



# THE NIMBIN GOOD TIMES

Mild and FREE

Peanut Tree Edition  
March 2010

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## Big Joint courts the Pink vote

by Max Stone

By car, by bus, by train, by truck and on foot, the Big Joint team assembled with random precision in the ACON (Aids Council of NSW) basement in Sydney at 2.30pm. At about 2.31, the Big Joint inflation device blew up in such a way that it ceased to blow up. Unbelievable. It was working fine when we left Nimbin.

There we were, with only 1% of the BJ inflated for the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade, and it was suddenly looking like we had all come a long way for nothing. I cannot speak highly enough of Peter Smith, who organised everything with outstanding attention to detail and when a problem arose (like this one), he solved it with alacrity.

Gary the butcher and Pete zoomed off in the Ute looking for a replacement leaf blower – by all accounts it was a mad dash from the centre of Sydney stopping at every hardware store they could see. They got to Ashfield before they found one and they only made it back just as the 4 o'clock Lock Down locked down. We then inflated the other 99% without a problem and were all good to go by 6pm, at which time we moved the BJ up to the marshalling area into our spot.... directly behind about 150 gay policemen and women! Yep, the AFP all marching hand-in-hand behind a bright red police car with flashing lights, which was right behind a music truck with a gay policeman mixing up the music and a contingent of NSW gay police as well.

7.55. As the sun went down the wind sprang up, gusting to 15 knots and there was real concern amongst the parade officials as to the safety of our float. The Obama banner with its bamboo frame was judged too dangerous unless we cut 'wind slits' into it, which we were not prepared to do and so, Obama was out. The parade officials then became concerned that the BJ could 'get loose' and hurt someone.

You can imagine the scene dear reader, the parade is less than 5 mins away from starting and the wind was getting windier. I said to the dude, tell your boss that the combined weight of the people carrying the joint exceeds the weight of the BJ by a significant factor, well over 20 to 1 – it can't get away from us, we've got hold of it with ropes. After a few minutes the word came down from 'upon high' that we could participate if we added more ropes, which we did.

The BJ was the 27<sup>th</sup> in the procession; there were at least 100 more floats behind us, which meant the crowd was still relatively fresh and impressionable when we walked by, they had yet to reach a point of super sequin saturation and still had plenty of lung power left for cheering and since a lot of those lungs were connected to plastic whistles, it resulted in the loudest concentration of sound I have ever been in.

That crowd definitely loved the BJ and more to the point, the vast majority of them signalled that wanted the law to be changed, by waving and yelling out LET IT GROW and similar slogans, leaving me in no doubt that including the Big Joint in the G&L parade was a superb public relations exercise for the HEMP movement. Well done, everyone.

## Tweed water augmentation plans: Byrrill Creek threatened

by Joanna Gardner CWG  
Representative for the Byrrill Creek Area

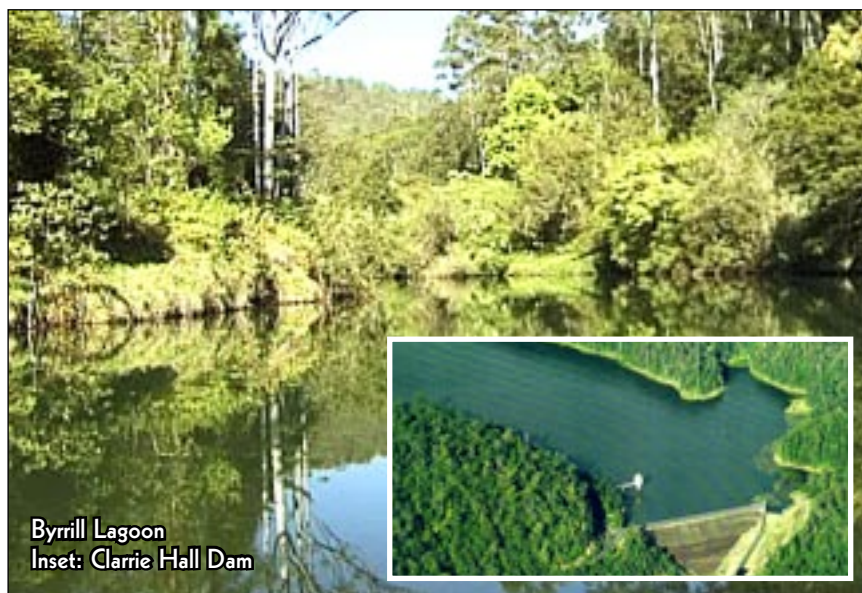
The Tweed Shire Council proposes to augment its water supply to meet a projected increase in population of 76,198 by 2036.

From nine options, council has short listed four, including a new dam at Byrrill Creek and raising the wall of the Clarrie Hall Dam in Doon Doon. A community consultation process is now underway and we are asked to comment upon the preferred options. As Council retains decision-making authority, it would appear this consultation is really a sales process. The community has not been involved in all stages of the process, as would be typical of a sincere consultation process, and is not a driving force for determining the development profile and associated supporting infrastructure for our region, the water options and ultimately, the look and feel of our home, now and in the future.

In these environmentally aware and responsible times, there must be a better way forward than the old ways of environmental destruction and disruption to people, their lives and livelihoods. Enlightened thinking would begin by questioning what is an appropriate environmentally sustainable population footprint for this region?

Within this context, Council planning requirements should ensure protection of the significant World Heritage Listed status of the valley and require water independence for all planned growth in the region. This would include large rainwater tanks, minimizing water use and installing major water recycling plants to meet water needs.

Implementing global best practice for water supply and demand management would introduce new practices and thinking, used successfully in England and Europe for decades, such as recycled water. Richard Murray (CWG Environmental Representative) has advised that if Tweed Shire Council had expanded their bulk water supply broad screening option list of nine options to include reuse of available bulk grey water, purified water, stormwater harvesting etc and reused a least 30% of water that is currently wasted, a costly dam solution would be unnecessary. 17,700 ML of water that is currently wasted would be available to the



Byrrill Lagoon  
Inset: Clarrie Hall Dam

predicted population increase.

The Tweed Valley is a special place, the second largest caldera in the world, centered around the geological formation of Mt Warning, which is World Heritage listed National Park and part of the ancient Gondwana Forests. It is sacred land to the Aboriginal people and to the non indigenous population that lives within its shadow.

Adjacent Byrrill Creek is the highest-ranking conservation status riparian area in the Tweed Shire and home to a biodiversity of Fauna and Flora, (42 priority flora species and 37 priority fauna species have been recorded within the area). Of particular concern is the threatened giant barred frog and the koala population. People have made their homes here, raising families and living in harmony with the environment, a large proportion with less carbon footprint than the average Tweed resident, using solar power, tanks for water and orchards and veggie gardens.

The existing Clarrie Hall Dam has already flooded 220 hectares in a catchment area of 52 square km of prime farmland, beautiful natural habitat and indigenous cultural heritage sites. It has disrupted the lives and livelihoods of affected residents and landowners then and now. Uncertainty around future developments continues to make it very difficult for people to make decisions about their homes, businesses and lives. It is home to the vulnerable comb-crested jacana (*Irediparra gallinacea*) and the endangered black-necked stork

(*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*).

Both of the dams inundate areas of nearby National Parks, both Mebbin and Mt Jerusalem, which were part of the World Heritage RFA agreements.

Imagine bulldozers clear felling 400 hectares, at Byrrill Creek, chainsaws, rock blasting, dense industrial vibration of infrastructure activities, for proposed construction periods of 2-3 years, to build a 40 metre high dam wall. At Clarrie Hall Dam, which would be extended by another 8 metres, a similar impact would also occur. Dams, with a limited life span, are old technology. Is it OK that we visit such devastation upon the land, the flora and fauna and people who live here? Particularly when other options exist and remain unexplored? And we are yet to explore costs!

When do the ratepayers and residents get to decide how our money is spent and how our lives are changed?

If you would like a say on the Tweed's Water Options:

- Fill in a Community Water Survey at [www.calderaenvironmentcentre.org](http://www.calderaenvironmentcentre.org) or drop in to the Centre in Queen St, Murwillumbah to sign a petition, also available at Nimbin Environment Centre.
- If a fun picnic day with the family, with a guided creek walk, maybe a dip and some information, is more your style, it's on Sunday 14th March at 10am.

For further details phone  
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