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There's a new accountant in town!

Loris Bianco has joined Nimbin Tax & Accounting, working alongside Peter Hughes for the next 12 months while he transitions to retirement, then Loris will take over the practice.

Loris is a qualified Chartered Accountant, and brings with him a wealth of experience from his 25 years in accounting and finance across small, medium and large companies.

Originally from Wollongong, Loris worked as an accountant there and also in Sydney, then in 2013 he and his wife Julia bought land outside Goulburn, wanting to escape the rat race, find a better work/life balance and smell the roses.

Except that the weather in Goulburn is harsh and either extremely hot or cold, and

not much grows.

A desire for a climate with more rainfall saw them make the 1,000km move in 2019 to a rainforest property at Smiths Creek outside Kyogle, where the grass really grows!

A day trip to Nimbin during Christmas in 2022 brought a chance sighting of a business for sale and with a desire to try something different, bought Fashionating and a permanent move to Nimbin soon followed.

Loris has worked across a range of companies from global organisations in Sydney's CBD to doing the bookkeeping for Julia's dog homestay business in Goulburn.

Big or small, Loris is



Peter Hughes welcomes Loris Bianco

dedicated to providing a high level of service to all of his clients.

If you are looking for a local accountant to take care of your individual or business tax and accounting

needs, drop in and see Loris at the Nimbin Tax & Accounting office in the Birth & Beyond building, 54 Cullen Street, or phone him on 02 6689-0470 or 0409-858-355.

Christmas raffle supports Breakfast Club

Kerry Hagan

Every year Nimbin Garden Club holds a Christmas Raffle with prizes generously donated by so many of our wonderful shops and services.

Our main focus is to raise money for Nimbin Central School Breakfast Club.



Every morning Marc LeBars and his team feed hordes of hungry kids as they get off the bus; the philosophy being that no child goes to class hungry.

Here I am (pictured) with Marc and some very enthusiastic recipients as I present our \$500 donation. Thanks everyone.

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Calling all carers

Diane and Kaila from Carers NSW will be back in Nimbin on Thursday 2nd May between 10am and 2pm, outside the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Info Centre.

Come along for a chat and find out more about how Carers NSW and Carer Gateway can help all carers.

Carers young and old, informal or formal, are all welcome, and can register for respite

opportunities, counselling, training, peer support, etc.

If you help someone and are concerned about how they would cope if you went away, you are a carer.

You don't have to be registered with Centrelink, or be a family member.

Can't wait till May? Find out more at: carergateway.gov.au or phone 1800-422-737.



David Harris with his sons, Hannibal and Romulus

Coffin exposé

by Carolyn Harris

My son David and I were lucky enough to visit Mongolia some years ago, where we stayed in yurts rented from local nomad families.

David became fascinated, and slightly obsessed with the way the yurts were made and could be disassembled and moved by horse and cart for seasonal reasons.

Following our return home, he decided to build a yurt, using recycled timber and using his father's small workshop, he and his partner Phoebe set about the job, as self-taught carpenter/fabricators.

They lived in the yurt, borrowing a corner of his cousin's land in the Hunter Valley and ended up living near Nimbin about 12 years ago.

On their property, a fallen hoop pine seemed a good

opportunity to harvest some timber, which David did with the help of a friend's portable mill.

This timber is now aged, and although unsuitable for building construction, is perfect for smaller jobs. He noticed that the carpenter in many Western films was also the coffin-maker, and so conceived the idea of making sustainable coffins, or caskets as some are called.

The idea is that people buy their coffin while still alive, and the lid becomes a low small table, while the box itself has removable shelves, so that while upright against a wall it becomes a bookshelf or display case.

I have ordered mine (I'm 80), and have been measured up in preparation.

For more information, phone Nimbin Natural Caskets on 0415-679-426.

'Frontline between extinction and survival'



Around 100 Save Wallum supporters dressed as zombies, marched to the Wallum site in Brunswick Heads on 1st May, calling for an immediate moratorium on all NSW Zombie DAs, including 'Wallum' Brunswick Heads.

"You are literally holding a front line between extinction and survival," declared Greens State MP Sue Higginson at the conclusion of the morning's Zombie March.

"We must stand strong together. You are mighty powerful. You are the



frontline. You are even bigger than this magic place, Wallum, and together we are going to win this," she said.

Joining Sue Higginson and the Brunswick Head community in the Zombie March was retiring Australian Greens Senator Janet Rice and federal Greens candidate for Richmond, Mandy Nolan.

Inspired by the day and the Wallum ecosystem, Senator Janet Rice elected to join the human 'Possums' in one of the ancient Scribbly Gum trees earmarked for the bulldozers.

Senator Rice was hoisted into the grandmother Scribbly Gum and celebrated by the Save Wallum

community.

"This Country is so special and it's such a privilege to be here," an elated Senator Rice said from the tree.

"The power of the tree and the air we breathe, being here protecting nature, protecting Country."

Later, Senator Rice wrote in a public social media post "...security guards and then police were on site today as I was up the tree.

"I was tempted to stay up the tree and risk arrest for doing so, but instead have promised the community that if we get to the point of blockading bulldozers, I will be there with them and will put my body on the line then."

Land returned to Aboriginal community

The NSW Government will return a large parcel of land near Drake village, east of Tenterfield, to the local Aboriginal community following a successful land claim.

A total of 104.4 hectares of Crown land across two adjoining blocks at the western edge of the village will be returned as freehold land to the ownership of Jubullum Local Aboriginal Land Council following the land claim by the NSW Local Aboriginal Land Council (JLALC).

CEO of JLALC, Michelle Nagas said "The approval of this land claim is very exciting. It involves a substantial block of land close to Drake village, which provides strong opportunities. We will have discussions with the Land Council and consultations with the community on future use of the site."

NSW Aboriginal Land Council CEO, Yuseph Deen, congratulated the JLALC on the return of country to Aboriginal hands, which he said is "A key strategic goal of the NSWALC is pursuing economic self-determination, independence and prosperity for our people."

"Central to this is land acquisition and activation; securing the highest and best use returns and



generating ongoing benefits fosters prosperity for Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal communities. This is particularly important in rural and remote areas of NSW," he said.

State Member for Lismore, Janelle Saffin said, "I want to warmly congratulate Jubullum Local Aboriginal Land Council – its Board members and Chief Executive Officer Michelle Nagas – on their successful

land claim near Drake.

"I appreciate the dedication and hard work that Jubullum LALC and the NSW Aboriginal Land Council have put in to reach what is a landmark win worth celebrating," Ms Saffin said.

"The local Aboriginal community rightfully is proud of their culture and history, and securing this land, to which they have deep ties, represents the start of a more prosperous future."

Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and the NSW Aboriginal Land Council have a right to lodge land claims on Crown land.

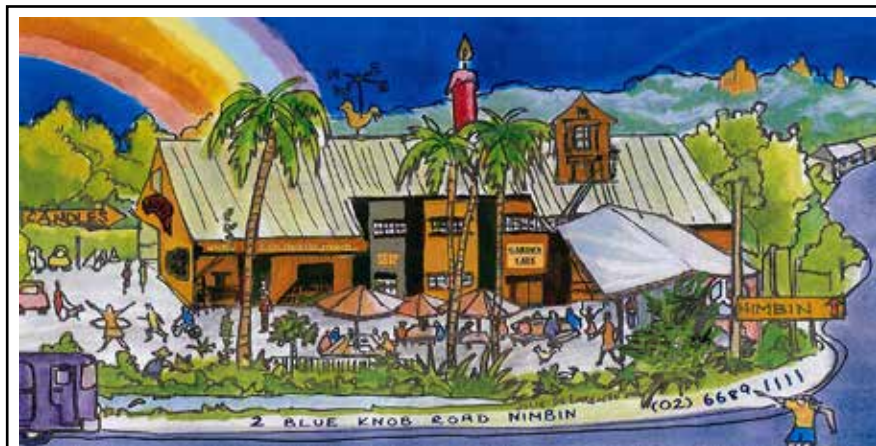
Land claims must be assessed against non-discretionary statutory criteria in the Act, including whether the land was lawfully used or occupied at the time of the claim, or was needed for an essential public purpose.

The Minister for Lands and Property, Steve Kamper said the return of this land to the Aboriginal Community will enable its productive use for the benefit of the local community.

"Returning land to Aboriginal people provides tangible economic, social and cultural benefits to Aboriginal and broader communities and we are pleased to see a positive resolution for this land," he said.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, David Harris said land claims such as this are a key to Closing the Gap.

"It delivers on several Closing the Gap targets including supporting economic participation for Aboriginal communities and maintaining the connection of Aboriginal people to land and water."



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Climate-impacted communities gathering

Andrew George and Miriam Torzillo from Lismore-based Reclaim Our Recovery joined people and delegates from Zenadh Kes (Torres Strait), the Northern Rivers, the South Coast NSW, Kangaroo Island, Brisbane and Melbourne in Canberra to connect, tell stories and communicate to politicians about the impact of sea-level rise, fires, floods, landslides and heat on their communities.

They aimed to create a broad coalition of groups to strengthen connections, advocacy and share knowledge thus balancing the power in the political game.

On the second day of the gathering, participants went to Parliament House to meet with representatives and their staff and present their demands for the transformational action that will address the scale of the problem.

Delegates asked MPs and Senators if their parties policies, budgets and consultation of the Members of Parliament and Senators will:

- Centre First Nations sciences, cultural knowledge, connection and participation in climate leadership and adaptation?

- Listen to communities most impacted about what they want and need and put them at the heart of decision making?

- Fund a transformational investment in community-led solutions that keeps people safe from extreme weather?

- Stop dangerous pollution making the problem worse for more communities?

Other delegates from the Northern Rivers included: Chels Hood Withey from Community Disaster Action Group (CDAG, formerly Byron Flood Emergency Action Group) and Jean Renouf from Plan C.

Both groups prioritise community-led recovery and the need for governments and decision makers to work with communities from the start in order to get it right before, during, and after climate disasters and extreme weather.

These are also questions and issues that concern Reclaim Our Recovery. Something we learned a bit more about in meetings with Ministers and staff, was that Disaster Recovery money does often flow direct from Federal Government to Local Government.

Therefore, and in the lead-up to the council elections in March, it is vital that open conversations about the future of the Northern Rivers take place.

We have seen the tragic consequences of an 'unprecedented' climate disaster in real-time. We have learned that the community response was brilliant, and the response of the authorities and bureaucracies they installed were failures.

The region needs democratic participation in the recovery now, community led, but that's not going to be enough. We face broader issues, and we need wider participation for the future.

There is a growing movement around the world for more participatory and therefore representative forms of government, including in the UK, Ireland and Spain.

Our calling is to build a similar movement here of participatory and deliberative democracy to avoid the inadequate response to the 2022 flooding from happening again, and to address the many other converging crises of our times.

ROR's plan for 2024 is to organise and facilitate popular assemblies, kitchen table conversations and other types of



active citizenship around the issues that matter to this community. Housing, habitat, plans for the floodplain, social and equity issues raised by the Resilient Homes and Lands program, local government and more are all issues that could and should be openly discussed.

We also plan to develop our skills in facilitation and organising of deliberative democratic processes, with experienced trainers Mosaic Lab, so that the resulting assemblies can be productive and inclusive as well as contribute to positive and informed conversations including in the lead-up to the 2024 council elections.

So join us via our Facebook page *Reclaim Our Recovery*, or come to meetings on Wednesdays, 5-6pm at the Warehouse, 23 Newbridge Street, South Lismore.

We welcome everyone, of all ages and backgrounds to be part of the training program, to bring your creativity and energy and come join the democratic revolution.

Resilient Lismore receives full 'Repair to Return' funding

Resilient Lismore has welcomed \$5 million in funding from the NSW Reconstruction Authority, which will go towards scaling up its 'Repair to Return' program.

Resilient Lismore Executive Director, Elly Bird said, "After nearly two years of our home repair work being privately funded by local organisations and philanthropists, we are very grateful that the NSW Reconstruction Authority is providing this additional funding so that we can continue to help people return to safe and secure homes."

'Repair to Return' was formerly known as the 'Two Rooms Project' that used volunteer labour to construct walls in two rooms of badly flood-damaged homes.

Elly Bird said, "Repair to Return has evolved as we have secured funding, and now we engage qualified tradespeople to do the work. Our scope has expanded to provide partial repair of homes, including kitchens, bathrooms and other critical repairs."

"It's a significant milestone for us and we extend our gratitude to Premier Minns and his government; to the Emergency Services Minister Jihad Dibb and of course, to



Repair to Return tradies

Janelle Saffin the Member for Lismore who secured this funding commitment for our work," she said.

The program provides assistance to owner-occupiers who were living in the affected property at the time of the disaster and who still need to live there.

"We prioritise people who can't progress their recovery on their own, we prioritise vulnerable people, and we are trying to help as many people as we can."

"We work in Lismore and in downstream communities, including Coraki, Woodburn, Wardell, Bungawalbin and others – we have a regional footprint," Ms Bird said.

"We are not doing renovations or total rebuilds, but we will help people repair

their homes so they have somewhere safe and secure to live.

"There is a high level of need, so there might be a wait-list depending on the situation and the work that is required. We can't guarantee that we can help everyone, but we are doing our best to help as many people as we can," she said.

The program can provide labour and materials, or help people use materials they already have.

Services include essential plumbing; repair and restoration of kitchens; assistance with electrical work; re-sheeting walls; assistance with furniture and white-goods, and more.

"People just need to talk to us to see what we can do," Ms Bird said.

Head of Adaptation, Mitigation and Reconstruction at the NSW Reconstruction Authority, Amanda Leck, said supporting the Repair to Return program was a practical example of the organisation backing a community-led initiative that clearly works.

"The work in Lismore is not just about buying back homes and rolling out our Resilient Lands Program, it's about restoring a community and maintaining its unique identity for the long term," Ms Leck said.

Ms Bird said there was still a mountain of work to do for the Northern Rivers to build back and develop resilience for future events.

"Lismore and the Northern Rivers are on the way back, but there is still plenty that needs to be done: homes that need to be repaired, people who need assistance, and businesses that need support," she said.

"Resilient Lismore is here for the long haul because this is our community: our staff and volunteers are from this community."

"We love it, we are here to help the people we live alongside, and we are committed to helping our region not just to survive but to thrive."

Rainbow Walking Track art installation underway

by Julie de Lorenzo

The collaboration between Oral Roberts and Donato Rosella is the first artwork to be installed and completed as part of The Nimbin Rainbow Walking Track.

The sandstone sculpture designed by Oral and carved by Donato has the Goanna on one side and the snake on the other side representing The Creation Story.

It is located behind the soccer field and beside the beautiful lake surrounded by Hoop Pines.

Oral and Donato (photo right) would like to thank all involved from Nimbin Community who initiated this wonderful project.

Thank you also to Martin Soutar and Ian Denovaro



from Lismore City Council, Julie De Lorenzo, Trout and Tim for their assistance in the completion of this project.



Grow natives

by Nerelle Draisma

Archie Roach sang about “the Australian bush losing its identity” before he passed into spirit. I’ve never known this fella to be a liar, and it’s certainly true.

In my mind, one of the saddest statistics that came out last year about this incredible continent was that there are now more exotic species recorded in Australia than native species. This is a huge one for me as a landscape artist, nursery manager and fledgling Botanist.

As we all know, Australia is at the forefront of the extinction crisis happening world-wide, so when people ask, “What can I do?... I’m just one person.” I tell them this secret: it all starts in the home garden.

Don’t get me wrong, I’m not a purist, and I love my veggie garden herbs and edibles. I just see a lot of people jamming in cuttings of exotics to fill their gardens up. Often the comments are it brings in the birds.

Honestly it does, however if we go deeper, the choice to spend money on natives that bring in the birds, native bees, lizards, night pollinators, beetles and other local fauna is hands-down a move towards understanding the incredible unique and diverse flora and fauna we have in this country.

Natives not only provide habitat, but they are also well adapted to climate extremes, many can be propagated easily and many more are threatened in the wild. The incredible array of natives and new cultivars commercially available is staggering.

It doesn’t matter how much room you’ve got, for every exotic brought into this country there is a native equivalent. If you want to see your gardens truly thrive, and this continent return to a beautiful oasis, put some energy into planting natives.

Come and see me at Green Thumb nursery at Nimbin Building Materials, currently located at 50 Gungah Road. Open weekdays 8am-4pm, Saturdays we close at noon.

For nursery advice, drop in and see me on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Until then, happy gardening.

Nimbin School of Arts Presidents Report 2024

by David Hallett, President

Following the Covid restrictions and cancellations of the previous two years it was especially pleasing to get back to a full program of major events in 2023.

The Nimbin School of Arts (NSA) managed three Blue Moon Cabarets and the Spring Arts Exhibition, while the Nimbin Art Fair, MardiGrass, Roots Festival and Nimbin Performance Poetry World Cup were all back in Nimbin’s cultural programming.

A fine addition to the NSA 2023 programmes were the classical piano concerts featuring Stephanie Hamlet and the Nimbin Hills Musicians Club.

Another major event was the Nimbin Aquarius Festival 50th anniversary, which saw the hall occupied for ten days with a series of forums, exhibitions, concerts, a dinner and a cabaret. These events were largely well attended by both ’73 festival attendees and the wider community.

Some essential work postponed during the Covid years was finally completed, notably the painting of the hall’s main street exterior and electrical upgrades particularly on the hall’s wiring and lighting infrastructure.

During this period Tim Tonkin has continued to add to the NSA’s extensive stage lighting supply, which has resulted in the spectacular staging of the cabarets.

Sam Herren’s assistance in essential maintenance and repairs is much appreciated, particularly in emergency callouts for jobs such as broken windows. Overall, the cost of maintenance, painting and construction continues to press on the NSA’s finances.

Raising the ticket price of the fundraising cabarets has helped somewhat but the rising cost of insurance and tradesmen continues to challenge the hall’s income.

Long-time tenant Perceptio Bookshop continues to provide invaluable service in hall bookings, payments, keys administration and general oversight of hall safety and security, while the Nimbin Artists Gallery remains an essential main street centre for Nimbin’s visual arts.

The School of Arts is indebted to the ongoing work of Secretary Tony Gibson and Treasurer Peter Brooker, assisted by Bookkeeper Suzanne Rensen, and to the Management Committee of Carole Barrett, Tim Tonkin, Samara Burcher, Sue Landers, Mandi Raval and Caroline Todd.

Great month for CWA Branch

by Sage Bryant, Publicity Officer

Far North Group Competition

Nimbin CWA members were very proud to bring home the trophy for highest point score overall at the CWA Far North Coast Cookery and Handicraft Competition.

Congratulations to our winning members Sarah Dobson, Nicole Raward, Natasha Tiffany and Pauline Ahern, who have items now going to the state competition, representing the FNC Group.

And special mention to Bev Gardner who received second place in the Cookery section for her Remembrance Biscuits.

International Women’s Day

On Friday 8th March, women of the community came together to celebrate sisterhood. Despite the inclement weather on the day there was a good turnout. We enjoyed poetry, music, song, a delicious spread, and of course great company!

We thank those who attended and look forward to doing it again next year.

Op Shop

The first month of our two additional Op Shop days have been very popular with the community and the CWA is happy to be filling this vital



need for Nimbin. Check the dates below for our next open dates.

Dates to Remember

♦ **Open Days:** 10am-3pm, 2nd and 3rd Wednesday of the month, pop in for lunch and a chat.

♦ **Op Shop Days:** 10am-3pm, 1st and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

♦ **Community Market Days:** 9.30am-3pm, 4th and 5th Sundays of the month.

♦ **Street Stall:** 10am-noon, every Saturday, outside the newsagents.

♦ **Branch Meeting:** 5pm, 2nd Monday of the month, new members always welcome!

For all general enquires please phone: 0461-412-831 or email: secretary.cwa.nimbin@gmail.com

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In your neighbourhood...

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre News

Sustainable Nimbin Community Plan (SNCP)

For all folks living within a 30 kilometre radius of the Nimbin village.

Community Workshop dates and SNCP Key Focus Areas – get these into your diaries, folks! You are welcome to attend one or some or all of the workshops.

The Plan will only be as good as the people who contribute to it – so come get amongst it and have your say! Your brainpower is needed.

- **Monday 29th April:** Economic Development 7.30am-9.30am (Town Hall)
- **Sat 25th May:** Energy plus Transport (Town Hall)
- **Sat 1st June:** Arts and Culture (Town Hall)
- **Sat 27th July:** Social and Political (Town Hall)
- **Sat 3rd August:** Water Security
- **September:** Final presentation – Draft Revised SNCP (date to be confirmed)

All workshops are from 10am to 1.30pm. There will be snacks and drinks to help sustain you in your efforts.

More info will be posted on Nimbin Hook Ups, NNIC and 7 Sibley St Facebook pages, and our website, and look out for posters around town.

For regular email updates: get onto our email list via Steph: sibley@nnic.org.au

Can't make it to a workshop? The Draft Revised Plans for each Key Focus Area will be circulated for further input and comment following each workshop. See the relevant KFA's section under the Sustainability Tab on the NNIC website. The first workshop (Housing/Health and Wellbeing) is now available to view and to provide your input if you wish.

Many thanks to the Northern Rivers Community Foundation for



funding support.

The Nimbin Women's Dinner 2024

This event was sold out and a smash hit!

Thanks so much to everyone who made it happen, including: Nicole, Claudie, Cath, Heidi, Gin, Kerry, Jasmine, Alison, Biko, Kim, Virginia and Mandi for helping with the organising, with set-up, the door, the floor, the dishes, the coffee and cakes and selling raffle tix. Gail and Rachel at the bar. Pauline for the fabulous banners. The NNIC teamsters for all the heavy lifting and set-up during the day. Indhi and the Little Kitchen Catering crew for the yummy food. Pyewackets for donating cordial shrubs. Cake makers: Chris Harris, Tash, Nicole, Gin, Kerry.

Plus Amanda for the sound and lights – with support from Tim Tonkins, the Community Centre and Neil Pike in helping us to cobble together a sound system. Thanks to Rachel for working the lights for us on the night.

Thanks to everyone who donated raffle prizes: Pauline Ahern, Nimbin Hills Real Estate, Greenbank, Emporium, Nimbin Building Supplies, Nimbin Servo, Uri Ross, Nimbin Environment Centre, Mandi and Nimbin HEMP.

And thanks also to all the wonderful performers Ellen Briggs, Scarlett Ruffles, Clued-Up Claudelia, Combat Cabaret, Asia, Menage and Mutton, plus all the fabulous women who came along to make for a fantastic night.

As promised, we turned the Inspire Board into a

6689-1692 10am-4pm
Monday-Friday. (Centrelink Agency Mon-Fridays 10am-2.30pm.)

New to Nimbin?

Have you moved into Nimbin recently? Or do you know someone who has? Maybe you have a new neighbour? Then the Welcome to Nimbin Kit is for you!

This Kit is designed to start conversations between new neighbours and help newcomers with lots of useful info to help you find your way and ease into the amazing fabric of the Nimbin community. Hard copies of the Kit are available for \$5.50 at NNIC.

The Kit is also available on our website. Go to: nnic.org.au and search for "New to Nimbin".

The list of volunteer organisations and contact numbers is only available in the hard copy version, which also comes in a handy folder with the great cover artwork.

Word Cloud which you can find on our Facebook page and feel free to download it or share it or turn it into a t-shirt or poster or whatever you like.

Need Assistance?

At NNIC we can help with a wide range of info and support, eg. material aid (including pet food/supplies), hot meals, referrals and confidential counselling and support, assistance with mobile phones/devices, printing, copying, internet access and disaster recovery support.

Food Pantry Wednesdays, Soup Kitchen Fridays. Plus lots more. If we can't help we probably know who can, so come on in or give us a call. 71 Cullen Street Nimbin (next to the park),

Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Services

We assist frail aged people, NDIS participants and carers to stay living at home and connect socially.



All NACRS support workers are qualified, certified, experienced, police checked, Covid-safe trained, insured and locally based.

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– Monday-Friday 10am-2pm. Drop in for a cuppa, access support services, info and computers.

DEVICE ADVICE – Wednesdays 9.30am-1pm. Seniors can book for assistance with phone, tablet or laptop issues.

SENIORS SOCIAL GROUPS – booking and fees apply

- Nimbin Tuesday Morning Tea, 10.30am-1pm. Tea/coffee, conversation, music and snacks, weekly \$5
- The Outsiders Group 1st and 3rd Thursday, 11am-2pm at various rural cafes, self-funded plus donation to NACRS
- Wise Ones at Koonorigan Hall/Dunoon 4th Monday, 11.30am-1.30pm, bring a plate to share
- Bus outings – 2nd and 4th Tuesday. Scenic drives, cafes for morning tea & lunch (you pay), bookings essential, fees apply.

Phone 6689-1709 or visit NACRS at Bottlebrush Studio, the rainbow building at Nimbin Community Centre.

www.nacrs.com.au

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Nimbin Hospital information



Child immunisation

By appointment, please phone 6630-0400.

Early childhood nurse

Every Tuesday. Baby checks, weighs, post-natal support. For appointments, phone 6630-0400.

Women's health nurse services

Third Thursday of the month, next is 21st March. Phone 6688-1400 for an appointment.

Wound clinic

Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8am. For self-referral, phone 6688-1433. Referrals also from Nimbin Hospital and GP clinic.

Drug and alcohol counselling services available

For an appointment, please contact 6620-7600. A trained professional will ask you a few confidential questions and will provide you with an appointment time.

Nurse practitioner clinic

Diabetes clinics: third Thursday of the month, next is 18th April.

Community Registered Nurse

Monday to Friday, 8am-4.30pm. Assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy, provision of palliative care in the home, medication support. Phone 6688-1433 – leave a message, will return call swiftly.

Nimbin NSP

Needle and syringe program open Monday to Thursday. Arrangements can be made to see a community Registered Nurse.

Health advice line

Phone 1800-022-222 if you have a health issue. 24-hour, seven days a week, free service. A Registered Nurse will assess whether you need to go to an Emergency Department.

Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary

Monthly meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month, 9.30am in the CWA room. New members are most welcome.



by Scott Sledge, president

Richmond Ranges logging compartments

In the weeks prior to International Day of Forests (21st March), Fridays4Forests visited Braemar, Richmond Ranges and Ewingar State Forests – all scheduled for logging.

The mess left by Forestry Corp contractors at Braemar, south of Casino, caused koala defender Dailan Pugh to post a video showing that the grey gums cut there are the preferred food for the koala colony that is trying to recover after recent fires.

NEC joined Kyogle Environment Group (KEG) to visit the Richmond Ranges compartments near the Toonumbar Dam where most of the big trees have hollows suitable for nesting by endangered species.

Northern Rivers locals, Emma Briggs and Bassi Brown locked onto machinery at Ewingar State Forest (Upper Clarence) on 21st March and called for an end to native forest logging. They were supported by a team of forest defenders.

March to end native forest logging

This march on 24th March took place countrywide in major cities and regional towns, with 1000 people marching in Bellingen and more than 500 braving the rain in Lismore.

Assembling in Riverside Park, protestors of all ages paraded to the door of Lismore MP Janelle Saffin to demand that the ALP state government join WA and Victoria in banning logging in state forests.

Speakers included Dailan Pugh, biologist Anastasia Guise, and rally organisers Sean O'Shannessy and Valerie Thompson, who said the public money now being spent to subsidise the destruction of our forests could

be put to better use employing workers to maintain forests for ecological and economic benefits.

Tweed demonstrators gathered on Friday 8th March at the South Tweed office of the ALP's Federal Member for Richmond, Justine Elliot, asking for urgent changes to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act to better protect native wildlife such as those threatened by the Wallum development near Brunswick Heads.

The EPBC Act

This Act needs urgent amendment as our environmental situation continues to decline in Australia, as it is around the world. Fundamentally, we now need to recognise the importance of sustainability over all other concerns.

The Federal Minister should not only be empowered to 'call in' proposals for development, but the law must require that the Minister review all new major developments and sign off only on condition that they won't contribute to climate change.

The situation is critical. Projects can't be allowed unless they will clearly not damage sensitive wildlife habitats or cause destructive pollution.

The federal government has kept a lid on dissent over changes to the approval process for off-shore gas projects so as to maintain the status quo. Buried in a bill ostensibly about worker safety were amendments stating that approved off-shore gas projects would be assumed compliant with environmental laws.

Influential gas mining company, Santos warned Resources Minister Madeleine King the offshore gas approvals process was in a 'dire' state a week after a federal court overturned Woodside's approval.



Photo: Chibo Mertneit

To alter this situation, the Greens, the parliamentary crossbench, First Nations activists, and environmental groups spurred into action an informal Labor pro-climate group: the Labor Environment Action Network (LEAN).

LEAN aims to limit the Resource Minister's override power and restore Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek's power to prevent rules requiring consultation from being watered down.

On 29th February, a bill was referred to a snap parliamentary inquiry, where the resources department explained that since 2014, projects only needed approval from either the environment or resources department.

LEAN asked for the approval of both Ministers – Resources and Environment – to ensure that off-shore gas projects would not be exempt from any revised EPBC Act. Amendments to the bill are understood to restore the power of veto to Environment Minister Plibersek after internal Labor dissent.

Australia Institute's Climate Integrity Summit

At this summit on 20th March, economist Richard Denniss told delegates we must stop doing two things: burning fossil fuels and chopping down trees.

"We can't fix market failure with market forces," he said. "That's not economics; that's nonsense." Australia has 100 new fossil fuel projects, thanks to a lack of integrity in public policy.

In his closing remarks, Richard Denniss said, "I love an election. We're going to have



Photo: V. White

one in a year. And the Australia Institute will do everything it can to keep those issues that you've heard about today – fossil fuel expansion, fossil fuel subsidies, dodgy offsets, all sorts of things that frankly, most people weren't talking about not that long ago, and a lot of groups still aren't even talking about – we'll do everything we can to keep them on the agenda."

Greens Senator Larissa Waters said, "The major parties are so hooked on fossil fuel money that they have lost the ability to govern in the public interest, instead of the interests of their donor mates. The time to restore trust and integrity in our politics is now.

"We can do this with political financing reforms that remove the fossil fuel industry's corrosive influence on our democracy."

Urgent reform needed as EPBC Act fails

by the Kyogle Environment Group



Courtesy WWF

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) is facing scrutiny amidst a backdrop of concerning environmental degradation.

As native species vanish and habitats shrink at an alarming rate, urgent reform is needed.

Under the stewardship of the Federal Minister for the Environment and Water, Tanya Plibersek, the EPBC Act is undergoing a comprehensive overhaul as part of the Department's Nature Positive Plan.

This is the most significant evaluation of the Act since it began in 1999, with three overarching objectives: to protect more of what's precious, manage nature better for the future and repair more of what's already damaged.

On the surface, these aims promise a step towards a more environmentally conscious future.

One particular area of focus within this review relates to the Regional Forest Agreements (RFA), established by the NSW State Government in 2002.

These agreements delineate the parameters, duties, and accountabilities for the

sustainable management of forests, renewing every two decades.

However, RFAs have enjoyed exemption from the EPBC Act since its inception, under a policy of exclusivity referred to as 'RFA exceptionalism,' a term coined by Thomas Baxter of the University of Tasmania. Initially perceived as providing the same legal protection as the EPBC Act, this presumption has proven misguided.

By exempting the RFA regime, the Federal Government has neglected its obligations under international environmental treaties concerning forests, effectively relinquishing oversight to State Governments.

Unfortunately, the NSW Environmental Protection Agency is frequently under-resourced, armed with fines and penalties that are inadequate deterrents against

any significant and reckless ecological harm incurred by forestry operations.

Take a trip to a recently logged coupe and you will see a landscape of cut and crushed habitat, weed infestation, erosion, homeless koalas and glider dens smashed by bulldozer tracks. Logging is inherently destructive, and nature suffers.

In response to mounting concerns, the Federal Government has pledged to address the deficiencies in forestry regulation oversight and compliance through the ongoing EPBC review process.

However, there are apprehensions regarding the level of community consultation, with fears that industry stakeholders may unduly influence the outcome, perpetuating a cycle of 'systemic capture.'

As the review unfolds, we will ask for balanced representation to ensure that the voice of conservation is not drowned out by vested interests.

Ultimately, the hope is for a regulatory framework that prioritises environmental protection, providing native forests and their inhabitants the robust safeguards they need.

Community Health Survey

Healthy North Coast is running an important community health survey and wants to hear your thoughts, ideas and experiences of primary health care on the North Coast.

The Better Health Community Survey 2024 aims to shine a light on what's working, what's not, and what health services are needed across our region in the future.

This feedback will be combined with other health



data to form a comprehensive review of health needs for the region.

By sharing your thoughts, you'll be helping shape future health programs and services for you, your family and your community.

It will only take 10 minutes to complete the survey at:

bnc.org.au/better-health

Plus, you could win one of 20 x \$100 cashcards just for participating. All responses are anonymous and confidential.

Together, let's shape a healthier North Coast.

The survey closes on Sunday, 14th April.

NIMBIN'S SUSTAINABLE LIVING HUB
7 Sibley Street
Workshops: 10.30am – 1.30pm

- Fri 12th: Monthly Crafternoon 5pm** – Bring a project, join like-minded crafty friends, by donation.
- Sat 13th: Build a Dead Hedge** – What to do with prunings and woody weeds – retain biomass, builds and protects soil, creates wildlife habitat- all while tidying the garden! \$15
- Tues 16th: Knitting group** – BYO project, learn & share, by donation.
- Sat 20th: Growing a Food Forest** – Abundant food forever! (9am at Solar Farm, bookings essential \$50)
- Sat 27th: Spun Cotton ornaments** – Learn this traditional easy craft to make your own decorations, \$15
- Community Tools Library:** Every Wed and Sat, 10.30am – 2pm. For home repairs, garden tools, food and craft equipment. Join at NNIC Mon-Fri. *Basketballs & pump available, \$5 refundable deposit.*

April What's On!
 \$15 unless otherwise noted
Bookings: text 0475-135-764 or email: sibley@nnic.org.au

FLOWER & FOLIAGE SPECTACULAR
 Friday 19th April - 9am - 5pm
 Saturday 20th April - 8am - 2pm
 St Brigid's School Hall - Wyangarie St, Kyogle
 Entry Fee \$3
 Light Refreshments Available
 Raffles on the hour
 Plants and other Garden Products For Sale
 Phil Dudman from ABC Gardening will make a guest appearance on Friday 19th from 10.30am
 Speakers and Demonstrations Saturday from 9.30am
KYOGLA GARDEN CLUB INC

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 45E(2) OF THE REAL PROPERTY ACT 1900 (NSW) – APPLICATION FOR POSSESSORY TITLE TO LAND
 Application AT757800 has been made by THOMAS JOHN ROGERS ('Applicant') for a title pursuant to Part 6A of the Real Property Act 1900 (NSW) ('Act') (possessory title) in respect of the undermentioned land:
 - Property situated at 520 Gungas Road, Nimbin NSW 2480
 - Being land referred to in Folio of the Register 31/755739
 - In the Local Government Area of Lismore, Parish of Terania and County of Rous.
 The Applicant claims title by possession adverse to Molly Davidson, their successors and assigns.
 The Registrar-General intends to grant this application on the expiration of one month from the date of publication of this notice, unless before the expiration of that time period an objection is lodged in the form of a caveat pursuant to section 74F(3) of the Act.
 Enquiries may be made at NSW Land Registry Services, Level 30, 175 Liverpool Street, Sydney NSW 2000.
 Enquiries: Legal Registry Services, Tel: (02) 8776 3575 (ref: JS LEG4 AT757800) Email: ldr@nswlrs.com.au

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NSW
Application for Appointment of Board Members
Hanging Rock Hall Land Manager
 Ever wondered who is responsible for keeping Crown reserves operating?
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 Your role as a Board Member is voluntary, but the rewards of giving something back to the community are priceless.
 We are looking for a good mix of people with a variety of skills, however, sound business and financial management skills and objective decision-making expertise would be a distinct advantage.
 Don't let this opportunity to do something for yourself and your community pass you by – contact us today.
 The Hanging Rock Hall Land Manager manages the Reserve No. 91046 at Wadeville notified on 24-Feb-1978 for Public Recreation. The term of appointment will be for a period not exceeding 5 years.
 Application for membership can be made via portal.crownland.nsw.gov.au
 All applications are required to be lodged by **29 May 2023**.
For further information contact:
 Joe Endean on (02) 6642 9204 or go to reservemanager.crownland.nsw.gov.au



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 Nimbin GoodTimes.

Housing help
 The front page of the March 24 NGT says it all! It is time to act on a grassroots level, in collective solidarity to find solutions to the current housing crisis. There have been many conversations amongst friends over coffee on ways to solve the current situation. We can no longer rely on federal or local governments to fix the issues we, as a community, face on a daily basis. We have discussed a database listing land owners who have space to rent, along with mobile-home owners looking for somewhere to park.

The increase in popularity of tiny homes, buses, caravans and van living, provides an opportunity for land owners to help those with their own (mobile) homes to find permanent, suitable, stable and affordable places to land.

It's also an opportunity for those who can no longer maintain their land as they once did, to receive help from potential land renters.

Please send your expression of interest in being part of the solution to: sibley@nnic.org.au whether you are a land owner or someone looking for a place to park and call home.

Lyndal Grey
 Nimbin

Informed and thorough
 My response is to the article by Aidan Ricketts titled 'Fascism, collective insanity and ourselves' (NGT February 24), which helped me to clarify my thoughts on the matter discussed.

Until now I have been unable to articulate the ideas relating to the title of the article. I wish to thank him for doing so in such an informed and thorough way.

Notices
Position vacant
 Admin / Bookkeeper needed – 1-2 days a week at Cawongla Playhouse, start early May. Information on our Facebook page.
Koala Food Tree Planting Day
 Richmond Landcare event, postponed due to weather. New date: Friday, 19th April, 9am to midday, Near Eastern Forest Nursery, South Gundurimba (address provided upon registration). Register at: <https://events.humanitix.com/community-koala-tree-planting-day-cu3vtkmt>
Annual General Meetings
 • Tunttable Falls Community School AGM: Thursday 9th May, 3.15pm at the school. All interested parties welcome to attend.
 • Cawongla Playhouse AGM: Tuesday 28th May, 2.45pm. All members are invited to attend.
Free notices
 Keep it short and of interest to our readers, get it to us by deadline, and we'll run it here for free.

It reassured me to know that a contributor of his calibre and ability is part of your excellent team of writers
 Sue Adler
 Nimbin

Dogs
 Please keep your dogs on leads if you bring them to town.

I'm sure yours is the best dog in the world and wouldn't hurt a fly, but not everyone knows your dog like you do.

Some people who lack experience with large dogs,

or may have experienced a dog attack, will not view your lovable free ranging pooch with quite the same eyes.

There are over 100,000 dog bites annually. Dog attacks put an average of 2000 people in hospital each year.

Is it fair to let your dog run around the village, lie in the doorway of a shop, or sprawl across the footpath effectively blocking the way for those who are frightened of a dog they don't know?

Dog Lover
 Nimbin

Name and address supplied

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NEXT DEADLINE:
Friday 26th April
 Email nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.
 The Nimbin GoodTimes acknowledges the Bundjalung people, the traditional owners of the land and waters on which we work and live, and pay our respects to the Elders both past and present.

Healing habitat vs healing crystals

by Holly English

We do our best here in Australia to end deforestation and habitat destruction with important and critical campaigns such as 'Save Wallum', here in the Northern Rivers and 'Takayna / Tarkine' in Tasmania.

However, we sometimes fail to realise that mining across the globe is doing exactly the same destruction, and also displacing First Nations people and paying workers (many children too) practically nothing to destroy their own country.

There is mining we can choose, such as healing crystals, and mining that is a bit harder to navigate – materials for cars, phones, machinery.

We can make better choices and buy second-hand with many products, but



mining of crystals, as well as silver and gold for jewellery, is completely unnecessary.

Somehow, ripping up the earth in India, China, Brazil and Madagascar for giant crystal amethysts for healing centres, or putting a jade crystal egg

into your vagina for 'fertility' or pelvic floor is OK. Yet, ripping up the soil in our own forests is not. But it is the same thing.

We sit in the tree-hammocks in protest in the Daintree, wearing our symbolic crystal pendants (yes, guilty of this when I was a teen), without the awareness of where it came from.

We have choices as consumers. I don't buy crystals, gold or silver. If I am gifted them, I accept them kindly, sometimes wear them, but occasionally plant crystals back in the earth. It's where they belong.

Let's keep campaigning to save our own Australian native majesty, but also think beyond our backyard at how we unconsciously support deforestation and destruction of habitat globally, because, ultimately, we are completely interconnected.

Doubt as an asset, certainty as an affliction

The fear of uncertainty and the deceptive allure of binary thinking are both things I have written about before.

Our living universe originates in a chaos so profoundly untrammelled that there is nothing to stop the continual process of emergent order, together with its eventual decay.

As humans we cling to the edge of this eternal dance of emergence and entropy, vulnerable, fragile and far more ignorant than we can usually bear to admit.

The great uncertainty and chaos are like a veil of existence so profoundly uncomfortable to many of us that our personal and collective project of swapping it out for whatever belief systems will give us certainty ends up feeling more real than the reality we are avoiding.

Our religion, our spirituality, our status or wealth, our political ideologies or our group identities, all desperate anchors in a world animated by uncertainty. The addiction to certainty is probably our most prolific global addiction.

I was listening to a podcast by senior physicist Professor Michelle Simmons the other day on radio speaking about the value of doubt and even of self-doubt. (www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/boyerlectures/boyer-lectures/102960870).

She observed that at the heart of all good scientific enquiry is the uncomfortable humility of not knowing the truth and therefore needing to be continually open to new information. Confidence, she explained is for charismatic leaders not for those who genuinely seek to understand phenomena.

The concept of the 'confidence trickster' takes on an enlarged meaning in this regard. People who have managed to fool themselves enough to feel confident in what they think they know, turn around and try to sell their illusion about themselves to others.

This is true of the cult leaders, the charismatic politicians, fascists and dictators, billionaires, life coaches, even many professionals and definitely true of the influencers and conspiracy peddlers on the internet.

So, it's confusing, who should we trust? I try to navigate that question by preferring to turn to those who know they don't know, over those who think they do. Having said that, it's not as if no-one knows anything.

In a specialised society we have many people with highly developed knowledge and discipline in certain fields.

Reliable knowledge is only ever part of an emerging picture and is usually acquired through learning from the accumulated discoveries from many others in the past, together with ongoing curious exploration.

What really propelled the great thinkers and scientists, was not their arrogance and self-assurance but the opposite, their inherent scepticism, doubt and the resultant curious



by Aidan Ricketts

exploration.

And the issue of who to trust is further complicated by the corruption, greed, contest for power and the growing sophistication of the means of propaganda to deceive and distract.

The crisis of faith in leaders, and the perception that we are being manipulated by powerful vested interests has generated a very real and understandable scepticism about official versions of reality.

In this regard it is easy to understand the resistive stirring of dissonance and disbelief that propels so many into conspiracy theories and false narratives, but here is the catch.

The dissonance, doubt and uncertainty that we feel is healthy; what is unhealthy is the addictive swapping out of this feeling for the illusory certainty of an alternative explanation. What irritates me most with conspiracists is not what they question, but what they are so sure they know.

And binary thinking is just another construct that divides grand uncertainty into a simple proposition of this or that. If you don't buy into my grand conspiracy then you must trust everything the government says, for example.

For the true sceptic though, the lies, the manipulation, the false narrative, the corruption are all around us, they do not emanate from a single source. Nothing so magically simple as an illuminati, an all encompassing 'they' or a secret cabal that planned all of this.

Instead, what we see is that most of this was not planned, the world is actually a chaotic struggle for control by thousands of differing vested interests all vying to control, manipulate and deceive for their own ends.

Corporations for example, from their inception have been a form of collective AI established for the relentless pursuit of profit. They collectively control far more capital than governments globally, and participate in the affairs of the world from a lens of relentless self-interest.

Global corporations stifling competition, manipulating government and public opinion and attempting to monopolise markets is ongoing. Just look at the misinformation the fossil fuel lobby has generated in recent decades to try to cast doubt on climate science.

In addition to these corporate agendas, add in the ambitions of narcissistic and psychopathic dictators, oppressive regimes, religious fundamentalists, billionaires, influencers and all manner of grifters large and small and you have the soup of competing agendas, manipulation and deception that animates our modern world.

There isn't just one or several powerful elites trying to control the world, there are numerous ones. The good news is that as a result, like crime gangs in a big city, none of them ever get anywhere near achieving total unquestioned dominance or control.

In a sense, an ecology of corruption emerges in which the contest of competing agendas has them all undermining each other.

This is not to say that we can't map and critique where the strongest constellations of power lie. Transnational corporations, international banking, global agriculture, weapons, big pharma, Murdoch media, big tech and social media companies.

The ecology of corruption is all around us, but it lacks a definitive single perpetrator. The most important discipline of all in critiquing all this is the humility to stay in your doubt, your scepticism and your not knowing.

In my own personal journey of dissonance and not knowing, I keep my scepticism filters on high alert to those who claim to have simple answers.

I much prefer those who dedicate their lives to doubt and enquiry, who conduct themselves according to disciplined codes of sceptical rigour, and who mostly stay within their field of expertise, admit to the limitations of their knowledge.

The specialist social researcher, medical expert, author, philosopher, teacher, psychologist, scientist or even politician that has the humility to level with us about the small piece they might know amidst the entire universe they don't, deserves our respect so much more than the confident fanatic, hard-line ideologue, smooth talking guru or therapist, or obsessively singular conspiracy peddler.

Is uncertainty really so uncomfortable that we must hide from our beautiful unpredictable fragile world behind simplistic delusions?

Uncertainty is in the fabric of our existence, better that we lean in to this most uncomfortable of experiences in every way we can. Exercise our uncertainty muscles, because these are what really help us live in a world full of mystery beyond our capacity to understand.

The doubting, the questioning, the dissonance, all of these are healthy, so is the research, the critiquing and the challenges to power.

What isn't useful is swapping out all of this rigour and curious enquiry for the false security of an all-encompassing explanation.

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