

Cherie Pugh
 landscape artist
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 6/78 Cecil St
 Nimbin
 Jarlanbah Community
 no dogs, rare wildlife

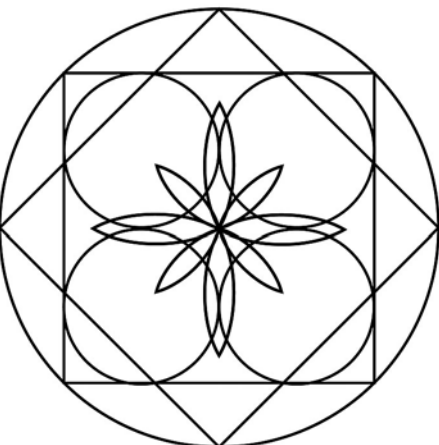


**NIMBIN
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 GALLERY**
 OPEN DAILY
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 49 Cullen St, Nimbin
 CONTACT: PH 02 6689 1444
www.nimbinartistsgallery.org
nimbinartistsgallery@gmail.com

A TASTE OF ART

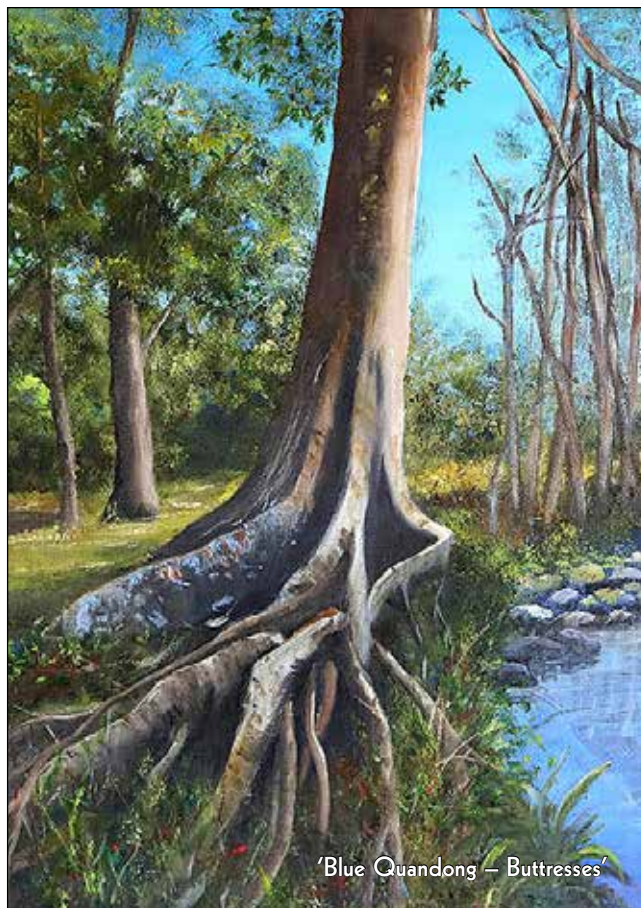
**blueknob hall
 gallery**
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 Blue Knob Cafe
 Gallery & Cafe hours:
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**ROXY
 GALLERY**
 131a Summerland Way Kyogle
 Open: Wednesday to Saturday 10am - 3pm, Sunday 10am - 2pm

Artist of the Month: Brenda Bryant



'Blue Quandong - Buttresses'

by Tonia Haynes

Brenda Bryant travelled extensively in her youth and later married, having three children which took up most of her time, limiting her desire to take art lessons.

When she retired to the beautiful Tweed Valley some 12 years ago, she was able to take art classes at Murwillumbah and began painting, initially with soft pastels and then acrylics, oil pastels and oils.

She now concentrates on painting with oils and has successfully received commendations at various art competitions and sold many of her paintings.

Brenda loves the rainforests

that abound near her home and most of her paintings are of landscapes, predominantly the rainforest and rural area, near to where she lives.

Brenda's paintings are being exhibited at the Nimbin Artists Gallery during January.

The Gallery is open every day, 10am to 4pm-ish, in the heart of the village on Cullen Street beside the School of Arts built in 1903.

When one walks into the Nimbin Artist Gallery, one is greeted by a feeling of serenity and patient, warm regard.

The mystery created by the individual passion of the artists that present their imagination on the walls and



'Tranquility in the Rainforest'

shelves of this little wooden room cannot help but make one inspired.

There is such a large choice, in various mediums, all manifested by the creative bent of artists who all live within 40 kms of Nimbin. A fine reminder of a little town that is different.

Maybe one is thinking of a friend, or maybe thinking that the lounge room could do with a lift, or imagining how those finely-honed pottery plates would look on your table.

The careful volunteer staff will safely post whatever you want to wherever you want it.

Eight-channel video work at Lismore Regional Gallery

One of the most powerful voices in art today, William Kentridge emerged as an artist during the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Grounded in the violent absurdity of that period in his country's history, his drawings, prints and animations draw connections between art, ideology, history and memory.

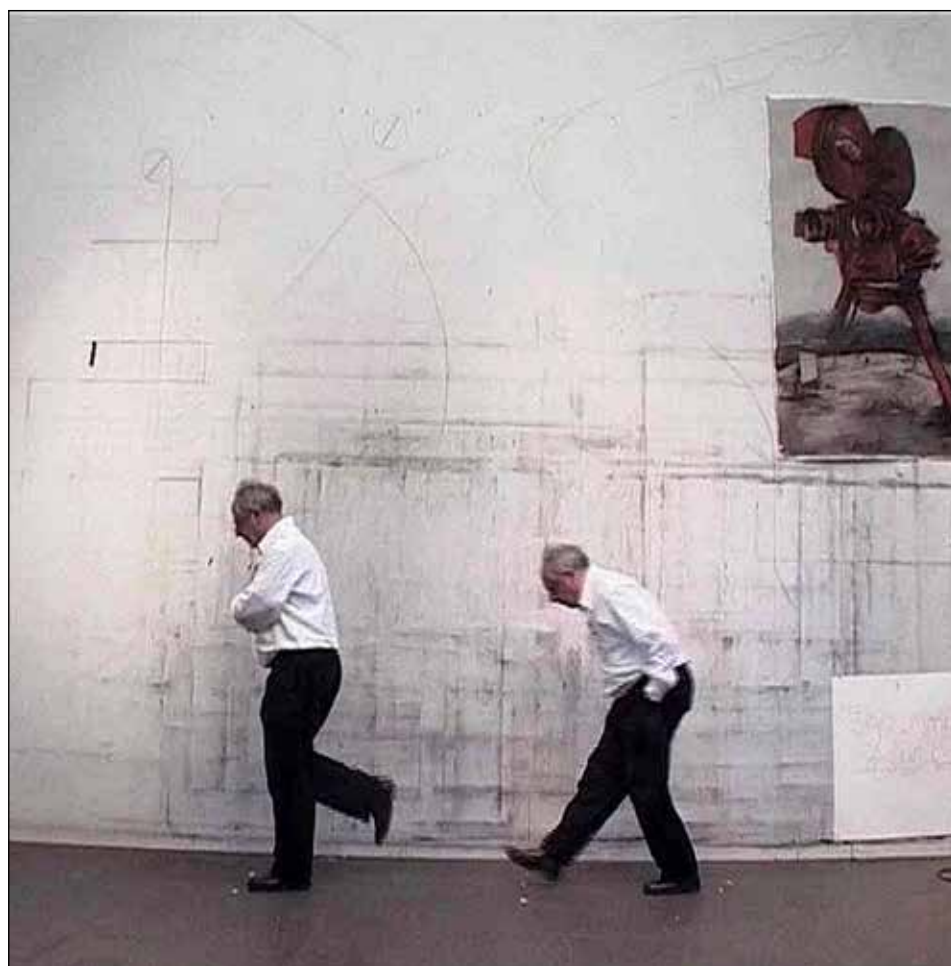
They reveal the ways in which ideas and images echo across time and between different cultures.

Kentridge's eight-channel video work 'I am not me, the horse is not mine' is among the artist's most ambitious moving image works, and arguably the most significant work by the artist in an Australian museum collection.

An Art Gallery of New South Wales touring exhibition, the video work premiered at the Biennale of Sydney in 2008.

The immersive exhibition runs until 16th February in Gallery 1.

Doors are open Wednesday through Sunday from 10am to 4pm and until 6pm on Thursdays.



Male Form – a humorous exploration of masculinity

by Corinne Batt-Rawden

Serpentine Gallery re-opens in late January with our first show of the new year.

Local artist, Jay Manby will exhibit his new work titled 'Male Form', which explores the complex and often contradictory landscape of masculinity, blending personal identity with the commercialised, hyper-stylised imagery that dominates our culture.

The exhibition draws inspiration from the clichés, symbols, and stereotypes that have come to define men both in their most authentic and most exaggerated forms.

The work offers a bold, sometimes flamboyant critique of the masculine ideal. It is both provocative and playful, using highly decorative elements and larger-than-life forms to create a dialogue about masculinity's role in both shaping and being shaped by our cultural norms.

It weaves together the personal and commercial, the authentic and the artificial, in a rich tapestry of visual language. Using humour and exaggeration, 'Male Form' pokes fun at masculine tropes while still celebrating their cultural

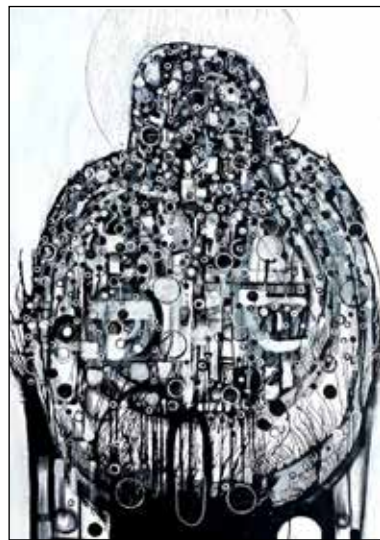


significance.

This exhibition consists of new paintings, works on paper, painted cut out wood panels, three-dimensional work and prints on canvas. Jay describes his work as process-driven and opportunistic: "I recycle and make use of incidental elements and push a work towards revealing its true nature."

"The process begins in the abstract and, at a certain point, the narrative enters."

"I work from my studio in Northern New South Wales, it allows me complete freedom to move around a canvas, and I like



to work large, rather than small, as there is an unbridled physicality to my work that demands scale – much like action painting, the canvases see-saw between order and chaos, which brings a fragile tension and energy to the work," he said.

Jay was born in Scotland and raised in Devon, England until he was 15. He moved to Canberra to finish school, then to Sydney to study Visual Communications Design at the University of Technology in Balmain.

He moved to the Northern Rivers 32 years ago and currently lives in

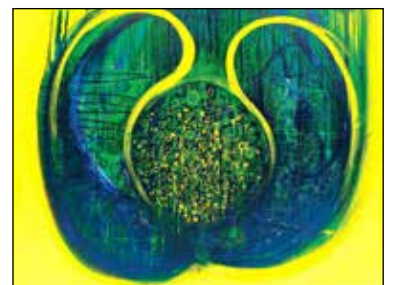
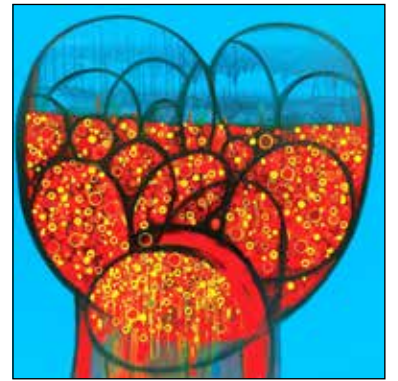


Eltham. Jay says, "After moving to the Northern Rivers and living in Lismore Shire for so long, I identify this beautiful place as home."

Over the years Jay has participated in many solo and group shows in our region. He is known for creating iconic imagery in Australia's music industry.

He has an ARIA nomination for designing The Cruel Sea's CD artwork, and his poster designs are in Sydney's Powerhouse Museum collection.

He still practises graphic design after 35 years, recently creating



record cover artwork and graphics for local bands Slug and Valhalla Lights.

Opening night is at the Serpentine Gallery, 104 Conway Street, Lismore on Thursday 23rd January, 6–9 pm. Please join us for drinks, nibbles and music from local artist Davey Bob Ramsey.

The show closes on Sunday 9th February.

Blue Knob Hall Gallery re-opens for 2025 with wide variety of art



'Blossoming' by Maddy Chandler



'Mosaic Flower' by Anne Marie Dineen

After a good holiday break, the members and volunteers of Blue Knob Hall Gallery, Café & Ceramic Studio look forward to welcoming locals and visitors alike back to Blue Knob when we re-open on Thursday 16th January.

"The Artist's Choice' & Blue Knob Ceramic Studio (combined) exhibition will continue through until Saturday 1st February.

This exhibition has a wide variety of work and shows off the talent we have locally and from the wider community.

The volunteer teachers at the Ceramic Studio have inspired students and made a huge contribution to this community art space where they provide classes three days a week.

The first exhibitions coming in the New Year are 'We were young once...' (members/artists) and Renita Glencross's exhibition 'Relics V: Mapping Time & Place' in The Solo Space.

An opening event for these exhibitions will be held on Sunday 9th February at 2.30pm.

The Gallery has about six exhibitions per year, two of which are annual exhibitions. They include The Fibre Show held mid-year,



Carved Black Slip Teapot by Lorraine Lintern

which is dedicated to fibre in all its forms; and 'The Artist's Choice' at the end of the year where artists exhibit their work free from the constraints of a theme.

Blue Knob Hall Gallery & Café opened its doors in 2004, with the Ceramic Studio opening in 2016. It has been a remarkable 20 years, and we continue to thrive by supporting budding and experienced artists



alike and providing a gallery, ceramic studio and café for the public to enjoy.

See our Facebook page for more info about the Gallery, Ceramic Studio and Café.

♦ Blue Knob Writers Group meet weekly at Blue Knob Cafe on Sundays. For more info contact Alex on 6689-7268 or Helen

'Fungii on the Rocks' by Hiske Tas Bain

0487-385-134.

♦ Blue Knob Vocal & Instrumental Group meet on Thursdays from 3.45pm at Blue Knob Hall. Everyone is welcome, just turn up, or for more info call Peter 0458-487-865.



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Terry Bressington

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Woodfordia's dazzling creativity

Billed as the largest gathering of artists and musicians in Australia, the 37th Woodford Folk Festival, held over six days to 1st January, attracted over 25,000 daily patrons and over 2500 volunteers.

As well as 480 musical acts on 22 stages, the Woodford experience has a strong emphasis on the visual arts with many installations and happenings around the festival site, creating a rich and colourful immersive cultural event.



Photos: Kurt Petersen

Lots more than just big veggies

by Joan Hayman, Kyogle Tidy Towns Committee

The Summerland Giant Pumpkin and Watermelon Festival Day is fast approaching, and what started as a competition for growers of giant vegetables has grown into a fun-filled day.

To be held at Stratheden Street Kyogle on Saturday 18th January, the day showcases not only giant pumpkins and watermelons, but highlights the skills of the local artists and craftsmen, offers an opportunity for home gardeners to showcase their skills growing the fruits and vegetables that this area is renowned for, and much more.

If rock and roll dancing or line dancing appeals to you, there will be demonstrations of both in the hall. For youngsters there is a Fancy Dress Competition for children under 12; you will be able to get your face painted, toss a pair of gum boots or find out how much watermelon you can eat in 30 seconds,

For car enthusiasts there will be the



classics, and this year they will be joined by the Mustang Club on the Oaten and Hoffman forecourt. If you are interested in old machinery that used to be used on local farms, the corn cracking and shelling demonstration is a must-see for you.

Throughout the day there will be food vans supplying a variety of food, drinks

and snow cones that will satisfy the inner person when the worms bite. Local musicians will entertain throughout the morning, and you must buy a raffle ticket or two and have a ticket in the Guess the Weight competition for the large pumpkin on display.

The day does not end until you have had a cooling dip in the pool, or challenged the inflatable. From 3pm entry into the pool will be free, courtesy of Kyogle Council.

Your day may continue after you have cooled down at one of the local eateries, or you may enjoy a movie at the local cinema. If you have been fortunate enough to get tickets for the Motor Rail for the trip around the Border Loop, we hope you enjoyed the scenery.

Before you finish, visit the Roxy Gallery and view the works on display and vote for the work which you find most appealing.

There is a people's choice vote which will continue until early February, and the work that receives the most votes will be awarded The Caroline Fisher Memorial Perpetual Trophy and a cash prize.

Back Door Blue



Forest Kingfisher. Photo Kitty van Vuuren

by Scott O'Keefe, ecologist

Living high on a hill is great, but when you live down by the water, all sorts of extra wildlife will be available to you.

Recently I was 'birdwatching' (having a coffee) next to the back door and looking out at the farm dam. A bright blue object zipped past – I thought I was seeing things.

A moment later there was a sharp staccato call from nearby. Just 10 metres away, perched on a beehive, sat a most elegant blue bird: a Forest Kingfisher (*Todiramphus macleayi*)!

Of the seven species of Kingfisher in Northern Rivers, the Sacred Kingfisher (*Todiramphus sanctus*) is the one most often seen. As far as I know, only Sacred Kingfishers breed on my property. The Forest Kingfisher is something new, a special treat.

Forest Kingfishers (FCs) are found in parts of PNG, Indonesia, and Australia. In Australia it occurs throughout the tropics in the Top End, Cape York, and down the east coast and adjacent inland areas as far south as Port Stevens.

They breed throughout their range, but FCs are migratory south of the tropics. So, in New South Wales and Southern Queensland, they are only present in the warmer months.

Like so many other animals, FCs are partially dependent upon mature trees, especially those with arboreal termitaria and hollow limbs. These provide sites for nesting.

Sometimes FCs will also nest in earth banks, especially those lining creeks. The nesting chamber is basic. Three to six white eggs are laid directly onto the rough surface.

Interestingly, when a pair of FCs breed,

outside helper birds sometimes assist with incubating the eggs and feeding the young when they hatch. Many beaks make light work.

FCs are most common in open forests and woodlands close to swamps, creeks, rivers, and other water bodies. They're also found in and around mangrove forest.

In more tropical areas they are also found in swampy forests with a grassy understory. Less often they occur in farmland with scattered groves of trees, especially large eucalypts.

FCs hunt from exposed perches, diving to the ground or into shallow water to capture their prey. They eat a very wide range of invertebrates including worms, grasshoppers, stick insects, cicadas, ants, butterfly larva, beetles and others.

They also eat small vertebrates such as tadpoles, frogs, small lizards and small snakes.

Australia has eight species of kingfishers out of a world total of 117 species. In the Northern Rivers region, Forest Kingfishers are around, but you must look carefully to identify them correctly.

FCs have bright blue upper parts (no green), white underparts, and when the birds are flying, the wings show two conspicuous white spots. There is also a white spot at the base of the beak, or in the case of juveniles, like the one in the photo, the spot is slightly brownish.

Since Forest Kingfishers are quite territorial, they usually return to the same place each year to breed. So, although ours will head north in March or April, it will hopefully be back in September. Maybe it will even raise a brood.

I will be waiting at the back door with my coffee.



Photo: Michelle Sandrik

Rewriting our climate future, one farm at a time

by Katinka Smit

In sweltering heat on 8th December, 50 people gathered at Jiggi Hall for a community screening of Rachel Ward's film, *Rachel's Farm*.

A delicious supper and cross-region catch-ups preceded special guest Mother Nature, who cooled the night and blew the power grid with her magnificence.

Demonstrating community adaptability in the face of disaster, Jiggi local Phil Biggar fetched a generator.

Projecting over the rain, guest speaker Rob Skinner explained the wonder of soil carbon: if 50% of farms in Bundjalung country captured 2% carbon, they would offset the region's emissions.

Electricity restored, Rachel Ward's film entertainingly delivered the hope-inspiring effect of regenerative farming.

Rachel and farming partner Mick used cattle to sequester carbon, decrease methane and increase biodiversity. Natural sequence farming maximised their land use, steering the books back to black.

But in 2022, the farm flooded. Post-flood, the soil dried hard. They needed to secure groundwater, to slow surface water. It transformed their catchment.

Post-film, second speaker Grant Fleming gave a short tutorial on landscape hydrology: strategic trenches in the right contours deepen the land's water holding

capacity.

This strengthens the overall effects of regeneration, and significantly boosts carbon sequestration. Robustly healthy, productive farms become drought, fire and flood resilient.

The film screening unofficially launched the recently founded, community-based not-for-profit organisation, Regenerative Land Solutions (RLS) Australia.

RLS will support, educate and lead farmers in regenerative conversion. An urban contingent will focus on regenerative practices suitable for town and small rural landholdings.

Their website launches early this year.

Unwanted coal for Christmas

While Australians push for clean energy solutions, the Albanese government is delivering an unwanted Christmas gift – three new coal mine approvals.

This comes despite communities clearly marking "solar and community batteries" on their wish lists, not more fossil fuels.

Community members staged six festive-themed protests at Labor MP's offices nationwide in December, including Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's electoral office.

In Tweed Heads, concerned citizens gathered at Labor MP Justine Elliot's office (pictured), carrying gifts for Justine that stated "No more coal".

Brunswick Heads social worker Valerie Thompson said, "Our communities have been good this year – we've installed solar panels, supported clean energy, and worked hard to reduce emissions."

"Yet the Albanese government is stuffing our stockings with unwanted coal mine approvals when we've specifically asked for climate action."

350.org Australia Community Organiser, Chels Hood Withey added, "Coal is causing climate change that's increasing disasters like the 2022 floods and the flash flooding we just saw in



Cairns, Brisbane, Sydney and the Northern Rivers.

"Rising seas in the Torres Strait means those islands could be underwater by 2050 – we need climate action now!"

The government's "naughty list" of decisions includes:

- Rejecting legal requests to assess environmental and climate harm of three new coal mine expansions.
 - Approving 28 new coal and gas mines since they came into government in 2022, with three more likely before the year is out.
 - Supporting fossil fuel corporations while nurses pay more tax than the entire fossil fuel industry.
 - Emissions are tracking worse under the Albanese government than under the final days of the Morrison government.
- While Labor has made significant strides in climate

action, approving more coal projects is not progressing us to net zero by 2050.

We urgently need to phase out coal to meet our climate target obligations.

The three mines awaiting approval are BHP's Caval Ridge, Jenlinbah's Lake Vermont and Idemitsu's Boggabri.

They would add 850 million tonnes of carbon emissions, nearly double Australia's total annual emissions from all sources last year.

The International Energy Agency has stated that no new coal mines can be approved if we are to maintain the 1.5°C warming limit under the Paris Agreement.

Communities are calling on the Albanese government to keep their New Year's resolution from COP28 and commit to genuine climate action by keeping carbon safely in the ground.

WANT TO MAKE A ZINE?

Are you an artist? Zine maker? Dick doodler? Picture book publisher, photo flicker or DIY aficionado?

Comics and zines are a highly creative and inexpensive form of expression, on subjects that can range well beyond simple humour, though that's OK too!

Experienced cartoonist and zine-maker, Holly English is volunteering her services to host an Alternative Comic Workshop for Library Lovers Day at Byron Bay Library on 14th February.

Learn tips and techniques for turning your ideas into two-dimensional representations that you can share.

The workshop is open to anyone in the region, over 18. Bookings are essential – phone the library on 6685-5540.

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Garden Club donation to Breakfast Club

by Kerry Hagan, president

On Saturday 7th December, Nimbin Garden Club had its Christmas party and the drawing of the fundraising raffle.

This year was our most successful raffle ever, and we had a total of 17 prizes.

We would like to thank Nimbin valley tree services, Nimbin Emporium, Nimbin Apothecary, Mended Drum bistro, Nimbin Herbs, Green Bank, the Hemp Embassy, Aquarius Cafe, Nimbin Building Materials, Vintage Pop Up Shop, Lismore Garden Centre, Pauline Ahern, and Bunnings for their amazingly generous support.

We would also like to thank the many people on the street who bought tickets and believe in our cause.

We make several donations to our local schools every year, and this year we are thrilled to say that \$700 is going to Nimbin Central School's Breakfast Club as



Kerry Hagan



soon as school resumes in the new year. Thank you all.

The Nimbin Garden Club welcomes new members.

They meet to view an interesting garden on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

Membership is \$15pa, apply by email: nimbingardens@gmail.com

Non-members welcome for garden visits. For enquiries, phone 0459-563-505 or email:

Mass opposition to native forest logging



Photos: Chibo Mertineit

Back in November, 700 people took to the streets in Mullumbimby to make their views known about unsustainable logging practices, yet still the State Government is not listening.



Method or madness?



View from the loo
by Stuart McConville

As a young undergraduate science student, I was impressed with the rigor and reliability of the scientific method. It was certainly all bagged up and ready to chew on, the stuff of life ingested, processed and very real.

Further into my studies, I found that the complexity of the web of life would not yield its secrets easily to science, as the variables were so well woven into it, one couldn't tell warp from weave. Holes were opening in the purity of the method.

When I read Capra and found that, at a sub-atomic level, particles were behaving differently according to who was observing them, I was really worried.

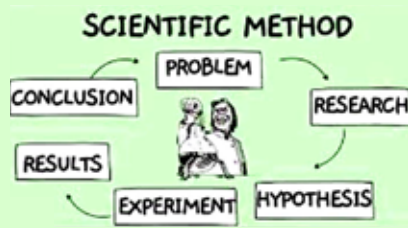
So much so that I briefly abandoned the concept of objectivity in science and dropped out of Uni. My ideology had been challenged and found wanting.

Over time, my purist approach has mollified somewhat. I am now happy to accept that there are things that won't fit into the

mold. That is not to say the methodology is flawed, just that we don't understand the questions as well as we may someday.

I am curious though, as to how many people fully appreciate the model of inquiry that has led us to the world we live in now.

A common misconception is that science sets out to prove hypotheses. If this were the case, the objectivity of the method would be compromised. Scientists set out to disprove or falsify hypotheses. If this proves impossible, the hypotheses stand.



At its core, the scientific method consists of several key steps: observation, hypothesis formulation, experimentation, analysis, and conclusion. These steps are not always linear; instead, they often form a cyclical process, with conclusions leading to new observations and questions.

The journey begins with observation. Scientists identify a phenomenon or problem that sparks curiosity, often informed by previous research.

Next comes the hypothesis – a testable and falsifiable statement that predicts an outcome.

The experimentation phase is critical. Scientists design controlled experiments to

test the hypothesis, isolating variables to establish cause-and-effect relationships.

Data collected during experimentation are then analysed. This step involves interpreting results using statistical tools to determine whether the findings support or refute the hypothesis.

Finally, scientists draw conclusions and communicate their findings.

Sharing results through peer-reviewed publications or conferences ensures that the research can be scrutinised and replicated by others, strengthening the scientific community's collective understanding.

It doesn't end there either. Nothing in science is set in stone. More questions arise from new findings and more often than not, scientific breakthroughs occur as a result of trying to answer a completely different question to the one that gets answered.

The process is not immune to intuition, serendipity or even stupidity. Mistakes have generated great breakthroughs.

Next time you use your phone, drive your car, visit a doctor... (insert endless list) think about the scientific advances that have enabled you to live the life we live.

It may not be a perfect world, but it beats trying to survive as a peasant in the dark ages.

Stuart McConville runs Pooh Solutions Compost Toilet and Waste Water Services
Phone 0427-897-496
<https://poohsolutions.com>

New tracks at Nightcap NP

by Peter Moyle, Nimbin Bushwalkers Club

I was only saying last month how the weather was so unpredictable and it gave us that for our last walk of the year, more wet weather. Luckily and fortunately, the rain stopped on Saturday after a week of over 100mm.

The Sunday saw us head off to the Nightcap NP on a blue sky, mild day, perfect for walking. We tackled the new Byan Yangala track part of the multi-day Gidjuum Gulganyi walk, starting and finishing at Rummery Park. A 6.5km loop track that we added to for an all-up walk of 11km.

The rains had only left us a couple of slippery sections, but the vibrant colours everywhere and all streams and waterfalls flowing with crystal clear water made this an enjoyable and well-liked walk.

16 walkers attended and over four hours we meandered down the new tracks National Parks have built through lush rainforest and dry sclerophyll forests. We highly recommend this walk and sections can be done depending on fitness levels.

The year finished up with a social get together and AGM, thanks Ken and Shar for hosting. 24 members attended, and after a short meeting where all positions were easily filled, we talked about next year.

As some areas in National Parks have re-opened, we will revisit some of our favourites that we have not tackled for a couple of years, also some regulars that being a great walk in a great location always popular.

Our first walk of the year is one such.

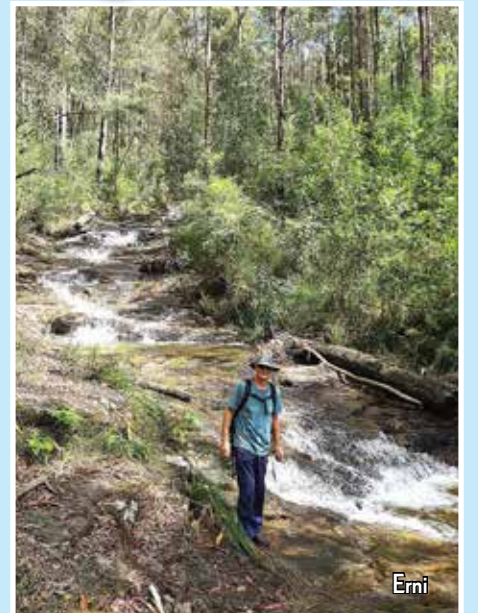
Walks programme

Sunday 9th February
Goanna Headland at Evans Head

Leader: Ron Smith 0497-792-789, please ring to register your interest.

Grade: 2 – 3. Some rocks to walk and track can be slippery, care needed at drop-offs.

Meet: 9.30am at Chinaman's Beach car park. Two beautiful coastal walks: each year we come here, and we never tire of this wonderful spot and a nice coffee after. A walk to Goanna Headland followed – after



Erni



lunch at the beach – by a walk through Dirrawong reserve. Each walk about 1.5 hours.

Bring: water, lunch, and a hat. Good sturdy footwear needed. A swim after always refreshing.

How we think affects our horses

by Suzy Maloney

Horses are incredibly sensitive animals, known for their ability to pick up on subtle cues from their environment, including the emotions and thoughts of the people around them.

What we think, feel, and project can have a profound impact on a horse's behaviour, performance, and overall well-being. This phenomenon is not just psychological, it's deeply rooted in the biology and sensory capabilities of horses.

I had a recent experience with a client where we were all three walking around the arena, myself, the rider, and a young freshly started horse. The horse was going beautifully until we began a conversation about our old beloved horses and how they passed.

As we talked, our young calm horse got tense and started looking for monsters outside the arena. We realised what was happening and changed the topic, and she calmed immediately.

This was a good reminder for me of how powerful our thoughts, which then leads to words, emotions and actions can be.

Horses, being prey animals, are masters of reading body language and energy. They evolved to read nonverbal communication as understanding the intentions and emotions of other animals, predators, or herd members, was crucial for survival.

They are finely tuned to body language, facial expressions, and even the energy or 'vibes' a person projects.

In the above scenario, we went from being fully focused on our young horse, to being immersed in grief and sad memories. This would have changed our energy completely, as well as removing us from supporting this young horse with her new experience.

Horses can also sense when they are being asked to do something out of fear or frustration versus when they are being asked with calm confidence. When we are tense, fearful, or feel any strong emotion, horses may become anxious, reactive, hesitant, unresponsive, or even dangerous.

On the flip side, if we are calm, confident, and clear in our intentions, the horse is more likely to feel secure and will respond with more trust and co-operation.



The connection between our mental state and the horse's behaviour is not only emotional but also physical. We often underestimate how much our thoughts can affect our own physicality.

A rider who is mentally distracted or unfocused may inadvertently shift their body weight in a way that confuses the horse, resulting in unbalanced movement or miscommunication.

This can create a feedback loop where the rider's frustration or confusion about the horse's reaction leads to more tension and miscommunication.

Horses are naturally sensitive to changes in our posture, tension in muscles, breath, and weight distribution. When our mental state is calm, fluid, and clear, the horse is more likely to move with ease and grace.

Scientific studies in animal behaviour and neuroscience support the idea that what humans think, and feel, can influence the behaviour of animals, including horses.

Horses are particularly adept at picking up on chemical signals, such as pheromones, which are released during stress or fear. When a rider is anxious, the body releases stress hormones like cortisol, which the horse can detect through smell.

This biological response can further exacerbate the horse's own anxiety, creating a cycle of stress between the two.

Horses can distinguish between positive and negative emotional states in humans, reacting differently based on the emotional cues they pick up.

When we remain calm and positive in our thoughts and demeanour, we are more likely to foster a similar emotional state in the horse.

Horses thrive on consistency, clarity, and calmness. When we are mentally focused on the task at hand, thinking through the steps of a manoeuvre or focusing on the desired outcome, the horse is more likely to stay calm and perform well.

If our thoughts are scattered, or we are distracted by worries, the horse can pick up on that and become confused, frustrated, or reluctant to perform.

We can build a stronger connection with horses through mental clarity.

Developing a mindful, positive mental state is key. Techniques such as visualisation, mindfulness, and meditation can help us become more aware of our mental state and its impact on our horse.

Staying calm, centred, and focused will not only improve our own performance, but also enhance our horse's comfort and willingness to co-operate.

How we think affects our horses in a myriad of ways. Our thoughts affect both our emotional state and our physicality.

Understanding the powerful influence of mindset, body language, and emotional energy can help us foster stronger, more successful partnerships with our horses, built on trust, clarity, and mutual respect.

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New MOU for Rainforest Botanic Gardens

Lismore Council has recently signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding with the Friends of Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens to support the volunteer organisation to continue their vital functions at the only volunteer-run botanic gardens in Australia.

In addition to providing the community with a place to visit and relax as they learn about our native environment, the garden importantly partners with other Botanical Gardens and universities across the nation to undertake scientific studies.

Council has supported the Friends of the LRBG for more than 20 years.

In the last 10 years in particular, the Botanic



Gardens has grown a great deal. The plants are now well established, and much infrastructure has been added, including a Visitor Centre, toilets, BBQ area, picnic tables,

signage, decks, seating, bridges and plumbing fixtures.

It has become a destination for local, interstate and international visitors, and serves as a cultural and

recreational venue, attracting theatre performances, as well as regular guided walks.

The MOU and Management Plan 2025 – 2029 focusses on identifying the Botanic Gardens' assets, the responsibility for those assets, processes for building new assets and applying for grant funding, as well as work, health and safety procedures on site.

The Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens, with its large collection of Big Scrub plants, opened in 2013 and last year the group volunteered about 4,800 hours.

Volunteer work days are held every Wednesday morning from 8 am to 11 am, except public holidays.

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