

Bushfire awareness

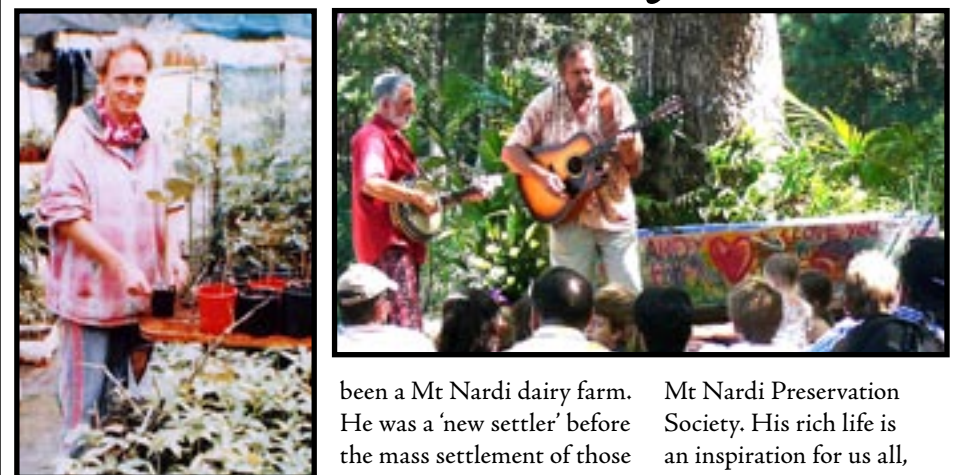


Class 2/ 3 /4 at Nimbin Central School (above) appreciated learning more about the Victorian bushfire disaster when local RFS volunteer Marc LeBars spoke to them about his recent deployment to the area, showing photos of the damage and informing students of safe fire protection.

Fundraising

Primary students at Nimbin Central celebrated reaching their goal (left), raising money for Victorian bushfire relief. Further donations were made at a collection tin at the school canteen. Now they're putting their dancing shoes on for the Nimbin Red Cross Tumble dance on Sat 4th April.

In memorium – Andy Frame



24th May 1948 – 6th March 2009

Andy Frame died at his beloved Nightcap Farm, seven kilometres, north of Nimbin, on Friday night, 6th March aged 60.

Our contemporary, he'll be remembered by a multitude of Northern Rivers residents and visitors who regularly sought his organic grown fruit, vegetables and native plants at his market stalls.

In 1970, Andy Frame settled on what had once been a Mt Nardi dairy farm. He was a 'new settler' before the mass settlement of those who came to Nimbin for the Aquarius Festival in 1973.

Having previously represented NSW and Australia in junior soccer, he also left his mark on Northern Rivers soccer, playing for the Nimbin Headers.

When developers threatened Mt Nardi rainforests in 1982 he hosted the large number of protesters who gathered at Mt Nardi to save the forests.

In later years he was a foundation member of the Mt Nardi Preservation Society. His rich life is an inspiration for us all, expressing what Nimbin represents in its aspirations for peace and a better way of life.

Andy Frame: a legend in his colourful lifetime... sadly missed, ever loved and remembered by his family, neighbours, friends and a myriad of others.

Andy, rest in peace.

Arthur Pike

In the 12th March edition of *The Northern Rivers Echo*, Jennie Dell's obituary eloquently expresses the reality of this legend.

Quilting group showing



The Nimbin Quilters group during their successful first exhibition last month at the Showground (left to right): Janice Rose, Carol Gardner, Daisy Stewart, Jan MacQueen, Louise Cuthbert, Gillian Lucas, Merle McWhirter. Absent: Sally Rose. New members welcome; contact Janice, 6689-1151.

Nimbin's new student leaders

Nimbin Central School's SRC Representatives for 2009 were inducted at a special school assembly on 20th March.

The new SRC Reps are:

- Year 12 Captains: Lucia Shultz and Oli Landreth
- Vice Captains: Mali Monahan and Matthew Gambin
- Year 11 Leaders: Kathryn H, Charlotte C
- Year 10 Leaders: Luke A, Kimberley F, Mahalia J, Tahlia H, Possum R, Opal W
- Year 9 Leaders: Chinta K, Lauren H, Tianna E
- Year 8 Leaders: Misty S, Ashanti T
- Year 7 Leader: Gianna K

Primary and Secondary executive members cut the cake.

Year 5/6 Captains: Angus S, Jazlyn D

Year 5/6 Vice Captains: Wade W, Matisse K

The elected representatives received certificates and badges from the Principal, Mary-Jane Pell, who also reminded them of their new responsibilities. Congratulations to all.



Skate Park Progress



The Sk8 Park Saturday morning working bees have got the northern wall up and ready for the final layer of tin, which it is hoped, will be up for MardiGrass.

Next priority is the north-east corner sound barrier.

Good lengths of excess steel are for sale on Saturdays to help raise critical dollars, and "Bill's Oven" will make its first public outing at MardiGrass to help raise funds also.

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Services showcased in Nimbin

As part of Youth Week, Nimbin Central School hosted a youth services showcase in its MPU on Monday 30th March.

The showcase brought together ten service providers with information stalls and sample bags, who fielded enquiries from the whole of the secondary school, and the general public.

Though the main thrust was youth services, many of the services represented are not youth-specific, but do include provision of service to young people.

Karen Ness, of the Northern Rivers Legal Centre, said, "This is about getting information to young people, and teachers, about what services are available."

Many of the services, such as the Intra Youth Service, Respite and Carelink Centre, Womens Health Centre, Child and Family Health Centre, are based in Lismore or beyond.

Judith Chubb, from Lismore Council, said, "This is rare opportunity for those service providers whose catchment includes Nimbin to let Nimbin know what is available."

The Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre's stall was well attended, and not only because it featured Dennis Parrish, a drug and alcohol counsellor from the NRAHS cannabis clinic.

"We're often the first port of call, because



Teena Kavasilas (left) attends to an enquiry at the NNIC information table, while Dennis Parrish of the NRAHS cannabis clinic chats with Anna Tonkin of the Child and Family Health Centre.

we're in the village," said NNIC's Teena Kavasilas.

"We're able to address a lot of the issues that young people have, giving information about lots of things including accommodation and respite care; we have counselling available, and we can referrals to other services that are available."

The Nimbin Neighbourhood and Info Centre is contactable on 6689-1692.

Cute furry animals oppose car rally

Tweed area marsupials are hopping mad because of the World Rally Championship stage proposed for dirt roads in the Tweed caldera during September this year... and then every second year for the next 20 years.

One grass-eater said, "Some idiots want to drive through our place at incredible speeds. This noisy car rally will disturb our breeding season and decimate the population. All anybody seems to care about is money... and koalas! Yes, I know the koalas are endangered, but so are we!"

"How's about a little consultation with kangaroos and wallabies who really make up the bulk of road kill? Do you expect us to just quietly hop off out of the way of these grown up hoons? Give 'em tickets to theme parks on the Gold Coast where they can get their adrenalin rush without hurting anyone. OK?"

Anyone wanting to see what a car-crash rally really looks like can check out youtube. WA Rally 2005: www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_FJPbR4k7Q also www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFvqrosWjwM

The Crash 2006-7-Czech rally: www.youtube.com/watch?v=1S-2o5NNixk

After watching these, you will probably want to help our wildlife (and your own) by sending objections to premier Nathan Rees and to both Tweed and Kyogle Councils.

DAs are not yet lodged but will probably



Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers Helen and Julie protest outside Tweed Council's March meeting at Murwillumbah. Photos: Scott Sledge

be displayed during April. More info on the campaign, phone Scott Sledge on 6689-7466.

Easy Riders put their points across at Nimbin's WNBR

by James Fuller

The inaugural Nimbin World Nude Bike Ride (WNBR) ran on Saturday, March 7, and was a great success. It started off slowly, with few people arriving by the meeting time, but when bicycles started appearing, it sort of avalanched. It takes bikes to attract bikes.

There was some dispute about the painting venue, so we compromised by stopping at the creek en-route to the intended venue, which proved to be a delightful spot. Some did not want to go out of town, and so waited in town.

The painting party was a lot of fun, with a creek for those still waiting. We had two excellent body-painting artists there, Elbereth and Tanya. There were no houses around, and only driveways to three properties.

We made ready to ride just after 1pm, with the crowd going up the hill slowly, a photograph opportunity in a cul-de-sac, and then into the town.

Riding into the town, we got an enourmous response from the crowd that had formed. We came back for another transit, and both the crowd in the town and the crowd of bicycles had grown. The magic of Nimbin.

The motorists were mostly quite patient, some of them were obviously unaware of our schenanigans in advance. We circled for a while in the centre of town and then departed gracefully to our clean-up and party venue.

Not all of the riders came back to the party, however, so the prizes for attendees were easy to win - one of the two US tourists (who just joined us that morning on a borrowed bike) won the prize for best presented. His painting was by Elbereth. The raffles also went quite well, with generosity from those winning things they did not want/could not use, putting them back in the hat for others.

The help from Nimbin community was excellent,



the media support fantastic, but at the end of the day it goes down the the riders and decorators - great job all!

Special kudos to those that brought not only their own materials, but also gear for others and to lend.

NBN came and covered the event on the day, getting an early interview and footage of the event itself, which screened on the 6PM News that night! An internet magazine 'Cycle Sport News' also covered the event, and assisted in some marshalling activities, and we had several other photographers in attendance as well. So our message has certainly got out there!

We were fortunate to have our own community radio station Nim-FM in Nimbin, and there were two interviews on this channel, on the Monday before the ride and the day before. The *Nimbin GoodTimes* also ran a story and on the wider scene, we also got an interview and photographs in the *Northern Star* the day before (front page!), an article in the *Echo* (thanks to our Byron Buddies there), and an interview on ABC local radio the day before.

Thanks to all our sponsors



Byron naturist, Shannon

that helped cover the costs of staging the event, with cash, goods, or services: Nimbin Rox Backpacker, Daizy, Rainbow Café, Nimbin Café, Planet Music (Lismore), Flowtrack, Nimbin Craft Gallery, Nimbin Museum, Nimbin Hemp Embassy, Nimbin Newsagents, Bringabong, Cafe Retro, Happy High Herbs, E-Bar, Suzukka Trading, All Holes Barred Body Piercing - Sharon & Tattoos by Beki, Nimbin Emporium, Jim's Bus Tours.

• More photos at http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/WNBR_Nimbin (age restricted) and info at <http://worldnakedbikeride.org/australia/>

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Living Library celebrates seniors



Lismore's Living Library made a special visit to the villages of Nimbin and The Channon for Seniors Week (16-20th March).

The programme, called 'Let's Talk Together', was a joint venture between Lismore's Living Library and Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Services, and featured 10 'books', including seven special editions – that is, local people who had received training.

Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Services coordinator Rose Cubis said, "Our work with the older community over the years has given us a chance to hear some of the stories from our interesting and diverse

Good reads. The living books available for loan at Nimbin (left to right): Liz, Chloe, Graham, Pam, Kevin, June, Judith, Tomaso, Vale and Sarah.

aged community, and now many others have had the opportunity, too."

The dozens of people who dropped into the Nimbin School of Arts

Hall throughout the morning were also offered refreshments and lunch prepared by volunteers from Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Services and the Nimbin community.

In the afternoon, the Library moved on to The Channon School for more borrowings from 2-4pm.

Living Library staff Susie and Narelle "We only use first names" described the villages programme as "very successful," adding that several of the special editions would now be available for borrowing at the regular Living Library open days, 10am-2pm on the first Friday of each month at Lismore City Library.

For more information, email livinglibrary@rtrl.nsw.gov.au or phone 6621-2464.

Free loans. Living Library staff Narelle (left) and Suzy in Nimbin.



What's happening at Tuntable Preschool?

Tuntable Falls Early Childhood Centre is now open for 2009 enrolments.

This is Marie's second year as director. She has the support of a diverse teaching team who bring their unique skills and interests into the preschool community.

The emergent curriculum program is still in place, where Marie and the staff take cues from the children's interests to extend their knowledge and understanding. For example, several of the children have shown an interest in the role of park rangers. A project has been created around this including an excursion to a national park with a real park ranger.

The children also participate in weekly music lessons at the Centre, conducted by a teacher from the Lismore conservatory of music. There are also weekly woodwork and cooking lessons for the children.

Playgroup

The playgroup every Tuesday from 10am till 1pm, comprising a group of young children and their parents, has also been very successful. We welcome all newcomers who are interested in joining our playgroup, which is a great bridge into school life.



Pre-schoolers playing on the new climbing gym, which was built last year.

We are continuously taking applications for new enrolments for children aged between 2 ½ and 6 years of age. We are open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and are nestled in the valley beside the creek fed by Tuntable Falls. For all inquiries phone Marie on 6689-1179.

Grandparents Day



by Rose Cubis, Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Services

Senior citizens were invited to a concert to celebrate Seniors Week with a Grandparents Day at Nimbin Central Schhol on Monday 25th March.

It was a day of celebration and frivolity, featuring performances, food and sharing stories, and was attended by mums, dads, aunts and uncles, as well as Nans and Pops.

The whole of Primary performed a story and medley of songs called 'It's a Party' that they had been rehearsing for some weeks.

It was fabulous.

Pictured at right are (left to righ, top to bottomt): Mrs Jean Stephens, Ani-Rae Fry, Phyllis Williams; Daphney, Lauren, Harold and Bonnie Whitney; Fay and Rol Couch, Jazlyn Douglas. Cover: Ayla Frew and Lauren Whitney.



Nimbin Vacation Care Autumn 2009 Program

We warmly welcome everyone to the new Easter Holiday program. Please read the dates below carefully and book to avoid disappointment.

To book phone NNIC on 6689-1692 (between 10 am and 4 pm). Please note that the fee is \$6 for Vacation Care.

Once again, we will be operating from

Nimbin Central School. Please meet us in front of the MPU at 9am on excursion days.

Please pick up your child no later than 3pm from the MPU at Nimbin School.

Please ensure that your child wears appropriate clothing, covered shoes, brings a hat, sun block and has adequate food and drinks.

Date	Program	Cost
Wednesday 15 th April	Excursion to Murwillumbah Cinema to see <i>Race to Witch Mountain</i> (PG) April & Julian	\$12.50
Tuesday 16 th April	MPU – Craft and Games April & Julian	\$6
Monday 20 th April	Excursion to Protector's Falls. Children will need a picnic lunch, walking shoes and a hat. April & Toni	\$6
Tuesday 21 st April	MPU - Kite making April & Ajita	\$9
Wednesday 22 nd April	Excursion to Lismore Skating Rink followed by lunch at Heritage Park. Please bring socks. April & Ajita	\$12.50

Daisy

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Chamber Chat

by Marnee Wong

After a four month wait, the much anticipated Lismore City Council response to the Nimbin Annual Community Contact Forum, held in November 2008, has finally been received.

The Nimbin Chamber of Commerce and the community has been hoping that Council would address the issues with clear direction and action.

Sifting through the document, however, brings more disappointment and delay rather than delivery.

Western Carpark Lighting

Focus of successive Chambers, the installation of lighting to the Western Carpark, while having had monies previously allocated, has been delayed yet again until the 2009/10 financial year.

Safety issues, always highlighted by Council and the media as of great concern within Nimbin, appear limited to the main street as Council has failed to recognise the grave concerns of businesses and residents in regard to the 'black hole' that is the carpark at night, and decided to approach this project in stages.

The use of solar technologies for this project has been advanced by the Chamber and, though concerned that the previous allocation appears to have evaporated, support the funding of this essential infrastructure project.



Dangerous corner

Disappointment is widespread with the Traffic Advisory Committee's solution to the dangers noted by the Chamber at the intersection of Cullen and Cecil Streets.

A stop sign and the painting of double white lines on all three approaches, in the Chamber's opinion, do not solve the issues of poor visibility, excessive speed and danger to pedestrians that this intersection represents.

The proximity of the Nimbin Hospital grounds is seen as a rallying point for the Chamber to further pursue this as a vital concern to residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Murals

The iconic Nimbin murals, are a matter of pride for the town and individual artists. Their maintenance and upkeep has been highlighted as a concern to Lismore City Council by the Chamber, among other community groups.

Instead of offering leadership and guidance to assist in this process, Council has thrown it back to the Chamber to research, plan and budget forecast for the complex and on-going oversight of this valuable community asset. While happy to use images of these colourful tourist attractions in advertising materials,



Lismore City Council appears unwilling to put some of the tourism dollars generated by Nimbin's unique streetscape back into their preservation.

The Nimbin Chamber of Commerce will continue to work with interested parties to present a formal proposal, as requested by Council.

World Café Forum

The overwhelming feeling that Nimbin's voice is unheard in the local government process remains unchanged by the response by Council to the Contact Forum.

This has prompted Nimbin Chamber of Commerce to partner with the Nimbin Community Centre Inc. to sponsor the March 25th world cafe forum at the Town Hall. Hoping to bring about more open, efficient and productive avenues for Lismore City Council to engage the Nimbin community, this forum focused on consultation approaches and processes, attracting a diverse attendance. Diana Robert, facilitator of the event, has committed to presenting the outcomes of this stimulating evening in the near future.

The Nimbin Chamber of Commerce wishes to thank the NNIC, Diana in particular, and the participants. We look forward to the ideas generated by our vibrant community and hope, once again, for action and direction to result from everyone's hard work.



Diana Roberts addressing the world cafe groups.

Community Forum a success

The Nimbin Community Forum, held at the Town Hall, was organised by Nimbin Chamber of Commerce and Nimbin Community Centre with the aim of ensuring that Lismore Council engages with the Nimbin community more effectively.

About 40 people from a cross-section of local organizations attended the Forum, which was chaired by Diana Roberts and structured as a 'World Café', where people move between groups on strict time limits, discussing set questions and having responses recorded by the 'table host'.

Each group included a Lismore Councillor

as an observer, who could listen but not speak. The questions addressed the consultation process itself, to determine: at what level we want to be consulted, on what issues, and in what ways?

Diana Roberts told the seven groups that the aim was not to arrive at consensus, though many common themes and issues clearly emerged.

The outcomes of the Forum are being collated from the table hosts' response forms, and will be presented to participants before being published in *The Nimbin GoodTimes*.

Towards A Sustainable Nimbin Forum: Working Parties Wanted

Report from Nat Meyer, Team Leader NNIC

The Forum was held at the Town Hall over the weekend of the 14 and 15th February. Thanks to more than 60 people who attended the weekend despite flooding rain.

A number of presentations and updates around solar technologies and rebates were made. Two x Community Workshops were held to look at solutions for a Sustainable Nimbin.

We took into account the imminent Peak Oil crisis, the economic downturn and climate change. We also took into account the outcomes of former community planning processes such as the *Envisioning Nimbin* exercises conducted in 1998, the concept of Transition Towns and various Transition Town models.

We are now looking to establish a number of **working parties** to progress the solutions... in relation to the following Areas identified as priorities for Nimbin:

Energy

- Working party to research

solar farming, Nimbin's own substation, base load power options for Nimbin, develop a community contract around low energy use etc.

(Note: Rainbow Power Co. and NNIC will be working to develop a new solar packaging scheme for local businesses).

Food Security

- Working party to work towards plastic bag-free Nimbin (headed by Kat).
- Working Party to re-invigorate LETS, update Nimbin Skills Directory and combine with seed bank directory.
- Working party to investigate food co-op, working with existing food suppliers, and to research staple crop which can be grown locally.

Transport/Peak Oil

- Working Party to look into bio-fuels, fleet of electric shuttle vehicles.
- (Note: there is already a team of people working on reserve roads/tracks and trails...to join this group contact Nat at NNIC or Amanda Williamson. NNIC

is currently working on a Community Car Pool; watch this space for more info.)

Arts and Culture

- Working Party to develop a long term plan for the sustainability of the town's murals. (as per written submission from Benny Zables)
- Working Party to develop a Sustainability festival for Nimbin – focusing on sustainable technologies and developments, showcasing Nimbin's contributions to sustainability NOT a music festival.

Cane Toads

- People are also wanted for the Cane Toad Busters Group: contact Venessa at the Nimbin Environment Centre.

For the full details of the Areas, Issues to be Addressed, and the Solutions, or if you are interested in one of the above working parties, email Nat at nimbinnic@yahoo.com.au and provide your email address.

If you attended the Forum but did not get the email with the full list of outcomes, let Nat know.

HAVE YOUR SAY Community Engagement Policy

Lismore City Council's Community Consultation Policy is currently under review.

Residents are now invited to complete a survey to help Council develop a comprehensive community engagement policy that will determine how and when engagement should occur in our community.

Results of the survey will also guide the principles underpinning Council's Community Engagement into the future.

To **Have Your Say** you can call and request the survey be forwarded by post. A self-addressed envelope will be enclosed for the

return of the completed survey.

You can also complete the survey on-line at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au or collect a copy of the survey from Council's Corporate Centre or the CBD Office.

The survey is anonymous and all information and feedback received will be managed in strict confidence.

Closing date for the survey is 23rd April, 2009. There is a limit of one vote per email address.

For more information, phone Wendy Johnson, Communications Coordinator, Lismore City Council, on 6625-0446.



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Janelle's Page

from Janelle Saffin, MP

The failure of the Opposition to support the Rudd Government's alcopops tax in the Senate shows the lack of moral leadership on the part of Malcolm Turnbull and Nationals leader, Warren Truss.

The price of alcopops going down will mean we can now expect to see the same impact as happened when the Coalition Government made alcopops cheaper in 2000-a marked increase in alcohol consumption by young women and an increase in the number of young women admitted to hospitals because of alcohol abuse.

Between 2000 and 2004 the percentage of 15 to 17 year old girls who had consumed alcopops at their last drinking occasion increased from 14 to 62 percent.

The Rudd Government's legislation would have closed the tax loophole to make sure that the spirits in mixed drinks were taxed at the same rate as spirits sold straight. This was part of a policy framework aimed at reducing the level of binge drinking and risky drinking by young people.

The World Health Organisation's extensive research proves that increased alcohol taxation is effective in reducing alcohol related problems among young people. The Opposition needs to explain how making alcopops cheaper can possibly be good for the community.



Member for Page
63 Molesworth Street
Lismore
Phone 1300-301-735

Janelle Saffin with Vicki-Lee McAllister from the Northern Rivers Maternity Action Group (and Charlie) at the Worlds Biggest Playgroup Day in Lismore's Wade Park.

Economic Stimulus

We are facing the most severe global economic crisis since the Great Depression and the Rudd Government has taken decisive action to stimulate the economy and protect our financial system. We had a responsible budget before this crisis began and we have a plan to restore the budget to surplus after it is through.

In Page we are already benefiting from the Government's stimulus measures.

Millions of dollars have been injected into the local economy from the December and March bonus payments, with tax bonuses due in April. And business is booming for local roof insulation and solar hot water companies due to the Government's Energy Efficient Homes Package of free insulation or solar hot water rebates.

Infrastructure funding

The Government's stimulus package includes a range of programs for longer term investment in infrastructure and skills to stimulate our economy for the duration of the downturn.

Under the Roads for Recovery Program, Lismore Council will receive an

unprecedented \$4,567,416 million in road funding over the next five years. This is a significant investment in the safety and condition of our local roads.

The Government has also approved more than \$1 million under the Community Infrastructure Program, for ready-to-go infrastructure projects in the Lismore Council area.

Projects include \$684,000 for the skate park and other facilities at the Goonellabah Sports and Aquatic Centre Youth Plaza and funding to upgrade 24 community halls as well as \$5,000 for the installation of a solar grid interactive electricity supply at the Nimbin School of Arts.

Playgroup Day

I was delighted to celebrate National Playgroup Week at Lismore's Wade Park recently along with hundreds of young children and their parents

Many new parents don't have extended family close by to turn to for support and advice, and they can feel quite isolated. I'm a strong believer in the value of playgroups for the support and friendship they offer.

Janelle.

Support for respite services in Richmond

from Justine Elliot, MP

Member for Richmond
107 Minjungbal Drive
Tweed Heads South
Phone 1300-720-675

I recently announced four one-off grants worth \$51,000 for Richmond respite services. Respite services provide valuable time-out for people who care for their friends or family members with conditions such as dementia and Alzheimer's.

The four grants for Richmond are part of the 342 funding grants worth more than \$6 million for one-off funding grants for community-based respite services across the country.

The \$6.8 million is funded under the Australian Government's commitment to carers through the National Respite for Carers Program, which is providing \$194 million in 2008-09.

The local organizations to receive funding are:

- Nimbin Health and Welfare Association - \$3,415 for a wheelchair, office equipment, computer software and IT support;
 - Byron Shire Respite Day Care Service - \$4,032 for Challenging Behaviors Projects;
 - Tweed Valley Respite Service - \$15,000 to update their kitchen and improve office space.
 - Feros Care - \$29,118 for Training, Resource and Research Development.
- The National Respite for Carers program funds more than 600 community-based respite services across Australia. It delivers services in a variety of settings, including carers' homes, day centres and overnight cottages.

Almost 2.6 million Australians provide care for family members or friends with a disability, mental illness, chronic condition or who are frail aged. Of these about 500,000 are primary carers – the people who provide the majority of the care.

Caring for someone full



Marjorie Stewart, Justine Elliot MP and Peter Husbands.

time is physically and emotionally demanding and carers need to be able to take well-deserved breaks.

Rebates for tanks and greywater systems

A reminder that households are eligible for a rebate of up to \$500 each for the purchase of a rainwater tank or a greywater system under the Rudd Government's \$250 million National Rainwater and Greywater Initiative.

The Initiative is a part of the Australian Government's \$12.9 billion Water for the Future program and continues to deliver on an election commitment which aims to secure our long-term water supplies.

A key priority under Water for the Future is using water wisely and householders have a major part to play in improving water efficiency and adapting to climate change.

Rebates are available for the purchase and installation of a new rainwater tank which is connected for internal re-use of the water for toilet and/or laundry use or the purchase and installation of a permanent greywater treatment system.

A \$400 rebate is available for a 2,000-3,999 litre tank and a \$500 rebate is available for a tank greater than 4,000 litres. To claim the rebate, tanks and greywater systems must be installed by a licensed plumber.

The guidelines and application form for the National Rainwater and Greywater Initiative are available from www.environment.gov.au/water or by calling 1800-808-571.

Aged Care Nursing Scholarships

I was pleased to announce more than \$1.6 million in scholarships as part of the Rudd Government's plan to support and retain aged care nurses.

Nurses are the backbone of the health and aged care sector and this is a long-term practical investment. So far, nurses have received 270 scholarships under two separate programs this financial year. The programs are:

The Aged Care Nursing Scholarship Scheme which provides Registered/Division 1 nurses who are studying for their Masters with scholarships valued up to \$15,000 a year. It also offers up to \$10,000 a year to assist Registered/Division 1 and Enrolled nurses working in aged care facilities for further education and training. Up to \$780,000 will be available to nurses in this round.

The Postgraduate Community Aged Care Nursing Scholarship Scheme provides up to \$10,000 to eligible Registered/Division 1 nurses working in the community aged care sector for tertiary studies, TAFE programs, vocational education, training courses and attendance at conferences. Up to \$876,000 will be available to nurses in this round.

Applications for the 2009-10 rounds of the two scholarship schemes close on April 17.

Contact the Royal College of Nursing Australia on 1800-116-696 for the Aged Care Nursing Scholarship Scheme, or 1800-551-201 for the Postgraduate Community Aged Care Nursing Scholarships Scheme.

Justine.

Integrated Regional Transport Plan

An 'Integrated Regional Transport Plan' was unanimously supported at the Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils (NOROC) meeting at Casino last week.

Janelle Saffin MP said in a letter to NOROC, "A united regional approach is the only way to convince Federal and State governments to support major projects that redress an historic under-funding and neglect in our region of rail, road, air and public transport generally,"

Ms Saffin is "quietly confident" of securing

federal support for the development of a two-region integrated transport plan so that Northern Rivers also can access funds identified for nation-building projects.

"We can protest against the downgrading of rail services, but petitions and inquiries have not succeeded in bringing back the trains," she said.

"We agreed that the scoping study was a good start, but more data was needed from the Qld side of the border before we could seek funds for a road-map which identifies what can be done realistically in the short term, and identifies our needs up to 2050 and beyond," she said.



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ARTHUR PIKE – ACTIVE SERVICE IN WWII

In 1941 Arthur Pike volunteered for the AIF. Because of right eye faulty vision, he was medically classified as A2.

After a series of transfers, he became a gunner in the newly-formed 1st Australian Mountain Battery, using 1918 Indian Army 3.7-inch howitzers.

One gun, 'Left section', was flown to Kokoda and with the help of Papuan carriers, it joined two other guns, 'Right section' with the US 32nd Division at Buna. Lance Bombardier Pike was second-in-charge of the 'Left section' gun.

The strongly dug-in Japanese could not be dislodged. The very experienced Australian 18th Infantry Brigade took the offensive, consolidating infantry victories on the Kokoda Trail, Milne Bay, and the Papuan coast.

When hostilities ceased at the Battle of Buna, General MacArthur claimed the victory as a US achievement. Arthur recalls this vividly:

"I remember the effect MacArthur's communique had on his troops, who had performed a secondary role to the Australian 18th Infantry Brigade, and who then saw the Australian Commander-in-Chief, General Blamey embark on a grand battlefield tour, while MacArthur stayed at his rear base at Government House in Port Moresby, preparing to join his wife and son at the luxurious Lennon's Hotel in Brisbane."

Blamey's visit took him to Buna airfield, scene of recent heavy fighting, where he pulled up on the approaches to the airstrip. Other jeeps, full of staff officers and journalists, accompanied by US General Robert Eichelberger, parked nearby.

Blamey stepped across to where two mountain gunners, Milligan and Pike, hatless, unshaven and stripped to the waist, had briefly stopped pumping out an alternative mix of armour-piercing tracer and explosive missiles, and now realised their Australian Commander-in-Chief was bearing down on them.



Forward Observation Officer's Assistant Pike (at right) inspects one of two captured 3-inch naval guns with supporting US troops on Buna airfield in December 1942.



Above: General Blamey (left), on a battlefield tour after the Battle of Buna, meets 1st Australian Mountain Battery gunners, Sgt George Milligan and Lance Bombardier Pike (at right), while they repaired a captured heavy calibre machine gun in January 1943. **Inset:** Arthur Pike addresses Nimbin's 2007 ANZAC observance.

Blamey proceeded to fire questions at them. He glanced down and sighted a pile of spent 50 cal. cartridges beneath the twin barrels of the captured gun. He bent down to pick up spent shell cases, but the metal was still hot.

Dropping the hot metal, the general straightened up, knocking his slouch hat down over his eyes when his head collided with an overhanging gun barrel. Though he was being filmed, even as he realigned his askew headpiece, muttering, the footage was not used in the public version of the newsreel.

In mid-1943 Pike joined Aust. 'M' Special Unit, a forward field section of the Allied Intelligence Bureau, and trained for commando-intelligence service, firstly based at New Britain US HQ in Talasea, passing field radio information to AIB and US sources. Then, as a member of the field unit in the Gazelle Peninsula, north of New Britain, serving behind Japanese lines during 1944-45. When the war ended in 1945, Arthur Pike was 23.

ANZAC Day in Nimbin

ANZAC observance in Allsopp Park on Saturday 25th April. Assemble 10.45am at hospital carpark for 11am march to the cenotaph. An ANZAC Service at the Bowling Club will follow the observance, then two-up games are on at both licensed premises.

The bigger they come... Lake Cowal gold mine expansion on hold

By Graham Dunstan
Peacebus.com

The biggest gold producer in the world, Barrick Gold, has stubbed its toe and stumbled at Lake Cowal.

On 5th February, the NSW Land and Environment Court ruled that the proposed expansion of the mine which would near double its life, its cyanide use, its water poisoning, its waste rock and its pit size, could not be approved as a modification of the existing development consents and restrained the Minister for Planning from doing so.

Barrick will undoubtedly appeal the ruling, but in the meantime the proposed expansion is stopped and, given the shifting sands of climate change and public opinion, is unlikely to proceed.

It could well be that the long and vigorously opposed Lake Cowal gold mine, where gold production for the past 12 months has been dogged by massive pit slips, may shut down.

The stubborn resistance, the wee rock so firmly planted in the Earth that has pained the corporate giant so, is Uncle "Chappie" Williams, the Wiradjuri Traditional Owner and a native title claimant over the mining lease.

Uncle Chappie has consistently opposed the mine development saying that Lake Cowal is the "sacred heart of Wiradjuri country" and conscientiously pursued a Native Title Claim on behalf of the Mooka and Kalara United Families.

Chappie's claim is now

before the Federal Court and all the research and documentation is in place to establish the Mooka and Kalara United Families direct family link to the Lake.

Meanwhile the Condobolin based group who were assembled at the behest of the NSW Government to treat with the mine developers, to claim Native Title and sign on for the mine and a reputed \$33 million in compensation, have let their legal claim lapse.

If Barrick wants to expand the Lake Cowal mine to keep it viable, it may just have to negotiate new consents with the Native Title Owners, which should be rightfully recognised as the Mooka and Kalara United Families.

Closing a mine these days is as difficult as opening one because the closure plan also requires consents including consents from the Traditional Owners.

Barrick founder and Chairman, Peter Munk, must rue the day he first heard of Lake Cowal. Barrick came to make millions at Lake Cowal and likely now it will cost them millions both in terms of lost production and also in compensation and clean up costs.

Thanks to Chappie holding his ground, the campaign to close the mine has gone international bearing witness to Barrick's toxic practices and human rights abuses.

Chappie has attended the Barrick AGM for two consecutive years now and the activist movement against Barrick is such that Munk, a high profile philanthropist in Toronto, is now heckled when he appears in public.



Uncle 'Chappie' Williams (left) with environmentalist Winiata.

To add to Munk's woes, Norway's Ministry of Finance announced at the end of January that it was excluding the mining giant from the country's pension fund for ethical reasons.

One of the largest global pension funds, it divested its 200 million shares due to the company's riverine disposal practice at its Porgera mine operation in Papua New Guinea, stating: "Barrick's operation of the Porgera mine entails an unacceptable risk of extensive and irreversible damage to the natural environment."

Easter at Lake Cowal

Wiradjuri Traditional Owners and their supporters will be gathering at Lake Cowal over Easter weekend this year, 10-12 April.

The slipping pit wall was made public by the witness of protestors last Easter. Now is the time to be pressing hard for closure.

Also, on Thursday 9th April, a Mining and Water seminar is on in Condobolin, led by Lee Rhiannon MP.

Come for Easter if you can.

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