

Page's Turn

News event, shock, horror. Howard's Defence Minister caught out telling the truth! The hapless Brendan Nelson was reported in Indonesia last week, stating that Australia went to war and remains in Iraq because of oil.

Within hours he was corrected. He apologized for misspeaking (Richard Nixon's favourite word) and he claimed that what he meant to say was that oil was not the reason.

When will they ever learn? What kind of people do they think we are?

Dr Nelson is of the same brand that offers nuclear energy, that brought us children overboard, WorkChoices, weapons of mass destruction, Australian citizens in detention, Wheat Board whitewash, AWA's and a promise of lower interest rates. His is the team that dismantles multiculturalism and who cannot abide the word "sorry".

With patience, the people of Page will soon be offered the leadership, fresh approaches and energy that only Kevin Rudd's Labor team can provide.

The federal seat of Page, not only can be won by Labor, it must be won. It is well past time that John Howard and all the odious appendages of his vile regime were discarded.

It's time for fresh ideas about transport and infrastructure, Rights at Work, reconciliation, climate change, broadband, a revolution in education, hospitals, decent care for the aged, the disabled, and much, much more.

Never have so many people, longed so desperately for an end to John Howard's rule.

Peter Lanyon
Lillian Rock

Dumb, scared and cheap

In another call to arms by the Prime Minister, all of the long term unemployed (more than 2 years) are now required to do work for the dole 25 hours a week, for 10 months of the year, something until now applied only for breaches of the rules.

Add the other hours spent looking for work and jumping through all the hoops to get their pittance, and it really is full time work. But it is not full time pay. For around \$220 a week they are working for a lot less than the minimum hourly rate.

In a fair and just society the government would just offer them a full-time job at the minimum rate, given that the "market" has failed to take them on. But then, this is Howard's Australia after all where 1 hour's work a week is full time Where myriad jobs are there for the taking, even outside cities and mining sites. Where dumb, scared and cheap is the grand future plan for the workers.

At times like these I realise the value in a democracy. Whatever its flaws, at least the people can kick the bastards out before they do their worse. And things still can get a lot worse under this rotten lot.

Peter Godden
Nimbin

Condolences

I would like to extend my condolences to Thomas George and his family. It is a terrible shame they have to live with the 3 P's, prohibition, prosecution and persecution.

Michael Wright
Mt. Nardi



Collateral damage

In the unyielding war on drugs, Brendan George is collateral damage. What an embarrassment for local Nationals stalwart Thomas George, to suddenly find that his son has been jailed for alleged involvement in a bikie gang drug syndicate.

After eight years of hearing Thomas extoll his 'war on drugs' rhetoric and targeting Nimbin consistently, it now turns out his own son has apparently been involved in the distribution of commercial quantities of illegal drugs far more harmful than marijuana.

It's not like Brendan was caught smoking a joint behind a shelter shed - this is much more serious. At 32 years of age, Brendan George cannot claim that it was a 'youthful mistake' or an aberration from an otherwise law-abiding lifestyle.

Thomas should be glad that another dealer is now out of circulation, unable to destroy the lives of others with illegal drugs, shouldn't he? Or perhaps now he might get the picture that the 'war on drugs' has been a dismal failure.

Even under the Greens proposed drug law reforms, Brendan would still be in deep trouble. The Greens policies do not remove penalties for dealing large quantities of illicit drugs such as methamphetamine or MDMA that Brendan has allegedly been associated with.

I do not know the details of Brendan's case, but would suspect that had the Greens' harm minimisation policies been legislated, he may not have been led down the path to being involved with a criminal group and dealing nasty drugs.

If a staunch 'tough on drugs'

advocate's own son can end up like Brendan George, do we really have a chance of winning the war?

Andy Gough
Larnook

A house for Smolder

Smolder needs a permanent place to live. He already has a caravan and some capital to put into a shed and camp of his own.

He loves people but he's happy to be independent. You'll find him c/o the Museum.

Michael Balderstone
Sphinx Rock

Open letter to local artists

We here at Tareeda Properties, the new owners of the Nimbin Eco Village site. (formerly the Foulkes estate) have become very aware of its cultural and historical importance.

We are attempting to develop the Village with as much community input as possible, taking into account every possible viewpoint and idea.

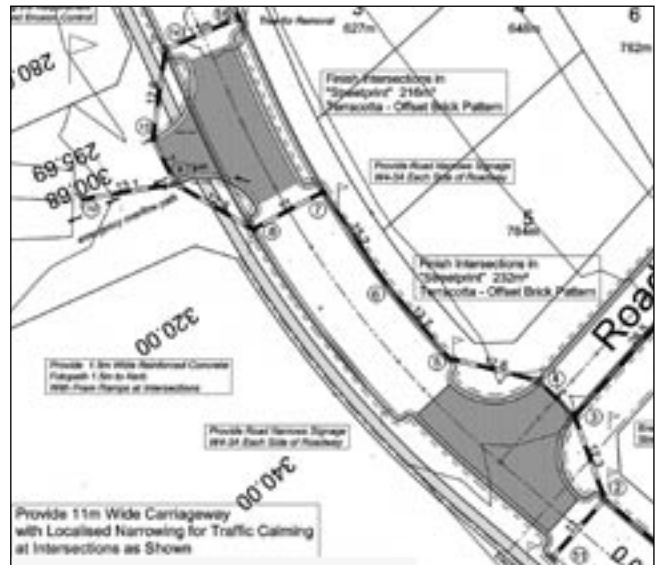
To give you all an idea of where we are with the project. Lismore Council have the final submission for the stage 1 engineering for the first ten lots. This includes the extension of Alternative Way. We are currently reviewing the overall development plan and we are sketching ideas for the Village Green Area.

We are asking for written submissions of suggestions for the Village Green area.

Some of you have already expressed ideas. So far we've heard need for a café and store, the Aquarius Archives Museum, Mural Museum, Artists workshops, Nimbin University Campus and permaculture gardens. We would like to hear more ideas too, to explore all options and possibilities.

We will be looking for artists' submissions for Streetscape artwork. This could include Sculpture, Design work and Murals.

We would also like to tell the tale of Nimbin and the Aquarius Festival in the footpath leading into and



Eco-village intersections. Artwork is sought, instead of the brick-pattern, by the developers.

through the development. Starting near the Rainbow Power Company we will initially be laying approximately 120 metres of footpath that will meander through the landscaping. In time this will also become a part of the proposed Nimbin walkway from the Nimbin Rocks through the main street and out to Jarlanbah Permaculture Hamlet via Djanbung Gardens.

We would like to see some creative design and story telling along this. Embedded pieces of art and history. This is also just the start of the footpath and so there can be years of ideas that can be put into the streetscape over the coming years.

All of the above is more long term at the moment. Our immediate concern is for the streetscape artwork that we can have painted onto the road.

As you can see on the plan above, we have two intersections that to please council were to have been painted with a brick like

pattern and texture. We have thrown this idea out and have found a new process that allows us to use a large selection of colors and any design we choose. The areas are 7 metres wide at their thinnest and approximately 25 metres long to give you an idea of the size.

We are currently looking for Artists submissions for this road painting. We are looking for artwork that is relevant to Nimbin and/or the Aquarius Festival. The chosen artist/s will be paid for their design/s and we ask the artists to specify how much they believe their work is worth. The Artist/s will also be credited for their work wherever possible.

Could you please forward this letter to any artists you believe would be interested in submitting work. We currently have only a few weeks to have the street painting designs done.

Bree Callanan
Tareeda Properties
0416-768-032
<bree@tareeda.com>

About us

Editor: Bob Dooley
Assistant: Sue Stock
Layout: Bob Dooley
Photographers: Sue Stock (principal), Cath Marshall, Len Martin, Graeme Dunstan
Bookkeeper: Lisa Yeates
Website: David McMin
We are online at www.nimbingoodtimes.com

Thanks to all contributors and sponsors.

NGT is auspiced by the Nimbin Community School Co-operative Ltd.

Next deadline:
Wednesday 29th August

Email: goodtimes@nimbinaustralia.com or put stuff in the ComSchool's pigeonhole in the Nimbin Community Centre.

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Department of
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CTC@Nimbin

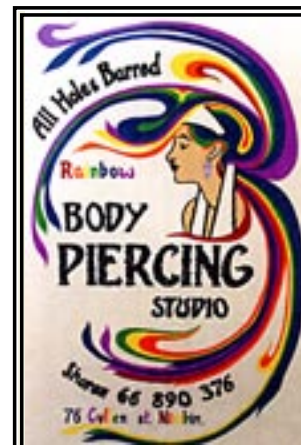
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Freaky. Another iconic brand, the Freakin label from the Gold Coast, has made its way to Nimbin, setting up shop in a converted garage on Cullen Street. Signage and shopfittings were due to be installed soon after this shot was taken, during a rare quiet moment on Market day last.

Chamber renaissance

Nearly twenty enthusiastic Chamber members and prospective members gathered at the Oasis on Tuesday 17th July 2007. It has been clear for a year or so that Nimbin needs to breathe new life into the Chamber of Commerce or close it down. That evening made it very clear that people want a Chamber and are prepared to work to make it happen. With the cessation of funding for the Community Economic Development

Officer (CEDO) position, it is vital to have a body able to represent Nimbin business and economic interests to Council. The group decided to meet at 6pm on Tuesday 21st August, (the third Tuesday of the month as always) with a speaker on the advantages of having a Chamber of Commerce. The AGM will be held on Tuesday 18th September. Both meetings will be held at the Rainbow Café, thanks to Jodee, and a

simple meal will be available. Please get your subscriptions in (\$50 p.a.) and applications for membership, and think about a new executive to be elected at the AGM. Everything is up for consideration. The two meetings planned will help to restart the Chamber, but it is over to all of us for new directions. Contact the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce c/o PO Box 433, Nimbin 2480.

New Nimbin bus service to start

Graeme Waller has announced the availability of a new midday bus service to Lismore. To operate Mondays and Thursdays only, the Wallers bus will leave Lismore at noon for Nimbin, and leaving Nimbin for Lismore at 12.45pm.

The service will commence on Monday 3rd September. Graeme said, "This will suit Nimbin people who don't want to go to Lismore for a whole day." The current morning and afternoon services will not be affected by the new service,



which is being introduced on a trial basis. "I'm pretty sure it will be popular," Graeme said. "You'll be able to spend half a day in Lismore instead of waiting round."

Nimbin CTC Community Update

by Roy Radle, Manager

At our special General Meeting on 5th July 2007, it was decided to end our relationship with the Lismore Council in running the Nimbin Visitor and Information Centre. A new management committee was elected, and as of 1st August, the CTC will vacate the site at 80 Cullen Street, with its combination Information Centre/Cyber Cafe. The CTC will continue in its old room and has determined to move its cyber cafe operation into the old LETS room (A12) down the hall in the Nimbin Community Centre. For its part, Lismore Council plans to resume operations at the Nimbin Visitors and Information Centre by October, under its own management. As part of the new look CTC, we plan to

host an open house weekend, where the net will be available for all locals to enjoy, for free, over the weekend, as soon as we are able to set things up. We also look forward to having committee members available to answer any questions that aid in the focus of networking the community. We invite interested locals to become members and active participants in the new focus, where dreams can come true under guidance of an appropriate mentor. Come speak your dreams today, and see if they are realistic enough to pursue to a stage that is sustainable, in both a sharing and caring model. Let's dream the bigger dream, where not just individual dreams come true, but the infrastructure is in place for a wider vision for the community. For a larger, more encompassing vision, go to this website/blog: <<http://spiritwinddreaming.blogspot.com>>

Lismore Council Jottings

by Cr. Jenny Dowell
6625-2206 Jenny.
Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au



Still smoking
At the last meeting I asked for a review of Council's policy on al fresco dining to look at whether we should continue to allow smoking on these areas of our footpath. With the changes to smoking in pubs and clubs, Council is expecting more applications from business owners to provide for their smoking patrons by using our footpaths as smoking areas. Queensland already has such a ban, as do Mosman, Manly and Newcastle Councils. My arguments that Council could be seen as condoning smoking by approving these areas fell on deaf ears, with most Councillors preferring to wait until the State Government acts on this matter.

Free computers
One of the feel-good things Council does each year is to give away its surplus computers to community based organisations in recognition of their great work. This year there were 60 applications and after the selection criteria were applied, 41 groups will receive a free computer with a total value of \$14,555. They include sporting clubs, fire brigades, support groups, hall committees and land care groups. Successful Nimbin organisations are the Neighbourhood and Information Centre, Preschool and Childcare Association, the Community Development Association, Stony Chute Land Care and Nimbin St Vincent de Paul Society. Congratulations to everyone. Unsuccessful applicants have been referred to Workventures, a Sydney based company that offers recycled computers at reasonable costs to eligible groups.

Rent equity
My other motion in support of the Lismore Theatre Club in its efforts to get its rent waived was amended to support a review of the rents paid by other community groups using Council buildings. There seems to be a huge discrepancy in rentals and the percentage increases for this year so it is hoped that this review will result in a fairer system for everyone.

Planning
Two planning matters were also before Council in July. Council needs to review the development control plan (DCP) for Dunoon as part of the preparation of a new Local Environment Plan (LEP) for the entire Council area. Residents of Dunoon are aware of the changes taking place in their community with one development approved and another in the application stage so Council will need to listen carefully to the community to determine the best way forward. The other planning issue before Council was a proposed amendment to the LEP for a new industrial estate in North Lismore. Again local residents are taking a keen

interest in this proposal and will have participated in a community meeting by now.

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Policy Advisory Groups
July is the time for Council's seven Policy

Advisory Groups (PAGs) to hold their AGMs and produce Annual reports and Strategic Plans for the coming year. As chair of the Community Services PAG, I am fortunate to work with 14 elected representatives from various community and interest groups and express my appreciation to village representative Sue Stock who ensures our decisions and policies reflect the important of Nimbin and our other villages. The CSPAG is currently grappling with a new policy on Community Cohesion-the invisible glue that binds our community and helps us to face times of adversity together. We are also overseeing Council's involvement with, and response to, the vexed issues of affordable housing and homelessness.

Local Govt Week
Local Government Week with its 2007 theme, 'A Climate for Change', runs from July 29 to August 4. To mark this special week, a civic reception will be held on Tuesday July 31 where Council distributes its annual grants to halls and fire brigades. Council will also hold an open day on Thursday August 2 from 9 am -1 pm to show the range of things Council does to improve the quality of life for all those who live, work and play in our local government area. If you are in town, feel free to drop by Council Chambers in Oliver Avenue, Goonellabah. Finally, the views expressed in this monthly column are mine, and are not intended to be a reflection of the Council as a whole or of other individual Councillors.

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Help End Marijuana Prohibition

Join the Party

by Michael Balderstone

OK, we're going for it again! Register now for the Federal election, and be prepared to keep your details up to date, and confirm your membership immediately if you are one of the lucky 20 that are checked. If anyone fails to respond, we fail to register.

Also, for those living in NSW, we want to register as a party for council elections, to be held next year, with the same conditions as above. If we are successful, we would like to hear from those interested in standing in their council elections as HEMP candidates.

Ironically enough, this registration situation came about when we helped expose Malcolm Jones and the bogus "Marijuana Freedom Party" in 2004, and the federal government's response was to make it more difficult for parties without sitting members, by requiring them to register each election and pass a membership check that requires 100% response.

We can only wonder if parties with a sitting member would pass the same test.

Declaration of Party Membership

To join the HEMP Party, you may not be a member of another Australian political party. You must be currently enrolled to vote. Because the membership will be verified to ensure it is a legitimate political party with a genuine membership, you must be prepared to keep your electoral details up to date, and answer any enquiry from the Australian Electoral Commission as to the correctness of those details. Twenty lucky members will be queried by the AEC to verify our membership.

Without a sitting member, a party must re-register for each election. For a registration to be

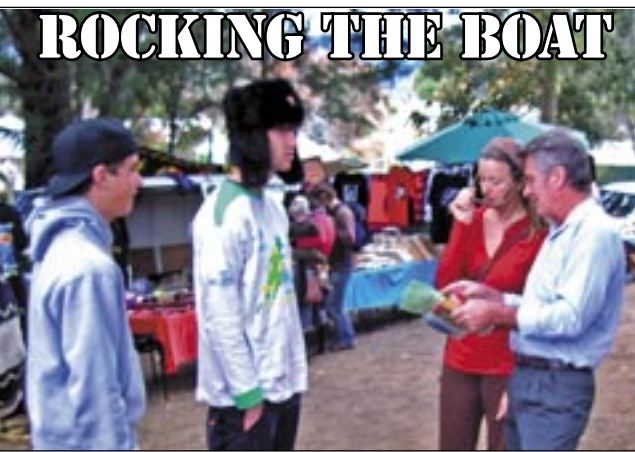


successful, members must be committed, otherwise registration will probably fail. Please be strong. Please register, and keep your address up to date.

Reasons to VOTE HEMP

This was a topic of extreme discussion recently, and a range of suggestions were made by an informal thinktank. These are the suggestions:

- To alleviate the suffering of the chronically or terminally ill
- To enhance the environment by replacing environmentally unsound products
- To reduce avenues of fast cash for terrorists, insurgents, arms traders and security organisations
- To reduce the flow of cannabis money to criminal gangs
- To limit corrupting temptations available to Police, Customs officials and prison guards
- To reduce Police workload, freeing officers to tackle genuine crimes where it is not as easy to gain high arrest rates.
- To remove an avenue for scaremongering by opportunistic politicians and journalists
- To hopefully lower the price of hemp
 - * To put an end to using dogs as a tool of discrimination against a harmless sector of the community
- To put an end to the marginalisation of cannabis users, indeed to try to put such petty behaviours to rest
- As the Democrats have forgotten all about "keeping the bastards honest" and would rather play "make a deal," the HEMP Party would undertake to keep the bastards honest
- To allow people to enjoy a spiritual, relaxing experience, legally



Willing helper

After his impassioned plea for help in the letters page of NGT July edition, Peter Till - aka Rock - found support from Jeff (at left), an escapee from the Gold Coast, who was happy to take his petition around The Nimbin markets. A protest rally is planned for Peter's next court appearance, at the Brisbane magistrate's court on Thursday 23rd August. "Come along and protest about your rights," Peter said.

Just say No to prohibition

The HEMP Embassy runs an information centre/paraphernalia shop in Nimbin all year round, to fund our fight against cannabis laws. This is staffed by rostered volunteers who live locally.

Every year on the first weekend in May, we have the Nimbin Mardi Grass Cannabis Law Reform Rally. To do this takes lots of volunteers who live locally or are attending the Mardi Grass. We have volunteers from allover the world who come to help make Mardi Grass possible, not just to stand and watch. Feel free to come and join in.

Artists are always welcome to submit hemp-related artworks.

The Goddess is... snoring?

A dateless Goddess? Sounds impossible, but no, there's the husk, spilling the beans on the internet. How must she feel?

Just one small thing though, perhaps the cockatoo might be sending the wrong message. Difficult as it is to represent divinity on the mortal plane, perhaps the bird is turning away potential worshippers.

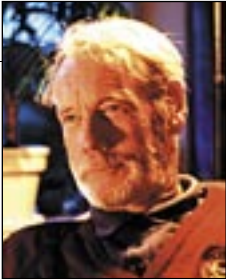
But then, who can say?



Commonsense Human Values

Fourth in a series by Laurie Stubbs

Our genetic hardwired reactions lead to different ways of being because of environments, and weather.



Living in tropic islands is easy. You need to grow food, catch fish, maybe keep pigs but getting enough to eat takes about a third of your day. You only need clothes for the rules modesty sets up. A tropical forest is different -- much more about hunting than gardening; and water is rivers, not the sea.

Nomads like our Aborigines had it fairly easy, but hunted and fired the landscape to move prey around. Moving from waterhole to waterhole, digging yams, eating bush tucker, taking all goodies of the lagoons. In southern areas animal skins became clothing, but in the north and the centre there was little need. Except when it rained, a roof wasn't needed. Compare all this with the rigours of living in sub-arctic areas where hunting and living were really tough; clothing and housing were essential.

Genetics -- which is about adaption as

we saw last article -- created pre-history humans of radically different appearance and ways of relating to where they lived. A shift to agriculture in later pre-history led these widely different groups to adapt again. By now the divisions were deep and enduring and have led to diversity -- And that seems to be the evolutionary rule:- adaptations become diversity.

Today's pattern in most societies emphasises the differences between peoples. Most of us ignore the similarities -- there's only two models, males and females, each with head (eyes, ears, mouth etc) arms, hands, legs, feet, and so on. Instead we focus on a person's differences in hair and skin colour, shapes of faces -- habits of clothing, foods, religions --- and on and on. Probably we are more individual on the insides of our skins than on the outside, for truth is we are all human, all very, very similar to one another -- but all totally individual.

Some habits -- like body decoration (and mutilation -- like male and female genital mutilation) may have had a survival value in some people's minds. It seems more likely the practice began as a confused idea of beauty, morality, or health. Once "built into" to a social group the practice becomes an identifier

of the group. Think of Jewish male, and Arab female circumcision -- and the Amazon women who removed the right breast -- so their sword arm was as free as the men they fought.

Ways of being and the values that created them were spread around the world as ice ages came and went, sea levels rose and fell. Social systems over hundreds of thousands of years developed the huge range of races and their ways. Today's world is breaking down these societies in the great melting pots of modern multi-race cities. Moslem, African, Asian, Jews and Arabs -- and still some Europeans - - rub shoulders, sometimes comfortably, sometimes with firearms. We have still to guess at which groups will dominate, but it is for sure that many, many rigid marks of race and creed will slowly cease to exist.

But what about the longer perspective? Our focus up to here, has been on the last, say, 2 million years. Planet Earth is about 4.8 billion years old. There are surely lessons for us if we take a careful look at that slab of time. Human history and pre-history has always looked more interesting -- but there are key lessons for us in the the beginnings of earth time. We'll look at those next article.



Building the culture of River Care

Report of the Cyanide Watch action at the Bruxner Highway level crossing, Casino NSW, 26th July 2007

by Graeme Dunstan

Freight trains were slowed but not stopped by the Cyanide Watch blockade at the rail level crossing on the Bruxner Highway at South Casino on Thursday night 26 March.

But by our witness we can say with certainty that no cyanide passed that night.

Every day the cyanide is stopped is a safer day for the Richmond River and a day closer to banning cyanide leach gold mining and the bulk transport of cyanide forever.

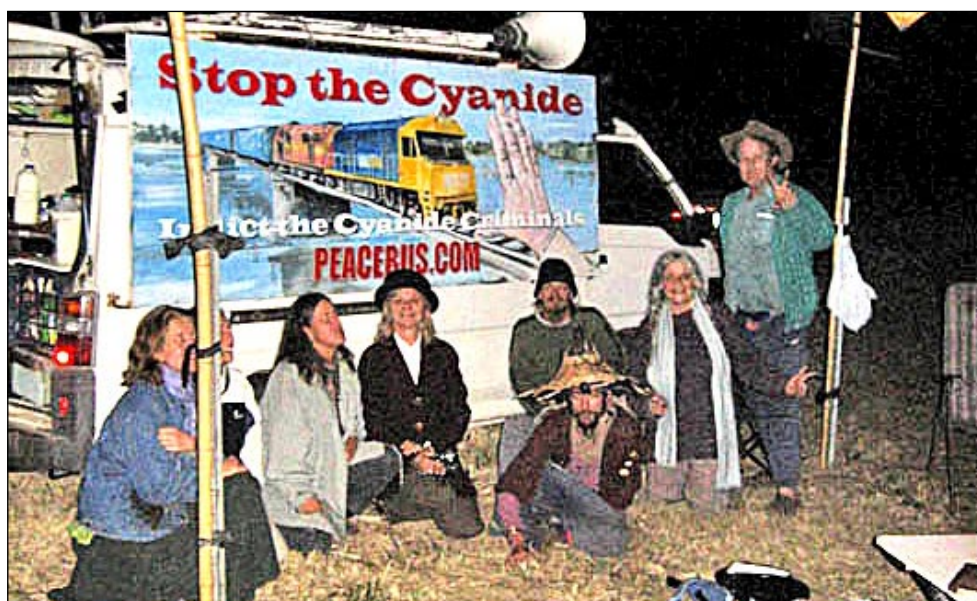
For most of the night we sat about a campfire by lantern light supping hot drinks and exchanging stories. We were 16 strangers for the most part and by the time we departed sixteen friends, friends of the Richmond River.

We had come from all about: Nimbin, Lismore, Casino, Ballina, Newcastle, Vancouver and as far away as British Columbia.

Joe Friend from Friends of the Richmond River shared insights from his research of twenty years or more into fish toxins he reckons to be entering the Richmond River particularly from exotic toxic woody weeds.

For example: did you know that just two seeds from a Castor Oil plant, and these are proliferating on the banks of the Richmond River under the rail bridge about 50 metres from where we sat, would be lethal, if swallowed by a child? Imagine a fish.

Margie Hayes, former principal of Nimbin School, now the culture transforming principal of Casino Public, showed up all smiles, regaled us with teaching stories and



Fire circle talk by the rail, by the river and in mist of South Casino: (in various positions) Margie Hayes, principal of Casino Public School, Graeme Dunstan, Cyanide Watch organiser, Joe Friend, true Friend of the Richmond, Our Lady Floresta, wise woman elder, Heather Bray, mother of three, gardener and zoologist, Ionas Yarker, yogi, poet, dancer, truthsayer Linda Pinda and Ella, German mother of three, remembering other rivers, their pollution and their clean up.

spoke of her gratitude and praise for her Nimbin friends and her Nimbin years.

Three local Aboriginal youths were drawn to our fire and koori flags. Their faces lit up when they recognised Margie and she hugged each of boys. "Now young fathers," she told us, "and I knew them when they were yea high."

Our safety was assured that night by the presence of just four police officers (very low key and courteous) and two representatives from the Independent Transport Safety and Reliability Regulator. They were in contact with the drivers and their movement near the track a signal to us that a train was due.

Then we would break the fire circle, take the lanterns and stand close to the rail.

These freight trains are



truly awesome and I am fast becoming an addicted train spotter.

Their headlamps lighting layers in the mists of the night as they slowly and respectfully approached and rumbled by, the locomotives, huge steel monsters but somehow benign and magnificent as work elephants; then the line of wagons, different shapes, different colours, sliding by one after another, maybe a 100 of them, the whole caboodle maybe one kilometre long.

Using the Peacebus.com PA I hailed the driver as the first south bound National Pacific freighter approached. "Are you carrying cyanide? Are carrying cyanide safely?" and then delivered a free

form rant inspired by the ancestors, inspired by the rivers and the angels that protect them.

The speaker horns were directed at the freight train and the sound was bouncing off the passing walls of steel, loud and carrying far across Casino in the still of that river flat misty night. Heart stirring stuff.

When the second south bound National Pacific freighter came by more than an hour later, I lit a distress flare so that we could see the HAZMAT warnings on the containers more clearly.

The illuminated smoke of the bright pink flare twirled in the slip stream of the passing wagons, lighting them up so that they slid past as if boxcars of tormented souls enroute to Hell.

From these profound experiences of awe we would return to the warmth of our fire and companionship, our tongues and our hearts quietened, if only temporarily. Cyanide Watch, if nothing else, is awesome theatre.

The information about the freight trains given by the cops and ITSRR guys, their passing times and the nature of their freight, proved reliable and when they departed we knew for sure there there would be no more freight trains that night.

We took our time packing up the flags and banners, talking around the fire till late into the night. Public space, our space.

After I gave Joe a lift back to Lismore. During the fire circle talk, Joe made the observation that LandCare (and in this he includes riverbank care) had succeeded because it plugged into an existing culture of land cultivation both agricultural and garden variety.

On the other hand river care, as in care of the water and its aquatic life, has little or no supporting culture. Rivers have always been drains to the white man and what's under the surface has always been out of sight and out of mind.

True river care, Joe says, will need a cultural shift. There's a cultural challenge! Hats off to your efforts, Joe.

As for Cyanide Watch it will roll on to another town,

to another rail bridge over another river, and to another bunch of activist river carers.

It's a cat and mouse game at this time with the cyanide maker, Orica, the cyanide carrier, Pacific National, the various cyanide guzzling gold mines and the corporate governments that approve and hide their criminal deeds.

They pretend to ignore us. But these rail side witnesses are powerful and movement building. We may be few, but we are watching and watched, and we make many friends as we go.

For me it's on the back burner for a while.

Next project for Peacebus.com will be witness at Sydney APEC. Pro-greed, pro-war, pro-nuke, this the biggest gathering ever of neo-liberals in Oz will render Sydney CBD a ghost city. Let the dead dance! See www.peacebus.com/GhostDance

For the Earth! To the dust!



Nimbin CBD room to let

Located opposite the western carpark, this Community Centre tenancy is set back just six metres from Cullen St. The room is 13 sqm with a western outlook and is accessed via the main entrance to the 'old' Nimbin School's admin building, opposite the Visitor Centre. The room will be open for inspection from 6th August.

Prospective tenants will become part of a supportive collective of not for profit community groups. Purely commercial enterprises are not disuaded from applying, however preference will be given to not-for-profit groups. Tenant parking is available.

Visit or telephone Marcus at the NCDA Office on 6689-0000 from 6th August. Applicants need to supply a letter of intent, which will be reviewed by the Community Centre management committee at their August 20th meeting.



A TASTE OF ART

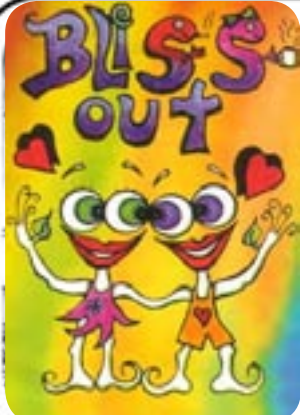


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