

Celebrating 40 years of rainforest regeneration

Story and photo by Greg Bork

“I trust that the snakes are getting out of my way.” Nan Nicholson (pictured) walks barefoot as we begin walking up through the long grass in the paddock that she and partner Hugh still look after, once the site of the Terania Creek blockade camp in 1979.

As we enter the regrowth forest, Nan observes, “When you see young eucalypts like this, with rainforest understory, you can pretty accurately age when the catastrophe happened – this was originally cleared for bananas apparently. If there’s no fire, as there probably won’t be, this will go back to rainforest.

“I didn’t plant anything here, just came up and attacked the lantana. It was my way of getting out of the house, dealing with children and

forest fights and other things. This is real work, it has a real result, and I still do that with regeneration.

“That’s my soul food, undoing some of the damage that we’ve done as a culture. Here was relatively easy because there’s such a huge seed bank immediately next door. You don’t have to do a lot of work, you just pull out a few things and stand back.”

Nan weaves together anecdotes that become many-layered stories, the forest always as metaphor for deeper meanings. “I really love it, it’s so incredibly complex. As humans we ignore the stuff we can’t understand and call it not important, but in fact it is the most important, we just ignore it.

“That’s why with economics we reduce everything into a system that we understand and then ignore the rest. We’re really good at that, which is why you end up

with forest battles. The people here were fighting for the non-economic values, the messy ones, the complex ones, the ones that involve emotion and spirit and all the rest of it.”

As a result of the Terania blockade, Nan and Hugh’s azalea nursery business collapsed, and they decided to grow rainforest trees instead.

“When we first began 40 years ago, it was considered weird. No-one seemed to know how to grow rainforest trees; we had to learn for ourselves. There was no culture of putting rainforest back, but it was just waiting to blossom. As soon as somebody talked about it and grew a few trees it just took off.

“I remember one young bloke came to the nursery once to buy trees, and he said his father had cleared their place completely, and now he was busy putting it all back.



So within a couple of generations the forest would go back to where it was, species-wise, not structurally. His father thought it was a waste of time, having cleared it, to put it back to forest.

“A lot of our cultural conditioning now is about identifying yourself as

a person, believing that you’re really important: the ‘I’ culture, the ‘me’ culture. Stepping into the forest I can relax all that, my boundaries can get fuzzy. Our life scale is 70 years maybe, so we tend to think of everything in terms of our life and what we see here immediately, but of course the forest thinks way, way longer than that.”

Listen to the full two-hour interview with Nan in Terania at: reciprocalrestoration.org where Nan talks more about her move back to the land, struggling to fit in between the counterculture and straight culture, and the fun of making trouble during the Terania and Bentley blockades.

Nan and Hugh Nicholson have published six books on Australian rainforest plants, and a rainforest plant identification key, which can be found on their website: rainforestpublishing.com.au

Forest biomass explained



Clear-felling operations in an area near Muli Muli / Tooloom National Park, near the QLD border

by Marion Riordan,
Biomass Action Group

As the need to act on climate change becomes more urgent, it may surprise people to know that a great part of the world’s carbon reduction targets is being met by burning wood from forests in place of coal.

Huge shipments of biomass wood pellets from the forests of the US and Canada are carried across the Atlantic to deliver a constant supply of fuel for electricity plants in Europe. Here they are burned to produce so-called renewable energy that receives large government subsidies. How did it come to be that forest timber became a “renewable fuel source”?

If we look at the history, we see the biomass industry started with good intentions. Solar energy was more expensive at the time of the Kyoto Protocol and trees were then considered as an alternative to fossil fuels. The logic was: trees contain carbon, which is released into the atmosphere when burned, but more can grow in their place sucking up carbon once again – therefore making the process “carbon neutral.”

Most of us will recognise the gross oversimplification of this logic that doesn’t even account for a tree’s life cycle. Climate policy scientists were quick to point out that burning a tree emits CO₂ now, but we must wait another 100 years or more for another one to grow to complete the carbon neutral part of the equation. Recent estimates say we need significant climate change action in the next 10 years. We do not have 100-year time frames to play with.

Many scientific reports to government agencies in the US and Europe have recommended that forest biomass be removed from the list of renewable fuels. However, the concept was carefully orchestrated and promoted by a powerful fossil fuel interest group, and sold to us by the very same PR companies who sold cigarettes to the masses, convincing us they were not harmful.

The US and UK government’s own energy reports show that when actual carbon impacts

of the biomass fuel process is counted, it often emits more CO₂ than fossil fuels. In SE USA, almost all operations involving native hardwood forests as a source of biomass fuel had higher CO₂ emissions than government permitted renewable standards.

In some cases the burning of native forest woody biomass is shown to emit 50% to 80% more CO₂ (per kWh of electricity produced) than coal!

When we remove trees from the forest, not only do we remove their function as a living “carbon sink” (converting atmospheric CO₂ to oxygen) we also hamper the function of soil to store carbon.

Few of us realise that the majority of earth’s carbon is stored in soil. The biomass industry incentivises stripping a forest completely bare, whereas woody debris is better left in the forest to decompose and release its carbon slowly whilst still providing homes for animals.

In this way, more CO₂ remains captured in the soil beneath. In regard to forest wildlife, it is important to realise that the value of biodiversity that is damaged or lost due to clear-felling is not part of calculations that regard forest biomass to be a renewable fuel source.

Today agencies are questioning the ‘convenient calculations’ in Europe and elsewhere that have classified the biomass energy process as renewable. For Australia this does not seem like a sensible use of limited public funds. Here biomass energy subsidies prop up a failing pulp wood-chip industry whilst wearing a green mask. As Australia looks to replace coal with renewable energy it is vital that we support solutions with a strong scientific basis.

Misdirected government subsidies could derail and delay this transition by undermining genuinely clean energy like wind, wave, and solar. Right now, we do not have time for such delays. We must decide if we are to continue as an extractive economy – using forests instead of fossil fuels – or move to secure a genuinely sustainable future for subsequent generations.

Energy from forest “biomass” can only be part of the problem, not part of the solution.

A stitch in (Nimbin) time...

by Gail Wallace

“How can I possibly impact the world, make a difference, influence others, implement change? I’m battling a seriously entrenched culture so, why bother?” Heard that one before?

Not so much cruisy complacency or outright apathy, but speaking to the struggle to stay buoyant against tsunami tides of waste, conspicuous consumption, mountains of landfill and gross national extravagance (GNE). Does the very word ‘recycling’ need recycling itself? Tired and tedious old argument? Yep! Boring? You bet. But one by which a group of local mature aged women is refusing to be beaten.

Out of a casual, convivial coffee and craft morning, discussion emerged (with associated disgust) related to quantities of “stuff” accumulated over decades. Acquisitions once treasured, some now broken, tattered, torn, begging for attention. Seeking relationship renewal. Our personal dormant landfills within our own four walls.

Everyone in the party admitted to owning tonnes more than needed or wanted. And mindlessly buying more or replacing with upgrades when something ‘broke’. So what to do?

Recycle the same conversation as a tokenistic feel good/seem good exercise? No. For these wise women, now elders of the tribe, time also was not to be wasted.

Agreements were made to create some real commitments to act on a personally responsible level. They revised the 3 Rs: *Reduce, Re-cycle, Re-use*, but with an important and do-able addendum: *Repair!*

The call to arms was declared, and with the zeal of suffragettes the ‘militant march’ began.

Fay did some major surgery in the form of needle felting to



Garment Girls at work
Photo: Chris Hansen

salvage a much-loved cardigan that silverfish had picnicked upon.

Caroline sits contentedly knitting directly off the fleece from sheep she raised herself, delighted that she is skipping steps involved in achieving product outcome.

Violet-May proudly brandishes her latest recovery. A moth-eaten jumper after a complete make-over from old appliqued fabric patches, giving it a fabulously new (and stylish) lease of life.

Chris knits outfits for the grandchildren, reducing their need to buy more as well as doing repair work for friends who are often too time-poor (or lack the skills) to bother. She still darns socks! Yes, that ancient art form almost lost in our rapidly developing throw-away world.

And, with our amped-up war on plastic, Gail assiduously stitches shopping bags with broken handles. A pledge not to purchase any new clothes during 2019 forms part of her commitment.

Everything from re-elasticising tired undies to mending hopelessly holey garments has been tackled for the sheer joy of opposing the disposing of salvageable items. Simple conversation snowballs more possibilities for inspiration and motivation.

This is the group who also annually knits blankets for the village of Bolgaun as part of the Nimbin Remembers Nepal movement.

Now the group is seeking to expand their creative net by inviting new members to bolster this wellspring to repair things. They meet every Thursday morning, 10.30am at Blue Knob Cafe.

Just bring along something to fix, stitch, repair or revive. All those items you have shoved for years into the back of back cupboards with perpetual promises of future projects on a bottomless ‘to do’ list.

Therapeutically, the conversation alone repairs the despair around waste and these weekly acts of fixing something offer a wholesomeness... beyond repair!

With China’s recent rejection of our rubbish, this seemingly small seed of a difference may well prove more timely than initially thought.

The annual Trash ‘n Treasure Event at Blue Knob Market on Saturday 7th September, 9am will have lots of lovely repaired, pre-loved and re-loved goods whose new address could well be yours and not the local rubbish transfer station.

We can all rally to reduce the unbearable, despicable weight of landfill from which our planet continues to groan daily.

Somehow, it feels like the old proverb ‘a stitch in time’ holds significantly greater meaning today than when it was first coined. The little things? They aren’t so little.

Roots Matter: The mighty beet shows its own



by Thom Culpeper

The end of winter sees the cool-grown root veg at their very best. Of the many, the Beetroot (*Beta vulgaris*, Crassa Group), shines in availability and cost, at a dollar a kilo and being regularly had from the fair traders. It is value FUD.

The Cicla Group, Chard, Silver-beet, Seakale and Indian spinach, (Palang Sag), are unjustifiably expensive, on a kilo basis, they being a continual-reap-profit, on a bi-annual basis, yield and until heading to seed, run on to the second year.

Beetroot is a beautiful, enjoyable root. Go to Farmer Charlie's (a buck a kilo) or Aldi, (two bucks a kilo, and still good value). A buck is enough for economics and fresh, good veg.

One local has an insistent, perennial rip-off \$3.50-\$5 a kilo – keep 'em! They're dried, dissipated remnants. Go on into Lismore. Take a comrade, even an enemy, to shop with and share and care.

The root vegetables are a single harvest, but the whole plant is of neglected use, in the case of beet and turnips the leaf material being, in Oz, chucked out and/or occasionally composted. Stupid cultural waste: water and plant nutrients made valueless.

Why not the leaf material? Cultural amnesia? Scots and such commonly harvest the 'neaps' of root veg. Indian farmers pluck and enjoy leaf mass, which is utilised in a host of societies.

Learn to harvest the leaf-wild-mass of Culinary Botany, the natural

outcomes of real agriculture. Incur, in your real 'world', the health and wisdom of the notion of "Waste Not, Want not". Distribute free seed, share and be the future.

Ferment, brine as need be and ban the fridge! We don't need that expensive tech. Let the wind and temp viable be our science. Bring on an evolution of the Coolgardie Safe. As the great Ozzie, Bazza Jones wrote, *Sleepers Awake!*

Meanwhile, let us sup and beg a peace in our time. Pax comrade, peace! And be of a sharing plate, a glass of whatever and at a communal table.

Oil-free Beetroot and Radish Kimchi

Ingredients

2-3 kilos of chopped beetroot leaves, in 3% salt brine (enough to cover), soaked overnight

1-1.5 kilo beetroot, shredded or julienned
1 kilo Daikon or red radish, shredded or julienned

1 large bulb of mashed garlic
2-3 red chillies, jalapeño if obtainable, or 2-3 tablespoons of Korean chilli flakes
150-200 gms of shredded fresh ginger
10-15 esballots cut into 30mm pieces, or 3-5 thick slices of red onions

Method

Mix all and press under the brine, cover with weighted plate or a plastic bag of water. Cover the container with cloth, sealed with a heavy rubber band. Store in a dark place for 6-12 days to ferment. Tightly lid the vessel or bottle in 1 kilo sterile containers. Keep cool or refrigerate. Enjoy.

Comment to:
thewholeearthveg@gardener.com

Rural landholder day

Lismore Council is inviting farmers, graziers and other landholders on the Wilsons and Richmond floodplains to a free field day about living with koalas on rural lands.

The event is part of Council's Rural Landholder Initiative free field days to help local farmers connect, learn and discuss protecting biodiversity.

The field day – Living with Koalas: Enhancing the habitat and health of koalas on the Richmond floodplains – will be held on Friday, 18th October from 9.30am to 2pm including a free lunch.

It will be held at a farm in South Gundurimba and Council will provide address details on registration.

The day will focus on seeing koalas in the field and discussing ways that farmers and graziers can undertake habitat re-establishment within productive environments.

We will travel to a number of different habitat sites and discuss the practical and science-based approaches to looking out for koalas, monitoring koala health and reconnecting broken habitat.

Our hosts are a local cane-growing family whose Richmond River property is also home to many resident and travelling koalas.

Presentations on the day will include:

- The impacts of wild dogs on



Photo: Brad Mustow

livestock and wildlife (Local Land Services);

- Isolated paddock trees and windbreaks on the floodplain;

- Koala hotspots on the floodplains – where they are and why;

- A vet nurse will explain the differences between a healthy, sick and an older koala, and what to do when you see a sick koala; and
- Koala food tree

identification and what to plant if you are planning a revegetation program.

This free event is delivered in association with Monaltrie Landcare, Friends of the Koala and Local Land Services.

Please RSVP on 1300-83-87-83. Lunch is provided and please wear sturdy shoes and a hat for walking.

This event is supported by the NSW Environmental Trust.



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Testing our limits in the face of environmental crises

by Richard Hill

For the vast majority of people who take the climate emergency seriously, there appear to be two broad schools of thought.

First, bad as things are, we can still get out of this mess through global environmental activism, rapid regenerative transition, 'drawdown', radical economic restructuring, and geoengineering. The world, say the proponents of this view, is already in the midst of a global transformative process which needs to be urgently accelerated.

The second school of thought is a little more pessimistic about things, arguing that we have already passed the point of no return, that the time-frame for global change is too short to achieve the desired outcomes, and that despite all the attempts to reduce greenhouse gases, they are rising as we speak.

Accordingly, they argue the most pressing task now is to reconsider how we think about life on earth, what we can do to try and offset the worst impacts of extreme weather events, and to gauge how we can exist in a world of resource depletion and increasing conflict.

There are of course variations on these binary positions which ebb and flow in the wake of unfolding events. Swirling around both positions is a

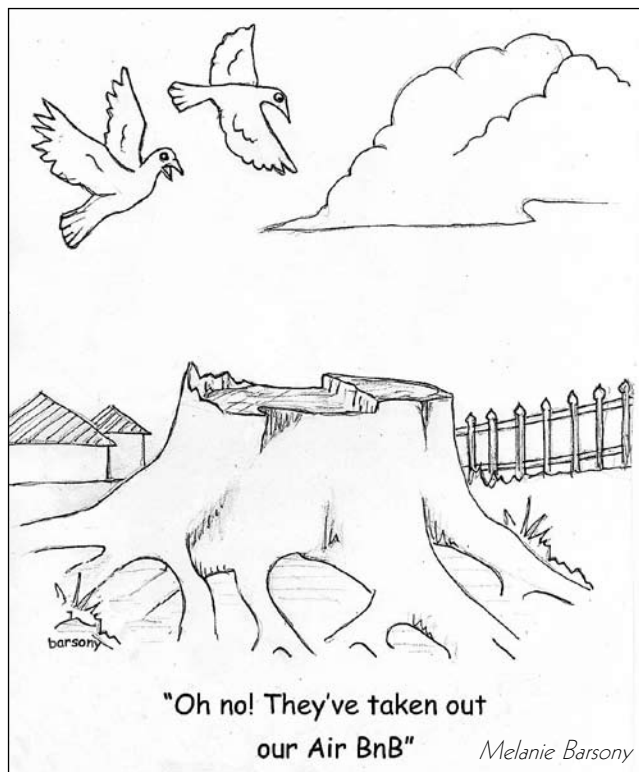
mood of deepening existential angst brought on by evidence of exponential environmental change. Talk of crisis, catastrophe and chaos, and the spine-chilling prospect of extinction, has focused the collective mind, as more and more people try to make sense of what lies ahead.

The great modernist shibboleths of permanence, certainty, progress, which despite the claims of Steven Pinker and others were always tenuous and polymorphous, have given way to a new emergent reality. Professor Jem Bendell suggests this reality demands that we revisit our accepted stories and entrenched ontological assumptions.

In many ways, as eco-psychologist Ruth Rosenhek recently noted at Kyogle Politics in the Pub, the "brokenness" of the current system is mirrored to a large extent in our own inner turmoil as we struggle with the grief and foreboding that so permeate our sensibilities.

Some of us are rushing for the barricades, others to contemplative spaces where we can seek cover and support to enable us to cope in the face of impending chaos.

Yet, when commentators talk of an existential crisis, as I often do, they often fail to acknowledge the full extent of what this means. Because what's occurring in



"Oh no! They've taken out our Air BnB"

Melanie Barsony

terms of the environmental crisis is not simply wickedly unprecedented, but something over which we now have little or no control. This is the 'dark knowledge' of which Catherine Ingram speaks in her seminal essay 'Facing Extinction'.

No-one, not even the most informed scientists, can tell us precisely what is about to unfold and how the climate emergency will impact our lives. The fact is that rapid changes are already upon us through the conflation of climactic events, and the

immense destruction to biodiversity and ecosystems.

The consequences of all this are profound and life-altering: ice melts, sea level rises and acidification, more intense fires, droughts and record temperatures, floods and inundation, water evaporation, the spread of diseases and the dying off of plant life and countless animal and insect species.

Together, these changes pose a direct threat to life on earth: disruption to food and water supplies, social collapse,

population movements and the rest. The toll on our spiritual and emotional wellbeing is incalculable. What feels secure, predictable and safe today, may be upended tomorrow. Each of us in Australia should be concerned, because, while we pollute the planet more than most other nations, we have no coherent plan to deal with what's coming. Communities will be compelled to fend for themselves, assuming they can remain where they are and hang on to their resources, human and otherwise.

Extreme crisis will generate all manner of unforeseen consequences, not least the rapid deterioration of civility and any lingering sense of community and neighbourliness, which has already been significantly eroded by decades of neoliberalism. There are, of course, many examples of compassion and care in times of crisis, but there are too many historical precedents of the opposite to assume cooperation and care when the going gets tough.

This means that if we are to build resilient and strong communities to face up to rapid environmental change, then we need a new resolve to forge meaningful, supportive and cooperative relationships that can lay the foundations for some kind of stability in the midst of chaos.

Extreme events will test our limits. Yes, this is a time for action of the Extinction Rebellion kind and for an ongoing regenerative campaign, but it's also a moment to pause and reflect on how we can reimagine our futures in communities based on mutual respect, reciprocity, kindness and compassion, the necessary ingredients of what social scientist Jean Renouf refers to as 'ethical survival'. This requires us to consider how, as communities, we can create engaged, supportive and ethical ways of being that just might enable us to have lives worth living.

None of the above is to suggest inaction, or to give in to despair, as some claim. Far from it. There remains a moral imperative to act, to offer pathways for regenerative and life-affirming existence, to counter inequality and the politics of hatred and divisiveness. The call for social justice and human rights should be as potent as ever. Moreover, acceptance of possible extinction does not mean the denial of joy.

Indeed, the very opposite might be true with a re-investment in the things that should have always mattered: love, care, compassion, justice and a deep and abiding respect for the planet and all species on it.

Essential Energies

by Christobelle

Everything is energy and that is all there is to it. Match the frequency of the reality you want and you cannot help but get that reality. It can be no other way. This is not philosophy. This is physics.

"Energy cannot be created or destroyed, it can only be changed from one form to another." – Albert Einstein

What am I? You are an indestructible unit of energy with infinite potential.

All matter is energy and because it is energy vibrating at a relatively slow rate, matter can be seen by the human eye. It is only the energy in matter that makes it seem alive. When the energy escapes, only the shell is left, and starts to break down into its constituent elements.

Though our human brains need to store information in separate compartments, we are looking to understand these fundamental principles from as many different angles as we can. It is through holding multiple paradigms concurrently and comparing them that mere knowledge can expand towards an overview of understanding.

So let's explore some principles of Creation. How is our universe manifested and maintained? How does energy transform itself to create matter?

In the beginning is the Source, where there is both the potential for consciousness and for manifested forms. This is the Great Cosmic Mind which we know to be intelligent because each specific form is characterised by its own particular quality of intelligence.

There cannot be one without the other. And the whole operates in order with definite laws, some that we can determine and understand a little – this is science.

The Chinese call Source 'The Tao' or essence. In the ancient Indian scriptures of the Ayurvedic or Pranic pathway, the Source is Brahman.

Then comes the 'Big Bang'. Intention initiates movement and impulse to give birth to a positive, outgoing thrust of yang expansion that commences the pathway of Manifestation.

When this purpose is realised and its momentum expended, it turns to return, now drawn by a negative, magnetic pull of yin attraction – the energy returning to its source on the path of Liberation to complete its circuit.

This is the Yin/Yang of polar opposites that enable function and wholeness. They are complimentary forces which describe relative aspects of the same phenomena.

This is the principle of polarity, with its outward expansion and inward contraction, pulsating life everywhere. The universe itself is one almighty breath.

Opposites enable movement to and from a source. It is the source that enables these opposites to arise.

"Every life is but the relationship of the unit to its Source." – Randolph Stone

Now we have the law of threes in play – in Ayurvedic understanding, the three gunas. Source is neutral; the Yang expansion is positive and the Yin contraction is negative in terms of their electrical charge in the circuit.

On the pathway of Manifestation, when the energy circuit completes itself, a new neutral centre of lowered vibration arises to express a progressively denser form.

Once the form has completed its purpose or life cycle, energies liberate themselves and commence the ascent back up through the centres by which they once came down.

This forms the basic spiral pattern of all energy. It is self-perpetuating and imbued with the consciousness that gave rise to it in the first place. This takes place on all dimensions and levels of reality.

Christobelle practices holistic healing with Polarity Energy Balancing, see her ad on p.20.

A flirtation with defamation

by John Adams

The Solicitors' Conduct Rules say I can't act for a client where there is a conflict between my duty to serve their best interests and my natural desire to serve my own. They've got a problem and I'm supposed to have the knowledge and experience they lack. The more work involved, the more I earn.

A man contacts me. We meet for coffee. He shows me a Facebook post:

"Unofficial: Big Rob – 27 June [2019] at 13:55

"Other than being a creeper trying to attract kids for whatever reason, can anyone explain why an old man would try to work with kids, ride around with a teddy-bear on his bike or regularly dress as a fairy???"

My prospective client explains that he was dressed – not a regular thing – as an angel, certainly not as a fairy, with the other Climate Change Angels on a fund-raising trip from Ballina to Lismore. He used to entertain children by twisting balloons, but that was before the flood.

Maybe a thousand people saw the post before it was taken down, maybe only hundreds; impossible to even guess. He's not going to give up activism; given the state of the planet, there's clearly no choice. But he's

finding it hard to go out. People know him. What are they thinking? Like, with this uncontrollable thought in your head, you catch someone looking at you in the supermarket, saying something to their friend. You can imagine. Paranoia blossoms. What can he do?

Defamation cases are fun for lawyers. For instance; defences in criminal law can get pretty complicated, but defamation is over the top. Division 2 of the *Defamation Act 2005* ('the Act'), after saying "the scope of defences under general law and other law is not limited" – makes it sound like a free-for-all.

It isn't – it goes on to list specific defences available to an alleged defamer, each with its own section; like justification, contextual truth, honest opinion, triviality, absolute privilege and innocent dissemination. There are more.

Self-interest invites me to dream of the billable hours preparing to attack whichever defences he's likely to choose, but I have to comply with the legislation, including an object of the Act: "to promote speedy and non-litigious methods of resolving disputes about the publication of defamatory matter."

The first steps of the statutory dance go like this: first the 'aggrieved person'

sends a letter (a 'concerns notice') to the 'publisher' outlining the 'imputations of concern'. The publisher can reply (within 28 days) with an offer to make amends, or a request for 'further particulars', to which the aggrieved has 14 days to reply. A couple of conferences, three or four letters. By now my fees might be up to a measly couple of hundred.

But if there's a dispute, like whether or not the offer is reasonable, it's time to throw on the suit and let the judge decide. Section 18 of the Act explains to that lofty figure how to make the decision. If reasonable, it's sorted. If unreasonable...

But this is Lismore, far from the world of politicians' swimming pools and million-dollar payouts, and money's not an issue anyway. His good name is all that matters.

I consider writing a friendly letter to the publisher with an offer to draft, after civilised negotiation, an apology for him to post on Facebook. Mediation perhaps? I cogitate. And decide.

Save. Attach to email. "Subject: Defamation."

Please see attached docx. "My considered advice is that you instruct me to seek to publish the attached in a quality local newspaper with a wide readership."

Review of cannabis laws needed

by Michael Balderstone,
President, Australian HEMP Party and
Nimbin HEMP Embassy

People have been coming to Nimbin to score for much longer than I've been here, which is over 30 years. Weed was mostly sold by heroin addicts in those days, until the hippie children grew up and created some competition.

Desperate addicts or unaware youth take risks others shy at and they become fodder for the privatised jail business. There's a more reliable occupancy rate in jails than hotels, and the new Serco prison near Grafton, on track to open next year and employ 600 people, is sure to be a safe investment for Macquarie Bank and the others up to their neck in this sordid business.

Rainbow Lane was the place to score for decades, but really came into its own when the street got live cameras to the police station. I remember clearly the police promising the cameras wouldn't be used to target drug users, it was to stop violence and the spate of broken windows we were getting as amphetamines were arriving stronger and stronger.

Slowly but surely the police numbers in the village increased after we got a



brand new police station. Meanwhile they created cannabis cautioning to stop young people getting criminal records and lessen minor pot charges filling the courts.

That enabled the likes of Scom to argue, "We've dealt with cannabis, unless you're a wicked drug dealer, you just get a caution, a slap on the wrist."

And now it's a new level of political cunning we're hearing regularly. "We've dealt with medical cannabis, it's legal now." Omitting to tell us you have to be almost dead to access the legal mediweed and it's incredibly

ridiculously expensive. And all imported! And you're not allowed to drive if you use it.

99% of Australian cannabis users are unaffected by the medical cannabis legislation, but politicians act like they've dealt with the issue. Reviewing the cannabis laws has been totally swept aside by the medical debate and barely one percent of users are even helped by the changes, Meanwhile ice is on a rampage.

They just don't get it, and why would they? It's like having teetotallers in charge of alcohol regulations.

Why we need a cannabis enquiry

by Michael Balderstone

The Sex, now Reason, Party's inside man and good old friend of Fiona Patten, Craig Ellis, came to visit and pick our brains about the Victorian government's 'Inquiry into the Use of Cannabis in Victoria'.

Fiona is the chair of the Legal and Social Issues Committee. The actual wording of the Terms of Reference reads as follows.

"On 30th May 2019, the Legislative Council agreed to the following motion:

That this house, requires the Legal and Social Issues Committee to inquire into, consider and report, by no later than 2 March 2020, into the best means to —

- prevent young people and children from accessing and using cannabis in Victoria;
- protect public health and public safety in relation to the use of cannabis in Victoria;
- implement health education campaigns and programs to ensure children and young people are aware of the dangers of drug use, in particular, cannabis use;
- prevent criminal activity relating to the illegal cannabis trade in Victoria;
- assess the health, mental health, and social impacts of cannabis use on people who use cannabis, their families and carers;
- and further requires the Committee to assess models from international jurisdictions that have been successful in achieving these outcomes and consider how they may be adapted for Victoria."

We mostly talked about models for the future, something we've been dreaming about in Nimbin for decades. These are my

suggestions, but she would love to hear yours.

First up let's acknowledge prohibiting cannabis causes more trouble than it prevents. Pretty much everyone agrees on that, it's just what do we do next. Or, how do we get out of the mess?

So first step, stop hunting pot users and if you must, treat it as a health issue. Police have better things to do and it will start reversing Aussie drug trends which are very much about not getting busted so don't use weed, it stinks and its bulky and you have to smoke it... the easiest bust by far. Pills and powders are a cinch to hide in comparison.

Then, critically, I would legalise home growing. We can argue forever about how many plants, but it's significant that California and Colorado both allow six plants. More would be great so try for ten but we all know some people will grow monsters, that's why some countries talk about height and size limits, but let's keep it simple.

Then comes the most difficult bit of regulations, supply. I'm all for the Employment model. There's 100,000 jobs out there waiting to happen and there's also plenty of Centrelink recipients that can do a complete turnaround and become taxpayers. Fuck giving the few grow and supply licences to the same old rich few. In Canada I read seven of the 10 licenced producers are partners with global pharma giants.

I'd put a ceiling on the Employment supply licences so Big Pharma and the like are out of the picture and rather than say licence growers to have 100 plants

like Humboldt county where they grow giant plants with fertilisers, let's licence quantity. So every pound you sell is taxed as well as checked for mould and contaminants. A licence to sell a maximum of 100 lbs say at current prices, will give Aussie expertise which has been accumulating for fifty years now a chance to partake.

A Dispensary licence is another matter but let's get it out of the chemist and into the hands of people who know the subject.

Watching North America try countless regulatory models over more than 20 years now, we have a unique opportunity to learn from their mistakes. California has had legal medical pot since 1996 and it's just no big deal on the entire west coast of America now. Two years ago I watched suited businessmen queue with long haired hippies to buy joints or deals at any amount of dispensaries. It was so simple and so obviously no big deal for anyone.

Driving also can be no big deal. Most people are safer drivers with their usual drugs inside them. Millions taking pharmaceuticals every morning first thing; pilots use speed to make sure they stay

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Nimbin Roots Festival

by Mel Williamson

The 4th annual Nimbin Roots Festival is nearly here, from Friday 13th to Sunday 15th September, with three days of fabulous roots flavoured music from 30-plus acts.

The festival is held in multi-venues around lively Nimbin village; and includes music workshops, and permaculture workshops (at Djanbung Gardens). There will also be the regular 'All you Need Is Love' street parade (get your creative juices flowing and make a banner); plus the 4th ARMA (Australian Roots Music Awards) presentation.

The line-up is as varied as the music they play – everything from old-timey banjo pickin' to touches of hip hop and world-reggae infusions.

Just some of the many acts appearing include: Hat Fitz & Cara, (pictured, above right) Huckleberry, (pictured, above left) Kulripa Reach, Wild Marmalade, Glenn Cardier, Sky Eater, Arkie T Williams, Bearded Betty and Neil Murray, who I had a chat with ahead of his third visit to play in Nimbin, having played here with the Warumpi Band in the 80's and 90's.

Currently with two releases out, his own *Blood and Longing*, and with Sammy Butcher on *Tjungu*, he's looking forward to the Roots Fest and is sure to bring a special performance. Tune in to Nim-FM 102.3 (nimfm.org) on Monday 9th September for a live-to-air interview with Neil on Pot Luck Lunch 12-2pm.

One of the most affordable festivals around, three-day tickets start from \$105, with weekend and daily tickets

also available. Book ahead as tickets are selling out.

Some tickets have been reserved for Nimbin locals – available at the town hall from the morning of Friday 13th. Camping is also available from \$15 a night.

As well as the always-exemplary music, the other joy of previous festivals has been the fantastic crowd – all ages, all good vibes, and all here to appreciate and enjoy music.

Live music is a daily part of Nimbin village life, and on the middle weekend of September the streets and venues will be overflowing with it.

The previous festivals have all been fantastic, so don't miss out – get amongst the music. For the full line-up, tickets and further info, go to: www.nrfest.com

Get classical at Tyalgum

Tyalgum Classical Music Festival
Friday 6th – Sunday 8th
September

Featuring: Michael Askill, Greta Bradman, Camerata String Quartet, Tenzin Choeygal, Erik Griswold, Ben Marks, Tim Munro, Kathering Philp, Queensland Conservatorium Big Band, Queensland Conservatorium Brass Ensemble, Roving Opera, Tinalley Quartet, TMF Percussion Quartet, Viney-Grinberg Piano Duo.

All seven main concerts will be held at the Tyalgum Community Hall

Friday 6th September

7pm Tyalgum Hall – Festival Opening Concert \$55/44/20
9pm Flutterbucks – The Heart Collectors

Saturday 7th September

9am Flutterbies – Bright Sparks
10.30am Tyalgum Hall – Tinalley String Quartet \$50/40/15
11.45-5pm The Buttery – Musical Conversations
1pm Tyalgum Hall – QLD Conservatorium Brass Ensemble \$25/20/5
4pm Tyalgum Hall – Greta Bradman in recital \$50/40/15
7pm Tyalgum Hall – Tensing Choeygal, Michael Askill & Katherine Philp \$50/40/15
9pm Flutterbucks – Anthony Garcia

Sunday 8th September

10.30am Tyalgum Hall – Viney-Grinberg piano duo \$50/40/15
12pm Tyalgum Oval – The



Roving Opera
12.45-1.45pm – QLD Conservatorium Big Band
2.30pm Tyalgum Hall – Closing Gala \$55/45/20
Emerging artists from the Queensland Conservatorium will appear throughout the village over the weekend presenting pop-up concerts everywhere; a Bach cello suite, a solo pianist, a percussion trio, a solo saxophone or a trumpet quintet – anything is

possible. Discover artworks throughout the village during the weekend, including at the Tyalgum Community Hall, in the Buttery and recent works by Jasna Spiranic in the Studio Gallery.

More information and bookings at: www.tyalgumfestival.com.au or book through 4MBS Ticketing on (07) 3847-1717 nine to five, seven days a week.

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What's On in September? LIVE ENTERTAINMENT THIS MONTH

- **Saturday 7th** – Red Eye Darts Comp, 12-2pm
- **Sunday 22nd** – Visiting Club: Tweed Heads
- **Open Mic Night** – Wed 18th, 7pm
- **Social Bowls** – Sundays, 9am
- **Membership** – \$5 Social
- **Courtesy Bus** – Enquire at Bar
- **Friday 6th, 6pm** Nina Lotus
- **Friday 13th – Sunday 15th:** Nimbin Roots Festival (ticketed entry)
- **Friday 20th, 6pm** Brommers
- **Friday 27th, 6pm** Mish

Lunch & Dinner Wed – Sat
Sunday lunch specials
Catering for functions of all budgets and tastes



KENO First-timers and novice bowlers welcome

Due to the Nimbin Roots Festival Activities over the weekend of 13th, 14th and 15th September in the Birth and Beyond Meeting room, this month Flix will screen on Saturday 21st September. The doors will open at 6.30pm and the film will start at 7pm.

Nimbin Flix is proud to announce *The Death of Stalin* as this month's Flix screening film. Last year we scheduled the screening of this film for December, but due to some organisational issues the film was not available by the date. We have had several requests to screen it since then, so decided it would be included in this year's screening lists.

In early-1953 Moscow, under the Great Terror's heavy cloak of state paranoia, the ever-watchful Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, collapses unexpectedly of a brain haemorrhage.

Inevitably, when his body is discovered the following morning, a frenetic surge of raw

panic spreads like a virus among the senior members of the Council of Ministers as they scramble to maintain order, weed out the competition, and, ultimately, take power.

But in the middle of a gut-wrenching roller-coaster of incessant plotting, tireless machinations, and frail allegiances, absolutely no one is safe; not even the feared chief of the secret police, Lavrenti Beria. In the end, who will prevail after the death of Stalin?

While Scottish satirist Armando Iannucci is best known for his British and American TV series, he has a broad engagement in other areas: radio, publishing, web-based projects and music. His first feature film was the highly acclaimed black comedy *In the Loop* (2009)



which satirised British and U.S. politics in relation to the invasion of Iraq.

Iannucci's black satirical edge is sharpened even further in his second feature *Death of Stalin* (2017) which follows the political in-house mayhem that surrounded Stalin's death in 1953. It features an outstanding ensemble

cast including Steve Buscemi, Michael Palin, Jeffrey Tambor and Simon Russell Beale.

In summary, the *NY Times* review of *The Death of Stalin* stated: "Armando Iannucci, a virtuoso of political evisceration, turns horror into comedy in this comic shocker about a strong man and his world of ash and blood."

Pratchett returns to LTC with *Witches Abroad*

by Jenny Dowell

Lismore Theatre Company's next production is *Witches Abroad*, the stage adaptation by Renoir (Henri Rennie) of Terry Pratchett's book of the same name from his 41-book *Discworld* series.

The production will run for seven performances from 11-20th October at Rochdale Theatre, including two Sunday matinees.

Discworld runs on magic rather than science and is full of surprises. In *Witches Abroad*, three county witches reluctantly take on the role of collective Godmother to a kitchen maid in far-off Genua.

Their task is to stop her marrying the Prince, who is not at all what he seems, and end the tyranny of the Other Godmother.

But first they must get to Genua – an adventure in itself.

The director of this production is the writer of the stage adaption, Henri Rennie, assisted by Dave Montague-Elliott. Henri has been a fan of Pratchett's *Discworld* novels since their earliest appearance, and credits them as inspiring his own work as an author.

Sir Terry suggested Henri might look at adapting the iconic books for the stage, and Henri has revelled in the challenge.

Witches Abroad has been performed to enthusiastic audiences in Australia and the UK. Sharing the late Sir Terry's great fondness for close-knit communities, Henri is delighted to now bring the show to Lismore.

The producers of the show are LTC President Sharon Brodie and Meredith Yardley.

Witches Abroad features a cast of 20 actors ranging in age from 17 to 60, many playing multiple characters, and will appeal to a wide audience not just those familiar with Pratchett's works.

Key roles are played by Shae Salmon as Granny Weatherwax, Sharon Forbes as Nanny Ogg and Kashmir Miller as Magrat Garlick. Producer Sharon Brodie says, "Kashmir is Shae's daughter in the real world which brings a great dynamic to the stage."

Sir Terry Pratchett was the UK's best selling author in the 90s and beyond with more than 85 million books sold. He died in 2015.

Patrons keen to see this new



Writer and director Henri Rennie (Renoir) and Sir Terry Pratchett discussing characterisation at the annual Hogswatch celebration in Wincanton 2013

show are advised to book online at: www.lismoretheatrecompany.org.au as previous shows this year have generally sold out with no tickets available at the door.

LTC is also calling on interested

children and teens for its end-of-year pantomime, *Puss in Thongs*. Auditions will be held on Saturday 21st September at Rochdale Theatre. Please contact Kylie on 0458-474-149 for details.

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Saturday 14th NRL Super Saturday 7pm

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Friday 20th Cass Eleven 7pm

Saturday 21st NRL Super Saturday 7pm

Thursday 26th Open Mic Comedy Night 6.30pm

Friday 27th Kiara Jack 7pm

Saturday 28th Mecha Mecha 7pm

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