

Birth and Beyond

"At least the baby and mother are alive"



by Kirrah Holborn, 'Traditional Wisdom' doula & birth educator

Yes. True. Everyone hopes that the baby and mother will make it through childbirth alive. In Australia, today, we can usually expect this to be true. The maternal mortality rate is 7/100 000 which means about 99.993% of women live. The infant mortality rate is 4.55/1000 which means 99.54% of babies live to have their first birthday.

It is a tragedy when death is a part of birth and that topic is for another day. Today, my focus is on birth trauma and what we can do to help.

What is birth trauma?

Births can be uplifting, transformative and positive experiences. However, mothers, fathers and other support people can come out of a birthing experience with feelings of confusion, powerlessness and regret or feelings of failure. Birth trauma can result from unexpected or undesired events that happen during pregnancy and birth. During these moments, the individual usually feels helpless or abandoned and they have real (or perceived) threats to their safety or wellbeing.

Really listen

When a mother has experienced a 'less than ideal' birth, the last thing she may want to hear is the often murmured condolence of 'at least your baby is healthy'. First and foremost, she needs to feel heard. Her experience and how she feels about it needs to be validated before she can begin to heal.

Don't assume you know how she feels. Just like in pregnancy 'oh, you must be so excited!' can seem pretentious if that is not how she is feeling. So, instead of assuming you know: ask! How are you going? How are you feeling? And wait and listen to her response. Acknowledge her feelings.

Know that she did the best she could

You can assume that the mother did the best that she could at the time. She made decisions based on what she knew and what she thought was the best option in that moment. Try not to let your mind start to wander about what YOU would have done or how you think YOU

would have handled the situation.

Understand that on a deep level, the mother wants what every human wants; to be heard, to be understood, to be loved, to be respected and to feel like she belongs.

Listen with your heart as well as your mind. Deeply listen to every word she says. This is not a time to 'swap' birth stories or start talking about what she can do next time. Avoid giving advice for her 'next birth'.

Re-defining a 'good' birth

In 2013, birth is safer than ever. It is high time that our view of a 'good' birth not only includes physical health, but also emotional and mental wellbeing. The way that a mother feels about her birth, affects the way she feels about herself, her baby and her relationships with others. If we can strive to help more mothers have positive experiences in birth, then their mothering journey will be greatly enhanced. If we can start to really listen to mothers that need time to process their birth, then we can help them to heal negative emotions and move forward with greater understanding.

Ask for help

If you or someone you know needs to debrief their birth and find healing, there is help available. I have trained with Birthing From Within in 'Birth Story Medicine' and offer birth healing sessions for women to find greater understanding and look back on their birth from a different perspective. There is more information on my website www.traditionalwisdom.com.au

There are also groups out there that specialize in helping women come together and find resolution with their birth experiences.

Birth & Beyond November schedule

Now Wednesdays 4.30pm-5.30pm.

New Time! New Day!

6th November: Birthing From Within birth preparation

20th November: Molly is talking 'Early Breastfeeding'

Nimbin Birth & Beyond meets every Wednesday afternoon 4.30pm-5.30pm. Sessions are run by donation (~\$5). For more info (or to hold a session): Phone 0429-308-851 or email: kirrah@traditionalwisdom.com.au

To be added to the mailing list just send an email or text. The schedule can be found online at: www.traditionalwisdom.com.au

Ghost catching with a dress



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
M Counselling, PhD



Photo: Sara McCafferty

I recently watched on YouTube a very beautiful conversation among therapists and others talking on the death of mothers. The phrase 'ghost catching with a dress' came up in relation to finding clothing, letters, and treasured objects belonging to mothers who had died.

I was very moved by the image, for I have such items from my own mother. Indeed, most of the crockery and utensils I use on a daily basis were from the cupboards of my mother. Hanging in my wardrobe is a red coat my mother made herself of the lining of officer's coats during the war, there are gloves she made, and there is a dress she fashioned from silk that I only very vaguely remember her wearing to a party once or twice. She was an extraordinary seamstress; a skill I entirely lack.

Ghost catching with a dress is, for me, the catching of glimpses of my mother's life and story and those others I have known and loved. Glimpses sewn into the gossamer of memory – sometimes poignant and painful, sometimes sweet and tender.

Life, death. What are these? When people talk of death, premature or after a long rich life, like my mother's, I wonder yet again, what it all

means.

The taking of one's own life, throws another angle into the mix. There are many therapists who express deep concern for those who contemplate their own death, and while I too am disturbed by this, I am brought yet again to the existential place that I face on a daily basis: What of life, what of death? I cannot see those who contemplate taking their own life as a sign of mental illness. I cannot, for the same reason that I acknowledge death as intrinsic to life and life intrinsic to death.

What gets thrown up into the air like wind in fallen leaves, is the integral mystery of existence itself. I cannot sweep this knowledge, this subtle awareness I have, into a neat pile to be put discretely into the rubbish bin. This is the greatest mystery I know of. Death is not a medical problem and suicide is not a medical condition. Death is, as life is, and relationships are.

What is caught in suicide are ghost catchers of clothes, of toys, bric a brac, books and letters; of the tears in memories, of hearts broken, of anger, resentment, bewilderment, lots of questions unanswered. These are perhaps more poignant than even the caught ghosts of those who died a normal death.

I have had friends who have died by their own hand and know something of the strangeness of this. One man, I had shared a meal with only a fortnight before he gassed himself. Was I partly to blame? I could not think so, for as the ghosts in cloth unravelled after the funeral, the threads emerged of a life of disconnect, of feelings of alienation and loss. This poor friend could not speak of what he suffered and it is here that my feelings are stirred, and it is now here that I offer myself as a therapist to hear and share the burden of pain.

Death, and life, are touched by the living in a fluid process and grief and loss are felt as those we've loved move into another dimension. It is not so much the death bit that shakes me, but the threads of life that are not always seen and understood; threads that need, somehow, to be shaped into a dress to catch the ghosts of real flesh and blood people in our stories, recollections, and a need for some kind of farewell. We living need to let go and yet to remember and to let go and yet to recollect. Our grief is not to be discarded mindlessly, but to be brought into the fabric of our life to enrich us and also, mysteriously, give us the courage to let go, let be that majesty that is life.

Lingering pathogens

by Brigid Beckett

Many people are suffering from long-term tiredness and pain, with symptoms that may be cyclical or recurrent, but that never really go away.

They will probably be able to pinpoint the start to an illness or incident: "I have never been well since..."

The incident may be an infection, contact with chemicals or sometimes a severe trauma.

If this sounds like you, or someone you know, read on.

Western diagnosis may be glandular fever, Ross River or Barmah forest viruses, chronic fatigue, post viral syndrome, or fibromyalgia. Or even, as the situation worsens, auto-immune and chronic inflammatory disorders.

Patients with these symptoms are in a frustrating and debilitating situation. Extreme fatigue and tiredness is a consistent complaint.

The diagnosis in Chinese Medicine is "Lingering Pathogens". The causative agent or influence has remained in the body to produce a persistent immune response.

If it remains in the *qi* level, the most superficial level, the symptoms are: low-grade fever, sweating, thirst, swollen glands or tonsils, and increasing fatigue. There may also be respiratory tract or digestive symptoms, or rashes and other skin lesions, muscular pain or weakness, joint pain, or sleep disturbances, irritability or other behavioural disorders, such as ADHD.

Another classification of lingering pathogens in Chinese medicine is when the pathogen is stuck in the *shaoyang*. This has a connection to the gallbladder meridian.



This produces a distinctive pattern. Typically:

alternating chills and fever, fatigue, dizziness, irritability, nausea, bitter taste, pain down the sides of the body including headache and discomfort on the sides of the head and shoulder and hip pain, and ear problems.

There are also deeper levels for pathogens to exist in. This is referred

to as the *ying* or blood level. These often correspond to complex auto-immune complexes such as Systemic Lupus. Clearly the more serious end of the lingering pathogen spectrum.

Lingering pathogens are clearly debilitating.

Sometimes adding to the unpleasantness of the experience is a patient having the symptoms for years without a diagnosis.

There is no specific Western medicine treatment for the *qi* level or *shaoyang* group. (Those with *ying* and blood level pathogens will likely

be on heavy duty medication such as cyclosporins or steroids). Therefore a diagnosis of chronic fatigue or fibromyalgia can be disheartening, with some patients coming to believe it is a very long-term, if not a lifelong problem.

Chinese medicine has definite strategies to eliminate the lingering pathogens. These patterns have been recognised in different ancient texts since the Shang dynasty 4000 years ago. They are commonly treated in acupuncture practices today.

Once the patterns are recognised, acupuncture and/or herbs are used to vent the pathogens and harmonise the body. Pathogens in the *qi* and *shaoyang* levels respond reliably to treatment.

Ideally it is better not to contract these debilitating conditions in the first place. So it is worth thinking about predisposing factors and trying to avoid them.

Overwork is one factor. This includes working when unwell, sweating it out or ignoring an illness. This does not allow the body to fight the pathogen, making it more likely that it will not be completely expelled.

Long hours of stressful work and shiftwork will lower the body's reserves and resources, increasing the chance of a pathogen getting into deeper levels. This is sometimes seen in people who rarely get a cold or flu, but will develop more serious conditions.

Other factors are exposure to chemicals, especially over time. Also the inappropriate use of medications may delay the expulsion of a pathogen.

Having said that, sometimes a very strong pathogen will invade and linger even when there is no predisposition.

Awareness of predisposing factors may prevent these situations.

But if you feel your symptoms may be in this category, there is something that you can do. There is everything to gain in being pain-free with energy returned. Even after months or years of symptoms, the lingering pathogen can be expelled, and you can have your life back.

Brigid is a qualified Chinese Medicine practitioner who can be contacted through Lismore Community Acupuncture on 0431-702-560.

What is stopping you from being true to your self?

by Zuela Christie

Have you ever wondered why some people seem to have it so easy and are able to create all sorts of amazing things in their life?



Ever wondered when you will have enough time? Enough money? Or even enough fun, for that matter?

Are you living the life of your dreams, or is there a hell of a lot of room for improvement?

Come and hear Rhiannon Rees (pictured) speak about changing your life, at Hanging Rock Hall on Wednesday 13th November, 6-9pm. You must RSVP to Marion on 0427-272-954.

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If you have had enough of yourself and are ready to get over yourself, then this evening event is for YOU.

What prevents you from being who you really want to be?

Unfortunately, disintegration is 'the norm' amongst humans. That is, what you think, how you feel, your intentions and your actions are not aligned, but are at odds with each other.

A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. Can you imagine how energised and effective you could be as a whole, unified being? Your potential is limitless.

You are your own worst enemy. Your psyche is a miracle of Creation, which is designed to be a self-healing system.

Are you stuck barely treading water when you could now be swimming with the power of the natural life-stream supporting, guiding and propelling you onwards? Treading water was a great strategy as a struggling child and the only alternative was drowning and being overwhelmed. You have since developed many more skills and strengths and, like any childhood defence mechanism, it now requires conscious re-evaluation as an adult to see if it is still helping or now hindering your life.

When you are prepared to face the fear and other emotions which originally locked this pattern down, it can easily be relinquished. You only have to let go and step aside to allow your intelligent psyche to restore you to balance, to release the underlying blockages from your electro-magnetic energy field.

Are you still giving your power away by resenting and blaming others, circumstances or yourself in the past or present? This is a vain attempt to defend yourself from feeling pain but all that it actually achieves is to lock you in with that pain and have it continually recirculating within, and attracting similar recurrent experiences from without. Previous lifestyle choices of pain management will also need re-examination to see if they are still serving your best interests, once the pain is released.

E-motion contains the movement that allows you to become unstuck and move forward with your life. Love is letting go of fear. The fear that was literally life-threatening as an infant and has been stored as such is surprisingly able to be faced when brought up into the light. The flow of Love, of Life is your birthright, your original blueprint for health and happiness – and once it is restored, anything is now possible.

I can help you. I am a Polarity Energy Balancer working as a holistic healer to restore mind, body, heart, soul and strength (will) simultaneously to wholeness. It is a simple, gentle yet deeply transformative experience. My fees are kept low to allow access to everyone who needs healing. Don't you deserve a pain-free life?

Zuela practices at The Green Bank, Nimbin, and can be contacted on 0429-501-387.



by Tonia Haynes
Dip Bowen Therapy, Cert Remedial Massage, Advanced Pranik Healer

Bowen Therapy and being perfect

butterfly.

Personally, I had just injured myself at the gym with little effort and had discovered I have the co-ordination of a four-legged arachnid, due to an optimistic journey through the world of Tai Chi.

Loved friends were dealing with their turn at the rock and a hard place and my computer was dealing me the karmic backlash I deserve, after suffering hours of mental abuse from one who is suspicious of all technology, which attempts to rule my life.

Wrought to gloom by the sadistic rattle of the media and the fact that at some time when I wasn't looking I had become an antique, I reflected on the not-so-distant future.

A future which may well involve being trapped in a small, air conditioned box with a flush toilet, whilst being castigated regularly by medical staff, when they find the last seven days' gifts from Medicare stashed in my bloomers.

As to the inevitable big needle in the sky? At the rate the trees are disappearing, there wouldn't be any left to appreciate the compost of my remains.

Less than happy? I was spittin' despair!

And then the phone rang. "How are you honey?" asked the angelic tones of a good friend.

"I've lost hope!" I wailed pathetically, and bleated for as long as I was allowed, which wasn't long.

"Stop it!" snapped the voice, dulcet wings crashing to the floor in retribution. "You are sitting in duality! Everything

is perfect just as it is and you

are perfect just as you are!"

"You're right." This one invented the word, 'bossy'!

Duality, in case you're wondering, means mulling good and bad and all things one lacks, into a powder, which seeps into the mind and is so toxic, one would need a cruel streak to feed it to a cockroach.

I replaced the phone feeling better, thinking. What is perfection? Instead of: What's the use?

I gazed down at the grizzled old dog asleep at my feet. He's not much to look at and happily shares the added blessing of an aquatic pong when the weather is warm, accompanied by a shedding of hair so wiry, one might weave it into the most excruciating of hair coats.

He also obeys orders at a snail's pace, with an unarguable expression of disgust and is inclined to run away from affection, rather than suffer my obvious need for attention.

All the same, I wouldn't change a hair on his smelly old head, because he keeps me on my toes and makes me laugh. To me, he is absolutely perfect.

I give you the hypothesis my friend gave me. Simply put, perfection is not locked into one way of being. Perfection lives in our imagination and like the potential of our imagination there are as many ways of being perfect at any particular time as there are fish in the oceans. So perhaps the guff we have been given for so many centuries, that we are imperfect and need

to strive for perfection is just that. Guff!

Imagine, instead of concentrating on lack, we strived to concentrate on the things we like about ourselves and around us and sent that out into the ethers every day, in any way we might. What better fertilizer for a planet where water, plants and animals respond to human feelings?

I wonder what might happen to the present scenario, if those with the dosh and the power all decided to take that first step and believe they were perfect just as they are. Would they become bigger monsters, or stop and grow more roses?

Thoughts of perfection must attract actions of perfection. 'Cause and effect', is a universal law. As to finding the fortitude to concentrate on a perfect bigger picture and believing our thoughts make a difference? The only challenge is time.

But then, it's so easy to believe we earned our misery. Nevertheless, thinking about perfect feels a lot better than mulling up cockroach torture powder.

If your back, neck, shoulder or limbs can't accept the idea of perfection due to pain and stiffness, a mixture of massage, spinal realignment, pranik healing and Bowen Therapy will renew their enthusiasm for a perfect, bigger picture.

Love Light and Laughter.

I am in clinic in Nimbin at 54 Cullen Street, behind the Apothecary, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Phone 02 6689-0240 or 0439-794-420.

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Good for Mother Earth: Pango Village, Vanuatu

by Wayne Wadsworth

It's a long way from Bello (Bellingen, NSW) to Vanu (Vanuatu), a different country with lots of the same problems: soil degradation, coral bleaching, coral-eating starfish, plastic pollution, unemployment and drug and alcohol abuse. On the positive side, the locals are very friendly and lovely people, with a keen sense of humour and a strong desire to hang onto their land.

I came to Vanuatu for a bit of a break and hoping to build a compost toilet in the short time I had. Well, I didn't get the toilet done however, I had a freak meeting with Pastor Kalo and his wife Merry, the parents of a large extended family living on about an acre of land. Kalo and Merry preach in their own community and on other islands. Religion is still very strong in Vanuatu and plays an important role as a moral compass.

Food in Port Vila is very expensive for locals, so the idea of growing more food on their land for the family, and using their waste to make the soil fertile, was very appealing. I had a very productive meeting with them, and we decided to run a one-week Permaculture course.

Kalo and Merry kindly made a very comfortable room available for me to stay with the family, and it was a treat to stay with them and enjoy their hospitality. Apart from the small amount of money and resources I donated to the project, there was no funding, so we had to find waste assets within the community.

The idea was to use the Keep



It Simple and Sustainable (KISS) method, so that Kalo and Merry could integrate the ideas into their religious work in Vanuatu and on other islands. We called the project (Mother Earth) Mama Ground Centre, the idea being to set the property up as a small-scale example for eco-education for locals and small scale eco-educational tourism, an untapped market in Vanuatu.

We did a Permaculture design for the front yard, which incorporated water tanks, ponds, sugarcane fences, a small shop, eating area and a Mama Ground Grow More (MGGM) system that Kalo and Merry could easily replicate.

The property had some pigs and chickens, but the land was generally pretty unproductive. There was plenty of waste lying around, such as dead banana and paw paw trees, plenty of coconut husks, cardboard boxes and waste food from the tourist place close by and the local market, a good basis for compost and soil fertility.

For the tribal people of Vanuatu there was no waste, as everything was organic and could be safely thrown into the bush or sea, where it became a food source for some other creature and ultimately compost for plants.

So there is very little history of composting in Vanuatu, and people tend to throw their unwanted organic and plastic material onto the side streets. There is little point in setting up composting systems that people won't use, so we devised a MGGM system that people could easily use in most households and villages.

The MGGM system consisted of a circle with most of the centre dug out and placed on the edge of the circle to make a bank for planting banana, paw paw, tomato, melons and pumpkins, with a miniature coconut in the centre (pictured). The young boys and girls then got into it and dug out most of the centre, leaving enough room to plant the coconut, while the wise elders gave advice. We then went into town and got a vanload of food waste and cardboard from the market.

We dumped the food waste down the bottom of the circle and put wet cardboard on top, which stopped the flies and the smell from the food waste, much to the amazement of Merry and the neighbours, who were horrified at the thought of food waste being dumped next door! The food waste, covered with cardboard, paper or banana leaf, will rot down quickly and become food for worms and bugs to

convert to food for the plants.

Biochar represents one of our hopes for taking carbon from the atmosphere into soil, improving the soil, and storing carbon in the earth for thousands of years. We made a very simple biochar system from an old 44-gallon tar drum. We only had whole coconut shells to make our first lot of biochar from, and I was not at all sure if it would work, as the husk is very light and flossy, while the shell is very hard and dense. When making Biochar in a gasification system, you usually try to get consistent material so everything chars evenly. Well, it worked great first time!

In an ideal world, we would have put a few inches of pre-soaked wee or pig poo Biochar down the bottom of the circle then the food scraps on top. This would have sped up composting, lowered any odours and kept a high level of oxygen in the bottom of the circle, all the elements you need for making good compost.

The last part of the course was to dig some trenches around the fence-line for growing sugar cane fences that could be used for making sweet things for the café. We used the same method as the MGGM system so that, as the waste got close to the surface, we simply cover it with soil, leave it a couple of weeks, then plant the sugar cane into it, letting mother nature do all the hard work.

Well, I never got the dunny done, but I think the trip was a good one for Mother Earth. For more info, please contact: wadzywell@gmail.com

Permaculture comes to China

by Robyn Francis

Fenzhou is a small city by Chinese standards, just 1.5 million population near the coast of southern China. The flurry of a decade or so of rapid development is evident in the glass and concrete forests of tower blocks, many newly completed and still uninhabited and many more under construction. I'm driven through the city to the rural fringe where I'm teaching a Permaculture Design Course (PDC) in a small village on the edge of the metropolis.

I arrive a half day late, due to delays getting my mainland visa in Hong Kong, so my co-teachers have the course already in swing. I'm just in time for lunch. There are 49 participants from all over China, including Mongolia and Tibet, plus a few from Hong Kong and Taiwan. They come from all walks of life: farmers, property developers, community workers, teachers, interior designers, housewives.

Hui-I Chiang and Peter Morehead from Taiwan are my co-teachers. Actually, they were invited to teach the course after conducting an introductory Permaculture workshop in Fenzhou earlier in the year, and insisted I come and support the training team. Hui-I and Peter convened the first PDCs in Taiwan and had my course notes translated into Mandarin. We've worked together for five years.

China struck me as a country of extremes: extreme affluence, extreme poverty, extreme development, extreme degradation, extreme pace of change. People are abandoning the countryside to move to the cities for work and better wages. The fields of rice, sweet potato and market garden crops surrounding the village are not being farmed by locals. The locals commute to the city to work and the farming is now done by people from other provinces as a stepping stone to moving to the city. Participants tell me there are entire villages and surrounding tracts of farmland abandoned for the rush to the city. "When there's no more farmers, who will grow our food?" was commented by more than one participant.

They were serious students, searching for real solutions, and I sensed many were really committed to making big changes. There were a few English speakers in the group and it was interesting to gain insights of life in China from conversations with participants. The pace of change has been rapid, many are questioning the nature of development, and awareness of the scale of the environmental issues they face is growing - concerns about pollution, quality of air, water and food, social inequity.

I came across a recent article in The Guardian suggesting that the future of



the planet largely depends on which way China decides to go. While China is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases, it's also the world's largest investor in renewable energy. There are serious conversations between government and industry on the need for sustainable and "green" development and cleaning up China.

One of the course participants is already pushing urban sustainable development to a new level of innovation, and is excited about the potential for Permaculture to take this cutting edge further. I've been invited to do some preliminary consulting on a project in the city of Shenzhen.

It seems like perfect timing for China to discover Permaculture as it enters a critical period of transition, though this course is such a small drop in a very big ocean. I've been promised this won't be the last time they'll be wanting me there to teach and provide advice on sustainable directions and regenerating damaged landscapes.

Our winter in Vanuatu

by Caroline Todd

In July, Ian and I went to Vanuatu and spent two months getting to know the place. Welcomed into the airport by men playing ukeleles with flowers behind their ears, we knew we were going to have fun!

Vanuatu is a series of 82 islands, 65 inhabited, covering about 1300km north to south, located south east of the Solomon Islands, north east of New Caledonia and west of Fiji and is in the middle of a belt of active above ground and underwater volcanoes. Population is 250,000.

We stayed on the island of Efate in the capital Port Vila where 30,000 people live, mostly in small communities with pit loos and bush gardens. French companies own the water and power supply. P&O liners visit twice a week with tourists, and it gets real busy.

Rubbish is a big problem in Port Vila and municipal collections are not reliable. Garbage is left outside the gate on bamboo stands, built 1-2m high to keep the dogs out. And it just piles up. We visited the

tip, which has filled up in 5 years instead of 12 years.

Recycling has started there, but it is all new. I talked to council people who want to launch recycling/reusing/repairing as a way of life. Primary school children are being taught about it now, to bring the knowledge to the older people who still burn their plastic rubbish with leaves, which creates a rank-smelling cloud at sunrise and sunset.

Town closes down on Saturday arvo to respect Sunday as church/rest day. Religion is big in Vanuatu, and after the Ni-Vanuatu stopped eating the missionaries, every denomination has had a go at converting the 'savages'. With determination, the Ni-Vanuatu have retained their Kastom (custom) rights and navigated the Church teachings without ever forgetting who they are. When I met Alice in July she told us her family had been praying Ian would bring me back.

I spoke on Radio Vanuatu (their ABC) with Alice, an environment and womens advocate, who also makes Sea Vegetable medicines treating just about everything. Alice lived in Nimbin in 1992 at Billen

Cliffs for a couple of months, and has always remembered and talked about her time there to her people. Alice had spotted Ian and Duuvy on the street in April when they were in Vila and stopped to ask them, "Are you guys from Nimbin?" Ian was wearing his Jungle Patrol shirt and Duuvy and his hat = Nimbin! So began the friendship.

On radio we spoke about the environment, growing hemp, youth, permaculture, Nimbin community, earthships and our similarities. Alice translated into Bislama, their shared language (a mix of pigeon English and French), and it was replayed many times when we were there. We have been asked to write Environmental Curriculum content for Ni-Vanuatu high school students by their Education Department. We will be sharing a Permaculture Design Course next year, implementing recycling and soil health solutions and showing some alternative building techniques.

Food forests and gardens are grown everywhere and no-one is hungry or begging. Papaya, bananas, manioc (cassava), taro, raspberries, cabbage tree, gramma pumpkins, sweet potatoes, yam, snake beans and coconuts are planted together in

managed forests. Peanuts, lettuce, bok choy, shallots, beans and carrots are planted into beds. People are harvesting the ocean daily collecting crustaceans, sea vegetables, molluscs and fish.

The communities all have chickens running around for eggs and meat, and are filled with fruit and nut trees, such as Publemous, which is like grapefruit but eaten green when it is sweeter, and Nafele which produces fresh almond like nuts, sold skewered on the spine of a coconut frond.

Fresh food and food made daily is the go. A lot of people have small businesses in food production. The main food market in Vila is amazing, and there are many daily small food markets all over. My favourite daily main meal was rice, omelette with tomatoes and cucumber/choko/coconut veges. Laplap is a traditional yam/coconut/meat/vege meal wrapped in banana leaves and cooked in hot rocks. Sweet food like green coconuts and banana chips are lifesavers. My favourite dessert was served in a martini glass, creamy lime sorbet soaked in vodka! Kava is the root of a pepper plant and is brewed daily and drunk after 4pm in a Nakamal with friends. It is



Alice makes sea vegetable gel for skin care

physically very relaxing.

The respect and stories associated with all of their food, trees, landscapes and influential ancestors showed a very developed culture to us. There is so much more to share. The first world is encroaching on their Paradise and Ni-Vanuatu know their environment needs protection, just as we feel here in Australia about our own environment. And maybe we can help each other to find the answers.

Wine, at what price?

Two very fascinated and fascinating volunteers graced my farm recently. They grew up in one of the most urbanised nations on Earth, with very little wildlife, and restricted opportunities for engagement with nature. They were eager to experience regional Australia in all its wild and confronting diversity, but they faced one disappointment: Australian wine was cheaper to buy in Brussels than it was in Australia!

How can it be, that after growing the grapes, producing the wine, bottling and packing it, and transporting it 10,000 miles across the earth, and then unloading it and distributing it to retail outlets, a bottle of wine could cost less (after taking into account currency conversion) than the same bottle of wine here in Australia?

The answer is threefold,



Permaculture Principles with Anastasia Guise

but ultimately accounted for under the single umbrella of false economy.

Firstly, a few years ago, major Australian wine companies began shipping their low and mid-range wines to Europe in bags, not bottles. These bags are 23,000 litre bladders (equivalent to about 32,000 bottles of wine) enclosed in shipping containers, to be bottled and sold in Europe. But as the bottle only accounts for (on average) 25c on the end product, this can't equate for the price difference.

The second answer then, is about marketing, and the prices people will pay. In Europe, with a distinct and ancient culture in wine-making, one of the ways in which Australian wine can compete is on price. For lower-range wines, at least, a purposely undercut price can guarantee sales in volumes not available here in the relatively low-population, low consumption Australian marketplace. Inversely, Australian consumers continue to pay higher prices due to a relatively restricted marketplace (geographically and culturally).

The third answer is taxes. Here in Australia, the price of grapes and of turning them into wine is but a fraction of the final retail price on a bottle of wine. Taxes (WET and GST) account for 24%, retail costs a whopping 23%, whereas 37% of the retail price is what it actually costs to produce it. But since most European countries, and

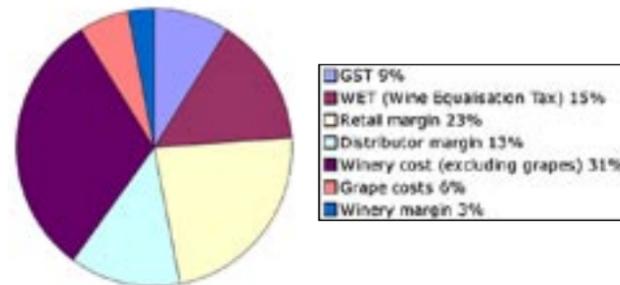
famously the UK, also have extremely high import taxes, this couldn't possibly account for the price indiscrepancy either.

We come then to the overarching problem, and that is false economy. A permaculture analysis is concerned with efficiency. Direct energy transfer and multifunctionality are design elements which seek to avoid the enormous waste of energy and resources inherent in modern industrialised processes. Market "logic" seeks to justify convoluted and inefficient processes with the idea that "activity" – even destructive activities – equals "economic stimulus".

Buying local unlocks true abundance and security, not the other way around. When will economy reflect true cost? Because a price tag reflects nothing but the extent to which we can be duped.

You can find this and more articles by Anastasia at: www.communitypermaculture.com.au

Breakdown of cost on retail price of a bottle of wine in Australia



Nimbin Hospital Information



Immunisation clinic

For 0-5 year olds. Clinic in Nimbin Hospital, second Tuesday of the month. Next Clinic: 12th November. December Clinic on 10th Dec. For appointments, phone 6620-7687.

Early childhood nurse

Every Tuesday at Nimbin Hospital. For appointments, phone 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health).

Women's Health Nursing Service

Every third Thursday of the month. Next clinic: 21st November. For confidential Pap Smears, breast checks, contraceptive advice, post natal checks, general health information. December Clinic: 19th Dec. For appointments, phone 6688-1401.

Nimbin community nurses

Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm. For assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy; provision of Palliative Care in the Home; provision and co-ordination of Aged Care Packages. Wednesday morning Drop-in Clinic at the NSP room, for health checks, minor wound care assessments and referrals.

Free health checks in the park

Every second Friday we will be set up at a table in Allsopp Park, run by a Nurse Practitioner and a Registered Nurse, for assessments, education and referrals. Health checks include Cardiac, Respiratory and Stroke risk assessments, BP, Oxygen saturation, Weight, Blood Glucose, Cholesterol. Everyone welcome.

Free respiratory clinic

Second Thursday of the month, at Nimbin Hospital. Run by specialist Registered Nurse and Nurse Practitioner. Spirometry readings. Includes assessment, education, referrals. Next available appointments: 12th December. Phone 6688-1401.

Free diabetic clinic

Third Thursday of the month, at Nimbin Hospital, run by a Diabetes Educator, Leanne Booth. Assessment and Education. Next clinic: 21st November. For appointments, phone 6630-0488.

Herb of the month – Mexican Tarragon

by Thom Culpeper

Mexican Tarragon: *Tagetes lucida* or *T. anisatum* and *T. erecta*. Syn: Sweet marigold, Sweet mace, Aztec marigold, Pericon, Spanish tarragon, and the cultivar, 'Yellow climax'.

Mexican Tarragon is a hardy shrub originating in the Americas, translocated to Europe by the returning Spanish colonialists, the Compadore and their support church and military cohorts. The hint of Anise, together with the similar flavour to the Continental Tarragons, both French: *Artemis dracunculus* Var. *sativa*, and the wild Russian species *A. dracunculus*, allowed a general acceptance

of this culinary herb.

Growing to 75cm, this form (*sativa*) with medium green leaves and bright gold blossoms (hermaphroditic) is growing in popularity, due its hardiness and wide application. This plant is pollinated by insects. The flower heads are composed of 3-5 florets significant in their dyeing quality. It is a grand salad garnish and a flavouring for soups, sauces, herbal butter and so forth.

The Spanish-Americans use the flowers as a 'Ofrendas' (offering) to decorate the graves of their ancestors on 'The Day of the Dead' celebrations in the Latin-Americas.

Dried leaves and fresh flowers are used as a popular

anise-like tea. *T. lucida*

produces a methanolic extract which when exposed to UV light, inhibits the growth of Golden Staph and Candida.

The *Tagetes* were blended with wild tobacco, (*Nicotiana rustica*) and used by the Aztecs as a ritual incense called 'Yauhtli', It is reported to have psychotropic effects. Some burn the dried plant as an insect repellent.

A family member *T. minuta*, 'Muster John-Henry' or 'Mexican marigold' is the source of an essential oil used commercially in South America in the production of ice creams, baked goods and soft drinks.

T. patula, French Marigold, or Imeretian Saffron. The dried flowers of this species



are used as an adulterant of Saffron and as a colouring for butter and cheese. In Georgia, the ingredient is important in the production of the spice mix khmel-suneli. This mix is the principal flavouring in the beef soup kharcho. The dried flowers are used as an oxidiser suppressor in walnut and vinegar cooking, preventing the walnuts from blackening the finished culinary preparations.

The bees also love this gem.

Culpeper is at Nimbin market with Nimbin Delicious. Caio



In the thick of it

For our first walk in October, we were led by Judy to Nightcap National Park. Seven of us were guided on an easy rockhopping exploration up a creek which had been scoured out by the last flood some months ago. Normally we would have had to struggle through lawyer vines but not so now. We were able to appreciate the many beautiful crystal clear pools and search for crayfish of which we found two. One, a very large specimen, was digging a substantial hole on the bank. It allowed us to photograph it {didn't have much choice really} and that entertained us for quite a while. Shortly afterwards, we spotted a beautiful blue dragonfly and that was another opportunity for some more camera clicking. As we progressed, we passed waterfalls,



big and small and at last came to the twin falls which was our main objective to reach. Here with two beautiful waterfalls as a backdrop, we enjoyed our lunch to the endless symphony of the falling water. After lunch, we climbed up the side of the falls and came to another waterfall with a deep and inviting pool at the bottom. It was irresistible and although the water was cold, in some of us went. Waterfalls are always cold anyway, so it was no surprise. Feeling revitalised, we headed back down to the Twin Falls and then started back downstream. As we passed the crayfish, he, or she, was still digging but hadn't advanced much in the rocky ground. I don't suppose there's much need to hurry if you're a crayfish. On reaching our cars, we were feeling pretty pleased with ourselves for having had a wonderful day enjoying some of the wonders of this beautiful area in which we live. It's far too special to let the filthy destructive gas industry desecrate and poison it.

Don Durrant

It was a perfect day, cool and overcast, for our last walk in October to Mebbin Lagoons. The mist was still hanging on the mountains as five of us left Nimbin for Mebbin National Park, with five

more people joining the group at the second meeting place on Cadell Road. The group was a good mix of long time Nimbin bushwalkers and some newer members and visitors, led by our always cheerful and intrepid leader Judy.

The walk started following an old logging track up a shallow but sustained incline that had a few of us puffing a bit. We then went off-track, with Judy leading us along a route she had marked out a few days earlier along the base of a steep ridge covered in deep vegetation. We walked for a short while then suddenly found ourselves in a thick forest of bangalow palms – easy walking except for clambering over the odd massive moss-covered log and dodging lawyer vine.

The forest floor was wet and springy, with a deep layer of leaves and no weeds but lots of native gingers, palm lilies and ferns. As we went deeper into the rain forest the real highlight of the walk was revealed – huge, amazing figs, water gums, flooded gums, brush box and other trees, all with their own unique buttresses like giant intricate sculptures.

We stopped for lunch on two very convenient logs, facing each other just like picnic benches, in the middle of a round shallow (currently dry) lagoon, which was very strange for its total lack of any vegetation in the middle of the surrounding lushness of the rain forest.

With hunger pangs assuaged we walked on a little further and although there was always



something that looked interesting 'just over there' we eventually had to head back. As we got back to the cars we looked back along the track – you would have no idea from the road that such a magical, beautiful, secret place was hidden away in there!

We didn't see much wildlife on this walk – one goanna up a tree – but we heard lots of different bird calls throughout the day. Someone commented that it was like listening to a relaxation tape. What a lovely day!

Linda Wirf



Nimbin Bushwalkers Club Inc.

November Walks Program

Saturday 16th November

Two walks in Mebbin National Park

Leader Judy Hales (6689-1477).

1. Brummies Lookout. Grade 3. 40 minutes return. Not difficult if walking carefully. Spectacular views down into the caldera, across to nearby Mt Warning and to faraway Byron Bay.

2. Amaroo Flora Reserve. Grade 3. 2-3 hours. Beautiful original forest. Meet Nimbin Carpark opposite Community Centre 9.30am or junction of Kyogle and Cadell Roads 10am. Bring food and water.

Sunday 24th November

Annual General Meeting at Nimbin Rocks Co-op, preceded by a rainforest walk
Leader Len Martin (6689-0254)

Grade 3 1-2hr. A new route into co-op's southern rainforest, to a small waterfall, admiring rainforest regeneration on the way. Gradients are largely easy and most of the walk shaded, though initial section is via open paddocks. AGM afterwards at the Martin residence, Currawongs, with food, tea & coffee. Meet 9.30am at entrance to co-op, 2345A Nimbin Road, opposite Shipway Road; route to Currawongs will be sign-posted. Bring water, hat, camera, food to share for lunch.

My friend Gemma...

by Marilyn Scott

I guess it's a given that it's big times... and October didn't disappoint. I was away most of the month, my first big trip in three years.

It's been a concentrated time of healing here. October began with the new moon in Libra, followed by the full moon eclipse in Aries, the 4th Pluto/Uranus square (the movers and shakers of our current world)... and the new moon Scorpio eclipse approaching us on 3rd November. Oh, and we can't forget the infamous Mercury retrograde... in Scorpio! Yes, lots of astro jargon... for those unfamiliar, it's been big! Huge amount of 'moving' energy, lots of changing and transformation. We've seen it around us with the fires... the internal fires are not so easy to see.

I've been very protected living in this Sacred Space, life around me giving and nurturing... so much beauty and kindness. So going 'out there' is full of new sensations and experiences, a bit of a jolt to the nervous system. I'd been feeling the energy, the exciting sense of newness, change and possibilities and also the heaviness and anxiety... a kind of brooding darkness.

After an inspiring and rejuvenating retreat at Ivory's Rock Conference Centre, a beautiful place in Peak Crossing Qld, I joined in with the yoga and Qi Gong classes every day... they

felt so good! There were inspiring talks and discussions on the Global Peace Initiative (a passion of mine). I felt reborn after those inspiring three days.

Then off to Adelaide to see my beautiful boy, Zeke. Such precious time spent with him... he's such a gift. I spent time with old friends, living in the gorgeous Adelaide Hills and then down to the city near Brighton beach. It's always invigorating to be near the ocean, but the city traffic is more of a challenge. Everyone seems so intent on getting 'somewhere'... and with the lack of Nature's life around me, the energy's so different. I found it exhausting.

I thought of Gemma often. Gemma, my friend... a loving, cuddly friend, we had cuddles and kisses every day. Gemma is a cow. She was bulging with bub when I left. I was hoping the birth would happen before I went... but no. She came to my thoughts often, I wondered how she was doing and if the new bub had arrived. I was really looking forward to seeing her.

I came home through White Swamp Road, stopping for a while at Koreelah National Park. There always seems to be this gorgeous, ever so gentle, cool breeze when I stop there... even on the hottest days. I needed to put my feet on the earth and take in a deep breath of invigorating air... after hours of driving in a car.

I headed off to Woodenbong... driving through Bald Knob State Forest there



was something ahead crossing the road... a koala. He seemed very slow, he looked thirsty, so I left some water in a paper cup nestled between some leaves so it wouldn't spill... and drove off.

Driving down Lindesay Creek Road, my eyes scanned the property looking for Gemma, her distinctive black and white body... her stately horns. Through the front gates, thinking of her... 'Is her new calf here?' Up the hill, through the house gate, the garden now taking my focus... it's been a long hot, dry spell, looking for life and survival all round.

It must have been only seconds after getting out of the car... ready to unpack, the car was full and my body hadn't 'landed' yet. The neighbour appeared at the back fence, climbed over and walked toward me. I knew something had happened... I could see it on his face, even from a distance...

Gemma and her bub hadn't made it through the birth; they are now buried up the back in the forest.

I haven't been able to go up there yet. I'm still in the grieving stage... it's been a huge few days. I really love you Gemma... and I'll miss you heaps.

Fire awareness at preschool



by Kate Coombes

With the recent fires across our beautiful country, we have spoken a lot about fire safety at Nimbin Early Learning Centre, and what we should do in an emergency situation to keep safe.

The children know water is used to put out fire. We have discussed where water comes from using our wonderful imaginations to create rivers and dams in our sandpit. During our play activity, children used sticks to build a wall to stop water flowing.

Sticks are also a source of fuel for fire to burn, which is why we collected sticks from around our playground to tidy up. The children decided to use them to make a safe campfire to toast marshmallows (pretend of course) and sing songs around. Following this, we made a tent and built a BBQ over our fire to make yummy stews.

The littlest members at Nimbin Early Learning Centre are all up and on the move! It's very exciting times as we see the babies developing new-found skills.

We are now taking enrolments for 2014 in our Tiny Tots group (6 to 24 months) as well as our Preschooler group (2 to 5 years).

For more information drop in at 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin or phone us on 6689-0142.



Fruit of the Vine

by Terry Beltrane

Heading north out of Adelaide, you drive through gently undulating wheat and sheep country for an hour before entering the dry sclerophyll vegetation and bush-pruned vineyards that robe the rolling hills of the Clare Valley, a high plateau in fact, within the Flinders Ranges. Even if you're not interested in wine, this place is a gem of unique scenery and historic hand-built stone buildings that embellish farms, wineries and the town of Clare itself.

A couple of Jesuit priests arrived there in 1851 and bought 100 acres on which

A night in the Clare Valley

to build a college and church to service the local Silesian population, along with a winery, which they named Seven Hills in reference to the Seven Hills of Rome, for the making of sacramental wine. Every building on the property was built by hand from stone quarried from the property. The underground cellars of the winery were dug and lined with stone by hand and the original hand-hewn vats of slate slabs are still in use. (Incidentally, the slate was bullock-hauled from Burrup, which today still supplies some of the world's best quality slate for making billiard tables).

Since the winery began 'working' in 1868, there have been seven Jesuit winemakers with Brother John May still at the helm, though with his commitments he elected to employ lay winemakers to manage the day-to-day operations of the winery. I was the first of the lay winemakers after he dropped by the winery where I was working at the time and said, "I especially like your whites and would

like to have you on board to pick up our game." An opportunity to work in an internationally recognised wine region, with top quality fruit from an established/mature vineyard and an historic winery to boot? The pay was crap, but hey, I'm in, and after the first week I would've been happy to work for the dole as work experience.

Now, Clare then was (and possibly still is) a very conservative place of old family and landed gentry, and as a newcomer I thought I'd invite a local distinguished winemaker and his wife over for dinner so as to get into the local fraternity. Let's call them Bob and Sue; very reserved, "straight" and cautious. I'd previously met Phil "Does" who was Bob's cellar master, some time earlier and asked him along to share and add a bit of comfort zone to our event of wholesome Italian slow food and some fine wine.

It was hard going from the moment that Bob and Sue walked in the door, and by the time we'd gotten

through main course I was feeling a bit uncomfortable, so thought I'd liven up proceedings a little by mulling up some top bud. Well! By the look on their faces you would've thought I'd opened Pandora's box – I don't think they had ever seen a bud before. So we get the trumpet under way and they aren't having any of it, sitting there speechless and all worried-looking and as I was getting more and more paranoid, I'm thinking, "This is going downhill faster than the Bangalow Billycart Derby. I have to get some levity into this."

I go into the bathroom and get the toilet brush and stick the handle in my belt with the brush end hanging out over my arse. I get two toothbrushes and stick the handles in my mouth with the bristly ends sticking out and come into the kitchen/dine on all fours meowing like a cat on heat. Horror reigns, while Phil's exclaiming, "It's not the dope, it's him, it's him."

Phil and I had to do dessert and Liqueur Muscat on our own.

Conspiracy theory #432



Mookxamitosis

by Brendan (Mookx) Hanley

Most of this is straight out of web blogs etc, so I make no apologies for content or grammar. Just thought it might stir up some interest and feedback.

A few years back I stumbled over a bunch of musos on the web who were blathering on about "432" as if it were the "next big thing!" At least they hoped so. I checked out dozens of websites, blogs and PDFs and had a major "gee whiz" at what I found.

Historically our Classical, Religious, Folk and Traditional music was all written and played in the tuning of A=432Hz, i.e. scales were based on a tuning of central "A" note to 432 cycles per second. The original Stradivarius violin was designed to be tuned to 432. It is the most precise instrument ever constructed by humans... and the instruments on which Mozart, Verdi etc. composed their masterpieces were in 432Hz.

Most music worldwide has been tuned to 440 hertz since the International Standards Organisation (ISO) endorsed it in 1953. The recent rediscoveries of the vibratory, oscillatory nature of the universe indicate that this contemporary international concert pitch standard may generate an

unhealthy effect or anti-social behaviour in the consciousness of human beings.

A=432Hz, known as Verdi's 'A' is an alternative tuning that is claimed to be mathematically consistent with the universe. Music based on 432Hz transmits beneficial healing energy, because it is a pure tone of mathematics, fundamental to nature.

The change from 432Hz to 440Hz was initiated by Nazi propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels. It happened in spite of the fact that the Paris Conservatorium issued a referendum that was signed by 23,000 French musicians who all were for the preservation of the A=432Hz quality. Was it altered to make people think and feel a certain manner, and to make them a prisoner of a certain consciousness?

Then around 1940, the United States introduced 440Hz worldwide, and finally in 1953 it became the ISO-16 standard.

Music on a basic tone of A=432Hz is said to be more transparent, is clearer and gives an obvious musical picture with all the overtones and undertones. Music based on 440Hz allegedly represents emotions and locks up the head. By lowering the pitch 440Hz by 8Hz to 432Hz, the music changes. What was hard and mathematical, changes into a beautiful, warm sound... naturally relaxing.

Instruments tuned A=440Hz create an artificial clarity and strengthen the high stress levels of today's world. This is perhaps why A=440Hz and higher concert pitches can be experienced as brighter, thinner, up and to the side of the head, whereas concert pitch at

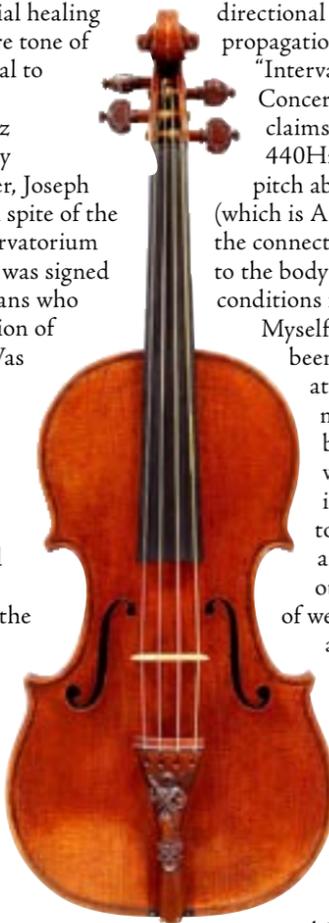
A=432Hz can be experienced in the body at the spine and heart.

Audiophiles have also reported that A=432Hz music seems to be non-local and can appear to fill a room, whereas A=440Hz is perceived as directional or linear in sound propagation. Maria Renold's book "Intervals, Scales, Tones and Concert Pitch C=128hz" claims conclusive evidence that 440Hz and raising concert pitch above "C" Prime=128hz (which is A=432Hz) disassociates the connection of consciousness to the body and creates anti-social conditions in human beings.

Myself and some friends have been playing music regularly at our "Monday Club" for many years. Some time back I requested that we re-tune our stringed instruments to A=432 to see if we could notice any effects, beneficial or otherwise. After a couple of weeks, I began to notice a "lightness", a vibe that was difficult to describe. I felt that we played better, more cohesion was evident, and a pleasant new ambience was beginning to manifest.

It was a subtle but nevertheless visceral shift in what we were doing. However the fact that "fixed" instruments like accordions, harmonicas, whistles etc. could no longer be used began to over-ride my desire for experimentation, and soon overtook the situation. We shifted back to 440 (which we still use). I firmly believe there is something in all this, and would love to continue experimentation on a regular basis.

If you have any info on this, please contact me:



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We have great local coffee with great baristas.



Roller Derby kids (l-r): Little Splatty, Hot Chilli, Roller Rocket, Lil Rocket, Samber Jammer, Cotten Caiti, Pink Jammer, Purple Ninja, Short Stack-her, Elka Skelter, The Tul-Star.

The Lismore Junior Roller Derby team, of which half live in Nimbin, attended the first Junior Roller Derby Carnival, held in the Tweed at the end of September.

Special thanks goes to those awesome players who represent Australia in Roller Derby who came down to train the next generation stars of Roller Derby!

And a big thankyou to all those Roller Derby women and men for giving their time and sharing their experiences at the JRD Carnival and throughout 2013 at Lismore Skate rink each Saturday.



Rabbitohs raffle winner

Nimbin local Clarrie Rose (pictured with Wayne Cuthbertson) was the winner of the 2013 South Sydney framed and autographed jersey, when his ticket no. 626 was drawn at Nimbin Hotel on NRL Grand Final day.

Clarrie, a member of one of the original families in the Nimbin area, is a passionate Rabbitohs supporter, and was delighted by the win.

The raffle raised funds to pay rent on the premises and supply new equipment for Nimbin Community Gym at the Nimbin Community Centre, which has

now been running for 3½ years without government assistance.

Committee president Uncle Cecil Roberts said, "Thanks to everyone who supported the raffle, and to South Sydney Rabbitohs for their on-going support of the gym."

Gym manager Wayne Cuthbertson added, "We're also grateful for the generosity of former player Mark Ross for his assistance in supplying equipment - more is coming this month."

Enquiries about the gym to Wayne on 6689-0069 or 0457-344-021.

Dance classes in Nimbin

Roisin Francis (pictured) aims to get Nimbin moving.

She kicked off her Jump Shake Dance (JSD) initiative with an Open Day of exhibitions and workshops in October, and is now conducting weekly classes in Tap, Modern and World Dance Fitness at Nimbin Town Hall.

Her timetable caters for all ages:

- **Tiny Tots** (under 6) on Tuesdays - Tap: 3.15-3.45pm; Modern: 3.45-4.15pm
- **Juniors** (6-9 years) on Tuesdays - Tap: 4.30-5.15pm; Modern: 5.15-6pm
- **Intermediates** (10-14 years)



- on Wednesdays - Tap: 4.30-5.30pm; Modern: 5.30-6.30pm
- **Seniors** (15-18 years) on Thursdays - Tap: 4.30-5.30pm; Modern: 5.30-6.30pm
- **Adults** (18-plus) on Mondays - Tap 6-7pm; Modern: 7-8pm

- **World Dance Fitness** (open age) on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 6.30-7.30pm
- For enquiries, phone Roisin on 0457-370-396.



Nimbin Garden Club Notes

by M.J. Green

Nimbin Garden Club had another top notch visit in October, this time to Carole and Ken Boomsa's 11-acre property overlooking Coffee Camp School. Carole is well known as the Sprout Woman despite not growing sprouts, she grows greens in soil, so from now on she is known as the Green Woman. Sprouts are seeds with roots; greens like sunflower are grown in soil and cut before they mature.

After 11 years in the business, Carole took stock and looked at exactly what she liked and decided to reduce



Carole with the 'spa'

production so she could manage it herself, and add some variety. She started to experiment with greens which grew in winter, so she winterised one of three hothouses with heat mats and grow lamps (going cheap when someone else's dirty business busted), so now she grows micro greens all year: pea shoots, purple radish, wheat grass, buckwheat and of course sunflowers.

The enterprise is self-sufficient in power with an array of solar panels, and there is plenty of water. It is very labour intensive, keeping up with the likes and dislikes of the finicky little seeds: they don't like high humidity, or extended heat, they need extra shade cloth in the summer, they fuss over how much water at different stages of their precious little lives. They like it overcast because the refracted light bounces off evenly, even underneath the leaves.

They don't need rich soil, and Carole rotates her sandy soil which is a good medium, holding moisture for some time. After harvesting with a knife, the greens go into their own custom-built spa for a quick scrub, picked through



Sampling the greens

by hand, spun dry for 20 seconds in a homemade spinner, bagged, labelled, and distributed.

Next time you munch into a handful of Carole's delicious greens remember, "the Personal is Political", particularly when it's green and local. Over 70% of Nimbin votes Green.

Nimbin Garden Club is privileged to visit so many interesting places, the hosts willingly share their insights and knowledge and let us roam around their yards oohing and aahing at their work and visions. Then we have a cup of tea and home made cake, share plants, get excited about a raffle and go home to garden before dark.

The Christmas shindig will be held on 16th November, with eating/drinking/games and merriment for members.

Email: nimbingardens@gmail.com

Una Noche en Antigua (One Night in Antigua)

by Warwick Fry

Antigua – a tourist Mecca in Guatemala. The cobblestoned streets (after the afternoon rains) are swept of the offending garbage that might deter the massive expatriate and tourist population here. You would have to walk two or three blocks to find the tortillas, tacos, 'comida tipica' that the local population eats. If you are a budget traveller, forget third world prices. Hot Dogs, Pizza, Hamburgers, and (the only edible breakfast I could find at 4 dollars a pop) 'smoothies'.

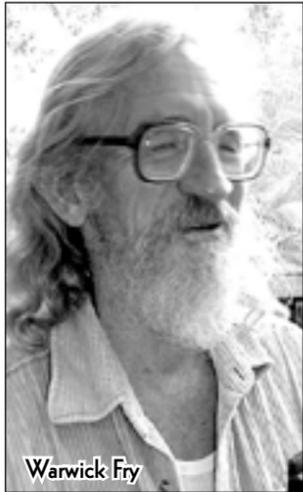
To maintain my health and protein intake, I indulged every morning at the most popular eatery on the central Plaza. It was full of tourists, Guatemalan Yuppies, and expatriates with their noses buried in notebooks, ipads, and mobile phones. (The main restaurants, bars and hotels all provide wi-fi, these days).

That's kewl with me. But I seemed to be the only person there who bought and read newspapers to peruse over my breakfast omelette. I'm not sure how many of the North American expatriates reading their Facebook were aware that there had been a shootout in a town about 50Km north, a protest by campesinos in another part of the country... They had been living here for years, decades, some of them, but comfortably, blissfully, unaware of the subterranean and sinister history of this disturbed country and their position in it. Rios Montt – former President who is currently on trial for war crimes. Forget it as a topic of conversation here. The evidence that the current President of Guatemala was implicated in the assassination of a Bishop investigating war crimes? Forget it.

My travelling companion commented that the people in Guatemala don't seem to be as lively, open, and vivacious as the Mexicans we met. My explanation is that there is a certain of fear that inhibits democratic opinion (although Guatemala is 'officially' a democracy). The 'old boy' network of police and military still impose



1918 movie projector



Warwick Fry

an implicit hegemony of intimidation and corruption.

So I avoided Guatemala City (for a few days at least). We decided to rest up in Antigua.

Antigua translates into English as 'Antique'. The values we associate with this term still apply to the city – one of the oldest colonial cities after Mexico, on the continent. The streets are still cobblestoned. There are desperate attempts to restore the old colonial structures and iconic buildings, although most of them seem to be dependent on funding from foreign NGOs.

In the hotel where we stayed, I had to admire the efforts of the owner to acknowledge a beautiful and rich historical past. She had collected antiques that were spaced around the spacious corridors, walkways and lobbies of an economy hotel that nevertheless preserved a sense of the past. Almost a

museum.

The Prize exhibit to my mind (it was just outside my door) was a massive, cast iron movie projector that I was told, dated from 1918. There were old cash registers, an ancient piano, a radio that was the size of sideboard cupboard, and a bronze penny-farthing bicycle...

But unfortunately a fusion of the antique with the modern (or should that be the postmodern) didn't quite work for me in Antigua.

Why? I started writing this article because I couldn't sleep. The heavy rock/doof noise pollution from the neighbouring bar ("The Funky Monkey" or "El Mono Loco") is shuddering through the cement bloc floor.

When I stuck my head through the door of the bar, I had a horrible flashback. A gruesome night in a backpackers in Brisbane. I woke up the next morning thinking that I was still there – stuck inside a backpackers in Brisbane again...

Mama – can this really be the end? The MacDonald-isation of tourism? Or the Hotel California: "You can check out any time you want, but you can never leave".

It's great to be in San Salvador now. Traffic to keep you on your toes, speedy people, buzz action and courage. Keep you posted.

Warwick Fry reports on Central American affairs on 'Latin Radical' on Nim-FM, 2-4pm Saturdays.

Custer's End of World at Little Bighorn

They found his body with his ears sewn back.

The squaws whisper, "In the next life listen"
Echoes in the wind . . . listen listen.
Rattlesnakes slither by, day ebbs away
Day dawns, growing into a blazing sun.
Days dawn, days die, timelessness slides by
Heat intense burns into my skin and memory.

Thick twisted sage bush, the raw hewn boots of cavalry men, moccasined feet of indians,
Riding full tilt into each other's arms and bullets, knives, arrows and seething hate.
Cavalry soldiers – job-desperate migrant boys from New York.
Young faces contorted by fear and horror.
Another falls, and another, another as his horse crumbles beneath him.
Arrows thudding into thighs, knives, bullets embedded in flesh.
Screech of a horse's guttural shrieking.
Eagles watch from high above, circling, gliding.
The Red man has had enough of white man's persistent seizing.

Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, Rain in the Face whipped into warpath frenzy -
Leave no white man standing. An unexpected day to die?
Baked dry hot earth, acrid smell of fresh death.
Sage brush beaten down by hooves and men and horses falling.
Heat, blood, the hate and craze of rage – leaves its echo never-ending.
All this being part of a gun toting nation's making.

Indian tribes swallowed a bitter pill –
Never enough compensation for pain and damage wrought against
Nature worshipping nations.

General Custer, Lieutenant Reno and Benteen rode into their hell on earth,
Now as ghosts sitting statue still . . . Listening
Under moonshine radiation, the wind lingers whispering on and on,
Humming lowly Ancient chant of life, death and life renewed.
A palpable silence pouring secret stories through the wind,
Flowing as a river into our universal sea.

– Bara

Nimbin Crossword Solution From Page 22





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8.00am	8.45am	12.00pm	12.35pm *
12.00pm	12.35pm *	2.35pm	3.10pm
2.35pm	3.10pm	5.30pm	6.00pm
3.20pm	4.15pm		
5.30pm	6.00pm		
Leaving	Arriving	Leaving	Arriving
Nimbin – Main St. (Park)	Lismore Transit Centre	Nimbin – Main St. (Park)	Lismore Transit Centre
7.52am	8.50am	9.00am	9.35am
9.00am	9.35am	12.45pm	1.15pm *
12.45pm	1.15pm *	3.25pm	4.10pm
3.25pm	4.10pm	6.05pm	6.35pm
4.25pm	5.00pm		
6.05pm	6.35pm		

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Happy campers dig the groove

Nimbin Roots Festival, 11-12-13 October



Photos: Brian Alexander

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