

'Esmissesmoor' by Gareth Deakin

For the new exhibition at Blue Knob Hall Gallery titled *Poetica*, artists have selected a poem, lines from a poem, song or text to create a piece of artwork.

Being inspired by poetry or text, spiritual or otherwise, is a long tradition in the art world and often results in a unique visual expression.

Opening night is on Fri 13th July at 6:30pm with a dinner available from the Cafe for \$15, Desserts \$4. Bookings essential please call 6689-7449.

*Poetica* runs until 26th August.

#### Artists & Friends Lunch

Next will be on Thursday 26th July at 12.30pm at the Gallery, with a set menu at \$15 per person including dessert.



'Man from Snowy River' by Robin Moore (detail)



'You lose your grip' by Christine Wynyard (detail)

## Nimbin Artists Gallery



'Evening Beach' by Denis Meagher



'Nature's Water Source - BoabTree' by Donna Sharam

by Peter P.

I know we were closed for painting longer than expected, but as they say, it's worth waiting for something good.

At least I didn't blame it on the weather – which is actually part of the reason the Nimbin Artists Gallery was closed for nearly two weeks rather than the originally planned one.

But we're open again bigger (well, not really) and brighter than before. We've shuffled the layout around just to test the regular visitors. Some have walked in and stopped in their tracks knowing that something's different but they don't know what. We think there's a bit more of a feeling of space about the place but come see what you think.

We have new paintings by Janet Hassall, Denis Meagher and Donna Sharam. New but all with the very distinctive style of those artists. And our new member, sculptor Rod Johnston, has brought in new work but it keeps selling.

Never mind, come in on a Monday and introduce yourself to him. Or come in anytime to check out the revitalised Nimbin Artists Gallery.



The newly painted gallery



## Calling all dancers

World famous choreographer Shaun Parker (pictured) will lead a Dance and Movement Workshop in Lismore this month.

Fresh from working on two street dance projects for the 2012 London Olympics, Shaun Parker will demonstrate how he creates arresting dance theatre through the use of theatrical tasks and improvisation, and by drawing on the talents and skills of the individual.

"I work very much with individual qualities of each performer, building on their strengths, and teaching them new skills throughout the creative process. We always start with a concept or a narrative first, and then layer the movement styles into each dance scene," he said.

This is an opportunity for aspiring and experienced dancers of all styles across a range of experience (13 years and up) to learn directly from one of Australia's most exciting choreographer/directors.

The workshop will be held Saturday 14th July, 11am at NORPA Studio in Lismore City Hall. Cost is \$15, and numbers are strictly limited. Bookings through NORPA, phone 1300-066-772 or [www.norpa.org.au](http://www.norpa.org.au)

## Connecting creativity and wellbeing in our community



Amber Louise, 'Fishing at Eton'

"Transmutation" – an exhibition of works by local artists Dawn Thirlaway and Amber Louise – the opening event will take place at 1pm on Saturday 7th July at the Serpentine Community Gallery, 17a Bridge Street, North Lismore. Everyone is welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be available.

Incorporated in November 2011, NRAHW is a new organisation born out of the need to link arts practice and wellbeing in the Northern Rivers. By connecting creativity and wellbeing in our community, NRAHW aims to improve the quality of life for people experiencing ill health through activities using creative art forms.

Currently run by a committee which includes a local medical professional, journalist, director of the local gallery, and arts facilitators and artists, NRAHW networks and collaborates with social services, health services and arts practitioners to achieve a holistic approach.

"Conversations" is NRAHW's first arts project and is aimed at

providing professional arts tuition to ultimately provide an experience that belongs to the participant at a time when they feel out of control of their lives.



Conversations

The Arts provides an avenue for healing and the exploration of social and personal issues. This project, consisting of art sessions comprising music therapy, meditation, clay work, drawing, expressive painting and creative writing, aims to bridge the gap between arts health and wellbeing in the Northern Rivers.

"Transmutation" - Definition: The action of changing or the state

of being changed into another form – an exhibition showcasing ceramic, mixed media and photographic works by ceramic artist Dawn Thirlaway and her photographer daughter Amber Louise.

Over the last five years both artists have gained strength and wisdom through the creative process. Used as a modality Dawn has delved deep into the clay to find purpose and meaning for her life. Whereas the camera lens has been the chosen method for Amber Louise to find beauty in the world during life's difficult and challenging moments

Both exhibitions are on view until 16th July. For further exhibition details, please contact the gallery on (02) 6621-6845 or go to [www.serpentinearts.org](http://www.serpentinearts.org) For more information about NRAHW, go to [www.nrahw.net](http://www.nrahw.net) or: [info@nrahw.net](mailto:info@nrahw.net)

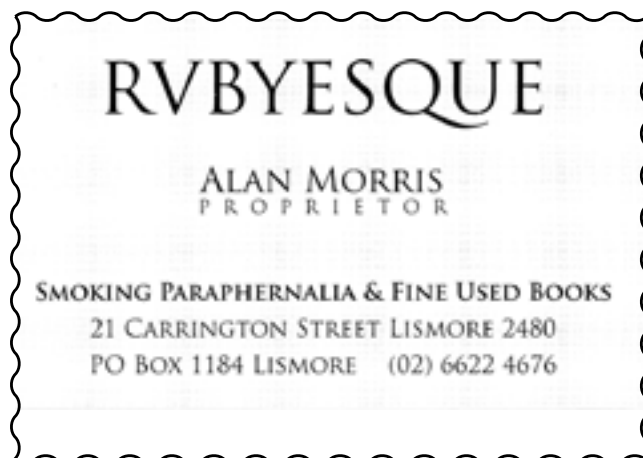
The person to contact for more information on either exhibition is Dawn Thirlaway, phone 0413-885-527 or 6688-8194, email: [auroradawn50@gmail.com](mailto:auroradawn50@gmail.com)



Conversations



Dawn Thirlaway, 'Flesh of the Past'





# The Julian Assange saga

Australian anti-war activist **Ciaron O'Reilly** will speak at Birth and Beyond in Nimbin on the trials of Bradley Manning and Julian Assange at noon on Saturday 21st July.

A member of the Catholic Worker community, O'Reilly spent 13 months in a US prison for a Ploughshares action that put a B-52 bomber out of action at the start of the first Gulf War.

He and four others were acquitted by an Irish jury for another Ploughshares action at Shannon airport during the second Iraq War. O'Reilly spoke about the recent developments in the Assange saga with **John Jiggins**.

### Why has Julian Assange decided to seek asylum in Ecuador?

Before the jihadists they'd trained turned on them, the US was planning to move against the Left in South America through Plan Columbia. They have been distracted from this by their wars in Asia, which has allowed leftist governments to flourish in countries like Paraguay, Bolivia. Venezuela and Ecuador. President Correa of Ecuador is prepared to stand up to the US because like Chavez in Venezuela he has survived a US-sponsored coup. As the Bolivian President Morales said, the only country that can be certain it is never going to have a coup d'état is the United States because it doesn't have a US Embassy.

Another South American connection is that the woman prosecuting Julian Assange is Claire Montgomery who defended mass murder, torturer and US ally General Pinochet from a Spanish extradition request. The basis of Spain's request was the murder of Spanish citizens in Chile during and after the coup that brought Pinochet

to power. Unlike Assange, this extradition request was refused. These issues are recognised by many Chileans, Ecuadorans Bolivians and Venezuelans who have joined Catholic Workers, Veterans for Peace and others in the ongoing solidarity vigil outside the Ecuadorian Embassy hosting Julian Assange.

*What do you think about the way the Gillard government has handled the Assange matter? Foreign Minister Bob Carr has said Mr Assange's argument was with one government – the Swedish government – who want to question him about sexual assault allegations. As he told ABC Television: "It's not about Wiki Leaks, it's not about secrets, it's not about political persecution."*

Bob Carr's response reminds me of Sgt Schultz in *Hogan's Heroes*: "I know nothink!" Carr's line is that this is all about consular support for Assange regarding the charges in Sweden. He pretends that the Americans have no interest in prosecuting Assange and he ignores all the evidence on the public record of a US investigation into Assange: evidence that has emerged during the trial of Bradley Manning, and evidence from witnesses like David House who have been subpoenaed to testify before the grand jury pursuing Assange. Steve Penrose, a friend and military vet, once described Australia's so-called "special relationship" with the US as 'faking orgasm while you're being raped'. *Bob Carr also said: "Throughout this we've given him [Assange] the sort of consular support that flows to any Australian in trouble in a foreign jurisdiction." As an anti-war activist who was imprisoned in the US, what was your own experience of the support you got from Australian governments?*

The treatment I got was shite. It may be of higher quality if you are an Australian citizen



in trouble for drugs in Bali and Thailand but if you are assessed as a political threat to the USA, the Australian government's position is like Domino's Pizza: we deliver. This was the experience of David Hicks who was served up to be tortured by the US at Guantanamo. This was my experience as a pacifist who disarmed a B-52 weapon of mass destruction in New York State on the eve of the Gulf War. The Australian embassy made no contact with me before my trial or before my sentencing.

After my supporters were evicted from the courtroom, a group of suits were conducted back into the court by the FBI. I asked a court official: "Who are they?" He responded that they were officials from the Australian embassy. They had not introduced themselves to me or explained their responsibility to me as an Australian citizen. They associated and serviced only the FBI, and their objective was to imprison me.

The US says jump and they say how high, and on whom, and how hard do you

want us to land. They claim to have done as much for Assange as they would for any other Australian citizen but contrast what Carr has done for the ICC lawyer in Libya and what he has done for Julian Assange. Has he ever gone to visit Assange?

They are a government that has repeatedly shown itself eager to

### do anything to keep the US happy. Why should we support Julian Assange and Bradley Manning?

Julian is in trouble because he has exposed the truth about US wars. The way to avoid the next war is to tell the truth about our current wars. We now endorse torture, systematic sexual humiliation and the denial of habeas corpus —behaviour that the civilised world had long considered unacceptable. This is a major paradigm shift that has come home to roost. These techniques and abuses will not end because we have accepted the unacceptable and consequently the world is a much more dangerous place for all of us. Hooding and gagging and stress positions were outlawed by the European courts in Northern Ireland. Now it is common practice.

We are now in the dangerous position where wars no longer need popular support. All they need now is our silence, sedation and disengagement. All we are asked to do is divert our gaze from the high crimes of our governments in Afghanistan and the perimeter of the empire whose centre we inhabit. What WikiLeaks, Julian Assange and Bradley Manning are accused of doing is bringing our gaze back to the murder and torture of innocent people by our government. That is why the government is so passionate about demonising them, isolating them and silencing them. They're in detention for us, we're on the loose for them!

## David Bradbury remembers

by Warwick Fry

The last surviving founding member of Nicaragua's revolutionary FSLN (Sandinista Front for National Liberation), Tomas Borge died a few hours before Mayday, this year. When I got the news I got on the phone to David Bradbury.

David is a well-known Australian documentary maker who lives in the Northern Rivers region. He is probably best known in Nimbin for his documentary about the effects of depleted Uranium, and the joint US/Australia military manoeuvres in Queensland. But in the 1980s he won renown for his documentaries about Latin America – *Chile: Hasta Cuando*, about the 1973 coup in Chile, and *Nicaragua: No Pasaran*, about the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua.

I got in touch with David because he had spent considerable time in the company of Tomas Borge, interviewing and filming him at some of his tasks and duties of rebuilding and reforming Nicaragua after the revolutionary 'triumph' of July 19, 1979.

Borge is the central character of Bradbury's documentary. He provides an account of how he became a guerrilla, his capture by Somoza's National Guard, the nine months of his torture and interrogation, and the dramatic circumstances of his release after his comrades made a daring raid on the National Palace and held Somoza's political cronies to ransom.

Bradbury shows Borge inspecting one of the open prisons, or work camps where captured National Guardsmen and 'contra' (counter-revolutionary) supporters were serving out prison terms. One of the first acts of the Sandinista government was to abolish the death penalty.



Photo courtesy LaPrensa.com.nl / Correo del Orinoco

As the Sandinista Minister for the Interior, Tomas Borge set up the open prisons, and reformed the police force, now regarded as one of the most ethical, and least corrupt in Latin America. One of the best-known stories about Borge was his response to one of his torturers when they met after the revolutionary triumph.

"I suppose you have come to take your revenge," said the fearful prisoner, to which Borge responded, "My revenge is to forgive you and see your children grow up with free health care and education."

The Sandinistas are now back in government, after having lost the 1990 elections (mainly on the issue of military service).

After 10 years of neo-liberal economic mismanagement and corruption, the Sandinistas are back on track, albeit with some of their revolutionary fervour diminished. They have regained overwhelming support with their economic policies, which have made Nicaragua's economy one of the healthiest in the region, and left the political opposition to the Sandinistas powerless.

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# Koala Kolumn



by Lorraine Vass

The depths of winter; the rain is back with a vengeance and it's cold as well. Koala-wise this is the quietest time of year. Even so we are admitting four or five animals a week from across the Region. For a poor result unfortunately; we feel fortunate if even one survives.

Our rescuers and carers agree that many more koalas these days are presenting with multiple symptoms; complex disease as well as trauma. Too often an animal looks perfect to the eye but its behaviour is such that we know something is not right. Veterinary intervention eventually gets to the bottom of most cases, but not all. The work put in by our local vets and the specialist work performed by the teams at the Australian Wildlife Hospital and Currumbin Wildlife Hospital is incredible. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

Rule of thumb across the koala's remaining range, approximately 80% are estimated to be located on private land and the rest on public land which of course includes the National Parks Estate. Here in the Northern Rivers, with our 112 national parks, nature reserves and state conservation areas and our extensive state forests, I believe the percentage of koalas on public land is somewhat higher than the norm.

The recent backflip by the State government to allow recreational shooting into national parks is yet another potential threat to koala numbers. The new Act makes 107 of those 112 reserves available for amateur hunting. Now I'm not suggesting that the vast majority of recreational ground shooters aren't responsible, nor that they would deliberately take a pot-shot at a koala. Accidents happen nevertheless, then there is the maverick element and shooters invariably have dogs. We all know that where there are dogs, koalas are in trouble.

The National Parks Estate is the cornerstone of our biodiversity conservation system. It's disgraceful that the State government has sold out to the

Shooters Party especially since feral species experts are adamant that recreational shooters are completely ineffective at eradicating pest species. Then there is the plight of the animal being hunted - even a pest has the right to a humane death. But can we be sure that humanity will prevail?

The State government's position on recreational shooting in national parks is of concern for other reasons. First it is another of a number of recent moves including increased tourism, horse-riding and mountain-bike riding, which are eroding the original purpose for setting them aside. Then there are the current 'cutting green tape' discussions. These see the Federal government and industry proposing to hand important approval powers back to the States. The total disregard with which the government is treating our national parks surely invites both scepticism and suspicion on that move.

As recently as May, Minister Burke has been reported to have written to all state and territory environment ministers flagging an agreement to eliminate duplication in the assessment and approval of the management of problematic flying-fox camps. The agreement will remove the need for Federal environmental approval where State approvals are in place and meet Federal environmental standards. It will apply to actions to "remove, disperse or manage" the grey-headed flying foxes where they are considered to have detrimental impacts on human communities.

The fate of the Pilliga hangs in the balance with Santos proposing to build an enormous coal seam gas field stretching cross 85,000 hectares of publically owned forest. The Northern Inland Council for the Environment has repeatedly pointed out that koalas in the Pilliga, the largest koala population west of the Great Divide, face having their habitat destroyed as the gas companies expand their operations.

Minister Burke has the power to stop such environmentally destructive developments but his government seems to be very keen to give it away thus enabling mining and coal seam gas development in forests, woodlands and rural landscapes to proceed despite enormous community and scientific distrust.

The drive to fast-track approvals for large developments and mining enterprises are putting hard-won environmental protections under unprecedented attack. Having only just realized the Koala's Federal listing, Friends of the Koala believes any watering-down of those powers is a retrograde step. Be aware and alarmed. To report a koala in trouble, or a sighting, please ring Friends of the Koala's 24/7 Rescue Hotline on 6622 1233. This number can also be used for information about koalas, their food trees, and other ways in which you can assist the koala conservation effort on the Northern Rivers.

Also visit: [www.friendsofthekoala.org](http://www.friendsofthekoala.org) or email [info@friendsofthekoala.org](mailto:info@friendsofthekoala.org) or follow us on Facebook.

To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat, phone the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 13-15-55.

Until next time, happy koala spotting.



Lorraine Vass and the Nimbin Environment Centre Koala (aka Lisa Costello) protest against hunting in national parks.

## PLANT OF THE MONTH



Zari with Tall Paper Daisy

by Richard Burer

This stunning herbaceous shrub hugs the roadsides, tracks and forest openings throughout the moister eucalyptus forests of the area. It has heads of white papery flowers from winter until summer, and large patches hold the enthusiast in a spell as the hardy white flowers resemble everything the beautiful Australian bushland is known for, hardiness and delicateness with beauty, longevity and strength.

### Tall Paper Daisy *Helichrysum elatum*

*Xerochrysum bracteatum* is another local everlasting paper daisy, an upright herb to 1m with yellow flowers. It was some years ago in propagation and lasted for years in our garden but it did disappear when the dry times turned to wet. Ask around at your local native nurseries for propagated plants. This plant is getting rarer, due to competition with noxious species such as Crofton weed.

To see the tall paper daisy, take a drive through Nightcap National Park as it can often be seen by roadsides and walking tracks. For those who bushwalk, it will be found throughout and along the historic Nightcap track.

In the garden, paper daisy needs sun and well-drained soil, and can be grown from cuttings.



Early morning mist greets protestors setting up the blockade to prevent the construction of an evaporation pond at Shannon Brook.

by Philippe Dupuy, president

First and foremost I would like to pay respects to Elders past and present, the Wjabul People of the Bundjunglung Nation, who have tirelessly protected the environment for thousands of years.

Also to the Elders and Guardians of Nimbin Environment Centre who for 30 years have nurtured the spirit of this group and kept it flourishing.

The NEC is one of the few NGO's that is independent of the whims and agendas of the government of the day, thanks to the amazing fundraising skills within the group and the generosity of the Nimbin community.

The energy, enthusiasm and dedication of the previous management committee has continued to make us a viable organisation, both economically and socially.

This has enabled NEC to actively support many environmental campaigns around the State and even in Queensland. Recently we worked with other Northern Rivers Communities in the week-long action at Shannon Brook, close to Casino, where coal seam gas company Metgasco is constructing an evaporation pond.

These ponds have been reluctantly declared illegal by the current state government. However Metgasco is getting around this hurdle by simply calling it a holding pond. Metgasco PEL's license has also expired but it is being allowed to continue its operations until it is renewed. It's becoming glaringly obvious that government laws and regulations are nothing more than a rubber stamp for their little mates in Big Business, but we as a people will continue our fight until a total ban is announced.

We have also been busy with other important issues. We joined in with other Nimbin groups to support the purchase of a dwelling in Nimbin to house the Nimbin Sustainability Project.

#### Film night raises \$300

Last month, NEC member Omega organised a very successful film night to help with the trip across to Olympic Dam uranium mine in SA for the Lizard's Revenge Protest on the weekend of 14-15th July.

For information about transport to this event call NEC on 6689-1441. Thanks to everyone who helped make the film night a success.

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## The problem with privet

by Triny Roe

Three species of Privet feature on the weed hit lists in NSW. Why?

Popular for their ornamental properties and ability to create thick hedges, small-leaf privet, *Ligustrum sinense*, and broad-leaf privet, *Ligustrum lucidum*, are natives of China, while common or European privet, *Ligustrum vulgare*, hails from Europe and Northern Africa. Widely planted and still found in Australian parks and gardens, these species are among many which have jumped the fence and gone feral.

Small-leaf and broad-leaf privet are very common in the Northern Rivers. These privets loves the mild moist climate of this region. They readily establish in disturbed areas, on grazing land, in bushland and along creek banks and lead to a reduction in biodiversity.

A mature specimen can produce millions of seeds. With a high rate of germination privet seedlings can outnumber native species 100 to 1. The seedlings can germinate in low light so privet can easily grow in the shade.

Small-leaf privet can grow into impenetrable thickets limiting access by humans, stock and wildlife. These dense

stands also effectively exclude other vegetation. The leaf mass inhibits light reaching ground cover plants and other emerging seedlings. The shallow branching roots spread widely, sucker easily and successfully compete for water and nutrients.

Development of single species stands leads to less variety of food sources for native birds and animals. In some areas, this can impact on survival of endangered species. Bird species that feed on the privet berries include the currawong, eastern rosella and silver eyes. Currawongs can be aggressive and chase other birds away, altering the balance of species.

Some claim privet aids in creek bank stabilisation. However riparian vegetation typically has a central root ball about five times wider than the trunk and few roots extending beyond the drip line. Other sources assert that privet with its shallow roots is not good at holding the soil on creek banks and can contribute to erosion by excluding more suitable species.

Privet can also be a health hazard. The creamy white tubular flowers produced in spring give off a heady perfume, causing serious allergies in some people. The colourful berries which ripen in autumn and winter, and the leaves are

considered toxic to humans and stock.

In many parts of NSW, not just the northern region, privet poses a threat to primary production, the environment or human health and as such is listed as a Class 4 Noxious Weed. This means "the growth of the plant must be managed in a manner that reduces its numbers, spread and incidence and continuously inhibits its flowering and reproduction".

Privet is well established in many areas. If removal of large stands is considered it should be done gradually and in conjunction with revegetation to reduce the impact of habitat and food reduction for wildlife currently relying on it.

If however, privet is a new arrival on your property, get in early before it becomes entrenched and problematic. Birds can distribute seed for a kilometre from the parent, so new plants can appear just about anywhere. Be on the lookout after roadworks, clearing or other land disturbances. Seed is also spread by water, so keep an eye on creek banks after flooding. Luckily privet takes a few years to reach reproductive maturity, so plenty of time to identify and dispatch.

Native species which can be grown instead include: coachwood – *Ceratopetalum apetalum*; lilly pilly – *Acmena smithii* and *Syzygium* spp.; cheese tree – *Glochidion ferdinandii*; grey myrtle – *Backhousia myrtifolia*; native mulberry – *Hedycarya angustifolia*; mock olives – *Notelaea* spp. and sweet morinda – *Morinda jasminoides*.

## Stu's view from the loo

by Stuart McConnville



Sitting here on my concrete pedestal, my stone throne, I ponder the process of our own evolution.

Like yin and yang, it ebbs and flows, evolving then devolving, but forever moving forward (a bit like the compost beneath me). Even the yawning Sphinx in the east is vulnerable to the onslaught of time, as the molten core pushes forth another somewhere.

Is our planet evolving? Are we? Here and now, our own little North Coast? I like to think so. Western society as a whole, probably not.

One of the great forces behind evolution, the capacity to adapt, and the necessary risk-taking behaviours that drive it, is under threat. The plethora of reactive planning responses to the human condition has driven risk taking onto the back foot. Looking around me, I can see things that took considerable risk to achieve. Leaping around with no safety harness bolting the purlins down on my shed, trying new building techniques with materials foreign to most builders, and the list goes on. The process of evolving robustly requires these risks and many more. OH&S overkill has resulted in procedures and training supplanting common sense and logic, not to mention the massive cost of having OH&S workers outnumbering actual workers in some instances (this is a large part of the price hikes in the cost of electricity poles and wires).

Kids are not walking / riding to school anymore, not playing as many

active games. Inconsequential risks such as those that are taken whilst playing computer games are supplanting reality. Boys will wear the brunt of these changes. Boys need to take risks for their own personal development / coming of age. If society bans legal risks, then illegal ones will prosper. As our younger generation grows, which of them will take the risks needed to try out new ideas, invest money into new innovation? There are none so much alive as those that have faced their own mortality.

The difficult question is how to reverse the situation and let our evolutionary process off its short leash. Western society has become preoccupied with safety. The root cause is probably our lack of confidence that life (or salvation) exists after death. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the rise of spiritual apathy occurs as our OH&S laws preserve at least the quantity of our lives. Insurance companies have taken over the traditional role of the church, and are charging a lot more for the service. They are also the driving force behind overkill OH&S laws, as they stand to profit most from less risk taking. Remember their outcry when planking (a good bit of fun) started happening in the workplace.

I think we would be a happier lot if we placed a little more priority on quality of life, and a little less on quantity.

Stu runs Pooh Solutions compost toilets and consultancy, For more info check out: [www.poohsolutions.com](http://www.poohsolutions.com) or call Stu on 0427-897-496.



## Exotic vines: a holistic perspective

by Geoff Dawe

Most exotic vines of the north coast seek the sun, and appear in their maturity to be disadvantaged by shade. For this reason they tend to be found on the edge of forested areas. Sometimes they will be found within forested areas, but usually where the canopy has not closed or is thin. There is good reason to presume that large-scale vine problems are caused by native trees existing largely as remnants, rather than as large, intact forest regions.

One large forested area produces less edge for vine niche than many isolated native remnants whose total areas are the same as the former. A major solution to vines on the north coast therefore involves linking isolated remnants.

Vine problems require more than an individual view. They require a regional or holistic view such as that proposed by total catchment management, so that catchments are organised with wildlife corridors extending across property boundaries. The land areas devoted to corridors might include watercourses and perhaps the southern side of ridges. The organisation of wildlife corridors is not done to stress landowners with "weed" obligations or to enforce use of land for corridors, but as an idealised plan of land-use for the

future. It is consideration of the long-term; consideration of seven generations plus. The organisation of corridors is determined by the people of a watercourse catchment, meeting regularly to determine obligation-free, what areas of their properties can be reasonably given over to wildlife, and how this will link with neighbouring properties.

The above proposals are facilitated by a renovation of human diet to one that is less destructive of both land and the human body. It is the official position of the American Dietetic Association and Dietitians of Canada since 2009, that "appropriately planned vegetarian diets – including total vegetarian or vegan diets are healthful, nutritionally adequate and provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases." As anatomist and primatologist, Dr. John Ardle has said, humans are omnivores but there is no obligation for the consumption of animal protein. "We have a choice." As far as the land goes, as has been mentioned before, 92% of environmental degradation in Australia is caused by 'animal industries'.

One might envisage that land-use in the future for human food will be carried out more from a gardening perspective as it becomes increasingly clear that broadacre farming is caught on a technological treadmill, and, the need to farm large animals drops away with diet change. Gardening on a national scale is supported by role-models such as Russia, where as Jim Arachne has pointed out, gardening is an important part of national food security. In Malta, Vietnam and Cuba also, government planning invites gardening as a means of countering the potential damage of industrialised farming.

The linking of remnant native vegetation with largely uninterrupted wildlife corridors reduces edge for vines comparative to forest area. An increased rural gardening population per unit of land area, makes all "weeds" more accessible. Vine, and indeed all 'weed' problems pass, as populations decentralise for rural interdependence and notice that the plentiful biomass, formerly called weeds, aid sustainable agriculture.

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# Use the bus, or lose it



by Eugenie Stephans

The 5.30pm Waller's bus service from Lismore to Nimbin, is currently being provided for a trial period at this stage.

Here are more reasons why we should use the bus and how it can benefit passengers in many ways:

- Commuters can simply sit back and relax and have ample time to talk and bond during the trip. It's also a great way to meet people in your community, but please respect your fellow passengers – alcohol, smoking and misbehaviour is prohibited.
- Playing personal and interactive games engages passengers during bus trips. Travellers can also bring playing cards, puzzles, board games, portable games or iPods for their personal enjoyment.
- There is ample storage space in the bus for your shopping bags. Also, supermarket specials are put out for sale in the

late afternoon, so you are able to get the best deals and still make it on the 5.30pm bus service.

- If there is a medical appointment in Lismore that you need to attend, with prior warning to the bus operator (phone 6622-6266), you can be dropped off or collected from your destination. If you have an appointment at Lismore Base Hospital, the bus can drop you off at the hospital at 8.30am. The bus also stops at Lismore Base Hospital prior to the Transit Centre each day.
- There's ample room on the bus for travel bags, sports and recreation equipment. It's good to see that teens are embracing the bus service as well as skateboard riders. Travellers have also been using the bus.
- There has been no need for family or friends to drive into Lismore to collect their visitors. It is much more convenient and cheaper than the \$100 taxi ride from Lismore.
- When taking a private car

to Lismore, there is the hassle of finding a parking spot, as well as the risk of being booked for speeding, parking or perhaps having a defective vehicle. The fewer vehicles there are the on the road, the better it is for the environment. Currently there are many solo occupant vehicles coming into Nimbin at the same time as the bus pulls in.

- It costs a lot of money to maintain and keep a vehicle on the road and with the increasing cost of living, it is better to have a good transport system in place, especially as Nimbin is growing in population and new housing estates are underway. With the poor state of our roads and the risk of running into bad drivers, it is better to be sitting comfortably in a bus that does the speed limit and can get you home safely, even in times of flooding.
- When taking a bus you can observe the beautiful countryside, including the absolutely glorious sunsets.

If you are a student or worker and the 8.30am arrival in Lismore and 5.30pm departure to Nimbin suits you, then please give the bus a go. Those who need to get to Lismore in the evenings can do so, as the same services goes back to Lismore at around 6.05pm.

Give Waller's bus a go, and help save the environment.



by Kirrah Holborn

B. ClinSc (complementary medicine)  
Traditional Wisdom

Rugged up mamas and bubs have been meeting to enjoy the morning sun and a cup of tea in the beautiful Birth and Beyond space. In June we discussed baby-wearing and had demonstrations of the hug-a-bub and ergo carriers. Nine mums and ten children joined to talk about sleep. This popular topic often gets brought up! There was great discussion on whether girls sleep better than boys. While some of the babies sucked on mandarins, we talked about baby-led weaning and what foods are good to introduce to little ones curious to have a munch.

It's a joy to see the Birth and Beyond room filled with passionate mums keen to share their knowledge and connect to discover the various aspects of parenting. It brings a smile to everyone's face when young babies interact and learn to 'share' their toys with each other.

This month we have a treat for the dads out there too! On the 27th July, Darren Mattock will be coming to Birth and Beyond to facilitate a group discussion on the role of fathers, the benefits of active and engaged fathers and team parenting. This is a great partner session and can be a real opening for expectant and new fathers. This session is open to mums, bubs and dads!

After the most recent arrival of rainbow babies, there was a break, but now it appears the next wave of pregnant mamas

are starting to blossom.

I will be branching out to Lismore to hold holistic prenatal classes. I have found a gorgeous space called 'Nurture' on Keen street and in July will be holding two workshops there. The first is a two-hour 'explore birth' workshop on the 14th July. This will be a chance to discover the Birthing From Within practices like; breath awareness for birth, creative processes to explore labour-land and what natural remedies are useful for birth. If you would like to delve deeper, there is a weekend intensive on the 28th/29th July. Everyone who has done the weekend course has left feeling more confident and positive about birth. One of the recent participants said "This weekend was absolutely inspiring and incredibly useful. I have learnt so much and now have a renewed confidence in birth".

For more information, or to see how the weekend course can help you, visit: [www.traditionalwisdom.com.au](http://www.traditionalwisdom.com.au)

## Birth & Beyond July Schedule

- 13th July:** Creative process for new parents
- 20th July:** Mums 'n' Bubs Yoga DVD
- 27th July:** The role of fathers and team parenting
- 3rd August:** Not on (I will be away).



Nimbin Birth & Beyond meets every Friday from 11am to 12.30pm. Sessions are run by donation. For more information phone 0429-308-851 or email: [kirrah@traditionalwisdom.com.au](mailto:kirrah@traditionalwisdom.com.au) To be added to the mailing list, just send an email or text.

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# LOVE

by Zuela Christie

## PART ONE – GOD LOVE

“Pure LOVE is matchless in majesty, it has no parallel in power and there is no darkness it cannot dispel.”  
– Meher Baba.

Love is the expansive energy flow which sustains the universe. Love is the power of attraction, which draws you back to God. God is Love. Love is your original nature.

If you have an adverse reaction to the word God, then ask yourself: Who is this God-concept that you are rejecting? Is it some mean, punishing tyrant to be feared; that you were mistaught about and ‘unloved’ in the name of, as a child? You are absolutely right to reject that. It has nothing to do with the real God, the source of Love, Light, Life and Truth.

“...propositional statements can never capture eternal truth. Whenever a powerful timeless experience is explained, the truth of that experience is captured inside the language, the level of knowledge and the worldview of the explainer. Explanation always places perceived truth inside time-bound words and time-warped concepts. To identify the ultimate truth of GOD with the explanation of that truth is to confuse the ultimate with the transitory...

Whatever it was that people experienced in Jesus has today come to

be identified with medieval doctrines based on pre-modern assumptions that are no longer believable...My commitment however’ is to the reality of Jesus as a GOD experience; it is not a commitment to the reality of the traditional explanations of that GOD experience in Jesus. There is a vast difference.”

– Bishop John Shelby Spong, ‘Jesus for the Non-Religious’

No wonder we don’t have a clear understanding of God as unconditional Love when the traditional Christian distortion presented a God created in the image of humans – instead of the other way round. A God who judged, kept track of misdemeanours, bullied, threatened, withdrew favour and sorted sheep from goats.

What a tragedy that human beings could have perverted the source of Life, the essence of Love, into a petty, judgemental power abuser. And that, for many people, this misperception of the Divine remains stuck, replaying the same tale of fear, retribution and imminent abandonment; rather than easily opening to a God experience that is Love, infinite delight, acceptance, humour, good will, encouragement, joy, peace, healing and wholeness.

The ancient Hebrew people were evidently patriarchal, misogynist, homophobic, fearful, vengeful, arrogant, controlling separatists. They could only conceive God to the limit of their own level of consciousness. We can all only see



From ‘Images of Water’ by Masaro Emoto

and interpret the world through the filter of our current awareness and understanding.

“Love is an energy, an all existing substance...If you have a lot of negative thoughts, you don’t notice it. When you’re feeling positive, you feel Love everywhere and you see it everywhere.”

– Sondra Ray

Oh what a tangled web they wove... The church re-interpreted everything in its own interests in order to build exclusive power, wealth and worldly control; and in so doing ended up fundamentally teaching the opposite of Jesus’ essential message. The church advocated fearing God, whereas Jesus, himself had emphasized that the appropriate attitude towards God is Love. The church preached hellfire and brimstone, not in an effort to help ‘sinners’ but to control them;

while Jesus told stories of God as a caring heavenly father searching for every lost sheep and prodigal son, and rejoicing in their return to the fold. The church insisted that people have to come through them to get anywhere spiritually – and that Jesus was not a man, but a virgin-born part of God incarnated.

Jesus was a man who, like the Buddha, attained enlightenment and wanted to show The Way for each and every one of us to do the same through a direct personal relationship with the Source that Jesus, in spirit, as the intercessor, can facilitate for us. Don’t forget that Jesus was not a Christian – he was the Christ: a spiritual teacher and supreme healer, who works with the miraculous power of unconditional Love.

The word religion comes from the latin *ligare* – to bind. The purpose is to enable you to bind back to the Source, not to a particular religious doctrine as an end in itself, but as a means to an end. The Sanskrit word Yoga has a very similar meaning.

“A man who was completely innocent offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act (of Love).”  
– Mohandes Gandhi

“All major religions traditionally carry basically the same message, that is LOVE, compassion and forgiveness ; the important thing is they should be part of our daily lives.”  
– His Holiness The Dalai Lama.

## Nimbin Hospital Info

### Immunisation Clinic

At Nimbin Hospital, second Tuesday of the month. Birth to five years. By appointment through Lismore Community Health, phone 6620 7687. Next clinic: 10th July

### Womens Health Clinic

Nursing service, free and confidential. Every third Tuesday of the month. For appointment phone 6688 1401. Next clinic: 17th July.

### Nimbin Community Nurses

At Nimbin Hospital Monday-Friday. Assessment, referral, advocacy, treatment (home visits) and palliative care in the home. Phone 6689-1288, leave a message. We return calls ASAP. Also assessment for Aged Care packages.

### Hospital Auxiliary AGM

Friday 10th August, 11am at Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Services in Acacia House, Nimbin Community Centre. All welcome to attend. New members urgently needed.

## Continuing to heal

by Dr Elizabeth McCardell  
M Counselling, PhD

In the bad old days, it was thought the brain grew during childhood, stopped changing in any way, then began a process of decaying, declining, and dementia-fying. In those days the brain was viewed as a bit of beautiful meat, essentially, and incapable of forming new neural pathways. The current sport of brain gym exercises was not thought useful, even relevant. You were born with an x amount of intelligence and you could be educated, but you couldn’t change your destiny – so it was thought. If you got schizophrenia, you got something that damaged your brain and a damaged brain is what you had. If you had obsessive compulsive disorder, you had OCD. That was it. If you got post traumatic stress disorder, you could be treated with medication, but that was it. Counselling, the talking cure, was thought not to be



effective in the treatment of these conditions, except for offering care and support.

That old model of an inflexible brain has gone by the wayside. We are now seeing the brain as a plastic organ (plastic in the sense of fluid, flexible and changeable, not the plastic of tupperware!) where grey matter may shrink or thicken and neural connections are forged, refined or weakened and severed in response to new encounters or habits repeated or activities not practiced. This is a physical process that is expressed physically, functionally, and chemically throughout life.

Brain or neuro-plasticity, as a way of viewing the brain,

excitingly and finally takes account of the whole human being in body, experience, and psychological state, for functionality is seen as not only being a result of brain process but a contributor to brain physiology and its processes, as a reciprocal process. Each time we learn a new skill, like playing an instrument, or crocheting, or plastering, or enhancing pre-existing skills, like writing, or cooking, or singing, we forge new neural pathways in our brain which changes how we do things and how we experience them, sensorially and in our thoughts, in other aspects of our lives. It is in this two-way process that effective treatments are being found for the supposed intractable conditions described above, and for slowing the rate of dementia. Individuals exercising their brain through puzzles and learning new skills is also extremely valuable. Treatments are now utilizing many of the techniques developed and found useful by psychotherapists and counsellors. Techniques we

developed from an interest in the interface between lived experience and story telling, as well as more hard-core symptom control.

Acute trauma counsellors, for instance, often use the method of asking the distressed person to tell and retell, in detail, what happened to them, while sitting warmly and comfortably and supported by the counsellor. Likewise, when the acute trauma continues to be experienced years after the first event becomes chronic (when the neural pathways in the parts of the brain iteratively repeat the course taken before), the therapist uses the same method with their client. We ask the client to tell and retell in as much detail as possible what happened to them and what feelings arise in them as they give account of the original traumatic event. In the process of telling the story (I use this word advisedly for I do not wish to imply a fictional account at all; this is real stuff), and retelling it, an interesting capacity arises:

a sense of being a witness to the experience, which – over time – lessens its effects on the psyche and felt experience.

It is interesting that neuroscientists have recently found that getting a person with post-traumatic stress disorder to write down and retell over and over, the traumatic event, in minute detail, and increasing, in this mindfulness exercise, what they call the impartial spectator effect (the witness) changes brain physiology. The use of magnetic resonance imaging show a shift from neural pathways used over and over (the post-

traumatic stress disorder brain) to vital new activity in the person’s brain. The shift to a capacity to look impartially upon a previous torment frees us physically, emotionally, chemically, and psychologically to experience life entirely differently. All thanks to a plastic brain.

Healing, real healing from a psychological wound, is possible – at a deeply neurophysiological level, at a functional level, and at the heart of lived experience. Little, it appears, is fixed. Fluidity of being, a creativity of being, and an awareness of being, integrally intermingle in the healing that continues.



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