

NGT welcomes letters and other contributions received by email or post prior to deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be edited for length, and articles for accuracy. Please include your full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

### State election

Every once in a while elections throw up candidates over and above the normal run of the mill.

These days, what with public perceptions of major party politicians as trustworthy beings sitting at a very low level, a new surge of independent, off-mainstream and predominantly female nominees stand a substantially better chance of being successful and it's vital we make the most of this unique opportunity to help secure our own as well as our children's and grandchildren's future.

In this month's state election we are blessed to have at least one such hugely capable candidate for the seat of Lismore who rates exceptionally highly on matters regarding personal integrity, visionary courage, compassion, intelligence, a capability for hard work, a hands-on commitment to social justice, and an absolute unwavering defence of environmental unity.

Sue Higginson has an awesome and ongoing track record of achievement in each of the above areas and honours us all in making herself available to represent us as our local member in the NSW State Legislative Assembly.

I implore you all to recognise what a unique opportunity this is to at last, make your precious vote count toward enhancing both local and planetary wellbeing by voting 1 for Sue on March 23rd.

Bob Hopkins  
Nimbin

### Standing stones

After discussing the article on the Standing Stones in the last edition of the *GoodTimes* with the two people quoted as sources and Elders, it is with great respect that it needs stating firstly, that a woman talking of a men's site is unacceptable to the Originies.

Secondly, the stories of the Pleiadian connection are not in line with the general narrative written on the Stones by Anthropologist Fredrick Slater before their demise.

Saying that the Seven Sisters were white is a pretty

big statement too which could be perceived as offensive, given the many dreaming stories of the seven sisters in Originie mythology.

I just found the whole story to be bizarre.

Binnah Pownall  
Larnook

### Last preference

In our voting system, your vote can end up helping someone you did not want to elect. Your first preference is for who you want in but your next most important choice is for who you want out.

In the State election you are allowed to mark just one preference but this can mean that your vote is discarded from the count.

In the last election, thousands of votes were dropped from the count because there was no second preference when candidates were eliminated. The effect was to make it easier for someone to win who you did not want because it reduced the total number of votes they needed.

But marking preferences is no guarantee your vote goes where you want it. During the count candidates are eliminated one by one until only two remain. If you chose a candidate who is then eliminated, then your vote is likely to bounce down your preference list until it counts for someone you likely did not want.

Who really wants their 5th or 6th choice to be elected? It is much better to mark more than one preference but avoid numbering those you don't like or don't recognise.

If you can't be sure to elect the candidate you want, you can at least have a say on who you want out.

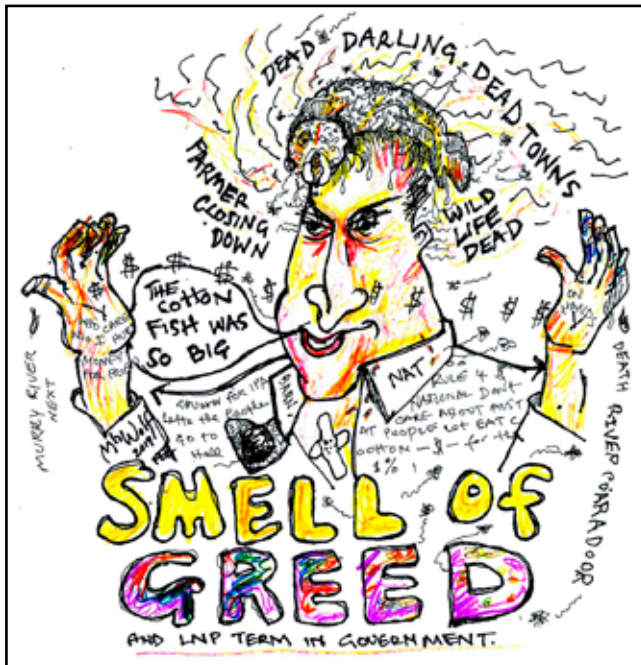
A reliable way to do that is to mark them as your last preference then fill in the rest. Your vote will filter through intermediate preferences to settle with the main opponent to your final preference.

Votes for the NSW upper house are counted differently. On these notoriously large ballots you can vote above the line or below the line. If you number just one preference above the line, there is a higher chance your vote will exhaust during the count.

If you number all the groups above the line there is a higher chance you may help elect someone you don't want. If you number three groups above the line it is less likely your vote will exhaust or go to someone you don't want.

Forget about nice faces or friendly candidates. Forget about sending a message with your vote. An election is about which group gets overall power.

If you want action on critical issues like climate



change, affordable housing, euthanasia etc, then look at the policy commitments of the political parties and make a choice based on what you think is best for the future.

Greg Reid  
Mount Burrell

### More country nurses?

Goodness me. I just drove past a sign saying "Vote Nats for more country nurses."

They are unbelievable!

For eight years the LBH midwives and nurses have been begging for nurse to patient ratios for NSW like they are in Queensland; begging the local Nat reps and candidate to sign their pledge for more nurses (which they have refused to do); and four weeks out from an election they have the audacity to make up placards of LIES!

Louise M. Somerville  
Lismore

### Federal election

It was 5am on a Wednesday morning, the temp was already 28 and I was out on the bike on a 40km ride.

Passing through the rural village of Ettrick, I felt how sad this normally green countryside appeared: trees drooping and stressed, paddocks cropped to the raw earth, gaunt cattle, creeks not running puddled with green stagnant water.

If this is a forewarning of times to come, then Kyogle Shire, which is largely farming dependent, is in dire trouble.

It dismays me to think that Kyogle is better off than most of rural Australia – Kyogle is suffering, so how bad must it be back-a-Bourke?

And then, what are our politicians in Canberra doing about it? Aside from squabbling with each other? Morrison telling lies about border protection and Shorten defending himself against a travesty he helped create.

They are blind to what's happening to our land and our farmers. How on earth do we rid ourselves of these

blunderers in power and appoint a government that is competent?

Not merely competent, but a government that understands how damaging its unethical, immoral behaviour is to the nation – that knows, no matter what the reasons for it, that cruelty (to refugees and Aboriginal people) is inexcusable.

I am grateful for the decency and humanity of the Greens and the Independents who have stood against our government's lame-brain, inexcusably bad behaviour.

Michael Brooke  
Kyogle

### A move to Nimbin?

My name is Neil, and I'm requesting people's feedback on my moving to Nimbin from Sydney.

(House rental, and I'm aware of the difficulties regarding availability etc.)

I've been there for three short stays, and in such a small town you can get some idea of both the good and bad aspects of the place.

I've had doubts about making this move, but I cannot shake an overwhelming attraction to Nimbin (no, not what you think). A lot of what this is, is a real sense of community that I feel is there.

I'm 65 and an artist.

Any pros and cons of living there would be appreciated, and also what attracted you to Nimbin.

And obviously if I make a connection or two, this would increase the likelihood of this move happening. Thank you.

Please email me at: [ndhartist@hotmail.com](mailto:ndhartist@hotmail.com) All information will be kept strictly confidential.

Neil Hill  
Sydney

### Fewer chemtrails

People wishing to try to make sense of the crazy weather might like to avail themselves of Dane Wigington at <http://geoengineeringwatch.org>

A firm believer in dire climate change (warming),

Dane also has vast facts to back up his warning that the crazy globalists are using science and secrecy to alter the Earth's biosphere in a way that, even if they have good intentions like cooling it, are making things far worse by messing up Mother Nature, mostly through the spraying of 'chemtrails'.

He has a regular program on youtube.

I have noticed a lot less of these chemtrails in recent years, and with the hottest day ever for February on the 13th, following the driest January ever (no rain), the skies were clear.

Previously (post late 90's) you would have the trails merge to white-out the sky the day before, and the temperature moderated a bit.

But make no mistake, they have done enormous damage to this fragile planet and told us nothing about it. They are at fault completely, along with their silent minions.

Peter Godden  
Nimbin

### Cars and wildlife

While driving on Tyalgum Road on Friday 22nd February, I witnessed several Ibis on the road ahead with two cars fast approaching.

I mentally called 'Get off the road!' because I could see the cars were not slowing down to leave time for the large, slow moving birds to fly away.

They finally flew and it appeared they just made it but there must have been another Ibis lower down that the car ahead smashed into as it was arching up to the sky.

It was violently catapulted into the air, feathers flying everywhere and landed on the other side of the road. Horrified, I jumped out of the car to help but life had expired from its body.

Why can't people slow down for just one second to give animals a chance to get off the road?

Do they not know that birds mate for life and the careless and uncaring act of killing its mate dooms the mate to a lonely life forever?

Perhaps they think animals don't have feelings, which is clearly untrue. Anyone who has a dog or cat can see all kinds of emotions – joy, sadness, anger, fear, jealousy, love etc.

In past years, I've seen more native roadkill strewn by the side of the road – bandicoots, possums, wallabies, snakes, water dragons. These days I mainly see dead birds.

We are a nation that does not value our native animals and as a result have the world's worst record for mammal extinctions, having lost 62 species to extinction (birds, mammals, frogs, reptile, insects – Wikipedia) since 1788. Australia has 1800 species at risk of

extinction right now.

While most of these extinctions are related to habitat loss and bushfires, we can all make a difference by just being conscious and slowing down when we see an animal on the road or on the verge.

Please don't add to the carnage. Slow down for wildlife.

Menkit Prince  
Uki

### Climate Science

The article "Nature..." by Bernadine Schwartz (NGT Feb 19) requires some rational analysis.

With an overwhelming number of humans, still increasing, now dominating this planet and rapidly increasing industrialisation, irreversible changes to our ecosystems must be expected. It is no use lamenting this or voicing emotional reactions to these inevitable Earth changes. There is no going back to a pristine state.

What is required is rational debate based upon true climate science, led by professionals, not by worried, uninformed community groups, corrupted politicians or commercial interests. I have a physics degree and graduated from Met. Course #21 in 1971. Also on that course was Neville Nicholls who led the team awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007. You should read and study his published papers.

There is no widespread agreement that we have now altered the jet stream or polar vortex to give the Northern Hemisphere a severe winter, nor will greenhouse warming cause this. As for saying that "It's impossible to replicate the work our trees...perform", really?! For goodness sakes, get out there and plant some more trees!

The Paris Agreement to limit warming to 1.5 degrees is nonsense, when there is clearly no understanding yet of how to set the world's thermostat. The advice of "stop everything you are doing and start talking to (people)" is something we do already; but if we come from a position of ignorance on the actual science then what we say is all emotion.

Look at the futile student walkout to demand the government correct our threatening weather catastrophes, and the middle aged male fool preaching climate protests who tried to take over a politics in the pub meeting in Mullumbimby.

The article concludes with a maudlin "say goodbye to the planet we once knew". Stop the doom and gloom. Let's hear some positive, practical advice for coping with Earth changes.

Russell Preston  
Luminvale via Billinudgel



# In Memoriam

**Vale Michael Webb**  
aka Chai Mic & Mic Essence  
28/08/1943 – 11/02/2019

by Meggan Jack

The Rainbow Chai Tent has lost one of its co-founding elders, the gentle, wise listener who touched so many people in his life of service.

During his 75 years, in this time, he created a unique mobile community meeting place, the Chai Joint, which became the Rainbow Chai Tent when they commissioned the first round rainbow tent, from a tent maker in Ringwood, Victoria, spending the proceeds from the 1983/84 Down to Earth Confest.

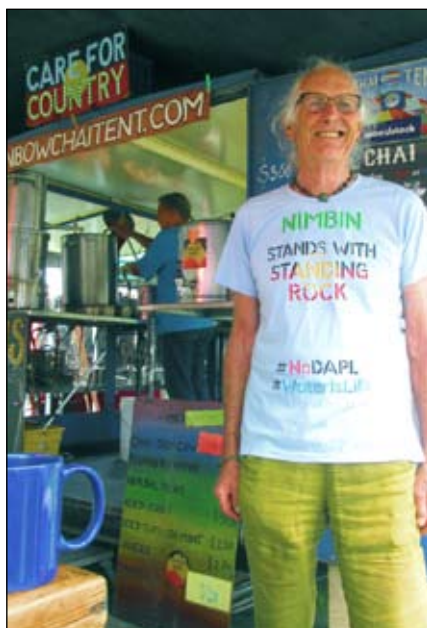
In 1981, Mic and Chris (Christine Wright, his partner for five years), created the Chai Tent, setting up every Saturday at St Andrews Market, Victoria, and took it, along with a volunteer group of chai regulars, to the early Confests held by DTE, where it established a legendary 24-hour chai servery, with the comfortable space to talk or play music into the wee hours, and see the sun rise.

They brought the Chai Tent up to the Northern Rivers for the Return to Aquarius 10th Anniversary Festival with a bus load of 20 or so chai wallahs in 1983, spending a few weeks here, before returning home to St Andrews. The Chai family began to grow.

At later festivals new people would always ask if they could join in and help, it was the centre of the festival, The place to be. It began to grow more, with plans to start growing some of the spices used, at Chris's place 'Tinklebend', at Cottlesbridge, which saw the Rainbow Chai consume their life, as it was on the main road and everyone and anyone, stopped in for a cup of chai.

A cup of chai, a long chat, a cry for help, stay for dinner, why not stay the night?

The two of them lived 'Chai Tent' in a constant whirl of people, on top of learning how to co-parent their 'blended family', Jake and Sam, Josie



and Damon. They were amazing years with some truly beautiful, and memorable experiences, catering for music in local halls etc. We all had some big dreams and plans... and then in '86, the Peace Train travelled down to Melbourne on its journey around Australia, so a second Rainbow tent was hurriedly commissioned, and what seemed like half of the most active chai wallahs took off with Mic, to join the travelling 'caravanserai'!

Michael Jack joined the Peace Train too, with his newly bought old Tramways bus, fitting the start of a second story/platform before they left and a rudimentary fit-out inside, becoming the Chai Bus. Chris and I drew up a step-by-step instruction list to assist those left behind, rostered on to run the weekly chai stall with the first tent, as there was quite a process to learn.



It was while Mic journeyed with the peace train, and later with just the chai crew and the band 'Dreamtime' and crew, that Mic began to really question who he was, and what he was doing. He told me he sometimes didn't feel brave enough to get up and make an announcement to a large group. Now, being the 'centre pole' of this Rainbow Chai Tent, he had become confused about who he was, for a time. So he left the travelling crew, somewhere along the way, Christine and he went their separate ways, and Mic journeyed alone for a time.

For many years, he lived with the Ananda Margas. It was there he met and later married Kate, and they moved to Warnambool when Kate's mother was sick. Mick studied ceramics at the Warnambool TAFE. He studied chiron healing which he practised and taught, running workshops around the world, in particular in Taiwan. See: [www.iachi.com/the-technique/founder-of-chiron](http://www.iachi.com/the-technique/founder-of-chiron)

Many people in the Northern Rivers know Mic for his bush flower essences, and he ran a essence healing/counselling umbrella stall at The Channon for a couple of years, and recently on the street in Nimbin when he was back in Australia from Taipei. He channelled his own bush/flower essences and published a book on them, Rainforest Range Essences (2011). See: [www.ancientwisdoms.org.uk/id3.html](http://www.ancientwisdoms.org.uk/id3.html) for info.

I feel so blessed to have known you and to have received such wise counsel from you so often, you touched so many people in so many ways. Reading all the comments people have written online, gave me the idea to make an 'event' page online as a place to gather people's memories of him, even the wild and wacky ones, to assist in the compilation of stories that may one day chronicle the story of the Rainbow Chai Tent.

A celebration of the life and times of Chai Mic, will be held on Saturday 9th March from mid afternoon at Coronation Park, where The Channon Market is held the following day, bring a plate to share.

## DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act

As the consent authority, Council has received the following development applications for consideration.



DA NUMBER: 19/41

LOCATION AND DP LOT: 60A and 62 Cullen Street, Nimbin (Lot 1 DP 587552 and Lot 13 DP 5446)

APPLICANT: Newton Denny Chapelle

DESCRIPTION: To undertake the redevelopment of 60A & 62 Cullen Street (former Nimbin Museum site), which was the subject of a fire in 2014 and has remained vacant for a period of over four (4) years. The redevelopment seeks approval for:

- A mixed use development comprising retail shops, food and drink premises, a health services facility (medical centre), outdoor communal space areas (outdoor seating, deck, garden, landscaping, and garden pavilion area) and associated civil works, infrastructure services, vegetation removal, landscaping and the demolition of on-site structures (NOTE: the rear garden pavilion building of the proposed development has a height of 9m, which exceeds the 8.5m height limit of the site); and
- The staged strata subdivision of the development into 16 lots.

CLOSING DATE: 27 March 2019

If you wish, you may make a submission to the Council in relation to the development application.

The above development applications and Statement of Environmental Effects may be inspected at Council's Corporate Centre, 43 Oliver Avenue, Goonellabah, during ordinary office hours or via DA Tracking at [www.lismore.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lismore.nsw.gov.au).

Further information relating to written submissions is available on Council's website. There are laws regarding the mandatory disclosure of political donations in relation to planning matters. Political donations disclosure reporting forms are available from the Department of Planning at [www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au).

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## Notices

### Annual General Meetings

- Nimbin Preschool is holding its AGM on Wednesday 20th March at 3pm at Nimbin Preschool.
- Cawongla Playhouse will be holding its AGM on Thursday 4th April at 9.30am in the Cawongla Community Centre.
- Nimbin A&I Society AGM will be held Tuesday 12th March, 6pm at the Showgrounds. All welcome.

### Documentation project

The Nimbin Aquarius Foundation would like to hear from all those still local who attended the original Nimbin Aquarius Festival in 1973. We are interested in documenting all the experiences of attendees for our archives. Contact at: [www.facebook.com/groups/1620882634661216](http://www.facebook.com/groups/1620882634661216) or call into the Bark Hut in the Community Centre – open most Fridays at least.

### Ethical investors wanted

For those interested in forming a conscious community based around education, living and modelling sustainable lifestyles, beautiful land and dwellings are available now but need to act quickly. More lenders are required to utilise our Trust, with 100% tax deductible donations welcomed. Partly a research project centred around positive mental health outcomes. Please contact Lydia on 0422-007-724.

## About us

Managing editor Bob Dooley

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Web [www.nimbingoodtimes.com](http://www.nimbingoodtimes.com)  
And find us on Facebook

NGT is published by the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation, 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin.

**NEXT DEADLINE:**  
**Wednesday 27th March**

Email [nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com](mailto:nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com) or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

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In an afternoon of film, food and song, Greens state candidate for Tweed, Bill Fenelon (pictured, inset) officially launched his 'Better Way for Tweed' campaign at the Sheoak Shack at Fingal Head.

As the sun set over the Tweed River, he joined Tweed mayor Katie Milne, the Greens state candidate for Lismore, Sue Higginson, Greens NSW MP Dawn Walker and Greens federal candidate for Richmond Michael Lyon who presented their vision and values to the crowd of Greens members and supporters.

Underpinned by a genuine commitment to boost local jobs and address climate change, key issues of the campaign include investing in renewable energy, providing an eco-friendly integrated public transport system which combines rail and cycleways, and strengthening environmental laws to protect forests, wildlife and water.

If elected, Bill Fenelon will use his position to retain and expand the current hospital in Tweed Heads,

ensuring that the Cudgen red soil farmland is preserved for local food production, and that people living north of the river do not lose their hospital.

He also vows to protect the rural and beachside villages south of the river from high-rise, increased traffic congestion and Gold Coast style development.

"I am passionate about ending homelessness and adopting affordable housing strategies in the Tweed. Everyone has the right to affordable, safe housing and no-one deserves to sleep rough," he said.

On the night of 15th February Bill Fenelon joined Sue Higginson for the 'Sleepout for the Homeless' event at Knox Park, Murwillumbah to raise awareness and support in the community for those in need of shelter.

Bill Fenelon strongly opposes water mining and the plastic water bottle industry. "Tweed is now the water mining capital of Australia and it is unconscionable that this runaway industry is allowed, especially when

our rivers and creeks are drying up and plastics are choking our oceans.

"I support the endorsement of the Tweed Council resolution to remove commercial water mining from the Local Environmental Plan," he said.

As President of TOOT and long-time campaigner to restore rail services to the Northern Rivers, Bill Fenelon leads the campaign to save Tweed's existing rail corridor for trains and bicycles, with a plan to extend and connect it to the Gold Coast airport and the Queensland network.

"Trains provide public transport with the lowest emissions, which is vital to address climate change," he said.

"I am honest, ethical and listen to the community. I strongly oppose corporate donations and decision-making influenced by greed, power and politics.

"I genuinely care for, and vow to protect our unique and pristine environment," he said.

"The Tweed is the best place in the world, and I'm dedicated to ensuring it stays that way!"

## Turning the Page on flood resilience

by Patrick Deegan  
ALP Candidate for Page

As we approach the second anniversary of the 2017 Lismore flood, I want to do all that I can to ensure Lismore never has flood rescue boats in the Lismore CBD again.

So when Tanya Plibersek visited and announced that a Shorten Labor Government will contribute \$12.3 million to support the establishment of a National Institute of Flood Resilience right here in Lismore I was pleased to have real solutions to a real problem.

During our visit to the University Tanya and I were shown through the existing flood research centre.

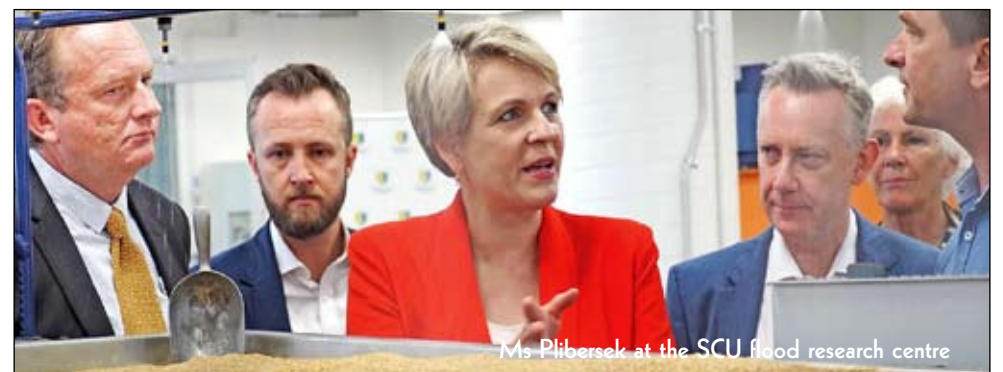
I encourage you to visit this amazing centre.

Research staff showed us around the centre which has working models of the impact of floods on the Lismore flood plain.

We were also interested to hear that the university played a vital role in the 2017 flood.

Vice Chancellor Adam Shoemaker recounted his memories of the evacuation centre the university set up following the 2017 flood.

"Over 450 residents of



Ms Plibersek at the SCU flood research centre

the city were in this very building at 7am in the morning," he said.

"For those who had lost everything, we said, come to this campus. We are you and you are us. The evacuation centre operated in our gymnasium and associated building for over 10 days.

"All the rules went by the wayside. For those who had pets, we said, 'Bring them with you'. For those who smoked, we found a way. For those who had lost their livelihoods and businesses, we said, 'Set up here. Use this campus. Use our electricity. Use our internet. Get back on your feet.'"

The Institute will certainly not be an ivory tower academic think-tank.

There will be educative modelling for schools; prevention and safety regimes; collaboration with

the local SES and other services. All of this will be on the SCU campus. And above all, the institute will get results.

This will be 'public good' research in its broadest sense.

The National Institute will include the creation of a flagship emergency Flood Response Centre for the Northern Rivers.

The Flood Response Centre will ensure the best possible co-ordination of the State Emergency Service and allied emergency and incident response in the Northern Rivers region.

And it will deliver improved communication between vulnerable communities and first responders during a flood.

The Flood Response Centre will work closely with the State Emergency Services, St John's Ambulance,

the Roads and Maritime Service, the NSW Business Chamber, and the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation of Councils.

The National Institute for Flood Resilience will help protect the Northern Rivers from the terrible impact of floods, it will boost the local economy and create jobs.

In contrast, all Southern Cross University has seen from Kevin Hogan and the National Party is cuts.

Under the Nationals, Southern Cross University has copped millions of dollars of cuts, including more than \$1 million ripped from research.

Southern Cross University is important to our region and was established in 1994 under a Labor government.

I would not have been able to go to university if not for SCU being in Lismore.



# 'This election is a test of our loving intelligence' – Bob Brown

by Sue Higginson,  
Greens candidate for Lismore

As I write this, 30 days out from the State Election, the Sue4Lismore campaign has hit full speed – and I will not stop running as hard as I can until March 23.

And as the campaign for the Lismore electorate hits full throttle – as the major parties roll out promises thick and fast – it was timely to be paid a visit from Greens elder statesman Bob Brown at the Northern Rivers campaign launch last week, to remind us of why we are running so hard to win Lismore.

According to Bob, this election – the first after the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its dire report – is a test of humanity's loving intelligence. With 12 years to transition to renewables or face catastrophic consequences for our planet and our children, this campaign has Greens core values at its heart.

What is so exciting about this people-powered campaign, which started in July last year, is that we have been able to set the agenda about what should be happening here in our region.

We have put our rivers on the map. The Richmond River here is one of the most

unhealthy rivers on the east coast of NSW – it has the lowest health rating a river can receive. Our campaign, with the backing of experts and community, has put our river – that essential lifeblood of our community – on the agenda. Since we launched our Richmond River Revival Action Plan last year, we have had people fighting to fund fixing the river. We now know the Tweed and Clarence rivers need help too. This Richmond River Action Plan will be a model project that will be adopted across all our catchments.

As Bob Brown reminded us, this is the fight of our lives and it's ours right now to win. We can turn things around with immediate action, and that's why we launched our Future Ready Region Plan.

Part of this clear action plan is to be 100 per cent renewable by 2030. We know we can do it because the experts have told us we can do it. The Australian Energy Market Operator has told us there are no fundamental barriers to this whatsoever. The only thing that is standing in our way right now is political vested interests fuelled by corporate donors. It is the major party's addiction to corporate donations that is preventing the Renew Economy from hitting our communities, our streets, and our future. We know how to transition, it will have some challenges, but it will be the most



exciting thing we have ever done together.

This plan is as much about healthy communities as it about healthy climate. We have an action plan to properly and safely staff our hospitals, fully-fund our TAFEs and schools, build an integrated public transport plan, and grow this region – with its good rainfall and fertile soil – into the food and fibre hub it can be.

At the pointy end of this hotly-contested race, we are seeing more and more promises from the major parties, conditional on the local member being elected. This new campaigning norm, from The Nationals in particular, is outright bribery and corruption.

If I am elected, I will be the 'promises watchdog' because these are promises for the people of this electorate, funded by taxpayers.

In fact, we know that a Greens member in a marginal electorate receives more funding. We only have to look at Treasury figures which tell us since Tamara Smith was elected in 2015, the Ballina electorate has attracted a 34 per cent increase in funding for infrastructure and communities.

Thankfully, at this election, your vote is the most powerful you've ever had. The state seat of Lismore is the equal-fourth most marginal seat in the State. The Nationals hold Lismore by 2.9 per cent. That's only a few votes. We also know there are many predicting that the Parliament of NSW may be a hung parliament.

That is an exciting proposition for all of us. The Greens currently have three lower house seats – Balmain, Newtown, and Ballina. If we retain those and add Lismore, that is four possible seats adding to the balance of power between those two old major parties. That gives us a position and a privilege to serve our communities and negotiate for accelerated change – especially on the big topics, like climate change, our rivers, health, housing and education.

I will not stop until March 23. We know why we are doing it. We are doing it for the planet, for the next mob, and the mob after that.

We can do this together. I need you this election to Vote 1 Greens and 2 Labor.

## From the mayor's desk

Cr Isaac Smith, Lismore City Council

With two elections on in the next few months, it would be great to hear more from other levels of government about waste and energy, two big issues that impact on climate change, but sadly this does not seem to be happening.

Strategic thinking and long term planning are now foreign concepts in our society, outside of Local government that is.

Our 10-year plan, driven by the community strategic plan that was developed a few years ago, has all the aspirational thinking we could want and our community deserves. But our big challenge is to make it happen.

Currently in Australia we see the local government level collecting just 3.6% of all taxes (rating being the only one available to councils) while trying to maintain 33% of all community assets.

This is unsustainable and leads councils, cap in hand, to those levels of government collecting the other 96% of funds from our pockets and businesses.

This inequality must end if councils, the only level of government that truly consults with their community,

can deliver on the wants, needs and visions for their future.

While there is an overarching struggle between the level of governmental and corporate control in most civilisations, the effectiveness of either system deserves far more scrutiny and we deserve more accountability.

It's a big month in the Lismore CBD this March with 'Eat the Street' and the AFL coming to town to make Lismore the the envy of the region once again. (See story page 16)

Events in our city just keep getting better and 'Eat the Street' is just another example of what we can do. This event, just a few years old, has become a major festival of food which will attract more than 25,000 people into our CBD over the day.

We are celebrating our primary producers and local businesses by putting their best produce into the tastiest plates and coldest cups around. Throw in a festival atmosphere with non-stop music and a cooking stage for the chef in all of us and you have a great day out.

But the fun does not stop there and local accommodation is already selling out as people are coming for the whole weekend so they can watch the Gold Coast Suns play

the Sydney Swans on the newly revamped Oakes Oval.

While the oval has had a modest transformation compared to other stadiums in NSW, the field itself has been modelled on the MCG in Melbourne, so that players and spectators can enjoy a full pitch experience.

The ground is expected to fill with around 10,000 people, so make sure you have a ticket and find a square of grass on the hill to enjoy the high-flying action.

With a lot to see and do in our city next weekend, and a CBD full of interesting shops and restaurants, there is no better time to get out and about with family and friends to experience our regional city at its best.

Can I say a personal thank you to everyone who has engaged with council on the plans to rebuild the heart of Nimbin. I know that any development is controversial and many voices need to be heard.

While we can't please every one, council is committed to working with the community and the property owners to fill the void that exists in the Nimbin streetscape.

We can never replace what was lost, but we can have a vision for the future.



Kevin Hogan MP,  
Member for Page

I have been lobbying my colleagues in Parliament to support my call for a Royal Commission into petrol prices and the power of large supermarkets.

We are being ripped off at the bowser. There is no reason that regional areas like ours are paying 30 cents more a litre than in the city.

I've also heard enough stories from our farmers and processors about allegations of misuse of market power by supermarkets, unconscionable conduct and the use of unfair contract terms.

We are providing \$54.5 million for research into Type 1 Diabetes.

This life-long auto-immune disease is one of the most common chronic diseases in children and most newly diagnosed cases are in people less than 15 years old.

At present, there is no cure for Type 1 Diabetes and no proven approach to prevent the disease occurring.

We are also expanding free access to glucose monitoring devices for pregnant women, children and more adults with Type 1 Diabetes from next month.

This will save people up to \$7000 a year.

It was great to be at the opening of the new Kyogle Rural Fire Service Headquarters.

These amazing volunteers put their lives at risk for us.

It was an honour to join others in thanking them at the official opening of the wonderful new station.

It was a great turnout for this special event.

On the same **PAGE**

Over the years, Lismore has been represented by a number of politicians who have held the seat for multiple terms.

The primary feature that unites these representatives is their ability to advocate for individuals and community groups.

Although I was politically a long way from Thomas George, he always took the time to shake my hand and speak with me, and I know he advocated for many individuals who wouldn't have voted for him.

Putting parties, branding and all that bollocks aside, what we need is someone who represents the

unique characteristic and diversity of our region without bias and who thrives in the role of an advocate.

In this coming NSW election there are two women who have extraordinary track records for advocacy; Sue Higginson and Janelle Saffin.

These two candidates are both open, friendly and hard-working – they're going to listen to you and take up your case and insure you get the services you deserve and that you are treated justly.

In fact, Sue has risen to the very heights of advocacy, becoming lead counsel and CEO of the Environmental Defenders Office,

**Revenge of the Loon**  
by Laurie Axtens

where she represented community groups and individuals against some of the largest and most rapacious corporations in the country; staring down and overcoming conga lines of their QCs.

I would go so far as to say Sue is the kindest, most qualified and indefatigable candidate to ever stand for a regional seat – she could easily have settled for a Senate spot, but she is a local farmer and she want to represent this region.

Janelle Saffin was a great advocate

when she was the federal member and her advocacy for the East Timorese during and after their independence sets her apart as a stateswoman.

What this region doesn't need is an unapproachable born-to-rule representative or a furious ideologue – drop into one of the election debates, they're hard to miss.

These candidates would preside over further regional stagnation and truly you wouldn't want them advocating for you, unless you want someone to draw fire.

This state election looks like being very close – Labor could

become a minority government – this opens the door for our amazing region to hold the balance of power.

We could lead our state into a clean green future – that's why I recommend you vote Sue 1 and Janelle 2 on your ballot.

This truly is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be represented by someone very special, at a turning point in history.

So cast your ballot for vision, cast your ballot for someone who will advocate for you no matter the size of your bank balance, expanse of your share portfolio nor the cash of corporate lobbyists.