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Invest in our farming future

by Adam Guise,
Greens candidate for Lismore

In August I travelled to Gunnedah for AgQuip, the largest agricultural field day in the southern hemisphere. I volunteered with colleagues at the Country Greens stall and was pleasantly surprised by the interest farmers showed in the Greens' agricultural and rural land use policies. I talked with coal miners (some who are also farmers), broadacre croppers, graziers, market gardeners, and orchardists. They all agreed: times were tough and it seemed all the harder to make a buck from farming. This made me reflect.

Farmers are feeling the pinch in every direction. They're feeling it in increased farm input costs, such as labour, electricity, and fertilisers. From lower farm gate prices, caused by the duopolistic power of large supermarkets and 'free' trade agreements which leave no bargaining power for small producers. They're feeling it from climate change-induced weather events, which has seen the longest period of dry in a century (but not now), and brought more unpredictability to critical weather patterns. They're feeling abandoned by politicians whose relationship with the fossil fuel industry is threatening their ability to access clean water, land and air, and is encroaching on their property boundaries.

It shouldn't have to be this way. Farmers are the backbone of a healthy community and a strong economy. The challenge of the 21st century is strengthening food and water security, and farmers are on the frontline. We must support them in this endeavour, which inevitably means assigning a greater value to what they



Green Scene

Greens candidates (L-R): Justin Field (Upper House), local Adam Guise (Lismore), Carol Vernon (Oxley), Jeremy Buckingham MLC and Mercurius Goldstein (Northern Tablelands).

do. Governments shouldn't be cutting funding to agricultural extension officers or programs like Landcare and Caring for Country.

Nor should we allow the last of our agricultural land to be turned into coal mines or gas fields, as is happening on the Liverpool Plains, Gloucester and (unless licences are cancelled) the Northern Rivers. Instead we should be clearly delineating no go zones, taxing mining appropriately and investing in farming for the future. After all, we can't eat coal and we can't drink gas, and after it's gone, what have we left?

As a health conscious region where people enthusiastically support farmers' markets, the last thing anyone wants to see is farmers driven to the wall and locally grown produce replaced by questionable imports. Unless we support keeping farmers on the land, farmers will be faced with tough choice of selling

up, potentially to gas companies keen to promulgate the myth of co-existence.

As a community we can support farmers by buying local produce that returns a fair price to the farmer. Government policy should push for a renewable energy future to mitigate climate change impacts, and support resilient farming practices that buffer against extreme weather. The support we give to our largest land managers in the state will benefit our region economically and environmentally. Healthy communities depend on nutritious food and clean water, so let's support farmers in this endeavour.

We will all be the richer for it.

• For coverage of the launch of the Greens agricultural policy at AgQuip, see: www.theland.com.au/news/agriculture/general/news/greens-challenge-nats-on-ag/2709173.aspx

In your neighbourhood...

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre news

www.nnic.org.au



RIP Jade and Barry

The month of August began with the tragic passing of Jade followed by the sad loss of Barry Stewart, both of them long time and much loved Nimbin locals. Many condolences to their families and friends from all the staff and volunteers at NNIC.

Fire appeal

And of course the month did not get much better when, on Wednesday the 13th, the Nimbin community awoke to the news that two of our most iconic buildings, the Rainbow Cafe and the Museum, had burned to the ground, with substantial damage to three additional business premises.

We are grateful that no-one was injured and to our local 'fireys' for containing the blaze as well as they did, but very sad to see a big chunk of our community history reduced to charcoal. There were some wildlife casualties, including the old possum who lived in the museum roof and did not survive. And of course, many of the relics once housed in the Museum are irreplaceable.

However, the community is already looking to the future and in the meantime a fund has been set up for donations to assist those who have lost their livelihoods and to support the restoration of our main street. To donate: Summerland Credit Union, BSB 728 728, account no: 22301986, first 3 letters of name (for electronic deposits): NIM, account name: NNIC Gift. Please give your name or stay anonymous.

Sustainable House Day

Come along on 13th September at Bangalow A+I Hall (show grounds) between 1pm and 4pm to check out all the great entries in the Ultimate Granny Flat Design comp (we got loads!), hear some speakers about a range of sustainable building topics including building with straw bale, and visit the sustainable building expo. Free entry. Come early to check out the Taste Food Festival which is also on at the Bangalow Show Grounds on the same day. A free bus to the Expo from Nimbin and Lismore will be available if enough residents register by 9th September. Bookings are essential. Phone

Vanessa (Lismore City Council) on 1300 87 83 87.

Nimbin Annual Country Show

It is still not too late (we are willing to be flexible around close dates – within reason) to get your entries in for:

Most Sustainable in Show. Can be individual produce or whole/part of a farm operation. Food or fibre.

Local Food Bytes short film competition. Anything to do with local food. Max 15 mins. Details and entry forms available on our website and at NNIC. www.nnic.org.au

Nimbin Main Street businesses

Don't forget to enter the Best Show-Themed Shop Display. Can you wrestle the trophy from last year's winner the Nimbin Bakery? Simply set up your display by Monday 15th September. Displays will be judged in the week before the show. There has never been a better time to dress up our main street for a bit of an all-round cheer-up!

Also – remember to enter your produce, baked goods and arts/crafts into this year's Nimbin Show. Simply bring your entries to the pavilion on Friday 19th September before 10.30am.

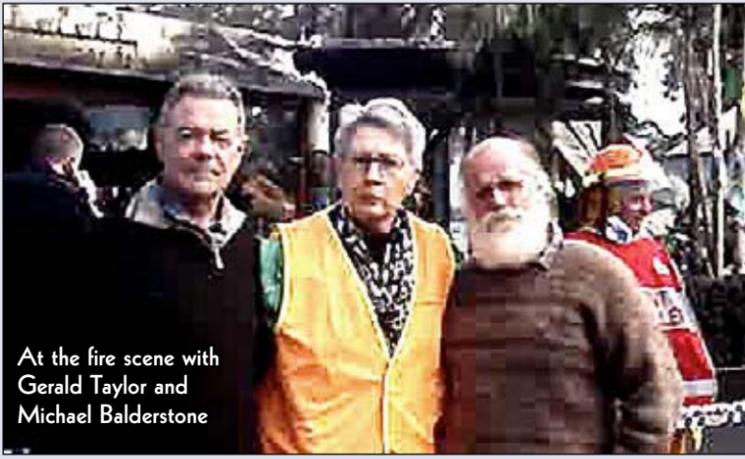
Struggling with unpaid fines?

You may be eligible to apply for a Work Development Order which enables you to pay your fines down by doing volunteer work at NNIC. Make an appointment with one of our Community Workers to find out if you are eligible.

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre (NNIC) is a local charity and community organisation run by locals for locals, and is funded by NSW FaCS as a Community Hub. Our main service delivery role is to provide information and referrals to disadvantaged community members.

For information about all services available in Nimbin, Lismore or the Northern Rivers region, drop into NNIC and ask at our front desk or else make an appointment with our Community Workers for referrals, support and assistance including material aid. If we can't help, we probably know who can.

From the mayor's desk



At the fire scene with Gerald Taylor and Michael Balderstone

by Cr Jenny Dowell

Cullen Street Fire

The news that rocked Nimbin on August 13 has affected residents and businesses in the village in a myriad of ways. It has also had an impact around the nation and the world, such is the significance of Nimbin and its Aquarius history.

After the initial shock and the praise for the wonderful fire crews from near and far that saved the fire from spreading, the realisation of what has been lost starts to resonate. While we might first think of the museum and its lost heritage, there are also the 30 or more jobs that are suddenly gone.

It is the nature of a disaster that there are people who want restoration as quickly as possible to return life to the way it was, but setting aside jokes about what is 'normal' in Nimbin, things can never be the same again. That's not to say what will rise from the ashes will be a shadow of the former, but

it will be different. New building codes, the owners' wants and the community's wishes need to come together in a plan that meets the interests of the village. That will not be a quick process, and Council will have a role to play.

So far, I think communication has been timely and open. I urge everyone to continue in that manner to ensure the inevitable frustrations and the lingering sense of loss are acknowledged. Recovery will take time, but already I'm sensing the passion of Nimbin to not just restore what is lost but to make it better. I can assure you that Council is committed to assist where we can.

Fundraiser

The Nimbin community is renowned for coming together to raise funds for all sorts of community projects. The latest is the planned event 'Restore the Heart', to be held at Peace Park on September 27. I am hoping to

attend and provide some support.

Community donations

To end August, Council hosted its annual ceremony for community donations of cheques and computers. Among the 13 cheque recipients were Friends of Nimbin Pool, receiving \$350 and Nimbin Community Centre, given the maximum \$2200. Nimbin Community Centre, Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre and Nimbin Preschool each received a computer, among the 20 given away. These computers are ex-lease computers and instead of returning them, Council pays the lease company the residual value in order to donate them to the community groups that do such great work.

Nimbin pool

During the off season, Council has spent significant funds on the pool including extensive repairs to the base. As I write, staff are on-site finalising the maintenance of the pumps and filtration systems. The shade sails have been replaced and the chemical storage area has been upgraded to meet current standards. The pool is nearly ready to be filled and will open for the season (daylight hours) at 3.30pm on Friday September 19.

Youth Film Awards

The standard of this year's Nimbin film awards was truly astounding. Not just was the narrative well-constructed but the technical skill of the film makers has risen to new

heights. Camerawork, directing, framing of the vision, sound tracks, animation and the titles were all executed with a level befitting adult professionals... and to think one of the award winners is only eight years old, and many are in primary school or junior high school! All I can say is 'watch this space'. Special thanks to Darmin Cameron, who is not only a great mentor as a professional film maker, but has a passion for encouraging and guiding young people.

Reg Baxter

Longer term readers will remember Reg Baxter, who died last month aged nearly 90 years. Reg was a Councillor, indeed an Alderman on Lismore City Council for two stints totally 16 years. If you are a baseball fan, you might know that the Number 1 field at Albert Park is named in his honour as a founder of the sport in Lismore. Reg served on the regional library committee, Rous Water and the Lismore and District Sports committee for many years. We remembered Reg with a condolence motion at our August meeting.

Barry Stewart

Another man of substance also died in August. Through discussions with several people, I became aware of the special role Barry Stewart had in Nimbin over many decades. His contribution to the village was, in part, as a contractor to Council. First as manager with Daisy of the Nimbin caravan park and caretaker of the pool, and also as the cleaning contractor for the street and its bins. Barry's love of Nimbin and his pride in the work he did in and



for the community on behalf of Council are worthy of recognition. To that end, I will be moving a formal Condolence Motion at the September 9 Council meeting. Vale Barry.

September 10

On September 10 it will be two years until the 2016 Council elections. It's the right time to start considering whether you will stand as a candidate and, if so, especially if you are female, I want to help you. In NSW less than 27% of Councillors are women. To maximise the effectiveness of Councils, that percentage needs to increase.

I am therefore hosting a forum for women who might think about standing or who would like to support a woman candidate. The non-party-political forum is open to any woman from Lismore, Byron, Ballina, Kyogle or Richmond Valley Council areas and will start at 5pm for a cuppa and a one-hour information session from 5.30-6.30pm.

In that time there will be a presentation, a panel of female Councillors and a discussion. Afterwards, women will be encouraged to link up with a sitting Councillor and start learning more in order to be able to make an informed decision about standing in 2016.



by Cr Simon Clough, Lismore City Council

I was on the scene on the morning of the Nimbin fire. It was very confronting to see the extent of the damage, and heartbreaking to see so many people shocked and stunned by the damage. The Rural Fire Service had done an amazing job limiting the fire to three shops.

It was also good to see lots of Lismore City Council staff including the general manager heavily engaged in securing the site and ensuring safety. Our mayor Jenny Dowell was also present supporting individuals and the community.

Being Nimbin, there were already plans being hatched for the future of the site



on the morning of the fire. But one thing you can be assured of is that Nimbin community will come out of this situation stronger, and with an amazing new feature in the centre of town whatever it is.

I'm putting a motion on the High Speed Rail (HSR) proposal to Council at its next meeting. The HSR project is a collaboration between Beyond Zero Emissions (BZE), the German Aerospace Centre (DLR), and the University of Melbourne Energy Research Institute. This report is based on what an actual builder and operator of high speed trains has experienced. The report has identified the routes, the station locations, fares

and even a train timetable. The authors believe that the whole network, Melbourne to Brisbane can be delivered in 10 years and would cost \$30 billion less than the costing from the previous Commonwealth Government.

Lismore would be the third stop going south, ie Brisbane, Gold Coast then Lismore. The location of the Lismore HSR station is shown on the south side of the showgrounds adjacent to the existing rail line, which could be used for local connecting services.

The timetable shows the first train leaving Lismore at 5.59am and arriving at Sydney Central at 8.33am. That's 2.5 hours. There are hourly trains thereafter until 10pm. Going north it would be 45 minutes to

Brisbane and 20 minutes to Nerang. Fares have been estimated at roughly 2/3 of current air fares. The table on page 19 shows 1.3 million passengers moving through Lismore HSR station per annum.

The proposed HSR network can be powered by 100% renewable energy. It is estimated that greenhouse gas emissions from regional travel would be reduced by 150 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent over 40 years of operation compared with business-as-usual. Emissions created from the HSR construction would be offset after 5 years.

\$84 billion is the total estimated construction cost including rolling stock, project management and contingency.

I'm not usually much excited by new technology but for the cost of the Curtis Island gas terminal off Gladstone this seems like a very good idea. Further information is available at: <http://bze.org.au/zero-carbon-transport-high-speed-rail>

I was fortunate enough to attend the graduation of the first rural graduates of the Centre for Sustainable Leadership at Mullumbimby recently. It was an inspiring event with over 20 dynamic

locals presenting all manner of exciting ideas on sustainability. The graduation was a tribute to the course reflecting a holistic approach to sustainability with an emphasis on experiential learning and practicality which is hard to achieve. The Centre is taking bookings

for their next local course which will be starting shortly and will be concentrating on renewable energy. You can find more details at <http://www.csl.org.au>

Have a great spring.

Contact Simon: Mobile 0428-886-217, email: simonclough@internode.on.net



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THE CASINO GOODTIMES

Gratitude across generations

by Daniel John

Sometimes we forget about the important relationships between our generations, which imbue our community with a subtle yet omnipresent sense of what is good.

Richmond Valley Council's recent change in position – now rejecting unconventional gas mining – reminded me of the way we bequest and inherit these relationships. As a younger person, I'm moved to write publicly on behalf of a younger generation who were actually born here in the bosom of our Northern Rivers, often of parents who have come to know this beautiful place as home, since their birth. I'm writing to say a big warm collective thank you!

There are many senior protectors who've guided my young emotions and who I look up to, and they know who they are. But unlike any others, the Richmond Valley Group Against Gas (RVGAG) and their supporters have been battling the most belligerent Council in our Northern Rivers, while often in complete political and, at times, community isolation. With the odds stacked against them, this small group of committed citizens has summoned something beyond the belligerence, something beyond recognition.

Belligerence is not a word I've chosen lightly. Having my entire childhood and adolescence in the Richmond Valley's Doubtful Creek farming community, belligerence was like the water that I, as a small fish, learned to swim in – swim or sink. If you can follow the metaphor, you'll appreciate how normalised the belligerence or 'bullying' has become for us younger fish who know nothing else. Asking for a 'gasfield free Northern Rivers' can be like asking a fish to fly, especially if the fish has only ever known the murky waters of a belligerent society, economy, and Council. But learn to fly, we must.

And so it has been largely with personal shame, that I've watched, silently supporting the champions of RVGAG, knowing I should be more involved, but never really being able to see or act beyond what was 'normal'. I feel I speak for many of our younger generation when I say that we are indebted, but also in awe. Last



month's Council meeting for example, demonstrated this profoundly. For when we listen to the voices of Jill Lyons, Liz Stops, Bev Crossley, Eric van Beurden and many many others who stand and speak in public, yet again, to a seemingly belligerent Council, we are all being gifted with not simply an important message about what's right, but actually a powerful message about how to be right. You are heard.

As news came through of their most recent achievement, I felt mostly speechless, though desperately I wanted to express my gratitude, for an enduring resilience, determination, and courage, over many years. I wanted the community to know, that the achievements of RVGAG and their many supporters (both public and private) are not just victories for essential environmental protection, but are ultimately empowering for our community's younger generations, who will inherit that protection for a timeless Richmond Valley. No salary package will ever buy that kind of empowerment. We've been watching.

For the first time in my short lifetime, I am starting to see voices speak against a belligerent normality. For the first time, I have a tangible reason to believe that something better than an isolating belligerence might (once again?) govern social normality in our beautiful Richmond Valley. To see and believe in something for the first time in one's life is nothing short of revolutionary, and speaks to the epic saga that RVGAG and their closest supporters have endured. You inspire us.

The Richmond Valley Council will never be the same again on this issue, nor should they. The younger generations of our sacred Richmond Valley and Northern Rivers are grateful beyond words, not just for a healthier and safer future, but for the courageous and authentic leadership flowing from our senior generations – our elders – who continue to show us the way.

Countdown until Creatives pop up in Casino

ARTS Northern Rivers is taking over an entire shop in the main street of Casino, converting it from an empty space into a pop up emporium.

Launching on Wednesday 17 September, Northern Rivers Creative Pop Up will be officially opened by Richmond Valley Mayor Ernie Bennett from 5.30pm and will kick off with live music by the Lucas Zorzo Trio and an exclusive preview of the Wake Up Time Women's textile collection.

The Pop Up shop is open to the public for 10 days, from 16th to 25th September, and is a unique opportunity to see some exceptional and one-of-a-kind products created by some of Richmond Valley's most talented artists,



designers, musicians, jewellers, and photographers.

After some tough decision making, Arts Northern Rivers has announced the creatives who have been selected to showcase their

work in the Casino Pop Up space. They are: Lazlo Biro, Stephen Blanch, Jennifer Boyle, Joanna Burgler, Charlie Caldwell, JadeIvonne Mace, Aaron and Jo McDermott, Bronwyn Russell-Collins,

Bonnie Sevil; Brook Walker, Jai Darby Walker, Wake Up Time Women, Annie Zorzo and Lucas Zorzo.

During the Pop Up, there is an exciting program of workshops on offer for the creatively inclined, including weaving with the Wake Up Time Women and, to get the school holidays off with a bang, yarn bombing with the Lismore Yarn Guerillas. Further details on the workshops will be announced closer to the launch of the Pop Up.

In partnership with Richmond Valley Council the Northern Rivers Creative Pop Up aims to support and advocate for creative entrepreneurs and introduce collaboration possibilities within the business community.

Mining boom to Dining boom

Greg Cary, of Channel 7's Sunrise program (pictured), will be Master of Ceremonies for the 'Fresh Ideas for Farming Productivity Seminar' at the Kyogle Community Cinema on Tuesday, 9th September, hosted by Kyogle Council.

A range of industry speakers will address the seminar, which will look at diversification, share farming, leasing, niche market cropping, off-farm investment strategies and agri-tourism opportunities to boost on-farm productivity and profitability.

Rose Wright will facilitate the keynote hypothetical workshop as the call to action.

Kyogle Council Tourism Economic Development Officer Malcolm Walls said the seminar comes as Australia joins the race to be part of Asia's food bowl.

"The time for change is here, time to export product grown in the ground, not mined from it," he said. "The seminar will be looking at how we,



the people of the Northern Rivers, can take advantage of this opportunity."

Kyogle Mayor Danielle Mulholland said, "Collaborative practices will allow entry into the industry for young farmers, exit plans for aged farmers, better methods for production, processing, marketing and distribution."

The seminar will also cover a number of issues within the Agricultural Competitiveness Issues Paper.

For more information contact Malcolm Wallis, on 0427-005-249 or email: malcolm.wallis@kyogle.nsw.gov.au

Kyogle Council notebook



by Cr Danielle Mulholland, Mayor of Kyogle



website. Just go to the site: www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au and fill in the details, and your event should appear in the Council calendar. We hope to promote community events across the LGA through this mechanism.

The last Mayoral Meeting was held at Woodenbong on Friday, 15th August 2014, where several issues of concern were raised.

The next mayoral meeting would normally be held on 10th September, but as you may be aware, Kyogle Council elects its Mayor on an annual basis, so I can't make any commitments beyond September at this stage.

Depending upon the outcome, I'll be able to advise if a mayoral meeting will be held in September or if a new mayor has other ideas. I guess we'll just have to wait and see.

I really would like to get to as many of you as possible, so if you'd like to see us out your way, please let me know.

I like to meet as many of you as I can but there's only one of me and there's lots of you, so if you see me in the street, feel free to say hello.

Alternatively, you can always phone, email or contact me on Facebook if there's something you'd like me to know about.

Until next time, all the best.

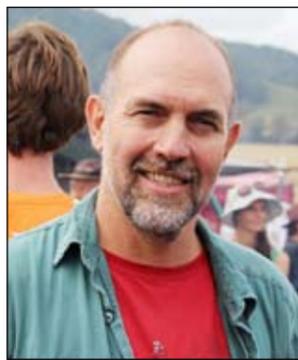
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Time to launch Aquarius 2.0

The recent tragic loss of the Nimbin Museum and Rainbow Café to fire has focused attention on the historic legacy of the Aquarian movement in the Northern Rivers. It's a time to reflect not just upon the past but upon the present and future as well. Hopefully the Museum and the Café will return bigger and better than ever, but in the wider social and economic picture we are rapidly approaching a time where we need the Aquarian revolution more than ever. There is a very real and powerful role our region can play to fight the agenda of the big corporations who are driving the Abbott agenda.

The viciousness of the Abbott budget and its ideological attack on all of the bastions of fairness and egalitarianism in Australia is set to push the gap between haves and have-nots into an ever deepening crisis. I am particularly concerned for the emerging generation of young people, facing an almost insurmountable burden of high property prices and rents, escalating university fees and the prospect of enforced poverty for the jobless.

Our rural land-sharing communities were a key part of the Aquarian dream: Breaking the commodification model of the real estate industry; providing opportunities for low cost housing and gardens; and getting people off the rent/mortgage spiral; exploring simple housing and energy solutions. All more relevant now than ever before.



by Aidan Ricketts

We have in this region a unique opportunity to offer our young people a chance to get off the hamster wheel that Abbott and Hockey have in mind for them. We have vast tracts of very fertile high rainfall land in the Northern Rivers held by rural landshare communities and associated tree changers, much of it being overtaken by weeds as landholders become older.

We have a vicious anti-youth federal government and a Northern Rivers region with a capacity to help that generation live with dignity, learn new survival skills and negotiate their own terms of engagement with the mainstream economy.

Young people need not 'drop out' in the 1970s sense, they can still pursue education and jobs, but they need a safe and low cost base to do this from. But what we may be able to help them do is unplug from Centrelink which has been transformed from welfare into control.

I believe we have not just the capacity but also a duty to offer some opportunities

to today's young people to build some personal resilience and a collective safety net, a uniquely Northern Rivers safety net.

Faced with the prospect of working for no dole, and pointlessly applying for non-existent jobs, young people are rapidly being forced into a choice between charity and crime. The social consequences of going down the US road and criminalizing and imprisoning an emerging generation are catastrophic for our whole society. The Aquarian vision of resilience, sustainability and low cost living had an ageless wisdom that is now urgently needed.

Obviously it's not a solution that can suit all young people but there are sure to be enough who see the sense in it. So are the older generation of Aquarians and tree changers ready to open our farms up? I understand the fear people may have of indolent drug addled ego trippers on their farms (God forbid they would be anything like we were) but let's not buy into the stereotypes. I'm very impressed with today's young people and we already have a working model for accommodation for a modest amount of work in the form of The WWOOF (willing workers on organic farms) system. This is not a naïve suggestion, its not for everyone, it's only for those young people with the grit and desire to take part, it's not a free ride but its an opportunity to build skills, live with dignity and live inexpensively.

Nor am I suggesting that young people should be exploited. In my mind its more like, "Here's a comfortable farm shack (with tank water and maybe solar lights), there's a garden for you to use. For one or two days a week work on the farm you can stay here for free, work part time in town and study if you want."

It's not a complete alternative to the mainstream economy but it does mean that the money people earn through seasonal work, part time work etc is not immediately lost on ridiculous rental prices. It's a chance for young people to get off the hamster wheel and reassess their life, their values and their strategies for survival.

I'm sure this has already started (it never stopped really) but I also think we need to start thinking about this more seriously as a region wide contribution we can make to resist the corporate agenda, and work with our young people to give them real choices and dignity. Let's make sure the Aquarian dream was an intergenerational one.

I know I'm currently fixing up those old hippy shacks on my block for when the homeless, penniless victims of Abbot's viciousness ask me for a safe place to stay. I encourage all of us across this region to think about how we can work together to give our young people the benefit of the Aquarian dream. Lets reboot Aquarius 2.0.

Tune in, skill up and work it out.

Keep the water trigger – states can't be trusted

Former Member for New England, Tony Windsor (pictured) has urged Senate cross benchers to retain the so-called 'water trigger' when debate on the issue is raised next week.

Mr Windsor introduced the Water Trigger Amendment to the Environmental Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Legislation (EPBC) towards the end of the previous Parliament and received majority support.

The Amendment allows for impacts of proposed coal seam gas and large coal mining developments on water resources to be comprehensively assessed at the national level and gives the national Minister the capacity to set appropriate conditions as part of the approvals process. The fully funded Independent Expert Scientific Committee (IESC) has also been established to provide transparent advice to the process.

The Abbott Government is attempting to water down the water trigger under the guise of removing red tape and

supposedly delivering a one stop shop for environmental approvals by accrediting State planning authorities to make those decisions that would previously have required the Commonwealth to assess the impacts on water resources.

"There are a number of reasons that the Cross Benchers should seriously consider before agreeing to any changes," Mr Windsor said.

- (1) Given that after more than 100 years the Commonwealth and State Governments have finally agreed on an across border Murray Darling Basin process of resolving issues it is absurd to revert to a state based arrangement for extractive industries that could impact on water quality, end of valley flows, water budgets, consumptive use and existing land uses;
- (2) The loss of faith by the community in relation to the previous State based decision making processes really demands that a National approach is preferable. This distrust has been exacerbated by recent ICAC findings in



relation to both Labor and Liberal Parties in NSW and detrimental water impacts in Queensland to the extent that there is now a real need for independent scrutiny at a Federal level;

- (3) The need for Bioregional Assessments of catchments that are potentially sensitive to groundwater impacts prior to the granting of approval for extractive activities. This was a recommendation of the Australian Minerals Council as far back as 2008, and was recently raised by former CEO Mitch Hooke. The Federal Independent Scientific Committee is ideally placed to provide trustworthy advice on such assessments;
- (4) The need for much more

information in relation to the interconnectivity issues between groundwater and surface water and how those issues relate to sustainable agricultural practices and the integrity of the Murray Darling Basin Plan; and

(5) The chronic under-resourcing of the state Departments to carry out this work under Federal accreditation will lead to conflict issues and legal challenge.

Mr Windsor said the removal of the water trigger in the Senate would be a retrograde step.

"Those who believe that removing Commonwealth scrutiny will lead to a quicker approval process will be sadly mistaken. Any policy that doesn't have the confidence of the community will eventually fail. We need to maintain an independent process that people trust.

"Given the deteriorating trust of government generally the Senate has the opportunity to maintain one thread of that trust and avoid any potential civil unrest," he said.

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Sunday Gig Guide

September 1pm start

7th Telegraph Tower

A folk-influenced duo: guitar, vocals and cello from Byron Bay

14th Shunya

Former Light Activation and Suavemente guitarist Rich Bell unveils his spacious new album, "This Vast Mystery"

21st Priestessa & Dash

The music of Priestessa & Dash is built on the old fashioned notions of songcraft, lyrical integrity and endless harmony

28th Black Vat & Ruthie-Ma-Toothie

Sydney-based three piece, playing klezmer, Romani, trad inspired-original folk tunes. They are joined by locals Ruthie-Ma-Toothie, taking favourite songs of yesteryear and giving them a twist



Going for baroque

Telegraph Tower is a folk-influenced duo who take their cue from seminal artists of the sixties such as John Martyn, Bert Jansch, Richard Thompson, Tim Hardin, Jethro Tull and the Incredible String Band.

Comprised of Byron-based Barnaby Smith (vocals, guitar) and Oliver Downes (cello), they released an EP last year entitled Concubine, which they toured throughout NSW.

With songs literate, moody, melodic and baroque, Concubine was described by Mess & Noise as "an assorted bleakness... these songs are not as well-mannered as they seem" and by Alt Media as "an intriguing effort... there are greater things to come".

The duo will be performing at Sphinx Rock Café on Sunday 7th September.

More information can be found at: www.telegraphtower.bandcamp.com and: facebook.com/telegraphtower

Black Vat Trio



Black Vat Trio are a Sydney-based three piece that bring you delightful classic klezmer and Romani gypsy tunes, as well as original polkas and sea-shanties with their own thumping Eastern European-inspired fare. A rare act, and a must see.

They will be appearing with their good friends Ruthie-Ma-Toothie, a gorgeous Lismore-based two-piece outfit that take their favourite songs of yesteryear and give them a twist. They put jazz into Country and Country back into Jazz. Tunes range from gypsy-like versions of Ella Fitzgerald to spaghetti western interpretations of Townes Van Zandt songs to Hank Williams as you have never heard him before.

Black Vat Trio and Ruthie-Ma-Toothie will be playing Lismore Bowling Club, 27th September at 8pm and Sphinx Rock Café on Sunday 28th September from 1pm.

Shunya and friends

In tantra yoga, the Sanskrit concept "shunya" refers to the void at the end of the outbreath. In music, it is the space between the notes.

Shunya the musician (aka Rich Bell, pictured) unveils his spacious new album *This Vast Mystery* at the serene Sphinx Rock Cafe on Sunday 14th September from 1pm.

Guitar instrumentals, songs of hushed vocals, and blissed laptop beats

will be on the menu for the afternoon, a spring awakening.

Some of the musicians who put the colour into the life of the new record will also be there, including vocalists Amrita Devi and Melanie Spears.

Get an audio preview at: www.soundcloud.com/byron-shunya or visit Shunya on facebook to watch some visual poems.



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September Gigs

Saturday 6th	6pm	The nBc
Sunday 7th	5pm	Jess Holland & Matt Henry
Thursday 11th	6.30pm	Bill Jacobi
Friday 12th	7.30pm	Diana Anaid
Saturday 13th	6.30pm	Brommers
Sunday 14th	5pm	Hell & Whiskey
Thursday 18th	6.30pm	Kellie Knight
Friday 19th	7.30pm	Romanics
Saturday 20th	6.30pm	Azadoota
Sunday 21st	5pm	Royal Artillery
Thursday 25th	6.30pm	Ben Kelly
Friday 26th	7.30pm	Tea Society
Saturday 27th	6.30pm	Headers Fundraiser with George Smilovici
Sunday 28th	5pm	Antibodies + The Dunhill Blues

All Gigs are Free of Charge

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The Channon open mic



by Ray Flanagan (Rayzor)

The Channon Open Mic was successfully launched on Sunday 24th August at The Channon Butter Factory Tavern. The weather leading up to the event dictated an indoor set-up on the back veranda of the Tavern.

Ironically it was quite a sunny afternoon, however the smaller space made for a more intimate experience with greater interaction between performers and audience.

Among the performers was young songstress Cleo Worts, who recently won the 2014 'Young Female

Songwriter of the Year' award in the Lismore City Council/Headspace Young Songwriter's Competition.

As well as regulars from our previous The Channon Folk Club two new performers, Phil from Nimbin and Robbie from Byron, were well received.

Local regular guitarist, Glen, surprised everyone with the great sound he managed to produce from a slide guitar he made using an old piece of 4 x 2 hardwood and other, mostly scavenged, materials.

The next Open Mic will be held on Sunday 28th September. Hope to see you there. Resonant regards.



Sharny Russell and Liz Lord

Sharny Russell and Elizabeth Lord present a Tribute to Sarah Vaughan and Carmen McRae on Sunday 28th September, 2pm-5pm at Lismore City Bowling Club. Admission: \$15 / \$10 Members



It's a warm welcome back to the Lismore Jazz Club for Sharny Russell and Liz Lord, two of Australia's finest jazz vocalists. Individually, they've performed with the who's who of Australia's jazz men and women, along with many international greats.

The musical and emotional range of their voices, coupled with their seductive flair for the jazz standard, will lift the performance beyond being a tribute to two of the music world's best jazz divas.

Joining Sharny and Liz on the bandstand will be long-time musical allies Steve Russell on piano, Jack Thorncraft, upright bass, Dave Sanders, drums, with special guest, John Hoffman on flugelhorn. No strangers to the LJC, and musicians who need no introduction at any 'big city' jazz party. Simply the best.

We're privileged to be living in an area where 'top shelf' musicians captivate us in buzzing, intimate venues, and all for a very reasonable door price. This one's shaping up to be one of those great jazz sessions - you'd be crazy to miss it.

Green gig a raging success



Rage Against Abbott gig organiser 'Sideshow', with Greens candidate for Lismore Adam Guise and Greens member Aniko Papp celebrate a successful fundraiser.

Around 300 punters braved the wet weather on August 23 and headed to Lismore's Italo-Australia Club to enjoy a smorgasboard of musical acts and cabaret performances including MC S Sorrensen, Davey Bob Ramsay, James Brook, Mick Daley and headline act The New Christs.

The gig was a protest against the Abbott government and also raised about \$3000 towards the local Northern Rivers Greens next year's state election campaign.



Davey Bob Ramsay



Mick Daley

Get into Spring Arts

Nimbin artists are invited to register for the Spring Arts Exhibition asap to avoid disappointment. Application forms are available at Perceptio's Bookshop and the Nimbin Artists Gallery.

Art and craft works will be received on Thursday 18th and Friday 19th September for the exhibition, which will open on 20th September and run daily until Monday 6th October.



No Fracking Way!

The No Fracking Way Cabaret performed to a packed out Nimbin Town Hall at the end of August.

Produced by Down the Gas Hole Productions, it was a magical night with stories, dance, spoken word and comedy about the successful Bentley Blockade, one of the most pivotal events in the campaign against unconventional gas mining.

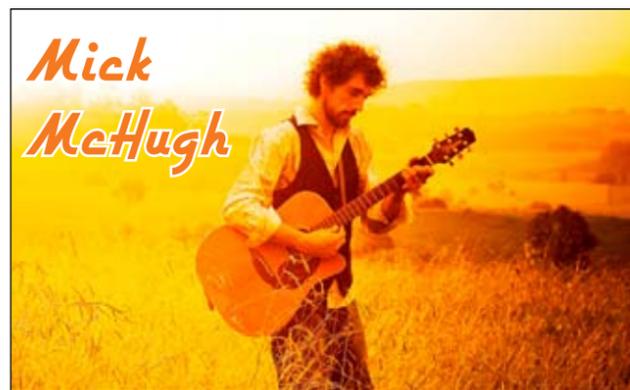
With over 50 items in the two-act programme, the cabaret provided a chronological commentary on the many incidents and events that occurred throughout the three-month protest.

The crowd appreciated the frequent comic references to life at Camp Liberty – such as the oft-repeated "Is this gate A?" Their spirited cheering was not just the result of a buoyant mood and good catering, it was underpinned by sense of family, based on shared experiences and an obviously unshakeable commitment to the cause.

The Cabaret raised over \$3000 for the Nimbin Environment Centre and local Original Winjyanbul community.



Knitting Nannas knees-up



Irish singer-songwriter Mick McHugh strives to connect, inspire and disseminate positive messages. After touring Australia extensively over the last two years, as well as New Zealand, Germany and Ireland – there is a growing excitement building around this Irish songwriter.

In March 2014, Mick released his fourth studio CD, along with some highly praised performances at Port Fairy Folk Fest, National Celtic Fest and Australian Celtic Fest and support slots for some of Ireland's biggest music names, including Damien Dempsey (Sinead O'Connor sings backing for him!).

The new studio CD 'Choose Who You Wanna Be' contains five studio tracks. The title track, 'Let's Dance' states that we choose who we want to be, a message inspired by Gandhi, to "be the change you want to see in the world".

Track two, 'Johnny' has a powerful drumbeat and a distinctive Celtic feel, it

unashamedly reminds people to love themselves. Track five, 'Sunshine' celebrates the joy you feel when you return home to your loved ones and your own bed – written after returning to the Northern Rivers after being away and gigging for several weeks around the country.

The CD finishes with a live track about anti-CSG mining, 'Lie To Me'. This song is a favourite with Northern Rivers residents and has been quoted as "a modern classic" by Damien Dempsey (Damien has been dubbed the greatest Irish singer of his generation). Its powerful message delivers a kick at the end of the song that people say sends shivers up their spine and brings a tear to the eye, with a statement as bold as: 'the gas under our land, is valued so much more than any child, woman or man', we can see why Mick is getting a name for himself as a true balladeer on the folk scene.

Mick will finish the CD tour with a local launch. Watch for dates.

Medical Cannabis: State of the Nation

by Alan Salt

The legalisation of cannabis use for the terminally ill is set to become an election issue in Victoria, and of late, federal and state members of parliament have set the issue firmly on the political agenda.

Federal Government MP Warren Entsch from Queensland is one of a multi-party group of federal MPs who are working on a bill that, if passed, will allow cannabis oil to be used in the treatment of illnesses including cancer, multiple sclerosis and epilepsy on a trial basis.

Entsch says that if the trials are successful, there would be a bill calling for the legalisation of medical marijuana and for it be added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. He may have some opposition, because Tony Abbott has already said no to the Norfolk Island initiative, and says that while the Drug War might be unwinnable, it is still a battle that must be fought.

ACT Greens have a proposal to legalise medical cannabis that would allow terminally and chronically ill Canberrans to grow marijuana and use the drug to alleviate their pain and symptoms. Greens minister Shane Rattenbury will release new draft laws and a discussion paper for community feedback on the proposal on Monday. The laws would allow people with a terminal or chronic illness to access medical marijuana without fear of being prosecuted.

The New South Wales Premier says the state might allow the terminally ill to use cannabis. Mike Baird says he is 'sympathetic' to the push to legalise

marijuana for medicinal use, but is concerned about how to regulate and safely supply the drug. Lucy Haslem has been campaigning from Tamworth on behalf of her son, who has cancer and uses cannabis to mitigate the effects of treatments. The bill will be presented as a private member's bill by Tamworth's local Nationals MP, Kevin Anderson, and the Premier says he will support it.

In Victoria, Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews said cannabis would be available for medical treatment if Labor gained office in November. Overseas medical trials have shown marijuana to be helpful in the treatment of chronic pain, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, cancer and the side effects of chemotherapy.

In Tasmania, suggestions that cannabis could be grown by existing opium farmers under parallel legislation were blocked by the Primary Industries Minister who said opium producers were against it. Despite protestations from the opium industry that this was not correct, the Minister stuck to his decision. He was supported by the current government.

South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill has said that his government was open to the idea for seriously ill people. "If there is a serious proposition put forward that is backed by sensible medical research, then it is something the government would consider," he said. The Premier's comments will encourage Greens MP Tammy Franks, who says she will move a motion when parliament resumes next month for a debate on the issue. Family First member Dennis

Hood will, of course, oppose it.

In Western Australia Labor opposition leader Mark McGowan says, "I want to allow pharmaceutical or medicinal cannabis to be prescribed under the strict supervision of a medical practitioner for the relief of pain, vomiting, nausea and poor appetite in terminally or chronically ill people." He also said, "Why should anyone suffer in agony if there's another way to relieve their pain? I make it absolutely clear: this would be strictly controlled and monitored." Mr McGowan stressed he was against recreational cannabis.

THE Northern Territory is considering legalising marijuana for medical use under a bold plan being explored by the CLP Government. Health Minister Robyn Lambley said a submission would be made to cabinet in the next six to eight weeks to support further investigation. "It's very important to differentiate between recreational and medical marijuana. I don't support the use of recreational marijuana in any way," Ms Lambley said. "The only way we would support marijuana use is for medical purposes, under a highly regulated regime."

In Queensland, Nudgee MP Jason Woodforth said he was moved to take a stand after reading the story of epileptic eight-year-old Tara O'Connell's recovery. Mr Woodforth said he not advocating legalising cannabis, but rather to trial the use of a medicinal version like the one used by the O'Connell family. A spokesperson for Health Minister Lawrence Springborg said the Minister was not currently considering such a trial.

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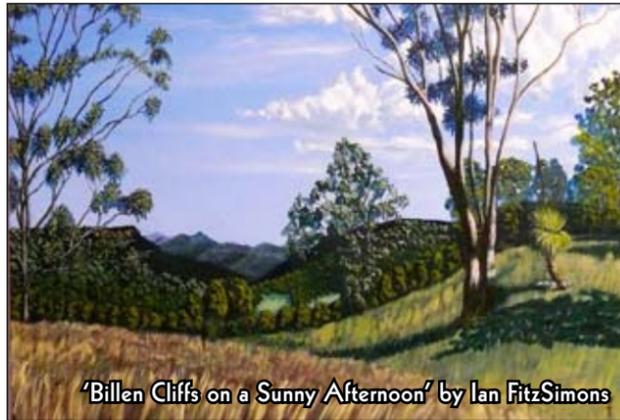
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Blue Knob Hall Gallery



'Billen Cliffs on a Sunny Afternoon' by Ian FitzSimons



Food Lovers Sunday - Hussein el Weshahy

Current exhibition: Elemental

The current exhibition at Blue Knob Hall Gallery is 'elemental'. A variety of artwork, paintings and sculptures that represents all that this theme embraces will be on show until Sunday 28th September.

The artists and members of Blue Knob Hall Gallery were given a wide ranging subject for this exhibition and the work in this show represents once again that art is a powerful force and artists can be very passionate about their work.

Artists and friends lunch

The next lunch will be held on Thursday 25th September at 12.30pm. Cost is \$15 per person and includes set vegetarian mains with a choice of desserts. We hope you can come along. Please contact the Gallery on 6689-7449 if you're planning to be there.

Workshops

Due to further interest, Catherine Dunham is holding a 2-day Felting workshop on Saturday 6th September and Saturday 13th September, 10am - 4pm in the Moore Workshop

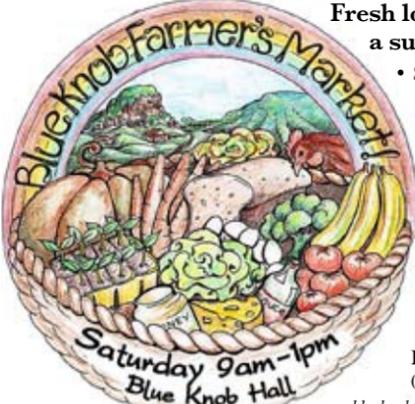
Space, Blue Knob Hall. Cost is \$120 per person including materials. Spaces limited so bookings are essential. Please phone Catherine on 6684-1262 or 0432-566-942 for more information and to make bookings. No experience necessary.

Food lovers Sundays - 12:30 - 3:30pm

We have had the inaugural Food Lovers Sunday with Chef Hussein el Weshahy cooking delicious Moroccan food. The Café was full and everyone loved it, many saying it compared with any eating experience, anywhere in the world.

On Sunday 7th September, the month starts off with Nathalie Finkenzeller cooking traditional Bavarian cuisine from Germany's south, then on Sunday 14th September, Hussein el Weshahy will be back again to cook Egyptian delicacies from his homeland.

On Sunday 21st September, Jen Harkness and Paul Geense will cook traditional Indian food, and to finish the month off, on Sunday 28th September Andre and Kaori will be doing traditional Japanese food, with meat and seafood dishes as well as vegetarian. Cash payment is required, as eftpos is not available. Bookings are essential: phone 6689-7449.



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Roxy goes solo



The Roxy Gallery is proud to announce the first solo exhibition of Rodney Brown.

"Going it alone in the world of visual arts means exposing yourself to the eye of the beholder, really that's the only way art can be seen anyway, but we don't know what that eye brings with it. Perhaps they will see what I see, perhaps they will see something I don't see, either way it is somewhat of a gamble and definitely a challenge."

Rodney's exploration into visual arts has been a lifetime preoccupation, culminating in this body of work. He has

succeeded in producing an inspiring body of work after an 18 month concerted effort of painting frenzy and creative activity. It seems that his subjects have always been subordinate to the process of painting. With his focus and fascination on the "how" as opposed to the "why" of painting.

With his subject directly taken from the world around him, he has captured scenes from the window and images from his wanderings, combining the man-made and nature-made images and composing them together. From still lifes

to vast vistas, back streets and old sheds. It seems anything that his eyes fell upon was considered fair game.

"To me art is a conscious expression of experience, a communication of discoveries, and understandings. This is an ongoing process as each experience builds to the next and each is perfect in its moment. Some offerings may fall short others shine but in the end it is all in the eye of the beholder."

Rodney Brown's exhibition 'Scenes from my window and my wanderings' opens on 19th October at the Roxy Gallery, Kyogle.

Artist callout

Are you an artist who cares about the society and environment you live in?

Would you like an opportunity to get your name and artwork out there in the Northern Rivers area, for free? Prizes, yet to be announced, will also be offered.

Here is an opportunity to do so, and at the same time help to raise peoples' awareness of the issues that The Greens cares about.

The Greens are a grassroots political party that stands for the things that matter most; a caring, equal and democratic society, creating a strong economy without undermining the quality of

life of current and future generations, and ensuring that our precious natural environment is protected and managed intelligently rather than exploited by corporations for short-term profit.

The Northern Rivers Greens is calling out to artists to donate an image of their artwork that you believe reflects Greens policies. These images will be used to help inform people about the broad range of issues the Greens stand for and to raise money for the state election campaign.

There are a wide range of policy areas, from the



environment, the economy, and climate change, to addressing poverty, health, food and housing issues, to ensuring equality for the First Australians and supporting regional and rural Australia. More info on Greens policies can be found at: www.greens.org.au/policy

The Northern Rivers Greens would like to

implement the saying 'a picture speaks a thousand words'. If you're an artist and would like to get your name out there, and at the same time help your local Greens party, then please send us an email at: lismore2015@gmail.com for further information.

The images judged to best reflect the policies dear to the Greens' heart will be collated into a GreenArt Collection that can be exhibited in venues around the Northern Rivers, as well as used for creating merchandise to help fund a successful Greens campaign. Any images used will include the name of the artist and information on the artist will also be readily available.

The closing date for entries is Monday 20th October.