

by Philippe Dupuy, Retiring President

NEC had its AGM on Tuesday 27th May. The meeting was well attended and ran red-hot at times, but in the end everyone cooled down and realised that our differences do not run deep, and that the enemy (big corporations) must be defeated.

Everyone present had been involved in one way or another in the great Bentley campaign, one of the biggest ever in Australia. It was a great victory of the people, no matter what the government and the establishment would have us believe. We are now stronger than ever, but we must keep building the movement. It is a numbers game, and in the end this is what will bring the much-needed new direction.

The AGM has brought changes, and the office holders are now: President – Stewart James; Vice president – Rusty Harris; Secretary – Philippe Dupuy; Treasurers – Lisa Green and Martha Paitson.

I would like to sincerely thank the outgoing team for the time and effort they have dedicated to keep NEC as a prominent environmental group in the Northern Rivers. Congratulations on a job well done. I feel sad at the loss of our former secretary and other committee members of the old team, but I am sure that they are more than willing to continue helping in their areas of expertise.

I welcome the new members and have complete confidence that we will be ready for the hard tasks ahead.

The future is no doubt daunting, the federal environment act (EPBC) is in the process of being handed over to the states which is criminal, The Leard, Pilliga, Gladstone harbour, the Surat Basin, Bimble Box, Blue Mountains – the list goes on and on – face severe destruction. We will be required to fight on many fronts.

We are however, well equipped to face the situation. Our membership has been steadily growing and previous committee members Mark and Alan have successfully made computerised records of membership as well as minutes, submissions and other documents. The NEC shop is powering along under the care of Lisa G and our dedicated volunteers, which has made it a significant contributor in keeping NEC afloat.

The Casino Environment Centre is also doing well, although it does not have the same turnover as its Nimbin sister. The work at CEC is centred around keeping Casino informed and supported, the addition of a couple of pages to the *Nimbin GoodTimes* called *Casino GoodTimes* is helping greatly. For this our thanks goes to Bob and Sue whose support has been critical, both morally and financially.

Finally I would like to thank the citizens of the Northern Rivers, without whose help and support none of that would have been possible.

Together we can change the world. Viva la Revolution!

## Habitat restoration

One year of work and over \$110,000 has been spent so far improving koala habitat in the Lismore local government area including Rosebank to Lismore and around Nimbin.

Over the next two years, a further \$80,000 will support professional bush regenerators and landholders to restore and connect significant koala habitat. Connectivity will be increased through control of weeds and planting trees.

Dan Cox, bush regenerator with EnviTE Environment said, “Over 60 private landholders have put their hands up to restore and extend koala habitat on their properties. We are working with around 30 landholders on this project.”

“Koalas are likely to become extinct in the local area unless we act to reduce threats including loss and degradation of habitat, dog attacks, cars and disease,” Friends of the



Koala’s Mark Wilson said. “As well as our work at the Koala Care Centre, our nursery has grown thousands of koala food trees which are currently being planted on this, and other projects.”

The project has been funded by \$90,000 from the Norman H Johns Trust managed by Perpetual Philanthropic Grants (through EnviTE Environment) and \$100,000 from the New South Wales Government through its Environmental Trust to Lismore City Council.

## Plant of the month

Coast Banksia

*Banksia integrifolia*

by Richard Burer

Hi folks and welcome back this month, after our diversion from endemic native plants last time round. A big hello to Bohdi from the Channon who FB’d me last edition to say how much he enjoyed my off-the-cuff rave!

This month I sit overlooking the ocean between two coast Banksias a whale in between, and know that the whales and this species ‘Coast Banksia’ have had a long association of thousands of years, watching each other as the whales pass, perhaps. The timely flowering offered indigenous people a calendar-like moment to remind them that the whale season was close.

A known cultural use of Banksia involves fire-making, as the fine fibre in the spent flower is perfect for initiating natural firestick practices.



This dear old friend, that grows to 16m high, is found throughout the north coast, and inland in NSW, Victoria and southern Queensland.

Locally, I have seen it at The Channon / Keerrong / Wongavale on sandy country, and it is also endemic at Nimbin Rocks.



Within weeks of each other, two permanent care girls Joanna and Hera, passed way. A sad time for everyone at the Koala Care Centre.

## Koala Kolumn



by Lorraine Vass

At long last, the independent consultant’s interim report and recommendations on the Northern Councils Environmental Zones Review has been released. It’s dated September 2013. Why has government been sitting on it all this time?

You may recall that the review was initiated in response to the petitioning of local members Thomas George and Don Page to have environmental zones E2, E3 and later E4 excised from the new Local Environment Plans (LEPs). That was in September 2012. Development of Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Lismore and Tweed councils’ LEPs continued but areas with environmental zones overlays were deferred pending the review’s outcome.

At the time of writing I have only scanned the report but clearly it endorses the inclusion of environmental zones and overlays in the LEPs. It points out the inconsistencies between the five councils in identifying and mapping areas of high conservation value suitable for E2 and E3 and in applying these zonings. It also identifies significant mapping errors which need rectification and confirms that new information gathered by council studies on biodiversity or other environmental values e.g. Comprehensive Koala Plans of Management, must be incorporated into the LEP.

The documentation on exhibition at [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/proposals](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/proposals) includes the Department of Planning & Environment’s response to the recommendations. While some are supported; others including the use of overlays to manage terrestrial biodiversity areas are not.

The Federal Coalition’s election promise to create a “one-stop shop” for environmental approvals and assessments was implemented with the amendments to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, introduced into Parliament in the shadow of the Budget debate. The changes potentially unwind the Commonwealth’s involvement in environmental matters which has grown over the past few decades and as of 2012 includes koala protection, by delegating powers to approve projects to the States.

The real detail is in the bilateral agreements which are in preparation – the NSW and Queensland drafts are presently on exhibition. There are a few surprises, increased transparency being one of them. They provide “an escalation process” that enables the Commonwealth minister to step in. They also require States to duplicate authorisation processes for Commonwealth environmental matters. Maybe the “One-stop

shop” idea is as much about the States lifting their environmental approval process as the Commonwealth getting out of environmental protection. See what you think about the NSW draft at: [www.environment.gov.au/topics/environment-protection/environment-assessments/bilateral-agreements/nsw](http://www.environment.gov.au/topics/environment-protection/environment-assessments/bilateral-agreements/nsw)

With the days closing in, koala activity is slowing down. Breeding females are engaged in their new pregnancies while disengaging with their yearlings. Male indifference continues, sporadic bellowing signalling their presence to neighbouring animals.

While koalas breed seasonally, mating is a rather brief, vigorous affair producing a single joey at a time (twins are rare). Females are normally sexually mature from 21 to 24 months. They initiate courting although the process may be triggered by the presence of a male or the sound of its frenzied bellowing. Given their relatively short life-span of around 15 years in the wild, a healthy, fertile female’s theoretical contribution to population survival is around 13 young.

By and large koalas make successful mothers. Style varies, from the aloof to the more attentive and nurturing (although rarely reaching the constant intimacy of some primates). Around 15% of young are lost during early pouch life but the survivors generally make it to independence.

So, why is the koala believed to be a slow breeder and why are so many populations in trouble?

A sad truth for our northern koalas is the high prevalence of female infertility. Recent studies of two koala populations in South East Queensland found that 50% of the female koalas examined had reproductive tract disease likely to render them infertile. Our experience in the Northern Rivers leads us to conclude that the extent of female infertility in our region is similar.

Together with elevated mortality rates of breeding females through road strike and dog attack, not to mention catastrophic events such as wildfire, the reasons for fertility depression in the characteristically small remnant populations of our northern koalas become obvious. Put simply, there are too few healthy breeding females and the lives of too many of them are ended prematurely.

Don’t miss the Our Pets, Our Wildlife seminar at Nimbin Town Hall on 29th June. In a great line-up of speakers, our Care Co-ordinator, Pat Barnidge will be presenting on responsible dog management around koalas.

To report a koala in trouble, or a sighting (live or dead), please ring Friends of the Koala’s 24/7 Rescue Hotline: 6622-1233.

For information about koalas, their food trees and how you can assist koala conservation, visit: [www.friendsofthekoala.org](http://www.friendsofthekoala.org) or email: [info@friendsofthekoala.org](mailto:info@friendsofthekoala.org) or phone 6622-1233.

Follow both Friends of the Koala and Save Ballina’s Koalas on Facebook.

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





by Triny Roe

Some sing the praises of lantana, claiming it protects and improves the soil. And in the fulness of time, the forest will re-establish itself. Therefore, leave it be and let it grow.

Another approach to land management involves removing lantana and similar pernicious species, allowing bracken - *Pteridium* spp, wattles - *Acacia* spp and other native pioneer plants to grow unimpeded. The soil will still be well protected, and in even better condition than before and the forest will return faster.

Wattles, being legumes, raise soil fertility by fixing gaseous nitrogen via rhizobacteria in root nodules. A suitable environment for

bush regeneration is quickly created to take advantage of natural recruitment.

If lantana is present, as well as overgrowing everything else, it produces allelopathic chemicals to prevent germination of other species. This robust plant well deserves its reputation as one of Australia's Weeds of National Significance. Few plants are as rampant, destructive or widespread. Lantana occupies 4 million hectares of Australia.

A research project in India assessed the suitability of lantana as a soil improver in the traditional wheat/rice rotation production cycle. This cropping pattern is typical of many South Asian countries. The addition of organic matter such as cow manure, compost and rice

or wheat straw had been previously shown to benefit the soil and crop yields.

Lantana was chosen for this study because it was a convenient resource and not useful for anything else such as fuel or stock fodder due to its toxicity. In many parts of India, manure is used as fuel and straw fed to animals so these materials are not available in quantity for fertilising the fields. Chemical fertilisers are expensive and not always affordable. However, lantana is a serious weed in India, growing fast and furious everywhere. So use the lantana!

Young green twigs were harvested from a nearby wasteland, chopped and incorporated into the soil prior to field preparation for the rice. Results from trials conducted over 12 years demonstrated physical improvement in the soil structure and higher carbon, nitrogen levels. Increased yields in both rice and wheat were observed, though there was no change in nutrient level in the crop biomass.

Lantana is well established in many areas in and around the Nimbin valley. For protecting the soil it's better than nothing, (or Giant Devil's Fig).

This weed is relatively easy to clear manually. The stems are light and brittle and the roots are fairly shallow.

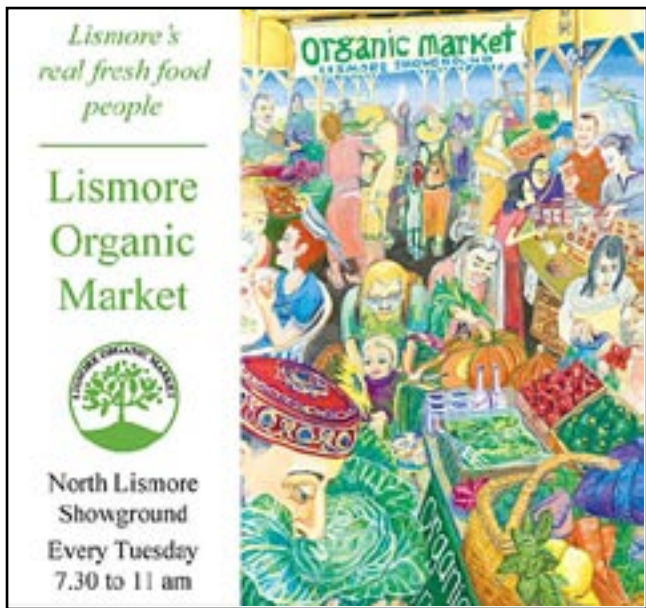
Where it is smothering trees, simply cut all the stems at the base. Leave the lantana in the tree to avoid damage by hauling it out. It will soon die and in time, disintegrate and drop out. For large solid patches, nibble away at the edges. Natural recruitment will soon see native species springing up on the margins.

Lantana control need not involve chemical measures. Glyphosate, a popular herbicide used in bush regeneration, is quickly falling out of favour. In 2013 Friends of the Earth Europe found glyphosate in urine from humans, hares and rabbits and dairy cows, demonstrating that it is entering the food chain. It was also present in the meat and organs of slaughtered cattle.

A recent study by Moms Across America found disturbing levels of glyphosate in 3 out of 10 samples of breast milk tested. Monsanto scientists claim glyphosate does not accumulate in the body. Sri Lanka banned glyphosate in March this year after discovering it contributed to a high level of kidney disease amongst farmers.

As with all weeding projects, regular follow up is essential to ensure initial efforts are not wasted. Lantana can grow back very quickly.

Happy weeding.





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# Naturalising the rabbit

by Geoff Dawe

Rabbits, like Lantana and Madeira vine, rampage in cleared conditions but quieten in shade. A CSIRO analysis in 1988 by E. Stodart and I. Parer titled *Colonisation of Australia by the Rabbit*, found that on the mainland "the spread over the wetter and more densely wooded or forested mountain ranges and coastal areas was much slower."

The rabbit's apparent preference to avoid wooded and forested areas was also the conclusion of Eric Rolls who said in 1969 in *They all Ran Wild*: "The rabbit does not like heavy timber or scrub ... both the coastal timbered belt and the inland plain at night were almost impossible for rabbits until 1860." Before 1860 we could presume, that the bush was still relatively intact, but by about this time, clearing and poisoning of unwanted fauna, was having an effect. The quiet-in- shade effect of the rabbit was probably not caused by an absence of sun as much as the fact that rabbits, and small mammals, were prey for many predators that were dependent on the bush.

The Australian bush was full of animals with potential to "balance" rabbits. Eric writes: "There were native cats and tiger-cats fiercer than weasels; there were goanna that crawled down into breed burrows and relished rabbit kittens more than bird's eggs; there were Wedge-tailed eagles that floated on air-currents so high up, they were no bigger than house-flies and could see a rabbit from two thousand feet up; there were fast hawks and slow hawks; and dingoes in packs of 10-15..." As the bush was cleared, all these predators on

the rabbit began to be threatened. But if that wasn't enough, poisoning with strychnine of unwanted native animals was in vogue and well advocated.

Many attempts were made to spread rabbits, but even as late as 1880 such was the tenacity of the bush, there were many failures in their release. Eric records that G.M. Simpson, the member for Dalby spoke in a debate on a Rabbit Bill about "attempts to breed rabbits in the Riverina for 25 years." Sir Patrick Jennings, Premier of NSW in 1886, Eric found, had no luck with bringing both hares and rabbits from Melbourne to a farm near Deniliquin and releasing them into the wild.

Rabbits, in a largely forested Australia, one could hypothesise, would have tended to remain in balance; always there, but not in plague numbers.

Unlike European consciousness, without thinking the rabbits were a problem, Indigenous people were already part of the solving of the "problem" of rabbits and feral cats. They ate them. In European civilization, rabbits had been venerated as food in earlier times. Eric says, "Rabbit embryos rated with nightingales' tongues in the feasts of ancient Rome ... [and that in] England throughout the 14th and 15th centuries, rabbits were priced as high as suckling pig." For a ticket-of-leave convict transported for poaching a brace of rabbits in Britain, it must have been a tumultuous time to hear in 1836, that the first legal dispute in the new colony on the Yarra River was on whether there should be a law to destroy rabbits!

The Europeans could have eaten



the rabbits, along with wallabies and kangaroos, rather than cleared the trees for the pasturing of hard hoofed animals. Rabbits were not just food, but came with the soft foot of the wallaby and kangaroo that was more suited to the thin, sensitive soils of Australia. The rabbit was a trans-continental Australian, but European consciousness failed to recognise it as such!

With hindsight, rabbits need never have been a problem in Australia provided there was extensive tree cover and the rabbit was accepted as reasonable meat. Colonel Sanders no doubt could have made them "finger lickin' good!" Fruit and nut trees could have been grown in coexistence with rabbits and the bush, in recognition that fruit is the major calorie supply for humankind.

The European adventure in Australia could and still can be, of major benefit to the whole with the polycultural spread of larger fruiting exotics such as oranges, apples, pears etc, and particularly plants such as the olive, almond and pomegranate, for Australia's extensive dry lands; fruits unknown in a mostly small-fruited Australia before 1788. Biodiversity need not have emphasised the restriction of exotic species but the noticing of their value. The positive rather than the negative.



# Finding new flavours



school has flourished since adopting the program. Kindergarten teacher, Deborah explains, “Our program encourages students to work together as a team and adopt a positive attitude when it comes to growing, harvesting and cooking fresh, healthy food. By teaching practical garden and kitchen skills students gain a greater understanding and appreciation for how plants grow and where they come from.”

The Kitchen Garden program is a powerful medium in the fight against obesity. However it is also successful in exposing children to smells and tastes they may not have experienced before. In the school garden, children have also planted fennel and artichokes for the sole purpose of encouraging the children to eat and taste the unusual flavours they produce. The children learn how to use these herbs and vegetables to create delicious healthy meals every week.

“I actually like the taste,” says one Year 2 boy, while eating a pizza covered in mushrooms, zucchini, capsicum, garlic and onion. “I didn’t think I would.”

**What to Plant in June**  
**Vegetables:** Broad beans, cabbage, onions, peas, potatoes, radish, silver beet  
**Flowers:** Alyssum, balsam, calendula, Californian poppy, godetia, impatiens, linaria, marigold, nasturtium, petunia, phlox.

As solstice night approaches, the children of Tuntable Falls Community School have been busy planting the winter vegetables. However that is not all that is worth celebrating, for on the 6th of May the Stephanie Alexander Program announced it had achieved the milestone of 500 primary schools Australia-wide.

The Stephanie Alexander program, which began in Melbourne 13 years ago aims to see pleasurable food education accessible to every Australian primary school via an experienced based kitchen garden program.

Tuntable falls Primary



# Energies of the outer planets

A special 1-day Astrology program, *Saturn, the Outer Planets and the Evolution of Consciousness*, is being held at the Lillifield Community Centre to coincide with the last of three ‘Grand Crosses’ of 2014.

In astrology, Saturn is the planet signifying the past and its consequences, while Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are the forces connected to the evolution of consciousness challenging humanity to develop depth (Pluto), empathy (Neptune) and wisdom (Uranus).

Saturn is the furthest planet visible from the Earth with the naked eye with its impressive planetary rings symbolic of the ‘Laws of Karma’ that hold us ‘imprisoned’. Saturn’s position in the solar system means we cannot incorporate the energies of the outer planets into our individuated consciousness without first dealing with our deepest fears and self-imposed limitations. As the co-ruler of Aquarius, Saturn is the planetary “Gatekeeper” for the “New Age”.

Saturn’s position in the chart will be explored to gain an understanding of what has remained unfulfilled in the past and has to be overcome now through concrete experience, and what needs to be healed and embraced. In the afternoon, we will explore the current Grand Cross/Pluto-Uranus square and its far-reaching impact on our personal and collective lives. The Grand Cross peaks again between June 14 and 25 for the last time, so come and find out what this all means for you!

The course will be held on Wednesday 18th June, 10am – 4pm, registration 9.30am, at Lilifield Community Centre, 4505 Kyogle Road, next to Barkers Vale School. \$80 Full price; \$70 concession – Morning tea provided; bring your own lunch.

Bookings: Tina 0457-903-957 or: [star-loom@hotmail.com](mailto:star-loom@hotmail.com) or Maggie 0755-945-959 or: [maggiekerr@universalastronomy.com.au](mailto:maggiekerr@universalastronomy.com.au)

# The real food pyramid



Permaculture Principles with Anastasia Guise



How many times have I opened a gardening magazine – mostly for the eye candy – and read that first sentence: “It is so easy to grow enough food to feed your family all year round in a space the size of an average Australian backyard.”

Over the years I have learned to read that repetitive line with a grain of salt. Even if one utilises the prudent permaculture principles of integrated planting, soil building, biodiversity, legume cover and rotation cropping, and a plentiful supply not only of water but of nutrients, trace elements and sunlight, I would not categorise such a task as “easy”.

Further, it’s nigh impossible unless one alters both one’s diet and one’s expectations; turning from a supermarket-dependent existence (shiny red apples available all year, every single fruit and vegetable available regardless of season, packaged meat, processed cereals, complex and instant meals, flavoured milk on tap etc) to consumption and expectations based on what I call the Permaculture Food Pyramid – an entirely different way of looking at food production as well as diet.

See, it’s not so easy to grow an entire family’s food needs in the current economic climate, which siphons our time and energy into economic relationships which for the most part are anti-planet and anti-people. A permaculture garden

destined to supply a family with all of their nutrient needs would require ten years optimally for its establishment, after which it would require at least one adult to devote a good portion of their time to planning, cultivation, seed sorting, storage and collection, overseeing nutrient cycling, animal management and so forth.

Then too, follows the picking, preparing, pickling, preserving and cooking required to make the most of produce at peak ripeness and in quantity. While the encouragement spouted forth by every gardening magazine is, well, encouraging, it fails to extrapolate on some of these little details like um, you might just have to change your life!

Remember the food pyramid we were all “fed” as kids? The biggest section at the bottom of the pyramid was the one you were meant to eat the most of – cereals, grains, bread, pasta. This suited the monstrous cereals industry, making billions out of mass produced monoculture grains, sprayed with pesticides, coated in sugar and stripped of real fibre. Then came fruits and vegetables, although now too much fructose in our diets has been blamed for inducing diabetes amongst other ailments. Then came meat and dairy – meat being implicated as high in the wrong fats and milk sold as the only

source of real calcium.

I’ve been experimenting with the Permaculture Food Pyramid because it connects the dual considerations of production and consumption. A permaculture food system ideally generates a mix of annual and perennial edible species with a variety of free-range animals for their products of meat, eggs, milk, fibre and labour. The most reliable food source in this context beyond all others are dark, leafy vegetables. Although some might believe you “can’t live on greens”, they are surprisingly high in most vitamins and minerals including, yes, calcium. Believe me, if you are going to “grow all your family’s food”, your family is going to eat a lot of dark leafy greens.

The biggest food group in this food pyramid are the meats, vegetables, greens and legumes. This is because your food supply needs to be diverse to be resilient, and these four food types provide the building blocks of all your dietary needs – particularly protein. Lard has regained its reputation as a good fat, over vegetable oils which when heated, become carcinogenic. Fruits and dairy come next. They are seasonal, (every cow has to go fallow) and too much fructose, lactose and casein have been implicated in imbalances such as candida, autism and cancer.

Lastly, to be consumed in minute quantities only, are the highly processed foods, such as processed grains and sugar. This is because even small quantities of these highly processed products are detrimental to the health, not beneficial to it. Further, the production methods used to obtain high yields of carbohydrate and sucrose are highly mechanised, pesticide-dependant monocultures. They are going to occupy but a tiny niche in your food production system.

Food is the problem, and food is the solution – to both human and planetary ill health. Grow yours, and eat it now. It won’t be entirely easy. It might even be hard work. Enjoy.

# Trash and Treasure at Blue Knob

by Jim Arachne

Following on from the exuberant Fibre and Fabric Festival last month, our biggest event for June is a Trash & Treasure market on Saturday 21st.

This Trash & Treasure is our largest fund-raising happening for the year, and all proceeds will go to the Blue Knob Hall. Two hundred or so customers and visitors to the Hall every week means a lot of wear and tear, so profits will help out with maintenance and development of new features.

A highlight of the morning will be an auction at around 10.30am. Do you have quality items to donate for this? Please phone Christine at the Hall on 6689-7449 to arrange donations. Would you like to have a stall yourself? \$10 on the day and a phone call to Marie on 6689-7329 will secure one for you. Last year we raised nearly \$2000, so we’re looking to top that this time!

**Workshops for June**

There was so much interest in the Fabric and Fibre Festival in May that some of



the Festival demonstrators are running hands-on workshops throughout June.

**Saturday 7th June 9.30am to 3pm. “Basket Weaving Using Natural Fibres” with Cherie and Fiona Shadwell**

Use leaves from flax, red hot pokers, day lilies etc to make a useful, hardwearing and attractive basket. All you need to bring is a full large fruit can or any can that is big enough to use as a mould for a basket. All the fibre will be supplied.

Cost is \$50 for the day and includes all materials. Bring your own lunch, or order a delicious meal from the Gallery café.

Registration is essential and numbers are limited to eight, so please call Cherie or Fiona on 6632-2980 to register.

**Saturday 14th June 9.30am to 4pm. “Felting Workshop” – Catherine Dunham**

Make an individual piece of flat felt depicting a landscape or still life, using merino wool and other fibres. You will learn how to plan, design, layout and make a felt picture you can hang on the wall or use to make a cushion cover.

Catherine has been felting for many years both as an artist and a teacher. Originally self taught and inspired by a workshop with Polly Sterling at Wild Turkey Studio in the early nineties, she has run felting classes, made large interactive pieces for public display and has taught felting to hundreds of children and adults.

Cost is \$60, which includes all materials. Bring your own lunch or order a meal from

the Gallery café.

Registration is essential, so please call Catherine on 6689-7101 or 6684-1262.

**Saturday 28th June 9.30am to noon. “Introduction to Back-Strap Weaving” – Paula Cordeiro**

Backstrap weaving’s origins pre-date recorded history. It was developed independently in many countries and is still practised today. Try your hand at this ancient skill and leave with a hand-woven belt. Sustainability practices and recycling tips will be a feature in this session.

Paula has 30 years of industry experience, exhibiting and teaching in textile creation. Hailing from South America, she brings a rich diversity of history and cultures to her workshops.

Cost is \$20 for the morning, which includes all textile materials. A backstrap kit is an extra \$55.

Registration is essential, phone Paula on 6680-2950r.

*Blue Knob Farmers Market runs every Saturday, rain, hail or shine, 8.30am to noon, on Blue Knob Road near the corner of Lillian Rock Road, 8km from Nimbin in the grounds of the Blue Knob Gallery.*



# International Tutu Day

by Natasha Livock

One part of the Assessment and Rating process in the Early Childhood Education and Care sector is a visit from an 'Assessment and Compliance Officer'. This person spends the day in your service observing and documenting all that goes on – from before children and their families arrive to long after they have gone.

For some services, this experience can be stressful; however at Cawongla Playhouse, we decided to embrace this process as a learning opportunity and chose to play to our strengths and personalities. All educators and children, even our roster Mum, decided to wear fabulous tutus in order to bring extra fun and colour into our day

– 10th March, a day now known as 'International Tutu Day' at Cawongla Playhouse.

So, how did it all go? Of the seven quality areas assessed, we received four 'Exceeding' national standard and three 'Meeting' national standard. The feedback was insightful. We have areas in which we can improve, which will be our focus in the coming years.

We also got to celebrate what it is we do really well. At Cawongla Playhouse, this is the provision of quality programs and practices. Our natural, beautiful and engaging physical environment was also recognised for the role it plays in our learning and play opportunities. Our staffing arrangements received positive comment: 'respectful and ethical', and our relationships with



children were noted as being 'respectful and equitable'.

All educators and staff at Cawongla Playhouse really believe in what we do. We don't get paid very well and we have to fight for recognition and funding from State and Federal governments; however, small, rural, local and community are worth fighting for, don't you think?

## Tell me about storms

The children at Nimbin Preschool have been discussing natural phenomenon, like wind. And storms.

Micah: Storms don't happen in the day. Storms are dark.

Mereki: Storms have rain. It's got rain and the rain comes and it goes thrrrrrrrrrr.

Micah: Storms talk.

Mereki: Storms growl. They go like this grrrrrrrrrrrr.

Micah: They go grrrrrrrrrrrr because it is dark. My storm has arms for picking up lightning and throwing lightning all around. Rain happens in the day.

Mereki: Rain comes out of night and day.

Micah: Rain just comes out of day.

Mereki: And rain comes out of wet like sand at the beach.

Micah: Wet is rain! Wet is ocean and rain and puddles.

Mereki: And rain!

Micah: I already said rain. It's my rain and your rain.

Diane: Do storms have rain?

Mereki: Yes! Because when it's raining we have to take an umbrella and walk all the way home.

Micah: Yes because rain makes puddles.

Diane: What else happens?

Mereki: The rain makes holes and puts water in the big holes and little holes.

Micah: My rain doesn't make holes because my rain wouldn't make holes because the road is already bumpy and bumpy with rocks. But my storm doesn't have rain because storms don't have rain. It just rains and then there's no storm.

Mereki: Mine does! Storms do have rain.

Micah: No they don't because it just rains and then it stops raining and then a storm comes.

Mereki: No! It's loud! It goes pppffffff!

Micah: Mine doesn't go like that! My storm just peaks outside very, very loudly. Peaks means loud.

Mereki: Storms are first, then it rains!

Micah: No! Rain then storm. First it rains then it storms.

Mereki: No! Storm then rain because when the storm comes first and rain comes after, it makes the noise.

Micah: My storm doesn't make sound it makes lightning.

Mereki: The lightning picks the storm up and then it throws it up in the air!

Micah: No! It throws it all around on the house. It picks it up and throws it all around!

## Hearing the children's voice

by Maree Conroy

There has been a lot of discussion about Bentley and the coal seam gas issue at Tuntabla Falls preschool of late.

Many of our children and families have been involved in the fight against coal seam gas in our region.

Some of our children have been camping at Bentley with their families and it has been an important part of their lives.

It has been very interesting listening to the children's thoughts and ideas about their experiences and the

csg issue in general. We have been recording some of what the children have said.

Tahné said, "We went camping and said No Gas! Neil came too."

Nala said, "I went to Bentley with my mum and dad and Lieka. We don't want gas because it will make us sick."

Haan said, "I ate Weetbix and saw Molly when I went to Bentley."

Molly said: "They were singing songs at Bentley all the time."

Sapphire said, "We went camping and went to the CSG protest."

Teacher asked, "What is CSG?"

Sapphire said "It's gas – it's going to poison the water and then poison us."

Tarua said, "I went to Bentley with mummy, Helder and Molly."

And the morning of the announcement that Metagasco's license had been suspended, many children and families came in to preschool very happy.

Teacher said, "What's happening now at Bentley?"

Honeymoon said, "It's stopped."

Sapphire said, "They won because they stopped the gas



Alila at Bentley

mining."

Teacher asked, "Do you know why it stopped?"

Honeymoon said, "Because too many people asked for it to stop."

## The journey of a teacher

by Marga Helms

The love for learning is a gift. How can we hand that gift on?

I became a teacher because some of my teachers had a great influence on me through their patience and understanding. When I entered the schooling system as a teacher in Germany with my ideas about teaching and learning, my experience turned out very differently.

It was disappointing to understand that most students were not able to realise their potential. The system did not suit my ideals and I left after several years trying to adapt.

Then I stepped into a local Steiner School on my search for an alternative for my young daughter here in Australia. I knew straight away that this was what

had lived in me, and a journey of discovery began.

One of my greatest discoveries was that a subject we teach becomes a tool to meet the children in their early years of learning, during their Primary School years, in their natural development. Everything is taught with imagination, through pictures, stories and art. The human being, the child, is the centre. The children's need for rhythm, movement, the loving guidance of the adults, the joy in play and work is fostered.

My ideal and vision as a teacher is to allow and support every child to develop their highest potential academically, emotionally, socially and as well as developing practical skills. These are all different kind of intelligences equally important to develop on our human journey together.



There are many layers to Steiner Education. Please come on a journey of discovery and I hope it will inspire you as much as it did me when I came to my first Open Day 25 years ago at the local Steiner School. I have been a class teacher at Rainbow Ridge from its very beginning.

During our last English block lesson we read many styles of poetry and the children wrote their own. This is a cinquain I wrote:

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# NIMBIN BOWLO

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## What's On in June?

- **Sunday 8th – State of Origin Bowls**
- **Sunday 22nd** – Club Visit: Coraki
- **Sunday 29th** – Club Visit: Coolangatta
- **Fridays** – Raffles, \$15 Buffet, Music with Jazz Duo
- **Open Mike Nights** – Wednesdays: 11th and 25th
- **Trivia Night** – Saturday 14th
- **Courtesy Bus** – Book at the Bar

- Lunch & dinner Tues – Sun
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# Library Dreams

The world according to **Magenta Appel-Pye**

“There is not such a cradle of democracy upon earth as the Free Public Library, this republic of letters, where neither rank, office nor wealth receives the slightest consideration.” – Andrew Carnegie 1835-1919

One night I dreamt I was teaching my psychic development class in the library.

Being a student of dreams, the next day I presented at the Mullumbimby Library and told the librarian of my dream and asked if they would be interested to have me run a free monthly class on Psychic Development. “Sure thing,” she said. Gotta love living in these parts where anything and everything is possible!

Two weeks later, 14 people of all ages turned up to the first class. To create the right atmosphere we started with a chorus of OM’s. I have to admit, I lost the first few to laughter because it was so alien making such noise in a place that traditionally demanded quietude.

Afterwards the librarian said she really ‘got’ the oming and felt the peaceful vibes from it. I hope the people on the computers

and reading got it too.

The next session will be on Thursday 19th June at 11am. We will learn about Dream Interpretation.

The famous psychic Edgar Cayce said people had no difficulty learning to recall dreams once they set their minds to it. They had to be certain they were ready to confront whatever came forth in dreams, and to do something with it.

Then they had to get across to their subconscious that they wanted dreams to be vivid enough to waken them, or to stay in consciousness in the morning.

Tell yourself just before dropping off, that you will recall your dreams. Be encouraged by whatever you can recall, even fragments are important. Sweet dreams!

# Nimbin Crossword

2014-6  
by 5ynic

### Across

1. Accordion door?
5. (And 16 down) Admittance to this property is only by invitation or appointment (4,3,4)
9. Calendar dates (since year 1).
10. Judge
11. Drilling and injecting fluid into the ground at a high pressure
12. Sound
14. Vague
17. Unconventional source of gas released by 11 across (4,4)
19. Not artificial
20. Spin
22. Gardener? Flower pot
23. They turned up. And locked on.

### Down

2. Kind?
3. Early Mexican civilisation
4. Northern City
5. Romantic herb won’t get you high
6. Mix
7. Freelance writer or photographer
8. Just another word for nothing left to lose
9. Garages
11. Moving (as of contaminated groundwater)
13. Water outlet
15. Creamy treat
16. See 5 across.
18. Whale?
21. See 17 across.

**Solution: Page 31**

# Literary ties grow stronger

by Rob Harle

2013 saw the publication of a number of poetry anthologies: *Poetic Connections*, *Indo-Australian Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*, and *Building Bridges*, which helped develop and strengthen literary ties between Australia and India.

These volumes featured the poetry of numerous Nimbin and Northern Rivers poets, many of which have now had further publishing success in Indian journals and poetry collections. The books themselves have entered the Indian education system and are being studied by MA English students.

The broad theme of these anthologies is that of emancipation – giving a voice to marginalised groups and individuals, and minorities suppressed by the status quo for whatever reasons.

Two further anthologies have just been published:

Indo-Australian Anthology of Short Stories (ed. Rob Harle, Sunil & Sangeeta Sharma) and *Voices Across The Ocean* (ed. Rob Harle and Jaydeep Sarangi).

Again these volumes feature the work of local writers including Nathalie Buckland, Tamaso Lonsdale, Sara Khamkoed, Peter Mitchell, Rob Harle, Max Ryan and Bronwyn Owen Allen.

Both Lismore and Nimbin bookshops will stock copies of these wonderful literary treasures, but if you just can’t wait you may order copies of the books direct from the publishers: *Voices Across The Ocean* \$15 (includes P&P to Australia) [www.cyberwit.net/publications/667](http://www.cyberwit.net/publications/667) *Indo-Australian Anthology of Short Stories*: [www.authorspressbooks.com/book\\_detail.php?preference=391](http://www.authorspressbooks.com/book_detail.php?preference=391)

# trivia

Devised by Nimbin Bowlo’s Quizmaster, Marty

Trivia has returned to the Nimbin Bowlo monthly.  
Next Trivia Night is Saturday 14th June, 6.30pm

## Questions

1. Who, in 1852, invented a mechanism to stop lifts (elevators) from falling, if the ropes broke?
2. What is the capital of Morocco?
3. What is the common name for the animal *Ursus arctos*?
4. How many strings are there on a standard mandolin?
5. What is the main component of so-called chemtrails?
6. Who wrote “The Right Stuff”? He also wrote “Bonfire of the Vanities” and “The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test”.
7. What does the abbreviation OCD stand for?
8. What happens to a human who eats only raw food?
9. The fastest humans ever were travelling in what?
10. In what country did the fabric denim originate?

## Answers

1. Elisha Otis. He went on to found Otis Elevators, the world’s largest elevator company, now owned by United Technologies, one of the world’s largest arms suppliers. Where did it all go wrong?
2. Rabat. Marrakech and Casablanca are the more popular destinations. I’ll send you a postcard in October. So long and thanks for all the hash.
3. The Brown Bear. *Ursus* means “bear” in Latin and *Arctos* means “bear” in Greek. The Arctic was named after the bear not vice versa. The Polar bear is *Ursus maritimus*. Doesn’t make a lot of difference when one of them is eating you.
4. There are eight strings arranged in four sets of two. Sort of like a ukulele for grown-ups.
5. Condensed water vapour. I know this for a fact because my unicorn told me.
6. Tom Wolfe.
7. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. It should really be CDO and then the letters would be in alphabetical order.
8. They fail to thrive and risk death. Years of cooking our food have changed our digestive systems to the extent that a raw food diet must be meticulously planned. So next time you get a hamburger loaded up with grated carrot and garden weeds, think twice.
9. A space craft. 39,000kph was achieved by the Apollo 10 astronauts when they were pretending to go to the moon.
10. France. It was originally called “serge de Nimes” after the town of Nimes.



# YOUR CHAKRAS AND YOUR HEALTH. PART 2.

by Zuela Christie

Chakras actually represent different levels of consciousness within a person. They are spinning vortices which step down Spirit into matter, the highest vibratory rate being at the Crown, and the slowest at the Base.

The Heart Chakra is the organising principle and balances all the energies above it with all those below. It is in the heart that Spirit and matter unite. Next month will be entirely devoted to a full exploration of the Heart Chakra.

### Solar Plexus Chakra

Element – Water. Astrological triad – Aries; Leo; Sagittarius.

Affirmation: I am unique. I am powerful. Brings the right to respond / to act.

Self Development: Attaining individuality. Learning appropriate physical, emotional and mental responses. Clarity of mind, focus and determination.

Emotions: Anger/self-pity. In balance, gives rise to self-esteem, confidence and enthusiasm. Out of balance and in excess causes power abuse, control and manipulation. Depleted, it causes timidity, self-doubt, apathy and poor self worth.

Physically governs: Eyes, diaphragm and thighs. Digestive system – stomach, liver,

gall bladder, spleen, pancreas, duodenum, small intestines. Autonomic nervous system, which relays messages between CNS and smooth muscles eg heart, glands and sense organs. Warmth and vitality of the heart, lungs, internal viscera and muscles. Islets of Langerhans, which produce insulin in the pancreas, maintaining blood sugar levels. Lumbar plexus – major motor nerves. Solar plexus – nerve supply to the stomach. Muscles and fascia.

Stressors: Anything causing restriction to self-expression. Intimidation. Driven by fear. Poor diet.

Malfunctions: Physically – Lack of vitality. Digestive disorders - ulcers, irritable bowel, gallstones, etc. Diabetes. Hepatitis. Food allergies. Headaches. Insomnia. Emotionally – Hyper/ hypo active. Blame/self-pity. Anger/resentment. Rage/self-hatred. Criticism/anxiety. Mentally – Fixated on problems. Controlling/compliant. Domineering/timid. Violent/passive. Power abuse or victim oriented behaviour.

### Throat Chakra

Element: Ether. Ether is the space, the field through which air, fire, water and earth flow through to form the Zodiac.

Affirmation: I am truthful. Brings the right to speak and be heard.

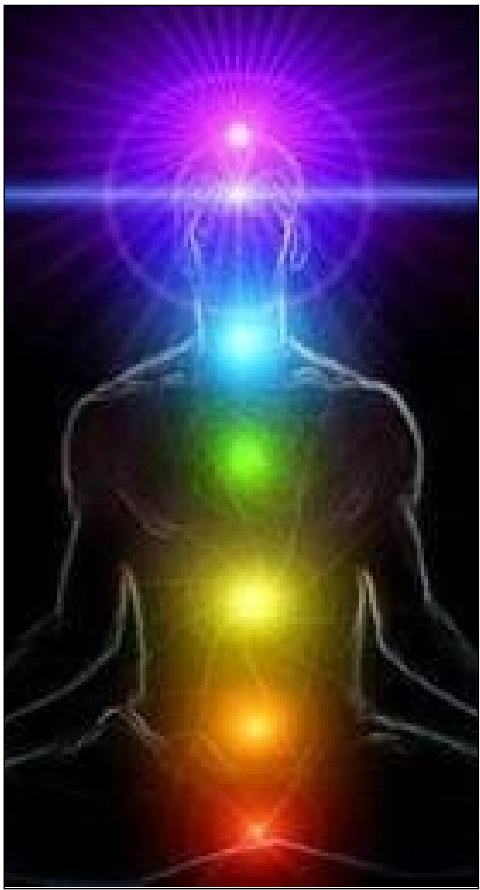
Self-development: Self expression and clear communication in tune with integrated Self and the Greater Whole.

Emotions: When in balance it gives rise to tranquillity and peace. When out of balance and in excess, a person may be egotistical, self-obsessed, grief struck, spacey, scattered, emotionally volatile and on information overload. Depleted, someone may feel a sense of not belonging, claustrophobic, emotionally shut down and unsupported.

Physically governs: Throat, mouth and ears. Neck, jaw and occipital ridge. All joints. Nervous and Endocrine Systems. Thyroid and Parathyroid Glands. Cervical plexus. Stressors: Restrictions to self-expression and freedom of speech. Abuse of personal space and time. Coercion.

Malfunctions: Physically – Throat and thyroid symptoms. Mouth ulcers, teeth and gum conditions. Loss of balance and hearing disorders. Metabolic disorders. Emotionally – Lack of empathy, emotionally fragile or overly emotional, grief struck. Isolation. Mentally – Monosyllabic communication. Inability to express oneself. Behaviourally – Inappropriate and egocentric. Ungrounded. Spacey. Excessive talking. Knowledge used unwisely.

Zuela can be contacted on 0429-501-387.



## ASTRO FORECASTS

by Tina Mews

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE HEAVENS?

### June

The Sun journeys through mentally agile and multifaceted Gemini until June 21, when it enters Cancer at our winter solstice. Gemini seeks diversity and variety. It has the ability to order reality logically by connecting one piece of information to another with the intention to form an understandable image of the world and then communicates it to others in a variety of ways.

Gemini reminds us that reality is not fixed but fluid and subject to our perception. Individuals with a strong Gemini signature in their chart attempt to bring together contradictory forces. The quest is to learn to reconcile differences by merging intellect with emotion, spiritual ideas with material needs. There seem to be always two roads that cannot be travelled simultaneously. That is why the twins are very changeable, restless and often scattered. They like to be light hearted but can be moody if they are disconnected from their true needs. Most importantly, they have to share their message with others and be able to explore and exchange ideas.

This month starts with a Mercury retrograde phase (June 6 – July 1). A retrograde planet is close to the Earth in its orbit around the Sun, passing between Sun and Earth. Therefore it appears as slowing down in speed and going backwards. When the cosmic messenger planet is slow, the communication channels on Earth seem to work less efficiently. Misunderstandings, delays and unintended changes to travel plans are common, as well as technical problems affecting computers, cars and electronic equipments. During this period we are reminded to pay extra attention to the day-to-day running of our lives. It is essential to focus on keeping things in good order and be extra attentive to the small print when signing contracts. Existing projects can be reviewed and unresolved issues from the past worked through by including information that has not yet been considered. Difficulties, especially with all forms of transport, can be expected as Mercury retrogrades through Gemini, the sign associated with mobility and short journeys (from June 17 – July 1).



This month's Full Moon (June 13) in excitable Sagittarius is opposite the Gemini Sun, the sign concerned with the mind and how we process information. What we perceive is based on our subconscious mind that stores our previous life experiences, beliefs, and memories. It influences our feelings and is responsible for our automatically triggered emotional reactions. The relationship planet Venus is in opposition to Saturn, planet of karma and duty.

Logic and intuition have to be aligned, as our ability to trust and show our love for other people might be inhibited. Issues concerning our financial or emotional security are highlighted. Therefore, some caution and restraint might help with keeping the peace, even when this could be difficult to achieve because of other influences.

During June 11 – 28 Mars, the warrior planet, is in a stressful alignment with the change provoking revolutionary Uranus/Pluto square (2010 -2015), the cosmic indicator for global political unrest and socio-cultural renewal that has altered existing patterns of consciousness. In our personal relationships we either will find creative resolutions for conflicts that have been lingering on since last December/January, or we (or others) might break suddenly away from the past, while following a call for individual freedom and independence. During the New Moon period (June 27 – 28) an exact Mars/Uranus opposition could be the trigger for acting willfully and impatiently against the demands of the collective or pressures imposed by others. Mars-Uranus contacts include the element of surprise. The winter solstice takes place on June 21 (8:51 pm), marking our longest night and shortest day on the southern hemisphere.

For Personal Astrology Consultation contact Tina on 6689-7413 or 0457-903-957, email: [star-loom@hotmail.com](mailto:star-loom@hotmail.com) Webpage: <http://nimbinstarloom.com.au> Astrology at the Lillifield Community Centre: 'Understanding Planetary Cycles and How They Influence Your Life'; Thursdays in June, 10am – 1pm. 'Saturn, the Outer Planets and the Evolution of Consciousness'; one-day workshop June 18 presented by Maggie Kerr and Tina Mews, 9.30am – 4pm; all welcome. Bookings and info, phone Tina 0457-903-957 or: [star-loom@hotmail.com](mailto:star-loom@hotmail.com)

### Aries

Right now you have lots of energy to follow through with your own creative projects and enjoy the excitement of a challenge. Be careful with dangerous sports as you can be accident prone. Clear communication is difficult during the Mercury retrograde phase, so choose your words wisely!

### Taurus

Right now, financial issues come into focus. It is essential to set realistic financial goals and communicate your planned projects with your partner. Try not to be too fixed on your point of view and allow for revision and reflection. Feelings of insecurity might cloud your ability to make good judgments.

### Gemini

This is a personally busy time of year, when you feel energetic and enthusiastic. Think about what you like to accomplish over the next 12 months. This is a time when you can plan new projects and be courageous. However, wait until the Mercury retrograde period has passed before starting something new.

### Cancer

This is a period of review and retreat to recharge your spiritual and physical batteries. Prepare yourself for new activities and projects that might start in a few weeks time. Some kind of soul-searching is essential to remain in connection with your inner guidance. Take good care of your sensitivity.

### Leo

Right now your focus is on making new contacts and networking with others. Goals and aspirations might involve group projects. Keep in mind that Mercury is retrograde during June 6-July 1 which could delay the circulation of information and cause computer problems. Strengthen your telepathic abilities instead.

### Virgo

Your focus is on furthering your career goals and life direction. You might feel motivated to develop new business plans. However, keep the Mercury retrograde period (June 6 – July 1) in mind. It is not favourable for signing contracts; if you have to, take your time and read the small print as well!

### Libra

Right now it is essential for you to initiate new projects or activities that expand your mind and fuel your imagination. A new perspective on your life will strengthen your motivation and counteract feelings of boredom. Dare to reach out for your highest potential at the Winter Solstice (June 21).

### Scorpio

It is a good time to focus on issues of intimacy as well as exploring your own internal impulses. Finding out what makes you or others 'tick' supports the development of your natural healing abilities. Use this Mercury retrograde phase (June 6 – July 1) for exploring the mysteries of 'life and death'.

### Sagittarius

You might be in the mood for making new contacts or re-defining existing ones. Issues of sharing and partnership are important now. Mercury retrograde (June 6 – July 1) might inhibit rational thinking but it furthers creative problem solving. Work on creating mutually supportive relationships.

### Capricorn

Right now you need to take care of your day-to-day duties and responsibilities, but also of your health. Pay attention to details and increase your effectiveness by re-organizing and simplifying different areas of your life in an attempt to sort things out. However, do not draw any premature conclusions.

### Aquarius

Right now your focus is on your creative self-expression and how it is received by the world around you. This can be a passionate time, especially when you do the work that you enjoy and be proud of. You might feel extra restless and excited during June 24 – 28, so please be careful with dangerous activities as you could be accident prone.

### Pisces

Your home and family may be at the centre of your concerns now. You might want to re-model or re-arrange your home to improve your living arrangements. Paying attention to your intuition and pondering on what makes you feel safe and secure will keep you in touch with your feelings and needs.