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# Rail service to the Gold Coast needed

by Beth Shelley

On Friday 1st April, the Northern Rivers Railway Action Group (NRRAG) and members of TOOT came together to protest the proposed rail trail at Murwillumbah and propose to the Federal government that they fund a rail connection between the NSW North Coast and south-east Qld.

People in both states would benefit from a commuter train to access health, employment, tourism and education facilities across the border.

However companies such as Linfox trucking, oil and car companies have donated to the major political parties for years. During this time, NSW governments have increased funding for roads while cutting rail funding.

The Nationals in this area said for years they would reinstate the Casino to Murwillumbah railway line at little cost. Then in 2011 the NSW Liberal/National government commissioned the ARUP group to do a report on the line that said it was in poor condition and would need \$953 million dollars to repair.

In 2004 when the last train ran, the Arup group did a study for the Ewingsdale to Tintenbar Pacific Hwy



Rail trail protest

upgrade. Baulderstone/Lend Lease got the contract in August 2011, only months after O'Farrell appointed Greiner as Chairman of NSW Infrastructure.

Between 2004 till now, a large portion of Arup's studies have led to road projects that have been awarded to Lend Lease/Baulderstone/Abigroup. In 10 years, more than 10 of Arup reports have resulted in contracts awarded to or benefitting a company Greiner is linked to, including Lend Lease, Abigroup, Baulderstone and Stocklands. In the years since the rail has been non-operational, Lend Lease on its own has been awarded road contracts worth well over \$16 billion.

Our railway experts estimate that repair of the Casino to Murwillumbah line would be much less than half the \$953m quoted in the ARUP study. It should be possible to construct 30kms of railway line from Murwillumbah to Coolangatta and have 160km of railway track from Casino to the Gold Coast for what it cost to build the 17kms of freeway from Tintenbar to Ewingsdale.

The New South Wales Parliament Legislative Council Inquiry into the Closure of the Casino Murwillumbah Rail Service (2004) recommended that a low-cost commuter rail service would be viable, run more regularly, and bring significant benefits to the community and environment. (p.102)

However, NSW governments seem to have been deliberately running down, neglecting and dismantling railway services. The recent closure of Countrylink railway stations is yet another indicator.

We call on the Federal government to do what's right for this country instead of supporting big business. We also suggest the Tweed council consider the many costs involved in maintaining a rail trail.

If you want to help, check out our facebook page or contact your local candidates for the Federal election.

## Meet the Greens candidate for Page

by Kudra Falla-Ricketts,  
Greens candidate for Page

I decided to run for Page because I love our diverse region and I feel that we deserve so much more from our politicians.

The big parties seem to be forgetting their core values and becoming captured by the big corporate donors and mining interests, or obsessed by polling.

I chose to run as a Greens candidate because I share the Greens values of grassroots democracy, social justice and environmental sustainability.

These are values that can unite people in a place like the Northern Rivers, whether we are farmers, indigenous people, youth, working families or small business people, we are all in this together.

Another reason that I decided to run was that I know a lot of people, particularly young people have lost all faith in the political system. They don't feel represented, so they don't vote or pay attention to politics, and then it's assumed that they don't care. People do care but they need



Greens Senator Lee Rhiannon with Greens candidate for Page, Kudra Falla-Ricketts, visiting Rainbow Power Company in Nimbin.

to be able to see that politics starts at the grassroots in our communities and that together we can make a difference.

I really want to encourage more young people to become engaged with politics, to address issues like university fees, housing affordability, destructive and outdated drug laws and climate change. If we stand back when the system lets us down, then the same old people will fill parliament house, and the situation just gets worse.

The only way to change the political system is to fill it with Australians who care about making positive change for their communities, and there's no reason to wait. We need to stand up for the values we share and make change; simply ignoring politics won't stop it from being the system that runs our country.

I am running for the Greens because they are a party that I know I can trust to put my future first. The Greens have always been leaders on the issues of refugees, climate

change, marriage equality, the environment and social justice. The Greens are the party that I can trust to represent the values that are important to my community. I have seen many times how the Greens stand and fight with our communities when it is needed while the other parties dawdle behind, either serving their donors or only taking action when the pressure from angry citizens grows too much to ignore.

We need to make politics less about popularity, polls and point scoring and more about working together to make Australia and our region better, fairer and pass it on in good shape to future generations. We can do this by educating ourselves, by speaking with our community, and making sure that our representatives are part of our community and represent our shared values.

So please, this election, enrol to vote, get involved, fight for what you believe and make sure that the person who gets elected is somebody who you know has your best interests at heart. It's up to all of us to create the change that we want to see in the world.

## School of Arts reports full steam ahead

by David Hallett, President

Nimbin School of Arts has been fortunate in the past year to have avoided major expenditures that have been previously sustained in electrical upgrades, roof repairs, painting and storeroom extension. The acquisition of art screens for the Spring and Autumn exhibitions has been the most significant addition to the School of Arts this year, and the NSA is most grateful to the Nimbin Artists Gallery for its share of the cost for this essential asset for ongoing exhibitions.

The three Blue Moon Cabarets together with the two annual exhibitions continue to be major highlights of Nimbin's cultural

calendar while also providing essential fundraising towards the growing costs of maintaining and insuring the NSA, as well as funding future projects and further improvements. The NSA has recently purchased a new office computer, and is about to oversee the installation of powered extraction ceiling fans, and also to co-fund the replacement of one of the iconic Bundjalung main street murals (with assistance from the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce and the Nimbin Artists Gallery).

The School of Arts continues to sponsor the annual Nimbin Performance Poetry World Cup, the Weave and Mend Festival and the Nimbin Youth Film

Competition, as well providing discounted hire arrangements for various community groups. The grand 112-year old hall continues to serve as the venue for dance classes, music tuition, public meetings, Mystic Festivals, MardiGrass and Hemp Embassy events, celebrations, funerals, fundraisers and motley functions, while the hall's chairs, tables and kitchen facilities are increasingly engaged.

The NSA has benefited greatly from the ongoing management of its dedicated volunteer committee, and the Nimbin community continues to be well served in both the fostering of the arts as well as the maintenance and additions to the hall's facilities.

# ANZAC Day – Nimbin District Memorial

Anzac Day was first marked on 25th April 1916, making 2016 the centenary.

For Australia, the First World War remains the costliest conflict in terms of deaths and casualties. From a population of fewer than five million, 416,809 men enlisted, of whom more than 60,000 were killed and 156,000 wounded, gassed, or taken prisoner.

114 names of Nimbin men are honoured on the Nimbin District Memorial, 30 of them paid the ultimate sacrifice, a shocking waste of the district's youth.

This year let us take time to reflect on those left behind, the families, those to young or to old to serve and the community who would go on to shoulder the work load left by the men called to the fight.

Unlike today, correspondence and news from the war effort was slow, and no doubt the fear and anticipation of not knowing the welfare of their kin would have been unbearable, and more often than not the news was not good. As the war progressed, the carnage and destruction became more evident to the community as the men returned to their families and the community, maimed, disfigured and with the lifelong

A call to commemoration, all are welcome to attend.

- The Dawn Service will be at the Nimbin District Memorial from 5.30am
- The ANZAC Day March: please muster at the Nimbin Hospital before 10.35am to start the March at 10.40 to the Nimbin District Memorial for the Commemoration service to begin at 10.45am and finish just after 11am.

after-effects of shell shock and mustard gas, or, just the lived experience of a horror that goes beyond our modern comprehension. (e.g. at Messines, 3½ million bombs were dropped in five days, with the loss of over 25,000 Allied troops and over 30,000 German troops.) Many died an early death from medical complications, or took their own lives, and the local papers of the time attest to that.

And let us also remember the families of all the members of the ADF from then up to the modern day, who endure their own hardships when a member of their family are deployed to conflicts and peacekeeping overseas.

"Lest WE Forget"



The Nimbin District War Memorial was recently given a scrub up and paint following some recent vandalism. Leisa Everingham from Bunnings Lismore and Taubmans Paints supplied the materials for stripping, sanding and painting. Thanks to the Lismore Sub-Branch RSL for their assistance in expediting the process, and thanks to Paul LeBars, Tubs and Matt Cook for their handiwork restoring the monument and flagpole.

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## Fundraiser for Zeb

A fundraiser for Zeb Wright-Cheah is being held at the Bush Theatre this month.

23-year old Zeb was hit by a car on 19<sup>th</sup> February when he was walking along a road in Brunswick Heads, and suffered multiple traumatic injuries to his legs, one arm, his head and brain and his chest. He was in a coma for almost two weeks.

He has been at Gold Coast Uni hospital where they have done a great job working on all his injuries. He is recovering well, but still has a long road ahead of him.

Zeb's parents, Vashti and Wan, have been at his side ever since the accident. Wan has had to forgo paid work and has racked up lots of costs for fuel and accommodation. Zeb will be needing various things to aid his recovery. He will be having intensive physio for a long time, and most likely will be transferred to rehab in Brisbane, which will mean more costs to support him.

Many Nimbin people know Zeb, who lived here when he was a baby and a youngster, and still visits often. His father Wan still lives in Nimbin, and most people know him as the driver of the ex-fire truck and a generally helpful guy.



The fundraiser will be held on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April, with an all-you-can-eat sit-down buffet from 6-8pm at Phoenix Rising Cafe, with music by Minus One and Vic Florey, followed by more music inside the Bush Theatre by the Antibodies, Unsupervised, Khanage, Mecha Mecha and Pagan Love Cult. There is a fancy dress theme with prizes.

Tickets are \$45 for the whole night (including dinner), or \$10 just for the Bush Theatre music, available from the cafe/shop or online at: [www.phoenixrisingcafe.net/events](http://www.phoenixrisingcafe.net/events)



Paddy Bugden WW1 memorial, Alstonville, sculpture by Maxx Maxted

...and I thought that I saw me a time with values based different to mine

Where Truth still speaks loud to the face in the crowd, but the outline is hard to define. The era, I guess, is Empire, no less, with fluttering flags, and muffled drums.

We were feeding dirt to old Johnny Turk and making mincemeat of the Hun. Thousands of small-town boys, your sons and mine, nineteen, shit-scared, in a line.

And they all fall down in vomits of blood. 'Bang Bang, you're dead' for good. But all they could find was his swag in the tent, So they buried that, with scraps of fat, and his sabre, which being mined, became bent.

Then – They sent a medal around to his Mum,

Which she polished and showed off, and thought of her son.

But all she could see was the rip in the knee Of his first new, grey pants, off to school, And the 'bang-bang you're dead'

From the boys in the shed, Practicing War and The Rules. Though neither survived the 'War to end Wars'

Neither returned from Empire's far-flung shore. 'Missing in Action' conceals many sores that fester, long after war has gone.

And later, in the Afterglow of Glorious Defeat on ANZAC's far shore, And with the going down of Empire's sun we shall once again forget,

Lest we remember.

– Maxx Maxted

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# Political donations the essence of corruption

Corruption is an imprecise concept. At its most obvious it is about under-the-table bribes to secure specific outcomes, but that is just the tip of the iceberg of practices that corrupt our political system. Corporate donations to major political parties is one of the most pervasive corrupting influences in Australian politics.



by Aidan Ricketts

Globally and nationally, corporations have learned how to manipulate two-party electoral systems through donations to both sides. We could look at armaments, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, alcohol or tobacco, but the big smell of corruption across Australia right now involves the pernicious influence of the mining and fossil fuel industries across all of our parliaments.

The influence bought by political donations is scarcely even hidden. The two most recent federal resources ministers from Labor and Liberal (Martin Ferguson and Ian Macfarlane) have political careers inextricably linked with work as mining and or gas industry lobbyists. The current CEO of the NSW Minerals Council was previously Mike Baird's advisor. The recent anti-democratic protest laws introduced in NSW were promised to the mining industry by Premier Baird at a pre-election mining industry dinner held late in 2014.

Major political parties (LNP and Labor) have received \$3.7m in donations from fossil-fuel companies since the last election. This money resurfaces in a myriad

of ways: flawed systems of mining approval at the state and federal level; anti-protest laws in several states; a bewildering variety of hidden subsidies and finally in deliberate inaction on the need to reduce fossil fuel consumption and export.

Political donations are a small and high yielding investment for the mining sector.

According to a recent 350.org report, governments in Australia will deliver \$2,000 in subsidies to the industry for every dollar donated.

Our major parties are in reality miner parties.

Climate change advocacy organisation 350.org has launched a campaign for pollution free politics ([www.pollutionfreepolitics.com](http://www.pollutionfreepolitics.com)) and has developed a pledge that all electors can take to their local candidates ahead of the next federal election, asking them to pledge their support for a ban on donations from fossil fuel companies, and a ban on subsidies to fossil fuel companies. So far, all Greens

members and Senators have signed, along with two lower house independents (Wilkie and McGowan) and two outgoing Labor members.

Greens Senator for NSW, Lee Rhiannon also has a Bill before parliament seeking to ban political donations from the mining sector, but does not have support of either major party or enough cross bench Senators to get it passed.

Political donations, particularly from the mining sector, but corporate donations generally, remain a burning issue as we hurtle towards a federal election, and one of the most



important things we can do is let our candidates know that their stand on mining industry donations can change the way we vote.

The Lock the Gate movement has been so much more than a social or environment movement. From the moment it began to seriously challenge the unfettered control of the mining industry over our parliaments, Lock the Gate became a pro-democracy struggle. This has been made all the more obvious by the recent spate of anti-protest laws in NSW and other states and moves by the federal government to starve advocacy groups like Lock the Gate of charitable fundraising status, and to limit access to the courts for

groups challenging mining approvals, and to de-fund the Environmental Defenders Office.

The mining industry expression for real democracy is sovereign risk. The industry has an appallingly bad human rights record in Africa, West Papua and Asia, where murder of activists is common. In countries like Australia, US and UK, the preferred method of political control has been through political donations. What Australia badly needs is a formal separation of mining and the state, and this can only be achieved with a long campaign. We need to take every opportunity to educate people about the corrupting influence of corporate and mining industry donations and about the fact that change is possible and that there are parties and candidates who do not receive mining industry dollars.

Elections are only a part of a functioning democracy it's true, but they are a good opportunity to pressure local members. Both Northern Rivers federal seats of Richmond and Page are marginal, which means as a region we have some power to exert.

Contacting your local candidates and finding out where they stand on mining industry donations, subsidies and donations reform is a great place to start, as well as letting them know that their answers to your questions will influence how you vote.

You don't have to vote for the miner parties

## The fourth element of online strategy – social

by Russell Lean

Remember the four parts of a great online strategy from previous articles? They are: MOBILE – LOCAL – VIDEO – SOCIAL.

How does a business engage on social media so that it is a good experience for the business and the people who see it? Firstly, there is a guiding principle for any business seeking to gain traction through social media. Choose one or two platforms and do them well. Or find a process that allows you to use 6-8 seamlessly.

What tends to happen is that business people sign up and get started and cannot keep momentum up. Unless your website/blog is a late version of Wordpress or other multimedia site, with social media automation, you will be manually posting, or trying to post in 6-8 places which is time consuming. What does automation mean? – you can write a post on your blog about your business and simply click on the icons of social sites you are a member of and the automated software built into the site will send that post to Facebook, Google Plus, your LinkedIn profile, or elsewhere. If you have automation built in, it's a breeze. If not, stick to manually posting on Facebook – where 14 million Australians are, YouTube (make a video) remember YouTube is a social



media site – 13.9 Million monthly Aussie users, and Instagram (you will need photos of your business of course) with five million Australian users. Or, follow the instructions below keeping it all in the one place.

You can bring all four components of online strategy together by making simple videos about your business (see February NGT article on this) and upload them to YouTube. These videos could be short pieces about what your business does and provides. An interesting thing about the "Social Functions" within YouTube is that under every video on the site including yours, there is a SHARE button. This share button once clicked allows you to share your videos to Facebook, Google Plus, Twitter, Reddit, Tumblr, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Stumbleupon, Digg and many other social sites. I bet your competition isn't doing that. If you do, your reach will spread exponentially

and you will out-compete your competition. Google will see all this social activity and your website rankings will improve.

But wait there's more, and it isn't steak knives! Google own YouTube. They bought it for \$1.65 billion back in 2006 after only \$13 million had been invested in it. They saw the future on the internet was social and it was also video. They also make everything they do mobile ready first. What

that means is that every video you upload to YouTube is socially shareable and it is mobile ready. You can also put in your location on a map in the information you add when you upload a video, so that local videos have a really good chance of being delivered first to people in your local area searching for services on YouTube. So, the video you upload to your channel on YouTube is mobile ready, it is location based, it is a video and it is socially shareable – MOBILE-LOCAL-VIDEO-SOCIAL. See, it's easier than you think. And all in one place.

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# Shorten reaffirms Labor's CSG policy

Labor Leader Bill Shorten returned to Lismore in March to talk and listen to a lunchtime crowd that packed the City Hall.

Joined by Labor's candidate for Page Janelle Saffin and Justine Elliot MP, Mr Shorten was warmly greeted by over 300 residents eager to engage with the alternate Prime Minister. The audience was loaded with hand-written placards and posters critical of the Turnbull government.

After a brief introductory speech, Mr Shorten responded to an array of questions from the meeting on issues ranging from the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Taxation, Schools, and importantly, Labor's policy on coal seam gas.

The room erupted in applause and cheers as Mr Shorten committed Labor to standing with the community in its fight to stop coal seam gas mining across the region.

"At the state level, NSW Labor has



committed to a policy of keeping the North Coast and Northern Rivers CSG free," said Mr Shorten. "If we were elected at the national level we would be

supportive of that policy of NSW state Labor, full stop, no qualification."

Labor's positive commitment against CSG stands in stark contrast with the coalition. In March the NSW Liberal and Nationals Government passed their *Enclosed Lands, Crimes and Law Enforcement Legislation Amendment (Interference) Bill 2016*, which can now send protesters charged with some offences under this act to a maximum seven-year jail sentence.

On renewable energy, Mr Shorten pointed to the positive benefits Labor sees as being available to Australians over the next 20 to 30 years from the estimated \$2.5 trillion dollar renewable energy sector.

"We're very committed to strong policy promoting renewable energy," said Mr Shorten. "We want 50% of our energy to be derived from renewable sources by 2030, and by 2050 zero net carbon emissions in the Australian economy."

# Nimbin Museum site redevelopment progresses

by David Piessie

The current plans for the Museum site are to keep the front of the site much as it was before the fire, with three large shops facing the main street. We will have a wide laneway entrance with the Rainbow Café with small lettable spaces down either side of the laneway and around the rear of the main building facing into the garden.

Rainbow Lane will have a funky Nimbin feeling, leading through to a large courtyard/ garden area with the western car park at the back.

We plan to have a great garden laneway atmosphere with food and music and make a place for safe and fun community happenings. As part of this, we also plan to put inexpensive accommodation upstairs above the shops which will help invigorate the centre of town at night.

I listen to the old hippies and their children talk about Nimbin in the 70's and how alive and how much fun Nimbin was at night, so our aim is to bring back some of that atmosphere.

Low cost housing is a big issue in the Nimbin area, and we would also like to address that in part by having The Rainbow Lane Guest House/ Boarding House for locals as well as visitors.

The plan has a garden building facing the western car park and a raised deck in the garden on the South side where one can sit and have good views to Nimbin Rocks.

Early on, Lismore City Council hosted what they called a 'Mini Charette' workshop with the Rainbow Café and ourselves. This set out some guidelines for us to work with. We have drawn up plans that my partner Dr Simon Rose and I are reasonably happy with, and now we are working with

a town planner and soon a heritage consultant to see if we are on the right track.

There has been a lot of interest in the spaces from members of the local community, both from existing businesses and those looking to set up new concepts, and feel that all will be taken up before everything is finished.

Before we lodge a DA, we plan to have a Council-hosted community meeting together with the Rainbow Café to present our concepts and listen to you.

From my point of view, I love Nimbin's unique alternate and brave community that is well represented by the Nimbin street life and shops in all of their variations, and I am focused on getting our new buildings, laneway and gardens to look like they have always been there. I also wish to thank the community for welcoming us and hope that you will be happy with the end result.

# Fountain for Nimbin? Rainbow Rising #6

by Louise Mehta

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could have a fountain in the centre of Nimbin... reminiscent of charming European villages where locals and tourists gather (piazza style)?

Not only would it glamourize the big "hole" where our village icons – the Rainbow Café and Museum used to be, it would provide some coolness to our hot summers.

I can see it in my mind's eye, under shady archways of passionfruit vine... and sparkling conversations at all the tables.



The rest of the detail, you can play with in your own mind – everyone's idea of heavenly food, drinks and company vary so vastly, it would be a shame for me to stereotype the "piazza" any further... especially among us broadminded Nimbin-ites. Live your dream.

by Megan James

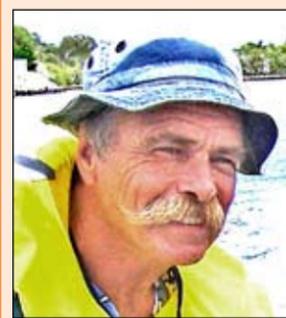
I have heard a few grumbles along the grapevine about the lack of progress on the Rainbow site, so here is the latest update.

Tuntable's Co-ordination Co-op has now employed Toni Appleton and Julie Lipsett as architects for the new building, and Alex Faulder as project manager. With their input and assistance, we plan to have a working set of drawings to present to the community and to Council in the next few months. Come and meet our new architects at

an open meeting on Friday 8th April at Birth & Beyond from 11am – 12.30pm.

The museum site owners are working on a similar timeline. There will be some formal shared community consultation organised by Council once all our plans are ready for presentation and feedback. We ask for your patience until then.

Meantime, many thanks to all those who are keeping an eye on the site.



**RIP Peter Atkinson**  
(18/01/47 – 23/03/16)

Peter Atkinson died in his sleep in Chang Mai on 23rd March, which has come as a huge shock to his family and friends.

His friends in Chang Mai have said he was very happy there, and spent his last days singing and playing music

with them down at the pub.

Peter travelled widely throughout his life, which provided him with many amazing stories. He was editor of the *Nimbin GoodTimes* from 1999 to 2004.

He is survived by his wife Jeanette and son Jarryd.

A celebration of Peter's life will be held on Sunday 10th April at Tuntable Falls Hall from 3pm. All who knew and cared for Peter are welcome.

Pete would love for us to sing him off, so if you're willing and able, come prepared to sing/play your instrument.

Please also bring a dish to share and whatever else you may need. Tea and coffee will be available. Any questions, contact Melody on 0422-751-508.



Peter and Bob Hopkins putting together an issue of NGT

A powerful new Australian play by the writer of *Last Cab To Darwin* & *Bran Nue Dae*

# THOMAS MURRAY AND THE UPSIDE DOWN RIVER

By Reg Cribb

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MATINEE SAT 2PM

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**NIMBIN BUSH THEATRE**  
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# From the mayor's desk

by Cr Jenny Dowell  
Lismore City Council

## Commendations

At the start of our March meeting, Council commended two recent recipients of the Order of Australia Medal, Jan Clifford and Ken Jolley. This is the first time we've held this recognition ceremony and I hope future Councils and Mayors continue the practice. Jan Clifford OAM received her award for service to women and the community particularly through her many years of involvement and leadership in the CWA. Ken Jolley OAM received his award for his long service to the community particularly as a volunteer fundraiser for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter.

## Lake pool

At the March meeting, one of the Notices of Motion recommended that Council investigate the costs to repair and replace the free Lismore Lake swimming pool. The motion was narrowly carried (6/5) along with a part of the motion that puts on hold any decision to reclassify, subdivide or sell the land on which the pool is located. The previous reports, 5 years ago, on the costs to bring the pool to current standards estimated that

more than \$900,000 would be required. Having the current costs would allow Councillors to make a more informed decision on the pool's future. The considerations will also involve the ongoing costs of providing life guards and may require an entry fee.

## Nimbin pool

The discussions on the Lake pool also raised the Nimbin pool because it is of similar design. It is inevitable that at some time in the foreseeable future that there will need to be major work at the Nimbin pool. At present the Nimbin pool is in reasonable condition and is looked after by the caravan park management and has the Friends of Nimbin Pool who fundraise and keep an eye on the facility.

While a future Council will be faced with decisions on expenditure for the Nimbin pool, I would hope that the pool is maintained as it is the only public pool in the village and offers an important community recreation and cooling off place.

## Pacific Highway signage

The saga of inadequate signage to Lismore on the new Pacific Motorway at Ewingsdale continues, with many reports of locals and visitors alike missing the turn-off. The Mayor of Byron Shire and I met with Bob Higgins, General Manager of the Pacific Highway, on March 8 to find a way to satisfy Bangalow's needs for reduced traffic through the village with our community's desire for a clearly marked alternative route to the main signposted route via Ballina.

The alternative is particularly important for travellers to Nimbin, The Channon and the villages of

Clunes and Bexhill. I thank the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce for providing a strong letter of support for the signage. Bob Higgins will prepare some conceptual designs and we will meet again to discuss. In the interim, the temporary black on yellow tourist sign will be checked for visibility including its placement and surrounding vegetation.

At the meeting held that night, Council resolved unanimously to insist on signage to Lismore on the major green directional sign and for additional tourist signage that names the villages.

## Multiple Occupancy to Community Title

At the March meeting, Council resolved to request the Department of Planning and Environment to grant Gateway Determination to permit owners of multiple occupancies to convert to community title if they wish to do so. Gateway Determinations is the next step in the process and not the final decision. The proposed change would permit residents to seek loans on their properties and for Council to levy rates on individual properties. It would be optional for owners to convert and would require agreement of all members of the development.

In addition, Council has proposed to restrict the locations in which future multiple occupancies can be built to areas in proximity to facilities and services. The proposal will be advertised for community comment.

## National Stronger Regions Fund

Applications for Round 3 of National Stronger Regions Fund closed on March 15. Having received funding for the art gallery

in Round 2, Council considers that the next project for funding should be the redevelopment of Oakes Oval including new amenities, new stands and an expansion of the oval itself by 10 metres at each end. The expansion would allow first grade Australia Rules football games to be played on the ground and has been supported by \$300,000 from AFL Queensland, \$55,000 from Cricket NSW and \$21,500 from Lismore Swans AFL Club. The amount sought from the Federal Government is \$1.4 million,

## Nimbin water supply

Also at the March meeting, council voted unanimously to put the policy for Rural Connections to the Nimbin water supply on exhibition for comment. Go to the Council website and click on On Public Exhibition to find the proposed policy.

## Nimbin Cubes

The applicant for the Nimbin Cubes development at 78 Cullen Street has recently submitted amended plans / additional information to Council addressing the items in the Council Resolution from its meeting on the 8 December 2015.

The amended plans / additional information were placed on formal public exhibition from 16-30 March 2016, and letters to adjoining owners and previous submitters were sent out in early March. The amended plans and information can still be accessed online via Council's recently upgraded DA tracking facility on Council's website by searching for DA 2015/170. Plans are also available for viewing at the Nimbin Visitor Information Centre. Council staff are now reviewing

the amended plans / additional information, and advise that written submissions on the amended proposal that are received by Council prior to 22 April will still be considered by staff in their assessment and subsequent recommendations.

## Traffic survey

Residents might have noticed Council's Mobile Parking Patrol car driving around Nimbin in the first two weeks in March weeks in the doing a parking survey. Rest assured, the driver was not fining people. Data collected will be used to inform the Nimbin Carparking Strategy which looks at parking supply and demand in Nimbin village and how to cater for visitor numbers into the future. Please be assured, the car was simply counting cars for data purposes.

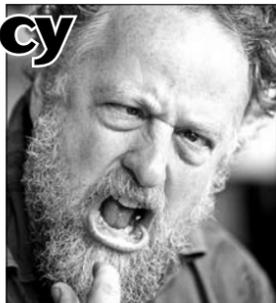
## Art gallery

When Council successfully applied to the Federal Government for \$2.85 million for a new art gallery, we included \$500,000 as part of the Council's matching share of the funding, but could not disclose the source of those funds. We are now delighted to confirm that the half-million dollars is from the Margaret Olley Arts Trust. The money was pledged last year and now that the Federal Government funding has been secured, Philip Bacon, trustee and dealer for the artist, came to Lismore on March 18 to hand over the money.

Our community, like many artists and galleries that have been beneficiaries of her generosity, is so grateful for Margaret's commitment to nurturing cultural life, particularly in regional Australia. Margaret Olley will always hold a special place in Lismore's heart and through this gift from her estate, she will have a presence in the heart of our city forever.

## Conspiracy abounds

Return of the Loon  
by Laurence Axtens



Having drunk my first glass of fluoridated water, I was suddenly gifted the power to read chemtrails. The criss-crossing vapour trails coalesced, contorted and cleared; that which was theory and that which was conspiracy became separate and all was revealed.

There are three big monoliths lumbering toward us; population pressure, global flooding and political fear-feeders such as Donald Trump. Conspiracy is not the issue, it is complicity that carries the seeds of our destruction. Conspiracy abounds, every confidence we keep, every time we parity price a product, we conspire.

The real issue is our apathetic acceptance of tyranny; we are bystanders at the police state bureaucratisation of our own lives. The quality and freedom of our existence is being sacrificed at the alter

of the penny pincher, the petty bureaucrat and the political fear-feeder.

Many people are coming, many more than the few thousand boat people of the last decade – their houses will be inundated, their livelihoods destroyed and their need will be huge. Will our hands be outstretched in friendship, or stretch out a gun? The fear-feeders will be screaming 'arm yourselves' but I beg you, be disarming, to plan ahead – to make room and make a way ahead for us all in hard times.

The real challenges of the next century will be how much do we care, how well do we communicate and how fully can we share. Don't be scared, we can do this; all we need to do is care, communicate and share.

## This region needs transport action now



by Cr Basil Cameron  
Byron Shire Council

It's time to start planning for a transport future that is sustainable financially and environmentally. We need a transport system that provides options and access for commuters of all ages and abilities. A transport system that can help make our local communities safer and less congested. A public transport system that can help move 4.4 million tourists and lubricate our economy, not stifle it.

Recently I wrote about the need for a rethink on transport investment for our region now that the massive skewing effect of the Pacific Highway no longer applies. While there is an opportunity to shift substantial investment to east-west routes and local transport networks, the ongoing impact of traffic growth along the north-south 'Pacific Coast' corridor needs to be considered in making choices on funding choices.

## North-South

Take a look at the border region around Tweed Heads that has come into focus again recently with the rapid expansion of the Gold Coast Airport, now Australia's fourth busiest. All five million annual passengers currently use local road networks and around 45% of arrivals travel into NSW. Daily traffic numbers at the Queensland border have jumped from 42,000 in 2004 to 67,000 today and are projected to reach 115,000 within ten years. To simply expand regional and local road networks is an unsustainable approach that will do little to stop increasing congestion, noise and emissions.

## East-West

The 'Bruxner' corridor between Byron and Lismore is by far the busiest east-west corridor in our region. It is also able to be serviced by the existing rail line that also happens to run north-south in the same corridor as the Pacific Highway.

## Sustainable Transport Network

Refurbishment of our rail and connection to the Gold Coast Airport would be cheaper than duplicating another two lanes of Pacific Highway and would set up future reduced expenditure on local road networks for Councils across the region.

As well as being safer, more enjoyable and sustainable transport for tourists, rail provides the opportunity for less

cars as tourists and commuters opt for rail instead of cars. It's worth noting that a connection to Coolangatta links Sydney, Gold Coast and Brisbane Airports by rail.

A further advantage of diversifying transport options is that the rail infrastructure currently links our towns more directly than roads and the central location of railway stations makes it very easy to integrate with buses, taxis and other modes of transport.

Of particular significance here is that the rail infrastructure is the missing spine of a regional public transport system that links with existing local bus services and even promotes increased patronage and expansion of bus services.

With a Federal election not far off and a Prime Minister who seems to get public transport, it is time to press the case for investment in a sustainable transport system that can meet the needs of our communities in the 21st century.

## NSW Government on wrong track

It is very disappointing that the NSW Government doesn't seem to have woken up to the transport needs of our region with its decision to close rail stations including Byron Bay, Lismore and Murwillumbah. Yet another move to reduce the accessibility, convenience and therefore patronage of the dismal network that passes for regional public transport.

# Green Scene

## Affordable housing

by Jan Barham MLC

We continually hear in the media that NSW, especially Sydney and some key coastal locations like my home town Byron Bay, are in a housing boom.

Whenever a celebrity purchases a piece of land or there is a boost in overseas investment, we're told that this is a bonus for us all; a sign that NSW is number 1. However, measuring progress in such a way ignores the tragic social consequences of unaffordable housing and gentrification, not least the loss of diverse communities.

No longer is gentrification an inner Sydney phenomenon. Communities in newly prescribed regional 'hotspot' locations are feeling the effects, most noticeably in the rising price of housing and lack of affordable and available rental properties.

It's having an impact on house prices: latest data shows that housing stress is rife, with 71,000 low-income renter households in regional NSW paying more than 30% of their income on rent. Older people, young families, people with a disability and Aboriginal people are finding that their communities are no longer affordable, and are getting pushed farther and farther out to the margins.

People's right to shelter is enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. But what of the right to a diverse community? Gentrification

outrages essential workers like nurses, teachers, fireys, and public servants from locations close to employment, and causes homogenisation of place.

We're seeing the impact on housing affordability. Regional areas are experiencing a housing price boom. For example, house prices in Kiama increased by 12.5% in the 12 months to September 2015 and only 3.1% of rental homes there are considered affordable for someone on a very low income. In Newcastle, that figure is 14.5%.

But it's not only coastal locations feeling the effects of unaffordable housing. Homelessness, often considered a city issue, increased in Armidale, Griffith and the Upper Hunter between 2006 and 2011.

Our cities, suburbs and towns need more housing and our communities need to

accommodate more people. But we need to do this right – not by undermining the wellbeing and character of the existing community, and not by driving people out through unaffordability and gentrification.

Housing is more than infrastructure and jobs; it's about communities and the people in them. Communities thrive with a diverse mix of people. The resilience of society relies on those who volunteer and contribute. To allow gentrification to take over and define our towns and cities risks losing that diversity and engagement within communities. Such a shift is a grave mistake that cannot be undone.

NSW is in a housing crisis across the state. This Government has a once in a lifetime opportunity to greatly increase social and affordable housing in communities across NSW. But does it have the courage?

## Simon says...

While the Baird Government is to be congratulated for its \$25 million purchase of the Metgasco licences in the Clarence-Moreton Basin (the Northern Rivers), there are some very worrying developments.

The NSW Government and the Northern Rivers state members have claimed the buy-back of CSG licences has delivered on their promise of a "Gasfield Free" Northern Rivers, but the recently released draft Regional Plan suggests nothing of the sort!

The Government's Draft North Coast Regional Plan reveals that North Coast CSG reserves are currently being considered as potential energy resources. The Plan states that the NSW Department of Industry is mapping coal and coal seam gas resources in the region in order to "inform future regional and local planning by providing updated information on the location of resources". The report also states this information "can support expansion of the sector."

The Regional Plan makes it clear that CSG development is alive despite the buyback of CSG licences from the Queensland border to Grafton. There is nothing to prevent these licences being re-issued, and it is now evident that that is exactly what the NSW government is planning.

The Plan's references to CSG will undermine confidence and deter investment in the region by clean, healthy sustainable industries. Surely a better plan for this area would be encouraging investment in renewable energy development which could safely co-exist with current enterprises including agriculture and tourism, protecting the employment that exists there and creating long term jobs for this area rather than the transitory ones provided by the mining industry.

The people of the Northern Rivers must have security from the threat of CSG. We request that:

1. the Baird government introduce legislation to permanently protect the Northern Rivers and the rest of the North Coast

Region from the threat posed by invasive industrial gasfields to our food, water, economy and communities.

2. all references to CSG be removed from the Draft Plan and renewable energy be identified as the main energy resource for delivering economic growth to the region.

I will be putting a notice of motion to the next Council meeting that Lismore City Council totally rejects the reference of the Draft Far North Coast Regional Plan that proposes that "the Clarence-Moreton Basin ... coal seam gas resources may be able to support the development and growth of new industries and provide economic benefits to the region".

Further that Lismore City Council contacts all local Councils in the Northern Rivers seeking their support in our stand and that Council write to Mr Thomas George, the Minister for Planning and Environment, the Minister for Trade and Industry and the Premier, expressing Council's rejection of this proposal.

On another Council matter at the last Council meeting, Isaac Smith put forward my motion that proposed that Council lobby the State Government to significantly increase the Pensioner Rate Rebate and then adjust it for the CPI every year with state government funds.

There has been no change in pensioner rebates since 1993. During that period local government has been under extreme financial pressure from rate pegging and cost shifting. For instance, State Government cost-shifting (moving costs to local government) in 2013/14 is estimated to have cost local Councils \$670 million.

Councillors Bennett and Battista spoke against this motion and then left the chamber before the voting took place, presumably because they didn't have the courage to have their votes recorded opposing an increase in pensioner rate rebates.

Contact Simon on Council matters on 0428-886-217 or at: [simonclough@internode.on.net](mailto:simonclough@internode.on.net)

## Ice-related crime in our community

by Kevin Hogan, MP for Page

There has been an increase in methamphetamine (ice) related crime in our community.

Ice is not a recreational drug – it's a 'hard' highly addictive and psychotic drug and users can "snap", becoming extremely violent without warning.

This puts our health care workers and emergency service workers at great risk. Families and the general community are also placed in potentially violent situations.

As a community, we must tackle the spread of this drug.

The Federal Government is working with the victims and users to reduce the use of Ice in our community.

I am particularly pleased that the Government has picked up one of the points that came out of the Ice Forum I organised in Lismore that 'local problems need local solutions'.

Our local North Coast Primary Health Network is being funded to boost local alcohol and drug treatment services and help reduce the demand for this very dangerous drug.

The Federal Government is also funding support and information



services to help families and communities.

This is an all-of-government approach that we need to tackle the problem of Ice. We cannot arrest our way out of this – it is much more than simply a law-and-order issue. We must also work to reduce the demand for the drug.

I would like to thank those who shaved, waxed or coloured their hair at the Nimbin Hotel last month as part of Shave for a Cure.

The night raised \$2636 with between 100 and 150 taking part throughout the day and evening.

One of those was Hayley Odewahn, who is originally from Nimbin but now lives in Perth.

Hayley was diagnosed with stage four Hodgkin's lymphoma in early 2010. The 25-year-old returned home to shave her hair which she has spent the last five years growing.

Hayley and her father Barry helped Kimberley Fuller organise the day.

My congratulations to the three of them, the Nimbin Hotel and all those willing to shave, wax and colour their hair.

I will be at the Nimbin Bowling Club on Friday 8th April from 5.30pm for a very informal 'Politics in the Pub'.

There will be no formal speeches, but if anyone wants to drop by to say hello or discuss any issues with me, please come along. It will be great to catch up.

It was terrific to meet up with so many people at the Lismore Car Boot market last week.

It's always a good crowd at the market. Thank you to all those who dropped by to say hello.

## Why I'm standing again for Page

I'm standing for re-election in the seat of Page because our community deserves better. Better representation, better services in health and education, greater investment for local jobs in our rural and regional communities, and a commitment to renewables.

I'm standing for Page because I will fight for locals each and every day.

We as a community cannot afford to let the Nationals privatise Medicare, allow them to continue with their savage cuts to our regional hospitals and health services, or let the Nationals cut the age pension. Add to this the Liberal Nationals Government cutting an average of \$3.2 million from each and every one of our local schools, their second-rate NBN service, and their plans to cut penalty rates from hard working locals.

Nor can I let our local services which protect the most vulnerable in our community continue to be hacked away at.

It is a fact that in 2014, Kevin Hogan used his vote in parliament to scrap the National Rental Affordability

Scheme. He then went on to support funding and service cuts to advocacy organisations that campaign for fair housing and homelessness. This was on the back of Abbott getting rid of the Minister for Housing and Homelessness.

In contrast, as our representative in the former Labor Government, I was proud to stand up and deliver for everyone in our community including the most vulnerable. It was Labor in government that invested in delivering more social housing and helped build 50,000 affordable rental homes through our National Rental Affordability Scheme. My commitment to helping locals grow sustainable communities across the Northern Rivers remains.

If regional communities are doing it tough now, imagine if Kevin Hogan gets back in and Nationals get to implement their plans to cut penalty rates, cut pensions, and to further cut hospital and school funding. You can see it in the Nationals' laws passed only this month, where



by Janelle Saffin

people protesting against CSG mining can now be gaoled for up to seven years. These types of National Party laws demonstrate that Kevin Hogan and the Nationals are a risk to our communities, families and future.

I'm proud of my proven track record of delivering for our region. Record funding for our hospitals; record funding to build a safer Pacific Highway; upgrades to every local school; much-needed local community and

sporting infrastructure; and unlike the pro-CSG National Party, I stand proudly with our community against CSG mining in the Northern Rivers.

The Nationals have sold out our communities. As a result, our region does not have equitable access to services, transport, jobs, health, and education. This Abbott/Turnbull government is actively undermining Medicare, continuing to make savage cuts to health and education, and are making it harder for local students, families and pensioners to make ends meet.

So when Mr Hogan makes sympathetic noises about the housing crisis with the lack of affordability and stock here on the North Coast, you can ask him why he got rid of the Federal Housing Programs delivered here locally under Labor.

Make no mistake, the Nationals are not on our side.

Janelle Saffin, Federal Labor candidate for Page: [jasaffin@nor.com.au](mailto:jasaffin@nor.com.au) or phone 0418-664-001.

## Letters to the editor

NGT welcomes letters by email or post by deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be cut. Letters already published elsewhere will usually not be considered. Include full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

### Working life

I'm into a four-hour work day. No lunch. No smoko. You come to work fresh, ready and keen to accomplish something because you are only there for four hours. Maybe four and a half hours so you could spend half and hour winding down as you tell your work mate who's winding up what's happening, what's to be done and "Did you have a nice morning/afternoon?"

More would get done. Everyone would be less stressed and happier. There would be more time for friends and families and the pursuit of happiness. Happiness is fine but it's a momentary lapse of reality. Reality is fine but I'm addicted to the chase of my happiness.

And I'm happy if you want to work eight hours if you love the job so much. More people would work happily for longer if they loved what they were doing, more people would have jobs and more people would be happy.

When God apparently made the world go round, it took six days and then he rested for the seventh. He must have taken some of those seeds and herbs he put there for us and had a nice rest. Or was that Mother Nature?

So help yourself, people. Believe in love, truth, justice, honesty... and most importantly believe in what your mum told you. I reject my government and the laws they have tried to put on me. I believe in my mum, and leave you with something she wrote at the end of every day she was alive: God Help Us All. Thank you mum.

Ant  
Nimbin

### Paleolithic vegans?

I wish to comment on Azan Mann's letter (NGT, March 2016). I was quite upset whilst reading this letter, at his exclusivist, bigoted and largely ill-informed comments about whether humans should, or should not, be vegan/vegetarian.

Unfortunately, I did not read the article he refers to, however I hope that the animal mentioned was killed humanely, which most aware,

empathetic people who choose to eat meat, would have done.

Vegans/vegetarians do not have a mortgage on consciousness, and are not "more in tune with our own bodies and innate nature". How insulting! These comments show me that he is part of the club who thinks that they are better than others "because". These attitudes lead to intolerance, bigotry, patriotism etc. which are the opposite of being an enlightened being.

Before I go further, let me just say that I am not writing this because I am not a vegan/vegetarian or because I am a meat eater. I believe it is every person's individual right on their journey through life to make their own choices about their behaviour, lifestyle and diet. We do not have the right to judge others, or to condemn them, the universe will take care of this by the law of cause and effect or, if you like, what goes around comes around.

Our only responsibility is to live within the parameters we set for ourselves, where we can feel confident and comfortable with the journey we are on.

I wish to comment on the Rob Dunn quote mentioned in the letter, regarding human ancestors were nearly all vegetarians. This is simply untrue and flies in the face of all anthropologic evidence uncovered about our Paleolithic ancestors, who were largely hunter-gatherer societies.

Loren Cordain, PhD compiled ethnographic data from 181 worldwide societies of hunter-gatherers showing that the mean plant to animal subsistence ratio in terms of energy was 35% plant and 65% animal. ([www.mercola.com/article/carbohydrates/paleolithic\\_diet.htm](http://www.mercola.com/article/carbohydrates/paleolithic_diet.htm))

However, I too condemn the industrial food machine, part of the 'beast' that is capitalism, and I fully advocate the rights and humane treatment of all animals, including humans.

Nora Sheridan, R.N., N.D.,  
BHS (Comp. Med)  
Nimbin

### Circle the vegan wagons

Azan Mann (NGT Letters, March 16) told us from his post-colonialist, vegan, new age, cultural construct soapbox that he and his vegan cadre should claim the right to the moral high ground on dietary preferences.

In doing so, he went on to identify brown-skinned peoples and a First Nation specifically as inferior, insensitive slaughterers of a meat industry.

I will admit, from your vegan permaculture utopia



on deforested and stolen land, 3000 miles from the tundra and winter ice-storms of Canada, it is easy to take pot-shots without fear of losing your scalp-lock, and unlikely that you'll share a fireside discussion with a fur and feather clad bloodthirsty savage such as myself.

The unbroken cultural practices of indigenous peoples have maintained far more of this planet's ecological and environmental integrity, for millennia, than the apple-biting conquering empires from which you suckle. The First Nations peoples do not seek your adoration of their unbroken cultural practices, but they demand your respect.

Those practices venerate life forces and the kinship relations between animal, plant, mineral and elements. Custodial resource management, kinship food avoidance laws, regenerative ceremony based on respect, compassion, gratitude and honouring all life ensure the balance. The reality of life within marginal subsistence indigenous cultures is beyond self-indulgent, affluent and sheltered individuals such as yourself. I ask you to walk a mile in my moccasins, but they are made of deer leather.

Lastly, Olduvian Homo habilis and erectus were opportunistic scavengers, along with baboons, on the carcasses of gazelle and bone marrow of Deinotherin (*Lucy's Child*, Johanson & Shreeve, Viking 1990). Australopithecines may well have been congenital vegans born by immaculate conception in a cabbage patch like yourself, but my gut tells me otherwise. Reconcile that!

Neil Liddell (Eagle),  
First Nations descendant,  
Nimbin

### Cash-bash

A snippet on ABC News Radio alerted my interest: that the Australian \$100 note is the most numerous – about 180,000,000 units – yet is the scarcest cash note in general circulation.

Apparently, criminals are stashing high value cash notes. These occupy less volume/space for cash value. Apparently it's an international phenomenon. So the international response is to delete high-value cash notes in any currency. Our \$100 note is marked for deletion to fight international criminals. Those nasty note-stashers.

Crims have used high-value bills for decades, so why the belated anxiety now? Quite convenient, isn't it? The subtle insinuation into the public consciousness to dumbly accept the gradual deletion of our currency (read liberty). It started when copper coinage was axed.

If crims like high-value notes, so do banks, the most likely hoarders of \$100 notes. Are they gradually extracting them from circulation? Bank tellers reach for the \$50 notes until I specify \$100's. And ATMs don't issue \$100 notes.

Money has underpinned our everyday lives for millennia. It's common to all nations. The garbage reasons for change are concocted to suit those who would benefit from the change. Those people could be the 2% of the world's population who own 85% of the world's wealth. When greed becomes so entrenched and endemic, that trait morphs from being lust for wealth into lust for power. That is dangerous.

ATM cards were mailed to everyone in the mid-70's to condition us for the plastic card system. But cash beats plastic anytime. Cash stymies

the establishment's arrogant attitude that it has the right to examine and control our (financial) lives. A cashless society diminishes liberty. It diminishes our right to anonymity at a fundamental level. You can bank on it.

Jim-Jim  
South Casino

### Biodiversity?

Carpet snakes have been eating local pets. A friend told me about how her neighbour's cat had been swallowed by a large carpet python. She was upset for the cat. I was sad for the snake.

My local python recently swallowed one of my neighbour's pet birds. It got caught in the cage after its meal and was apparently 'relocated' down the river somewhere. I guess it won't be sleeping in my roof with the possum anymore. Snakes don't often survive this kind of removal.

In reality it's our native species that are disappearing, not our pets.

The bandicoot that used to go through my compost at night is gone. I no longer see any koalas in the gum trees up the hill. What I do see is local rural and urban development continuing to clear native trees and scrub.

We are lucky to have a few dedicated bush regenerators and wildlife carers working to save our local remnant

native wildlife. Even so extinction rates of our native species is soaring.

The Northern Rivers is a typical microcosm of Australia.

The CSIRO, also under threat, recently released a report that estimated threatened and endangered species to be 40% higher than previously thought. 75 million native animals including snakes are killed every night by the over 15 million feral cats in Australia.

Then there's the threat of cars, dogs and garden pesticides in our waterways. Habitat loss and pollution from our farming, logging and mining also play a big part in loss of native species.

I just received a letter in response to my concerns about a new Biodiversity Act being drafted by the NSW Government. The Secretary to Premier Mike Baird assured me that it will be more equitable and effective. They are going to modernise our laws governing biodiversity, I'm informed, and included is managing native vegetation for key stakeholders, whoever they are.

His reassurances stand in contrast to his actions. At a meeting in Lismore recently with the Total Environment Centre from Sydney, I heard how thousands of mature trees had been chopped down, thanks to the Baird

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**NEXT DEADLINE:**  
Wednesday 27th April

Email [nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com](mailto:nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com) or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

Government's 10-50 code. Now Mike Baird plans to fast-track tree clearing approvals across the state to appease big agribusiness and developers.

We all can help to save our wildlife. Go to: [www.standfornature.org.au](http://www.standfornature.org.au) and: [www.tec.org.au](http://www.tec.org.au) to find out how.

**Omega Breakspear**  
Lismore

### Art wank

The term 'art wank' refers to pretentious works of art and literature.

It denotes art that is mired in obscure terms and concepts that leaves the audience wondering if they are viewing something creative, or a desperate bid for attention!

The artist's statement accompanying many exhibitions is typically a mix of clichéd terms and Post-modern babble that reveals little about the artist themselves, or the emotional path upon which they journey.

"Pushing back the boundaries", "challenging the paradigm" and "realigning the frontier" are examples of meaningless phraseology that make no sense in a world where everything has already been done.

They are frantic attempts to conceal a paucity of skill or matter!

Language can reveal or obscure, yet ultimately, an artwork either speaks for itself or it does not. No attempt to bolster it with intelligent sounding words can compensate for an absence of talent or content.

Art wank is a form of camouflage that only make sense if you are trying to hide something!

**RJ Poole**  
Lismore

### Plastic not-so-fantastic

Over the last few years there has been much talk about banning free single use shopping bags. While it is a good idea in helping the environment and most important the water ways, I just wonder if people know about what has happened in South Australia since they banned free single use bags.

While the ban of free bags and the buying of multi use bags has changed household attitudes towards the need and use of plastic bags, there is much less bag waste blowing in the streets and on the beaches, but it has not changed much in the area of less plastic bags in landfills.

As most people use their free shopping bags as bin liners, since the ban in SA the sale of bin liners rose from 15% to 80%. This change in behaviour will have an environmental impact and may negate the success of the ban.

If and when the NSW government go ahead with the ban I just hope they look into the option of giving paper bag makers an incentive to make recycled paper bin liner bags that will break down a lot better in the landfills. This will have a better environmental impact than what plastic liners will have.

**Daniel Jones**  
Fernside

### Saving TAFE

I would like to thank the Tweed mayor for tackling the TAFE closure in Murwillumbah. At last weeks council meeting she advocated a vote for a deferral on the sale, which was carried.

Educational facilities make economic as well as social good sense and Council's own Economic Development Strategy identified the creative arts as important to the local economy as it has the potential to build on the success of the art gallery.

\$4M of public funds has already been invested in the TAFE building and arts facilities recently and it is reasonable for the community to expect that this translates into a sound investment for Murwillumbah's future rather than another asset sell-off.

The mayor has undertaken to write to the member for Lismore and request he seek to defer the sale to allow community members to submit a business plan to TAFE NSW to continue using the building as a dedicated TAFE training, education and arts centre.

Let's hope Thomas George is up for it.

**Trish Mann**  
Burringbar

### Dry dragons

Murwillumbah Library pond upgrade began on 1<sup>st</sup> February. On Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February, I checked out the left side where the water dragons live, but the pond had been drained as it is part

of the main pond. I wondered if they had water to drink, especially on hot days.

A cursory examination showed no water for them. I enquired at council's front desk and was assured there was a water feature near the lower offices and near the Autumn Club.

Again I looked and saw nothing except a water dragon that scrambled under foliage. Back to the counter. Her computer showed that two water features for the dragons were planned with NRM supervision.

Not trusting there was water for them, I purchased a small bowl and filled it with water for them.

On Tuesday I phoned and was reassured the dragons had access to water.

On Wednesday I searched but still found nothing. A construction worker went to the left side and invited us to follow but found nothing. His supervisor confirmed the matter would be resolved in 30 mins. Later that day we checked and again found nothing.

Thursday I finally found the 'water feature' – stiff grey plastic scrunched up between two big rocks with water in it. How would water dragons be able to scramble up the plastic to get out? With nothing to grip on to they would surely drown. So we put a thick log in so they could climb out.

A week later I checked to see if the water had been changed. It had not. It was putrid, so I replaced it with clean water. This has become my weekly ritual, because nobody else is doing it.

Out of 700 council employees, not one could take the initiative to provide water to these amazing creatures without a member of the public harassing them four days in a row! It would have been a miracle if any water dragons survived council apathy and neglect, if not for my actions.

Perhaps council regards animals as resources and not living beings with needs – or they just don't care?

**Menkit Prince**  
Uki

### Koalas need help

Cr Longland, whilst you are sleeping my partner David Norris is checking out another very sick diseased koala in a tree on the southern edge of the Black Rocks sports field access road, which is set for capture in order to receive urgent treatment. This koala is the mother of the joey which was sighted during the 2015 survey. Please do not make any suggestions that this 'principal protagonist' has a sole objective other than the saving of our iconic species the koala from extinction. On behalf of the Threatened Species Conservation Society,

David Norris spends 12-16 hours per day, seven days a week trying to get a better outcome for koalas. He seeks your assistance in his endeavours. I hope you will oblige.

**Lyn Dickinson**  
Secretary,  
Threatened Species  
Conservation Society Inc

### Animal rights

As a concerned member of the global community, it was a milestone to hear of SeaWorld's recent decision to effectively stop using Orcas as circus performers.

By surrendering to public pressure on this topic, it reflected a new awareness of the rights and intelligence of other species and the ethics in exploiting these animals for human entertainment.

And so it is with other animals. Presently the status quo remains with several circuses in Australia that use wild animals in this way. The permits which allow this to happen are issued from the office of the Department of Agriculture.

I am running an on-line petition to bring public support to the plight of these animals, in the hope that a sufficient number of signatures may persuade the Australian Federal Government to abolish these permits.

[www.thepetitionsite.com/en-au/914/735/070/abolish-permits-which-still-allow-exotic-animals-to-be-confined-in-circuses/](http://www.thepetitionsite.com/en-au/914/735/070/abolish-permits-which-still-allow-exotic-animals-to-be-confined-in-circuses/)

**Gabrielle Smith,**  
Lake Macquarie

### Nationals betrayal

The leader of the Nationals, Troy Grant is using his position as Police Minister to betray country people and particularly farmers. Mr Grant is the driving force behind new laws that crack down on farmers protesting coal seam gas and coal mining.

Farmers and other people taking action to protect good agricultural land and water resources are true Aussie patriots, not criminals – and they will not be intimidated by Mr Grant's threats of seven years jail for disrupting any mining or gas related activity, or 1,000% increases in fines for trespass.

Mr Grant needs to understand this is Australia, not Vladimir Putin's Russia. Australians have a right to free expression and peaceful protest action.

If the Shenhua Watermark coal mine goes ahead on the Liverpool Plains, will Troy Grant instruct the NSW Police to arrest farmers trying to protect their land and water? Does he want to see them sentenced to seven years jail?

Mr Grant needs to understand that we need a

political solution to land use conflict in NSW. It is clear that the vast majority of people want good farmland and water resources protected from coal mining and coal seam gas. The government should respect that opinion rather than turn the NSW Police into a private security force for unwanted industries.

The fact that the president of the National Party was a lobbyist for the Shenhua mine, which Barnaby Joyce has been too useless to stop, and now Troy Grant is pushing laws and threatening farmers with years of jail shows the National Party has lost its way.

And it's not just coal and gas. Troy Grant is denying farmers the opportunity to grow hemp for highly lucrative food products. Although the Food Authority has recommended hemp food products be made legal, as in most other countries, Troy Grant as police minister blocking it.

It's a shame Troy Grant spends more time at the ballet and the races, than he does representing farmers and regional NSW. He's allowing regional councils to be wiped out through undemocratic forced amalgamations; he's gutted Landcare and TAFE; and is sitting idly by as Mike Baird blows billions on inner city motorways while our regional rail network is stuck in the 18 Century. The National Party has lost its way.

**Jeremy Buckingham**  
Greens agriculture and  
mining spokesperson

### Refugees and the Bible

Regarding Omega Breakspear's refugee article (NGT March 16), is she aware that multiculturalism is the New World Order's main tool to destroy Western sovereignty, prosperity and peace?

I doubt the Scandinavians, Germans etc would agree with that propaganda banner held by two young girls in the photo: "People just like us". Divide and conquer is an ancient and efficient strategy.

Likewise, Ruth Haig's letter glibly quotes scripture, yet her Matthew 25 is the strongest evidence against her conclusions: "Jesus shall separate all nations, as sheep from goats... The goats shall receive everlasting punishment" (v 32 and 46), not blanket acceptance of strangers.

"Asylum" seekers do not threaten Australia? How much money from the public purse is being spent on "heightened security"?

Read your bible and know that the Western nations are God's Christian people.

**Vyvan Stott**  
Main Arm

## Notices

### Take control of your health

The Bobby Goldsmith Foundation offers the Positive Self-Management Program (PSMP) and Chronic Disease Self-Management Program to people living with HIV.

These highly interactive workshops are designed to provide the tools for people to learn how to take control of, and better manage their chronic but manageable health conditions.

Workshops are held each week over a seven-week program. Each 2½ hour session builds on the previous week's content and is facilitated by two trained leaders, at least one of whom is living with HIV.

If you would like to find out more about a course in your area please call email: [bgf@bgf.org.au](mailto:bgf@bgf.org.au) or call us on (02) 9283-8666 to speak to Richard Kennedy, our Client Education Co-ordinator.

### Reiki

**Reiki Circles:** Thursday 7th April and Thursday 5th May in Lismore. 5.30-8.30pm, \$10 + bring a healthy plate. Open to anyone who has completed any Reiki level.

**Reiki First Degree Course:** Wednesday & Thursday, 20th-21st April, 9am-4pm in Lismore. Contact Helene for more info & preparation requirements.

**Soul Circle:** Thursday 28th April, 5.30-7.30pm at Yemaya Centre, upstairs, 115 Keen Street, Lismore, \$20. Listening. Sharing. Creative expression. Meditation. Men and women welcome. Info: [www.helenecollard.com](http://www.helenecollard.com) or phone 0405-656-797.

### Awesome garage sale

Saturday 9th April, 9am-3pm at Flats, 23 Cullen Street, Nimbin. Massive collective sale, loads of good gear. Clothes, jewellery, kitchenwares, children's toys, all got to go.

### Annual General Meeting

Tunttable Falls Community School AGM, Tuesday 31 May, at noon, at the school.

### New midwifery clinic

There is a fully bulk-billed holistic midwifery clinic starting in Nimbin soon. For more information, contact Bronwyn on 0425-335-414.

### Beginners Tai Chi

Yang style classes starting Tuesday 5th May, 11am at dance studio in Nimbin Community Centre. Enquiries, or to register interest: Melissa 0431-958-443.

### Open Learning Centre

Enrolments 27th/28th April, classes start 4th/5th May at Nimbin Community Centre. Classes confirmed so far include Spanish, Pelvic Floor, Gut Health, Ukulele, Computers. Phone 6689-1477 or check facebook page [nimbinopenlearning](http://nimbinopenlearning) for updates.

# Combatting sepsis

by Noelle Lynden-Way,  
Community Representative,  
BUNK Quality & Safety Committee

In recent years, there has been world-wide research and focus on sepsis, and in 2011 the first World Sepsis Day was observed to focus on what is called the Sepsis Pathway. Sepsis used to be called septicaemia and had a huge mortality rate.

The Sepsis Pathway is like a recipe

for action on how to recognise and then treat the condition. The NSW Clinical Excellence Commission describes sepsis as follows:

"Sepsis arises when the body's response to an infection injures its own tissues and organs. It may lead to shock, multiple organ failure and death, especially if not recognised early and treated promptly."

If recognised when a patient presents themselves at a local MPS,



sepsis can be treated immediately by nursing staff with antibiotics and IV fluids.

It is the recognition and the fast treatment by nursing staff and medical officers that is so important. It can literally mean the difference between life and death.

Staff and medical officers in both the hospital and aged care at our four local MPS sites have now been trained by Clinical Nurse Educator Vicki Wale, using the medical guidelines to recognize sepsis and give the necessary treatment.

Each year on World Sepsis Day on 13th September, Vicki celebrates the success of sepsis education. She dresses up in a

costume and arrives with music and cake at each of the sites for half an hour to focus on the achievement of a particular aspect of sepsis education that year.

Last September, she was the sepsis Scot, playing 'Scotland the Brave' on her phone as she came along the corridor with cupcakes for everyone (pictured).

Kyogle, Nimbin and Urbenville MPS were featured on the world wide events sepsis poster last year, one of only six places in Australia. See: [www.world-sepsis-day.org/WorldWideEvents2015.pdf](http://www.world-sepsis-day.org/WorldWideEvents2015.pdf)

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## In your neighbourhood...

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre News [www.nnic.org.au](http://www.nnic.org.au)

### Job available at NNIC – closing date extended

**Disability Youth Support Worker and mentor**  
NNIC seeks a suitably qualified and experienced person to become our Disability Youth Support Worker and mentor.

This is a fixed term position of 12 months (subject to funding) – Part time – 8 hrs/week over 2 days – SCHCADS CSW Grade 3 Level 3.

Applicants MUST address the selection criteria in the job kit, available from Nimbin Neighbourhood and Info Centre at 71 Cullen St, Nimbin, (02) 6689-1692 from 10am til 4pm Monday to Friday, or by emailing: [admin@nnic.org.au](mailto:admin@nnic.org.au)

Applications close: Friday 15th April.  
NNIC is an EEO employer. Successful applicants will be required to undergo Working with children and police checks.

### Nimbin Holiday Club

The Autumn round of Vacation Care commences on Wednesday 13th April. See our website and/or facebook page for the program. Be sure to pre-book your kids into the excursions so you don't miss out.

### Sustainable Nimbin Community Plan 2016-2021

The revised plan and the report on achievements to date will be available on our website in April. Keep an eye on Hook Ups and our website for its release. We are pleased to report that quite a few of the strategies are already

being progressed. There remain some gaps in the Plan in terms of nominated drivers and/or partners to progress certain strategies. If you or your organisation can fill these gaps please let us know. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the revision of the SNCP.

### Exchange/barter system

This is a strategy arising from the Food Security aspect of the SNCP. We are seeking to gauge the interest in a "no money", "exchange only" market for Nimbin.

If you are interested please leave your name and contact number down at NNIC or contact Hellena at the Nimbin Market every 4th and 5th Sunday at the Community Centre grounds.

### NSW Draft North Coast Regional Plan

The Draft Plan is open for submissions until 2nd June. Of particular interest are the references to the implementation of the NSW Gas Plan (ie CSG) in our region.

A briefing session will be held on 27th April at 9am-10am at Tweed Heads Bowls Club, cnr Wharf and Florence Streets, Tweed Heads. Please RSVP to: [northcoast@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:northcoast@planning.nsw.gov.au) to confirm your attendance. You can view the draft Plan and have your say by making a submission online during the consultation period at: [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/NorthCoast](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/NorthCoast)

### Nimbin Women's Dinner

Thanks a million to everyone who made the 13th annual Nimbin Women's Dinner happen: Teena, Gail,

Heidi, Micaela, Lilly, Judy, Rose, Sue and Pauline, Tamara, Cullen Street businesses who donated to the raffle, the cake bakers, and Truffula Seeds Cafe for the yummy (locally sourced) food. Also to Disco Sista, all the performers and all the women who came along. A great night had by all and fun way to celebrate IWD. See you all again next year!

### Northern Rivers Biohubs project

The report in the findings of the Social License research is now available. See our website for the link.

### Nimbin CDAT (Community Drug Action Team)

The Report on the Community Drug Survey is now available on our website (follow the link on our home page).

### Struggling to make ends meet?

Household bills getting on top of you? We may be able to help with material aid ranging from nappies, sanitary products, food supplies, assistance with phone and electricity bills and unpaid fines.

To find out if you are eligible for assistance make an appointment with one of our Community Workers for advice.

*Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre (NNIC) is run by locals for locals and our job is to support people in need and the community in general to achieve their aspirations. Everyone is welcome at NNIC. If we can't help we probably know who can. You can also find lots of useful local and other info on our website. For appointments call 6689-1692 or just drop in between 10am and 4pm weekdays..*

## Nimbin Hospital Information

**Child immunisation clinic**  
For 0-5 year olds. Held second Tuesday of every month. Next clinic 12th April. For appointments phone 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health Centre).

**Nimbin NSP**  
Opening hours Monday 9.15am-12pm; Tues, Wed & Thurs 9.15am-12.30pm.

**Cannabis clinic**  
Confidential counselling, every Monday. Phone 1300-664-098.

**Early childhood nurse**  
Every Tuesday. For appointments phone 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health Centre).

**Drug and alcohol counsellor/psychologist**  
Every Thursday, phone 6620-7634 or mobile 0428-109-474.

**Women's health nurse services**  
Third Thursday of the month, next clinic 21st April. Confidential service, pap smears breast checks, contraceptive advice post natal checks, general health information. Phone 6688-2401 to make an appointment.

**Free diabetic clinic**  
Every 3rd Thursday of the month. Phone 6630-0488 for appointment.

**Free respiratory clinic**  
With specialist respiratory nurse and a nurse practitioner, 2nd Friday of every month. Next clinic 8th April. Phone 6688-1401.

**Free health checks**  
In front of the Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre 1st and 3rd Friday of the month next Check on the 15th April. Run by Nurse Practitioner and Registered

Nurse. Cardiac, diabetic and stroke risk assessments, weight. Blood pressure, oxygen sats, blood sugar levels, and cholesterol levels. Referral to appropriate health professionals as required.

**Health advice line**  
Phone 1800-022-222 if you have a health issue. It's a 24-hour, 7 days a week free service. A registered nurse will speak to you and assess whether or not you need to go to the emergency department at your local MPS.  
Read more information about this service at: [www.healthdirect.org.au](http://www.healthdirect.org.au)

**Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary**  
Meetings are held on the second Friday of each month in the hospital conference room at 10am. Next meeting: 8th April.



**104 GABAL ROAD** **SOLD**

- Timber home with 4 bedrooms on approximately 5 acres
- 2 bedroom self contained studio
- Main dwelling has sun room, large lounge/dining, high-set ceilings
- Large shed for all the tools!
- Overlooks "Lake Norma" adjacent to property



**909 STONY CHUTE ROAD** **\$315,000**

- Approx 15 undulating acres located 10 minutes from town
- Established temporary dwelling and a building entitlement
- Extremely private, running spring on property and stunning views
- Access all year round with a sturdy driveway. Top spot to build.
- Only 5 minutes from Hanging Rock swimming hole



**25 FARAWAY ROAD** **\$669,000**

- Approx 97 acres of open absolute privacy, slate floors & raked ceilings
- 4 Bedroom mudbrick home with en-suite, great views of Blue Knob
- Water galore, boundary is on Webster's Creek
- Assortment of Fruit trees, Pool, Solar Hot Water
- 4 bay machinery shed with two lockable bays



**42 CULLEN STREET** **\$325,000**

- Approx 1000sqm of land situated in the heart of Nimbin village
- Zoned rural residential village within the commercial precinct
- Large family home with 4 bedrooms + sleep out and 12ft ceilings
- Lock-up garage, laundry and additional storage areas under house
- With a little TLC, this could be the opportunity you have been waiting for!



**52 FALLS ROAD** **\$650,000**

- Once in a while you'll find that perfect property so why look any further?
- 5.5 acres 4 bedrooms 2 bathrooms, master with en-suite + walk-in robe
- Stunning Tasmanian timber kitchen, 2 reverse cycle air-cons
- Double carport, separate double sized lock-up garage/shed
- Greenhouse, shade house.



**69/265 MARTIN ROAD BILLEN CLIFFS** **\$265,000**

- Neat 2 acre strata titled share on the quiet Billen Cliffs Community
- The cottage has two bedrooms plus a study or third bedroom.
- Keep warm throughout winter with the wood fired heater
- Newly renovated kitchen
- Beautiful north north westerly aspect with views of surrounding area



**3/33 THORBURN STREET** **\$210,000**

- Tranquil street just a short walk from the centre of Nimbin
- 3 bedroom unit on approx 284 sqm of land
- Lots to offer with views to Nimbin Rocks and a peaceful outlook
- Open plan combining the lounge room, dining and kitchen
- Vehicle accommodation under, a quiet way of life in the village



**67 COLLINS VALLEY ROAD** **\$245,000**

- Lovely rural block approx 12 acres in size, 1 hour drive from Nimbin
- Building entitlement and spot with 360 degree sweeping views
- The shed is basic but cosy with Telstra phone and internet reception
- 12V solar, 8KVA generator, 5,000 gal tank + 5,000l tank, composting toilet
- Caravan is staying (tool shed). Easement to the drinkable Lynchs Creek



**413 KOONORIGAN ROAD** **\$470,000**

- Set high on the Koonorigan Ridge, lovely 15 acres of fertile land.
- Gorgeous double brick home with 2 generous bedrooms plus sleep-out
- Fireplace, verandas on all four sides, acreage to run a few cows
- A grove of mango trees plus an assortment of fruit trees
- 2 water tanks, solar hot water, garden shed, veggie patch, good fencing



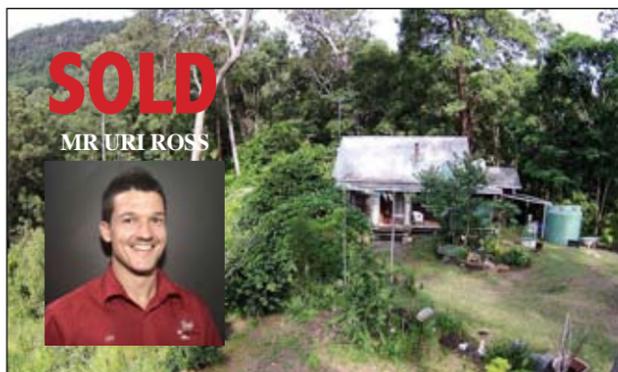
**1183 JIGGI ROAD** **\$540,000**

- Charismatic 3 bedroom home on 15 acres of lush open land
- Warm wooden floors and a picture perfect view
- Large formal living area, massive back deck, second bathroom
- Two dams, one spring fed, gravity feed to house + pump
- 2x 5,000g tanks, two bay carport, 2.2kw solar system on 60c rebate



**135 OAKY CREEK ROAD** **\$595,000**

- 100 acre country retreat, 3 bedrooms plus sleepout
- Polished teak floors, 12ft ceilings, air-con, mains power
- Two bay carport plus BONUS work-in-progress converted bales
- Bales has its own septic, water and wood combustion heater
- Currently carrying 25 head of cattle, functional stockyards



**67/265 MARTIN ROAD** **SOLD**

- 2 Strata acres with views to Billen Cliffs
- 2 bedroom dwelling – one loft, other separate
- 12V solar system for lighting and general electricity
- Water from 5000 gallon tank and additional 1000 gallon at rear
- Additional two caravans – 1 used as an additional bedroom

**SOLD**

MR URI ROSS

