

## NIMBIN BOWLO

25 Sibley Street Nimbin  
Phone 6689-1250

### ADVICE FOR MEMBERS & GUESTS

Nimbin Bowling Club and the Greenskeepers Bistro thank members and the community for your continued support.

**The Club is now open with Covid-19 restrictions**

Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday: 2.30pm – 6pm

Friday and Saturday: 2.30pm – 9.30pm,  
with Bistro open 5pm – 8pm

**AGM: Sunday 19th July, 9.30am**



by Neil Amor

The Nimbin Organic Food Co-op is delighted to share our wonderful mural 'Reproductive system' (pictured) by local artist Jen Harkness with the community.

Come on in and have a look, and while you're there consider enquiring about volunteering at the Co-op.

The recent extraordinary events of the last few months (and counting) have seen the co-op reduce its hours of operations. It is now necessary to increase shop hours to meet community need. But we can't do this without an increase in our volunteer numbers. That's where you come in.

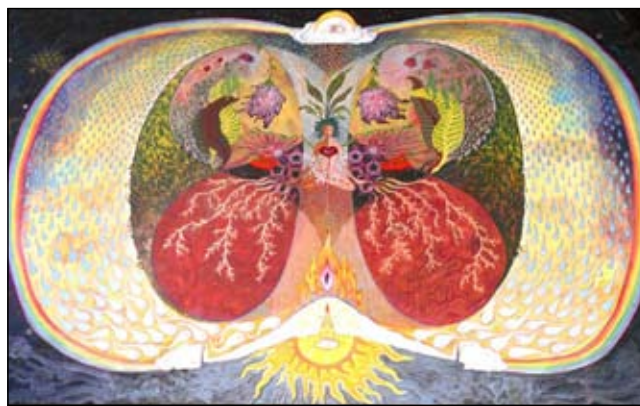
We have a great team of motivated community members who will make your volunteering experience a good one. There are lots of different roles to fill, and your skills will be most welcome. Just ask for a volunteer form when next in the shop and our volunteer co-ordinator, Nina, will take it from there.

This month's feature food is the humble potato.

In the area of present-day southern Peru and extreme north-western Bolivia, potatoes were domesticated approximately 7,000-10,000 years ago.

Potatoes formed a vital part of the food supply of the Incan people, and most villages would have had a

# Food Matters



particularly odd-shaped potato to worship and ask for a good harvest.

Incas not only grew, ate and worshipped them, they even took to burying potatoes with their dead. The Incas also believed that every crop had a protective spirit.

Potatoes were introduced to Europe from the Americas in the second half of the 16th century by the Spanish. Today they are a staple food in many parts of the world and an integral part of much of the world's food supply. As of 2014, potatoes were the world's fourth-largest food crop after corn, wheat, and rice.

Following millennia of selective breeding, there are now over 5,000 different types of potatoes. Over 99% of presently cultivated potatoes worldwide

descended from varieties that originated in the lowlands of south-central Chile.

The English word *potato* comes from Spanish *patata* (the name used in Spain). The name *spud* for a small potato comes from the digging of soil (or a hole) prior to the planting of potatoes.

It subsequently transferred over to a variety of digging tools. Around 1845, the name transferred to the tuber itself, the first record of this usage being in New Zealand English.

A raw potato is 79% water, 17% carbohydrates (88% of which is starch), 2% protein, and contains negligible fat. In a 100-gram portion, raw potato provides 322 kilojoules (77 kilocalories) of food energy and is a rich source of vitamin B6 and vitamin C, with no other

vitamins or minerals in significant amount.

This month's members special is 20% off our range of certified organic potatoes. The co-op currently has desirée, pontiac, sebago, nicola, Dutch cream and midnight blue in stock.

### Potato cheese bake

4 large potatoes (Sebago, but any will do) peeled and very thinly sliced / 1 large onion peeled and thinly sliced / 1 cup grated cheese (I use a mix of cheddar, parmesan and pecorino, but just cheddar is fine) / 1 egg / 1 cup milk / 1 tsp mustard / 1 tblsp olive oil / salt and pepper.

Pre-heat oven 200°C. In a frypan, cook onion on low heat until soft and translucent. Set aside. Lightly grease a large baking dish with a little bit of cooked onion.

Place one layer of potato covering all of the dish well. Sprinkle with a little bit of the onion, grated cheese, pepper and salt. Repeat this process for another 2-3 layers.

To the cup of milk add broken egg, mustard, salt and pepper. Mix well. Gently pour over potato bake. Finish off with remaining cheese.

Cover dish with foil and bake for 1 hour. Remove foil and bake for a further 15mins until potato is cooked and browned on top (a sprinkle of smoked paprika works well).

Until next month, eat well.



Local Artist Holly English  
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## Iranian Fesenjan with Muhammara paste

by Thom Culpepper

*Punica granatum*, the pomegranate, is the "apple" of much of the Eastern cultural history, rumoured in the biblical story of Adam and Eve to have been the real matriarchal porn for the determined seduction and consequent enslaving of man's freedom and innocence.

Apples (*Malus spec.*), as we Anglos now know them, were not, it appears, on the fruit-stacks amid the 1000 + year-old Suks of Aleppo. The Chinese, the Han culture then, remained culturally satisfied with the apple.

The pomegranate of the Middle-east was in all essence in the core culture of the East, celebrated and enjoyed for their very existence, and still is so.

The hardy 'Punica' survives and thrives, husbanded by the hardy farmers on all of the lands of the levant and the Turkic-Afghani-Pashtun, tribes.

This 'Ahmar' (red) fruit, is the living heart of the being of the East.

This dish, Fesenjan has a long history. It seems to have originated on the shores of the wild-water-fowl populated Caspian Sea. The land-sea of ducks and geese.

Fortune and locality begat another culinary event. The pomegranate prevailed on these coasts and the hinterlands and the cultivating-culinary genius of the Persian women made the connection.

Fesenjan is duck with pomegranate: the light acidity of the juice as a molasses cuts the lard of the duck and the yellow-fat of the capon-cockerel. Voila! The mix gave many a poor table bird a place on the plate.



### Muhammara

First the paste. Muhammara is similar to Harissa, the African-Mediterranean spice paste. The pastes are Halal, Hindi, low lactose, vegan and vegetarian allowed.

But with a northern mountain edge of the cool climate, walnut (*Juglans regia*) is added, or if you must, the American hickory-pecan, (*Carya illinoensis*).

### Ingredients

- 4 bell peppers, roasted, skinned and mashed
- 3/4 cup bread crumbs or 1/2 cup hemp-seed protein with 2 tsp gluten-free bread-crumbs
- 2 tblsp pomegranate molasses
- 3 tblsp Aleppo red-pepper flakes. Korean red-pepper flakes are similar and will do.

- 2 tsp lemon juice or a 1/3 tsp of citric acid
- 1/2 tsp ground lemon myrtle or lemon verbena or 1 tblsp of chopped, preserved Lebanese lemons
- 1/2 tblsp balsamic vinegars
- 1 tblsp tomato paste
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 4 cloves crushed garlic
- 3/4 cup walnut or pecan nuts, pulped
- 3 tblsp green olive oil
- Salt to taste

Use usual paste method. Coarse-blend all of the ingredients. Set as a dip, garnish with chopped mint, parsley or some other herbs of choice, and chopped walnuts.

### The Fesenjan

Take 2 or 4 duck breasts, rub with Mahammara, lightly brown in olive oil with wilted onions and garlic, set aside.

In a large heavy pot or a tagine, add 4 cups of water, add nuts, some hemp seed protein and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add salt to taste, add 1/2 cup of pomegranate molasses, if sour, add some demerara sugar, simmer for a further 30 minutes.

Add duck breasts and extra onion, cover and simmer until cooked and the sauce reduces.

Serve with Persian saffron or turmeric rice. Garnish with pecan sections, pomegranate arils (red seed capsules) or orange zest, rose buds and cinnamon.

Mahammara, Harissa paste, preserved lemons, pickled limes and kimchi pastes, kimchi, sauerkraut, fermenting jars and 'Dunder' (organic fertiliser) are to be had via: [thewholeearthveg@gardener.com](mailto:thewholeearthveg@gardener.com)



# What about the wildlife?

**Weed Words**  
by Triny Roe

Winter is a great time for gardening and bush regen activities. Recent rains have kept the soil soft and moist. So get out into nature and make the most of the cool days. Hand weeding is a beneficial activity for people as well as the environment. It reduces stress and anxiety. Exposure to the emanations and microflora of plant and soil boosts the immune system. And it's mostly free! Small costs can include PPE such as gloves and hand weeding tools which are very useful for the species with deep tap roots such as Giant Devils Fig. If bits of these remain, they will soon shoot again. Get them while they are small and use the weeding tool to loosen the soil down deep to avoid breakage. A handy technique is to visualise the roots of the weed and imagine them releasing from the earth. Breathe out, give them a little shake and pull. The weeds slip out, easy peasy, though sometimes the gnarly ones might also need a tickle with the tool. Slashing is another useful non-chemical method of weed control. However, some species will readily regrow from small pieces. Seeds can be also distributed to new areas so this can actually spread the pest plants. Timing is important and slash before flowering. Use of a catcher to collect and hot composting of the debris in one controlled place can reduce this problem.

What is a weed and should I always try to remove them? Do we need to get rid of all the weeds? What about the wildlife that has come to depend on various exotics that have established after the removal of the native species? Setaria, *Setaria sphacelata*,



originates from Africa and was introduced to Australia as a fodder grass. Promoted as “a palatable bunch grass with moderate drought tolerance”, it also doesn't mind water-logging and occasional flooding, so has been very popular in the often very wet Northern Rivers. This tussocky grass with the bristly flower spikes can grow to 180cm, forming thick clumps. Considered suitable for grazing beef cattle, it will, however, cause problems for horses and donkeys due to the high oxalate content. Setaria is often found on old farms, now repurposed as 'lifestyle' properties. It is difficult to manage. Hard mowing or slashing will keep it down and can mimic heavy grazing, allowing other grass species to dominate. Brush-cutting in the areas the mower or tractor can't reach will require a metal blade. Whipper snipper plastic string won't cut it cleanly. The long stems of setaria tangle in the cutter head, making it a slow and tedious task. This grass is considered naturalised and an environmental

weed in SE Queensland and Northern NSW. It has established widely in the Northern Rivers in riparian zones, wetlands, parks, paddocks, along roadsides and driveways and other cleared or disturbed areas. Setaria's aggressive and robust growth ensures it will outcompete other species and cause problems in bush regeneration. Also known as canary seed grass, setaria has become a popular food source for Australian finches and other small birds which eat grain. It is common to see flocks of finches frolic in the roadside setaria, feeding on the seeds. Local native grasses can be planted to provide suitable food replacements for wild birds. These include kangaroo grass, *Themeda australis* and weeping grass, *Microlaena stipoides*. Weeping grass is a perennial, grows in full sun as well as damp and shady spots. It is highly nutritious and can be sown as pasture for horses and cattle or used for a lawn. Happy weeding.



## Plant of the month

**Forest Oak**  
*Allocasurina torulosa*

Selected and photographed by Richard Burer, Bush regenerator

This pretty tree is common in the area, its needle-like leaves and cone fruits make it impossible not to recognise. A medium size tree, it's often dominant in areas with a healthy fire regime, and it can be found on the edges of subtropical rainforest and wet sclerophyll forest. Its flowers are red and are often not noticed, as the cone fruits are

the unmistakable identity of this very important local tree species. I have found this tree to be very rewarding in my conservation projects, with the sight of glossy black cockatoos nibbling the delicious cone fruits a memorable nature experience. This tree is also a core habitat tree for Koalas, in particular lactating mothers. This tree is easy to grow and available at your local native tree nurseries.



## Bushwalkers get out and about

by Peter Moyle

Great to be out and about after the lockdown, and hopefully for everyone's sake we can keep things under control and with precautions and a bit of luck, life under the new reality will be enjoyable. The Nimbin Bushwalkers have had two-day walks with good numbers attending, conscious of hygiene and social distancing. Separating into two groups, we were able to keep each to less than 10 walkers. Late autumn/early winter has given us some gorgeous weather, and walking between Ballina and Lennox along the coast, as well as the inland trails through the Billinudgel Nature Reserve, was what we needed to take in the beauty of our local area. More walks attached, and visitors welcome – register early to reserve a spot.



## Walks program for July

**Sunday 12th July**  
**Peates Mountain and Rocky Creek, Whian Whian State Conservation Area**  
**Leader:** Peter Moyle 0412-656-498  
**Grade:** 3-4. Mostly on formed tracks, there will be some slippery rocks and tracks particularly after rain. About 4 hours and 9km we will walk to Peates Mountain on a well-formed forest track before returning via Rocky Creek with its beautiful creekscape. We will experience the Blackbutt Forest before rainforest and the lovely Rocky Creek  
**Meet:** after 9am for a 9.30 start at the Rummerly Park Campground.  
**Bring:** the usual, hat, drinking water, lunch and good bush walking boots/shoes. Insect protection recommended.

**Friday 24th to 26th July**  
**Illaroo Campground at Minnie Waters in Yuraygir NP**  
**Leader:** Peter Moyle 0412-656-498  
**Grade:** 2-3. Just after school holidays, so hopefully not too crowded. A spot we have not visited in several years. This time the Southern section. Lovely coastal headland and beach walking. Also, a 4WD trip up the beach to Sandon River and its pristine

waterway. Camping fees of \$12 per person/night. A vehicle access pass or \$8 per day applies Booking online: <https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/camping-and-accommodation/campgrounds/illaroo-campground> or phone: 1300-072-757 for more info. If you want to share a site, phone Peter as he has booked some sites, also to confirm your attendance. **Bring:** camping and walking gear, open fires are allowed so bring wood.

**Sunday 9th August**  
**Mount Chowan – Mt Jerusalem NP**  
**Leader:** Anne Gilmore 0413-450-440  
**Grade:** 4. 10km, approx 4 hours. There are steep sections involving rock scrambling and if it has been wet some trail slippery. Walking boots recommended and walking poles or a good pole as well. **Meet:** 9.15am at the trailhead off North Chowan Road which is off Smiths Creek road between Stokers Siding and Uki. This is a combination of a steeper bush trail and fire trail walk, with views across to the Border Ranges, and on the way up to Mt Chowan a great view of Wollumbin. We will have an early lunch on the walk, and for those interested, afternoon tea at nearby Uki.





# Responsible dog ownership

by Amanda King

Many *GoodTimes* readers will have heard that my two whippets, Rocket and Nelson were mauled by a Rottweiler when they were on leash and out for our morning walk on Tuesday 2nd June. I have been walking my dogs around Nimbin twice a day for the past eight years, and though at times we have had some close shaves with unrestrained dogs, in most part we have been able to manage our walks in safety and take pleasure in the parklands and natural spaces that Nimbin provides. Our walks were the highlight of our day and it was a joy to see the dogs exercise and play, and I love walking and taking in the stunning scenery that surrounds our village. I will not 'name and shame' the human parties involved in this attack, but I will say that their reaction to taking responsibility for the dog in question's behaviour is appalling. To date, not only have they not provided any financial assistance or true concern for my dogs' wellbeing and ongoing care, they openly declined to provide vital information as to their dog's whereabouts to me and the authorities. I would like to let the dog owner and dog walker know how much this incident has impacted on my life, my daughter's life and my dogs' lives. The pain, stress, trauma, time away from work, 24/7 care for badly injured animals and the fear I now have of going out for a walk with my dogs will take some time to recover from. We would like to extend wholehearted thanks to our community, friends and family for their support in this traumatic time. Not only have we been assisted with the exorbitant vet bills, we have had food parcels, dog-sitting and great kindness and concern extended to myself, my daughter and of course, my gentle boys. Once again, the wider community has come to the assistance of another dog owner and dogs who have become victims of an unprovoked attack, many of whom are on low incomes and can least afford to give. I would also like to thank from the bottom of my heart, Paul, who caretakes the showgrounds, who, at great risk to himself, restrained the Rottweiler, in effect saving us all from a very bad situation. Nimbin, we have a real problem with dogs that are not fit to be out in public. On so many occasions I have had to 'verbal' unleashed dogs to stay away from my leashed dogs as we walk. I have had to insist on many occasions that dog owners do not let their dogs invade our space while my dogs are on leash. My dogs are not big and are quite sensitive, and sometimes defensive when they are restrained because a whippet's only advantage over other dogs is the speed at which they can

get away. There is a systemic problem in our wider community with aggressive dogs and owners who will not take responsibility for their dogs' behaviour. Too many innocent creatures are being harmed in our community, and more often than not, the attacking dog's owners are not being held accountable for the terrible toll this kind of incident takes on the victims (dogs, people and wildlife). Most dog attacks are deemed 'fights', and it's not until a witnessed unprovoked attack occurs that a dog will be declared dangerous. I now know the dog in question has a history of attacking other dogs, and only a few weeks ago attempted to attack an old Staffie who fortunately was able to escape, frightened but unharmed. An historical incident was also reported with the same dog invading a neighbour's yard and attacking the resident dog. Surely these incidents should have been a warning for the owner and dog walker that the dog's temperament towards other dogs was antisocial. There is no good outcome in a situation like this. Dogs who have been 'blooded' will never change their behaviour without intensive rehabilitation. Clearly the owner has failed this dog by not providing the training and socialisation required for the breed. As it stands, the dog has now been officially deemed dangerous by the ranger and though this means that the dog is flagged and there will be strict measures required to keep it under control, my fear is that as time goes by, who will ensure the measures that are in place to protect the public and other dogs from a future attack continue to be adhered to? I also don't think locking an animal away, essentially jailing it for life, is a satisfactory or civilised outcome, and could result in even more disturbing antisocial behaviours. With the ever-increasing number of dogs in the village, the times where dogs were able to roam off-leash must end, and dog owners need to step up to the responsibilities that are part and parcel of keeping an animal. If anything good can come out of this terrible situation, I would hope that people who own dogs that are not well socialised will use every precaution to make sure that their dogs are appropriately restrained, wearing a muzzle if needs be, and safely enclosed in a yard that protects the dog/s and the public, because in only a few seconds everything can go very wrong. Rocket and Nelson are healing now, but it is a slow process. The vets are very happy with their progress and for the time being, rest, good food, kindness and nourishing herbs are helping their recovery. I am still very anxious about going out for a walk, but have been supported by friends and family who often accompany me to help rebuild my confidence.

# The healing power of animals

by Donna Connolly

How awesome are animals? Their love is unconditional. They help heal us in so many ways. They help us make sense of the world. They are a huge part of our masterplan and assist us in our soul development and evolution, both individually and for humankind. In my work as an animal communicator, I get to witness the most incredible soul connections between people and their pets all the time. The most profound human-animal relationships are animals as companions. History shows us evidence of this as far back as 32,000 years. Most people in Western society have a beloved fur-friend. Statistics show up to 65% of households contain at least one companion animal. (Most have more than one.) Research has investigated the relationships people share with companion animals and suggests a number of health benefits, both physical and psychological. While the majority of these relationships have primarily benefited humans, some are also mutually beneficial providing survival advantages for the animals too. For example the horse providing transportation and heavy labour in exchange for food and shelter. The wolf assisted in the hunt while protecting the environment and human pack, receiving some of the spoils from the hunt as their reward. In European folklore and folk-belief of the medieval and early modern periods, familiars (sometimes referred to as "familiar spirits" or "animal guides") were believed to be supernatural entities that would assist witches in their practice of magic. They were also known to be protectors for their humans as they step into their power. I feel that this is still very true, as I look back over my



own journey. I can pinpoint the times when my familiars have come into my life to assist me in my work as a healer, intuitive and teacher. Animals assist us in every part of society and our day to day lives including mental health, physical therapy and detecting of chronic disease and seizures. There is a lot of scientific evidence documenting the benefits of having an animal in your life. Here are some reasons why having a pet is great for your mind, body and soul. • They make you social and help you form relationships. Having an animal automatically introduces you to new people and new places; • Animals improve your physical fitness by increasing bone density and heart strength during exercise, play and walking; • They elevate your mood. Scientific research shows just patting an animal can reduce blood pressure and set off endorphins and an assortment of feel good chemicals in your body and brain; • Animals are great for all ages. They can show children how to interact and can help with self-esteem and social development too. Older people benefit from having a fur-friend to enjoy their days with; • They make excellent aids for medical support groups, people with developmental issues, learning to read and PTSD; and • Animals can play a huge

role in healing our hearts after a break up or death of a loved one. On a planetary level, animals assist by raising the frequencies, vibration and energy and in most cases repairing and restoring the damage that humans have inflicted. They do this with sounds such as purring and howling as well as with play, dancing and singing. In the oceans we have a symphony of underwater sounds, acrobatic movement and play, often mimicking the actions of the birds in the sky. There is a fascinating movement that is facilitated by a collection of the same species, using their higher consciousness; to operate as one force. This is called entrainment. For example, you will see flocks of birds, herds of prey animals and schools of fish. They will all move in a beautifully choreographed dance. This works like a huge smudging or energy clearing. Each ecosystem on Earth is interconnected. Everything we say, think and do has an impact. We are the only species on the planet that create rubbish and toxic substances. We too are animals, we have the same ability to help out mother Gaia. We can take a cue from the animals, by incorporating their healing methods. We can also make more conscious choices with our consumption and offer our carbon footprint. Be kind to yourself and each other.

## Dora's last word

Humans seem very self-absorbed. They put all sorts of value in things that don't matter. Very busy in their minds but not doing anything. They need to be more present and peaceful. Life is not a race.

We are in the process of organising some Animal Communication Workshops. Please head to our website if you would like to join us: [www.rivergem.com.au](http://www.rivergem.com.au)

# Dog club seeks trainers

Brunswick Area Responsible Canine Owners (BARCO) needs more trainers. Since BARCO was established in 2008, never before have more dog owners wanted to enrol in our community-based dog training classes, run by volunteers, and we need new people to get involved. The people we need will have personal experience in training dogs, and preferably will have studied dog behaviour and psychology. They might already be working in a dog-related area such as veterinary nursing. They also need to be happy working with dog owners, as BARCO is really about teaching people to train their own dogs to a standard where the dog is well-behaved, both

at home and when out in a social setting. Our dogs must be vaccinated and we work on a rewards-based system, with no harsh treatment or physical punishment. Our classes are run in groups of around 10, catering for pups from three months old; bigger or teenage dogs, and more advanced classes. Trainers need to be prepared to arrive at Brunswick Sportsfields by around 8.15am on a Sunday, run a 9-10am class and attend a short de-brief afterwards. If BARCO is of interest to you, please contact Eve Sinton at: [barcodogs@gmail.com](mailto:barcodogs@gmail.com) More information about BARCO can be found on Facebook.



# The inside becomes the outside

by Suzy Maloney, B.Eq.Sc.

I have been looking into the power of beliefs. What I am observing is that whatever a person believes, they somehow make reality.

This is especially true when working with horses. If you feel you cannot do something with a horse, then really, it is best to not even begin until you have moved the cannot. Our intention is a powerful thing, and if we believe we cannot do something then we are right. The horses can always pick up on what we are thinking, sometimes I think they can read minds!

So, if we are about to do something, we are not sure of, before we commence, we need to change our thinking to 'I can'. This is a hugely important thing for both the horse and the person. We are much more likely to succeed if we do this.

An example of this is something I saw with a person picking up a horse's hooves recently. The woman was sure she could not do this, and when she went to pick up the hoof her hand was stiff and controlling, which the horse objected to and reacted by kicking out. This of course scared her and validated her fear of picking up the hoof.

I then went to the same hoof and picked it up



Suzy and Soray

knowing that I can, my hand and arm were soft. The horse repeated the kick out with me, but I did not fight them, just moved with the hoof then calmly brought it back to where I wanted. The horse felt the change in energy immediately and stood there with the hoof in my hand easily.

The woman's 'I cannot' became a reality, and so did my 'I can'. We talked about changing her mental belief, which allowed her to go back to the hoof and pick it up with confidence and with a relaxed hand. The horse obliged without a problem.

This is not about skill.

Horses most definitely perceive our thoughts,

energy and intentions, their empathy skills are huge compared to ours. A horse will fit into whatever we believe.

This idea can be confronting. It means we must take responsibility for what is happening. We prefer to blame others for our problems and issues: the government, our parents, our horse... It is so much more comfortable if someone else is at fault. Then we can complain about them and try to change them, but we can remain the same.

When we take responsibility for our own reality, we must do some work, on ourselves, and

make changes. This is uncomfortable on several fronts. First it means admitting that what we are currently doing may not be the best way, then we must think about and research alternatives and finally we change what we are doing and how we do it.

The last step is the hardest for many. All animals are creatures of habit and we are no exception. It can be extremely hard to change things we do in the external world, and even harder to change what is on the inside. But this is what is needed to move forward with horses.

There is something about horses that pushes people's buttons, makes them look at parts of themselves they would rather not. But at the end of the day, if we have a horse in the paddock then some part of us has chosen this journey.

The take-home message is to look at your beliefs and see if they are limiting you. If they are, then maybe pull them out and see if you want to keep them. If you choose to keep them, that is your call, but if you choose to grow and change, you will find your horses doing the same right along beside you.

Phone 0401-249-263  
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## Brumbies play an important role

by Les Rees

I recently read an interesting article in *horsetalk.co.nz*, claiming that brumbies can play an important role in Australian ecosystems which made perfect sense to me.

In a presentation at an Ecological Society of Australia conference, wildlife ecologist Craig Downer suggested that equines can aid our ecosystems in a number of ways.

He claimed that the dietary benefits from eating dry vegetation were not only excellent fodder for the equine digestive system but also aided the dispersal of seeds from ingested vegetation.

Unlike ruminant animals, equines produce less degraded faeces that contain a lot more viable seeds. Given that they can travel many miles daily this would suggest that it is an excellent system for increasing biodiversity in the landscapes.

Due to the high roughage content, coarse dry grasses, herbs and bush foliage are very important for equine digestive function. This choice of grazing exposes the seedlings of many diverse species to more sun, water and air enabling them to flourish.

Moreover, the slowness of faecal decomposition aids microbial action in the soil, providing micro-organisms with vital nutrients needed for growth. The slow decomposition of faecal matter also helps increase water absorption in the soil which is vitally important in arid areas.

The flat shape of equine hooves helps



to push seeds in their faeces into the ground also providing fertile areas for germination and the brumby wallowing habit causes indentations creating small ponds that collect water used by a diversity of wild plants and animals.

Equines also help to crack open the ice during the winter months enabling other animals access to forage and water as well as providing smaller animals with trail networks that help them move around snow clad areas during the winter months.

Horses are also able to climb into high rocky terrain that other grazing animals are unable to access, helping to reduce fire hazards by grazing on the sometimes tinder dry vegetation.

Given that equines produce large quantities of partially-degraded vegetation, they are also providing food

for a myriad of soil microorganisms which ultimately builds the humus component within the soil.

The gradual decomposition of the faeces also triggers the release of nutrients throughout the seasons, feeding the fungi and increasing the soil's absorption of water, making it extremely important for arid areas.

Here is a quote from the article:

*"Equid faeces lend more sustenance to decomposers and food webs that involve mutually sustaining exchanges among all classes of organisms. The latter include many diverse insects, birds, rodents, reptiles, etc. This could help bolster many native species in Australia."*

*The less degraded faeces of equids contain many more seeds that are intact and capable of germination and from many more types/species of plants when compared with ruminant grazers.*

*Thus, the horses' wide-ranging lifestyles can greatly assist many plants, including Australian natives, in dispersing far and wide and, so, in filling their respective ecological niches. This enriches the food web and allows a greater diversity of animal species, including Australian natives."*

It's sad that this information appears to have been ignored by those who are hell-bent on culling our brumbies. There seems to be little interest in looking at any real research in favour of leaving the brumbies alone.

Perhaps we should be asking if there is an agenda here!

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# Care goes both ways

It's nice being warm. Too much of my life I've had the silly idea that I have to be brave, brave enough to bear the cold, and as I think on this, I realise that with that idea came a tendency not to discard things, just in case I'll need them later on. How are these two ideas connected, I wonder?

My mother was Russian-Estonian and half my family are Russian-Estonian, with a tendency to hoard and hold things close to ourselves as though to protect against the cold, all the while bravely putting on a firm resolve to walk hard against the iciness in light clothing. I saw it in my Estonian aunt and my cousins a few years ago on a visit my brother and I did to that part of the world in their winter. They all had that glint in the eye of resolve.

I watched them put their walking clothes on and it seemed to me that they were not really dressed for snow and ice – and it was freezing out there, but out we'd go, and begin walking, fast. We walked in the snow fields, past the ski jumps; we hurried past the kindly-lit and probably warm cabins; we just kept on walking. I, in

a very familiar way, held in my shivers, and just sought to keep up.

So here I sit now, snug in new trackie pants and in awe of warm legs. Who would've thought! Interestingly, but not so much, in light of my growing awareness, this comes amidst a house clearing where boxes of things and papers have been cast into bins and given away. The family psyche is getting a clean-out.

How many other familiarly held ideas do we have, behaviours, cultural ideas, just the stuff we traditionally do, that take years of shedding? It's a useful exercise doing what I'm doing now, writing down the little bursts of insight. I had never put together the two ideas described above, till now, sitting, as I am, feeling cozy and warm.

I've written frequently about the importance of connections with one another for good mental health, but now I want to talk about the importance of connecting with oneself. Doing this is ultimately caring for oneself.

Christianity only gives lip service to this in the phrase, 'Love thy neighbour as thy self', because they also talk



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

a lot about selfless giving. Buddhism, on the other hand, recognises that the idea of compassion includes oneself in the act of having compassion towards others. Loving is giving and receiving at once in a crux of connection.

What do I mean 'connecting with oneself'? Aren't we ourselves whatever we do? This is true, we are ourselves whatever we do, but much of what we do is out of awareness and we frequently react to certain things, things other people say, or situations, with feral aggression and blind self-hatred. If we are going to be kind to ourselves, we'll need to understand ourselves better and be less reactive.

Me, being cold in winter, and quietly and interiorly

shivering is me not being sufficiently conscious of the indoctrination of my family-borne idea that suffering is good and natural. I am not the suffering of impoverished Russia and downtrodden Estonia, I deserve warmth.

Connecting fully to oneself is emerging through the fog of disconnection and being able to choose wisely who else to connect with. Again, this is something I am still learning about and in learning, I am better able to pick my causes as well as my connections.

Many people think that looking after oneself is selfish and uncaring towards others. Nothing could be further from the truth. Self-care is not egocentric, it is simply looking after oneself as we would care for another loved person or animal. Self-care recognises that any love we have for another is really the same as the love we give ourselves.

When St. Francis called his body, Brother Ass, this was not to beat himself up, but to nurture the beast that he knew he was. We need taking care of and when we look after ourselves, we are better able to care for others.

Care goes both ways.

## Doula Wisdom

by Kirrah Stewart

During my clinical science degree at Southern Cross University, I studied two units from the College of Indigenous Peoples (Gnibi).

As uncomfortable as it is learning about history of invasion of Aboriginal nations and the health crisis facing our Indigenous communities, the education was invaluable in opening my eyes.

Later in 2012, when I screened the *Face of Birth* documentary at Birth and Beyond, I was shocked to learn about the harsh realities facing Indigenous women when it came time to birth.

It was heart-wrenching to learn that many women are sent away from their country and their families to birth, often alone, in a medical system that doesn't know how to honour their traditions. The ramifications of this also directly affects their families and communities.

There is a huge disparity in maternal and infant health for Indigenous women compared to non-Indigenous women. The gap is unacceptable. Many of the poor outcomes are preventable with early intervention.

In an effort to learn more about maternity care for Indigenous People, I decided to study the Birthing on Country (BoC) Course with the Australian College of Midwives (ACM).

Janine Mohamed, CEO of



Photo courtesy: www.BobbieLockyer.com

the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM) says, "Birthing on Country is not something new, it is a continuation of thousands of years of knowledge and practice."

Wiradjuri and Wailwaan woman, Fleur Magick-Dennis says, "Birthing on Country is about Aboriginal women being able to access our culture during pregnancy and birth if we would like to do so."

The Birthing on Country project is seen as sort of a 'renaissance' of traditional care. For many Indigenous women, pregnancy and birth has a strong connection to country and culture. Birthing on Country is considered to be "the best start in life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies and their families."

Yolgnu Elder and Manager of the Yirrkala Women's Centre, Djapirri Mununggurririji says

"Birthing in the country is the most sacred and the most powerful thing that can happen to a woman."

The Australian College of Midwives defines Birthing on Country as maternity services designed and delivered for Indigenous women that encompass some or all of the following elements:

- Are community based and governed;
- Allow for incorporation of traditional practice;
- Involve a connection with land and country;
- Incorporate a holistic definition of health;
- Value Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of knowing and learning;
- Include risk assessment and service delivery;
- Are culturally competent, and
- Are developed by, or with, Indigenous people.

Director of Murdoch University's Ngangk Yira Research Centre, Professor Rhonda Marriott says, "We

need to understand what women want and ensure that they get the right maternity care, especially culturally rich birthing experiences in hospitals, and safer assisted births in the bush."

One of the key aspects in providing culturally sensitive care is to ask the mother-to-be what her needs are and work out ways to include this.

Writing a birth plan is a great way for women to define and communicate what they are hoping for with their birth. Aboriginal women can include their cultural ways into their plan so care providers can further understand and support their needs.

Connection to country is an intrinsic part of overall health and wellbeing. Community support and a sense of belonging is essential.

If you're a midwife or birth worker, please ensure you undertake further studies so you know how to deliver culturally supportive maternity care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

If you know an Aboriginal person thinking about studying midwifery, definitely encourage them to do so. We need more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander midwives in the field!

Let's work harder to help Aboriginal babies have the best start to life.

If you'd like help creating your birth plan, head to: [www.doulawisdom.com](http://www.doulawisdom.com) to download a free checklist.



# The concept of qi

After a few months (unplanned) break, I am happy to be able to return to practising community acupuncture. I am sorry the process of restarting has taken a while, and sorry to those who have been missing their acupuncture.

After a break, it is worth thinking about how acupuncture works and why it has benefits. The concept of qi is essential to understanding acupuncture, and Chinese medicine in general.

Qi is central to Chinese philosophy. It is often likened to energy, but an exact translation is difficult as it has a very versatile nature. It has similarities to the theory of quantum physics, with all matter being made of this energy. It is the basis of all phenomena in the universe.

"Every birth is a condensation, every death a dispersal. Birth is not a gain, death is not a loss". When qi condenses, it becomes a living being.

In terms of Chinese medicine, again the body is qi existing in different densities. Dense forms include the organs, bones and blood. Mind and emotions are a subtle non material form of qi.

The smooth flow of qi is essential to health. Acupuncture is very good at moving qi, tonifying qi and ensuring qi flows in the right direction.

One example of where acupuncture is very helpful with this qi moving function is moving constrained liver qi. This is a very common problem, as it is linked to emotions as well as digestive function, and also to appropriate exercise.



by Brigid Beckett

When liver qi flows smoothly there is good digestion, sleep, emotional stability and movement. Conversely all these things are needed for qi to flow. Chinese medicine and acupuncture in particular is very good at creating this flow and addressing the factors that may be impeding it.

Qi is produced from the food that we eat and is needed for the digestion of food. Where there is a weakness in the digestive organs, this can be tonified. If there is damp or phlegm present that impede digestion these can be dispersed by acupuncture and herbs.

Where qi is flowing in the wrong direction – it should flow upwards towards the lungs and smoothly downward from the stomach, but not sink and cause prolapses – acupuncture can correct this.

Adequate qi is needed for immunity against pathogens. This is surface qi or wei qi. In cases of deficiency, a person will be prone to colds and flu. There are specific treatments that easily boost this wei qi.

Qi moves blood, and in this role is essential for good blood circulation and heart function, as well as being needed in the production

of blood. Again any damp or phlegm in the lungs can be treated with Chinese Medicine.

The kidney qi is all-important. The kidneys are where our original qi, that we receive from our parents, is stored. It is our essence, essential in the processes of growth, also aging, and day to day it is used to power the other processes. It is replenished by qi produced daily from food and breathing.

This is the deepest, most essential form of qi and if it gets low, the slowest to be replenished. It will be drained prematurely by overwork or not enough sleep. Apart from ensuring enough sleep and rest, acupuncture, moxa and herbs can tonify this original qi.

The shen (mind) residing in the heart is the most refined form of qi. All the organs contribute either directly or indirectly to the heart's wellbeing. For example, the spleen forms the heart's blood, the kidneys provide the basis for the heart's energy and the kidneys' water aspect balances the heart's fire.

As well, each organ has its own mental/emotional and spiritual aspect, which again is a refined form of qi.

From all of the above, it can be seen that by encouraging the flow and function of qi we can be well and feel well.

I look forward to seeing my clients again. Details of the new premises for Lismore Community Acupuncture are in the advertisement on the opposite page.

*Brigid Beckett is a registered acupuncturist working at Lismore Community Acupuncture. She can be contacted on 0431-702-560.*

# Spirit attachments

by Auralia Rose

It is quite common during a past life regression to find attached spirits. They can deplete a person, causing them to feel low in energy, as the spirit is feeding off their host's energy. They can also affect their health, relationships and business.

When spirit attachments are present in a person's aura, there is often a merging of thought processes, with the person they've attached to experiencing unwanted thoughts and emotional outbursts which come from the spirit attachment.

A person may feel drawn towards some behaviour that is not in alignment with who they really are. They don't understand where such thoughts and behaviours come from.

Unknowingly they are allowing that soul energy to live through them, and even to take them over in some way.

For most spirit attachments, some form of communication is needed. I find it easier to allow the attachment to talk through the client whilst they are in a trance.

Communication initially is aimed at weakening the hold the spirit attachment has on the client, reminding the entity it is dead, that it is not in its own body, and that the client wishes it to leave. We then need to find out what is needed for the entity to go to the spirit realms.

Often spirits attach out of love to protect that person, or because they believe that is their job. I always instruct my client to thank the entity for their service but let them know firmly that their protection is no longer needed and they must go. When we offer entities a good reason to return to their next place of evolution, they are usually quite eager to leave.

This is totally different from exorcism that uses force and fear to try and force the spirit attachment from the person, which often results in the spirit jumping to another person, or returning to the person they have just left!

Some spirits remain attached to a person across lifetimes. Usually these spirits have some strong connection with their host. Here are some examples of spirit attachment spanning lifetimes:

A young man of 25 had a female spirit that had been attached to him for three lifetimes. The spirit had been his wife in a past life and had attached to the young man soon after her death in that lifetime.



The spirit initially refused to leave, she had become extremely jealous of the man's relationship with his current girlfriend and had often been responsible for many quarrels and arguments between the two.

After much persuasion, the spirit agreed to leave the young man and go to the light. After that the impulse to argue on silly matters had reduced considerably.

In another case, a woman had a spirit attachment for fifteen hundred years. She had been a cruel Empress in an oriental land and had overseen live burials of those who rebelled or opposed her.

The attaching spirit was that of a man who was buried alive along with his family. The family had moved to the light but the man had refused. He was attached to the woman with an intention to make her suffer.

The attaching spirit refused to leave and refused to give the reasons for his motives. He just kept repeating he wanted the woman to suffer. Eventually he was persuaded to move to the light after it was explained to him the importance of finding forgiveness.

In some extreme cases, people carry large groups of spirits across lifetimes. In one case, a man had been an army commander in a past lifetime, leading a group of soldiers. The entire troop was killed by the enemy army in the war. The army commander had felt so responsible for his troop that he had since carried them in his aura over lifetimes.

It is important to understand that it is not the number of spirit or entity attachments that determine the strength of influence upon a person, but more the relationship and the motive of the attachment that matters.

In all the above cases, the man with the attachment of his wife in a past life had suffered more than the man with thousands of soldiers in his auric field.

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# Treating adrenal fatigue and backache with Bowen therapy

I don't know about you lot out there, but Covid-19 brought me a change of living abode and a torn groin muscle.

The new joint was scored because I changed my mind about a ship cruise I had been saving for, two days before the cruise left Brisbane. The friends were a little miffed and I lost money, but if I hadn't been here, I would not be living where I am now.

Interesting that the choices we make can have such far reaching ripples on the pond of life, for good or bad. I guess it depends on one's view.

It is said by them that knows: "It is not what happens to us that causes the problem, but how we handle the change."

Well I handled the unexpected move and change of mind with a lack of grace

and ease and in the process tore a groin muscle, which has had me limping, groaning and yelling, with limited sleep, for weeks.

If you have an enemy you would like to punish, don't waste the mental energy on anything more complicated than a torn groin muscle. Unless you truly want them dead, one of these is punishment enough.

The philosophy of Chinese Medicine relates the groin muscles to the adrenals. Tired adrenals, caused by trauma (which is actually resistance to change), send the hormones into disarray and apart from other things, like continual tiredness and digestive problems, the muscles related to the kidneys are compromised.

A major muscle involved is the Psoas, which begins in the lower back and moves

diagonally to the front of the body, where its main purpose is to lift and move the leg. When a Psoas throws its dummy, coz it's had enough, its partner on the other side of the body goes into overkill and attempts to hold the fort alone. (A bit like us when we attempt to hold things together by ourselves, because it seems other members of our team have lost the plot.)

The result is imbalanced muscles and a sore back.

The good news is that the Psoas, with the help of some trauma release and the right tweaks, can be persuaded to return to work. This brings other associated muscles, such as those in the groin, back into good working order, because as I have sprouted on many occasions: the body works as one unit.

In case you're wondering, I knew before the groin



by Tonia Haynes

muscle actually tore, that it needed help, but my osteopath had done the smart thing and taken time off. Unfortunately, I can only do so much for myself with the help of a door jamb, tongs and a tennis ball, so I ignored the ache and kept hanging curtains and moving furniture. A warning to all: don't keep ignoring the ache. It may become a total pain.

The new abode is delightful.

A cabin lined with tongue-and-groove pine, nine km out of Nimbin; it is a pleasure to live here and also a great place for people to come to, for healing of body and heartache.

Of course it has its dilemmas. Isn't there always? The major dilemma here is the farmers' friends, which cover the surrounding paddocks. Should I remove them?

The Wooks, my assistance to joy, a ShiTzu dog, looks like a porcupine most of the time, except for the bald eagle around his nether region. Pulling the cobblers' pegs out with a wire brush from that fine skin is just too cruel, so we do the modern thing, and shave.

The dilemma is that the bees love the plants and apparently, when eaten fresh or steeped as a tea, farmers'

friends are a major herbal antibiotic. What to do? It's a bit like the question: do natural weed killers like salt, bi-carb and vinegar kill microbes in the soil?

Perhaps a Robbie Green lookalike has the answer to that question. It appears that the more we know about Mother Earth, the more there is to learn; similar to the amazing, human body.

If you are happy to travel the nine kms in order to experience delightfully nurturing surroundings, I will do my nurturing best with the help of massage, Bowen therapy, spinal realignment and energy healing to realign you back to suitable feelings of pain free comfort.

A sense of humour is a wonderful thing to own.

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