

NGT welcomes letters and other contributions received by email or post prior to deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be edited for length, and articles for accuracy. Please include your full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

Air-conditioned trains

The sort of people who say 'it's never gonna happen', in reference to putting trains back onto our rail infrastructure in the Northern Rivers, remind me of the sort of people who say 'climate change, or global warming, is never gonna happen', or they act like it!

Climate change is real, and when temperatures go close to 50deg C, and more frequently, during the next 10 to 15 years (and here I'm being generous), people and their families will not be on their bikes for hours on end out in the heat.

They are more likely to each be in their air-conditioned cars, consuming fossil fuel, clogging up the badly worn roads, and contributing to further bringing up the Earth's temperatures. Even electric cars need lots of energy to build and maintain.

Many people in the country do not travel on public transport because there are just not the right options available to suit their needs.

Air-conditioned regular trains would solve the many problems for people and climate change, with people leaving their cars at numerous railway station car parks, to go to work, shop, and for recreational travel to the many local villages and major centres, as well as the Gold Coast sometime in the not too distant future.

A healthy lifestyle can also be achieved with a train service, as bikes can be taken on the train, along with things like skateboards, and tents too.

If our corridor's tracks are removed, it's going to be a hot and expensive slog to put them back down.

Coralie Summerton
Nimbin

Dream of a dog park

When I am a millionaire I shall purchase two acres, somewhere close to Nimbin.

In this two acres, which I will fence, I will place an artificial lake for dogs to swim, a path to walk upon, exercise machines for people to play, smoothly mown grass and lots of trees. It needs to be relatively flat – don't want the dog lovers dying of exhaustion.

It will be up-kept by a fund supported by people like me, who have a particular love for dogs, and I will call it Wooky

Park, after my beloved Shihtzu who makes me smile, often.

Nimbin is going through a huge transition right now, from rural to urban and doing it the best we can requires a place where people and their dogs can safely have a good time.

Tonia Haynes,
Nimbin

Calico Creek unapproved

Lismore Council has refused the application to develop 39 Crofton Road, DP 591453 Lot 3.

The development, which was in the opinion of many seen to be a precedent for others to follow across vast areas of the northern part of the Richmond Valley, has now been stopped.

Close to 1000 people signed the petition that outlined concerns, and many shared it for others to sign.

On top of signing and sharing, many people helped with a flow of letters to the local newspapers, to Lismore City Council, to the NSW Minister for Planning and to the NSW Local Government Ombudsman, opposing the development.

We have together stopped the development, and in doing so we have saved habitat, saving the creeks from pollution, saved endangered species, saved indigenous birthing pools etc.

In the future we must be on guard, as the developers may try again.

Mark Pestell
Nimbin

Financial help needed

Dear people of Nimbin, you may know me, as I have been living and loving and giving in many different ways in Nimbin for 30 years. I have two children, one of whom has been critically ill for eight years.

I was involved in a serious car accident a few weeks back – no guard rail and a slick road – and I ended up a Code 9. My car, that I had saved up for for seven months, rolled into a paddock at the donut dam on Nimbin Road.

It had just rained and the road was slick. I was not speeding, and two people in the car can attest to the speed I was doing, 40 or 50 clicks. We just slid over the road, and with no guardrail, over we went.

Thanks for the \$500 neg. driving fine I received, for what? Having the worst council in Australia. I feel defeated by our council and the way they treat Nimbin, which brings in so many tourists, so why are we ignored?

Our roads are dangerous and in desperate need of fixing. So many accidents and deaths: it has to end.

I have never asked for money or help, but if it's good enough for Prince Harry and

others, then I too am asking anyone who is willing to give me a hand-up, not a hand-out.

I would be grateful for any help you may like to offer to help me get a new vehicle, and will know my community cares for us. I will have an account set up for donations at Summerland Credit Union.

Jackie Payne
Nimbin

Seven Sister site

In reference to Binnah Pownall last edition saying my story in the February Edition was "bizarre": I feel the need to clear the air.

Cecil Roberts and Charlie Harris did give me permission to write the article and Charlie read it preprint in the Oasis and had power of change.

I have not meant any disrespect. I did share knowledge of this site with them, that Steven Strong had shared with me, which included his opinion that the theory of the Seven Sisters building the stone circle fitted well with the site and a different site was potentially related to Thoth.

It is worth noting that women are looking after the standing stones which have been re-found.

I understand there are two threads of stories about the Seven Sisters with one being of Original descent. In the book *Wise Women of the Dreamtime*, in a story 'Where the Frost comes from', the Seven Sisters are spoken of as having "bodies sparkled with icicles" (which could be seen as a white colour).

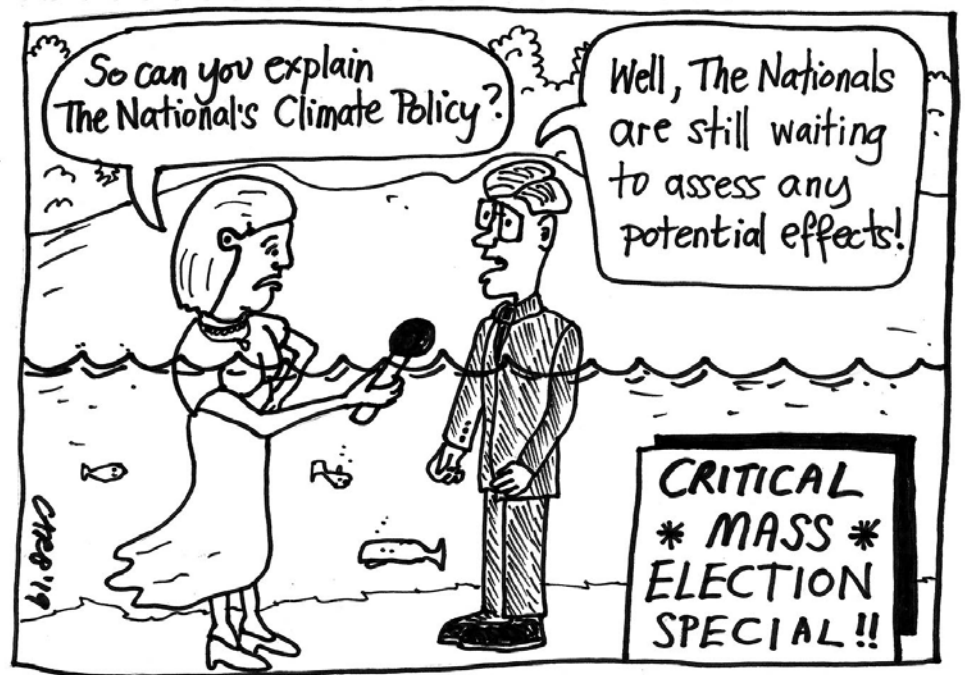
Correlations with Greek, Egyptian and Indian myths are noted after this story. I believe it is out of character for the Original people to move hundreds of tonnes of rock and carve with thousands of pre-Egyptian glyphs. Astronomical Stone Circles have been found in many parts of the world.

Gavin Menzies, ex-Royal Naval Commander, makes a convincing case in his book *The Lost Empire of Atlantis – History's Greatest Mystery Revealed* for these Stone Circles to have come from an ancient civilisation that originates in the Mediterranean.

He shows this through DNA Haplogroup X2, matching tools including double headed axes, jewellery, purity of copper in wrecks of Mediterranean linked with Lake Superior America, petroglyphs ie double headed axe on England's Stonehenge and boat like Thera ship frescoes near Copper Harbour America found close to a Stone Circle etc.

This local one, I hear, is blackfella whitefella dreaming, and I would love to see a cultural centre there and the ancient language valued.

Kate Marson
Lismore



A crying shame

I am so appalled and disappointed that the people of NSW voted for business as usual for the next four years.

They voted for: corporate dollars that have led to corruption, a continuing degradation of our environment including mismanagement of our waterways and massive fish kills, destruction of our forests and koala habitat and worst of all, no movement on Climate Change nor support for Renewable energy.

It was time for a real change and to move forward to a more sustainable future for this state for our selves, our children and grandchildren.

What a waste and what a shame!

Joanna Gardner
Uki

Addressing climate change

Russell Preston (NGT, March 2019) correctly observed that "irreversible changes to our ecosystems must be expected". Irreversible, yes, but not unalterable.

"Uninformed community groups" can be unhelpful – the child abuse of non-vaccination being an example.

Far more problematic is the climate change denial of unscrupulous profiteers and populist media, whose misinformation and propaganda is rampant.

Most great (and some not-so-great) agents of change have started at community level.

To label the student "walkout" as "futile" is disingenuous. The withholding of labour is a fundamental tenet of democracy.

Irrespective of the imposed laws, the reality is, there are no illegal asylum seekers, just as there are no illegal strikes.

While not to be undertaken lightly, they must be an option.

Yes, let's hear "positive, practical advice", but let's not ignore the dystopian environmental maelstrom into which we will descend without action.

Peter Mudd
East Lismore

Putrid Pell

I found the 2012 meeting on Q&A between Pell and Dawkins.

Pell presented himself poorly — a high ranking Christian fairly inarticulate about his faith, he appeared as a man with a strangely obtuse mind: one of those creatures who is clever with words, numbers and various ways of manipulating ideas while, at the same time, quite stupefied by beliefs in impossible irrational forms of magic.

He evidenced Christianity as a hotchpotch of borrowed primitive faiths (which it is), a bit of animism, a bit of pantheism, a smidgin of druidism and a firm belief in the power of spells, charms and rites. It seemed to me he was confused about the difference between a living body and a dead one.

I can imagine that a man like that, who believes the after life he imagines is more important than the physical life he endures, would not be phased by incidentally practising buggery on children whose immortal souls he does, at the same time, save from hell's fire and everlasting suffering.

The law has condemned his behaviour as criminal; what is criminal about him is descriptive of the corruptness of his church.

To those who think Christianity is a 'nice' religion I suggest you've not studied your own holy book — it contains the same strange beauty and the same putridity as you find in men like Pell.

Michael Brooke
Kyogle

Come on back to the war

Is this a modern-day definition of insanity?

A 100,000 dollar American missile, launched by a 20 million dollar fighter jet that flies at a cost of 6000 dollars per hour to kill people who live on less than one dollar a day in Yemen, and you can include many other countries that the Western alliance targets.

Welcome to our modern progressive world of international politics! Much

of which is of course "gagged" in the name of national security. But we, as the astute, incredibly intelligent readers of this unique newspaper know, we can take a pretty good guess at what is really going on.

One of the late, great prophets of our time, Leonard Cohen, summed it up many moons ago in his song, "There is a War" (*New Skins For An Old Ceremony*, 1974):

There is a war between the rich and poor, a war between the man and woman.

There is a war between the ones who say there is a war and the ones who say there isn't.

Why don't you come on back to the war, that's right get in it.

Why don't you come on back to the war, it's just beginning.

Why don't you come on back to the war, don't be a tourist.

Why don't you come on back to the war before it hurts us.

Why don't you come on back to the war, let's all get nervous.

I was so easy to defeat, I was so easy to control, I didn't even know there was a war...

Live your vision, you beautiful Rainbow Hippies.

Craig Marlow,
Kyogle

Admiral 'Banks'

It doesn't need much insight to see that most problems on Earth are caused by greed; nor to see that most greed is generated by the banking industry.

No other industry creates something (money) from nothing, and then contrives to make even more something in the form of fractional reserve lending, and the interest payable. This is the juggernaut captained and crowned by Admiral Banks of the good ship Greed, from the homily that greed is good.

Whenever I hear politicians' poly-waffle in the Senate etc causing me some hope, I take a reality check and know that their good vibe blather is self-serving, self-promoting ego stroking.

Australia is becoming a corporate tyranny. The Lib/Nat coalition represents a global capitalist tyranny. The

Notices

Annual General Meetings

- Tuntable Falls Early Childhood is having their AGM on Wednesday 15th May from 8.30am at Tuntable Falls Community School Library. All welcome.
- Tuntable Falls Community School will hold its AGM on Thursday 16th May at 9.30am, at the school library, 117 Upper Tuntable Falls Road, Nimbin.

Labor and Greens parties represent a global socialist tyranny. Both sides are funded by Admiral Banks and the crew of the good ship Greed. While the Greens are merely a minor political force with their thought-bubble agendas, they pose no real threat to Admiral Banks, and will be allowed to toy around in their social-engineering play-pen. However, if they ever hint at being a real threat, they may well find themselves being taken out, either figuratively or literally.

History tells us that US President Andrew Jackson (1829-1837) took away control of America's money supply from private banks which were the forerunners of today's US Federal Reserve, but when his term expired the good ship Greed started sailing full steam ahead again.

About three decades later, Abraham Lincoln planned again to take control of America's currency and dollar notes were to be named "greenbacks". The international bankers were not about to take any chances of America issuing its own money and being debt-free. Lincoln was assassinated.

As for Australia, our Reserve Bank is one of approximately 162 central banks owned or controlled by the Rothschild banking die-nasty. Join the dots to the good ship Greed and Admiral Banks and crew.

Ian Morris,
South Casino

Robin Hood tax needed

The fastest growing false religion is belief in the capitalist economy.

This product of Western civilisation, widely studied at universities, has dominated the globe. It's so successful that 26 billionaires now own as much as the poorest 3.8 billion!

Politicians and economists who say 'let the market rip', the trickle-down effect will nourish the masses, are proven wrong. The trickle smells of urine.

Humanity cannot afford to maintain its faith in capitalism. Would you trust a bank with your money, or your child with a priest? The time of 'father knows best' is over for all aspects of society. Human nature dictates that only full transparency will do. Be happy that exposure of corruption is accelerating.

All those of European origins, know that we count

as much as past victims of slavery and empire, now that corporations are globalised. Angry conservative politicians are subject to historical propaganda, their parties, and manipulation by shadowy profiteers. It never occurred to them that we can evolve an all-inclusive system that doesn't need divisive politics.

If a modern Robin Hood distributed the assets of but the 26 richest, to the poorest half of the planet, everyone would have enough to be happy and thrive. The pseudo-science of economics can't perceive of a system that works fairly for all.

This election season, the major parties will as always, promise crumbs from the table to all and sundry. Employers will plead ruin if wages rise.

We need independents who will work towards a universal basic income (check Peter Bregman), and to rein in corporate world rule. It has been all but proven that generous unconditional universal income works miracles. People become highly motivated and are enabled to solve their unique problems. A 15-hour week is possible, with time for family and community, and leads to dignity, health and happiness.

Economists wax lyrical when comparing gross domestic product (GDP) with the average wage, judging it too high. People are considered mere economic units in an equation.

Gross income, without considering costs, is unfairly compared, while GDP is a total of business profits, after all expenses are deducted. No matter that individual net income is insufficient for food, transport and accommodation, and that contributors of labour are sick, fatigued, or stressed. Such economics seems both illogical and stupid.

The super-rich who meet annually in Davos and control world governments, are incapable of solving this problem, whilst they battle one another for ever greater riches, using governments in their arsenals. We must disarm them by taking away their power over political parties and dictators.

Yes, we need genuine democratic governments willing to tax like Robin Hood. Only independent politicians, united in working for the people, can deliver that.

Hayo van der Woude
Mullumbimby

Letter from Ireland

My neighbour John Lyons and his family toured Australia during (our) autumn 2018 – your springtime – and brought back copies of the *Nimbin GoodTimes* (Native Indigo edition, October 2018).

Bernadine Schwartz's 'Majesty of Trees' prompted this writer to reflect and respond – unregretfully via 'hard mail', never having been online.

We in Ireland are bereft of any Nimbin community including any remote equivalent or prospect of such community template and despite a scattering of community-based environmental advocacy groups and a handful of national NGOs (non-government organisations), our central government in tandem with our local planning authorities fail persistently to effectively guard Ireland's endangered and vulnerable habitats and their species.

Felling licenses continue to be issued for our remaining old growth Oakwoods that are now reduced to 0.5% of Ireland's 20 million acre national territory. Our plantation forestry cover exceeds 11% comprising 85% Sitka Spruce (Alaskan provenance).

In Bernardine's ultimate paragraph with reference to 'sustainable logging' in 17th century Japan, one is reminded of Emperor Fu's 'Wisdom Texts' published 3,600 years BP. Fu advises: to look after your rivers, look first after your mountains."

Since our independence from the United Kingdom (1922) Fisheries and Forestry and Wildlife have been kicked from pillar to post across separate government ministries. Currently Forestry is stitched into Agriculture with our recently enacted Forestry Act of 2016, not only

criminalises any "unauthorised disclosure" by Forestry Services personnel, but amends our Freedom of Information laws to expressly exclude public access to information.

In our republic, which one vulnerable adult describes as 'the land of milk and money', environmental citizenship amounts practically to the cult of appearance. Our young offenders point to the ethically depraved vandalism of semi-wilderness – men and machines looking for something to do, they tell me at our outdoor field surveys.

As a heritage specialist working in our primary school sector, how does one respond to a non-verbal (who actually spoke) who asks "Why are people so afraid of trees?" Bernardine writes "we just don't fit in at all."

When in 1985, we formed into Macroom and District Environmental and Historical Group, local elected councillors referred to us as 'mental hysterics' and 'dilettante blow-ins'. (writer's roots are from Northern Ireland)

This fact is added because in that intervening 34 years our group, has witnessed a younger, educated, articulate and more dynamic voluntary recruitment of the local community to relay the baton – a new generation with ecological consciousness far beyond ours of the mid '80's.

Organic farming (as distinct from industrial agriculture) is creeping up our valley – our unemployed are turning out in big numbers to plant Oak, Holly, Hazel, Birch, Tew and Wild Cherry and acquire conservation skills (Field Botany, Plant Identification, Habitat Enhancement, Riparian and Woodland Surveying and Recording, Bio-dynamics, Applied Arboriculture, Bat/ Owl/ Red Squirrel/Butterfly surveying).

Ted Cook
Kilbarry, Ireland

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**NEXT DEADLINE:
Wednesday 1st May**

Email nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

Rental Vacancies at Nimbin Community Centre



Room A3, Acacia
Small room (15.91m²) in Acacia House available. It comes with a sink and has 2 windows. Great location and security. Rent will start from \$259.13/month (net GST) for a non-profit group. Commercial rates available on application.



Room C3, Figtree
A large (85.34m²) central room with kitchenette, and bathroom attached. Would suit many different purposes. Rent from \$871.88/month (net GST) for non-profit. Commercial rates available on application.

If you are interested in renting one of these rooms, please direct a written Expression of Interest to the Nimbin Community Centre Management Committee at 81 Cullen Street Nimbin, or email: ncci@nimbincommunity.org.au
You will need to provide 2 rental references.

For further information on what to include in your Expression of Interest, please contact our co-ordinators during office hours Monday to Thursday between 10am and 2pm on 6689-0000 or via email.



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Elliot backs community, opposes Adani

In the midst of heated debate about Federal Labor's stance on the controversial Adani coal mine, community groups have welcomed Labor MP Justine Elliot's recent comments in Parliament opposing the controversial Adani mine.

"We've been asking for this for over two years," said Kathryn McConnochie, spokesperson for Stop Adani Byron Shire.

"It is significant both nationally and locally that Justine has spoken out against the Adani mine in Parliament."

Representatives from Stop Adani Byron Shire and Tweed Shire groups visited the Federal Labor Member for Richmond, shortly before Parliament resumed and presented her with a petition of 3,904 signatures from constituents opposing the Adani Mine.

Kathryn McConnochie, spokesperson for Stop Adani Byron Shire said, "We requested that Ms Elliot present the petition in Parliament as a document and that she states her opposition to the Adani mine."

Ms Elliot tabled the petitions in Parliament with a statement against the controversial coal mine: "Personally I'm opposed to the Adani coal mine going ahead and share the community's concerns about the potential environmental harm that could follow to the Great Barrier Reef and other areas."

Ms McConnochie said, "We are very pleased that Ms Elliot has presented



Representatives from Stop Adani Byron Shire and Tweed Shire groups with Justine Elliot

our petition and represented the views of our community in Parliament. She was under no obligation to present the petitions, as they were worded informally. Now they have gone on the parliamentary record along with her statement opposing the mine."

"These signatures, combined with those for the same petition, presented to Kevin Hogan MP in 2017, now total 4,660 from our community."

"We have had thousands of conversations with people across the region and have found that overwhelmingly our community want

this dangerous project stopped."

In the lead-up to the federal election, the #StopAdani movement is calling on both major parties to commit to stopping the mine.

"It's time for Labor to stop sitting on the fence and commit to stopping this catastrophic mine, which will open up the Galilee Basin, one of the largest coal reserves left on earth."

"To protect the climate, our groundwater and the Great Barrier Reef for future generations we must keep Galilee basin coal in the ground," Ms McConnochie said.

Turning the Page on climate change

by Patrick Deegan
ALP Candidate for Page

If there's one single issue that shows how much the National Party has lost touch with people in regional and rural Australia, then it's climate change.

As the country swelters through yet another record-breaking hot summer, as farmers deal with the devastating effects of another prolonged drought, and as our rivers dry up – you would think the Nationals might reconsider their heads-in-the-dust climate change denialism.

But no, the Coalition treats climate change like an in-house joke. How else can you explain Scott Morrison's decision to appoint climate change sceptic Barnaby Joyce as "Special Envoy for the Drought"?

Since I started my political journey, I have had hundreds of conversations with farmers and other people in traditional National Party voting areas who are dismayed by, and angry about, the party's dogmatic determination to ignore reality.

They just want politicians to get over the nonsense and arguments. The science was settled decades ago, and regional communities are now suffering from the lack of action at the political level.

What's more, we all know that things are only going to get worse. The longer we leave it before taking action, then the longer it will take to restore the delicate balance in our atmosphere that sustains life on earth.

Of course, climate change is a global problem that requires a global response. We cannot solve this crisis on our own.

But equally, the world cannot solve this crisis without us. Australia is one of the world's largest per capita polluters, and a relatively affluent, developed nation.



We have the capacity, the skills, and the resources to be a world leader in the transition to a carbon-free future. All we are missing is the political will.

And frankly, we will not see that political leadership come from the Liberals or the Nationals.

So what will a Federal Labor Government do?

Labor's climate change policies will be guided by our energy and climate targets of 50% renewable energy by 2030, a 45% cut in pollution by 2030, and net zero emissions by 2050.

Labor will start by super-charging the renewable energy industry, because this is where the biggest gains can be made, and quickly.

Not only will we support large-scale renewable projects, we will stimulate the development of a more decentralised energy network, where more households and residents are energy self-sufficient.

The cornerstone of this strategy will be our program to increase residential battery storage, which will aim to see an extra one million household batteries installed by 2025.

Labor's Household Battery Program

will provide a \$2,000 rebate for 100,000 households with incomes below \$180,000 per year to purchase and install battery storage systems.

The Smart Energy Council estimates that household batteries would allow most homes to save more than 60% off their power bills.

But just as importantly, by allowing people to store energy generated during the day for use in the evening, batteries decrease demand during peaks – thus lowering power prices across the board.

Labor will also open up access to renewable energy for households currently cut out of the solar revolution – like renters, and public housing tenants – through a \$100 million Neighbourhood Renewables Program.

You can read more about Labor's progressive energy plans at: www.makeourfuturerenewable.org.au

Labor will have a lot more to say about climate change, sustainable energy and sustainable transport in the lead up to the election, so stay tuned.

As a society, we cannot wait any longer. Our climate crisis is urgent and we must take serious action now.



by Tamara Smith
Member for Ballina

I am honoured to have been re-elected as the Member for Ballina, and I congratulate the other MPs in the Northern Rivers region on their election or re-election. I pay tribute to the Greens candidate for Lismore, Sue Higginson, for her hard work during

Greens back in business in Ballina

her campaign. The Greens are a grassroots party and our model of door knocking and phone banking was first pioneered by Barack Obama. Labor and the Nationals seemed to fly in all their campaign experts, whereas for us it was all about our local volunteers.

We did around 10,000 door knocks and I personally rang nearly 500 people myself for one-on-one conversations.

I felt overwhelming support from the community for the values which make this region a magnet for tourists and new residents alike: awareness of the impact our actions are having on the climate and the

planet, and concern to preserve our environment and wildlife for future generations.

Back in 2015 I said that the issue of Coal Seam Gas had united a diverse community, but that it was just a catalyst and that the mood for change ran deeper. We saw in this election, in the Ballina and Lismore electorates, people from all walks of life continue to stand up to the threats to our water, wildlife and environment from water mining operations, from deforestation and from overdevelopment.

And we saw the amazing enthusiasm and commitment from the next generation just before the election

with the school strikes for climate action. Being back for a second term means there is no time to rest because there is a lot at stake and so many issues to be addressed.

This is a watershed moment for the Greens and for the North Coast. It is a moment that suggests that people from all walks of life, in greater and greater numbers, care deeply about the environment. They understand that our resources sustain our way of life and that the essentials of life must not be sold off to the highest bidder.

More than a million people a year flock to our region to surf and dive, fish, walk and swim our beautiful beaches. They come to escape the

hurley-burley of fast-paced lives, soak up the beauty of the hills and rivers, and immerse themselves in the art, music and culture of the region. We are the jewel in the crown and we deserve to be resourced accordingly.

That is why I will be asking the NSW government to halt development on projects that do not have community support, to better fund infrastructure which is under pressure from tourism (such as our road system), and the Greens at state and federal levels will continue to push for the legalisation and regulation of cannabis for recreational use, and to take immediate action on climate change.

On the same PAGE

Kevin Hogan MP
Member for Page

Work is about to begin on the upgrade of Norco's ice cream factory in Lismore. \$15 million is from a Government grant. This will help secure the over 800 jobs at Norco and the 200 dairy farmers who supply them.

Norco is matching the funding dollar for dollar.

The \$30 million project includes the construction of a two-storey building to accommodate the two spiral freezer tunnels, the installation of a new palletising system, water recovery machines and new vats.

This will be a world class ice cream factory. It will also make our dairy industry more sustainable.

In another major win for our local dairy farmers, Coles and Aldi stopped selling \$1 a litre milk.

This is important because we need the price paid to our dairy farmers to be sustainable for the industry to survive.

I will continue to lobby my colleagues to support my call for a Royal Commission into the large supermarkets. There is still a



Kevin Hogan enjoys ice cream with some of Norco's directors

power imbalance in the sector that needs to be addressed.

We have announced a \$30 million pilot Agriculture Biodiversity Stewardship Program for farmers to receive incentives for projects that boost biodiversity and also, if appropriate, absorb carbon.

Maintaining or enhancing remnant forests, regeneration of gullies or waterways, or mixed species native tree plantings could be examples of eligible projects.

Additionally, \$4 million will go towards creating a national and internationally recognised biodiversity certification scheme to help biodiversity-friendly farmers get an extra premium for their product.

So in NSW Labor has proven it can, through a lack of integrity and competence, lose a seemingly unloseable election. In early May they will get another chance to battle out another seemingly unloseable election.

The rats have all jumped the Coalition ship that is listing profoundly under the weight of its own internal conflicts. The ocean is flowing onto it decks as it flounders on the rocks of climate crisis and profound social inequality.

Multiple new conservative parties have established themselves in the wake of these internal divisions, further diluting the Coalition vote.

It will come as some relief to Captain Scumbo that the pirates of the No Nation, under the control of the gun lobby, having been busted being traitors desperate to bring American violence back onto our streets.

And even if that means he won't preference them, in a compulsory preferential system their vote will still flow back to him. Just as the votes from the Greens, in a compulsory preferential system, will flow to Labor. It's how the two party system works... or used to work.

A new reality is becoming apparent in Australia. In the last decade the very primacy of the major parties has been adrift and will soon founder completely as it drops below 30%. At this stage, as they loose the right to be called major parties and they will, as we have already seen, start to preference each other to keep their duopoly going.

They call it the centre, but it is the home of corporate parties executing corporate government for their corporate bosses and



Revenge of the Loon

by Laurie Axtens

the community is starting to join the dots.

For them to maintain their hegemony they must keep the false dichotomy of left and right wing going, to divide the community forces that oppose them. However, the emergence of increasing numbers of unlabelable independents is making this increasingly difficult.

This has meant a growing eruption of democracy as parliaments are regularly hung, and the influence of the cross benches takes on a whole new meaning. I can only see this trend continuing.

Labor should win in May, but they could easily just form a minority government or just as they have in NSW, fall flat on their faces. Will we care... not much, we're handling climate change without them, we're coping with our social inequities despite them.

We've long since realised that they are in many ways our opponents, not our representatives.

Candidate Daniel determined to make a difference

by Daniel Reid
The Greens candidate for Page

I want to firstly congratulate the wonderful Sue Higginson for the great job she did in the state election – achieving a great result and helping Labor over the line to defeat the Nationals. It was Greens voters who made this electorate a progressive one – after many years as a Nationals stronghold.

I think it's clear that the Nats have let down their constituents, who are beginning to see that regional issues must take climate change, protection of our natural environment and agricultural productivity into account; to create a future for us all, especially our children and grandchildren.

We were all very inspired by Sue's campaign, and I'm sure she'll make a great impact on the future of our natural environment, and justice for all Australians, whatever she chooses to do. It was also heartening to see that our three incumbent Greens MPs, including Tamara Smith in Ballina, retained their seats with increased majorities.

Our party's success was in no small part thanks to the progressive plans that The Greens take to the people and in Parliament, ones that often challenge the very system



we operate under. People who care for the environment, and believe in social justice for all Australians will have a chance to vote for The Greens again in May, and it's very exciting to be a part of a movement with some ambitious and much-needed reform policies. One of my strongest reasons for becoming

involved in politics was to clean up the gross corruption and cronyism that is the norm for the old parties. As a first step, corporate donations should be banned and individual donations capped. Large corporations have too much influence over political parties.

The second step in this process of cleaning up politics is to publicly fund election campaigns so that parties are accountable for the promises they make, as well as the promises that they break.

If we taxed corporations their fair share, we would have more money to spend on health, education and social services, which should never have been allowed to suffer at the hands of private industry. The best funded and run hospitals and schools should be available to everyone and be free. We know that aged care and childcare should be seen as basic rights of our society instead of being open to abuse by private providers with little oversight and practically no enforcement.

We also take a very strong stand on giving everyone access to a home and shelter. We all deserve a home, so we will demand a massive increase in affordable housing in Parliament. Renters too need improved rights – longer, more secure leases, and capped rent increases. Building development is far too often driven by the need to make money rather than

support the housing needs of the whole community.

We have had our policies costed by the same body as the big parties – one that was set up by a Greens deal with government to ensure transparency and viability in policy statements – so we can confidently say that what we stand for will ensure that Australians from all walks of life benefit from the wealth and industry of our country – without sacrificing the things that matter to us.

I love my home and my community. It's the best. I lived my early days in Bishop's Creek, then in Lismore, then went away to study but have been back again for a few years now, working and furthering my studies, with some contract work for a Greens MP. If you support me and The Greens, then together we can make a real difference to how the conversation unfolds in the coming Federal Election.

There are many issues that concern the good people of the Northern Rivers, and The Greens are known for looking at them from different perspectives, and without lobbying from corporate donors. I will discuss some of these in the May issue.

In the meantime, please follow my Facebook page: Daniel Reid – Greens Candidate for Page, or contact me on: dareid001@gmail.com. You can also find our policies on the internet.