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Site inspection with councillors in Lismore Park. The Masterplan includes creating a destination park by turning the concrete drain into a creek, creating a childrens water play area, amphitheatre for outdoor performance, promenade, picnic spaces, cyclepaths, cafe, toilets and open space to kick a ball around. Council plans to upgrade Oakes and Crozier Ovals as well. What do you think about turning some of our formal sporting fields into passive recreation spaces?

## NSW forests need our help

Australia's native forests are critical to the survival of innumerable plant and animal species, including the koala, greater glider and the sooty owl that make up our unique ecosystems. These forests are unlike any other place in the world, and unfortunately not just because of their unique character.

In 2015, the World Wildlife Fund identified the shameful fact that eastern Australian temperate forests were the only 'deforestation front' in any developed country in the world. Logging is the major driver of that deforestation.

It is clear that after two decades under the New South Wales and regional forest agreements that current legislation is failing our native forests and pushing species towards extinction.

Despite the irreplaceable nature of our native forests, logging continues to be permitted in areas that should be turned into protected reserves by a State Government held captive to timber quota agreements. This is despite the fact that native forest logging is actually unprofitable.

For most of the past

ten years the Forestry Corporation's native logging division has operated at a loss, while the plantation division continues to operate profitably. Figures obtained by the Greens in 2015 show that NSW taxpayers lost more than \$40 million from logging in NSW's native forests over the previous four years.

The New South Wales Government made matters worse last year by replacing the *Native Vegetation Act* with land clearing laws that could see more trees removed on private land. But there are still opportunities to improve the situation and protect our forests on public lands.

In 1998, the legal rights of third parties like the North East Forest Alliance (NEFA) was removed and transferred to the EPA. This is something I hope to be able to rectify, to once again allow third parties to initiate legal proceedings against Forestry Corporation for breaches of their logging approvals.

The need for this legislative change was recently illustrated when a local conservationist from the North East Forest Alliance travelled to the Gibberagee State Forest,



by Dawn Walker, NSW Greens MLC

near Yamba to meet with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to show evidence that the Forestry Corporation had breached their logging contract in the area.

As reported recently, the conservationist was asked to leave without being able to show evidence of logging operations within exclusion zones placed around a nationally endangered plant species, endemic to the area.

The sad truth is that both Labor and Liberal-National governments have consistently failed to establish a comprehensive, representative and adequate system of protected forests here in NSW. Instead, Forestry Corporation's destructive logging practices have been allowed to run rife, while the

EPA appears incapable of holding them accountable for their actions.

My recent visit to Kalang Forest near Bellingen, clearly shows that local communities are not going to allow Forestry Corporation to log in our most sensitive and biodiverse forests. These communities know that the continuing deforestation of our native forests is an unsustainable and senseless enterprise and the greatest value of our forests will come from their preservation.

Protecting public forests from deforestation and promoting them to tourists will deliver new regional employment opportunities. There are 150,000 people employed by the New South Wales tourism sector, and our national and State parks are the number two tourist attraction. There is more potential to expand this sector in a sensitive manner.

As the NSW Greens forests spokesperson, I'll be working with communities and conservation groups to get the NSW Government to move the timber industry into plantations and bring an end to logging in our public native forests.

## Afloat in Bali

As I languidly recline and peer across the top of my tilted glasses at the lake-like surface of the Bali sea, I think if it was brown and reeked like vomit, shit and petrol I could be at home.

Of course my first holiday since 1991 is occasioned by a huge flooding event. It always is. I lifted all my tools before I left.

I'm surprised the good citizens haven't noticed that my absence corresponds with big floods and haven't imprisoned me in the township.

I like floods - they're so exciting, but I always miss the big ones.

And finally the levee was topped and it wasn't just the businesses that were caught out but the home owners within the levee banks who had forgotten they get flooded.

And all those under-house uninsurable flats - follies.

Big clean up - that's the unexciting bit. I should be back for some of that.

For now, I'm going to think of the similarities between Lovina and Lismore such as my octogenarian mother busy washing the petrochemically-infused mud from our walls, just as this aged Balinese masseur is busy working on my feet.



**Return of the Loon**  
by Laurie Axtens



# Debbie does Lismore – the aftermath

It's Sunday night after the most intense 72 hours I've ever lived through.

Like many other people in our community, I was caught totally by surprise by the biggest flood many of us can remember.

We had just hours to scramble to save what we could at the Lock the Gate office, which wasn't much. I got the computers and some electronics, and the rest is lost to the rubbish pile.

I haven't had time to absorb the sheer depth of the loss to our town, our businesses and our community, my heart goes out to each and every one of you who are affected by this disaster.

In the wake of Cyclone Debbie, people are mobilising to help each other and we will pull together and help each other – it's the human spirit, and our compassion will see us through.

## Word of the Bird by Cr Elly Bird, LCC

I have met with the excellent women who have organised the Lismore Helping Hands facebook group, which has attracted 5000 members to date.

Find it at: *Lismore Helping Hands & After Flood Cleanup – Northern NSW*

The outpouring of support is phenomenal.

Hopefully some of my learnings from the Bentley Blockade, that other epic experience we have all been through, will be of some use.

By the time you are reading this, we will be well in to the recovery period, but many people in our community will take years to recover.

All my love to you amazing, resilient, strong people. Dig deep and don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it.



## On the same PAGE

by Kevin Hogan MP Member for Page

This flood is tragic on many fronts. It is going to take a long time for our communities to recover.

Our emergency services personnel and volunteers and many more are doing a fantastic job. I thank them for what they are doing to protect our communities.

Disaster assistance has been made available for communities affected by flooding, through the jointly-funded Commonwealth-State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA):

The following assistance is available under the NDRRA:

- Help for eligible people whose homes or belongings have been damaged to assist with the cost of replacing household items essential to maintaining a basic standard of living, including bedding, furniture, clothing, and essential electrical items, phone 1800-018-444.
- Grants for essential structural repairs to homes for low income home owners, phone 1800-018-444.
- Concessional interest rate loans for small businesses and primary producers, phone 1800-678-593.
- Grants and concessional interest rate loans to non-profit organisations (1800-678-593) and sporting clubs (02 9228-5062).
- Freight subsidies up to 50% for primary producers, phone 1800-678-593.

- Support for affected local councils to help with the costs of cleaning up and restoring damaged essential public assets and delivering exceptional relief and recovery measures.
- People who have been affected by the flood can now also apply for a one-off payment of \$1000 and a further \$400 for each child under the age of 16 under the Disaster Recovery Program, phone 180-22-66. In addition, those who have lost their income due to the flood can apply for a regular cash Disaster Recovery Allowance for up to 13 weeks.

This further cash help is something our community desperately needs and will help us to get back on our feet.

It was great to catch up with so many people who dropped by my mobile office (pictured) outside Nimbin Bakery recently (thanks Darren).

Topics ranged from infrastructure projects to telecommunication upgrades. I also caught up with Nimbin Chamber of Commerce and other local community groups.

Nimbin is a major tourist drawcard for the North Coast, bringing jobs and money into the community. Last year the number of domestic tourists to the North Coast jumped 13% with visitors spending a total of \$2907 million.

The number of international visitors also rose 12%, spending \$198 million.

## Lismore Council flood update

Lismore City Council and other agencies are working round the clock to deal with the aftermath of recent Wilsons River flooding, which is the largest flood peak Lismore has seen since 1974.

Lismore was declared a Natural Disaster Area on Friday 31st March, and the Lismore CBD, North and South Lismore still have Evacuation Orders in place.

Eighty NSW Fire Service trucks and more than 500 staff will continue hosing out homes and businesses across the city.

Mayor Isaac Smith said, "The scale of the disaster is unbelievable. This recovery effort is going to take time and it's going to impact people emotionally and financially."

A Flood Recovery Centre will be established, where people can go for counselling and support, as well as accessing services like Centrelink."

A range of financial support is now available for essential household items (see Kevin Hogan's column at left for details), but meanwhile the Lismore Transit Centre is now open from 7am to 7pm for free hot showers.

The Lismore Helping Hands Hub is now open from 8am to 6pm at the old Railway Station in South Lismore, where a laundry service (both washing and drying) is available free of charge courtesy of Orange



Mayor Isaac Smith and Cr. Eddie Lloyd inspect the damage

Sky Laundry. They also have a pick-up service. If help is needed cleaning homes or businesses, go to: <https://lismore.recovers.org> More than 4000 volunteers have registered to help.

The Insurance Council of Australia has advised Council that people with insurance in flood-affected areas who do not specifically have flood coverage should still make a claim, as it may be covered under storm damage.

If people encounter problems with their insurer, they can phone the Catastrophe Event Insurance Hotline on 1800-734-621.

The clean-up will take time, and it may be weeks before Council and its contractors can get to all roadside pick-ups. The Lismore Recycling and Recovery Centre is open all week and over the weekend until 6pm for flood drop-offs, free of charge.

Bins that have been lost in the flood will be replaced, phone 1300-878-387.

Anyone who finds hazardous materials during

the clean-up should phone NSW Fire & Rescue on 000 so this can be collected safely.

Meanwhile, Lismore City Council has started the Lismore Flood Appeal to raise funds for those worst hit. \$20,000 has already been donated, and Council is establishing a committee of community leaders including the Mayor to decide on how best to distribute funds.

"The donations keep pouring in," Isaac said. "The generosity of strangers is overwhelming and heartening."

To donate, go to: [www.gofundme.com/lismorefloodappeal](http://www.gofundme.com/lismorefloodappeal)

Banks and other service providers are being provided space for temporary pop-up shops in the Clyde Campbell Carpark until their businesses can reopen. CBD retail outlets have also been offered 34 free pop-up retail spaces at Lismore Square for six weeks, with tables, power and security at no cost.

Availability is limited. Email: [admin@lismorechamber.com.au](mailto:admin@lismorechamber.com.au)

"We need to try and get our city back to some sort of normality where businesses can trade again," said Mayor Smith. "Our businesses have shown some true guts and fighting spirit through this natural disaster... it's been inspiring to watch."

"Our message to everyone now is: buy local. Buy everything local."

## Kyogle Council flood recovery

by Danielle Mulholland, Mayor of Kyogle

The flood clean-up for Kyogle and surrounding villages is well underway, and hopefully things will be back to normal as soon as possible.

A very big thank you to Council staff, emergency services personnel and all the people who have worked so hard to help our area recover from this disaster. I'm very grateful for all their efforts.

If you see flood damage to any roads and

bridges in Kyogle shire that hasn't been attended to yet, please let Council know by calling (02) 6632-1611. Council crews will progressively address any flood damage as resources permit, so be patient and they'll get to you.

I'm conscious that our neighbours in Lismore didn't fare as well and their clean-up will take a bit longer, but I'm sure in a few months it will all be just a memory and a story for many.

We are, if nothing else, a resilient bunch in the Northern Rivers.



# Suits Vs Stoners in US cannabis legalisation

by Michael Balderstone

The Nimbin Potshop is all we ever dreamed of. A hundred different Cannabis strains all packaged and labelled with the grower's details, THC and CBD content, and even what it's particularly good for. Like Lemon Haze is recommended for headaches and migraines, while Blueberry Headband for focus and ADD/ADHD. That's the future.

Endless buds on offer, but also shatter and wax, tincture and oils, balms and caps, edibles and drinks. Weed chocolate and even chewing gum, anything you can think of. And every type of smoking apparatus of course. Still, most people buy buds and joints. On the way home from work, there are suits buying ready-rolled Indica joints like they'd buy a bottle of wine. No big deal, just part of life on America's west coast in 2017.

This is not a dream, the only problem is it's not in Nimbin, but a legal Cannabis Dispensary in Seattle, complete with Kombis and psychedelia. The owner wasn't in but they put our MardiGrass posters all over their walls.

It was one of about fifty dispensaries Miss Guidance and I visited on a tour of legal, regulated and quality-controlled weed supply in North America. The invitations and tickets to Vancouver to be guest judges in the inaugural MOM Cup, Mail Order Marijuana, were hard to refuse. It was all fantastic weed, manicured to within an inch of its life, and you have to inhale, surely? You can't spit it out like wine tasting. It was a very difficult job, let me tell you, but we had five days to do it in and worked very hard.

We kept our heads down, because any sign of ever using cannabis and it's no entry, and early one morning we crossed the border into Trumpland for a tour of dispensaries in nearby Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington State. The whole west coast of America has legal weed. They've had legal medical for ages, since 1996 in California, but in the last election another handful of States voted in recreational and all the



dispensaries we saw were selling openly to anyone over 21, same age as for alcohol over there. In fact, in both States cannabis is being managed by their alcohol departments. The Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board issues the licences to grow, package and sell!

Bars in fact were everywhere, as alcohol is in America. It's in cafes and corner stores. We saw few drunks and no violence. There were strict rules on no dispensaries near schools or children's playgrounds. And there was no smoking in public! Nor in the bars, but all agreed that has to change. In Vancouver the Cannabis Culture lounges were super popular big spaces for smokers, but the health rules on smoking inside make it tricky. They were strictly tobacco free.

Incidentally, I asked everyone about drug driving tests and most stared back at me blankly. Non-existent unless you are seen driving erratically, then blood tested. Impairment is the only thing you can lose your licence for, no matter what drug it is. Fact is we're being stood over here, car accidents and deaths are down over 10% in States with legal cannabis. Probably because of less alcohol use.

I was shocked by the homelessness. We are the planet's fat-cats here in Oz, no doubt about it, almost spoilt to death. There were clusters of cheap blue tents under freeways and beside highways. There were out of sight carparks in industrial areas full of unregistered vans with families living in them. The Sudanese



refugee taxi driver told us when you get out of jail, no one will give you a job or rent you a house. There's no dole. Food stamps! We donated to a couple on the footpath raising money to buy sleeping bags and \$29 blue tents. It was freezing cold, and snowed while we were there.

A thousand people overdosed and died last year in Vancouver, which is smaller than Brisbane. Fentanyl is a huge drama. There were hundreds of homeless addicts, derros or whatever, on the streets gathered over a few blocks on the edge of the city. It was easy to watch deals happening quite openly. The Prime Minister Trudeau was in town for crisis talks on the deaths. He has promised "to legalise bud this summer to protect the children from the blackmarket and take the profits away from organised crime."

This is supposed to happen in a few months' time and the war on drugs has come out of its cave, or rather plush top-storey offices, and is fighting dirty. Well, what did we expect? There is less than a handful of big corporations who want to control the supply of cannabis in Canada versus the huge stoner culture which has developed its own dispensary and licensed producers

system employing thousands of people, and mostly young people.

It was the Vancouver Police Chief who opened the door to their Dispensary network. When he became Mayor, and before he became a Senator, he decided police had more important things to do. Especially after court challenges using Canada's Charter of Rights (introduced by the current PM's father in 1972 when he was PM) regarding freedom of choice and then access to your medicine. Health Canada has been legalising medical Cannabis users and licensing growers and suppliers for years, but currently it's in a grey zone with court battles, basically over who controls the industry.

The business world is one-eyed, it only sees profit, and the numbers are rolling in now. Colorado made a billion dollars in tax alone last year. Of course the stoners have known all along how popular the herb is. Not everyone ticks 'yes' when they ask you in the census if you participate in criminal behaviour!

Money rules, and Big Pharma spends a fortune maintaining the lies and fear and war on weed. Its job is to make money for its shareholders, and they know if



they can stop you getting sick you'll pay them a fortune, and if they can fix you when you're sick you'll pay them a fortune then also. And if you're dead or healed there's no profit to be made so it can be confusing for business people ethically! Our health should be in the not-for-profit sector.

There's not one Cannabis user on the Australian government's weed advisory board. Imagine a bunch of teetollers ruling on our alcohol use!

So the weed war is far from over, though it's morphing into a legal money war. The suits versus the stoners! And Governments want a slice as well, with Canada Corp actually on a similar track to Australia Corp, as far as legal weed goes. They want control of it. All of it. And when you're busted with weed over there that you don't have a permit for, they take your assets!

Now, are we following America or what? Is the Simpsons the biggest influence on the planet? Wherever we went there were lots of... Nimbin types! Beards and long hair, dreads and tattoos, and tattoo removalists. "Hippie types" my father would call them. If we are following America and the left coast is the leader, we're on track. People who are questioning and thinking for themselves. This, of course, is the other big reason they don't want weed legal!

The war on drugs, that's anything not owned by Big Pharma, is fast coming to a head, and that's why we'd love you to support MardiGrass this year, more than ever.

[www.nimbinmardigrass.com](http://www.nimbinmardigrass.com)

## Medican Workshop looks to future

The next in the series of medical cannabis workshops in Nimbin will be held on Easter Saturday, and will include an unusual presentation on a future cannabis research and teaching facility.

Among the speakers is Dolph "Charmaster" Cooke of Biochar Industries, who has envisaged a community cannabis university, a campus where healers can practise their medicine, and agricultural workers can sow and harvest the hemp/cannabis (and other) crops required to sustain the community (and for profitability, beyond the immediate community).

Chemists would be needed to prepare the many different preparations (including oils, balms, patches etc) already proven effective in the medical field, and industrial scientists to design and produce a range of products from the hemp.

Dolph will speak on what he sees as



"one of the most exciting educational and employment opportunities this region has seen in decades."

BiocharIndustries.org is providing the startup capital for the project, which involves the creation a co-op of 10000 members with an initial joining fee of only one dollar each.

"We are looking for people to get

involved and to help us create a great resource," Dolph said. For more information, contact him at: [hemp@biocharproject.org](mailto:hemp@biocharproject.org)

Other speakers include Dr Deb Waldron on healing with cannabis; Steve Bolt on legal issues around pot; Andrew Kavasilas on the latest from the government on their promised medical supply; Radic Al on making medicine; Zane Archer on using nutrition and therapy for healing, together with cannabis.

Michael Balderstone and Miss Guidance will also give a report on their recent trip to North American dispensaries.

The Medican workshop will be held on Saturday 15th April at the Nimbin Bush Theatre, by Mulgum Creek at the north end of the village, with food served by Phoenix Rising Café, from 11am – 4.20pm.

Free entry, donations adored.

## World Environment Day

by Ari Ehrlich

The Caldera Environment Centre's annual World Environment Day Festival will be held again on Sunday 4th June at Knox Park, Murwillumbah from 10am-3pm.

The theme for World Environment Day 2017 is 'Connecting People to Nature', which implores us to get outdoors and into nature, to appreciate its beauty and its importance, and to take forward the call to protect the Earth that we share.

World Environment Day is a day for everyone, everywhere. Since it began in 1972, global citizens have organised many thousands of events, from neighbourhood clean-ups to action against wildlife crime, to replanting forests.

The line-up of speakers so far at the Knox Park event includes the CEO of ENOVA, Tyalgum Energy Project, Greg Reid from Tweed Can, with workshops from Tweed Shire Council and more.

Entertainment will be provided by the Pitts Family Circus, Hoopla Kids Circus, workshops and kid's space, with music from Balkan gypsy band Taraf Tambal, Monkey and The Fish and Broadfoot.

There will be healthy, yummy, vegetarian food sourced from local growers and producers, and environmental stall-holders including sustainable businesses and community groups. Environmental books may be borrowed at the library stall.

For more information and updates, or to book a stall, please go to: [calderaenvironmentcentre.org](http://calderaenvironmentcentre.org)



# MardiGrass cometh: Overgrow the Government!

by Michael Balderstone

It's Nimbin's 25th MardiGrass, believe it or not, and having just visited North America with cannabis dispensaries dotted around common as cafes, I'm feeling a bit pathetic about our lack of progress in a quarter of a century.

MardiGrass started way back then after a season of particularly nasty helicopter raids. Raiding hippy communes from the air must have been fun for them and maybe good military training, but it freaked out the peaceful hippies and their animals and tiny naked babies. It was Bob Hopkins who sparked that first Mayday rally where we had such a good time we vowed to do it every year until we were no longer criminals. He'll be speaking at the Sunday rally this year.

A handful of activists are following us back from Vancouver to speak and hold workshops at MardiGrass. Sita who's been making medicine for years, Ajia who runs a dispensary and Rob who's a whizz lawyer in the trenches for the movement. They all have medical cannabis permits, the lawyer for ADD!

Then there's Carl who's leaving his lab in Edmonton where he's making hemp transport electricity! And Dr David Bearman from California is returning to share his latest understandings of healing with this plant that has a thousands of uses. The old hippy adage still rings true, "We've found a plant that can save the planet – the



Cannabis dispensing machine in Vancouver

only problem is it's illegal." Drug use is a health issue. Humans trying to feel good, or at least have less pain! Our health should be in the not for profit sector. Greed and profit has corrupted the ethics of healing each other and that's what MardiGrass is about. We're being bullied by the money gang, Big Pharma in particular who is terrified about how much money they will lose if we are allowed to grow this incredibly useful plant in our garden. And the police, whose opinion is listened to above all others, like they are now our drug experts.

And MardiGrass is about being a voice for the oppressed because the courts and jail aren't full of rich people who can afford fancy lawyers and

don't need to become dealers. Over 50% of jail inmates have mental health problems and there's a totally embarrassing and ridiculous disproportion of aboriginal people locked up. Jail and the war on drugs that feeds the criminal justice business system sucks big time. In America, some states are now letting non-violent cannabis inmates out of jail, while here we continue to build new jails.

Your health, your pain free life, is where the biggest profits are to be made and where the sharks circle like vultures. We all know greed runs the show these days, but not at MardiGrass. One weekend of the year cannabis users and lovers can get together and enjoy each other and the herb while feeling

included and understood. In Nimbin we really do try to be alternative to the mainstream monopoly game, and we reckon our health should not be controlled by business interests who have profit foremost in their minds. Making illegal the best painkilling plants in the creation is just plain dirty business and totally un-Australian. We're actually owed a huge apology, but that's not how business works, is it?

As for Australian authorities, what is our problem with pot? We are the only country on earth not allowed to eat hempseed. The only country on earth with saliva testing of drivers and taking away their licence for any trace of THC. So make sure you come to MardiGrass this year and help us make a stand for a fair deal. Come early if you can and camp at the showground. And don't be bullied into staying at home by the police on the roads, find a clean driver! It's time we draw some lines in the sand and put the planet and people before profit.

We need help and rely on volunteers, so consider joining us with a big variety of jobs and a good time pretty much guaranteed. We need drug-free drivers! The farmers managing the camping in the showgrounds need help. The MOB, MardiGrass Organising Body meetings are every Friday from 4.20 in the HEMP Bar. Tickets and a huge program, still growing, are available at: [www.nimbinmardigrass.com](http://www.nimbinmardigrass.com) or phone the HEMP Embassy

## Judging a book by its cover

**Ironically yours**  
by Dionne May

As most Australians seem to sink deeper within duplicitous designer labels and visa card cars, I'd like to remind readers of an old and practical piece of advice my grandparents (and life) taught me: don't judge a book by its cover.

Not so simple in the streets of Nimbin I'm afraid, where the colour and dazzle of the rainbow region confuses and confounds many on a daily basis, and even many locals don't know who's who in this new zoo. Not only do we have wolves in sheep clothing, the clothing has become multi-dimensional, multi-faceted and multi-coloured... designer hemp, imported silks and tribal linen. What is the glue that binds this book and where is the magic when the oasis is no longer an oasis for locals, when there is silence in our once boisterous and lively street and when pot lovers are being ripped off worse than ever?

Within the retail reality of Cullen Street, the clueless continue to conspire to make endless cash, while the ethical alternative wilt in the heat of a town laid more and more exposed to modern social inequalities and dishonesties that led many of us to seek refuge and/or integrity here originally.

People used to arrive in our town and cry with an undefinable sense of relief. I've seen a woman jump out of her car, take off her clothes and laugh and dance with her face turned to the morning sun. Daizy's infamous bears blasted out the same crazy homecoming to every black, green or rainbow-coloured sheep that didn't fit into suburban serenity or city glitz or the idea of environmental destruction for human pleasures.

Nimbin locals know a thing or two about being judged and understand also that this is no place to judge. Most understand arriving in town with remnants and rags of former selves and the feeling of being thrown into a rushing river with eddies and swirls and bedazzling rainbows all around. Police officers flounder in the shallows and go crashing over waterfalls. I've seen evil lurk in the shadows and angels laugh in the moonlight.

I've recently witnessed nearly fifty good young men of this town branded and labelled as criminals, banned from their village, their lives, facing the despicable consorting law next month. They are sorely missed. Also missing are many of the old crew... prohibition laws finally squeezing the very life out of our community.

So hopefully many of you readers will take up the mantle in just a few weeks time and head to Nimbin for the 25th

MardiGrass, our world famous protest/festival of all things green. No other plant in the history of the world can do so much for so many, but by God has she been judged by her label! The Nimbin H.E.M.P. (Help End Marijuana Prohibition) Embassy is again in full swing and never has it been more relevant or necessary for sheep to stop worrying about being judged and come along to help protest this unjust law. We need to stand united and show solidarity for cannabis. The sick and dying deserve the right to choose cannabis as medicine. Their families and carers should not be labelled as drug dealers. Recreational cannabis smokers around the world should not be labelled as criminals.

So dust off your covers people, leave your stereotypes, your suits, your aprons and your uniforms at home and roll up your sleeves...it's time to challenge yourself and your labels, we've got a lot to protest this year and we need you!

Leave the judges of 2017 to dwell in ivory towers with their glossy magazines. Dusty, dog-eared books full of character await you.

So bring your smile and your love to once again remind the world that the prohibition law is wrong and that standing in judgment while others suffer shows a far more revealing aspect of human nature that no fancy cover will ever truly hide.

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**Happy Easter!**  
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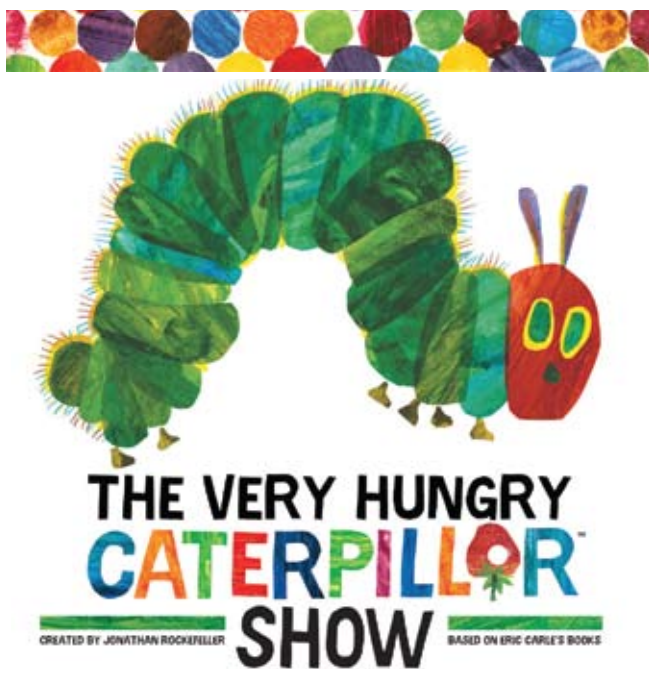
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**AUSTRALIA POST**



by David Hallett

This month's Nimbin Flix movie is *Hell or High Water*, showing Saturday 8th April at Birth & Beyond.

When I saw *Hell or High Water* last August, I got the understanding of why Donald Trump was about to win the upcoming election.

The film is set in the dead heartland of America, with a backdrop of broken towns and broken people. The story concerns two Texan brothers Toby (Chris Pine)



and Tanner (Ben Foster). In a wonderful post-modern post-GFC twist, the brothers are robbing bank branches in small dying towns to raise the cash to pay the bank trying to foreclose on their family land.

This contemporary Western is certainly not any run-of-the-mill/heist/shoot-em-up drama. This is a very

well-crafted movie with well-drawn characters, directed by Scottish filmmaker David Mackenzie (*Starred Up*, *Hallam Foe*), and written by Taylor Sheridan who did the screenplay for the brilliant *Sicario* (2015).

The narrative of *Hell or High Water* traces the cycle of poverty and dispossession

of the heartland American dreamers, as a repetition of the dispossession of the Indians before them. The loneliness and melancholy of the landscape is a stunning backdrop in this carefully paced story.

The cinematography by Giles Nuttgens is superb, the music is by Nick Cave and Warren Ellis, and the film features excellent performances, notably by Jeff Bridges as the pursuing Texas Ranger, but by all the players, even the bit parts.

This is a not-to-be-missed movie.

It is screening on Saturday 8th April, doors open 6pm for a 6.30pm start (note the 'winter' starting time), at Birth & Beyond, 54 Cullen Street, Nimbin. Members and non-members \$10 donation. Cake, tea and coffee available



## Nimbin School of Arts president's report

by David Hallett

The School of Arts managed to both fund and complete another major addition to its infrastructure in the past year.

The powered/ducted extraction fan system installed by Sidney and Hacking has considerably improved the use of the auditorium by hirers during hot weather. Some events benefitted with the new system operating, however with extreme heat conditions, as during December's Fantasies Cabaret, the system could not cope with 40°-plus temperatures.

The ongoing fundraising events of the NSA enabled both the installation of the extraction fan system and the repainting of both the hall foyer and the south verandah cladding as well the line-marking in the rear carpark. The end of the solar feed-in tariff has necessitated the installation of a new net meter (significant increases in electricity accounts are now expected).

Additional art screens were also fabricated for the annual exhibitions, assisted by further funds from the Nimbin Artists Gallery. The planned re-painting of the main auditorium will be delayed until the new external electric meter box and wiring have been completed. This will be another major expenditure in the next few months.

The NSA has been the venue for another series of major annual Nimbin events: Blue Moon Cabarets (pictured), Autumn Arts Extravaganza, Spring Arts Exhibition, Nimbin Roots Festival, Nimbin Performance Poetry World Cup, Nimbin MardiGrass and the Youth Film Competition.

The NSA also continues to sponsor the Youth Film Competition, Nimbin Performance Poetry World Cup and Weave and Mend Festival, as well as providing discounted hire fees to various community groups and events.

Perceptio Bookshop has provided ongoing invaluable support in

bookings, hire payments, key admin and supervising night lighting, as well as dealing with innumerable varied enquiries, and liaising with management, and also generally in reporting relevant hall safety, security and maintenance problems and issues.

The small crew who manage the Nimbin School of Arts have done another outstanding job in the hall's 113th year, not just on the big cabaret or exhibition evenings, but in the 'nuts and bolts' of maintaining, securing, improving, insuring, replacing etc etc which are weekly, sometimes daily, requirements in such a large and central village facility.

Committee members Tony Gibson, Kylie Kingston, Carole Barrett, Len Martin, Sue Edmonds, Joan Gibson and Peter Ptschelinzew are all to be thanked for their ongoing service to the community, as well as the ongoing assistance provided by Donovan Lynch and Angus Edwards.

## Record numbers at naked bike ride



Organisers of this year's World Naked Bike Ride, held in March, were pleased with the roll-up for the three events, in Nimbin (pictured), Byron and Lismore.

With the participation of members of the Australian Nudist



Federation, about 100 cyclists took part in Nimbin.

The annual ride highlights the vulnerability of cyclists and pedestrians, and which reminds local politicians to consider creating cycle-friendly and walkable communities.



# NIMBIN BUSH THEATRE MOVIES



**Wednesday 12th April, 11am**  
**School Holiday Movie:**  
**Spirited Away \$10 Entry, Rated PG**  
*Spirited Away* is a 2001 anime fantasy film written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki. The film tells the story of Chihiro Ogino (Hiiragi), a sullen ten-year-old girl who, while moving to a new neighbourhood, enters the spirit world. After her parents are transformed into pigs by the witch Yubaba (Natsuki), Chihiro takes a job working in Yubaba's bathhouse to find a way to free herself and her parents and return to the human world.

Miyazaki wrote the script after he decided the film would be based on the 10-year-old daughter of his friend, associate producer Seiji Okuda, who came to visit his house each summer. The film was released on 20 July 2001, and became the most successful film in Japanese history, grossing over \$289 million worldwide and receiving widespread critical acclaim. The film overtook *Titanic* (at the time the top-grossing film worldwide) in the Japanese box office to become the highest grossing film in Japan's history. *Spirited Away* is frequently ranked among the greatest anime films of all time. It won the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature at the 75th Academy Awards, and continues to be the benchmark of anime excellence by one of the great anime masters of our time. Don't miss the fantasy adventure come to life on the big screen, it is an incredible adventure for children and adults alike.



**Friday 14th April, 8pm**  
**John Pilger's The Coming War on China \$10 Entry, Rated MA+**  
*"John Pilger's new documentary The Coming War on China ought to be a film of urgent interest, given the not insubstantial possibility that the war in question might wind up killing us all."* – The Age  
*The Coming War on China* is John Pilger's 60th film for ITV. Pilger reveals what the news doesn't – that the world's greatest military power, the United States, and the world's second economic power, China, both nuclear-armed, are on the road to war. This film is both a warning and an inspiring story of resistance. In John Pilger's own words, "I have spent two years making a documentary film, *The Coming War on China*, in which the evidence and witnesses warn that nuclear war is no longer a shadow, but a contingency. "The greatest build-up of American-led military forces since the Second World War is well under way. They are in the northern hemisphere, on the western borders of Russia, and in Asia and the Pacific, confronting China. "The great danger this beckons is not

news, or it is buried and distorted: a drumbeat of mainstream fake news that echoes the psychopathic fear embedded in public consciousness during much of the 20th century." This is a chilling and eye-opening film that explores the nuclear arms race and industry and its potentially dire consequences for all who reside on Planet Earth.



**Wednesday 19th April, 11am**  
**School Holiday Movie: Moana \$10 Entry, Rated G**  
*Moana* is a 2016 American animated musical fantasy adventure film produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios. The film introduces Auli'i Cravalho as Moana and features the voices of Dwayne Johnson, Rachel House, Temuera Morrison and Jemaine Clement. The film tells the story of Moana, the strong-willed daughter of the chief of a Polynesian tribe, who is chosen by the ocean itself to reunite a mystical relic with a goddess. Tui, Moana's father insists the island provides everything the villagers need. But years later, fish become scarce and the island's vegetation begins dying. Moana proposes going beyond the reef to find more fish. Tui rejects her request as sailing past the reef is forbidden. When a blight strikes her island, Moana sets sail in search of Maui, a legendary demigod, in the hope of saving her people. Sentient coconut pirates called Kakamora surround the boat and steal the Ocean's heart. Maui agrees to help return the heart, but only after he reclaims his hook, which is hidden in Lalotai, the Realm of Monsters. At Lalotai, they retrieve it by tricking Tamatoa, a giant coconut crab. Full of fantastical beasts and drawing from Polynesian mythology, *Moana* is a joyous music-filled adventure that tells the story of one girl's journey through mystical lands. *Moana* received critical acclaim, with particular attention directed to its animation, music and voice cast, and is a joy for all the family



**Friday 28th April, 8pm**  
**Zach's Ceremony \$10 Entry, Rated M**  
The Nimbin Bush Theatre proudly presents a multi-award winning Australian film, *Zach's Ceremony*. Growing up isn't easy, especially for Zach who is rapidly making the transition from boyhood to manhood, in both the modern world and his ancient culture. Pressures from his loving, but staunch father, the temptations of city life and the ever-present spectre of racism all take their toll. Ultimately Zach must embrace the traditions and knowledge

of his ancestors and awaken the warrior within. When we first meet Zach he is a bright, friendly 10-year-old boy who loves his dad, Alec. Zach talks excitedly about his upcoming initiation ceremony, a cultural obligation for his tribe and a vital part of his indigenous heritage. Zach yearns to be seen as a man in the eyes of tribal society and, more importantly, his father. Complications arise as Zach enters adolescence and the pressures of his life mount. Zach feels too white to be accepted by his family and friends and too black for his inner city peers. Combined with Alec's well-intentioned but strict style of parenting, Zach snaps and starts to rebel. Against the backdrop of Indigenous oppression, Zach's teenage experimentation and his violent reactions to racism leads the troubled youth to some dark places. Alec knows that without a true connection to his culture, Zach is lost. It's time for Zach to answer the call of his Elders, to take part in the ancient rite of passage and walk in the footsteps of his ancestors. Zach's Ceremony is an extraordinary, feature-length documentary captured over ten years that shows one boy's journey to manhood in a complex, emotionally-driven story. Its themes are universal: that of family and connection, but also explores the fascinating and unique question of what it means to be a modern man belonging to the oldest living culture on earth.



**Wednesday 3rd May, 8pm**  
**Vaxxed \$10 Entry, Rated M**  
In 2013, biologist Dr. Brian Hooker received a call from a Senior Scientist at the U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) who led the agency's 2004 study on the Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine and its link to autism. The scientist, Dr. William Thompson, confessed that the CDC had omitted crucial data in their final report that revealed a causal relationship between the MMR vaccine and autism. Over several months, Dr. Hooker records the phone calls made to him by Dr. Thompson, who provides the confidential data destroyed by his colleagues at the CDC. Dr. Hooker enlists the help of Dr. Andrew Wakefield, the British gastroenterologist falsely accused of starting the anti-vax movement when he first reported in 1998 that the MMR vaccine may cause autism. In his ongoing effort to advocate for children's health, Wakefield directs this documentary examining the evidence behind an appalling cover-up committed by the government agency charged with protecting the health of American citizens. Interviews with pharmaceutical insiders, doctors, politicians, and parents of vaccine-injured children reveal an alarming deception that has contributed to the skyrocketing increase of autism and potentially the most catastrophic epidemic of our lifetime. Regardless on your personal position on vaccination, this is an important film that explores some of the cover-ups perpetrated by Big Pharma and the consequences for us all.

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<b>Saturday 22nd</b>	<b>6pm</b>	<b>Rob Cass</b>
<b>Sunday 23rd</b>	<b>1pm</b>	<b>Doug &amp; Biko</b>
<b>Friday 28th</b>	<b>6pm</b>	<b>Mark David</b>
<b>Sunday 30th</b>	<b>1pm</b>	<b>Rob Cass</b>

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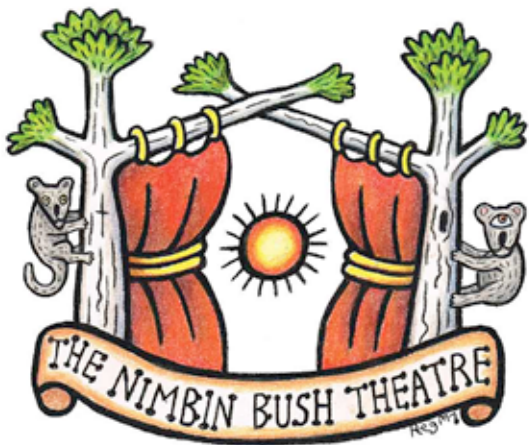
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**Wed 12 April 11am** **HOLIDAY KIDS' MOVIE**  
'Spirited Away' **PG**  
Anime Classic



**Fri 14 April 8pm** **MOVIE NIGHT**  
'The Coming War on China'  
A John Pilger Film **MA/15+**



**Sat 15 April 10am-12pm** **PUBLIC EDUCATION**  
Medicinal Cannabis  
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**Sun 16 April 8pm** **ELECTRO-PUNK/ROCK**  
'The All Seeing Hand' [NZ]  
+ Antibodies



**Wed 19 April 11am** **HOLIDAY KIDS' MOVIE**  
'Moana' **PG**  
Pacific Adventure



**Fri 21 April 6pm** **DINNER UNDER THE STARS**  
Two-Inch Tape (Sydney)



**Sat 22 April - Sun 23** **INDIGENOUS FESTIVAL**  
Ceremony / Dance  
Storytelling / Music



**Tues 25 April 11am** **SONGS OF PEACE**  
Open Mic / Open Stage -  
All Welcome



**Thurs 27 April 8pm** **GRRRLS UP FRONT**  
The Tommyhawks [WA]  
+ Essie Thomas Ensemble



**Fri 28 April 8pm** **MOVIE NIGHT**  
'Zach's Ceremony' **M**  
Indigenous Coming-of-Age Story



**Wed 3 May 8pm** **FUNDRAISER / INFO NIGHT**  
'Vaxxed' - Vaccination Film  
**MA/15+**



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**Fri 12 May 8pm** **MOVIE NIGHT**  
'Daniel Blake' **MA/15+**  
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# Nimbin Roots Fest takes shape

by Mel Williamson

The initial line-up for the second annual Nimbin Roots Festival (Sept 15 - 17, 2017) has just been announced: over 50 acts will be performing over three days on five stages, including a dedicated local artist stage.

The line-up covers the rich diversity of traditional and contemporary styles of roots-based music, including the acoustic roots/rock of Black Rabbit George, alt-country of Aria-nominated Paul Greene, and gospel-inspired American duo The War & Treaty.

There are no headline acts at this festival, it's a promotion of original artists who are all about their music, not their industry status.

If you need a music break, the Abundance Village will be hosting workshops in yoga, philosophy, permaculture and more.

The festival is also engaging in a cultural exchange program by bringing out young indigenous WA musician John Cox, who has never travelled outside of his home town of Halls Creek. A rare treat for artist and audience alike.

As part of the festival there will also be the second Australian Roots Music Awards (ARMA), which will be showcased in a separate event on the last night of the festival. All the profits from the awards will be donated to the Nimbin Aboriginal Cultural Centre. Applications for the awards will be



Black Rabbit George

opening in May (check website for details).

Last year's inaugural festival was great - good vibe, good crowd, and most importantly good music. Everyone (artists and audience) were there to share their love of music. Make sure you don't miss out on what will surely continue to grow into an important festival that is all about showcasing roots

music at its ego-less best.

First release tickets are now selling for a limited time, starting from \$95 for the weekend, and there's plenty of camping available at the Showground, which is walking distance to all festival venues @ \$10 per person per night. No pre-bookings to camp, just rock up!

More info and full line-up at: [www.nrfest.com](http://www.nrfest.com)

## Dinner Under the Stars with Two-Inch Tape



Two-Inch Tape are an eight-strong collective of musicians from Melbourne, helmed by songwriter and producer Simon Rigoni.

Their first album, *New Addiction*, landed well on community radio, and began to mark out their unique terrain, and March 2017 saw the release of their sophomore, self-recorded and independently released effort, *Control*.

Two-Inch Tape play outside of any one genre, though you can hear trace elements of the music that's inspired the group - the two-chord thrum of Velvet Underground and Lou Reed at their most gloriously primitive; the country swagger of Gram Parsons, both solo and with The Byrds - and some surprising intersections, such as the soul-influenced pop of Kevin Rowland of Dexy's, and the lush, string-swathed melancholy of Liam Hayes (Plush) or Todd Rundgren.

The magic happens in the interaction of the eight members, both with each other, and with the personal, observational songs of Rigoni. The live interaction between the musicians in the band results in a captivating performance that is sure to entrance you.

Two-Inch Tape will be playing the Nimbin Bush Theatre, Friday 21st April, 6.30pm, as part of the Dinner Under the Stars concert series. Entry by donation. All ages. BYO permitted.

The Phoenix Rising Cafe will be open from 6pm for gorgeous locally sourced meals, award winning coffees and teas and a range of healthy sweet treats and delights.

## The Tommyhawks with Essie Thomas

Barely three years old, The Tommyhawks are a fierce femme-fatale foursome who explode with quirky, blues-fuelled songs, and have been making waves on the Australian festival circuit.

There's a sweet spot between rollicking folk melodies and punk-infused blues, and The Tommyhawks have found it. Addison is a rare mythical creature with the voice of a unicorn; combine that with dark sax harmonies, home-made electric mandolin, super-tight rhythm and a contagious on-stage presence, and you'll be mesmerised from the word go.

Following the success of their debut EP, *We're All Meat and We're Gonna Get*



*Eat*, which sold out of both pressings in September 2015, they've just released their second EP, *Hurling Stones and Sticks*. Pop ballad 'Hollow' was nominated for the WAM Song of the Year in 2016.

The Tommyhawks will be supported at their Bush Theatre gig this month by the Essie Thomas Ensemble. Fresh back from international touring, Essie Thomas now finds herself backed by

an amazing concoction of talented musicians that make up the Ensemble. As if Ani diFranco and KD Lang had a love child that ran off with an anarchistic-gypsy-circus, Essie Thomas is an arresting and captivating performer with an individual musical style that both rocks and aches and reveals and breaks.

Don't miss this incredible line-up of all-female riot grrl talent coming to the Nimbin Bush Theatre on Thursday 27th April at 8pm. The Phoenix Rising Cafe will be open with delicious meals, award-winning coffee and sweet treats. BYO.

Tickets \$15, available online at: [www.nimbinbushtheatre.com/events](http://www.nimbinbushtheatre.com/events)



# Two Tears in a Bucket

Two Tears in a Bucket is the musical collaboration between Nathan “Slyde” Petersen and Michelle Fitness, with a sound described as Swamp Grit meets Hillbilly Jazz, and a repertoire of original songs and unique interpretations of traditional blues and roots tunes.

Michelle Fitness is an original and evocative vocalist with an impressive emotional and technical range guaranteed to make your spine shiver and your hairs stand on end. Michelle has 20 years’ experience singing Blues, Jazz, Fusion and Roots music up and down the East Coast from Melbourne to Brisbane.

Nathan Slyde Petersen is a virtuoso guitar player and an insightful singer/songwriter. Nathan’s evocative, raw Blues and Roots style is fused with Folk, Country, Jazz, Punk and Rock. An eclectic and powerful musician, Nathan is a well-known underground and street



performer Australia wide. Catch them playing at the Nimbin Hotel on Friday 14th April, and check them out on

line: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCXA0I06OeGHPLQk7kv5oDpw](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXA0I06OeGHPLQk7kv5oDpw)  
Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/2twotearsinabucket](http://www.facebook.com/2twotearsinabucket)

## New album for the Ace of Space

Shunya (Rich Bell) has just released a fourth album, *Rarities 2013-17*. It contains tracks that didn’t fit on the much-loved collaborations with Amrita Devi, and some new creations.

In perpetual search for the spacious, this new nine-track collection mixed in his bush studio is another lovely listen, from languid electronica *Universal Mind* with enigmatic vocalist Adelphi, to chilled solo guitar pieces such as *Caldera*.

Other guests include world-class bansuri flautist Shyan Kishore, Kathryn Wildbeauty (*Minyon*), Suriyah (*The Spark of Creation*) and Swedish singer Josefin Wikevand with a song recorded in one take at Moondani *Se Jag Dansar Igen*.

Find Shunya’s *Rarities 2013-17* on Bandcamp.



### Weaving the Divine

Shunya is part of the experimental performance troupe ‘Weaving the Divine’, together with Kathryn Wildbeauty, Chandika and Peter Walkingourworld (pictured).



Their next gig is at the Sat Nam Institute, Stuart Street, Mullumbimby on Saturday 22nd April, doors open 7.15pm.

## THE ALL SEEING HAND PLUS ANTIBODIES

The All-Seeing Hand line-up is unusual: drums, turntable, voice. Then again, there’s no reason such a combo should produce a particularly startling noise.

But this is no ordinary drummer, DJ and singer. It would be hard to say which is the most unique. Certainly, singer Jonny Marks has an unusual skill-set, having spent a year studying throat-singing in Inner Mongolia, and he brings this extraordinary, unearthly vocal technique to these songs, making it look easy.

But equally unorthodox is DJ Alphashead’s approach to his instrument. He can play the turntables and MPC like Tony Iommi plays guitar, or with the funk and syncopation of Bernie Worrell – sometimes both at once. To watch Alphashead at his turntables is like seeing Gandalf in the throes of some particularly demanding spell.

All three members have a profound physicality about their playing. Ben Michael Knight’s drumming is physical by definition, and he hits ‘em hard, yet weirdly there seem to be as much



energy in the spaces between those powerful beats.

The All-Seeing Hand may take its work seriously, but they also have a sense of the absurd, deliberately pushing some of these pieces to comic-operatic heights. There’s always a touch of the comic when it comes to yodelling, even when combined with rock histrionics in ‘Dog Eat Dog’. But there are also passages of sublime beauty.

The All Seeing Hand will be playing the Nimbin

Bush Theatre at 7pm on Wednesday 19th April. For this show they will be supported by local punk-rock favourites Antibodies. This will be a show of epic awesome rock, not to be missed.

Tickets \$15, available online: [www.nimbinbushtheatre.com/events](http://www.nimbinbushtheatre.com/events) The Phoenix Rising Cafe will be open from 6pm with delicious meals, award winning coffee and sweet treats. BYO.



### Bart on tour

Local jazz, flamenco and world music multi-instrumentalist Bart Stenhouse performed as a guest artist at the India International Guitar Festival in Calcutta last year, and has teamed up with Indian virtuoso Surojato Ro to present a North Coast tour.

He plays electric and flamenco guitars, as well as electric mandolin played in the South Indian style, and performs a combination of original compositions (which combine jazz, North Indian and flamenco influences), re-arranged jazz standards, traditional flamenco and classical guitar pieces. A truly unique mix!

Catch Bart when he plays locally at The Channon Tavern, Saturday 15th April, at 7pm or at Sphinx Rock Cafe, Mt Burrell on Sunday 16th April, at 1pm.

Visit: [www.bartstenhouse.com](http://www.bartstenhouse.com) and: [www.sphinxrockcafe.com](http://www.sphinxrockcafe.com) for more details.

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**Sunday Gig Guide**

**April 1pm start**

**9th Richard and Fraser Bell**  
Father and son debut show, with interweaving guitars, indie dream-pop songs & crafty covers.

**16th Bart Stenhouse & Surojato**  
Bart performs original instrumental compositions that blend Flamenco, Indian Classical and Jazz music styles.

**23rd Loa**  
This lady, her music, and her delivery of the tales she offers will take your breath away...

**30th Rob Csokas**  
Rob’s casual, warm style of rich vocals and acoustic finger-style guitar evokes a sense of self-taught folk and is a joy to listen to.

**May 7th Bassix**  
“Catchy Pop that has been out on the town for a wild night with the Blues.”

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**April Gigs**

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Thursday 6th	7pm	Adam Brown
Friday 7th	7pm	Brommers Duo
Saturday 8th	7pm	Mapstone
Thursday 13th	7pm	Guy Kachel
Friday 14th	7pm	Two Tears in a Bucket
Saturday 15th	7pm	Salt and Steel
Thursday 20th	7pm	Ben Purnell
Friday 21st	7pm	Q
Saturday 22nd	7pm	Adam Hole Band
Thursday 27th	7pm	Blakboi
Friday 28th	7pm	Mojo
Saturday 29th	7pm	Bassix

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