is a community building *not* a community building?

by Bob Dooley

A dispute between owners of an iconic Nimbin building could see it become no longer available for community use.

The Birth and Beyond building, as it is currently known, in Cullen Street, has been used as a community building with a stable tenants-in-common ownership since 1973.

Once the Nimbin RSL Club and sub-branch, for \$500 Graeme Dunstan bought the building on behalf of the Australian Union of Students in December 1972 to serve as the organising office for the Aquarius Festival, from which it gained its name the 'Media Centre'. After the Festival, Graeme negotiated its sale for \$900, the difference being transfer costs.

At the time of the sale, the aim was to keep it in community hands and, rather than sell it to one person, six shareholders (\$150 a share) were sought, to buy and hold the building "in trust for the community."

Three were bought by Dr Harry Freeman, who gave one to his wife Beth Cameron and another to Jan Oliver; all members of the newly formed Paradise Valley community. The other shareholders were Carol Elliott, Gail Knepfner, and John Dobson, the latter acting on behalf of the then forming, Tuntable Co-operative.

Early tenants included the Nightcap Action Group, Rainbow Power Company, Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre, Nimbin News, Fashionating, and Birth and Beyond, which had met such



The extension at the rear of the Birth and Beyond building

a need in the community that by 1983 the building had primarily become a birthing centre.

Birth and Beyond, whose early founders included Carol Elliott and Jan Oliver, applied for a grant to build "a new out-the-back verandah and small meeting room underneath", and was successful in gaining a grant for \$80,233 from the Wage Pause Program of the Office of Special Employment.

This funding, only available to projects which could make worthwhile and long-term contributions to the community, gave work to unemployed young women for several months, and included the addition of a septic toilet, new bathroom and birthing room, a new roof, solar hot water and consulting rooms for midwives; in effect doubling the floor area of the existing building.

The funding ran out before the project was finished, and work was completed by volunteers. Until 1990 the building was managed by volunteers involved in Birth and Beyond.

From 1990, the Nimbin Apothecary and the Nimbin Environment Centre have tenanted the front of the building, with volunteers

contributing extensively to further building improvements, including shopfront facades and murals, awnings, closing of the vehicle laneway and night lighting, and connection to the sewer. In the early 1990's also, Beth Cameron sadly died from breast cancer, willing her share to her and Harry's son Toby.

From early 1990 Nimbin Apothecary commenced collecting rents from tenants, paying overheads and overseeing the day-to-day management on the building, in return for a reduced rental. Over the years the building has housed a range of complementary therapists, and provided a venue for many meetings, conferences, film and music nights.

Since 1990, none of the tenants-in-common on the title deed have been involved in running the building. They have neither reaped any financial benefit nor made any financial contribution. All income from the building has been placed in a building fund and utilised to maintain and improve a much-loved and valued community facility.

In late 2007 one of the owners decided it was time to sell her share in the building as she was aging and wished

to provide for her son. Local agents valued the building at between \$400,000 and \$440,000. This caused quite a stir between the owners and members of the community, and several months of dialogue and correspondence followed.

In mid-2008 Jan Oliver gifted her share to Toby Freeman. To assess tax on the gift, the building had to be valued, and it came in at \$300,000, well below the real estate estimate.

The dust seems to have settled now, and all of the now five owners are agreed that it is to be sold, but the Tuntable Co-operative is holding firm that, given the building's history, it must be sold to a not-for-profit community organisation to administer for the community, and at a price that takes into account that organisation's ability to remain financial, and the significant government funding received in 1983.

A number of such organisations do exist in Nimbin, but their funds base would be unlikely to support a purchase price of even half the building's valuation.

It seems likely that, as usual, the legal fraternity will have the final say, and it could be a long time coming. Murwillumbah lawyer and NORPA Chair, Wroth Wall is now representing four of the owners, and Tuntable's case has been accepted as having merit for representation by the Public Interest Advocacy Centre.

Let's hope the legal eagles help to ensure this building does not now fall prey to commercial development.



Coal Lotta Shakin' Goin' On

Anti-coal activists get a boost from Tennessee ash spill and other mishaps

The coal industry spent tens of millions of dollars last year to promote the notion of "clean coal," but that investment couldn't shield it from the massive coal-ash spill at a power plant in Tennessee just before Christmas. Environmentalists have seized on this disaster as they ramp up their campaigns to stop new coal plants from being built, curb emissions from existing plants, and convince the world that coal will always be filthy.

Mistakes Were Made

Coal-mine explosion punctuates Clinton's China visit

A couple of days after China said it was willing to work with the United States on addressing climate change, Hillary Clinton visited Beijing to encourage the country's leaders to stick to that pledge – and to grow in a smart and sustainable way. "We hope you won't make the same mistakes we made," she said during a tour of an energy-efficient gas-powered plant in Beijing. Hours later, a deadly explosion rocked a coal mine about 300 miles away, killing at least 74 workers and injuring more than 100 others. Which prompted officials to ask, "Uh, did you want us to start right away on that?"

A Greener Stimulus

US bill funds green projects, cuts nuclear and coal subsidies

The \$789 billion economic-recovery bill that Congress passed last week and President Barack Obama signed yesterday looks good in terms of green spending, according to preliminary analysis. The bill contains at least \$62.2 billion in direct spending on environmental initiatives and \$20 billion in green tax incentives, while most of the funding for nuclear and coal projects seems to have been dropped from the final version.

A Fish Called Wander

Climate change to cause dark night of the shoal

PARIS – Climate change will cause key species of fish to migrate towards the poles, badly depleting many commercial fisheries, scientists said in a study published on Thursday.

"The impact of climate change on marine biodiversity and fisheries is going to be huge," said its lead author, William Cheung, of the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia, eastern England.

Cheung's team used a high-powered computer model, based on knowledge of 1,066 species of fish, their habitat and climate change, to predict what might happen by 2050 according to three scenarios for global warming.

The paper, appearing in a British journal, Fish and Fisheries, says the turnover of species will be "dramatic," affecting 60 percent of present biodiversity, and with repercussions for the entire food chain.

President Obama went to Canada...

and came back with only 'clean energy' promises...

Barack Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper get dual climate fingers this week for a thoroughly disappointing meeting in Ottawa on Thursday. Rather than coming forward with fightin' words on climate change, the two promised to talk about talking about global warming a "clean energy dialog" that commits senior officials from both countries to collaboration. Lame. To make matters worse, the two leaders spent most of their post-meeting press conference hyping up their desire to drop billions of dollars on technologies to make dirty energy sources like coal and tars sands "clean."

Sustainability Forum

Last month's weekend-long Sustainability Forum in Nimbin provided an opportunity to develop local ideas and priorities for building a sustainable community into the future,

Permaculturist Robyn Francis (pictured at right) gave a keynote address on sustainable community issues for Nimbin, and approaches from other communities around the world.

This was followed by workshops to develop proposals and strategies into an Action Plan for a Sustainable Nimbin.

A broad canvas of issues were raised, from car pooling and cane toad busting to building design and low energy consumption lifestyle changes.

They will form the basis of the Action Plan, to be finalised by the Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre, and reported back to the community in the coming months.



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Censored, observed

by Jay Stephens

First, some good news. In New Zealand, concerted, media-savvy campaigning that ran all the way to the stroke of midnight looks to have seen off, or at least delayed, the implementation of section 92A of the *Copyright Amendment (New Technologies Act)* due to come into force February 28. This law would have made it legal for ISPs in New Zealand to act upon suspicion that an end user was downloading copyrighted material as though a breach of contract had occurred, with no guarantee to right of appeal, and absolutely no redress in any case. See tinyurl.com/b26w9w This is a great victory for people power, and should give us all cause to redouble our efforts in the fight against clean feed here in Australia.

In case anyone doubts that censorship in various forms curtails ever more of our electronic communications, and that we are being watched ever more in everyday life, remember that Magnavox, among others, is trialling DVB boxes which include a hidden camera and microphone (see tr.im/gPim). The advantages of these kinds of technologies to content programmers, marketers, and advertisers are too great to ignore, despite the inevitable privacy concerns: This kind of technology allows the cable provider to collect data about who watches which kind of programme, and which kind of advertisement; how many people gather around the box



Cover art from Cory Doctorow's novel "Little Brother", Tor Books (2008).

for which kind of sporting event; when people mute the sound, switch channels, look away from the screen, leave and re-enter the room during a programme; talk amongst themselves rather than pay full attention to the programme; and even which segment of the screen each of the viewers' eyes are focused on at any given moment in the programme.

These data are of immense value, and could well represent a bigger income stream when offered for sale to programme makers and advertising companies, than cable subscriptions, and any associated advertising revenues currently do. It is likely that consumers will quickly accept, that many devices for everyday use will soon contain various recording devices capable of capturing and uploading realtime video, audio, GPS positional, data flow (e.g. calls and web connections made and accepted), and even biometric data which can be used to tell the user's emotional state.

Of those who currently use a mobile phone for work, many, had you asked them 15 or 20 years ago if they would be willing to carry with them

at all times a device which would indicate their exact geographical position in real time, would have scornfully dismissed the suggestion. Of those who currently use Facebook and Myspace, many, had you asked them five or 10 years ago, if they would be willing to keep a public diary which included photos and video of themselves and their family, which would, in its entirety, be statistically processed and sold (quite expensively) to foreign-owned multinational advertising companies, would have been similarly dismissive.

I am convinced (and this may not be a popular opinion in Nimbin) that the widespread use of these technologies, and the privacy compromises which that use will bring, are inevitable. We can no more fight it, then we can "un-invent" the nuclear bomb or the anthrax virus. Instead, we must learn to live defensively - in general, not getting caught out by these technologies is no harder than not being knocked down by a car when you cross the road. As a parent, I feel that just as we teach road safety to our children, we must teach them to jealously guard their privacy, and to think of the consequences when they give away information online. Putting Cory Doctorow's *Little Brother* on the syllabus would be an excellent start (see: craphound.com/

CyberLatin

by Warwick Fry

Way back in the naughty noughty nineties when a Pentium was the latest thing in computers, and Windows95 was just starting to become sexy enough to be useful, I did a little trip to Mexico on a research project.

I ended up putting together a dozen or so 486 ('pre-pentium') 'boxes' that had been dumped on a peasant community by a well meaning US aid organization. When the generator gave us the juice, I made them dance. (I hate to see old boxes go to waste). Everyone loved it. The screensaver was a slideshow of the local people, who crowded round to see themselves and their neighbours scroll across the monitors. The kids would slip in to play some simple games and quickly learned to find their way around Windows.

It was 1997. Three years after the Zapatista uprising on New Years Eve in 1994 when EZLN (National Liberation Zapatista Army) guerrillas won control of four of the major towns in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas. They held those towns for a few weeks, and then retreated to bases in the bush to negotiate for the indigenous communities that were their support base, (or rather, that they basically supported).

The concept of a network of 'autonomous' communities was based on resistance to the change in the Mexican constitution that triggered the uprising of 1994. The Zapatistas take their name from the hero of the Mexican Revolution - Emiliano Zapata, who led the peasant uprising in the mainly indigenous south of Mexico. Like that other big name of the Mexican Revolution, Pancho Villa, he was set up and assassinated, but not before he had introduced an item in the Mexican Constitution that communally owned indigenous land ('ejidos') could not be bought, sold, or otherwise be commercially negotiated.

The idea of a 'commons' is closely attuned to the idea of an open internet, and many of the pioneers of the early internet saw the internet as a way of breaking down the preconception that personal ownership (including ideas) is property and therefore sacred, untouchable, but always negotiable, for a price.

The presence of the Zapatistas on the Internet in the 1990s was a groundbreaking media phenomenon. Pentagon think tanks and experts wrote papers describing the international networking of supporters for the Zapatistas on the internet as 'cyberwar' - even though there were no hack attacks or attempts to

infect computers with viral infections. The 'attack' was purely on a particular set of ideas.

I left Oventic, late 1997 with the faint hope that the junked computers network, and the proposal I wrote up for the autonomous Zapatista Central Committee that a 'computer laboratory' (however primitive) might be worth making part of the 'college' curriculum, would be accepted.

It happened. A journalistic colleague was in Chiapas recently and I asked her if she had visited Oventic, (still a collection of bamboo long huts and a couple of cement block rooms) and if the idea of a computer lab had been accepted. "Shit yeah - they've got broad band now and I used it to send some of my stories out ..."

From little things, big things grow.

I'm about to head off to revisit some comrades in El Salvador and cover the Presidential elections, as a road warrior with laptop. But I'm going to do a little run up to Oventic in southern Mexico, and definitely the *GoodTimes* will be the first to know how that little idea has grown, with or without high tech. Thinking outside the square can get you around many a problem, and Latin American communications adventures are certainly a lesson in that.



The Nimbin Community Technology Centre is a not-for-profit group that provides community access to internet connected computers, a range of industry standard software and office support services such as high quality colour laser printing/scanning up to A3 in size and computer repairs. Nimbin CTC also offers DVD/CD burning, VHS to DVD conversion, hire of digital hardware (projector, cameras etc) to community groups and computer based courses to support local community infrastructure.

We are housed in the Nimbin Community Centre building, the former Nimbin School, where we

occupy two rooms. One serves as an internet kiosk, catering for casual users and offering a small range of computer accessories, while the main CTC room contains our computer repair section, administration area, class room space and when possible a quiet retreat for long term computer users. Our opening hours are 10 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, though sometimes we stay open longer and at other times one or both rooms may become unavailable.

Since its inception under the NSW and Commonwealth governments' "networking the nation" program for rural communities in 2003, the Nimbin Community Technology Centre (CTC) has evolved to meet changing financial circumstances and emerging community needs. We are currently entirely funded by our

community and, in line with rising community computer literacy, we have established a robust commitment to encouraging visual storytelling as artistic expression.

Under the banner of Nimbin Films we have established a video production unit specialising in DVD production of short films and community events. During the past five years we have also been instrumental in successfully running two annual events, the Nimbin 39 Hours Short Film Competition, in which participants must make a film in 39 hours and the Nimbin Film Festival which functions as a showcase for local and international content. In view of this commitment we are saddened to hear that this year's 39 Hours Short Film Competition has been cancelled due to a lack of volunteers.

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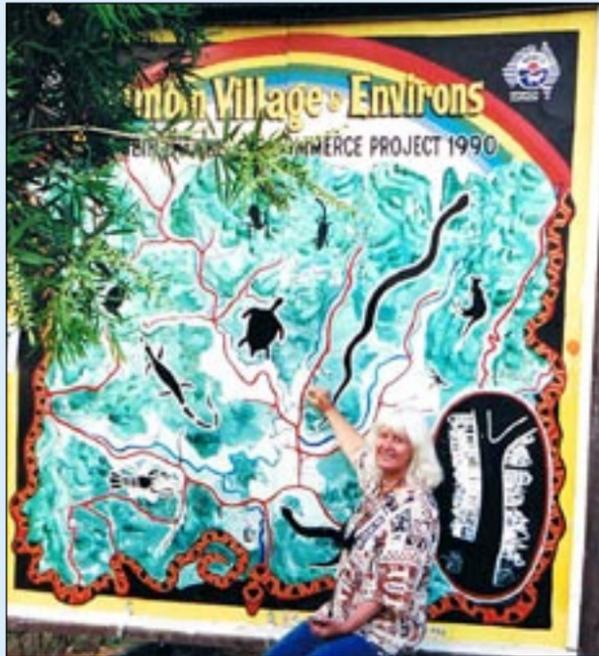
The big Nimbin and Environs Chamber of Commerce Map, and how it came to be

by Kathy Stavrou

It all started one day in the Rainbow Cafe back in 1990. I recall my school teacher friend, Barry Glyde enthusiastically endorsing my idea for a Big Nimbin and Environs map in the park, which would both show, and celebrate, the wildlife tree corridors Barry was planting with his students and the community, across the Nimbin countryside; and also (in my ignorance, thinking that it only involved acknowledgement) for me to paint on it, the local Aboriginal names. Next, I put the idea for the Map to the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce. I was Secretary at the time, having found myself being the surprised owner and manager of the Nimbin butcher shop.

In my naivety, I thought they'd be pleased. But no, the idea of the Aboriginal names enraged some. And, I was to find out, even suggesting that I would paint the sacred Bundjalung names onto the Map was crass. In actual fact, I didn't end up getting permission to put up Bundjalung words for things, let alone place names, for years after that. But then, as time went by, Aboriginal friends helped me with the map by painting the Aboriginal designs on it, plus the land rights flag on the back. I have found tree names (not yet painted on the map) in a Sydney Morning Herald article, about Northern Rivers timbers, dated September 13, 1861 – two are "wobal", and "bogam bogam". Other words I have been told by Bundjalung Elders, or found in Bundjalung dictionaries in the Mitchell Library.

But back to 1990, when the Chamber of Commerce ended up enthusiastically endorsing my idea, and letting me do the project. If I remember rightly, I paid for the paint, Norco paid for the sign-writing, friends, especially Kevin and Peter, helped me design it and constructed it, and other friends including Charters Hardware donated the other materials. Lismore City Council didn't



contribute a cent, though some Councillors came to the unveiling. Oddly enough, it was originally next to the big Nimbin Central School mural, i.e., along the Northern edge of the Park. But one day, for no apparent reason, and without consulting me, or the Chamber of Commerce either I presume, a gang of Council workers came to Nimbin, shifted the Map to where it is now, threw away the Sheather Bridge timbers I had collected and which had formed a garden area for the Big Map, and cut down the big old camphor that used to grace that end of the Park.

However, Dennis Walker, the famous Aboriginal activist, and my friend, was there. Enraged at the summary execution of the big old tree, and maybe even about the summary shifting of the Map, he grabbed a Council worker's pruning saw, and lightly pinked his bum, drawing a drop of blood and creating a slight tear in his Council Yakkas. Dennis then retreated, still steaming, to the back of the Rainbow Cafe.

Enter Sergeant McDonald, Nimbin's man in blue. "I arrest you, Dennis Walker," he says, "for assaulting a Council worker just doing his duty." He grabs Dennis, preparatory to putting him in irons. Dennis struggles and grabs the Sergeant's firearm. Bam, bam, he fires the gun four times in the air, then points the gun at

Sergeant Mac, who is on the ground expecting the coup de grace, and says, "One left for you, and one left for me." But of course doesn't fire, this is street theatre. Then he puts out his wrists for the irons. But of course Dennis is arrested and escorted to jail by about 50 police cars (they know where Nimbin is). Then off to jail for four years, in spite of his plea of No Jurisdiction,

Anyway, I repaint and add to the Map every year or two, generally paying for the paint myself, though the most recent lot, after a bit of a delay, was paid for by the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce. My repainting work is a lot of fun, not just because I love doing it, but also because that's when I find out how much passing visitors and locals like it, even though many look at it a bit bemused, and wonder if it is more art than map.

But now I'm perturbed. There's some talk in the Chamber that the Big Nimbin and Environs map be removed, so that a Big sign advertising local businesses could go up instead.

Why doesn't the Lismore City Council just do the right thing and replace the white-ant riddled, dangerous legs of the Big Map with proper metal ones, and even put up a Rainbow Power Company solar powered light so travellers can see it at night?

What's more useful, I ask you?

New counselling practice opens in Nimbin

Dr Elizabeth McCardell
Phone 0429 199021

I have only recently come to Lismore to live, but I have been visiting my brother in Nimbin for many years. Our mother lived with him for a while before her death. She loved it here, as I do. Our father lived and died in Perth. Because of his great age (he died one month short of 101), I continued to live there. The glorious Northern Rivers region has been my parallel universe for a long time, and now my full time reality. I live and work here.

I am a counsellor and psychotherapist. The difference between the two is only a matter of the number of sessions: a person sees a counsellor for a shorter time than seeing a psychotherapist. The number of sessions is determined by the client's wishes and needs. Sometimes a few sessions bring new insight, awareness, and the ability to move on from what had previously held the person back from engaging easily in life. Sometimes more sessions are required.

The kind of work I do is much more than mere symptom control. I employ relaxation techniques and use guided imagery (a couple of the methods used by cognitive behaviour therapists) when a client's anxiety levels are high, but the core of how I work is to bring focussed awareness to behaviour that is taught to us by our early conditioning and the stories we make about ourselves. I bring a variety of integrative methods and approaches to this: Narrative Therapy, Transcript Therapy, drawing, dreamwork, journaling, and anything else that works.

We all have stories. We humans need them. They make sense and give shape to our many faceted experiences. Our stories consist of events, encounters, and perceptions, linked into sequence, over time, and according to a plot. We don't just have one story; we have many. These narratives (or stories) don't just reflect or represent our lives, they shape and make sense (in some way, at least) of our living



experiences. Sometimes, through relationship breakdown, or trauma (assault/robbery/rape) or bereavement (loss of loved ones, loss of job, profound disappointment about one's life course, etc), a dominant problem story prevails that causes us enduring pain, deep unremitting sadness, and depression. Other stories, often uplifting, joyous ones, made from "sparkling" experiences in a person's life usually co-exist with this problem narrative, but are "forgotten" or missed. The "re-authoring" or "re-storying" conversations that take place in Narrative Therapy aim to bring these more healing narratives to the foreground and mindfulness to those events that trigger the re-telling (over and over) of problem stories. The foregrounding of these other stories that contradict the prevailing stories of pain, distrust, and disappointment enriches a client's life, which in turn allows a move from the tired, but known old story, to what is possible, what gives real empowerment.

Transcript Therapy works in a similar way. It, in the words of its innovator, James Coventry (aka Indivar), brings 'mindfulness to behaviour in an objective way.' The counsellor asks the client what dreams they've had, or what is going on in their inner life and then identifies the key

antagonist in the account and asks questions of it, via writing. The client writes, and sometimes draws, their response.

Why writing? Because writing takes more effort of mind and body, it takes considerably less time to get to the heart of the matter, to essential personal issues and life scripts borne out of our conditioning. Talking can become convoluted, twisted, and evasive much more easily than writing things down in response to well directed questions. Transcript Therapy provides for both client and therapist an objective witness to behavioural mechanisms.

A workshop conducted by Indivar will be held in Mullumbimby over the weekend of 18th to 19th April. For more details, please ring Sambodh on 6684 5280.

If you would like to work in a collaborative way on your relationship issues, anxiety, depression, grief and bereavement (enduring sadness and loss of loved ones, dreams, career, etc), problems with study, substance abuse, or any other life issue of deep concern for you, or just want to explore your inner life, please ring me on 0429-199-021 to make an appointment.

I am in Nimbin Thursdays and Fridays at 80 Cullen St, above the Oasis Café. I am available for consultation in Lismore, Mondays and Tuesdays, 9am-5pm. Sessions last one hour and cost \$55.

I have a Master of Counselling degree as well as a PhD. I am an associate member of the Australian and NZ Psychodrama Association, and a member of the International Integrative Psychotherapy Association. I look forward to meeting you.

Dr Elizabeth McCardell, M. Counselling, PhD

Counsellor/Psychotherapist

For those who want to bring mindfulness to, and some relief from, that which is creating depression, anxiety, drug and alcohol excess, relationship problems, prolonged grief, or a sense of meaninglessness in their lives.

Clinics:

- 80 Cullen Street, Nimbin: Thursdays & Fridays
- Lismore: Mondays & Tuesdays

Ring 0429-199-021 for an appointment



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