

# Nimbin School of Arts Annual Report

by David Hallett, President

The past 12 months have proved to be another challenging year for the sustaining of Nimbin's oldest building.

General maintenance in electrical and plumbing infrastructure, and roof leaks, and painting have led to some major upgrades, with further rewiring to be completed before this year's Autumn Arts Extravaganza and the first Blue Moon Cabaret, while re-roofing of the deck is yet to be done.

In recent months Tim Tonkin has assisted in significant acquisitions to upgrade the hall's lighting facilities, as well as improving the layout of the network of exhibition lights. The NSA has also installed track lighting in the backstage studio for the annual exhibitions, as well as an air conditioning unit.

The major aim of the School of Arts to foster the arts has been positively pursued throughout the year. The three sold-out Blue Moon Cabarets have each excelled in the performance arts while continuing to provide critical funds for the NSA. The Spring Arts Exhibition and the Autumn Arts Extravaganza, managed by the Nimbin Artists Gallery, have both succeeded in engaging many Nimbin valley artists and craft workers, while also attracting over 10,000 visitors to the shows.

The School of Arts once again auspiced and provided funds for the Nimbin Youth Film Festival, while supporting the Nimbin Fashion Show, Nimbin

Performance Poetry World Cup and the annual Weave and Mend Festival. The NSA is also managing a bequest for an annual poetry award, the John West Youth Poetry Prize, which will be held for the first time at the Byron Bay Writers Festival.

The NSA continues to give discounted hire arrangements to various community organisations and events, while serving as Nimbin's largest venue for private functions and for other annual events such as MardiGrass, Roots Festival, Women's Dinner and Community Xmas Lunch.

The School of Arts is certainly highlighted by its association with the Nimbin Artists Gallery, and also notably with the long tenure of Perceptio Bookshop, and the ongoing assistance of Perceptio staff with annual events, bookings and hire, and day-to-day issues.

In the past year, the School of Arts lost one of its longest serving committee members with the passing of Joan Gibson, and of gallery founder and long serving NSA treasurer Margaret McLaren, together with the resignations of Len Martin and Tony Coiffet. It has been very pleasing to engage new committee members Samara Burcher and Peter Brooker during the year.

The management and care of Nimbin's 115 year old School of Arts is most fortunate to have the ongoing services of long time representatives Tony Gibson, Kylie Kingston, Carole Barrett and Sue Edmonds, together with assistants Robert 'Angus' Edwards and Donovan Lynch.

# Great line-up for MardiGrass

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There is a fantastic line-up of musicians for the various stages, Pickers and Harvest Balls, and so on, including locals on Steph's Magic Garden Market Stage.

Bands and performers booked for this year's MardiGrass include Parissa Bouas, Pepper Jane, the Hussy Hicks, the Pitts Family Circus, Hartje and Mika, the Gypsy Rose Soiree dancers, hoops artiste Kyasha, Daniel Pearson, Louey Howell & the Funkatu Collective, Kelly Gang, Kron, Kalle Berry & Sassy Gang, Nimbin Street Drummers of course, the Ganja Faeries Burlesque Performance, Shallie, B-Syde, Mapstone, Sol Tradas, DJ Nug in the Hilux, Digital Bionics, DJ Miles Jackson, Phil Brommers, Leif, Shane Burnt Earth, Joel Sweetman, Trigz & DJ Vills, Ronnie Ruckus, Late 1 Tayls & B-Grade, Emph N Treats, Diana Anaid, Blakboi, Kobya & Mo'Fyah Band, Enchanted Movement, DJ Amazon and DJ Bush Grub, Hones... enough, there's more!

The comedy line-up is a beauty this year and don't we need it to enjoy this protest. They help a lot in keeping us sane. Comedians include Marty Bright, Lachlan Brooks, Tommy Dean, Gavin Scott, Patrick Melton from America, Kyle Legacy, Sam Kissajukian, Ruven Govender, Greg Sullivan and of course Alan Glover and S Sorrensen who will no doubt bring some surprises that I believe include Steady Eddy and his band this time.



Photo: Sue Stock

Disco Sista is a legend and her tent has the usual packed line-up with a Weed Drag Show added to the program this year. The Industrial Tent will see various farmers and researchers with the latest from the low THC world, while every angle of Mediweed will be discussed at the Hemposium.

There are great prizes from the HEMP Embassy for the best dressed in Sunday's big Rally. The best protest statement, the best look, the most thought provoking, the funniest, and so on. Just be creative and we'll make the categories that suit!

There are also top prizes for the best floats in the Rally parade and you can register now if you want on the website, or on the day before the Rally begins at 2.30pm on Sunday. Whoever doesn't want

to march against prohibition can watch from the sidelines. It should be empty!

Neil Pike and Miss Guidance are putting the website together, so do have a look at the enormous program with a lot of detail about speakers and events, at: [nimbinmardigrass.com/program-by-day](http://nimbinmardigrass.com/program-by-day)

Volunteers should contact us through the website also, we need all sorts. For more info contact the HEMP Embassy, but the phones are busy so email is best: [info@hempembassy.net](mailto:info@hempembassy.net)

Don't forget the traditional Mayday march from the Lismore Court House to our local members of parliament offices. Wednesday 1st May at 1pm at the court house for the Thomas George memorial walk to end prohibition.

We're not real criminals!

## Cliffhangers to host Aquarius Legends at MardiGrass

Billen Cliffs rock outfit with music royalty connections, The Cliffhangers, are set to send MardiGrass over the edge when they host the Aquarius Legends Tribute Show under the giant Chai Tent at the old museum site, from noon on Sunday 5th May.

Cliffhangers vocalist, Kate Feain, said the band brings local musicians together for a good time. Kate has rock royalty in her veins, as sister of Celibate Rifles legendary



axeman, Dave Morris.

"It's an honour to be hosting Aquarius Legends at this year's MardiGrass, and we're looking forward to paying homage to some musical icons

from the late 60s, early 70s. I understand that Billy Cliff's contestants include a duelling pair of male and female Bob Dylans - I'm looking forward to that," Kate said.

The Cliffhangers will rock the Chai Tent before and after Aquarius Legends in the lead-up to the Main Parade (at 2.30pm). Expect some Beatles, Stones, Marley, Hendrix etc early on, followed by some great dancin' songs to help everyone get ready for the Parade.

If you would like to enter the Aquarius Legends Tribute Show, please email: [billycliff73@gmail.com](mailto:billycliff73@gmail.com) or alternatively turn up at the Chai Tent before noon on Sunday 5th May.

Lawyer X, as she is known, has created absolute mayhem in the underworld as you can imagine. A nation wide review of informers and undacuas is being written as you read this. Even ScoMo put his nose in because I'm working in his department, or I was.

"Turns out a little village in northern NSW has 32 informers. Can you believe it?" ScoMo himself told me, eyebrows raised.

"What's going on up there in your hippy country Bethany, 32 agents seems a trifle overkill?"

"People are busted and given a choice sir. We'll wipe your record off the books, drop all charges and let you go home now, if you do what we say and give us some info. Simple. Plenty say yes sir. Who wants to go to jail? Exactly the same as happened to Agent 3838. She was still at university when they busted her and signed her up."

"You aren't a lawyer are you Bethany?" He took me by surprise.

"Well actually, I did study law sir, but I never really practised and I didn't become an agent until I got busted myself. It was half a ton of hash sir, and they let me keep it, can you believe it? At the time it was an easy decision and one thing led to another and here I am today

working for you sir. It's a great honour. You never know where your career might take you, eh sir?"

"We're working for the people Bethany, not me, the people of Australia."

"Of course sir." It made me squirm unda my make-up.

"On your report it says some think you're a double agent, though I read it's unsubstantiated."

"They're jealous sir. I have the special 'allowed to smoke as much as I like' licence which few have. They don't issue them anymore."

"Shocking thing this Lawyer X business," he muttered to himself more than me. "And one informer lawyer was murdered. His parents have been calling my office. What do I say to them?"

"Tell them he was a war hero sir. And he made the ultimate sacrifice."

He looked at me with such surprise, relief and appreciation, and even sort of patted me on the shoulder as he left.

I didn't undastand why he kept calling me back to Canberra, but of course it's all about the imminent election he wants to win at all costs. He's even developing a medical pot policy, can you believe it? A secret Liberal party weed policy. I teased him about it only to get a

# STREET SHUFFLE

Journal of the North Coast's longest serving covert - Undacuva

stern lecture. "Loose lips sink ships, Bethany."

Tell me all about it, I thought to myself, this is my profession bro! I just gave him a silly of-course-not look which suits my middle aged Bethany conservative dress and handbag. First rule in Undacuva College, make 'em feel comfortable, blend in.

I got to him on the jail talk last time I was down. I told him our recidivist rates are possibly the worst in the world and as it costs over 100k a year per person in jail, you don't want people coming back do you?

"You undastand business Sir. Serco is a private company. They want people to keep coming back to jail. That's how they make their money. The new Grafton jail is like a new Hilton, they won't build it unless the occupancy rate is there, like next to an airport. I wondered if you gave Serco some sort of guarantee on that?"

He got all tall and proper. "I know the Serco directors well. Good

people. Caring." He stood over me. "I helped them get the job housing our refugee invaders. Good people. I trust them."

"Sure. But it's business. They don't want to empty their jails. In fact, they must keep them full or they'll lose money."

"Exactly." He kind of head-butted the air with his head and marched off.

Those were the last words between us when I was here nearly a month ago, but it must have come back to haunt him because when he greeted me this time it was front and centre.

"Haven't been in jail, have you Bethany?" Big laugh from him, awkward shuffling from his minders, except one who grinned from ear to ear. Fido I think of him as, actually it's Grant. He doesn't like me and I know it's because Beth looks like his mother who abandoned him he says. He told me this one day looking very mean around the eyes, scary, even for me. But back to ScoMo. His plan is to

control the crop. He grows it and sells it and taxes it like alcohol. And he's been talking to his Canadian counterpart about the profits to be made.

"Trudeau told me it grows like a weed and there's huge money to be made. Like you said actually, Bethany". So that's why he's been so friendly this time. "He told me there's nothing to be afraid of, and was surprised I hadn't tried it. He said Jesus would approve."

Next thing I made a bit of a joke which he took seriously.

"THC, the stoner cannabinoid that the hippies and greenies like, belongs to the Labor Party sir. Whilst you, the Liberals, are much more suited to CBD, central business district, for stress and anxiety. With the load you carry as our PM, the business one is the one for you sir."

Next thing he's asking for the business pills. Every couple of hours one day. Of course it has to have a little THC in it to work properly.





## Caring for each other

Tex Perkins raises a laugh from fellow panelists, a medicine supplier and Greens Senator, Richard Di Natale at the Medical Cannabis Symposium in Tweed Heads Photo: Chibo Mertineit

by Michael Balderstone

The United in Compassion Medical Cannabis Symposium at the big fancy giant Pokie Club at Tweed Heads in March was thought-provoking and a perfect inspiration for MardiGrass this year.

Sponsored by global corporate mediweed giants, it was full of amazing new science presented by endless excited scientists and doctors about how awesome the plant is and what potential it has for our health: *when allowed by government forces!*

The American doctors have been prescribing legal weed since 1996. All the legal Cannabis stats not only show marked falls in suicides, car accidents, violence, alcohol use etc, but also sharp falls in the use of pharmaceutical products for a variety of extremely expensive illnesses, like chronic pain relief, cancer, depression, anxiety and so on.

That should also read a sharp fall in profits, because that's what our society really values. Profits have somehow become more important than people in these strange times on Earth.

The out-of-control money game in which we are all forced to join has lost its way, and we all know it deep down. It's particularly distasteful when it comes to our health and happiness being a squabble over profits rather than kindness.

And so, thank God (or the Goddess or whatever name you have or don't have for the Unnameable) for Nimbin and what we are standing up for in an effort to remind everybody about this disastrous injustice of the drug wars on the first weekend in May every year.

This is Holy stuff, and if Nimbin was in India it would be a holy town. And every year sadhus, and whoever worships this amazing plant, would gather and the smoke

coming forth would fill the valleys... stop me now!

There you can see it, fuel for the imagination. Creative heartfelt thinking is what Nimbin is about, and I love that our annual celebration of life is a protest about our sacred herb.

The war on drugs is disgusting, full stop. Over and over again we are being told by experts, drug use is a health issue and should not be treated as a criminal matter at all.

It's bloody obvious if you think about it. This is us trying to feel good. It's all about feeling good, isn't it? Trying to have less pain, less worry, finding peace of mind. That's why drugs are so popular.

Half or more of the population is taking pharmaceutical pills every day, often mixing several types which doctors sort out through trial and error. They're all allowed to drive! It's ludicrous that regular cannabis users are not treated the same. How could I not be a better focused driver without my daily pain relief, what I'm used to medication, for anxiety, depression, migraines, nausea or how about a screaming vertebra rubbing on its neighbour?

There are people living in the hills around Nimbin who have stopped driving altogether now because of this outrageous law. This law was introduced for truckies on speed and was never meant to be used like this.

But people in Nimbin, and Cannabis users across Australia, have been trained to deal with bullying. We've been misjudged and persecuted on Cannabis for decades now, and it's true, what doesn't destroy you does make you stronger.

MardiGrass this year will be more passionate than ever, and we would love everyone to join us. It's time, seriously. This issue is past its use

by date. Who from the Northern Rivers doesn't have a Cannabis-using friend? In Nimbin, who doesn't know someone who has been in jail for Cannabis?

You do realise our arrest and imprisonment rate in Australia for Cannabis shows no sign of declining, and the biggest jail in the land is nearing completion just down the road near Grafton? A private jail owned by global giant Serco, who also built our offshore detention centres.

It's hard for criminals to publicly protest. Exposing yourself can mean losing your job for a start, or your lease, even your family if you get busted.

But in the polling booth at election time, or at Nimbin's MardiGrass, you can be anonymous, mingling with hardened potheads, occasional tokers and others who just simply know how wrong this is. There are many people now being kept alive by a plant that not long ago, pre-prohibition, was the most widely used medicine on Earth.

Please join us in a weekend of protest (which we aim to make as enjoyable as possible!) against the sheer greed and ignorance that is maintaining this war on probably the most useful plant we have.

P.S. The cops tested more than 1800 saliva samples last year at MardiGrass, so be prepared. You can use U-Bud, or a taxi, or buses, or hitchhike, or find a driver who doesn't smoke, catch a chopper if you can afford it, or maybe walk!

Try not to smoke for the twelve hours before you drive, unless it makes you a dangerous driver. After twelve hours the government says you should be clear! Whatever, we know the test is shonky, so don't forget to clean your teeth well and take some chocolate milk for the trip.

## Top presenters at Hemposium

It's the 9th year of the MardiGrass Hemposium, and as usual, MardiGrass offers full tilt education from Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th May.

The MardiGrass Hemposium inspires, as we learn and share knowledge about our favourite plant ally and healing herb. There is an impressive line-up of speakers who will reveal creative and abundant places around the globe basking in the post-prohibition green glow.

This year's MardiGrass Hemp Expo on the old Museum site will showcase from seed to plant to process to product, featuring workshops, demos, videos, and competitions. Don't miss a shocking live expo of real industrial hemp.

Considering MardiGrass is a great national and international melting pot, it is a perfect opportunity to have an open meeting for all those currently advocating for medicinal Cannabis access. We want this community united like never before and to make ALL voices across Australia be heard: healers, advocates and users.

On Friday 3rd May, 12 – 4pm, we welcome back Adela Falk from POW420, a Californian based advocacy group for Cannabis prisoners. Honorary local, WeedWoman Mae Moon will share the highs and lows of legal recreational cannabis in Canada, and we're excited that Sita von Windheim, Canadian cannabis rights activist, will return to Nimbin in 2019.

Politicians joining us include David Shoebridge, Greens MLC NSW and Fiona Patten, Reason MLC Victoria. Fiona will discuss how Cannabis law reform has reached a tipping point in Australia and will detail her plans for legalisation in Victoria. David will educate us about our rights with police.

Come and hear first-hand about:

- Legal recreational pot in Canada;
- Prohibition's prison population;
- Beyond corporate profits: the social justice side of legalisation;
- Prohibition and police powers;
- The march towards legal weed in Victoria;
- Prohibition's problem child: synthetic cannabis.

Saturday's Hemposium, 10am – 4pm, showcases two medical Cannabis pioneers from USA: Alice O'Leary-Randall co-founder of the medical Cannabis movement in 1976 with her late husband, Robert C. Randall, who was the first person in the U.S. to legally receive medical cannabis; and Elvy Musikka, who relies on pot to keep her glaucoma under control. She entered the US Federal Government's New Drug Program in 1988, and 30 years later, is currently the only woman still receiving her allotted 300 joints a month.

From The Netherlands, Charly Bedrossian, head gardener at the Cannabis College in Amsterdam, will offer advice on the safe use of recreational and medicinal Cannabis. Charly's motto is to learn something new every day and share this knowledge with others, so we're very happy he's decided to visit Nimbin for the first time.

Other new speakers in 2019 include two impressive plant heads, glass artists and craftsmen from North America. David Nickles is an underground ethnobotanical researcher and glassblower based out of North Carolina, USA. Operating under the name Oneiros Glass, he has been pursuing the craft of borosilicate glass. David also explores the ways in which intentional and deliberate use of plants can transform our world.

Patrick Vrolyk AKA Red Beard is a Canadian-based glassblower who specialises in handmade pipes and bongs. Every year Redbeard holds an event 'humbly' named 'The Great Canadian Glass Gathering': [gcfg.ca](http://gcfg.ca)

From around Australia, we welcome experts and passionate educators for medical Cannabis and drug law reform: Steve Bolt, "Dr Pot" Andrew Karelaris, Ray Thorpe (Happy Herb Company), Dr Deb Waldron, Nick Wallis (Australian Psychedelic Society), Martin Williams (Psychedelic Research in Science & Medicine), Michael Stoopman, the amazing Morgan Taylor, Radic Al, Frances Moonshadow, Andrew Kavasilas, Klara Marosszeky, Martin Ernegg, Dolph Cook and many more.





# Elections in the late Anthropocene

The recent NSW election has left me wondering when the massively overdue "climate election" is ever going to eventuate in the minds of the population, the media barons and the big corporate donation swilling major parties. With fish kills, record March temperatures, a global epidemic of extinction all around us we saw the politics of human entitlement once again prevail.

How many elections do we need to fight over potholes, jobs and government services until we realise the environment is more than simply the stage on which the human social and economic drama is played out. The stage is on fire and we literally fiddle while it burns.

Every election for decades has been supposedly about jobs, hospitals education and roads, and that old chestnut law and order. Whilst there's no under-estimating the importance of these things it's a bit like being anxious about whether the airline food cart will reach you before the plane crashes.

The environment is not a luxury issue. We cannot afford to place it down a long laundry list of perennial squabbles about government spending priorities as though it's just another 'issue' to "have a policy on", but this is exactly how the major parties keep treating it.

The re-election of the Liberal National government in NSW is a

disaster for our Koalas, our native forests, which will be threatened now with clear felling, our rivers, and native vegetation generally, and our atmosphere. These impacts cannot simply be fixed in the next electoral cycle, environmental impacts are now on a one way trajectory.

The re-election of the LNP is also a disaster for civil liberties, for the right to protest, for sensible drug policy, homelessness and numerous other issues but these are human social issues and we can keep fighting about those amongst ourselves for as long as our planetary life support systems allow us to.

It certainly isn't easy being Green. I was personally very disappointed to see Sue Higginson narrowly miss out on the chance to represent our great innovative region and the values we stand for. The re-election of Tamara Smith in Ballina with an increased majority was a bright spot, and the Greens held their ground across the state, but it is always an uphill battle fighting a status quo as entrenched as the two party system and the corporate power blocs that support them. Sue and the Greens ran a uniquely people-powered, positive and policy driven campaign and are to be commended for avoiding the dirty smear tactics used by both major parties. The preferencing discipline of the Greens helped Janelle defeat the Nats finally and congratulations

to Janelle on her win.

Tamara and Janelle will be faced with a tough job in opposition and we will need to support them to hold the government to account on its election funding promises and to fight for our environment and civil liberties.

But in the bigger picture it's a case of where to from here?

I think we all need to take a pause for some self-care before rushing to our next battle. We have another four years of environmental vandalism and an escalating police state in NSW to endure, a federal election that is bound to be frustrating and a world of rising global fascism ahead.

Those of us whose political motivations arise from an understanding of the interconnectedness of life can become very exhausted fighting the overwhelming human-centeredness of this society. It is the irony of activism that the ecologically literate end up in offices and on computers; greenies end up in log dumps and mine sites; animal rights activists in feedlots and abattoirs; and human rights activists visiting detention centres and prisons as we bring attention to the sacrifice zones of a corporatised world. Where we are dealing with the general public we are often abused and attacked. But when we have suffered a loss, or even when we are simply exhausted we need to return to the source of our



by Aidan Ricketts

inspiration to rebuild. I personally returned to the forest after election day to soak up the city of trees and critters. No social media buzz, no more shouty campaigners, no more self-interested humans to endure, just the peace and aliveness of a relatively intact forest in the late Anthropocene.

What I find almost amusing (if not so sad) is that the very people who can't think out of the human social and economic box are the ones who are going to be most shocked when the climate crisis triggers social and economic collapse. Whilst our planet Gaia is threatened with system break down, it is still an immensely more adaptable and resilient system than late stage capitalism is. Our

planetary ecology has inbuilt mechanisms of resilience whereas our economic system simply has algorithms that defy physics. When it stumbles, it falls and with it not only our economy but much of our social progress.

Extinction is beckoning us from its edge, and as humans we stand in a long queue with thousands of other species in front of us falling over the edge whilst we frantically busy ourselves with money, social conflict and self absorption. We really ought to not be in such a hurry to get to the precipice.

Maybe the coming federal election will finally be the climate election where human entitlement gives way to a realization of the genuine plight of all life support systems on this planet. Don't hold your breath, instead, keep breathing.

We need to connect to nature, re-invigorate ourselves, and in our deepest being know that all we can ever do is accept things exactly as they are and find a resourceful way forward. Who knows how long humans will take to understand our collective predicament, or if they even will in time, but fear not oh ecological ones. The bacteria will survive the worst catastrophe possible and life on Gaia can re-emerge and re-evolve, whether humans choose to avoid this fate or not is up to us. The great matrix of life arose out of bacteria in lava flows, it will survive the Anthropocene.

## Butterflies, bats and Landcare

by Graeme Gibson

The usual habitat for the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly (*inset*) is the lowland subtropical rainforests, but with the increase in logging for timber, and clearing of rainforest for development, its habitat is diminishing at an alarming rate.

This beautiful and endangered butterfly's food plant, the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly Vine (*Pararistolochia praevenosa*), is very specific for the butterfly's survival and is being lost along with the forests.

It is not a matter of any old vine will do. The emerging larvae requires enough of the vine's leaves to feed for 25-50 days, until it is ready to pupate.

The Kyogle Landcare Nursery has grown the host vines from seed, and hopes to encourage landholders both in and around Kyogle to plant the vines in appropriate areas that can be monitored and maintained to increase the chances of survival of these most beautiful butterflies.

Anyone with a spot in dappled shade with some light support for the vine to climb, and the excitement to nurture it to maturity, will greatly assist in this endeavour.

Fences, trellises and shed walls are all suitable. More vines reaching maturity



Members of Kyogle Landcare group

means more leaves for depositing eggs underneath, and more food for the new larvae and so more butterflies.

Since the national Landcare movement started in Australia in 1990, Kyogle Landcare has been involved in numerous land, waterway and habitat management and restoration projects.

Growing the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly host vines is just one of these projects. Through the wide range of these projects the association and its members have developed a strong local knowledge base.

It is also worth noting the well established link between voluntary participation in environmental projects and improved physical and mental health outcomes.

People who do Landcare and other similar project work do it because they like it, they can see improvements in the land and waterways and because it makes them

feel good. A happy upshot of all this is that their GP sees less of them!

To share the local knowledge, and provide an opportunity for people to learn how they too can participate in creating a better environment, Kyogle Landcare is holding an Open Day.

The Open Day will be at the Landcare nursery in Kyogle's Alcorn Park (adjacent to the tennis courts) on Saturday 4th May from 9am to 1pm. A number of activities, all free of charge, are on the program for the day.

Kyogle Landcare nursery operates on Tuesday mornings each week. Information on this, and various Landcare regeneration projects will be available throughout the day.

Sales of tube-stock will be available throughout the day with all plants, apart from the Birdwing vine, being \$2. Morning tea will be available for a gold coin donation.



Photos: Omega Breakspear



## Classroom walk-outs



by Omega Breakspear

On 15th March, over a thousand students walked out of classrooms at local schools to let our politicians and industry leaders know of their concern about climate change.

Tens of thousands from across Australia rallied as

part of worldwide protests inspired by 16-year-old Swedish student Greta Thunberg.

She has pledged to protest outside the Parliament in Stockholm until the country catches up on its commitments under the Paris Agreement.



Dylan McConville

Protesters gathered at Lismore Quad from around our area as well as at Byron Bay and Murwillumbah.

As Frewoini Baume from Trinity College said at the Lismore rally, "Our changing climate is even more important than our education."





by Dionne May

## Life at sea... a new alternative

our time on Earth, requires the same dedication, planning and daily efforts as any full-time job.

And so perhaps the only true difference between a mainstream or an alternative lifestyle is one's ability to learn to handle the challenges and stresses endemic to either choice with love and peace?

So throwing caution to the wind, I have literally cast myself out upon the ocean and her estuarine waters bound for an alternative life on a houseboat. Tethered not by land and fences or roads and traffic, I have chosen the open waters as my new home. And like all new unknown endeavours, the challenges have been unique and the stresses unforeseeable.

Learning the intricacies and nuances of an ever-changing tide takes observation... and time. Learning to navigate a boat... to understand the motor when black smoke starts billowing out of the engine... to stay calm, have a cuppa and solve the problem takes a certain experience to *not panic!*

We have been buffeted by the winds of a cyclone, by the winds of change and by the minefield of navigating a new community.

Three months on a leaky boat, a new dawn glows softly in the eastern sky and blends with the electrical glow of the Gold Coast and Brisbane. Out here on the water, the stars shine with ethereal beauty, reflected in the heaving surging

ocean surface beneath us. The tide ebbs and as the day brightens we are able to step straight off the deck onto the now exposed sand of Swan Bay.

It is a designated 'Green Zone'... so entirely suited to this green gal!

An environmental and wildlife protected bay behind Stradbroke Island, it is under the protection of the Quandamooka people of the island. Swans grace our presence and gather in elegant splendour, turtles and dolphins glide in on the incoming tides and the tips of small reef and bull sharks arc through the clear waters.

Salty ocean air wraps around us as we go about our daily chores, ever aware of the fragility of the environment we now inhabit. Lessons learnt in life, in Nimbin – such as taking only what you need, mindfulness and infinite care with what goes into the ocean... recycling, creating an environmentally friendly toilet and grey water system – have been invaluable knowledge gained by a dedication to an alternative life and have been put to good practice.

So thank you Nimbin. Thank you to that rich pool of like-minded, ethically and morally aware individuals that I have been blessed to know and share time and history with in our pursuit of peace and harmony in a conflicted, confused and fearful world.

The wind blows, the sun sets... we breathe and strive ever to live and love life... and prawns are on the menu tonight.

Choosing an alternative lifestyle to the mainstream has never been easy in Australia.

Surrounded by consumer demands and insatiable, competitive appetites for shiny new stuff, the alternative appears lacklustre at best and perhaps limited or even boring at worst.

No big shiny car in front of a big shiny house. No designer labels. No shopping trips. No expensive restaurants, concerts or holidays.

What many perhaps don't understand is that this is often a moral and/or ethical choice, not a financial affliction.

To decide to tread softly upon the planet, to strive to live in harmony, to have time for simple observations and personal interactions that define



by Therese Biscoe

### The Country Doctor (M) 102 mins

This is a film about the local public faces of a changing system. In *The Country Doctor*, French filmmaker Thomas Lilti has made a movie about doctors as the lynchpins of communities.

The movie is an open-hearted drama, about how the local GP is a safety net stretched thin as they administer care, direct government aid, and counsel the needy. In the opening scenes of *The Country Doctor*, Jean-Pierre Werner (Francois Cluzet), where he again plays a curmudgeon who we come to love and appreciate, makes house calls to the ageing and infirm, spells out a social worker's name for an immigrant and fixes a dairy farmer's mangled hand.

François Cluzet is the Dustin Hoffman of France, though at 61 is considerably younger. Self-contained

and compact in size, Cluzet is as adept at humour as drama, and as with Hoffman, has a facility with facial expressions that can swing a character's mood in the blink of an eye.

"We're going to make it," Jean-Pierre reassures a patient struggling to overcome depression, and the danger with that inclusionary support is that he has nothing left for himself. When he's diagnosed with a brain tumour, the dedicated doctor begins chemotherapy but refuses to stop working.

His stop-gap solution is to recruit a junior doctor, Nathalie Delezia (Marianne Denicourt), an experienced nurse who has gone back to further her qualifications. "Ever worked in a country practice?" he asks her – a line that Australian audiences of a certain age might appreciate – before he plunges her into the everyday reality of working in rural France, outside of the textbooks and the teaching hospitals.

Cluzet and Denicourt both project a quiet, focused compassion even as the old hand teaches the newcomer the ropes, and bristles at being supplanted. "He's God here," Jean-Pierre's adult son, Vincent (Felix Moati), tells Nathalie at a community festival, and the importance of his role, along with the illusion of confidence he projects, stops the ailing Jean-Pierre revealing his own illness.

The performances are adept and the locations and bit players so expressively authentic that the movie binds together.

Lilti is a doctor turned filmmaker, and has a knack for holding on to community members and the briefly seen so that their faces and concerns register, while being economical with the sentimentality.

His film takes its tone from Jean-Pierre: caring but on the clock. It's a small, worthy film that might leave you wondering why this country can't produce an equivalent.

The film will be screened Saturday 13th April at the Birth & Beyond meeting room, 54 Cullen Street, Nimbin. Doors open at 7pm, movie screened at 7.30pm. Light refreshments available.

The trailer can be viewed at this link: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDneQIsDocM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDneQIsDocM)

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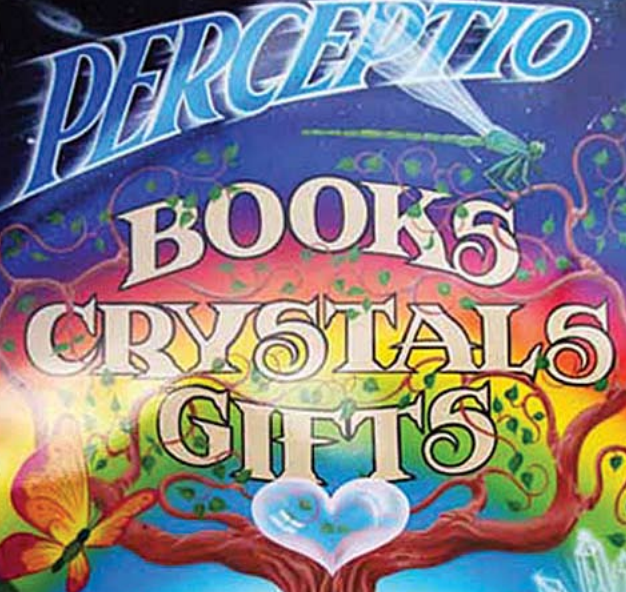


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by Teresa Biscoe

Once again the Nimbin Fashion Parade in March wowed audiences with the range and talent of the fashion designers of the region.

The show was consummately staged with sound production from Neil Pike and lighting and projection production from Tim Tonkin. Both Tim and Neil worked extensively with each designer to get the best backdrop to stage each performance. Each designer and performer had an individually crafted sound, projection and lightscape as a backdrop to their designs.

As an extra treat we also had the pleasure of two fabulous dance performances; a delicate flow of classical ballet from Avila Douglas and a theatrical and gymnastic contemporary dance performance piece from the multi-talented Freya Fae.

From the Art Deco lines to edgy and beautifully crafted leather and metal fetish wear, this show had something for everyone. Most designers produced one-off original designs.

Honey Cut Fashion, transmuting Glo-mesh handbags to haute couture, wowed us with her vamping, 1920's Erte-inspired style. The geometric lines combined with sumptuous detailing show her fashion credentials and creative inspiration.

Mimi La Fae showed exquisite embroidered flowers and butterflies, combined with fine crochet pieces, appliquéd onto upcycled vintage fabric garments and accessories of deceptively simple and eminently wearable designs.

Daizy's Funky Fashion House danced through with a techno beat showing the latest dance party style.

Sylvia Nagy with her individual one-off fashion pieces of Boho chic, inspired by the 60's, 70's and 80's, and retro prints, reflected her obsession with color and recycling second-hand clothes.

Uzume Bee Welling wowed us with the luxury of pure white new silk, a celebration of femininity and romance that flows, floats, and flutters.

Kerry Hagan with her mastery of period clothing and exquisitely fitted gowns presented us with a collection that could easily grace the red carpet or the silver screen with its form and glamour.

A new label RaQ's Designs by Cerne Chaves was

launched at the show with two separate collections. The "Crazy Kool" collection, which consisted of 80's Urban/Hip-Hop inspired designs, and "The Signature" collection consisting of Victorian steam punk inspired pieces, all garments are made to order.

The Q Fever Collection is inspired by unconventional recycling. All of this collection was made from recycled vintage crochet and denim. Nanna's old crochet rugs never looked so funky.

Pol Nettleton, a long term Nimbin fashion designer, inspired us again with his edgy architectural, Japanese and punk-inspired high fashion and street wear.

Last but not least was an experimental street-wear label called Spunkhyde.

Producing costumes for performers around the globe, delving into BDSM wear and incorporating leather, metal rubber, rope and plumbing fittings into her unique designs. This collection of jewelry, clothing, leather boots, leather wear, hats,

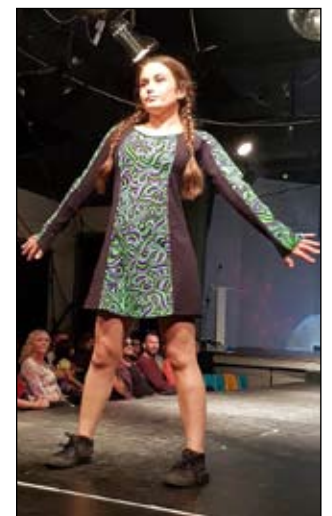
BDSM toys and costume were created for the brave and edgy.

Once again Nimbin Fashion Show Producer Samara Burcher has created an amazing event showcasing the range of design talent of the region, the incredible spunk and personality of our locals who modelled for the event, and the ability of the community to come together to support and promote local culture. Samara is committed to maintaining this annual cultural event, and sees this as an opportunity to contribute to her community.

We would like to thank the backstage crew; the wonderful Kat Anderson our backstage organiser and general roustabout, the dressers and make-up people; Neil Pike for posters, sound and for being a slave for the show; Tim Tonkin for lighting and setup; Louise Metah for fantastic production assistance, no job too big or too small, and the front of house crew.

Thanks also to Steph Secold from the Truffula Seed Catering for the delicious food; Kimberly Fuller and Chris Tichbourne for running the bar; the Green bank for ticket sales; Tim, Bev and Arthur from Sound Solutions Lighting Dept; and all the designers.

Last but not least, thanks to Samara's wonderful family, Rom, Ari and Tane, without whose support this production would not have been possible.



Photos by Sue Stock



# Check out Mish, being herself

When you Google Mish Songsmith's latest album, *Be Yourself*, it's amusing to read the differing opinions and attitudes of these words. Yet at the end of the day, it's really what it means to you.

Since quitting her 'safe' (regular) income job and trusting 100% in her musical abilities and the universe to support her, local musician and songwriter, Mish Songsmith has been in two places at once.

The ecstatic feeling of freedom, with a marvellously jam-packed gig month of March to the overwhelming sense of fear, where the mind comes in and whispers callously, "what have you done?"

**'Be'** v.i. (pre. tense *am, are, is*; p.t. *was, were*; p.p. *been*) exist, occur. **'Yourself'**; emphatic and reflexive form of *you*.

Ah, "You only live once darling," her dearly departed dad would say with such pride, echoing the sentiments of her loving partner, family and friends. "Good on you for being so brave."

Let's keep live music living! Come and enjoy the love and music that flows out of Mish Songsmith.

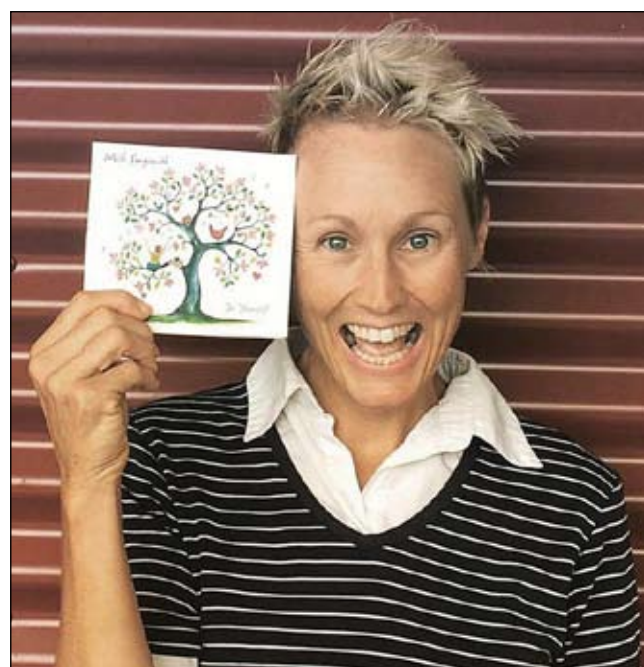
Perhaps she will do what she desires to do through her music... inspire you, uplift you, fill you with love and joy so that you too can trust in yourself and 'be yourself' through and through.

Mish is flying solo on keys and powerful, passionate vocals this month at these gigs:

- Friday 12th April: Tintenbar Upfront Feature Artist 7.30pm;
- Thursday 18th April: Australian Songwriters Association (ASA) Feature Artist 6.30-9.30pm East Lismore Bowling Club;
- Friday 26th April: Nimbin Bowlo Greenkeepers Bistro 6.30-9pm;
- Sunday 28th April: Sphinx Rock Café 12-3pm.

For more info on Mish Songsmith and upcoming gigs, check out:

[www.mishsongsmith.com](http://www.mishsongsmith.com)  
[www.facebook.com/mish.songsmithmusic/](https://www.facebook.com/mish.songsmithmusic/)  
[www.reverbnation.com/mishsongsmith](http://www.reverbnation.com/mishsongsmith)



by Tara Ali

Message Stick Walk is a film worth watching about Alwyn Doolan, an inspiring indigenous fella who is marching across the country to Canberra to give notice to the Government that a treaty must be signed with the original people of this land. He is connecting with mob

on the way and we filmed a few days of his journey.

We would like to raise awareness of his cause and rally a crowd to meet him in Canberra on 20th May to show their support for a treaty now.

The film will screen at the Rainbow Centre in Mullumbimby on Saturday 13th April at 7pm.

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- **Open Mic Nights** - Wednesdays 3rd & 17th
- **Saturday 13th - Nimbin Jazz Club**
- **Social Bowls** - Sundays 9am
- **Courtesy Bus** - Enquire at Bar
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### LIVE ENTERTAINMENT THIS MONTH

- **Friday 5th, 6pm Koby**
- **Friday 12th, 6pm Freowin Harper**
- **Friday 19th, 6pm Cass Eleven**
- **Friday 26th, 6pm Mish**
- **Friday 3rd May Rob Cass**

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**Thursday 4th Comedy Night 630pm**

**Friday 5th Mercy Mercy 7pm**

**Saturday 6th Cass Eleven 7pm**

**Thursday 11th Jay Jackson 7pm**

**Friday 12th Salt & Steel 7pm**

**Saturday 13th Scott Marriot 7pm**

**Thursday 18th Craig Atkins 6.30pm**

**Friday 19th Sandy 7pm**

**Saturday 20th The Letter O 7pm**

**Thursday 25th Surf Report 6.30pm**

**Friday 26th The Hoochers 7pm**

**Saturday 27th Q 7pm**



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