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ANZAC Day 2021 - Remember and connect

by Matt Brumley

What an odd day ANZAC Day 2020 was! The normal dawn services, commemorations and marches were dispensed with and we were deprived of the opportunity to support and participate in some of our most significant national rituals.

For many Australians and New Zealanders, ANZAC Day is profoundly meaningful. It holds a unique and remarkable place in our national psyches and remains a powerful element of our self-image, although it is subtly different for our Kiwi mates than it is for us.

And, while ANZAC Day is not without its dissenters, like military service generally, the vast majority rightly put aside their differences on the day in a spirit of goodwill and remembrance. It's an important day and it's everyone's day.

In 2015, I wrote a short piece about the ANZAC Day Dawn Service for this newspaper. I chose that topic because it was the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings and my aim was to provide just a little deeper understanding of a ritual that we so often just take for granted.

Back then I noted that the service has "...no prescribed format, but its origins lay in the moments of comradeship shared at the beginning of each day on the battlefield where soldiers 'stood to' in anticipation of enemy attacks, or readied themselves to attack. Ironically, these moments could be among the most peaceful of the soldiers' day."

"So it was at the conclusion of the Great War, Australian veterans commenced the annual ritual of the Dawn Service with simple gatherings where often only the veterans themselves attended. The earliest ceremonies were frequently just a solemn couple of minutes of silence to remember fallen mates and re-connect with those who had survived. We, of course, continue that tradition wherever we are, and circumstances permitting, whenever we can."

Our community has gone for two years without a full commemoration, which made great sense for the community's well-being, but did affect ANZAC Day.

While many community members found creative ways to gather virtually, our traditional public gatherings, powerful symbols of remembrance and connectedness, were greatly missed.



Piper James Alexander leads the Nimbin march in 2019

ANZAC Day services in Nimbin Sunday 25th April 2021

- Dawn Service: 5.30am at Nimbin District Memorial, cnr Sibley and Cullen Streets.
- March and mid-morning Commemoration: March form-up 10.30am at Nimbin Hospital car park, Cullen St, step-off: 10.40am. Service at Nimbin District Memorial commences 10.45am approx.

Remembrance is pretty simple; pause for a few moments, clear away other thoughts and remember the Aussies and Kiwis who made great sacrifices for their people in times of conflict. Sacrifices come in many forms. The preparedness to willingly give one's life is arguably the greatest sacrifice, but there are many current and former service women and men who carry a great burden from their service; some physical, but for many it's the invisible scars of their experiences that remain etched in their memory.

Nonetheless, simple acts of remembrance allow us to honour those who have died and extend a simple gesture of appreciation to those still among us, whether serving or retired.

Connectedness, on the other hand, is a little trickier. The physical act of being together on ANZAC day is very much

what defines it, but there are many layers of connectedness. Connectedness to a community of old Service colleagues; connectedness within suburban or small town communities; connectedness between the Australian community and our Defence Force; connectedness to our history and connectedness within the units of today's Defence Force.

Even if it is only temporary, like on ANZAC Day itself, it's a reminder that the Defence Force is not only from the community, but of the community, and its members will eventually return to the community. It is the day that consciously brings veterans and ex-service men and women together with their community. It is the chance to re-connect, reminisce and share through conversations that only they can have, face to face, over a beer or a coffee.

In 2020, we missed profoundly our ANZAC Day gatherings, so this year cherish the opportunity to again remember and connect. Remember the original ANZACs and their descendants – the soldiers, sailors and airmen and women of other past conflicts and of today. And connect, connect with those descendants who are proud to share the traditions built on the foundations of the ANZAC legend, and who are proud to build upon a heritage of service and sacrifice for their community.

Forestry Corp presses ahead with unsustainable logging program

by Chris Gambian

The Nature Conservation Council has renewed calls for an end to native forest logging in State forests following revelations that up to 30% of the quality timber in some regions was destroyed by the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires.

The losses detailed in a Forestry Corporation report dated December 2020 but only made public on 26th March after a parliamentary inquiry forced its release.



This report shows yet again that logging in NSW State forests is both financially unviable and ecological unsustainable.

The government now needs to outline its plan to transition out of native forest logging to a sustainable plantation based industry.

The EPA slowed Forestry

Corp's destructive behaviour by enforcing post-fire logging rules, but the corporation has now gone rogue, defying EPA controls and resuming pre-fire logging practices.

The NSW Government must resume control of the state's public forests and manage them for all of us, not just the big resources companies.

The Coalition government's decision in 2012 to let a state-owned corporation manage our forests has cost taxpayers millions and degraded a

priceless community asset. It is time to end this failed experiment.

Our public forests are in serious decline because of decades of unsustainable logging, and the Black Summer bushfires were a massive hit. They must be given time to recover.

Logging at rates Forestry Corp wants to set will convert our public forests from stands of big old trees to thickets of saplings destined for the chip mill. There is nothing sustainable about that.



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Is street lighting in rural locations appropriate?



by Gwen Trimble

Be warned, this situation may be replicated anywhere in the Lismore Local Government Area.

It came as a surprise when 17 street lights were installed on a 23-lot development on Gungas Road, 3.7 kms out of Nimbin village. Until then, only the village streets were lit.

We learnt, because this development was classed as 'Large Lot Rural Residential', the Lismore Development Control Plan (DCP) required the developer provide "adequate street lighting for the development as required by the Australian Standard".

This requirement will also apply to the development at 4 Blue Knob Road, Nimbin and any other similar-sized DA's being processed.

There is uncertainty regarding when this requirement was adopted. Council says it has been part of their DCP for some years but as there are no street lights on the Tulsi Lane development, it cannot have been in the DCP when that

was approved.

Community representative bodies lodged submissions with Council, arguing street lighting in a rural location was inappropriate, undesirable to residents who valued their view of the night sky, created light pollution and will affect the travel of nocturnal animals and insects.

They cited examples where current urban planning best practice is to protect nocturnal animals and insects from light pollution and create dark sky reserves.

Sydney's Waverley Council are adopting this policy, Northern Beaches Council are looking at something similar and the WA Planning Commission released a draft policy designed to reduce light pollution, calling the measures "cost neutral" and says it plans to treat its night sky as an asset.

There is strong evidence to support less rather than more lighting.

The submissions asked for a revision to the DCP, where street lighting is assessed on individual merit for each development and not a

requirement of approval in rural settings.

In addition, because only one lot at the entrance to the Gungas Road development is occupied, leaving the streetlights to illuminate 22 unoccupied and seemingly unsold blocks, Council was asked to request Essential Energy turn lighting off until the land was occupied.

Council's response was disappointing but not unexpected with regards to the two existing developments, but contained some hope for the future.

They acknowledged the issue of light pollution wasn't considered in the drafting of the DCP and undertook to draft amendments for consideration to rectify that.

They said Council was working with Essential Energy towards implementing better technology solutions seeking flexibility in the street lighting network, motion sensors, dimming and individually specific timing, but these improvements are some time away.

Street lighting was regarded as a component of

neighbourhood safety, so turning off lighting could create a possible liability for Council.

There was no resolve to make any changes to the Gungas Road development. Council felt that, because they had required the developer to install street lighting, it was not consistent for them to now agree these lights could be turned off or not used and felt that would leave them vulnerable to a claim for reimbursement from the developer.

Whether the lights are on or off, Council must pay a fee to Essential Energy.

Street lighting was also a condition of the approval for 4 Blue Knob Road. It is possible for the developer to apply to modify the consent, but there is a cost involved.

Take-away message: Council can make decisions that impact our life and our environment without them even realising it.

We need to be mindful, take time to read and respond to policies put on exhibition for comment, and be vocal on village and rural issues.

Black spot roadwork

Lismore City Council has successfully obtained funding from the Australia Government Black Spot program to complete roadworks on Gungas Road.

The roadwork will continue on from the previous stages of improving the road width and surface.

It will apply to the section of Gungas Road between Tunttable Falls Road and Anderson Road (pictured).

At this stage it is not possible to replace any of the causeways on this section of road, as the cost exceeds the approved budget.

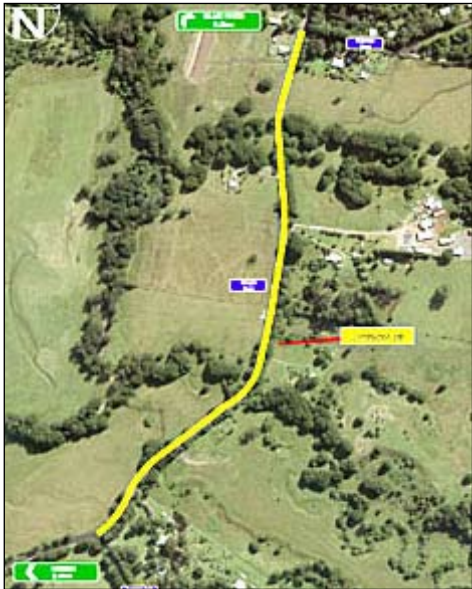
Council will receive the funding next financial year in 2021/2022.

The funding was based on recorded accident history there over the past five years.

Council has started the road survey and design process and has applied for additional funding under the Fixing Local Roads (Round 2) to extend the work.

If you have any enquiries about the roadwork, contact Barry Goodwin, Design Engineer at Council on 1300-87-83-87 or email: council@lismore.nsw.gov.au

> See more planned district roadworks listed on p.11



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What's your motivation: Is it yourself or the change you're making?

by Aidan Ricketts

This title is taken from a lyric by Urthboy, and it's an important question we should all ask ourselves at times.

In this age of social media, there's a real risk that our activism becomes a disembodied process in which we find ourselves more focussed on curating our politically correct self-image on social media (and attacking those who don't measure up) than working in our communities to achieve real change.

In activist circles we have a concept called our 'theory of change' and it challenges us to explain how a particular type of action promotes real change. For example, getting arrested at a protest by itself doesn't necessarily contribute to change, but it can if it is part of a deliberate strategic process designed to put pressure on power-holders.

While social media can be useful to disseminate and discuss new ideas and promote social change, there are also real dangers and pitfalls where our 'activism' might be counter-productive. Without a coherent theory of change, it may amount to little more than personal grandstanding or worse, a dangerous and competitive purity spiral.

Here is a list of ten reasons why focussing most of our personal activist effort into correcting others on social media might be problematic.

1. We are probably in an echo chamber and not really getting any message out to the wider world. This is a side effect of the social media algorithms.
2. Our echo chamber may be distorting our view of the diversity of genuine opinion that exists in the world and pushing us towards a non-inclusive fringe.
3. This extremism is possibly fuelling an equal and opposite form of extremism in someone else's echo chamber and when we go to head to head with opponents we tend to alienate the genuinely curious people in the middle.
4. When we encounter someone from outside our echo chamber who says something we may find frustratingly naïve, we may feel the need to attack them, rather than respectfully walking them through it.
5. We may be inadvertently sapping energy (individually and collectively) from real organisations, groups and campaigns that are working on important issues of environmental sustainability or social justice rather than actually helping do the heavy lifting for that cause.
6. There is a huge mental health toll generated by pile-on culture that harms those who participate as much as it harms those who are the victims of it.
7. We may become exactly the kind of self-parody that our opponents love to caricature and lampoon to drive people away from supporting our cause.
8. We may actually contribute to funnelling people into opposing echo chambers because they are confronted by the aggression, unreasonableness and pile-on bullying behaviour being exhibited in our echo chamber.
9. Psychological studies show that people rarely ever change their minds from being argued with, labelled, abused or socially excluded; it usually causes them to reinforce the opinion they started with.



10. In the name of fostering love, inclusion, diversity, equality and respect, it might just be that externally people are seeing us and our fellow travellers as angry, hate-filled venomous bullies that use social media to pile on anyone who questions the ever-shifting gold standard of ideological and linguistic purity in our echo chamber.

None of this list questions the validity of the causes, the genuineness of people's motivations nor the fact that they may at the same time be contributing in effective and meaningful ways, but self-reflection is essential. It is an old saying that the road to hell can be paved with good intentions.

The greatest risk is that genuine social justice causes degenerate into damaging and destructive purity spirals.

"A purity spiral occurs when a community becomes fixated on implementing a single value that has no upper limit, and no single agreed interpretation. The result is a moral feeding frenzy." – Haynes

Haynes is the author of a BBC documentary that documents how an on-line community of knitters were ultimately torn apart by an unending cycle of moral one-upmanship over who was more or less racist than the next person.

Purity spirals are like some highly destructive form of ideological cyclone that builds with a gathering intensity as those close to the eye compete to prove their ideological purity by attacking and calling out others in the community.

Purity spirals are well-established phenomena in political movements, and can occur in right wing or left wing politics. Historical examples of dangerous and deadly purity spirals include the French revolution's orgy of beheading, and Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge 'communist' regime that sought to expunge what it saw as 'privileged educated people' from the population, culminating in the infamous Cambodian killing fields.

In both cases the people involved in the murderous purity spiral, at least initially, believed they were engaged in a process of 'punching up' against a privileged group.

Other egregious historic examples would include Thomas Cromwell's English puritans and of course the Spanish inquisition. Stalinism and Maoism also prosecuted their own versions of purity spirals. Religious fundamentalism is a purity spiral, that sometimes feeds into terrorism.

Tell-tale signs of purity spiral politics include: denouncement and calling-out of those who depart from the true faith; book-burning and censorship; and a general acceptance of the appropriateness of rage, group attack and social exclusion of dissenters. I will leave it to the reader to discern where in

our own social movement environment we may be seeing these tendencies on display.

Now our modern social movements may not be at the point of beheading people or forced labour camps, so we should not become hyperbolic, but the social and cultural dynamics are the same and the end point is predictably destructive.

Opinions always occur in a spectrum, and individuals are often on a learning journey in relation to their own internalised prejudices and biases. Ideally they get encouraged to move along in that learning journey rather than attacked and excluded. Once a purity spiral begins, the work of winning hearts and minds (the real work of social movements) is suddenly replaced by aggression.

Not only does this alienate anyone unfamiliar with the group or cause, it begins to hollow out the group from the inside out as yesterday's virtuous denouncer of others, themselves becomes denounced by their even more pure successor.

So what is the alternative?

The risk of destructive purity spirals has certainly been exacerbated by social media, its algorithms and the echo chambers it produces. So the alternative is to be more embodied and less exclusively on-line with our activism.

This means becoming part of real organisations that are pursuing social justice ends, whether they are trade unions, environmental groups, political parties, victim support groups, charities, or any number of groups campaigning for equality for traditionally disadvantaged groups in society. Or actually establishing new groups to pursue the social justice ends that we are passionate about.

Becoming embroiled in purity spirals is actually a serious mental health issue. We hear a lot about call-out culture, there is a place for calling out the embedded attitudes of power holders and politicians but when dealing with friends, neighbours and peers it may be more useful to practise call-in culture. Real change is often achieved through millions of interpersonal conversations where people are encouraged to learn and self reflect.

We have seen huge advances in social justice campaigns over decades in relation to racism, sexism and LGBTI rights, as well as environmentalism. There is a great need to continue to build on these campaigns in an inclusive and positive way.

Channelling our support in practical ways into the social movements and organisations on the front lines is the best way to make change. It will build communities, promote new friendships and often expose us to a broader range of people and views than we currently experience. Purity spirals ultimately instead tear networks and communities apart.

The world will never be perfect, and some social problems may remain seemingly intractable for a very long time, but there is no reward at the end of a purity spiral, it is like an ideological pyramid scheme that only produces victims.

So next time, before you call someone out, call yourself in and ask whether what you are doing is really promoting effective social change.

Towards the Nimbin Aquarius 50th



by Benny Zable, president

We warmly invite the community to participate in planning the 50th anniversary of the 1973 Aquarius Festival. In 2023, Nimbin will be celebrating 50 years since the first Nimbin Aquarius Festival, when the Australian Union of Students (AUS) representatives obtained permission from the locals in Nimbin to prepare and create a 10-day alternative lifestyle festival. It was the fourth such gathering organised by AUS. Quoting from Wikipedia: *"The Nimbin Aquarius Festival was a counter culture arts and music event organised by the Australian Union of Students. It was the fourth in a biannual series of festivals, first organised by the National Union of Australian University Students (NUAUS)."* *"The First Australian Universities Arts Festival was held in Sydney in 1967, and the Second Australian Universities Arts Festival was*



held in Melbourne in 1969. The third added "Aquarius" to its name and was held in Canberra in 1971. The fourth and last was held in Nimbin, northern NSW in 1973". In Canberra in 1971, students protested predominantly against the Vietnam War. Nimbin was a dairying and banana growing region which was in decline before the Aquarius Festival. The festival helped the town to revive, evolve, seek new cultural experiences, listen, express, share and most especially, gave a platform for many on the outside of the mainstream to experience and explore

different ways of living together in a way that was conscious of social justice and planetary awareness. It has been said that it was the first time in Australia First Nations people were sought out to participate in a non-Aboriginal festival. The evolving counter culture that developed from the Nimbin Aquarius Festival focused strongly on listening and learning from First Nations people. Others came to the festival from around the country to participate. We have been closely linked in community ever since. The festival set in motion a series of happenings that



transformed Nimbin and the whole Rainbow Region. Over the past 45 years, Nimbin Aquarius Foundation has both organised and supported Aquarius anniversary events in Nimbin, Lismore, and the Rainbow Region. The 50th anniversary in 2023 gives us the opportunity to showcase this journey from then to now, projecting towards the future, bringing new and renewed energy and input for where to from here. A meeting will be held on Friday April 16th, 2021 from 4pm in the Comskool Room in the Nimbin Community Centre. This will be a chance for input toward organising a planning structure to encourage the many groups and individuals in our region to participate in our celebrations and move forward in the spirit of Aquarius. May the longtime sun shine upon you...

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My friend, the witch of Kings Cross

by Jazmin Theodora

"Born in Dunedin in 1917, emigrating with her family to Sydney in 1925, and dying in 1979, Rosaleen Norton was a trailblazing woman and under-appreciated cultural touchstone of 20th century Australia. "A self-proclaimed witch, Norton experienced childhood visions. From around the age of 23, she practised trance magic and, later, sex magic, in various flats and squats in inner-city Sydney. "Not only a witch, but openly bisexual, Norton drew and painted her beliefs and the spiritual beings central to it. But she was reviled for doing so, attacked by the media for her art, her beliefs, her lifestyle, and sometimes, her appearance." – Marguerite Johnson, *The Conversation*



She was the woman that they say, in 1939, after Cardinal Gilroy went to Italy to have a big meeting with Mussolini and I think he went on an airforce plane, when he arrived back, Dulcie Deamer was at the airport. They say she threw an empty beer bottle at him and called him a fascist. Nimbin is so much like King's Cross was in those days. Everyone knew each other, all types of people came together. Roi had an affair with Gavin Greenleaves, who was a poet. Vicki Reardon was a jazz singer, and she and I would often go around to Roi's place or Roi would come around to ours. Years later, I came back to Australia for a month for my parents' funeral, and went down to see Roi. Cerce, her sister, answered the door and said, "Oh! Roi, Jazmin's here." Roi was overwhelmed.

She said, "Oh! Jazmin, so lovely to see you. Darling, I can only give you an hour." Pan, her cat, was sitting in a pose in the middle of the floor while she sketched. She said, "I'm under pressure to have this finished for the Cat Society. That'll do, thank you Pan." Pan got off the cushion and came over to me to be patted. I'd brought her a trip. She said, "Oh how lovely, OOOO how wonderful!" Roi and I raved on to each other and then finally, hours later, she said, "I have to do this, I have to do that." I got up and gave her a kiss and hug and said see you later, and she said, "Pan, could you please get back on the cushion darling," and Pan did pose before I left. I came home one night and Vicki said to me, "Roi had to have all her teeth out today." Previously, and I don't know the true story, but I've been told that Roi took a pair of pliers to her teeth and disfigured them; they were all sticking out at all different angles. For whatever reason she did this, I don't know. A couple of days later Vicki said to me, "Let's go down and visit Roi and see her new teeth," and I wondered what Roi would be like with normal teeth. When we arrived, rang the doorbell, and Roi answered the door, she had had the false teeth made exactly the same as they were before! For more information about Rosaleen Norton, see: www.abc.net.au/news/2021-02-05/rosaleen-norton-witch-of-kings-cross-groundbreaking-bohemian/13121738 *The Witch of Kings Cross*, written and directed by Sonia Bible, is available from Amazon, iTunes, Vimeo and GooglePlay.

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Nimbin Pool – closing 18th April

The ongoing wet weather has made it challenging to keep the pool open, and we have had lots of stops and starts which has not been ideal.

As autumn commenced, the pool opening hours were reduced to 8am to 4pm, 7 days a week.

Despite the hiccups, it has overall been a phenomenal effort by everyone involved to keep our pool open for the community for the 20-21 season. Thanks to all the volunteers who worked through March to keep the pool open as much as possible, and especially to Kath Moyes who was the Roster Co-ordinator for March.

We will be doing our utmost to keep the pool open as much as we can until the official last day of the season on Sunday 18th April. This will depend on the weather and the availability of volunteers.

Living with long-term mental health issues?

If you're wondering if the NDIS is right for you, make an appointment with our community worker to find out more. 6689-1692

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We make no judgements and all services are confidential. We can also provide mental health support and referrals. Call us on 6689-1692 to make an appointment with our community worker (available Wednesdays-Fridays) at NNIC.

Nimbin Disaster Plan

We have prepared a short on-line survey for the community to give feedback on the draft plan. This survey can be accessed via the below link, which includes a link to the Plan so you can view it. Hard copies of the Plan are available at NNIC during our opening



Through the Local Health District's Big Ideas competition, Nimbin CDAT was awarded the funds to bring Clued-Up Claudelia to life, so she can join Captain Competent on his Harm Reduction escapades. Look for them at MardiGrass having conversations around recreational cannabis use. New superheroes are wanted: males of slim build and six foot or less, females size 12-14 with average height. Visit the CDAT page at: www.nnic.org.au

hours. The survey closes on the 12th April. www.surveymonkey.com/r/nimbincommunitydisasterplan

The Nimbin Disaster Plan will be officially launched at the Nimbin Town Hall on Saturday 24th April.

The launch will include an overview from Robert Kooyman, well-known botanist and ecologist, of the values of the World Heritage Gondwana Rainforests of Australia and an update on the forests and rainforests of the Nightcap and Border Ranges region.

He will also update us on the continuing post-fire research and discuss the implications of those

findings for the future of the local forests, local landholders and residents.

The Red Cross will also be there to talk about Survival Kits and they will have demonstration kits on display.

Nimbin Death and Beyond – let's get it back up and running!

This is a shout out to anyone who might be interested in joining the group so we can get it back up and running. The main aims of the group will be to finalise the purchasing of a cold bed for community use, to raise the remaining funds needed to purchase the cold bed, and to hold the Day of the Dead event in November 2021. If you are interested contact us at: admin@nnic.org.au

The Tools and Equipment Library

Tools and equipment are available for borrowing to members.

The cost for existing NNIC financial members is \$11 inc GST for membership until 30th June. (Full year's membership is \$22). Non-members need to join NNIC first (\$5.50 a year).

There is a great range of equipment for loan. You can check it out on our Sibley Street website: www.7sibley.org

Are you handy with tools care? We are looking for a volunteer to drop by Sibley Street on a regular basis (eg. once a fortnight) to service any tools/equipment that needs maintenance etc., and keep an eye on consumables.

If this sounds like you, contact Steph: sibley@nnic.org.au

Volunteers always wanted and needed

We have heaps of different jobs for volunteers, ranging from admin and research tasks through to handyperson jobs, tools maintenance, cleaning and more cleaning, both interior and exterior of our building, and lots more.

We aim to link volunteers to work areas that they are interested in, so we have a fair bit to choose from.

We can always use help on our reception desk... quals (min Cert 2) or experience required for the Front Desk job. Contact Kath at: caw@nnic.org.au for more info.

www.nnic.org.au

www.facebook.com/pages/Nimbin-Neighbourhood-and-Information-Centre

Nimbin Hospital information

Child immunisation clinic

For 0-5 year olds, held on second Tuesday of the month. Next clinic: 13th April. Phone 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health Centre)

Early childhood nurse

Every Tuesday. Baby checks, weighs, post-natal support. For appointments phone 6620-7687.

Women's health nurse services

Third Thursday of the month, next is 15th April. Confidential service, checks, advice, general health information. Phone 6689-1400 for appointment.

Wound clinic

Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8am. For self-referral, phone 6689-1288. Referrals also from Nimbin Hospital and GP clinic.

Drug and alcohol counselling services available

For an appointment, please contact 6620-7600. A trained professional will ask you a few confidential questions and will provide you with an appointment time.

Nurse practitioner clinics

- Respiratory clinic: second Tuesday of the month, next will be on 13th April. Phone 6630-0488 for appointments.
- Diabetes clinics: third Thursday of the month, next is 15th April.

Community Registered Nurses

Monday to Friday, 8am-4.30pm. Assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy, provision of palliative care in the home, medication support. Phone 6689-1288 – leave a message, will return call swiftly.

Nimbin NSP

Needle and Syringe Program open Monday to Thursday. Arrangements can be made to see a Community Registered Nurse.

Health advice line

Phone 1800-022-222 if you have a health issue. 24-hour, seven days a week free service. A Registered Nurse will assess whether you need to go to an Emergency Department.

Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary

Monthly meetings are held on the 1st Wednesday of the month, 9.30am in the CWA room. New members are most welcome. Fund-raising has also commenced.





NIMBIN

ENVIRONMENT NEWS
CENTRE

Supporting habitat for koalas

At the Save Our Koalas rally in Murwillumbah: Clr Katie Milne, MP Janelle Saffin, Scott Sledge, Sue James, Sophia Fletcher. Photo: Chibo Mertineit

by Scott Sledge, president

Where will I start this month? Do we have a fair and equal society in Australia? No, but many other places are worse.

Are men and women respectful of each other and do they have equal prospects for a comfortable, safe future? No.

Women are often paid less and cop more abuse than men, and sexual assault is more common than I thought.

Will climate change and extreme weather events affect nature and future generations? Yes, but few seem ready to adjust their lifestyles to save the planet and provide generational equity.

Are we "Closing the Gap"? No. In fact, the gap between Indigenous and other Australians is growing wider.

Are state and federal legislators well motivated or badly-behaved narcissists?

Why does Canberra resist having a corruption watchdog agency?

The problems seem endless, yet I do see some positives.

Protecting wildlife

Public gatherings in Murwillumbah on 20th March and in Lismore on 21st March called for legislative reforms to support habitat for koalas and other wildlife in NSW.

Speakers asked voters to contact state parliamentarians to put back controls onto land clearing and federal representatives keep federal control of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC), which provides a legal framework for protecting and managing important flora, fauna, ecological communities and

heritage places and can be used to protect endangered species.

Other communities where rallies were planned, such as Sydney and Bellingen, had to cancel due to heavy rain and will mostly be rescheduled for World Environment Day on 5th June.

Expanding forests

In my opinion, we have no better way to stop the slide into climate change disaster than protecting existing vegetation, expanding our forests, and stopping further fossil fuel emissions.

Australia needs to commit to doing its part. The current Coalition government has handed our future to fossil fuel companies with what it calls "the gas-led economic recovery" – a serious deception.

Easter is traditionally a time symbolic of hope and renewal, and we must look on the bright side, yet I am reminded of Sir Walter Scott's words: "Oh what a tangled web we weave when first we practise to deceive."

Nightcap on Minjungbal

This proposal for a massive housing project in the Tweed valley near Kunghur is long on great-sounding intentions but short on details.

The project has morphed from Bhula Bhula Village Community to Mt Warning Eco Village, Mt Burrell Commercial, Nightcap Village, and now Nightcap on Minjungbal.

A number of individuals and companies have been involved through the years.

A DA has been submitted to Tweed Shire Council which may end up being decided by a state government panel, depending on an

assessment of the proposed capital expenditures, but the promoters are offering pre-approval shares to buyers.

The promoters also offer tribal Indigenous membership to approved purchasers, and say they will give land to some members of the coastal Minjungbal tribe.

Northern Rivers Guardians Inc sponsored a public meeting at Uki on 14th March to discuss the project.

Some prospective residents spoke in favour of the venture, but most attendees spoke against the massive overdevelopment on environmental grounds and over practical concerns for new and existing residents.

The consensus was caveat emptor!

Extreme weather

NSW has just suffered massive floods, demonstrating the need for more effort to prevent extreme weather events.

We can no longer afford to ignore the effects of climate change: floods, fires, heat waves and species loss.

It is not only for the future but for current generations who lose their homes, businesses, livestock and natural environments that we must act responsibly.

I leave you with lyrics from the song 'Before the Deluge' by Jackson Browne:

*Some of them were angry
At the way the Earth was abused
By the men who learned how
to forge her beauty into power
And they struggled to protect
Her from them
Only to be confused
By the magnitude of Her fury
in the final hour.*

Nimbin Interagency Forum

by Rebecca Ryall

The Nimbin Interagency Forum is a quarterly meeting of representatives of various organisations delivering service in and around the Nimbin community.

The purpose of the Interagency is for individual workers to network with others working in their field and stay abreast of what services are delivering which programs and to whom.

The Nimbin Interagency Forum is a Nimbin Health & Welfare Association (NH&W) initiative, assisting all local services to stay up to date with support and well-being opportunities for their service users.

The Interagency has been running in its current form for over ten years, with more recent gatherings taking place via Zoom, allowing participants to stay connected, even while working from home, whilst observing the ever-changing Covid-19 protocols.

The most recent Nimbin Interagency Forum, held at the end of February, brought together representatives from Nimbin Aged Care & Respite Service, Nimbin Neighbourhood & Information Centre, Social Futures (NDIS local co-ordination, Lismore),



Nimbin Community Preschool, Nimbin Central School, Women Up North Housing (Lismore), The Buttery (Binna Burra), and our guest speaker, Jennifer Parke from Human Nature Adventure Therapy (Mullumbimby and Ballina). Jen spoke to the group about Human Nature and their suite of nature-based therapeutic programs supporting participants aged 14-21.

Previous Nimbin Interagency Forums have hosted guest speakers from ACON Northern Rivers, Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre, Lifeline Australia, and our very own Steph Seckold from the 7 Sibley Street project.

The group also heard service updates from other participants, providing a valuable opportunity to further support staff and clients, by learning what other services or programs are available and how to access these.

Additionally, new and exciting collaborations

are often conceived in this environment, as Nimbin-based organisations interact with larger, often Lismore-based service providers with much to offer the Nimbin community.

This may be through provision of physical space allowing outreach services to Nimbin (such as Women Up North being available through the Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre one day per week) or assistance with policy and procedures.

The speaker at the November event, Edda Lampin from ACON Northern Rivers, was able to offer valuable assistance to local organisations seeking to update their intake and data collection procedures, ensuring inclusion of clients of diverse gender and sexuality.

The next Nimbin Interagency Forum will take place on Thursday 27th May from 2pm. We are always seeking new members, to ensure broad representation and increase the reach for each and every organisation with an interest in the health and well-being of our fantastic and diverse community.

To be included on the mailing list and receive information about the next Interagency, please email: nimbinhealthandwelfare@gmail.com including the name of your organisation and best contact details.



NIMBIN'S SUSTAINABLE LIVING HUB

7 Sibley Street

April
What's On!

\$10 unless otherwise noted
Bookings: text 0475-135-764
or email: sibley@nnic.org.au

Workshops (start 10.30am)

- **Wed 7th: and 21st: Spinning and textile weaving** (wheels, looms); materials available.
- **Sat 10th: Using pigs in land management** with Noah Neilsen.
- **Tues 13th: Building with cob.** Hands-on for kids (school holidays).
- **Tues 20th: Knitting and crochet** with Sue
- **Sat 24th: Weed block making.** Turn lantana and woody weeds into buildings, \$25 bookings essential.
- **Tues 27th: Basket weaving** with hemp fibre

Farm tours (Bookings essential)

- Carpool leaving 7 Sibley Street at 10am.
- **Sat 17th: Hemp farming** – visit a licensed

hemp farm for seed, oil and fibre.

- **Sat 24th: Stuart's** – waste water management and re-use, composting systems, orchards, timber lots, regen forestry.

Regular events

- **Community tools library:** Wed and Sat 10.30am-2pm
- **Plant nursery:** Seedlings, cuttings, fruit and regen trees for your sustainable gardens.
- **Reference library:** Relax and enjoy books on traditional skills, gardening and sustainable living.
- **10 minute workshops:** Try your hand at hemp string making, stick spinning or cob building!



Shop 1, 66 Cullen Street
BRAIN TREE CLOTHING NOW IN STORE

