



Chamber Chat

by Diana Roberts, president

Congratulations to the Hemp Embassy on the official launch of their on-line shop: shop.hempembassy.net and thanks to our local NSW member, Janelle Saffin, for coming out to cut the ribbon.

It was lovely to spend some time with Janelle and talk about Nimbin issues. There is no doubt that on-line shops are the way of the future for many businesses.

Rainbow Road Walking Trail

Following Lismore Council's reinstatement of the Rainbow Road walking trail into their operational plan, work has begun on mapping out a route for the second stage.

(You might remember that the first stage is on hold, awaiting support from two private landowners who have properties encumbered by the legal right of way that is integral to stage one).

When the last land release of the Alternative Way subdivisions occurs, a large piece of land that follows the gully from Rainbow Power Company through to Cecil Street will be dedicated to Lismore Council.

Building on plans completed by Robyn Francis (Djanbung Permaculture Gardens) over a decade ago, this land will provide the location for stage two of the walking track.

Having walked the proposed route mapped by Robyn many times in recent weeks, I have become more and more excited by the project's



Janelle Saffin and Diana Roberts on the steps of the HEMP Embassy
Photo courtesy Charlie Wood Photography

potential. The regeneration works in this area, undertaken by John Blatch and his team, are fantastic.

Once we have a proper walking track constructed through there, it will become a wonderful community asset. Not only will it be a great place for locals to go for a walk through a reforested environment, it will also provide a different focus for visitors to our village, hopefully encouraging them to stay longer.

Rainbow Road will be more than a walk. It will provide places to stop and learn about our history and our attachment to environment, there will be places for creative art and spaces for people to sit and enjoy the peace and quiet. It's an exciting project and I'll use Chamber Chat to keep you informed of its progress.

Visitor information options

Following closure of the Visitor Information Centre by Council, the Chamber has been conducting a survey seeking your ideas for replacement options.

We have received a small business grant from the NSW government to undertake this work and the survey results are currently being collated.

We will be holding a meeting in mid to late October (Covid permitting) to work up some of the ideas from the surveys into concrete outcomes; outcomes that we can either deliver ourselves or seek outside funding for. I will cover this in more detail in the next issue of the *GoodTimes*.

Border closures

Following the recent, much stricter closure of the border with Queensland, many main street village businesses are reporting a significant downturn in trade.

This is not surprising, but is indicative of how dependent we have become on visitors from SE Queensland.

Hopefully the restrictions will ease in coming months as, apart from the impact on businesses, they have also separated families, impacted heavily on cross-border business transactions and hampered access to medical services.

Shop locally

The first round of JobKeeper ends in September, alongside many of the business support packages.

While there is a round two of

JobKeeper, eligibility requirements will change and payments will be reduced.

A recent ABS survey has shown that when support measures are no longer available, business will likely decline, staffing will be reduced and we will be likely to see more businesses close.

Hopefully our local businesses will survive, so please shop locally whenever you can.

Be Covid safe

It is now compulsory for NSW businesses in the hospitality industry and indoor gyms to have a Covid-19 Safety Plan and to be registered as a Covid Safe business.

Inspectors are checking businesses, fines apply, and businesses that don't follow the rules may be shut down.

Even if your business is not in hospitality or an indoor gym, it is strongly advised that you complete a Covid-19 Safety Plan and register as a Covid Safe business to both ensure you stay open and show your customers you take their safety seriously.

If you're thinking about hosting an event in your area you need to make sure that you put in place Covid Safe measures and adhere to NSW Health physical distancing guidelines at all times. Covid Safe measures might include limiting the number of people, attendees remaining seated, hand sanitiser, attendee registration, preparing and adhering to a Covid-safe plan.

New hours for businesses

- Summerland Credit Union: 9.30am-4pm Monday to Friday. Closed for lunch 1-1.30pm
- Nimbin Village Pharmacy: Due to border restrictions and staffing issues, the pharmacy's hours will be Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9-5, Tuesday 9-1 and closed on Saturday.

Fire site DA for museum site

This development application is going to Council for determination on 8th September.

While agreement seems to have been reached on most issues, the amount of money to be contributed to provision of car parking off-site remains unresolved and will probably be determined by Councillors.

Support your local Chamber

Chamber membership is free for 2020-2021. We recently sent out letters to all businesses we could find email addresses for – and more. If you haven't told the Chamber you want to renew your membership, you will no longer be included in our information mail-outs (we don't want to bother you) and your business will not appear on our website.

It will never be too late to renew or join. Simply email: chamber@nimbinaustralia.com.au or communicate through our website: www.nimbinaustralia.com.au and we will sort it for you.

Chamber website

This month the Chamber's website is undergoing search engine optimisation to increase the quantity and quality of traffic to our site.

All member businesses will be in our website directory and there is an opportunity there for you to promote what you do.

If you haven't already, send us images (under 500mb each if possible) and some information about what you do and we will post it onto our site: www.nimbinaustralia.com.au

Special thanks go to committee member Sammi Allen (Nimbin Apothecary) for the work she is doing to keep the website current.

Until next month, enjoy this beautiful spring weather.

Nimbin Community Centre

by Teresa Biscoe, Co-ordinator

Sunday Market returns

Despite the difficulties created by the Covid restrictions, the Nimbin Weekend Markets resumed during August.

Our market Co-ordinator Steph (pictured) has ensured that she has all the latest guidelines and recommendations for managing the markets in a Covid-safe way.

The market was a little smaller than usual, but the weather was clear and sunny and the event was thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated by the village.

We hope that we can continue to have our weekend market, and that stallholders will continue to enjoy the support of locals.

Closure of Nimbin Visitor Information Centre

Villagers have probably noticed the closure by LCC of the Nimbin Visitor information Centre. This is part of the cost-cutting measures instituted by LCC to address their current financial crisis.

The Community Centre recognises the loss this represents to the village, especially at this time of economic pressure due to the pandemic. We fully support the action taken by the Chamber of Commerce to create and distribute a survey to the village.

This feedback will guide the Chamber toward a plan of action and a basis for seeking funding to replace the service.

We also continue to work with and support the Chamber's initiatives with the Mural restoration, under-awning lighting and Nimbin Walking Trail projects.

Weave & Mend 2020: October 2, 3 and 4

Our wonderful village weavers are again gathering for the annual Weave & Mend Event. This is to be held in Nimbin Community Centre Grounds, with organisers setting up in the Market Area for camping and workshops.

This family-friendly, low-key event welcomes all to come

and learn to use natural fibres and ancient weaving and fibre techniques to create your own beautiful baskets and objects.

NAIDOC 2020: Always was, always will be

The Community Centre is excited to be working with the NACRS and the Nimbin Cultural Centre to apply for funding and plan NAIDOC celebrations this year.

Due to the pandemic, our annual event has been delayed until Friday 13th November and will be scaled down to manage pandemic recommendations for the event.

We are planning that the NAIDOC march will still happen with attention to social distancing, and end



Photos: Sue Stock

at the Nimbin Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

The event following the march will be scaled back due to Covid Safety planning, and staged around the Cultural Centre and in the

Community Centre Grounds.

We are seeking volunteers from the community to assist on the day with set-up and pack-down, so please contact us at the Community Centre if you want to be involved.

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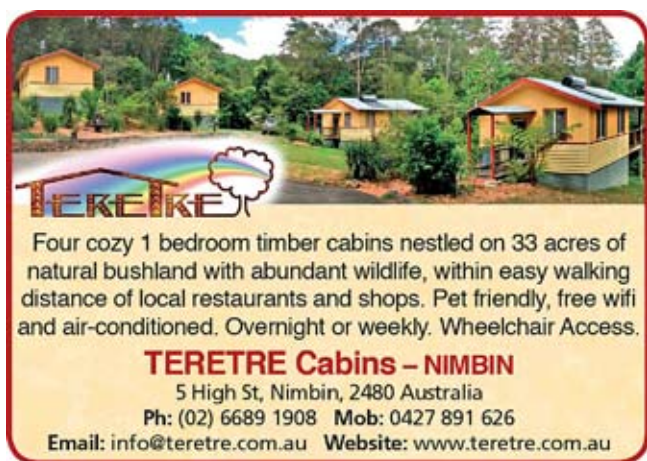


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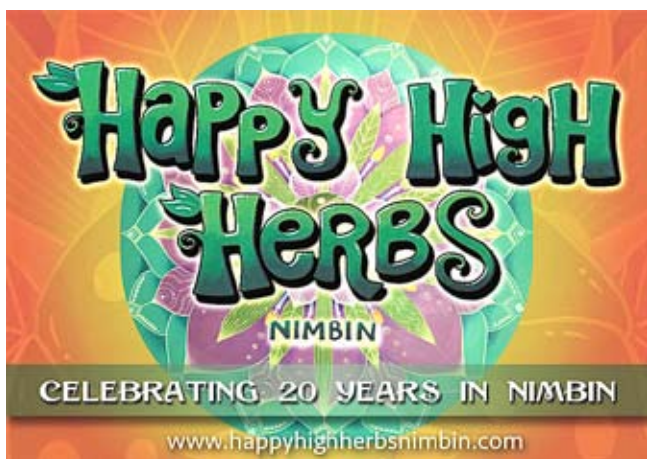
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Local Indigenous economic development initiative

In August last year, I attended the Indigenous Economic Development Forum in Darwin which consisted of two days of presentations and workshops from Government representatives, Indigenous business leaders and Indigenous organisations such as Supply Nation, which has set up a nationwide register of Indigenous owned businesses.

The forum's focus was on the importance of economic development to assist in closing the gap that still exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Business ownership and the ability to learn the skills to tender for Government contracts was a key theme throughout the forum.

Since 2015, the Federal Government has had an Indigenous Procurement Policy which has set a target of 3% of all government contracts to be awarded to Indigenous owned businesses. Hardly a radical move, considering Indigenous Australians make up about 3% of the population.

For a business to qualify it must be at least 50% Indigenous owned.

The National Agreement



by Cr Jeff Johnson,
Ballina Council

on Closing the Gap has 16 national socio-economic targets across a range of indicators (see: closingthegap.gov.au).

The best way to bridge the economic divide, which has obvious flow on effects, is to increase the number of Indigenous owned and operated businesses in our local area or region.

I think Local Governments should also seek to achieve (or exceed) similar targets and actively support local and regionally based Indigenous businesses.

While it has taken me a year to bring this forward as a policy position with Ballina Council, I'm proud to say that my proposal for a Local Indigenous Economic Development Initiative was supported unanimously at our August meeting.

The resolution was as follows:

1. That Council acknowledges and confirms its support for the Federal Government's Indigenous Procurement Policy targets of 3% of the number of contracts and at least 1% of the value of contracts being awarded to Indigenous businesses each financial year, based on a three-year rolling average.
2. That Council liaise with local Aboriginal organisations and employer groups with the aim of increasing the level of involvement of local Aboriginal owned businesses in Council's procurement and tender processes.

Ballina Council can assist local Indigenous businesses to apply for government contracts/tenders with the aim of increasing the number of locally-owned Indigenous businesses, increasing the percentage of Council procurement being awarded to Indigenous owned businesses and to grow local employment opportunities and economic development.

Ballina Council recently adopted a Local Strategic Planning Statement which includes an action to

develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Jali Local Aboriginal Land Council. Indigenous procurement opportunities will now be considered as part of this MOU.

Furthermore, October is Small Business Month, and there is an opportunity for Ballina Council to host a regional tender writing skills workshop to assist local businesses to tender Government (Federal, State and local) contracts and grants.

Clarence Valley Council is looking to co-ordinate a series of workshops, but if there is enough interest locally (Ballina, Lismore, Byron and Tweed), then I'm sure we can do the same here.

While I'm particularly interested in supporting and encouraging Indigenous owned businesses, these workshops would be available for all business owners who wanted to attend.

If your business would be interested in attending or finding out more information, please email me at: jeff.johnson@ballina.nsw.gov.au

It would be great if all local Councils can support this initiative and turn the 'policy targets' into reality.

Uranium mining is a dead end for NSW

by Abigail Boyd, NSW MP and
Greens NSW Mining Spokesperson

It's nothing new to see corporate interests using disasters as an opportunity to push through unpopular policies.

So it was not a huge surprise to find out that, while the rest of us have been busy adjusting to the everyday realities of living through a pandemic, the nuclear and mining lobbyists have been working to reverse NSW's 30-year old ban on uranium mining.

Uranium mining is a dead end for NSW: nuclear energy and uranium mining are dirty, dangerous and obsolete.

Nuclear power is *not* part of our future energy mix. As much as the Minerals Council hates to hear it, our future energy sources will not be reliant on the mining industry.

Nuclear power is simply not a useful part of a modern energy mix. Nuclear power production peaked in 2006, and because it's slow to react to changes in supply and demand, it works poorly with solar and wind, the real energy superstars of the world's future energy supply.

Nuclear power is slow to build. It takes, on average, 9.6 years to build a nuclear power station. By the time any nuclear power plants could be approved in NSW – something that would also require an overturning of the Federal ban on nuclear power – the community and the market will have left the idea of nuclear far behind.

There is a real risk then that any uranium mined in NSW will end up being exported, enabling production of nuclear weapons. Because, despite the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty,



Photo courtesy Abigail Boyd

the export of uranium to countries with nuclear weapons allows them to utilise their own or other sources of uranium for use in weapons, while using Australian uranium for power.

Nuclear power is of course *not* "emissions free". Mining, processing, plant building, storage, clean-up and waste disposal all produce large quantities of dangerous greenhouse gas emissions. It's slightly cleaner than coal and gas, but they are no longer the yardsticks. Compare it to wind, to solar, to other emerging cutting-edge renewable technology such as geothermal and wave, and nuclear doesn't stand a chance.

Uranium mining produces vast quantities of toxic waste. The Olympic Dam mine in South Australia has produced more than 180 million tonnes of radioactive tailings, covering an area of 9.6 square kilometres, one-third larger than the Melbourne CBD, and around 30 metres or 10 storeys high. And those tailings will need to be stored for 10,000 years, according to Australian safety standards.

There are almost no jobs to be found in uranium mining. The real jobs creation blueprint can be found in the *Beyond Zero Emissions Million Jobs Plan*

released recently, written by scientists, engineers, and economic and technology experts. Long-term, clean, secure jobs throughout Australia that reactivate the economy and reskill our workforce.

Experiences in other states show that uranium mining is environmentally devastating. Open cut mines destroy ecosystems, decimate the irreplaceable cultural lands of First Nations peoples, and are impossible to remediate.

Nuclear power uses vast quantities of water, totally unsuitable for the driest continent on earth already ravaged with drought and water mismanagement.

We know from coal mining that mining companies and regulators have repeatedly failed to contain toxic waste, clean-up the damage, restore ecosystems, and protect our land and water. Why would we trust them to be responsible with an even more toxic resource?

This is a future no-one wants, mining a product the world no longer needs. It has no social licence and it never will.

Guess what is clean, safe, affordable, and highly prized by the community? Renewables.

The rest of the world is embracing the renewables revolution – it's time we did too.

Cross-border issues continue to dominate our lives

by Janelle Saffin MP, Member for Lismore

I have been lobbying overtime on behalf of Nimbin and other local communities, seeking exemptions and clarity from the Queensland Government since it closed its border with NSW on 8th August to contain the spread of Covid-19.

While my priority is ensuring people's access to specialist medical treatment, I am advocating for exemptions based on compassionate grounds, or to help businesses, farmers, the construction industry, families with children boarding at Queensland schools and NSW residents relocating to Queensland, navigate the restrictions.

These are all important issues because they affect people's lives and livelihoods.

Hundreds of my constituents have contacted me in recent weeks seeking assistance with quite complex, serious and sometimes heart-wrenching medical issues, and I have taken up all with Queensland deputy premier and health minister Dr Steven Miles and his NSW counterpart health minister Brad Hazzard's advisers.

The QLD Government Border restriction direction (no. 12) makes it clear what is possible. However at time of writing, there is still work to do, including the exemption of health workers from Queensland to work outside the border zone bubble.



Janelle Saffin in a hook-up with NSW Cross Border Commissioner James McTavish, fellow State MPs and local mayors.

I have lobbied hard for our farmers and agricultural sector, noting that there has been success on this front. Queensland's chief health officer has issued a class exemption under Border restriction direction (no. 12)

for farmers and agribusiness workers needing to move between Queensland and NSW to perform essential agribusiness services or farming activities, such as tending to livestock or crops. The exemption commenced on 22nd August for one month.

As soon as I saw Urbenville (postcode 2475) was not included in the bubble zone, I put a strong case to make sure that it was. Now it is done, along with Torrington and Stannum (both in postcode 2371).

I have been in regular contact with NSW Cross Border Commissioner James McTavish in trying to deal with a myriad of cross-border issues, and he has been hard at it.

I have made representations to NSW deputy premier and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade John Barilaro, asking him to consider the idea of a border zone further south with NSW checkpoints to include larger swathes of the Northern Rivers.

Importantly, I also wrote to Mr Barilaro, who has a new remit for all cross-border issues, welcoming the NSW Government's \$45 million grant program designed to lessen the negative economic impacts on NSW businesses of its decision to close the NSW-Victoria border or southern border.

I told Mr Barilaro I recently heard that he would announce something similar for the small businesses impacted by the northern

border closure. Such a program would be a welcome helping hand for many struggling small businesses here.

I respectfully asked him to consider offering a similar generous grant program for businesses located in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) within the border zone – Tweed Shire, Kyogle and Tenterfield Shire – but to also extend it to businesses in Lismore City (including Nimbin), Byron Shire, Ballina Shire, Richmond Valley and Clarence Valley LGAs.

My letter concluded: "Deputy Premier, we both know that regardless of the location, the current border closures with Victoria and Queensland have negatively impacted local businesses.

"For small businesses impacted by the northern border closure, this program would help with their day-to-day costs, keep their businesses open and keep people in their jobs."

In the media, I made it clear that I am asking for extra targeted support for Northern Rivers and Northern Tablelands businesses over and above pre-existing Covid-19 support measures outlined by Finance and Small Business Minister Damien Tudehope.

These are New South Wales residents we are talking about, and the NSW Government is responsible for them and to them.

On the same Page



by Kevin Hogan MP, Member for Page

Honouring our World War II veterans

15th August 2020 marked 75 years since the end of World War II. To commemorate this, I have been presenting our Veterans with a Commemorative Medallion and certificate. It has been a privilege to hear their stories.

Rex Page (pictured) has lived in Kyogle his whole adult life. He joined the Air Force the day he turned 18 and was deployed to Port Moresby during World War II. Rex married Audrey Burton after returning from war.

Rex bought and ran a barbershop in Kyogle as soon as he returned. He worked in the shop until he was 89. He is also a life member of the swimming club, played local cricket and golf, and was active in the Anglican church.

It was an honour to present Rex with this Medallion. Thank you to all our Veterans for your service. Lest We Forget.

Qld border closure is not okay

People are being denied access for medical appointments and other urgent reasons. This is simply unacceptable.

I have written to the Queensland State Premier and the Cross-Border Commissioner seeking further urgent changes and exemptions.

Northern NSW is not Victoria and is not part of the Greater Sydney region. We should be allowed easier access for medical and other urgent reasons. We are not a hot spot with this virus. The closure has not been recommended by the Chief Medical Officer.

Pacific Highway upgrade update

Great to see another section of the highway opened recently. 15-kilometres from the Iluka turnoff (Mororo) to Devils Pulpit is now open.

More exciting openings in September. 34-kilometres from the Woodburn/Broadwater/Wardell bypass, 7-kilometres between Harwood and Mororo, and 2-kilometres between Maclean and Harwood.

This will make 74-kilometres of opened dual carriageway from Glenugie to Devils Pulpit.

Survey to document border closure disruptions

The Qld government closed its border with NSW to protect their residents from Covid-19 transmissions coming from travellers from the southern states.

However, this hard border has left many of us unable to travel for medical appointments on the Gold Coast or Brisbane, others – including many health workers and police – unable to go to work across the border, and contractors unable to fulfil obligations.

While there are many anecdotes circulating in media and social media about hardships people are experiencing in getting exemptions to cross the border, Lismore City Council wants our community to tell them what real impacts the border closure has had on our lives, our jobs and businesses.

The short survey will provide concrete evidence of the hardship and disruption the border closure and quarantine requirement is causing to our community and to our businesses.

This evidence can then be presented to local MPs and the Cross Border Commissioner and enable them to lobby for more exemptions for our residents or to extend the "border bubble" further south to include Lismore and Ballina Council areas.

The survey is open until 4th September and can be found here: www.lismore.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/news/page.asp?p=DOC-QQB-64-48-20

Roads

The 2020/2021 roads reconstruction program is now available to view on Council's website at: yoursay.lismore.nsw.gov.au/lismoreroadworksprogram

Included in this year's program are the following works in the Nimbin area:

- Blue Knob Road Stage 2: 200m east of Salkeld Road, funded by the NSW Government;
- Nimbin Road: Various sections from 500m north of Wilson Street to 2.2km north of Bishops



by Cr Darlene Cook

- Creek Road. Funded by the NSW Government in association with Lismore City Council;
- Nimbin Road: Intersection of Boyle Road, funded by the NSW Government;
 - Nimbin Road: 400m east of Stony Chute Road, funded by the Australian Federal Government;
 - Stony Chute Road: Various sections from Nimbin Road to Campbell Road, funded by the NSW Government.

Resignations

During August two Councillors resigned their positions on Council. Greg Bennett, who lives near Nimbin, has sold his farm and is leaving the area. Greg has been a representative for his farming community for the past eight years.

He had previously advised us that he would not be standing for another term at the local government elections, which have been deferred. Due to his family's plans, he has resigned as he is unable to serve for the next year.

Gianpiero Battista has been a Lismore City Councillor for 12 years. He too had indicated that he may not stand for re-election for another term. His decision to resign now, rather than serve the final 12 months of this term was a personal decision.

Both men have represented the community with dedication, passion, determination and with the intention of achieving the very best outcomes for their community that they could. We all wish them the very best for their future endeavours.

Fire site DA

The amended application for the redevelopment of the old Nimbin museum site at 60-62 Cullen Street will come to Council at the September meeting.

This DA was scheduled to be reported at the February meeting, however agreement on the draft terms of consent could not be reached, and the developers asked for the report to be withdrawn while they reviewed their position.

One of the sticking points has been the requirement to offset the 16 car parking spaces that the DA proposal would require to be provided.

Everyone agreed at the community charette last year that car parking should be offsite and there have been suggestions about works to be done in the western car park in lieu of provision of actual parking spaces.

The current proposal coming to Council does not have any provision for a contribution towards offsetting the car parking requirements.

All the details of the proposal can be viewed on Council's website in the business papers for the September meeting.

Council meeting

Also coming to the September Council meeting will be setting the formal Council monthly meeting schedule for the next year and the election of a deputy mayor for the next 12 months.

The meeting is live-streamed via council's website and Facebook page, and will be held at 6pm on Tuesday 8th September.

I have really enjoyed my term as deputy mayor. It has been a challenging and rewarding experience, learning new skills in chairing meetings, being interviewed for television and radio, and formally representing Council at a variety of functions. I hope the next incumbent enjoys their term as much as I have mine.

I can be contacted by phone on 0427-895-316 or email: darlene.cook@lismore.nsw.gov.au

Democracy shudders when the thin blue line dissolves

Remember back to 1st June 2020. Across our Facebook and email and even television screens was the image of a young first nations person giving a police officer a bit of lip.

We have all seen and heard the video evidence a hundred times. It is very clear what happened: the young person took offence at something said by officer Plod, and – from a distance, and with other police much closer – threatens Plod with hypothetical harm. Words spoken while walking off. Words only, no gestures or raised fist.

Plod loses his cool, moves rapidly toward the young person and grabs his arms. There is no apparent resistance. Plod then, while holding him from behind, leg sweeps him face first into the ground.

This is an assault on a young person. An arrest is only *not* an assault if it is reasonably necessary, and if reasonable force is used. Neither is apparent in that video, and particularly the leg sweep was utterly unjustifiable when there was no resistance, and there were other police around. I have seen really serious injury result from that type of force.

This young man was arrested, charged and taken to the hospital. The charges against him were rapidly dropped.

Even in the United States, the officer might have simply been charged. But not here, of course. We have an internal inquiry – police led, no less – which has yielded absolutely nothing in over three months. Three months! What are they waiting for? You can bet Nimbin to a bud that if you or I had assaulted a young person like that, charges would be laid within minutes or hours.

So why have no charges been laid? Why has the investigation not finished after three months? In my view the most likely reason is that the delay is deliberate and specifically designed to allow the heat to go out of the situation. There is no evidence to gather, or witnesses to interview, or scientific evidence to analyse.

The video is the beginning and the end of whether there is reasonable suspicion of crime. Plod should simply be charged, like anyone else would have been, and then it is up to the courts. If Plod has a legal defence or strong mitigating

circumstances, then the judiciary can determine his fate.

Another reason for the delay perhaps is the approach of the Police Commissioner, who is the boss of Plod, but also of the police conducting the investigation. What should the Police Commissioner say in such a circumstance? Nothing.

It is bad enough that the police investigate police, but the last thing you would want is for the Police Commissioner to be publicly signalling and prejudging. People might lose faith in the independence of the investigation. Gasp.

While many in the legal profession were jumping up and down wondering why charges had not simply been laid and the matter left for the courts, even Gladys was voicing her concern saying: “We still have a long way to go in our country.”

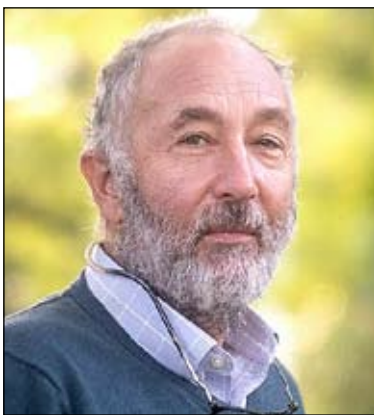
What does the Police Commissioner do? Well he does a radio interview on police-sympathetic 2GB and straddles several barbed-wire fences. He apologises and says the officer’s actions were “incorrect”. I guess that’s a long way from saying that it was child abuse, but so far so good.

He then goes on to say: “The fact that this officer doesn’t have a chequered history and he has been in the force for three and a half years, if the complaint is sustained against him, you would have to say he has had a bad day... I’m sure most of the community wouldn’t want to see someone who’s made a mistake sacked after making such a commitment to the community.”

Well, there we have it. If that isn’t signalling the result, I don’t know what is. A reprimand and fined tuppence with ten minutes in the naughty corner for the “mistake”. Because, after all, three and a half years is really, like, a big big commitment.

This is the sign of a Police Commissioner who does not know his place. Especially as he doesn’t seem to understand that an apology means nothing if you belittle and minimise an assault on a young aboriginal person in the context of a “bad day at work”. Or maybe his audience was meant to be the troops, to let them know that he’s got their back as long as your service record is more than three minutes long.

Either way, it is more than just bad form. A criminal justice system is



by David Heilpern

tested when a participant is also the potential defendant. The public lose faith quickly when it is one rule for an insider, and one for the rest of the community.

And this is just one example of where Police Commissioner has crossed the line – others include the Don Harwin affair, Black Lives Matter rallies, pill testing, strip searching of children and of course drug driving. I will detail these in columns to come.

Why is this important? Because democracy shudders when such lines are crossed.

David Heilpern was a Magistrate in NSW for 21 years, and has now returned to private practice.

Can cannabis cure Corona?

by Michael Balderstone

When I typed Covid-19 and Cannabis into Google I got 306 million things to read, but I thought I’d have a quick look at just a few to see if there really is anything solid I could find.

One thing is certain: sales of pot are booming around the globe, even here in Oz legal prescriptions are breaking records every month. In America and Canada, dispensaries are often selling out and demand is unprecedented.

Well, if you are stuck at home in iso watching Netflix, that makes a lot of sense. But as well as that, we know it’s a top herb for anxiety, which happens to be booming alongside Corona.

Of course money for research is severely limited, though that is changing fast in North America. In Toronto, researchers are saying: “THC and CBD have been shown to have pain-relieving, sleep inducing, and anti-inflammatory properties so on your sick day it can reduce body aches, ease swelling of the airways and help you sleep.”

The Israelis are at the forefront of global research on pot and are looking into “CBD-loaded exosomes which hold the potential to provide a highly synergistic effect of anti-inflammatory properties and help in the recovery of infected lung cells.”

All very handy if you get Corona, but what about prevention?

Researchers, again in Canada where weed is legal and they are looking at cancer treatments with pot, say the plant may provide resistance to the virus. They think that some strains of weed reduce the virus’ ability to enter the lungs where it takes hold, reproduces and spreads. The Corona virus needs a receptor to enter the human host, known as ACE2, and weed seems to discourage the receptor.

Researchers in England where you can buy CBD across the counter in the corner store, say they have found strains of cannabis that could prevent and then treat Corona.

“We were really stunned at first, and then we were really happy,” said one of the researchers at the University of Lethbridge. Again they said the strains appear to affect the ACE2 pathways that the virus uses as a gateway into the body. Cannabis can reduce the virus’ entry points by up to 70% according to them.

They even suggested that pot could be used to develop preventative treatments in the form of a mouthwash or throat gargle. Great for the police saliva testing drivers, not!

I even found a video of three young children smoking to “fight coronavirus”. WTF! And numerous stories that nicotine might also help

stop the virus hooking onto your lungs. Of course there’s endless advice that smoking anything damages your lungs and weakens your immunity, which would be pretty much the mainstream sensible advice.

Edibles however, do no such damage and there is general agreement that getting enough sleep and managing stress are both essential in keeping our immune systems strong, and that is one of weed’s specialties.

One thought I keep coming back to is: the three most common health ailments that coincide with people catching Corona are obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes. All of which pot is generally considered good for treating.

The other nagging thought I have in these Covid times is we hear the nation’s top health advisors on the news every hour telling us not to touch each other and so on, but there’s little advice on it being a good time to keep our immune system strong.

Not much talk about eating healthy wholefood (much less organic), drinking less booze (which is also booming like pot), or getting plenty of fresh air and exercise (sunshine = vitamin D). Common sense, practical intelligence, might even be science-based by now.

They seem to be just waiting for the saviour called Vax.



HEMP Embassy opens on-line store

by Michael Balderstone

Nimbin’s HEMP Embassy has used the Covid lockdown time to create an online store.

HEMP Embassy president Michael Balderstone says it was a group effort during the lockdown, but is particularly grateful to Nimbin resident Dr Geoff Lynne who took on the job of setting up the shop on-line at: shop.hempembassy.net

“Geoff moved to Nimbin with his family 20 years ago, and like many in this extraordinary community, brought considerable skills with him. With his wife Helen they ran an IT corporate consulting business in Sydney for years,” said Michael.

The on-line store was officially

launched by our Lismore MLA, Janelle Saffin, on Friday 14th August in a small opening ceremony at the Nimbin shop.

Janelle has had a long association with Nimbin and was pleased to be opening a new small business venture in these difficult times.

“Janelle has always been unafraid of Nimbin, and we appreciate her cutting the ribbon for us,” said Michael.

After the opening, Janelle and Michael sat down for a live-streamed session where they discussed some difficult issues like saliva testing drivers for cannabis, ACT pot legislation, why medical CBD is so expensive and hard to get, and the upcoming NZ referendum on legalising cannabis.

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Apprehension of violence 2

by John Adams

I’ve breached an Order of the Federal Circuit Court: “...one (1) affidavit of evidence in chief to be filed and served no later than 4pm on [four days ago]”. The trial’s in two weeks.

Then the other side emails me; the father’s affidavit is filed and served, three days late, so we’ve both breached the Order.

I’ll finish it when I get back from an urgent drive to Sydney and back. In for a sheep as a lamb.

An important client arrives with a problem. He wants to evict the mate of a deceased shareholder, who’s there on a handshake deal with said deceased. It’s an MO without rules, so there’s no useful paperwork. Solicitors need paperwork.

The intended evictee has caused my client extreme anxiety. He’s been asked to go away but won’t. No-one else wants him there either.

“He’s trespassing, isn’t he?” my client asks, “You know, like ‘trespassers will be prosecuted’?”

“Well,” I sagely reply. “Does the land have a fence all the way round?”

He shakes his head. I explain that prosecution’s not the way. Even if he’s there



without legal excuse, if he’s convicted under the *Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901*, the maximum penalty is five penalty units (\$550).

Maybe the handshake deal would look to police like a possibly legal excuse. And there has to be a fence anyway. There’s no lease agreement, so the Tenancy Tribunal’s no good.

If he was rich there might be options. Like suing for damages, if there were any, which there aren’t. Or getting the Supreme Court to grant an injunction ordering the trespass to stop. His sleepless nights imagining what might happen as he awaits judgment is not something the law can do much about.

So, all I can think of is an AVO. Not to assault etc and not to go within 100 metres of the boundary. And have witnesses around at all times after he’s been served.

I draft the grounds of the application for him. Then a friend calls about an AVO duel with the next-door neighbour. This is weird. I hardly ever do AVOs. Too much material with no time for the old subconscious to do its bit.

I’m about to go into trial, with weak evidence, to end a five-year fight over this child’s future, until she’s 18. Which, given the science, the carbon budget, tipping points, feedback loops and so on, is absurd. Is it ethical to pretend, as a professional, that it’s not? I apprehend far greater violence than the legislation assumes.

Then a bit of neat timing makes me wonder again. I’ve nearly finished the affidavit, just need some corroborative evidence that he’s as controlling as she says, when an email arrives from the registry. The subpoenaed material is there to view.

In the foot-high pile I find one useful page, a letter to a court from her counsellor. I quote from it for my last paragraph; “I am convinced he does not live in fear of her in any way and that he has taken advantage of the AVO system.”

Printed, scanned, emailed, signed, scanned, emailed back, filed and served.

Sorry business

by Aniko Papp

After working in remote indigenous communities in the NT, it became evident that the one event that touches every man, woman and child there, is sorry business.

It means more than a funeral. It is a gathering of the clan group, the family and often part or all of a community or communities, to celebrate the life and mourn the death of a loved one.

First thing for me to learn about death, was never to mention the name of the person who passed unless the family said it was okay. Carrying out legal work in say, Estates, poses challenges to obtaining information about the deceased. Writing the name down is acceptable, however in speaking of the deceased, one must be circumspect using references like “your dad” or “my sister”.

Second lesson for me to learn was that it was very important and indeed a cause of many family disputes, if someone didn’t attend sorry business. The event, which could last a week or two, might take place thousands of km from where that someone is, but you are expected back there, on country. Getting time off work or commitments has to be negotiated.

One issue alone for the white community to understand is how many uncles, mothers or fathers a person has. An uncle might not be one’s father’s biological brother, but rather an elder, or an uncle due to the skin relationship. Indigenous people don’t much care whether or not us white folk understand.

Missing sorry business results in no end of grief on the next visit or phone call home. So, often indigenous mourners don’t bother getting leave or explaining, they just go.

I got involved in disputes on the vexed issue of where the deceased is to be buried. The surviving partner often wants to decide, but an elder or parent would overrule. I explained that white man’s law meant that the next of kin like a surviving partner may have the legal say, but that this is blackfella law to be resolved via the family. Being embroiled in a sorry business dispute between clashing families was a sure way of me not being unable to engage in half the community on my next bush court trip there.

Bodies are held in the morgue until all the family decides, often after many calls and meetings, as to when and where the funeral will be held. Often held up to a month ahead, the planning as to where and how



the burial will take place, what food will be there, who will come and from where in Australia, is a logistical feat.

Cultural taboos reign during sorry business. I recall funerals for a man’s partner and mother-in-law held on the same day and same place. The grieving widower was unable to approach his wife’s casket as it lay beside her mother’s. Custom forbade him from speaking to his mother-in-law during her life, and this embargo continued after her demise, even if he was unable to go near his young wife’s grave.

Then there is smoking the deceased’s home and belongings, at least such belongings which aren’t buried with them. The common practice of interring a deceased’s wallet, purse, ID and clothing with the corpse, leads to immense legal difficulties for their estate.

I once visited a sorry business camp. It had been set up for a few weeks in a client’s home, pending the relocation of the body from the town of death back to their own country for the funeral. I received permission to attend. Visitors came to pay their respects. Neatly arranged tents, chairs and tables scattered around the backyard, housing relatives trickling in from hundreds of km around. The families took turns in comforting, feeding, caring for each other and looking after the tribe of kids.

Crying and loud wailing was okay. Just being sad was okay. So was simply sharing stories. The strong ones took over the planning for the funeral which was to take place on country, respecting the wishes of the closest family/kin as they did so. This leaves mourners free to just be.

This grieving process is something we, in our white community, could learn from.

Hempstone bead-crafting workshop in Nimbin

Hempstone is an air-drying moulding material, made in Nimbin from hemp fibre and water.

Besides its beauty, it is bio-degradable, renewable, vegan and super strong.

A workshop is being held this month for people to learn to transform hemp fibre, water and pigments into beautiful beads and jewellery.

The workshop will be held on Saturday 19th September, 10am – 1pm at Synergetic Systems, 87 Cecil Street,



Nimbin.

Cost: \$40 – materials and drinks included.

No bookings are needed.

For more information, contact: martinernegg@gmail.com

Unda Corona Law

Scomo has talked me into joining his elite CW team in Canberra. Covid Watch if you’re not with it.

He wants to use my Undacua skills, and rented me a pad in the capital so I can grow my two plants. They’re not allowed inside but that’s sorted with a giant plastic grow tent and two leccie blankets. I could nearly sleep in there naked and it’s been snowing nearby. The plants of course are booming. Brought my own sativa seeds down from hippy central.

Where by the way Pipe’s commune is in a minor panic about my new Boss taking away their money supply if they don’t wear the Oxford jabs. Pipe himself doesn’t seem to mind, even saying it’ll make things real again instead of living like spoilt little rich kids off daddy’s cheque.

The single mums and the old hippy pensioners aren’t so sure though. They’ve taken all their money out of the banks and stashed it in the caves, figuring Scomo will grab anything saved as well if they won’t vax.

It adds up to quite a stash, I can tell you. Enough to keep them in essentials for at least a decade if they give up tobacco, one feral who used to be a teller in a bank worked

out. No one is worried in the slightest about getting Covid, but they’re terrified of the new regulations on the horizon.

And so they should be. Down in the Big House I have endless freedom with the Gold Pass and find myself on the inside of a river of supposed secrets that are not meant to leave the building. Like everyone knows the Dutts has never really left the Queensland Force and acts like he’s already got the top job. Scomo remains endlessly nervous, waiting for a knife in the back.

Neither of them are actually very bright it seems but the Potato just keeps his head down and his mouth grim, and shows no sign of compromising. He wants unlimited powers for the Force, no jab no pay goes without saying, jailing the unmasked is already well into advance planning. You think, where will they all fit, our jails are already full. The MCG is ready to go if needed I believe, along with ANZ Stadium.

But even his staff helping him make these

plans think it’s a big joke and agree most of it will go up in smoke. Several of them actually do smoke weed and live in Canberra; they’re allowed to of course. We hang out after work and they talk freely after a few cones.

The words “total control freak” come up so often we’ve shortened it to a weird sound a bit like a catbird. TCF is what it is but it sounds like... ticcup, or maybe it should be spelt with no i, tccuf. Anyway, we know what we mean and it gets used a lot.

Not-so-bright Scomo is clearly on edge around the Potato’s steely gaze and doesn’t stay longer than necessary. He knows I hang out there a bit with my new stoner mates and demands I tell him everything I hear.

Being a good Unda I do my reports, but I had to warn him the Potato knows I’m Unda also, he has the copper’s nose for it which Scomo will never undastand.

So he can feed me false information and I’m sure he does, knowing full well I’ll tell Scott, as he calls him, everything. The way

he says Scott is downright frightening. The two t’s are emphasised with a little spit at the end. Extremely uncorona behaviour but no-one dare say a word.

Well, poor old Scomo got really confused when I told him about the false feeds as we call them in the trade, and now doesn’t know what or who to believe. Finally, he said it was my job to sort out what was real and what was not, the sheep from the goats, he actually said. So I just... do my best, and guess.

When I talk about it to Pipe he undastands too well where this might all end up, but nothing seems to worry him. We have to trust the change we know we need to have, he keeps saying. This is the first wake-up call, don’t worry, there’s much more to come. All will be revealed in time, the show’s just warming up.

Fancy words the ferals and faeries have been hearing for years that don’t have much impact any more. And they know Pipe is microdosing on goldies every day, so nothing worries him much anyway.

The upshot is new gardens are going in and the orchards are in perfect nick from being over-loved. It’s comforting for me to know it’s all there if I really need it one day.