

Learning a new language involves not only mental activity and cultural awareness but also a lot of fun! When learning French, you will soon learn about animals and discover some new expressions involving animals that ‘frogs’ like to use...

It is true, French people love animals and it is very common to have (at least) one pet in each household. You will also very often see furry friends in the streets, on the train or at a café, held with a lead and quietly sitting next to their master. I remember a French TV broadcast called *30 millions d'amis* (30 million friends) dedicated to pets in France from 1976 to 2016. This gives an idea of how popular animals are in France. No wonder the French language contains many expressions referring to animals!

Overseas, we are called ‘frogs’ (grenouille – pronounced “gre-noo-ye”) because of the famous ‘Cuisses de grenouilles’ dish... I don’t really



French Corner by Aurelie Billot

know about the delicacy of this dish for I have never tasted it, but I am tempted to think the dish is famous because it is quite.... unusual. In France, our emblem animal is ‘le coq’ (the rooster), which you can see at the very top of churches, on old coins and along the fences of the gardens of the Elysée palace. You may also know the brand ‘Le coq sportif’ and certainly wonder why a rooster? Well, many explanations are suggested... 1 – In the Catholic religion, the rooster is considered as a very smart animal that symbolises the return of daylight, waking up people at dawn to call them to their Christian life.

2 – A Roman pun. When the Gauls invaded Italy back in the early fourth century, the Romans saw them as wild, braggy and loud and likened

them to roosters. Indeed, in Latin, the rooster is called ‘gallus’; playing on words, the Romans designated the Gauls as “Galli”, inhabitants of “Gallia”, La Gaule. Therefore, the animal has been used to refer to the Gaul, which is la France.

The rooster is considered pugnacious, a conqueror, proud and aggressive, always fighting but vigilant. Maybe this is why it’s been used as the symbol of France, especially by sporting federations, even if the rooster has never been officially chosen as such. Napoleon tried to replace it by an eagle, for he thought the rooster was not majestic enough; but it didn’t work...

Anyway, in Australia, we are seen as frogs and, as bouncy ones, we love ‘kangaroos’ (kangourou- pronounced “kan-goo-roo”)! Once we became Australian citizens, a friend of mine told me we had become ‘frozies’! To maintain the animal theme, I’d rather call myself a ‘frogaroo’ and my kids ‘kangarogs’ then...

Even affectionate names often

use animal words... I have heard ‘sweetie’, ‘sweet heart’, ‘sweet pea’, ‘honey’, ‘love’ but also ‘possum’ here in Australia. In France, we also hear ‘mon/ma chéri(e)’ (darling), ‘mon cœur’ (sweet heart) but it is common to say ‘ma puce’ (my flea), ‘ma caille’ (my quail), ‘ma biche’ (my doe), ‘mon lapin’ (my bunny), ‘mon chat’ (my cat)/ ‘mon chaton’ (my kitten), ‘mon canard’, ‘mon loup’/‘mon loulou’ (my wolf/wolfie) and the list goes on and on...

We find animals a lot in the French literature classic ‘Les fables de Jean de la Fontaine’ (Jean de La Fontaine’s fables) such as ‘le lion et le rat’ (the lion and the rat), ‘la cigale et la fourmi’ (the cicada and the ant), ‘le corbeau et le renard’ (the raven and the fox), ‘le lièvre et la tortue’ (the hare and the tortoise)... just to name a few of the 253 existing ones, written from 1668 to 1694 and still taught at school. Each animal embodies a famous character (the king, ministers, courtiers, peasant...) and illustrates a moral message with

humour, irony and nuance.

Some French expressions also include many animals. Maybe advanced learners in French know some of these idioms (literally translated):

‘S’entendre comme chiens et chats’ (to get along like cats and dogs); ‘Comme un poisson dans l’eau’ (to be like a fish in water);

‘Un temps de chien’ (a dog’s weather); ‘Avoir un chat dans la gorge’ (to have a cat in the throat);

‘Donner sa langue au chat’ (to give one’s tongue to the cat);

‘Quand les poules auront des dents’ (when chickens will have teeth);

‘S’ennuyer comme un rat mort’ (to get bored like a dead rat);

‘Se faire poser un lapin’ (to be given a rabbit);

‘Appeler un chat un chat’ (to call a cat a cat);

Can you guess the English equivalents?

Thinking about learning French? Visit www.douce-france.com.au or email: douce-france@yahoo.com.au

ASTRO FORECASTS

by Tina Mews

WHAT’S HAPPENING IN THE HEAVENS?

Aries

Mars continues journeying through Aries until mid-February and signifies a high energy time for you. Chiron’s entry into your Sun sign on February 19 and subsequent journey through Aries until 2026 might correlate with significant revelations regarding your own vulnerabilities. Acknowledging and accepting your “darker” side might bring healing followed by a new phase in your life

Taurus

This is the time of the year where you are receiving the rewards and results of your activities from the last nine months. What has worked well and what parts need a different approach? Remain flexible, think out of the square, question your assumptions and orientate yourself towards a renewed vision for the future.

Gemini

This is a time where learning something new will help with shifting your perception to a different, more inclusive level. Encounters with others can be highly inspirational and could motivate you to explore your own beliefs that influence the affairs of your daily life. It is a great moment in time for re-programming outdated thinking patterns!

Cancer

There are things that need to be brought to an end and now the time has arrived when you can do this more easily. There is support by the cosmos to suddenly see old attachments that do not belong to you anymore. Take charge of your life and dare to move beyond your usual comfort zone. If necessary change the role play in your relationships.

Leo

Relationships with others are either more challenging or liberating during this period, depending on how easily you can move with the current energies. Where do you need to break free and release fixed opinions or old feelings of frustration? How much you love and value yourself will be reflected in the words and actions of the person that you attract.

Virgo

Issues of work, service and health are emphasised during this period. A job might end or a new one may begin. Whatever the case, there is a necessity for re-organising your daily life and routines. The Full Moon on February 20 is in your Sun sign highlighting the need for balancing vision

february

All planets are in forward motion until March 5 when Mercury turns retrograde. We are supported in moving forward with our plans, ideas and projects until then. The New Moon on February 5 is in Aquarius. Aquarius energy is revolutionary, egalitarian, eccentric and intuitive but can also be aloof and emotionally disconnected. The latter is important because Aquarius, being an air sign, tries to gain an objective view of a situation to then form their own opinion about something or someone. In general, Aquarians are progressive thinkers who can make brave, optimistic choices in a spirit of community motivated by a vision of a better and fairer world. On the downside they might live too much in the head and are too detached from ‘normal’ reality. This is why Aquarius needs the heart-felt passion and warmth from the opposite sign Leo. Leo is the sign of leadership and helps to ground Aquarian ideas by generating sufficient emotional energy for earthing a worthwhile cause.

The New Moon on February 5 is conjunct Mercury and the Black Moon Lilith. The Black Moon Lilith in Aquarius is the archetypal enemy of conformity and the voice of those who are regarded as troublemakers by mainstream conventions because they stand up for their rights and beliefs. On a different level, the Black Moon, not a planet but a potent point in the Moon’s orbit around the Earth, can be seen as a remnant of the ancient lunar consciousness and nature’s cyclic movement of waxing and waning: after times of growth and abundance times of contraction and austerity will follow. A deeper evaluation of what has been suppressed and put into the ‘too uncomfortable’ basket is needed now. Then doors can open for developments that overstep old taboos and challenge established structures and traditions. It is the spiritual task of Aquarius to create space for the seeding of fresh ideas! Mars in Aries makes a square aspect to Pluto (exact Feb 2) and conjoins Uranus, the modern ruler of Aquarius on February 14 before entering Taurus on February 15. These days can be quite explosive and upsetting but also might trigger a breakthrough into a new direction.

Like every year, this New Moon symbolises **the start of the Chinese New Year and the year of the Earth Pig.** The pig is the last in the animal cycle and can signify endings. It denotes a time when we have to choose between either living within our means while taking good care of the Earth and its riches, or indulging ourselves



by consuming the resources that are meant for securing our and our children’s future.

Chiron, the mythic healer, teacher and mentor of many ancient Greek heroes re-enters Aries on February 19 and will remain until April 2026. During this 7-year

period new healing modalities will change the way we deal with illness and dis-ease. Various forms of energy, sound and telepathic healing will become more prominent and mainstream. Chiron’s transit through Aries will show us where our sense of self has been debilitated so that we can reconnect with our authentic nature. As a collective, we

have to develop different strategies to deal with anger, conflict, the use of weapons and how to manage aggression in a non-destructive way. Aries rules the head, teeth and nose as well as the fight and flight response. Chiron’s gift to Aries is acting on what we know, confidently speaking out against injustices and empowering others to embrace their independence and authenticity. The challenge is to integrate our accumulated knowledge and wisdom into our day-to-day lives. Chiron’s message is to rise above these old pains by searching for new meaning and understanding.

The Full Moon on February 20 is in Virgo opposite the Pisces Sun. We are reminded to balance our vision with practicality. Venus, the planetary energy symbolising our values, desires and how we relate to others is moving away from a restrictive meeting with Saturn and will conjoin with Pluto on February 23. Venus in this position signifies the transformative power of love. It is a good moment in time to heal old wounds, unite and renew our commitments may it be to a cause, a person or a group; in any case it needs to be something that has substance and depth.

Navigation by the Stars: Personal and/or relationship astrology; life cycles and your year ahead: plans, directions, concerns for 2019. New Weekly Classes in 2019: ‘Astrology for Beginners’, Tuesday evenings 5.30 – 8pm, starts Tuesday February 5 at the Lillifield Community Centre, 4505 Kyogle Road.

The Astrology of Mental Well-Being & Life Transitions: February 16, 10am – 4pm, Lillifield Community Centre, costs: \$70, conc \$60; please bring your chart along or contact me for a print-out. Planets, Houses & Rulership: Energy Transmission in the Horoscope, February 23, 10am – 4pm; The Living Yoga Sanga, 63 Stuart Street, Mullumbimby; costs: \$80, conc \$70; bring your natal chart or contact me for a print-out.

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and practicality, the wishes of the mind with the requirements of body and soul.

Libra

You have a need to express yourself through something creative or artistic. You will enjoy busy creative projects and mentally stimulating activities especially around or in the home. Find a balance between fun and duty, because your heart is yearning for more space to be you.

Scorpio

Your home-life is going through an important process of liberation and transformation. It is a good moment in time to create space for new developments and let go of ideas which have become too fixed. Think out of the square and allow yourself to be inspired. Strengthen your innovative and creative self.

Sagittarius

This is a great moment in time for starting a new course of learning or teaching others your special field of expertise. In any case you need to find outlets for communicating and sharing your inspirational ideas. This is your time of expanding your field of experience, knowledge and understanding so that you can increase your cultural and spiritual awareness.

Capricorn

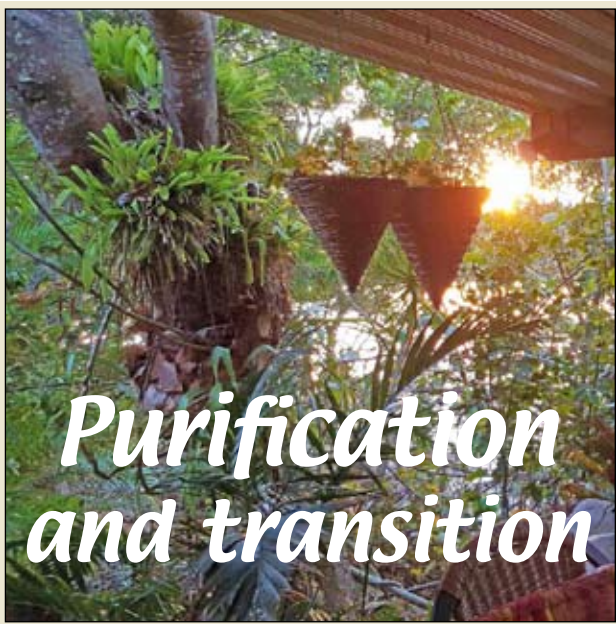
This is a good time for examining your personal values, talents and resources, as the current process of transformation can bring spontaneous insights of what really matters to you. Prioritise and focus on what is most important and allow new ideas to fall on fertile ground. Listening to others and incorporating their values will help with achieving successful outcomes.

Aquarius

As an independent thinker you have the ability to network information and ideas. On the other hand, your at times eccentric ideas and non-conformist attitudes might challenge others but can be put to good use when taking the right approach. This is a good moment in time to champion the cause of those who haven’t a voice and need your support.

Pisces

This is the end and beginning of your yearly solar cycle. Therefore, use the energy to complete unfinished projects and take stock of the last 12 months. Release what has lost its meaning and keep what has proven its value. Dream up a new vision for the next solar year.



by Marilyn Devlin

It was a heightened energetic start to 2019 with both a Solar and Lunar Eclipse adding its intent. Emotions and feelings often run high during these times of accentuated cosmic energy.

January is generally a time of slowing down, for many at least here in Oz. After the speeded up manic vibe of end of year, all the celebrations and festivities followed by New Year's Eve... everyone gets a chance to stop for a bit and let out a giant exhale. Living in a holiday town you get to witness these rhythms quite dramatically.

Then February arrives – school is back, people start settling into routines of work or whatever their normal activity. In ancient Roman times February was known as 'The Month of Purification', coming from the Latin word Februarius meaning to purify.

February is also known as a transitional month. Here in Oz it's the last month of summer (in the seasonal calendar)... crossing over to autumn in March. So a purifying and transitional cycle presents in this month of February. Well I guess transitions are purifying, as they move us from one state to another. And something always 'dies' in the process... something is let go, released, as we move into a new space. Leaving a part of us behind.

It's also Chinese New Year... 2019 being the Year of the Yin Earth Pig. It's been described as lucky and fortunate and a more calming influence, with 'huge leaps forward in relationships worldwide'. That'd be nice. I think some of us are feeling this Yin/Feminine energy settling around. And mustn't forget Venus's Valentine's Day.

Maybe this gentle Yin/Feminine energy is holding us through these huge shifts and changes. That feels kind. Yes big changes are inevitable, but maybe these gentle energies can reflect back to us, remind us that we carry these energies within us.

Our systems and social interactions have been a bit yang heavy for a while. The balance will be soothing.

It will also help us to think more clearly. From a more settled place we have a clearer perspective. We can act with clarity and remember we have choices. We feel safer, more connected to our body. We aren't slaves to our unconscious reactions. It's important to become familiar with who we are, deep down. What we stand for within the depths of our self. Who are we behind the masks? Who we are when we stand alone.

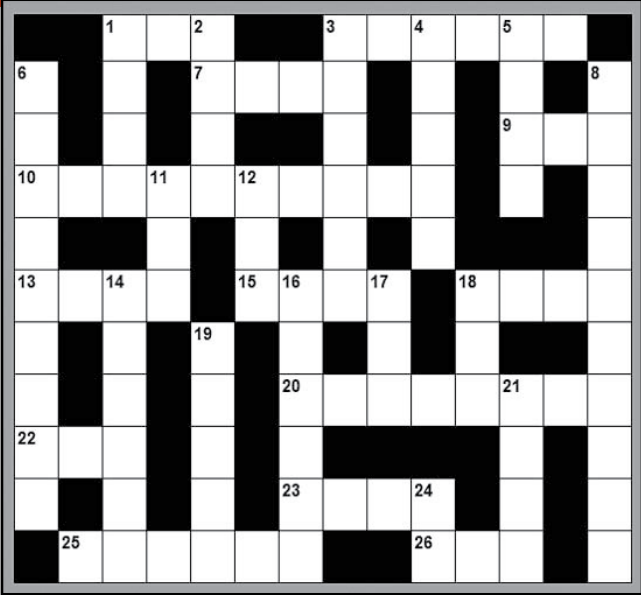
What do we need to begin shedding the trauma and dysfunction? 'Cause trauma keeps us locked in a vicious cycle. We need our conscious self to be at the wheel. We need to direct our life through conscious choices. Of course as a human we'll never be perfect... but we can be truly beautiful just as our self.

For me – after last year's digging deep in my psyche, uncovering early childhood trauma, and a big month of moving and almost tipping over the edge... I dedicated this time in January to finding a deeper, calmer, more restful and slower rhythm in my body and life. In a more conscious way than I ever have. As a practitioner and forever student of wholistic health, I believe in healing. If we are unwell, there's a reason. There's always a reason. Maybe it's going deeper below all the waves, all the disruptions in our energy fields, in our nervous system. As humans we're both incredibly resilient and amazingly fragile and vulnerable. We hang on to life with a thread, literally... our breath. That we're alive is a miracle. For me this deeper level of healing is moving down through layers and barriers within myself... behind walls that I've constructed to protect me... like so many of us do.

I believe in healing... my mantra 'there's always a way'. Our lifetime is super short. It's really good to be here.

Nimbin Crossword

2019-02
by 5ynic



Across

1. Sadness (is me)
3. Rulers of 13 across (in drag?)
7. You (archaic)
9. Doctor at the world health organisation
10. Small sour fruit (belongs to Bart's teacher)
13. Home of 20 across
15. Remainder, when you stop working
18. Make dirty
20. Sweet pollinator
22. Performance diesel vehicle
23. Malicious
25. Glowing remains
26. Nimbin's book exchange

Down

1. Studio? NZ's largest insect
2. Volcano on Sicily
3. Doonas of family history
4. Rub out
5. Salamander
6. Coffee with a touch of foam
8. Dynastic chow of 20 across (5,5)
11. Mad cow! (init.)
12. Shots to the hole
14. Antidepressant
16. Sound returns
17. Cure skin?
18. The heavens?
19. Mumble boringly, overhead?
21. (Serve of) winter fodder
24. (military) area aircraft may touch down (init.)

Solution: Page 23

Nimbin Trivia Time

by Eclectus

Questions

1. What form did the great god Om take in Terry Pratchett's "Small Gods"?
2. Who wants Momma to shake that thang?
3. What is the newest mineral on Earth?
4. In Monty Python's Holy Grail, who founded the People's Front of Judea (not to be confused with the fucking Judean fucking People's Front)?
5. Name four events at the 2019 Nimbin Pool Olympics. Bonus point if you can say how many contestants managed to float longer than five minutes in the Floating event?
6. What is a patagium and where do you find the biggest ones?
7. When did the last Ice Age finish?

Answers

1. A tortoise.
2. Eeeeeeeeeeeeee! But especially Mrs Hippo and the Love Handles.
3. Carmelazite, which was previously only found in outer space. Found in sapphire near Mt. Carmel in northern Israel's Sevvun Valley, it is potentially more valuable than diamond due to its extreme rarity.
4. Reg.
5. Walking Forwards, Save the Babies, Push and Pull the Crocodile. Five contestants lasted five minutes in the Floating event until the adjudicator scuttled all

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Leaving	Arriving	Leaving	Arriving
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7.00am	7.30am	8.00am	8.30am
8.00am	8.45am	12.00pm	12.35pm *
12.00pm	12.35pm *	2.35pm	3.10pm
2.35pm	3.10pm	5.30pm	6.00pm
3.20pm	4.15pm		
5.30pm	6.00pm		

Leaving		Arriving	
Nimbin – Main St. (Park)	Lismore Transit Centre	Nimbin – Main St. (Park)	Lismore Transit Centre
7.52am	8.50am	9.00am	9.35am
9.00am	9.35am	12.45pm	1.15pm *
12.45pm	1.15pm *	3.25pm	4.10pm
3.25pm	4.10pm	6.05pm	6.35pm
4.25pm	5.15pm		
6.05pm	6.35pm		

* Mondays & Thursdays Only

No Public Holiday Service
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Preschool renovations complete

by Maree Conroy, director
Tunttable Falls Community
Preschool

We are very excited for the children, families and community to cast their eyes on our gorgeous renovation.

The builders are putting the finishing touches to our project as I put pen to paper.

Staff and families have been very busy moving in to our amazing new space, making it all happen before preschool goes back on the 30th January.

Thankyou to everyone involved in this project, for your dedication and hard work (you know who you are).

We look forward to starting Term One in our fresh new space. We are extremely happy with the



A sneak peek at the renovations

end result that has given our preschool a much-needed facelift.

We put a lot of thought into making the space an aesthetically beautiful and functional space, where children and educators are inspired to play and work creatively.

Our pedagogy is designed

to encourage creative free play and exploration, while providing opportunities for children to engage in many small group experiences with specialist teachers (circus, music, creative movement, art).

We have a shallow creek at our doorstep, where our children get to explore the rainforest setting as part

of their curriculum. These are just some of the things that make our preschool the special place that it is.

The main thing that I think is important to mention though, is the beautiful way we nurture our relationships with children and families. We have an incredibly talented team of educators that are passionate about their work with children.

We are open three days a week throughout NSW school terms on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, from 8.30am until 4pm. We are located on the beautiful Tunttable Falls Community, 10 minutes' drive from Nimbin town. A bus service can be arranged if necessary.

We have vacancies for 2019. Call us on 6689-1179 to enquire, or email us at: tunttablepreschool@gmail.com



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Music is more than having fun

by Marga Helms, educational
administrator, Rainbow Ridge School

I have been watching the ABC series *Don't Stop the Music* with Guy Sebastian being an advocate for the importance of music in primary schools.

Today's research tells us that making music creates neurological pathways in the brain for learning. I was touched by the students' situations and how music helped them to develop resilience, confidence and self-worth.

Playing in an ensemble or orchestra brings people together and every student finds their place to contribute to the best of their ability to the sound of music.

Rudolf Steiner was ahead of his time when he asked his teachers to make

music, movement and the arts an integral part of the education. At Rainbow Ridge School young and old sing in their class groups every day.

In class one the students get introduced to the recorder, a wind instrument, using the breath, which harmonises their breathing. In class three, every student starts learning a stringed instrument, either the violin or the cello. The students have weekly lessons in small groups, practise at home and play in the string ensemble.

Middle school students, who have played violin or cello for four years, can choose another instrument, like guitar, piano, flute... All classes have weekly music lessons with a qualified and experienced music teacher.

The students have plenty of opportunities to perform at seasonal festivals, on tours into the community, at other schools, on music camps and at the end-of-year concert.

I am not a music teacher, but I accompanied the string ensemble on one of their outings and I experienced the magic among the players and the joy of the audience.

Don't stop the music, it is more than fun.

If you feel inspired by our music program and would like to learn more about it and our other programs and teaching and learning practice, please visit our website: www.rainbowridge.nsw.edu.au or call our office and arrange a school tour.

Enrolments for 2019 are still open.

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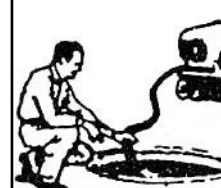
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Personal journeying from martial arts to meditation

by Sensei Rachel Whiting

2019 brings Nimbin's Junior Karate class into its second year for our 5-11 year olds, going strong, and Senior Karate also steadily into its third year now.

Having been instructing Traditional Goju-ryu Karate-do for around 20 of my 30 years of training, it's nice to have finally settled down into a place to call our dojo 'home'. To be able to offer the reliability for dedicated students to train long term in the same place; and for those who have followed me around the Northern Rivers to finally 'land' and make their way at last this year to black belt.

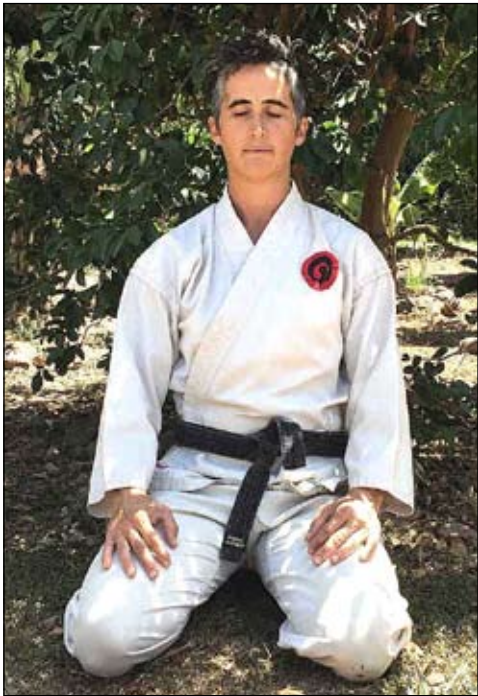
It's an exciting year to see our first black belts rise up, as they too take on leadership and co-teaching in the dojo.

It's been a long fantastic journey since I started karate at the age of 14. Never did I realise the benefits that were to come when my father took me to my first class, and my mother insisted I continue, even when I "didn't feel like it", "was too tired from school", "had too much homework" (which I often didn't do anyway, oops!). Thank you Mum and Dad!

Here I am, now unafraid to speak my truth, to stand up not just for myself but for those around me. To protect myself and others, including animals, from harm. To recognise and say "no" to DV relationships. To be treated respectfully and never shrug off rude behaviour for fear of another's reaction. To treat others with respect also.

To know the true meaning of humility – to know oneself truly and be confident and peaceful in that knowledge, to have nothing to prove, and to be able to say who I am truly without fear of judgment or scorn.

This I wish for each of you reading this article (and those who aren't!) and this is the gift I aim to share when I enter the dojo, when I teach 'Wise Warriors' at primary schools, the women's self defence courses, and when I now guide the 'Peaceful Minds' meditation group starting 6th February in



Nimbin.

The focus and concentration developed through karate training connected this little being to the 'spirit' that courses through all of life, and pointed me to meditation and mindfulness. Yes, mindfulness. It works if you know how to apply it.

So this I wish to share also. Blessings to you and your family, your friends, your community and your culture.

Feel free to contact me for details on any classes. ACTIVE KIDS \$100 vouchers are valid for karate and self-defence classes: Nimbin Karate Monday and Friday afternoons; Nimbin Meditation Wednesday 5.45-6.45pm; Kyogle Self-defence Thursday 5-6.30pm.

Text/phone: 0427-778-837, email: togka.rw@gmail.com
Facebook: TOGK or Cool Calm Connected
Instagram: 'karateforthespirit' or 'coolcalmconnected'



It's an exciting time at Cawongla Playhouse and Preschool as we prepare for the start of the 2019 school year.

The summer holidays have been a busy time, with a major upgrade to our playground with the installation of a new soft-fall surface to enhance our historical climbing fort and swing set.

Alongside this, the on-going development of our bush tucker garden, and the design of some new children's spaces mean that we are ready and rearing to go for an exciting and rewarding new year.

For those who haven't come across it before, Cawongla Playhouse is a community based and parent run preschool situated in the peaceful village of Cawongla, on Galibal country, halfway between Nimbin and Kyogle, and close to the communities of Larnook, Billen Cliffs, Wadeville, Stony Chute and Barker's Vale.

The preschool has a long and rich history in the community, stretching back many years. We take children from two years to school age, and are open during school hours Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week.

We also offer a playgroup (entry by donation) every Tuesday morning, as a chance for younger children and their parents to visit the preschool, make use of our resources and network with early childhood professionals and other parents.

This can be a lovely way to meet other people (for both you and your child), and to give your child some preparation for possible later enrolment at preschool. Families that attend usually find it a great way to get a 'taste' of the preschool experience.

For enquiries please phone 6633-7167, or email: cawonglaplayhouse.director@gmail.com or simply drop in to visit us (Tuesday to Thursday) at 5425 Kyogle Road, Cawongla.

Tesla's new Powerwall now available



by Fabien Prevost,
Rainbow Power Company

With twice the power of its predecessor, Powerwall 2 has completely revolutionised the way Australian households use, store and manage their power, now making it possible to run your household on solar power 24 hours a day.

How would it feel to say goodbye to your power bills? We call it "the off-grid feeling" for grid-connected customers.

Rainbow Power Company has led the charge with Tesla's roll-out of one of the most exciting products to hit the sustainability market, installing the Tesla Powerwall 2 in Northern Rivers and beyond.

This experience gives our customers the peace of mind that their installation is backed up with responsive technical support and customer service.



Compact, stackable and with a built-in inverter, Powerwall 2 enables solar households to further reduce their power bill and maximise self-consumption of solar power. In fact, with a capacity of 13.5 kWh, a typical family home will be able to run

all evening on stored solar power.

Powerwall 2 comes with complete compatibility with any existing solar system, it also provides backup power for when the grid goes down.

The battery set-up comes with a very easy-to-use monitoring smart phone application, allowing you to monitor your electricity consumption, solar production and battery operation.

We now have customers like Tom running their home on solar power 24/7: "The Tesla is all you said it would be, it is fantastic. Thank you for looking after us, much appreciated."

Rebuilding Bolgaun

Don't Forget Nepal
by Helen Simpson

The eleven Nimbin earthbag houses have been painted and all are fully occupied for the middle of Winter.

Mick Watson and I have just returned from Bolgaun. I had hoped to do house 12 but the elderly woman nominated at the village meeting last May had gone to Kathmandu for medical treatment. So we decided to use Nimbin Nepal Relief funds to buy paint for all the houses instead and jeeped up the mountain enough blue paint, brown paint, primer, rollers etc for the eleven houses.

Nimbin has totally funded these houses and it was terrific to see them all finished and occupied. We didn't quite have enough funds for another house at this stage, anyway and as we weren't disappointing anyone. It felt like a good call.

The colour blue had been unanimously picked at a village meeting. The families painted their own houses except for two where we concentrated our energy. The elderly couple Tilke Syangvo and Pasang Dhalmo both injured in the earthquake and for whom we built house 2, have no relatives or children to help, she paralysed, he having to fully care for her, had not moved into their house. No floor, windows, ceiling or door.

We built a buffalo dung floor, cane ceiling, organised door insertion and window boards, painted inside and out. They moved in on our last day.

A young Nepalese woman,



Pra, from Pokhara, came with us, mainly to help with translation and to help me collect stories from the village.

She was amazing, motivated, such an inspirational addition to our team and and is going to be a huge asset to her country.

All the families in our houses had experienced death and injury in the earthquake. All are from the Tamang tribe, Buddhist, subsistence farmers with next to no cash flow. The women, apart from childcare, cooking and washing clothes at the communal taps, grow millet, buckwheat, vegetables and tend chickens and buffalo... some chip gravel for meagre cash. All are illiterate.

Many of the men have left the village seeking work to help fund rebuilding their houses after the earthquake...

The good news is through our project some of the men have been employed on other good Earth Global earthbag projects in Nepal.

The women expressed frustration at the treatment of their children by the teachers at school. They felt powerless in their illiteracy and inability

to help their children with their homework or even buy exercise books. They strongly felt their children were not being educated properly .and punished unjustly for not doing homework, not having exercise books and being dirty. No washing machines and bathrooms there.

We organised a meeting with the women and the teachers at the school. To see the women flock to the school, shyly sit on the ground, then bit by bit get more vocal and strong was absolutely fantastic... they were a voice! And they knew it, their smiles and laughter said it all.

The teachers not from the village looked uncomfortable and defensive at first, but realized the force and feeling. I think some changes will be made... always slow in Nepal.

We gave some blankets lovingly knitted by the Nimbin craft group to the most elderly in the village. Hats and jackets knitted by a Uki group were distributed to the children. Exercise books and pens to all the students.

The Nimbin Nepal Relief Fund will continue under the auspice of Nimbin Health and Welfare with the aim of providing smaller amounts of funds for exercise books for the children and possibly some adult education. Houses too if funds can stretch. Not being a charity, there will be no tax exemptions.

Helen Simpson: helensim7@gmail.com Donations to Nimbin Nepal Relief Fund are welcome via Summerland Credit Union BSB 728-728, A/C: 22305642.