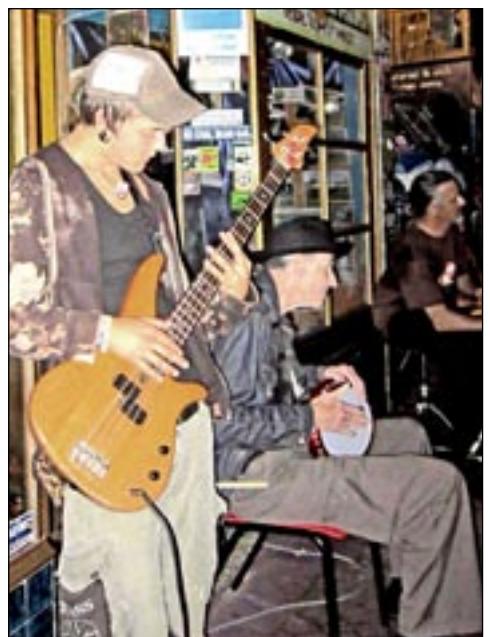




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2012 - Let's have a big one!



Photos: Venessa Johnstone-Kappel and Heidi Glover

by Bob Dooley

There may have been doom and gloom about the Christmas period sale figures amongst members of the Retail Traders Association, but none of it was showing in Nimbin on New Year's Eve.

Perhaps not as spectacular as the fireworks in the capital cities (and Byron), Nimbin's spontaneous drumming circle and fire-twirlers brought the main street to life, to

the delight of the many locals and visitors, who danced and played well past the turn of the year.

Admittedly, the pub's large-screen TV became the focus of much attention to watch the extraordinary 12-minute Sydney fireworks, which sparked much comment about their \$4 million cost.

The appeal of a low entry-cost, community celebration was, of course, not confined to Nimbin. Attendances were down at major

festivals around the country, and it was the free gigs that attracted the most crowds.

In Nimbin's case, there had been no organisation, no Development Application, no Police permit to dance on the road, no fees for consultants' reports, no reams of reports, and absolutely no hassles.

Here was a model of people using their community infrastructure to make a great night for everyone, put together simply by a bit of

networking, and a common spirit of goodwill.

Going forward into 2012, perhaps this is the model for other community celebrations. It is certainly a model being considered by this year's Mardi Gras organisers, concerned about the spiralling compliance costs for the event.

Will we see an outbreak of street parties across Australia?

Best Wishes

The *Nimbin GoodTimes* wishes a Happy New Year to all our readers, contributors, and advertisers, and especially the small army of experts in IT, website management, proofreading, and logistics, without whom we wouldn't be hitting the street, now for our 16th year. Long may you prosper!



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