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# Fundraiser shows support for Nepal

by Helen Simpson

Thanks to all those who came to the Nepali Thali Party at Tuntale Falls on 2nd September and supported the rebuilding of Baruwa village.

It was a fabulous night and over \$3000 raised. This means we now have well over half our target for building 10 houses, \$15,000. Awesome.

Also thanks to the musicians who donated their time on the night and all those who chipped in the kitchen and helped, you were great. And Tuntale Falls Community for the use of your cafe and hall... so grateful.

We, the Nepal Relief Fund crew, have linked in with an Organisation in Kathmandu called Good Earth Nepal who are training locals in villages to build with Earthbags.

Having extensively researched this technology, we have found it to be the most sustainable, cheap, quick and above all safe in the event of an earthquake. Good Earth Nepal is an ethical organisation employing Nepali workers in conjunction with International NGO's. They are involved



Villagers in Manekharka

in the rural villages building schools and doing the 'ten house project' training the locals in various villages to construct their houses with Earthbag technology.

Two of our volunteers are in the Village of Baruwa at this time looking at feasibility, getting to know the local people and initiating the project there. The road is still impassable due to landslides, so they have had to walk in. This technology suits inaccessible areas because local materials – stone, mud, and rubble – can be used

More volunteers are going on 11th

November (ages from 15 to 87), when we hope to be able to start building. All volunteers are training to do the Earthbag construction in Kathmandu, going for a few days out to existing projects, then up to the village of Baruwa... hoping the road will be open by November.

Watch out for more raffles... all money will go directly to the village.

For more info on the project, phone Helen 6689-1417 or if you would like to donate to the Nepal Relief fund, supported by the Nimbin Health & Welfare Association.

## Nimbin's Year 12 graduates set to make their mark

by Bob Dooley

There were 16 smiling Year 12 faces at Nimbin Central School's farewell assembly this year – the largest cohort for some time.

They were alternatively lauded and ribbed in addresses by fellow students from Years 7 to 10, Eva Johnston on behalf of their parents, and Principal Mary-Jane Pell – her last official duty before taking up the Principal position at Richmond River HS next year.



Photo: Peace Freeborn

Instrumental musical treats on harp (Brydie Waters) and piano (Logan Freeborn)

entertained the audience of students, family and friends, Along with a dazzling array

of medallions and awards, several accompanied by significant sums of money, graduation certificates were presented to the students, together with a portfolio containing their report, school reference and just to be on the safe side, a copy of the HSC exam timetable.

They left bestowed with good wishes for their exams, and for the future, sentiments that are no doubt echoed by the Nimbin community.

Enrolment enquiries for 2017 can be made to the school on 6689-1355.

## The ukulele strums again at Open Learning Centre

by Megan James

After a few terms' break, we are ready to take up the delightful challenge of ukulele lessons again – on Thursday afternoons from 1.30pm 'til 3pm at the Nimbin Open Learning Centre.

So if you have a lonely little uke in the cupboard, bring it out and have some fun. Songsheet, videos and tutorials provided free – just bring yourself and a uke!

If there are enough enrolments, there will be two groups – one for beginners and one for people with a little more experience in strumming. Email: [meganjamesy@gmail.com](mailto:meganjamesy@gmail.com) or phone 0429-009-594 for more information.

Watch for the Term 4 program for full list of courses available.

Enrolment days for all the courses available in Term 4 at the Open Learning Centre are Wednesday 12th and Thursday 13th October. Classes begin the following week on Wednesday 19th and Thursday 20th October.

Enquiries to Judy Hales or Christine Strelan at the Nimbin Community School on 6689-1477.



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# Bob Brown at Big Scrub Day

Bob Brown will be the keynote speaker for the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Big Scrub Rainforest Day being held on Sunday, 16 October at Rocky Creek Dam.

Bob Brown was born and educated in rural NSW and worked as a doctor in Australia and the UK before moving to Tasmania in 1972. He has been a successful high-profile environmental activist since he helped establish the Wilderness Society and became the face of the campaign that saved the Franklin River in 1983.

He was elected to the Tasmanian state parliament in 1982 and in 1996, Bob was elected to the Senate, where he led the national debate for 16 years on issues including climate change, water, preventative healthcare, conservation, and human rights.

Bob resigned from the Senate in June 2012 to establish the Bob Brown Foundation, dedicated to supporting environmental campaigns and green causes in Australia and our region. He is a published author and acclaimed photographer.

Speaking from Tasmania ahead of his attendance at this year's event, Bob Brown said:

"The Big Scrub is one of Australia's iconic rainforest landscapes and was once the largest continuous expanse of lowland subtropical rainforest in Australia, covering an estimated 75,000 ha of fertile basalt-derived soils between Nightcap Range and the Richmond River. Whilst only 1% of the Big Scrub remains in remnants and regrowth areas dispersed throughout the landscape,



these patches of what is now critically endangered rainforest contain very high plant species richness, and provide habitat for thirty-three nationally threatened plant and animal species in a national biodiversity hotspot.

"These areas provide key stepping stones between coastal habitats and the hinterland ranges for many animals that need to move to follow food resources as they change with the seasons. Such connectivity is likely to become even more important as climate changes, underlining the need for remnant expansion and linkage through restoration, regrowth and planting in corridors.

"I am very much looking forward to coming to Big Scrub Rainforest Day on 16 October at Rocky Creek Dam to visit the Big Scrub and help promote the protection and restoration of this

majestic landscape."

Now in its eighteenth year, Big Scrub Rainforest Day is Australia's largest annual Landcare community information and education event, attracting 23,000 attendees since 1999. It provides community members with a unique opportunity to learn more about our wonderful, internationally significant local rainforest and its restoration.

The program will feature presentations from some of Australia's leading ecologists, rainforest regenerators, scientists and naturalists as well as practical workshops, guided bird and rainforest walks, children's activities, food, displays and stalls.

This year's event celebrates 30 years of restoration at Rocky Creek Dam.

For further information about the event visit: [www.bigscrubrainforest.org.au](http://www.bigscrubrainforest.org.au)



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## Peace in the village, 30 years on...

A family fun event, named 'Peace in the Village' will be held to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Drake Village Hall, situated behind Woodward Park on Saturday 29th October at from 9am to 9pm.

View the peace quilts, vintage cars, an art exhibition, and participate in demonstrations and workshops.

Local youths will also be turning a vehicle into a graffiti masterpiece.

There will be a Sideshow Alley, face painting, and a jumping castle for the littlies; Buck-a-Bull, screen printing and graffiti art for the older kids; market stalls and a chocolate wheel for the



Drake Community Hall

adults.

With a delicious variety of food,

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This event is supported by funding from Multicultural NSW.

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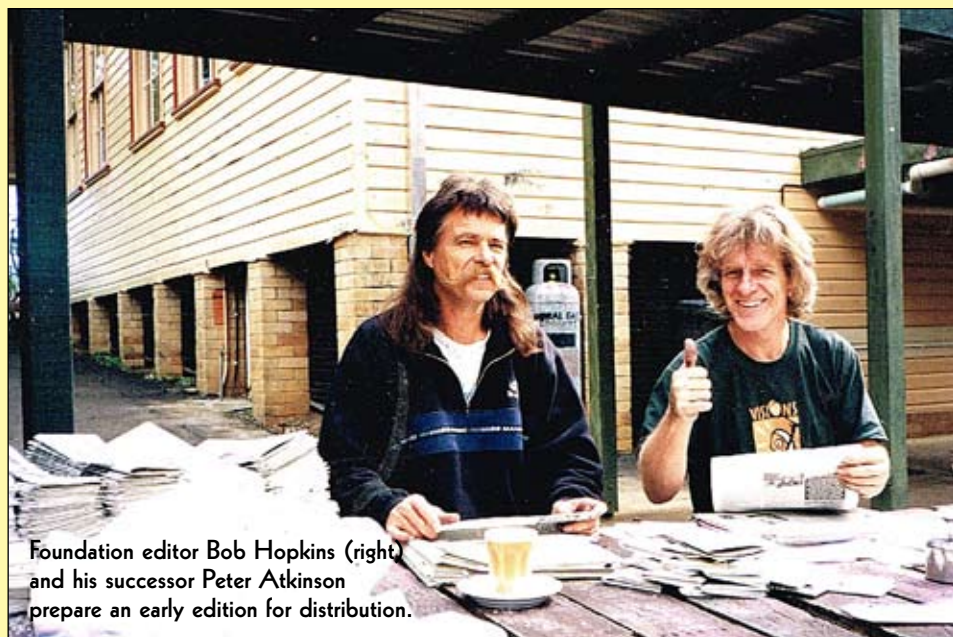
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Authorised by L. Dickinson for the Greens, 28 Toshack Place, Pottsville NSW 2489.

# Nimbin GoodTimes turns 20



Foundation editor Bob Hopkins (right) and his successor Peter Atkinson prepare an early edition for distribution.

From modest beginnings, the *Nimbin GoodTimes* community newspaper has grown to be one of the most successful local publications in the region.

While the exact date of the first edition is unclear, it was produced in 1996 to help publicise the first Nimbin Visions festival, held in October that year to raise funds for the community to purchase the old Nimbin Primary School site from the NSW Department of Education.

After more fundraising, including a significant sum from the Nimbin Community School Co-op Ltd and a loan from Lismore City Council, the site at 81 Cullen Street became the Nimbin Community Centre, managed by Nimbin Community Centre Inc through its elected management committee.

The loan from Council was repaid in full, ahead of time in 2008, and the facility now houses many community groups, including the Nimbin Community School, Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre, the Parenting Centre, Nimbin Day Care, Nimbin Markets, Nim-FM radio station, Jungle Patrol Inc and the Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

The first edition of the *Nimbin GoodTimes* was a four-page tabloid produced by editor Bob Hopkins and printed in black and white with bright orange spot-colour.

Subsequently, the newspaper was produced monthly, growing to eight pages and increasing its circulation beyond the Nimbin village.

From its inception, the paper has been produced by volunteers, with support from an increasingly diverse range of advertisers meeting the printing and distribution costs.

In 1999, Peter Atkinson, who had been involved in pre-production for some time, took over as editor, a position that he held until 2004, when he handed the reins over to Bob Dooley

and Sue Stock, a pair of local school teachers with experience in media production.

Under their editorship, the publication has developed into a well-respected 36-page full colour publication with a circulation of 16,000 throughout six local government areas, with an on-line edition.

The *Nimbin GoodTimes* vision statement has remained virtually unchanged since its early days, seeing an on-going role for the paper in community development by:

- Informing the Nimbin community of news relevant to people living in the region.
- Presenting information from local groups and news of their activities.
- Providing contact points through which people can become involved and connected in their community.

This vision statement is reflected in the newspaper's content today, with extensive coverage given to cultural, artistic, sporting events, and a wide range of complementary health services.

Political issues are also given prominence, not only by running regular columns by politicians from all three tiers of government, but also by presenting the views of local activist groups, such as the Lock the Gate Alliance, Northern Rivers Guardians, the Nimbin Hemp Embassy and the Nimbin Environment Centre, as well as giving many fringe groups an airing in the well-supported Letters pages.

While the Nimbin Community School Inc currently holds the registered business name and ABN, editorial independence is at the core of the newspaper's effectiveness, as it makes it possible to present alternate or dissenting views, and cover stories and issues not connected with any particular organisation, which prevents it from becoming doctrinaire.

Its high visibility makes the newspaper ultimately responsible to the community it serves, who are quick to provide feedback on every edition, both positive and negative.

Current Managing Editor Bob Dooley said, "A media outlet must be responsive to its community – readers, contributors and advertisers – without being overly partisan or seeking to censor."

"I think this is why we're seeing the mainstream media now in decline, and the small independents holding their own, or growing."

Now in its 21st year, tributes for the unique not-for-profit newspaper have been flowing from community leaders.

Diana Roberts, until recently chair of the Nimbin Community Centre Inc said, "The *Nimbin GoodTimes* (is) a wonderful community resource that has become a vital community asset under the current editorial team."

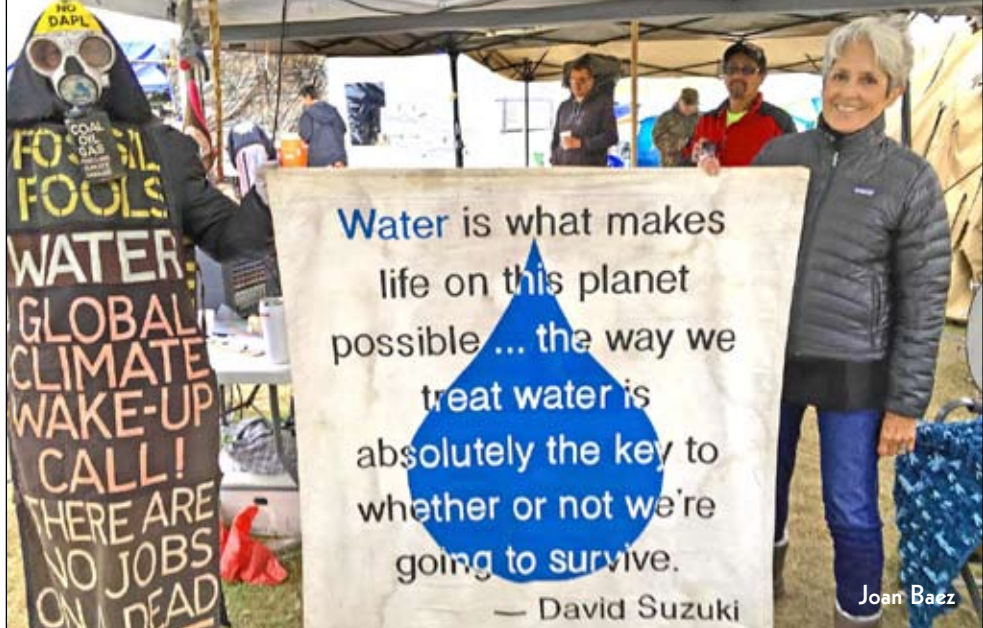
Natalie Meyer, team leader at the the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre Inc said, "The Neighbourhood Centre (and many other local groups and services) rely on this publication to circulate important community information to the community."

"I write a monthly column for the *Nimbin GoodTimes* on behalf of the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre and I am personally very grateful to Bob and Sue for their personal attention to our needs, which has included attending many of our functions and forums to write stories and take photos."

Stipendary Magistrate David Heilpern said, "The *Nimbin GoodTimes* is an exemplary publication that manages to 'walk both sides of the street', which is no mean feat in such a diverse community."

The newspaper hopes to continue to serve its community well into the future.

## Standing strong with Standing Rock



by Benny Zable

It is almost a month now since President Obama announced a halt to where the Dakota Access Pipeline, (DAPL) construction workers went out of their way to deliberately plough through old burial and sacred sites. Amy Goodman with her *Democracy Now* TV crew happened to be on-site recording this provocative act.

**Friday September 10th**, I flew out from Newark NJ to Minnesota to connect for a flight to Bismarck, the capital of North Dakota. A pow-wow was taking place nearby to the airport at the United Tribes college. After the pow-wow, the security lined me up a ride out with a native American artist, Wesley May and his family, going to the Standing Rock actions. Along the way, we were waved through by a heavily-armed National Guard roadblock.

The road into to the main camp was lined with a breathtaking spectacle of an estimated 300 flags from different Native American nations. It is said to be now the largest gathering of Native American tribes in history.

**Saturday September 11th** at dawn, I climbed with my Native American friends up the rise behind our camp which overlooks the Cannon Ball tributary that flows into the Missouri River. In the evening I dressed up in my Fossil Fuels garb to perform with ex-rapper Thomas at the Red Warrior camp.

**Day 3 Sunday 12th**. Wesley May and friends departed. Food, water, blankets and tents were distributed to people around the campsites by folks from California. People from all over the world have come to support the #NoDAPL action.

On **Monday September 13<sup>th</sup>**, I handed over the Woodstock poets' takings from last Wednesday's show, to the camp co-ordinator, Phillis. I was given an opportunity to address the camp circle in the morning about Australian solidarity actions and similar campaign struggles we are dealing with back here. Around the camp circle sacred fire, I shared stories of how we stopped the gasfield development at Bentley. I visited the original seed camp where it all began up at Sacred Stone site, situated on the reservation.

I discovered to my delight, the Aboriginal flag flying, overlooking the plains below where you can see the current large central camp located on the other side of the Cannon Ball river. It was announced today that stocks of the company building the pipeline have plummeted, wiping out hundreds of million dollars. The main camp was renamed the Strong Heart Camp and has been declared a community where planning is underway to build a permanent village. Runners arrived today from Canada and Arizona all painted up and holding the sacred bow and arrows. This was an initiation into warriorhood.

Cowboys and Indians united at Standing Rock is similar to farmers and Aboriginal/alternative new settlers uniting in the Lock the Gate movement here. It was estimated there were around 7,000 people in camp during my visit. A crying woman who descended from



Lakota Sioux, tells the story of the decimated sacred lands in Alberta Canada, were the pipelines being built are for bringing the shale oil to ports in the Gulf of Mexico to be shipped out. Her father's spiritual homeland was in South Dakota. It was her first homecoming to her ancestral home. A woman poet, Lennie Reid from Washington DC, recited ONE, a poem of peace, caring and unity.

**Tuesday, 14th September**. Joan Baez warmed the day up with some classic folk songs from the 60's before we went on a walk to the ploughed-up sacred burial grounds. We circled up to listen to elders performing prayers, songs and spread tobacco offerings to the ancestors through the company's barbed wire boundary where the burial sites were disturbed. We then walked to a nearby gate entrance to the halted pipeline construction. A rally proceeded, where I had an opportunity to speak to the group assembled.

**Wednesday, September 15th**. I took time out to help out in the camp kitchen, at the serving line, collecting and washing dishes. This was my last day in camp. It was a wet one. I went out of camp for the first time since I arrived here to do some internetting at the nearby Indian Casino.

**Thursday 16th September**, I flew out of Bismarck, back eventually to Newark, New Jersey. At the moment the camp/s are settling in to tough it out during the extremely cold winters they have there.

The AFL-CIO, the nation's largest Labor federation, generated waves of criticism by standing against the Standing Rock Sioux and supportive allies last week when it endorsed the Dakota Access Pipeline – a project opponents say threatens tribal sovereignty, regional water resources and sacred burial grounds, while also undermining efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions and fight climate change.

Now the UN is stepping in. This campaign has fired up and united Indigenous communities throughout the world.

# Desecration of initiation site halted

by Binnah Pownall

Work has been stopped at the Cedar Point quarry site, on Gullibul tribal land just South of Kyogle in Northern NSW by a court injunction which was granted on 9th September to the Githabul Tribal Elders and their supporters.

The injunction to stop the quarry on an Original Men's Initiation site was prepared by principals of the Environment Defenders Office including key EDO lawyer, Sue Higginson. The appeal to stop work was heard in the Land and Environment Court in Sydney under Justice Preston, where the injunction was granted until November.

Access to the site was also granted. Now a thorough Cultural Heritage survey can be undertaken to properly assess the archeological values of the site, something that those opposed to the proposed quarry argued had never taken place.

As evidenced by drone footage of the top of the hill, preparations holes were drilled for the first blasting of the site. The top of this now unassuming hill, an area of probably 2-3 acres, is likely where most of the ceremony took place in the old times.

This is the site where boys were initiated into men; where boys were taught to

stop wantonly killing and destroying things and were informed of what men were really on this planet for, and what their responsibilities and roles actually were. This is where boys made their first stone axe from the same rock that is likely to become road base and concrete if it is not preserved for our heritage.

This is where, probably for thousands of years before the present title holders forcibly took over the land, a mere one hundred and fifty years ago, that young men of the area made their first wooden shields from the trees around. They became warriors and true protectors of their country. These men were actually initiated into being Conservationists – before we even invented the term in our language.

Nearly all sane and knowledgeable people will agree that this precious cultural heritage is no doubt worth preserving for generations to come.

Some say we really need to re-enliven the site and the practice of initiation for boys to men back to the East Coast of what is now called 'Australia'. Then we wouldn't have so many big 'boys' playing with their big toys and trashing the planet incessantly. Initiation reminds men that they are not working for the aggrandisement of their egos, but are in fact work-



Drone image of desecration



Rob Williams being charged after 'trespassing' on the traditional Men's Initiation site at Kyogle.

ing (often unbeknownst to them until they are 'shown' in ceremony) at the behest of a higher calling.

We wait to see at the fur-

ther hearing in November, when the issue returns to court, for further decision on the fate of the site, whether logic and reason will prevail.



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## The Tree Believers

by Darmin Cameron

My fascination and love for trees began at an early age, climbing them, hiding in them and eventually hugging them. I lived in Brisbane in the 1960's before most trees on the outskirts were cut down. Then, the bush was just there, across the back fence, the land not yet covered in tiles, concrete and bitumen.

At the edge of the bush and in a playground dotted with Gum trees, lay Serviceton State School. A school with about a seven hundred pupils, it rested in the Brisbane satellite suburb of Inala. Serviceton State was notorious for violence and abuse, not just from the students, but the principal and teachers. Teachers did not protect students from the bullies, teachers were the bullies.

The Principal of Serviceton State kept the canes lovingly displayed in glass cabinets, and in a painfully slow ritual of selection he would open the cabinet door, pull out a cane out, bend it, and swish it through the air, put it back in, then select a different one all the while menacing his victim, which was sometimes me.

But there was a place to go to in that office, just before the searing pain hit. On the wall of the principal's office was an Albert Namatjira print, a seemingly standard issue artwork for many Queensland schools of the time. Nearly every classroom at Serviceton had a Namatjira on the wall. These paintings by Albert were a place for the disassociated mind to escape to, beautiful landscapes celebrating the Aussie Gum tree. I was under 12 years of age during these years. I did not like school.

My love of trees in those paintings and in the natural landscape grew, until I became a protector of trees. I wanted and needed to preserve and protect trees. In the eighties and nineties I got involved in such projects as *Earth First* and *Blowpipes and Bulldozers*, television documentaries by Gaia Films on

attempts to save some of the most threatened forests. I began writing and recording protest songs such as 'Earth First' and 'The Tribesman of Malaysia', and performing them at World Environment Day events, Peace Festivals, environmental rallies and gigs. Proselytising to the unconverted and celebrating with the "tree believers".

Trees need protecting from development's insatiable greed. We need trees more than they need us, but they do need us to protect and nurture them, for our sake, theirs and the future of the planet.

School was hard, but through it I developed a strong connection and love for trees. The classroom discipline was hard but it connected me with the power, potential and beauty of Albert Namatjira and his enduring landscapes.

Research is now coming out that trees are a kind of 'sentient' being. They can feel, they look after their young, they can count, they feel, and can communicate with each other through the Wood Wide Web (*Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben).

This love and celebration of trees continues today with my art and photography. I hope an artwork on a lounge room or office wall can have the same effect as an Albert Namatjira had on me and inspire people to protect and nurture our last remaining forests.

### Postscript: 50 years on

Inala, which means 'restful peaceful place', still exists today, but the trees are gone, replaced with tiles, concrete and bitumen. It definitely was not a peaceful resting place for me.

"Public housing was built for low-income residents, which has been Inala's most distinctive feature. In 2001 the median weekly income for residents was the lowest of any Brisbane suburb." (<http://queenslandplaces.com.au/inala>)

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# The greatest Show on Earth

by Mookx

**"T**he Nimbin Show is the best show in the land! I come all the way up from Grafton every year just to be here. There are no social divisions, no cliques or power groups. It's like a big happy family. I wouldn't miss it for the world!"

The old farmer was smiling at me, the old hippie, across the stout arena fence whilst brushing the mane of his tiny, beautifully-groomed Shetland pony. Behind him in the arena I was seeing mainly young women and girls prancing around on shining steeds, almost literally putting them through hoops in friendly competition for the coveted ribbons that will proudly adorn the walls of their family homes for generations to come. "This and the Mullumbimby Show are the friendliest and most interesting shows I've ever been to... and here I am again!"

Interesting is hardly the word. I wouldn't miss it either, so long as circumstances permit I'll be there again too... as long as these old bones can make it.

For a mere pittance, you enter the wonderland of the Nimbin Showgrounds, passing Brad Soward's chugging vintage pump display and into the thick of it all. The sausages are sizzling in the canteen on your right where \$2 will buy you a snag slathered in onion and folded in a piece of bread, a cup of tea or coffee... or you can lash out and spend a whole \$6 on a steak or a big bacon and egg sanger with the works. It's the timeless real thing of country show

catering at its best.

The traditional show program of horses, chooks, livestock and pets, arts, crafts and produce, rides for the kids and an open bar under canvas and trees next to the arena are all there, as one would expect. But being Nimbin, you soon find yourself in "Sustainability Alley" where the other side of the rural coin is expertly displayed by formally-trained and/or self-educated experts. Here they show you stuff that ranges from making fire without matches to making gas and electricity without coal or uranium... bees, trees and herbal teas. The show is a beautiful blend of the old and new settlers' best efforts at living on the land and the things they do to support and compliment their chosen or traditional rural lifestyle.

The main attraction as you enter, apart from the sizzling snags, is the big Pavilion, totally chokka with arts, crafts and produce, all of which has been made and displayed by talented local people on all sides of the fence, all ages and stages of life... covering a wide range of categories of creative endeavour and expertise. Up front, assaulting your senses as you enter is the flower display. It's a heady visual and olfactory knock-out welcome to the exhibition of people's prize-winning productivity, from fruit and veg to photography, garments, victuals and much more.

Where to look first is the challenge. The brightness of the kids' art display and the racks of hand-made clothing vie for your eye... as do the jams and wines, cakes and breads, colourful quilts or model houses home-built ... they fill

your head with the immense variety and quality. A whole hanger full of people's creative output to boggle and delight. I couldn't put my camera down in this photo-op oasis of colour and skill. But eventually, outside activity soon calls, and the adventure takes on new and exciting directions at every turn.

The snake man is always on hand, this time with his new exhibit of the recently-discovered Taipan, whose venom can kill 100 people with one drop. Then there's the amazing and immensely-popular dog high jump, music in the big tent, Djanbung Gardens' Abundance Cafe where you sit on hay-bales and chat with a friend over a drink or a munch, the Rainbow Power Co's massive portable power display, the merry-go-round and jumping castle for kids, the horses competing all day in the arena (with the same voice over the intercom that you hear at every show in Oz! How does that bloke get to be at them all?)

There's Belgian chocolate mousse or Biko's chokkies on the loose. Even a talent quest where I got hauled in to be a judge, kids' whip cracking and food stalls for snacking. Oh, and a film comp called 'Local Food Bytes' which features 10 minute short clips around the subject of food, gardens etc. Good prizes too... so think about it for next year!

It's a kaleidoscope of colour, cuisine, camaraderie and country culture like you could never imagine... and on a sunny day in September, I can't think of a better place to be than the Nimbin Show. Do yourself a favour and put it in your diary for next year.

I'll see you there!

## Café and cubbies at Nimbin Preschool



Cubbyhouse building at the Nimbin Preschool Café



Avia and Alyse serving cake

The annual Nimbin Preschool Café was held on the Saturday of the Nimbin Show, and once again, many families enjoyed time in the preschool yard relaxing with coffee and cake while children played.

This year, the giant cubbyhouse building project took place with lots of fun

creating and constructing cubby spaces using boxes and tape. Nimbin Preschool would like to thank Mountain Top Coffee and Nimbin Valley Dairy for their generous donations of local coffee beans and local milk for our café.

Also thanks must go to the Preschool

Committee, especially Lisa Lucken, for their help in making this event such a success. Many families baked cakes and treats for the event, and we thank them all for their support.

Preschool re-opens for term four on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October. See you then.



Photos: Peter A. Chaplin, Sue Stock, Mookx, Mel Williamson