

## The astrology of 2021: Venturing into the unknown

2020 has been a year of major significance as we experienced the endings and beginnings of several planetary cycles.

We have witnessed the falling apart of an old order followed by a general uncertainty about the future and which direction to take.

**The grand finale of last year eventuated during the Solstice, December 21/22 when Jupiter and Saturn met on zero-degree Aquarius and cosmically marked the beginning of a new era.**

Their close alignment symbolises an opening and offers opportunity for change. 2021 is the time where we start the difficult process of integrating the best of the old with the evolving new.

**This development will last until 2025/6.**

### The Jupiter-Saturn Conjunction in Aquarius: Taking off into a New Era

Jupiter entered Aquarius on December 19 and will remain in this sign until December 29, 2021.

Jupiter will make a short visit into Pisces during May 23 until July 28. Saturn entered Aquarius on December 17 and will remain until March 2023.

They met on the December solstice at zero-degree Aquarius to form their Grand Conjunction.

Since ancient times, the Jupiter-Saturn cycle has been used to measure history and is associated with generational or even epoch-making social change.

Even though Jupiter and Saturn align every 20 years, their conjunctions take place in the same element for about 200 years and then shift into the next element.

**The current Jupiter-Saturn conjunction has started a new cycle in air signs and completed a 200-year era of conjunctions in the earth element.** Earth cycles are about manifesting power and resources to increase material security.

Looking back over the last two centuries, we can conclude that we have been successful in conquering the material world but our relationship to the earth has been destructive.

The momentous shift from earth to air heralds a fundamental change in value systems since new streams of thought are entering our collective consciousness.

Nonetheless, it takes some time before the positive qualities of this new cycle will become apparent and prevail.

The last Grand Conjunctions in the air element corresponded with the birth of the Renaissance (from 1226 to 1405) and the development of humanistic principles.

The current conjunction in Aquarius activates Aquarian themes for the next two decades or even centuries.

To the Ancient Egyptians Aquarius the Water-bearer represented the vital spiritual powers that impregnate the world with electrifying ideas and futuristic visions.

Another Aquarian archetype is the Greek

Titan Prometheus who stole the fire (consciousness) from the gods to bring it to the people. However, he got punished for his brave and bold act.

For every invention there is a price to pay. What we call 'progress' might have negative consequences for ourselves, humanity and the planet if we do things in a hurry.

**The conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in Aquarius marks the final shift to the digital age, taking us away from the physical/material world into the virtual.**

Data and ideas are the new gold. The question is who is directing this radical shift and to whose advantage? Knowing the facts and then envisaging new solutions to deal with the current multifaceted crisis will be ever more important.

We might experience both expansion (Jupiter) and contraction (Saturn) as we find our way into a changed world.

For example, while in the past we may have valued our freedom by travelling the earth to please ourselves, we now shift to zoom or skype (air) as ways for connecting with those far away.

In Aquarius, Saturn reviews the past to find practices that improve the present while Jupiter imagines future possibilities.

2021 is a good time for visionary explorations and conversations about what kind of world we want to live in and what kind of society we want to be.



### The Saturn – Uranus Square 2021 – 2022: Freedom or Repression?

The Saturn – Uranus square is the other important outer planet alignment during 2021. **Saturn will square Uranus exactly on February 18th, June 15th and December 24th.**

Saturn and Uranus are very opposing principles. Their alignments can create a lot of tension, such as the tension that exist between authority and rebellion, order and freedom, structure and chaos.

Important societal and economic questions are raised when these forces align.

How far are we willing to trade our personal liberties (Uranus) for more control and safety regulations (Saturn)? When are innovation and breakthroughs in science and technology serving humanity and when not? Which principles and boundaries are better to be left alone?

On the positive, these are good times to break with old habits and patterns that have become too limiting and are no longer serving us. Often something from the outside is forcing us into a new direction (such as corona virus).

Hard aspects between Saturn and Uranus have also been correlated with economic downturns and recessions. Additionally, it indicates a turning point for our free-market economy and liberal values that underpin

our consumer society.

For example, the powerful tech giants (Uranus) such as Google, Facebook and Amazon are controlling and monopolising a huge part of the market and have set an end to the doctrine of 'free economic competition'.

Nevertheless, top-down control and sophisticated systems of surveillance (Saturn) are likely to fail because it goes against the flow of change and the incoming egalitarian energies associated with the air age that we have just entered. Leadership and change will come from below, from the people and their communities.

The current 45-year Saturn-Uranus cycle started in 1988, just months before the fall of the Berlin Wall, the disintegration of the USSR but also the Tiananmen Square Massacre.

*"Nothing is as powerful as an idea whose time has come!" – Victor Hugo*

### January/February 2021: The Search for New Impulses and the Call for Change

The Saturn-Uranus square is in its waning phase of the cycle and sets free a crisis in consciousness. It indicates that something very fundamental needs changing. Conflicts are to be expected until the new order has emerged (most likely in 2025/6).

During January 2021, the red planet Mars activates the Saturn-Uranus square adding hot emotions to the mix. Mars enters Taurus on January 7 squaring Saturn on January 13, then conjoints with Uranus on January 20/21 and squares Jupiter on January 23!

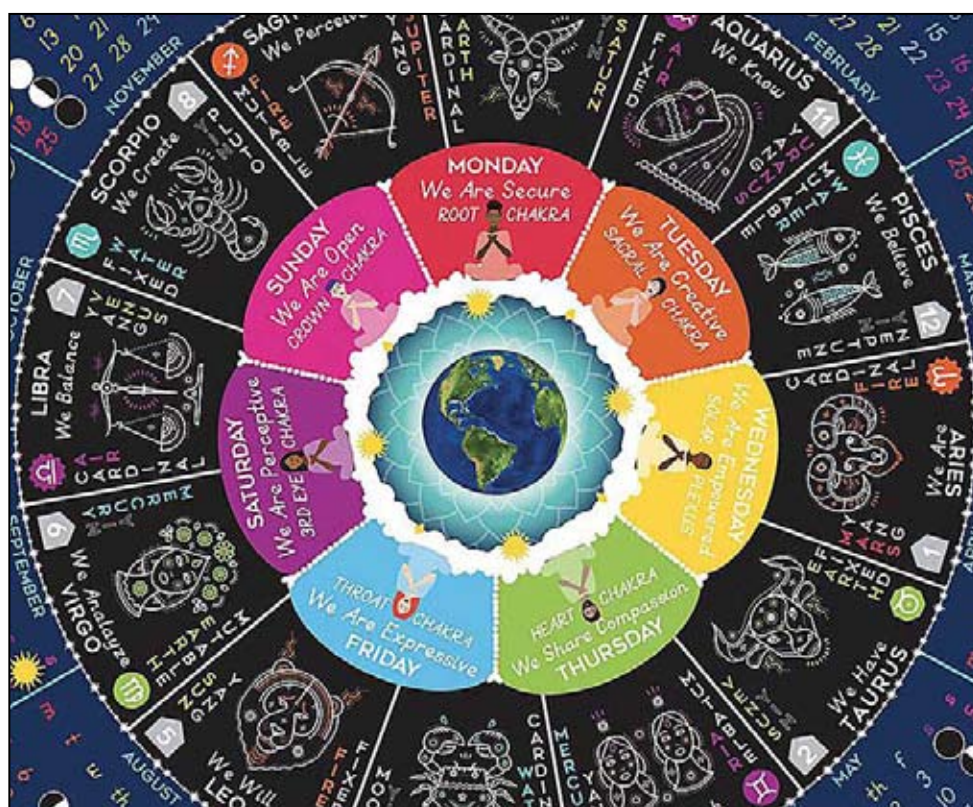
These Mars aspects heat up the overall climate. The square with Saturn triggers frustrations when things do not move as expected, while the conjunctions with Uranus represents the potential eruption of anger and rage against too many restrictions and control from above. The Saturn – Uranus square will be exact for the first time on February 18.

### Another outer planetary alignment is the square aspect that Jupiter forms with Uranus. It will be exact on January 17/18

This alignment defines the beginning of 2021 and symbolises our collective search for a new worldview. Guiding themes are needed that are convincing and powerful enough to release the old modes of thinking.

Jupiter in Aquarius believes in a fairer society, is interested in large social projects and reform and activates interests in topics of global concern such as climate change.

However, Jupiter is in a square aspect with Uranus and expands the revolutionary energies of the cosmic rebel. January might witness dramatic break-throughs and quantum leaps but also the exposure of double standards and outmoded beliefs that lead to vast protests and clashes with authorities.



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# FORECASTS FOR JANUARY

## Aries

New opportunities in 2021 will come through people and friends who share your ideals, new or old, while at the same time you might want to weed out social associations that have lost their purpose. You could even feel inspired to create your own group or circle of like-minded souls! The task is to remain open to new possibilities especially the way abundance can flow into your life. January 13-21 might raise questions around your practical security as you feel like having to choose between the past or the future. Break-throughs are possible if you can rise to the challenge.

## Taurus

2021 brings opportunities for growth in your life direction or career path as you start a new chapter in your life. It is crucial to review what you have been building over the last years because an in-depth evaluation of your achievements offers you guidance of where you stand and where you want to go. What you do and the roles that you take on need to align with your personal evolution. Being true to yourself means releasing other people's expectations. Conflicts with a figure of authority is possible during January 13 – 21 because you might feel a strong urge to walk your own independent path.

## Gemini

2021 can be a door opener if you commit to a vision of the future that is in alignment with your personal growth potential. Vision made practical is the keynote. What kind of future are you working towards, and why? The urge to travel the world might need to be lived in a new way as travel restrictions continue. This might push you to grow spiritually into a new direction and beyond existing limitations. Ideas that have been regarded as impossible can be included into your expanding worldview. However, have the stamina to follow-through and turn your visions into reality!

## Cancer

If you have endured life changing events during the last year or years, you are now at the point of deepening and integrating these experiences. 2021 brings you opportunities for personal growth and better understanding of yourself and others. Money issues are also asking for your attention. Your efforts to repay debt might help form a new business partnership and open a new channel of abundance. Reassess priorities because what you once wanted so dearly might have changed and directed you onto a new path. The period between mid-January to the end of February might bring more clarification in these matters.

## Leo

New opportunities in 2021 will come through your relationships as you are getting ready for a new chapter in your life. A positive mindset is helpful in finding common ground in your dealings with others and provides the foundation for stable partnerships. Likewise, it is also a year for clarifying communications with others, even the likelihood of having to end partnerships and contracts that have outgrown your life's goals. Especially from mid-January until the end of February you will feel a need to embrace the unknown releasing those expectations that block your creativity and expression of individuality.

## Virgo

2021 is important for your personal well-being. Taking better care of yourself will help with regaining strength to deal with the many challenges of everyday living. These are good times to break with old habits that are no longer serving you. Avoid rich food and try to have sufficient rest. Reduce stressful activities. This is an excellent time for starting new regimens to better your health. Changing some of your core beliefs can provide you with an expanded worldview and new freedom. During mid-May until the end of July relationships, personal or professional, can open new possibilities and new avenues of growth.

## Libra

2021 could be your year on the stage of fame where you can give freely as an inspirer or educator. Your destiny is guiding you towards contributing something special to your community. Creative projects are likely to do well if you are willing to put in the hard work. An in-depth

evaluation of your talents and contemplation of what makes you happy assists with formulating your new vision. This might also require the integration of some shadow parts because they may contain your greatest treasures! These periods of emotional renewal and cleansing can free the life force and enhance your creative expression to generate new opportunities. Luck is on your side if you believe in yourself and your abilities.

## Scorpio

2021 opens a new chapter around your home, family and domestic life. In the year ahead, it is more essential than ever that your home feels like a sacred space. Visions of renovation, relocation or buying real estate can be manifested as you have the stamina and determination to pull through with your plans. During mid-January until the end of February unresolved family issues that have been lingering in the background might suddenly surface asking for your immediate attention. They might contribute to conflicts in your current relationships. You might feel as if you have sacrificed too much of yourself for the well-being of others. Consider open discussions and a re-designing of your contracts to find a peaceful solution.

## Sagittarius

During 2021 you can make a quantum leap towards fulfilling your dreams. You have the vision and persistence to accomplish what felt impossible before if you combine vision with structure and practicality. New impulses might come through your relationships with others who want to teach you something. Remain open to learning or vice versa you could help someone else transform their life. Either way, conscious interpersonal communication combined with wise planning is the path to success. It also requires a change in your daily routine and habits. Space needs to be created by setting priorities and re-negotiating contracts.

## Capricorn

During 2021 themes around values, self-worth, money and your financial foundation is in the spotlight. A new vision is emerging which needs persistence and determination to be put into reality. Whatever you are intending to do, plan your steps wisely. During mid-January until the end of February you might feel caught between the past and the future, the old and the new. This is a good moment to work on beliefs that are limiting you. Creative blocks can now be released to generate new opportunities. Luck is on your side if you believe in yourself and your abilities.

## Aquarius

2021 could be your personal watershed year. Let the journey of reinventing yourself begin! Explore new frontiers and envisage new possibilities; build on your vision constructively. You are birthing the new you. Take your dreams seriously and they will become reality. Nevertheless, the challenge is to create the necessary space and freedom to move. This might be achieved through changes in the home environment. During January and February, you could be on a mission to tackle unfinished projects around the home. If you considering moving during 2021, this is a good time to do so.

## Pisces

During 2021 opportunities for growth come through healing the past and your connection with spirit. Aligning with what is and maintaining an attitude of acceptance gives strength and calmness to you and those around you. It is a time where releasing the old to make space for the new is the most important step for future developments and can be extremely liberating. During mid-May until the end of July you will experience a sense of expansion. You might try something new and start growing into a new direction. This new cycle of growth will be boosted during the first half of 2022.

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*Astrology Mornings at the Lillifield Community Centre:*  
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**Nimbin Crossword Solution**

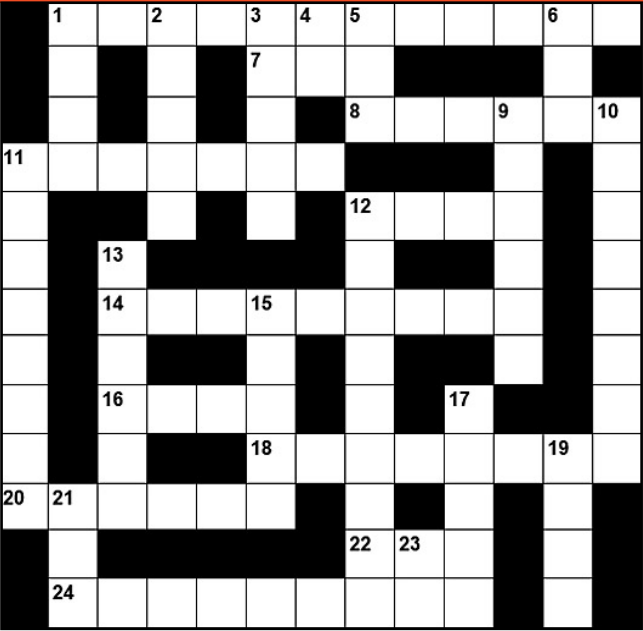
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# Nimbin Crossword

2021-01  
by 5ynic



- Across**
  - Image made up of many smaller pictures
  - Movement protesting racist policing (init.)
  - Distancing to flatten the curve
  - Outer castle courtyards? Irish liqueur
  - Shape puck of ground coffee for pressurised hot water
  - Ballet attire? Long footless socks.
  - Exclamation of pain
  - Kraftwerk album? Motorway in Austria, Switzerland or Germany
  - Lowest navy C.O. rank
  - Computer network within a building? Gaming party
  - Hundredth anniversary
- Down**
  - Head Smurf
  - Gemstone going places in Sydney?
  - Follows orders
  - Thousandth of a litre (init.)
  - Syllables in Hindu and Buddhist sacred chanting
  - Coastal city in Northwest India
  - Transmit (knowledge, wisdom)
  - 24/7 curfew?
  - Rural conflagration
  - Widely distributed large spider family
  - Inundations
  - Industrial Yangtze city near 3 Gorges dam
  - Hardwood for flats and sharps?
  - Ship steering mechanism, including the ship's wheel
  - 1701 – Starship Enterprise? Our village's non-profit hub! (init.)
  - Augmented Reality (init.)
- Solution: Page 27

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Cutaway section of a typical electric hot water heater

Original Anode

# Nimbin Trivia Time

by Eclectus

**Questions**

- What is this beautiful blossom? (Photo: Wikimedia Commons)
- Which Australian rep sporting team recently drew twice in two weeks against the same international opponents to make three draws for the series?
- Who was, the now sadly departed, Lonesome George?
- Who or what is Mummy Brown?
- Which country bordered by Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia bears the same name as its capital city?
- What is the meaning of “refoulement”: an archaic term for a double fault in tennis; the academic term for failing a supplementary examination; the official legal term for a second conviction for the same criminal offence; or the forcible return of an asylum seeker to persecution in their country of origin?
- Which Australian author has won the Booker Prize for literature more than once?
- What is the origin of the Christmas carol ‘Oh Christmas Tree’ and who wrote it?
- How long has the Nimbin School of Arts been around?
- What is the animal emblem of New South Wales? Take a bonus point if you can name its genus.
- What is the difference between a vintage port and a tawny port?
- There is over 120,000 kilometres difference between the Moon’s closest approach and its furthest departure as it orbits Earth (hence the large, bright “super moons” we see on close approach). Is its average distance closer to 200,000, 300,000, 400,000 or 500,000 kilometres?

**Answers**

- The globe artichoke (not to be confused with the positively luminous in low light. The flower takes a bit of processing for the table as the “choke” in the centre of the flower, and the outer leaves are unpalatable but the remainder is worth the reward. The dehydrated flowers are also used as a healthful tea.
- The Wallabies drew twice against Argentina’s Pumas and once against the New Zealand All Blacks in the recent 2020 Rugby Tri-Nations series.
- He was the last surviving Pinta Island tortoise from the Galapagos Islands. Reputedly over one hundred years old, in his last years he was known as the rarest creature on Earth.
- A favourite of the Pre-Raphaelites, Mummy brown, also known as Egyptian brown and caput mortuum (dead man’s head), is a rich brown pigment made from pulverised Egyptian mummies, either human or feline.
- The Republic of Djibouti.
- Refoulement is the term for forcible repatriation of refugees or asylum seekers to their country of origin where they are liable to persecution. Its origin lies in the French word, refoulement, for forcing water back into a river channel. In a rejuvenated international refoulement Head (Bottom, more like!) of the River regatta, Australia, with renowned cox Peter Dutton, is a serious contender to take the chocolates.
- Peter Carey for True History of the Kelly Gang in 1988 and for Oscar and Lucinda in 2001.
- Originating as a 16th century Silesian folk song describing the symbol of faithfulness represented by the evergreen fir tree, Tannebaum by Melchior Franck was rewritten by August Zarnack in 1819 as a tragic love song contrasting the faithfulness of the fir tree with a faithless lover. Ernst Anschütz added a couple of verses in 1824 emphasising the fir tree as a symbol of hope. The custom of a decorated Christmas tree arose in the mid 19th century when the song was finally associated with Christmas.
- 2021 will see the Nimbin School of Arts celebrate its 117th birthday.
- The platypus (Ornithorhynchus anatinus).
- While both are fortified with spirit, as the name implies, a vintage port is made from the grapes of one year’s harvest and then bottled while a tawny port is aged in barrels (often very large) and added to with new material over a period of years (often many).
- The Moon’s average distance from Earth is 384,399 km.

## Honouring your weird and wonderful

by Marilyn Devlin

“It’s time,” they say... nestled there amongst the mossy pebbles. “It’s time”... the vibration of these sweet sweet words ripple in the sparkling mountain water... rocks gleaming in their passing. Concentric circles spread their magick.

“It’s time”... they hum as they dance amongst the vibrant green, the rich brown of the shallow hollows, moist and fertile. Ancient trees seen it all. “It’s time”... they join in with the chorus.

“It’s time.”

“You’ve tried the straight and narrow”... God, look where that has landed you. Dark, mouldy laneways... creepy half-dead haunt the shadows. Mumbles of despair... cries pierce the dripping darkness. Lost souls wander. Lost forever? Or is there a way? Hope dances in the dawning.

“It’s time”... they sing so sweetly. Echoes through the chambers of my inner halls of knowing. Ears alert, standing to attention... “It’s time”... They hear the calling.

They stretch their weary muscles... bent from all the heavy carrying. They’re tired and want to sleep. They want to fall and crumble. No more strength for going on... but they can’t ignore the calling. “It’s time”... the echoes pierce the air they breathe.

“It’s time”... they are persistent. Not a moment’s breath is wasted. Living there behind the veil they know the world awaiting. The feasting of our eyes will be a day of joyous celebration. “It’s time”... they gently prod before we close our eyes and fall again into the darkness.

“It’s time”... to come and play. Shake off that spreading poison. Step outside and breathe again. “It’s time”... to know the magick.

“It’s time”... to unbolt the doors. The pathway to the secret garden. Hidden from your thirsty eyes. “It’s time”... to know the wonder. To know the life that feeds you. The Life that’s always by your side. The Life that never leaves you... even when you’re gone forever.

“It’s time”... to breathe the magick.

“It’s time”... to breathe the magick

“It’s time”... to breathe the magick.

“It’s time”... to birth your weird. Time to unveil your magick. Time to be your wonder and enchantment. “It’s time”... to dance your passion. To fill the chamber of your Heart... with sparkling life. “It’s time”... to dump the poison.

It’s time to be all you are... it’s time to come out of hiding. Everything in Life supports you. We *do not* surrender to darkness. We are made of Light, of Love, of Joy. We control our destiny. No matter the storms, no matter the gales. We stand and face it all. We *are not afraid*.

“It’s time”... to unveil your magickal self. Only one of you ever made... in the whole eternity of everything. Don’t let it go to waste. We’ve got work to do.

“It’s time”... to *allow* your Weird. Shine it *bright*... wear it with pride. We need your special brand of weird. Weird gathered together creates a potent brew. One capable of casting a super magick spell. We have life on our side... we’re not alone.

Celebrating your weird and wonderful. We’ve got this... we’ve got what it takes to take this on. Shine up that armour... sparkle that sword. Have everything ready. We were born to do this.

We can do this.



# Strength

The world according to  
Magenta Appel-Pye

When my husband was struggling for life recently, I had to be the strong, reliable one to keep everything going despite having a chronic illness. There was no space for a debilitating flare-up or weakness of any kind.

As always, when the going gets tough, I called upon the Divine gift of Strength.

40 years ago, my Mother, Peggy Pye, gave me the book *How to Use your Twelve Gifts from God* by William Warch, who is a Christian minister.

Even though I'm not a Christian, the wisdom in this book was so great that it became a guide for the rest of my life. The gift I have had to activate the most has been strength.

Rev. Warch teaches us that strength is derived from the balance between your thinking and feeling. There are two uses of strength: physical and spiritual. Physically you spend strength to guard possessions and to maintain self-preservation.

Spiritually you spend strength as patience – calm, uncomplaining endurance, tolerance – your ability to be fair to those with whom you do not agree; steadfastness – your ability to stay fixed in a direction and balance – mental stability in the face of variants.



## She says

Dear Perry, I can't speak for other women, but this is what I do.

I finish cleaning up the kitchen, using my female super-scanning abilities, and deposit the extra cups, glasses and teaspoons that he missed into the dishwasher and fire her up.

Then I re-wipe the bench that he messed up making his nightly snack and cup of tea. The dog needs to go outside for a pee, which for some reason seems to be my responsibility.

Next I lock up the house, passing my husband who flashes at me and makes his silly noise.

Does he really think that with his fat gut, dropped gonads and the same routine every night for 23 years that this is in any way sexy or entertaining? He's got to be dreaming.

Funnily enough, he gets a laugh out of it every single time.

I finally make it to the bedroom. I clean the sink before I use it, imagining ways I can kill him without getting caught.

Finally I get to bed hoping for a cuddle, but he's already snoring like thunder, drool running out the side of his mouth.

I wonder how couples manage to stay together over a lifetime, and resign to my fate as I lull myself to sleep with fantasies about the butcher boy and what I'd do with his meat.

Send your relationship problems to:  
[normanappel@westnet.com.au](mailto:normanappel@westnet.com.au)



Strength must be replenished regularly for an adequate duration of time. Strength is stillness: "Don't just do something, stand there!"

When I still myself to Divine Strength, I use his denials and affirmations: "I deny any sense of weakness or despair" and let it go. Then: "Divine Strength surges through me now as energy, encouragement and patience," and imagine it flowing through me.

Some days I concentrate more on energy, sometimes I need encouragement, and other days patience needs to be replenished most. Usually it is all three.

This powerful meditation works for me and is an invaluable tool in my life which I am more than happy to share with you.

Happy and strong 2021.

## Bedtime stories

My wife and I get ready for bed at the same times every evening. I'm always first into bed and she takes ages. I haven't asked her what she's doing all that time for fear of it being a stupid question. Please explain

– Perry Neeham, Sleepy Hollow

## HE says

Dear Perry, take heart that your wife is not unique. One of my mates reckons his wife takes an hour to get to bed. He uses that time on his mobile catching up with the news, so he says.

How bloody complicated does it have to be to simply go to bed? Blokes don't make a three ring circus out of it.

I get in the bathroom, admire my rugged good looks and hack some phlegm into the sink. Then I brush my teeth, being sure to use plenty of toothpaste and not spill too much on the floor.

Next, off with the t-shirt, sniff it and decide it's still good to go. I throw it on the 'can go another day or two' pile, congratulating myself on my thoughtfulness by saving my wife extra washing.

Then I drop my pants where I stand, kicking them off towards the laundry basket. If they actually go in, I'm a legend! At this point I wave my old boy and balls around making "woohoo" sounds to entertain the wife as she passes by, to which she simply rolls her eyes.

By now I'm ready for bed and this has taken all of five minutes. She, on the other hand, finally arrives, smelling like a florist's shop and wanting her wifely dues when I've already drifted off and having a good dream from which I do not want to be disturbed.

So what's the go here? Bugged if I know mate, and I'm not going to ask my little nightingale either, because it is a stupid question. All I can advise you is to treasure the time you have alone in bed and make the most of it.

"Before marriage, a man will lie awake thinking about something you said; after marriage, he'll fall asleep before you finish saying it."

– Helen Rowland

# Dialogues

by S Sorrensen

Oh my god! Look at that! Isn't it glorious? You can see all around. Look. To the north. That's Mount Lindesay.

Yeah. It's nice. So... Lismore would be over there? To the east?

I think so. That looks like Mount MacKenzie over there. So Tenterfield must be that way, to the south, and –

Is that the carpark? Down there? Where our car is?

No. The car is over that way. You can't see it from here, though, because of the tree cover. The bushfires didn't burn that bit.

Oh.

Are you already thinking about leaving? We've just got to the top. We should sit down for a while. I have apples.

Not hungry. But it is definitely spectacular here. The fires really ravaged the place, didn't they?

Yes. Everything changes. It's sad. I don't like change.

I know. Let's sit down here.

I can't stop thinking about him.

It's okay to be upset. I understand. But don't let what's going on in your head spoil the reality around you.

You're right. It's just... I wish he was here.

But he's not. That's the thing. And, if he was, you wouldn't be here. I wouldn't be here. And we are.

Oh, I don't mean that it's not great being here with you. It is. It really is.

OK.



Did you know this is the biggest inselberg in the southern hemisphere?

Insel... what?

Inselberg. An inselberg is a big rock jutting up from the landscape. We're about 200 metres higher than the car now. And 1200 metres higher than where Byron's beaches used to be.

How do you know this?

I read the sign at the start of the track.

Oh. Well, an inselberg is a good place to get some perspective.

True. It's an awesome place – even with the fire damage.

Sure is.

There will be more fires, I suppose, what with government-sponsored climate change.

Yes. More heartbreak. More sad. That's the way it goes.

Oh... So, what do we do?

Get some perspective. From a big rock.

So, what country are we in?

Bald Rock is a sort of neutral zone, a meeting place for the people of the three countries surrounding it: Kamilleroi, Jukambal and, from our way, Bundjalung.

A place to sort shit out. I don't know if recovery is possible.

Yes, it is. Check out the regrowth. Epicormic buds shooting from burnt trunks. And young trees springing up everywhere.

Yes. But I mean recovery for me.

Same thing. We're all recovering.

He was so beautiful and I –

Yeah, yeah. But, he's not here. He chose to not be with you.

I know.

Look around. What can you see?

Mountains and great chunks of bare granite and gnarly trees with tiny birds.

Who can you see?

There's that couple taking selfies. They look so happy.

Bastards...

Oh Jeez... Who is with you now?

You.

Yes. We are here. You, me and this hurt, burnt, but recovering, land. That's it. The whole of now.

Yes.

Oh, and apples.

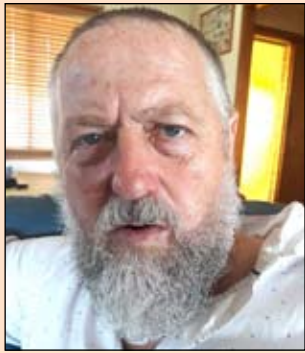
Good. I'm hungry.

# Did they learn nothing?

I have plenty of regrets and I generally roll my eyes when I hear people claiming they have none – did they learn nothing! Surely you regret your errors and do what you can to rectify them.

When I was writing in the early 2000s, one of my many regrets was crumbling to pressure from local administrators as they centralised the healthcare funding. I failed to be part of the battle to stop the defunding of smaller hospitals like the Coraki facility, as those funds were transferred into the Base hospital development.

This centralisation of funding into Lismore and



Revenge of the Loon  
by Laurie Axtens

away from the villages remains a failing of our local system and one that needs change.

Nimbin is an international tourist draw-card and big earner, meanwhile

Lismore CBD is a post-flood basket case – so why do we keep feeding the big white elephant while village and hamlet infrastructure require fatal tragedies to get adequate monies?

Thanks to Covid, the local government election has been postponed, and as a consequence there is an opportunity this year to elect a village voice on council; to redistribute funding to where its needed and where it can earn wealth for us all.

This year is a year of rebuilding; we need to rebuild wisely instead of pouring it all down that well-watered flood drain. No settling for second, Nimbin, win your own top spot.





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## Starting high school

by Anthony Neenan,  
Year 7 Year Adviser, 2021

Nimbin Central School was excited to host our budding Year 7 students of 2021 for a series of Transition Days.

These students made their way to our school from a variety of local primary schools, including Barkers Vale, Coffee Camp, Uki, Tuntable Creek, Tuntable Falls, our own Year 6s from Nimbin Central School and

others.

During the two 'Taster Days' in November, the cohort got to know each other and the school by participating in a series of taster lessons.

They sampled a range of classes from the foundation subjects of mathematics and English to the more practical subjects of science, visual arts, industrial technology, agriculture, drama, PE and more.

The formal Orientation Day on Tuesday 1st December was a state-wide transition day for students heading to high school.

A fun day was had at Nimbin Central with a range of activities presented to engage our newcomers.

There were trivia contests, treasure hunts, competitions and a central lesson where students were introduced to the 4-Cs of School Transformation

(look it up).

A barbecue topped off the event, and students departed with a smile on their face and the confidence and excitement to start their high school career next year.

We look forward to a cracking start in 2021 with our new cohort of Year 7s.

Please don't hesitate to contact Nimbin Central School if you are looking for any enrolment information.

## Gardening guide for January

by Caroline Nature

**H**appy New Year to everyone! I love Botanical Gardens and visit them wherever I travel. Last week I visited the Coffs Harbour Botanical Gardens, which I highly recommend.

The amazing thing about all botanical gardens is their use of microclimates to grow plants from various climatic areas. In colder climates, glasshouses are used to replicate tropical humidity by trapping warmed air and providing light.

The glasshouse I visited in Innsbruck was full of Mexican cactus and Asian orchids, so beautiful with the snowy weather outside.

Our subtropical climate in the Northern Rivers provides both humidity and light in Spring and Summer so we can grow many tropical plants including some of our staple foods like lettuce, tomatoes, bananas, pineapples, papaya and mangoes, then in autumn and winter we get cooler temperatures and less humidity so we can grow staples like potatoes, silverbeet, onions, mulberries and plums.

Our local indigenous food trees fruit throughout the year in line with our subtropical climate: davo plums and bunya nuts at summer solstice, lemon aspen in Autumn, fingerlimes in winter, and lillypilly varieties fruiting from summer through to winter.

Consider the microclimates in your garden. Sunny and shady spots, wet and dry spots; what plants will suit growing in these different areas? Sunlight will vary over the year according to the solstices and equinoxes, the changing of the seasons. Gardens facing the north east, north and north west aspects will get the most sunlight.

Vege gardens and fruit trees are best grown in full sunlight. A lot of softer herbs and flowers fare better in semi-shade in the summer, but in winter they can be grown in full sun. Orchids and ferns love dappled light and humidity; an outdoor bathroom with some sunlight could provide the perfect



microclimate.

And La Nina has finally arrived! We have happily recorded almost a metre of rain here in December.

### January 1-5

The Cancerian full moon fell on 30/12 and this week, moon waning gibbous, there is still time to plant dahlia tubers for flowers in March/April and sweet potato runners or tubers.

Sweet potatoes take 4-6 months to grow and to get a staggered harvest, continue to plant them at this time of the lunar calendar each month. If you have clay soils, like most of us in this ancient rainforest, plant cuttings on mounds, as they won't grow fruit if the soil is too wet.

### January 6-12

This time of the month and of the year is for maintenance, mostly weeding! Thorny devil's fig, asthma weed, farmers friends, grass on fencelines, billygoat weed and others are all growing quickly now, so pull them out while the ground is damp. Mow, clear drains, tidy edges, mulch and fertilise to replace the nutrients that have been washed out of gardens.

### January 13-20

This week of the new moon means it's time to plant leafy perennials like local bush tucker warrigal greens and tulsi basil, both easily grown from a cutting. Annuals like fennel, cress, parsley, dill



and coriander can be started from seed or planted as seedlings.

Our local Nimbin Organic Food Co-op has a good range of healthy seedlings for sale. Water seeds and seedlings daily, and consider some shade cloth for sun protection.

### January 21-28

During this week (waxing gibbous), plant fruiting veges like dwarf beans, climbing beans and cucumbers, capsicum, chillies and tomatoes, all ready to harvest from May. It is fine to plant leafy greens this week and beans last week during the waxing moon.

### January 29-31

This full moon in Leo is at 5.18:36am in our part of the world. According to the moon gardening gurus, no planting is done in the 24 hours around full moons or new moons.

During these particular days each month, I like to appreciate the incredible bounty that Mother Nature and the galaxy in which we revolve have provided us with.

Put any crystals out into moonlight for recharging. Walk around your garden and dream.

Thanks to the 2021 Astrological and Moon Planting Guide, a fantastic reference tool I have used since 1988. The guide is available at the Nimbin Hemp Embassy, the Emporium, Daisy's and Perceptio, and online.

Happy gardening!



# The cruellest month

by Warwick Fry

In El Salvador, October is the cruellest month. The end of that month is marked by All Saints Day, the Day of the Dead, a public holiday when families all over Latin America congregate in the cemeteries to pay their respects to the dead.

In 2014 my future wife took me to the mountains near the Guatemalan border to meet her family. I was launched into the middle of the febrile preparations for the Day of the Dead.

The entire family; mother, 82-year old father, two sisters, a brother, aunts, nephews, nieces, were all engaged in making imitation flowers from corn husks to place on the grave. Mari's family were preparing to visit the grave of her younger brother, murdered by a Salvadoran gang two years before.

There were a thousand locals in the local cemetery on the day, coloured by the dried floral offerings, capturing the experience of the vibrancy of life in the proximity of death.

My first experience of El Salvador was the unforgettable October of 1979. There had been a bloodless internal coup by a rival faction of the military that had controlled El Salvador for 40 years.

In the turmoil and political uncertainty, a huge population of activists took to the streets. The 'popular organisations' – students, unionists, opposition parties, and progressive religious movements – all came out in days of rolling street marches and rallies of 10,000 or more in the capital, San Salvador.

I arrived that October morning to a city riddled on every wall, every pole, with a palimpsest of graffiti. Acronyms, slogans, underwritten with names, overwritten with caricatures; a reflection of the crowded buzz and bustle of the teeming streets of the capital. There I witnessed my first massacre.

Returning to my hostel I noticed an eerie silence. The streets were abandoned. On one corner was a group of people. I went to cross the street. I was unceremoniously hauled back. "Don't go there, they are killing people!"

Then I became aware of the "Crack! Crack!" of single shots. Peeking around the corner I saw an armoured car with a soldier on top systematically shooting young students trying to shelter in the entrance bays of shuttered shops, one by one. We counted eight.

A few days later I read that an army vehicle had ploughed into the funeral march for the eight victims, killing another twelve. That was when the Bishop gave permission for the bodies to be taken for burial in the Church Rosario facing the Plaza Libertad, to avoid further atrocities.

I woke up one morning in my hostel across the road from the Church to hear revolutionary songs being played from the bell tower. I looked out my window. Youths with the red berets, dark glasses and red bandanna masks – the 'uniform' of the marshals and autodefensa (self-defence) – were cementing crosses on the roof of the church.

Over the next few days, tens of thousands filed past to observe and pay their respects to the line of



Making paper flowers, 2014

coffins on the patio of the Church. After this experience I knew that I would always return to El Salvador.

Fast forward to 1989. It was the ninth year of a Civil War that was triggered by the assassination of the Archbishop of El Salvador (March 1980) for calling on the government armed forces to cease killing their fellow countrymen.

In 1989, FENASTRAS was one of the largest of the many militant unions of that era. They had women's workshops, a *comedor popular* (a bit like a 'soul food' eatery), training and workshops in areas like photography and theatre. I contributed with some English lessons. Most importantly, it was the first trade union in the Central American region to have a woman as its General Secretary – Febe (sic) Velasquez.

On 31st October 1989, a bomb blast ripped apart the headquarters of FENASTRAS in the middle of a press conference, where ironically the international media was asking for an evaluation of the possibility of the government negotiating a peace with the FMLN guerrilla movement.

Nine were killed in the blast, one



Green Cross medics and journalists take cover in San Salvador, 1979



After the bombing, 1989



Febe Velasquez

of them Febe. Over 20 more were injured or seriously wounded.

On the eve of the guerilla offensive triggered by Febe's death, acting secretary Gerardo Diaz spoke. In the bombed-out ruins of the headquarters of FENASTRAS, he invited all to a memorial service at Febe's burial.

But there was an unspoken message: "In the coming weeks many of us will not see each other for some time, if at all." He was, in effect, announcing that FENASTRAS would be going underground and that the offensive was about to be launched.

Fast forward again to 2013. The FMLN is now a legitimate political party. The 1989 offensive had stalemated the military and their supporters in the financial elite, and long-sought peace negotiations by

the FMLN had finally got under way and signed in the accord of 1992. An FMLN President has finally been elected.

I have returned to El Salvador to attend the memorial service for Febe. It is the end of October. There are emotional reunions with the comrades of the former FENASTRAS. The unions have a street march in her honour.

Gerardo Diaz has flown over from Australia (where he took political asylum), and as one of the few survivors of the FENASTRAS executive, successfully lobbied the government to have 26th October declared a public holiday as the National Day of the Salvadoran Worker.

The struggle continues. The vibrancy of life in the proximity of death.

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2020 was a challenging year with trials, tragedies and tears worldwide. So 'bring on 2021' with hope and an ongoing sense of community. We at Nimbin Hills acknowledge the spirit of the wonderful community we live in, and thank the people of the Nimbin area for local business support and genuine friendships. Stay safe and HAPPY NEW YEAR to all

SUZY, JOHN & THE TEAM

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