

## Closure of Mt Wollumbin National Park

At the approach to Mt Warning (Wollumbin), there is a perfectly good bitumen road going up a rainforest gully; it doesn't even have pot-holes!

People went to great efforts to engineer and build this road. It must have cost a fair bit of money at the time. Now there is a double-locked gate with a rude sign that threatens a fine of up to \$3300 for moving beyond this barrier.

In fact you can be fined for walking on this very road, so a local told me! Why are we not allowed to walk on the only road in the shire without cars?

It would be a beautiful walk; you'd have time to see the rocks, trees and the meandering creek below.

A quaint and beautifully-equipped picnic area lies beyond this barrier; inaccessible for no reason at all. And further up is a big carpark with a very small rainforest loop walk and the big summit walk.

The mountain, the only mountain here, has been deemed unsafe since Covid hit. It was lately reassessed with the result: "Nah, it's too dangerous to go up there!"

Apparently two people died somewhere on the mountain in the last 10 years. One was 80 years old and died on the first part of the track, and the other was struck by lightning on top of the mountain.

That's supposed to be unsafe for the general public! So is driving a car, swimming in the ocean and surfing! Such is life.

Recently Geologist Mark Hendrix has found that a National Park and Wildlife Services visitor safety assessment report classified risks of landslide, rock fall and slope stability as "medium". A report by geotechnical professionals found the risk of slope stability to be low.

In its information to the public however, NPWS have classified this risk as "extreme" and "catastrophic". See: [www.echo.net.au/2021/02/geologist-says-mt-warning-is-safe-to-climb](http://www.echo.net.au/2021/02/geologist-says-mt-warning-is-safe-to-climb)

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

The other thing is that some local First Nation people want the mountain not to be climbed. Fair enough! If that is the case I think it would honourable to start at the top of Wollumbin and regenerate its original glory, without chains and viewing platforms. Once all that is removed, very few people would dare to try to climb to the top anyway.

But why:

- close the public road already 4km downhill and prohibit walking on this public road?
- close the Korumbryn Creek picnic area? A new toilet block was just lovingly built not long ago.
- close the carpark?

I feel privileged to have spent countless hot summer days splashing with the kids in the natural rock pools up from the picnic area. It was not just a useless pastime. The kids and adults had quality time with each other and nature. This experience stays forever in the hearts of the ones who were immersed in it.

The love and care for Mother Nature is of great value to give to the next generation, I reckon.

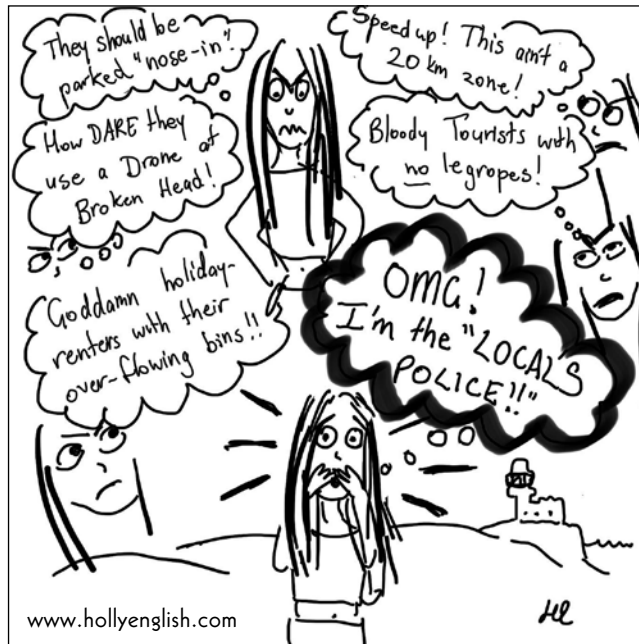
However, the NSW NPWS wants the park permanently closed by November 2022.

Gisela Stieglitz  
Wooyung

## Light pollution

Thank you to the person who brought up the issue of light pollution in Nimbin as a problem for both people and wildlife (NGT Letters, February).

Two bright lights have recently been installed at the Showgrounds, replacing



a single, slightly less bright light that was installed there a year or so ago. The lights are turned on at dusk and remain on all night until daylight.

If the lights had light shades on them, it would direct the light to where it is presumably needed, to illuminate the grounds around the building. Without shades, the lights also illuminate the hillsides to the south and west of the Showgrounds as well as going up into the night sky to cause a recognised problem for flying wildlife.

Every night the light floods into the bedrooms in my house, which is a considerable distance away, so I have to draw thick curtains across the windows to stop the light. On hot nights (about six months of the year) this cuts off cool air coming into the bedroom so, instead, I have to drag my mattress into the living room where it is both dark enough and cool enough to sleep.

Lights in public spaces always used to have light shades to direct the light to where it was needed and prevent it from being an annoyance to people and a problem for wildlife. This is a plea to those people with the authority to change this situation.

For a small cost we could have light where it is needed without light pollution spreading everywhere else.

Name and address supplied

## Terania Shire revisited

In the February edition of NGT (p.1), mention is made of Eric Bazzana, who is best remembered as the last President of the dismantled Terania Shire Council.

As well as promoting the long-held dream of Aquarius Park in 1986, Eric also supported the building of the Nimbin Pool by the community in 1968.

Terania Shire Council also welcomed the Aquarius Festival in 1973.

30 years have passed since the Nimbin Greens were formed to contest elections, along with the Tweed, Ballina and Byron Greens, at the invitation of peace activist

Ian Cohen, who successfully ran as an Upper House candidate in 1984.

He campaigned on the four international Greens principles: disarmament and non-violence; ecological sustainability; economic and social justice; and importantly grassroots participatory democracy.

The Nimbin Greens, following that last principle, agitated for a return of the Terania Shire. A Nimbin Town Hall meeting chaired by Diana Roberts resolved to form a committee to investigate and report back in six months' time.

What happened? The HEMP party happened, and all thoughts of resurrecting grassroots democracy in Nimbin were swept away.

Now, as Michael Balderstone writes, the war on drugs is almost over, is it time to revisit the Terania Shire?

With Nimbin increasingly resembling a "Little Lismore", perhaps those Aquarians can find a voice to represent all those who have broader local concerns for grassroots democracy.

James Hill  
Brisbane

## Flood waste

Every 20 years, Lismore city is inundated, and when the waters recede there is a mighty clean-up.

Four years ago, thousands of tonnes of flood waste were trucked to a disused mine in Queensland and tipped into the earth because our local recycling centre could not cope. You probably saw footage of the excavators scooping up the mounds of material deposited in front of people's homes in North and South Lismore.

So here's my gripe: people who live in these places know that sooner or later a flood will swamp everything they have stored over the years under their houses. They know that after a flood, a lot of people will come to help remove all that accumulated so-called waste: white goods, carpets, old furniture, you

# Notices

## Annual General Meetings

• Nimbin A&I Society AGM will be held on Tuesday 9th March, 6pm at Nimbin Showground. All members welcome.

• Cawongla Playhouse AGM will take place on Tuesday, 23rd March at 2pm, at the preschool. All members are invited to attend. All positions (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) will be open.

name it.

They put the stuff they no longer need out of sight, out of mind, rather than dispose of it ethically by taking it from time to time to the Lismore Waste Transfer Centre for sorting. When the State Government declares a disaster event, these people may become beneficiaries of a substantial payment for the loss of their goods.

It's extraordinary how such a pattern has developed over the years, and how everyday things in our life hold such little value for us. Clearly this practice has to cease.

Alex Mitchell  
Tullera

## Northern Rivers rail

I write regarding an article written on behalf of the Northern Rivers Rail published in the January NGT.

I read this with increasing concern beginning with the fact that it was written by Lydia Kindred who appears to be the secretary of all pro-rail organisations in the Northern Rivers. Are there no other persons in the area with secretarial skills?

Reading further, I was informed that Northern Rivers Rail is registered as not-for-profit and a charity. Its main thrust as stated, is to crowd-fund enough money to clear and fix up the disused rail line from Byron to Tyagarah and eventually to Mullumbimby. The purpose being to assist the Byron Bay Solar Trail to extend its run to these two places. Interestingly, the Byron Bay Solar Train is a private business owned and operated by a Byron Bay millionaire, or is that billionaire?

So Northern Rivers Rail, a not-for-profit and apparently exceedingly very charitable organisation, is asking for a membership fee and donations from the public to be able provide for the – again – privately-owned Byron Bay Solar Train business to expand.

I find this whole thing very worrying and wonder if the government, or the relevant government department, has any oversight of organisations such as Northern Rivers Rail.

Perhaps a call to your local politician asking a few questions about this situation might be in order before

sending in your hard-earned money.

Pat Files  
Lismore

## Rotten behaviour

Canberra, where the Australian government should be working, where instead we have a cesspit of politicians whose focus is entirely on themselves and their own egregious conduct, who with bugger-all attention paid to governing the country, are presently squirming like maggots desperately trying to disavow responsibility for their thoroughly rotten behaviour.

The dishonesty and the muddiness of the political mind is commonplace, we've become used to it, but the abuse and the molestation of women is not acceptably normal.

It seems the males who swagger the corridors of our parliament house do accept it is normal, with a nod and a wink, and now how frantically they try to make the fact of it go away.

These are the buggers we've elected to run out country. Their lack of morality, their posturing is sickening!

Michael Brooke  
Kyogle

## Family law farce

Before the latest Parliamentary Inquiry into Family Law has even produced its final report, having been granted another extension of time until 30th June, we have the Federal government pushing for the Family Court to be merged with the Federal Circuit Court, which was created to ease the workload of the Family Court.

We also have a member of the Inquiry panel pushing his own agenda with a Private Members Bill, trying to abolish the presumption of equal shared parenting of children when relationships break down.

When will our law makers stop playing games with the lives of families and children and shuffling the deckchairs on the Titanic rather than taking real action to move family law away from the current hostile and adversarial system in which children all too often permanently lose a parent and only the lawyers win?

Adrian Grainger  
Larnook

## About us

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The Nimbin GoodTimes acknowledges the Bundjalung people, the traditional owners of the land and waters on which we work and live, and pay our respects to the Elders both past and present.

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

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**NEXT DEADLINE:**  
**Wednesday 24th March**

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



# Aquarius Park and Rainbow Road



## Chamber Chat

by Diana Roberts, president

The Nimbin Community Centre now holds the title to 11a Alternative Way, 2.69ha in Nimbin village.

This is a wonderful community achievement, made even more special when it was realised the property was planted by Nimbin Central School students in 1991, under the supervision of their then teacher, Barry Glyde.

This explains some of the fine tree species found on the property. I will leave it to the Community Centre to publicly recognise those who have contributed financially to bring this dream to fruition.

However, there is still a considerable financial burden being carried by the Community Centre so if you are a business or individual planning to donate, please do so soon via Summerland Credit Union BSB 728728 A/C 22269890 (Nimbin Community Centre).

A Deed of Agreement between the Community Centre and Rainbow Power Company (RPC) will see approximately 1/2ha surrounding RPC incorporated into their existing landholding through a boundary adjustment.

Development of the remaining 2 ha into a park will probably not commence until the outcome of the Rainbow Road walking track grant application is known, hopefully mid this year but, given the controversy surrounding the allocation of bushfire economic recovery funding, we can't be sure.

This gives the community a lot of time to think about how we would like this park to evolve and to seek the expertise required to deliver best outcomes.

The property has recently been slashed and it is planned to have an open day where those interested can meet on site, walk the property and better understand how it connects a walking track from Sibley Street to Cecil Street via 11a and the watercourse running alongside Alternative Way.

This is outlined in the updated Rainbow Road feasibility study which can be viewed on the Chamber's website: [www.nimbinaustralia.com.au](http://www.nimbinaustralia.com.au) under 'current projects'. The document was completed prior to acquisition of 11a and will be revised to encompass Aquarius Park.



Signing the Deed of Agreement for Nimbin Community Centre: Michael Balderstone, David Hallett, Diana Roberts; for RPC: Paul O'Reilly, Andrew Nicholas

## Post Xmas review

While the village is now comparatively quiet, from many accounts it was an extremely busy Xmas/New Year period. Some businesses reported never seeing it so busy with traffic backed up and car parking, outside of residential streets, non-existent.

Many businesses have reported doing very well financially, a welcome outcome after extremely challenging times following the 2019-2020 bushfires and Covid-19.

The Summer Arts Exhibition, organised by the Nimbin School of Arts, saw a record in daily sales and served as a valuable fundraiser for our local Hall.

The visitor influx did create problems though. Social distancing became completely unmanageable and visitors, queueing for long periods for service, became frustrated and occasionally intolerant.

No doubt staff in shops found the influx a test of tolerance too. For myself, it reflects a long-identified need to direct visitors away from the main street to other visitor attractions, both easing the pressure on our main street and encouraging a longer stay by visitors.

## So who were our visitors?

During the holiday period the Chamber conducted a 10-day visitor survey (completed by 267 people). Not surprisingly over 75% of visitors surveyed were from NSW with only 20% of those residing in the Northern Rivers. Presumably most visitors came from the Greater Sydney area.

As a result of Covid-19 restrictions and border closures, interstate visitor numbers dropped from 50% during the same period in 2018 to 20%, while international visitor numbers dropped from 31% in 2018 to 4%.

50% of visitors were couples and a further 17% identified as being a member of a family group travelling with children.

Interestingly the age of visitors was not significantly different from 2018, despite

suggestions from local businesses that there are more middle-aged visitors in Nimbin. 43% were in the 18-30 age group, 28% were in the 31-49 age group while 27% were over 50.

Did people enjoy their visit? The overwhelming response was yes with only 5% expressing dissatisfaction and 94% likely to recommend visiting Nimbin to others. This is consistent with all past surveys.

Another statistic remaining unchanged is the visitor length of stay with 29% of visitors staying less than 2 hours and 45% less than 4 hours.

Numbers of people staying overnight dropped considerably, no doubt reflecting the closure of many accommodation options since Covid-19. The only accommodation option with a significant rise was Airbnb.

The survey results also gave a strong indicator of the interests and needs of the domestic tourist:

62% would have used a dedicated Visitor Information Centre (if we still had one) for maps, information about places to see, things to do, eating options and accommodation information.

Only 35% had looked up information about Nimbin on-line before arriving. Half of these respondents accessed the visitNimbin website, a site that Lismore City Council no longer maintains. 23% used the Chamber's website ([www.nimbinaustralia.com.au](http://www.nimbinaustralia.com.au)) for information.

In this regard, the Chamber is working hard to deliver a website that both services our business community while providing reliable, current information for visitors.

The Chamber was interested in better understanding the interests of domestic tourists so we can support development of tourism initiatives. The major interest rested in bushwalking (74%) and Rainbow Road walking track (72%). Other areas of interest included an indigenous culture trail (49%), a village art trail (47%), sustainable living

demonstrations (41%), medical cannabis information (41%), wildlife information talks (38%), permaculture (36%), farm tours (35%), renewable energy (33%), community living (29%) and driving an 'artists in studios' trail (25%).

All information collected through the survey will be used to support future grant applications and lobby Lismore City Council for reinstatement of a visitor information presence and up-to-date visitor website.

## Visitor Feedback

The Chamber recently received a delightful email from one of our visitors.

*"I am an ABC TV producer (Religion and Ethics) and was recently in Nimbin (January) with a group of six Carmelite nuns. This was a private visit, but I noticed how very welcoming the local community was to the Philippino sisters. We looked at galleries, shops and had a picnic in the park – because the nuns were fascinated by the history of Nimbin."*

*"I am now thinking about making a Compass programme about Lismore and greater area – from the POV of religion and culture."*

*"My concept is that a group of traditional nuns arrive in an alternative community, and found not only welcome, but genuine kindness and interest. And it was mutual. I was so touched that so many Nimbin people actually patted them on the shoulder in affection."*

The email was a wonderful affirmation of our community and bodes well for 2021. May it prove to be an easier year all round.

## Contacts

If you'd like to contact us please email: [chamber@nimbinaustralia.com.au](mailto:chamber@nimbinaustralia.com.au) or drop in to see Sammi in the Apothecary, Kylie at The Green Bank, David at Nimbin Law, Peter at Nimbin Tax, Caroline at the Hemp Embassy, Biko at the Community Centre or Steph at 7 Sibley. I now work from home so I'm a bit harder to connect with, but I'm never far from my phone.



## POSITION VACANT

We are looking for a  
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- Instrument management

### Beneficial abilities

- Conducting and Ensemble experience
- Music programming and scaffolding

Please address the selection criteria and send or email applications with a covering letter and resume to: Rainbow Ridge School for Steiner Education  
279 Lillian Rock Road, Lillian Rock NSW 2480  
Phone: 02-66897033

Email: [admin@rainbowridge.nsw.edu.au](mailto:admin@rainbowridge.nsw.edu.au)

**Applications close on Monday 19th March 2021 and interviews will be conducted Friday 26th March 2021.**

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## Lismore focus on water and waste

by Vanessa Ekins,  
Greens Mayor of Lismore

**I**t feels like change around here, change in how we approach living in this place.

Instead of building big dams, we are investigating recycled water. Why treat water as waste when we use it to wash our clothes and flush our toilets?

Only 2% of household water is used for cooking and drinking and the rest is put into the sewers.

Time to re-use this resource and our local water authority Rous County Council is pursuing this exciting opportunity.

Another change is the way we view floods. Lismore

itself is built on a floodplain and we have levees that keep some of the bigger floods out of the CBD. We cannot keep building higher levees to cope with the bigger rainfall events we expect.

What we can do is capture water in the upper catchment to slow the flow of water and reduce flood depth and velocity.

These techniques or green infrastructures include planting trees, re-vegetating riverbanks, creating riffles and weirs in streams, and have the potential to employ lots of people.

We are talking huge investment and projects that will have other positive effects such as increasing habitat, reducing erosion and

rehydrating farmland.

And finally waste: what is it and how do we deal with it? Council is exploring our waste management systems. It's very expensive to collect and dump stuff in landfill, we pay tens of millions of dollars to the state government to do this. The state is supposed to reinvest this money in recycling technologies, but have been slow to do so.

Lismore council audited our waste stream and realised 70% was organic matter and we now divert that to compost. We also separate paper, plastic, metal and glass, the latter crushed for use in roads and laying pipes.

Community consultation on waste is happening soon. We all need to reconsider



what we buy, its packaging and what we throw away, because there is no 'away'.

Some big things are happening, meanwhile Council will continue to mow the parks, fix the roads and empty the bins.

Please contact your councillors, we are your representatives and we want to know what's happening.

Contact Vanessa on 0417-245-502 or email: [vanessa.ekins@lismore.nsw.gov.au](mailto:vanessa.ekins@lismore.nsw.gov.au)

## Council fossil fuel divestment strategies

by Cr Jeff Johnson,  
Ballina Council

**I**n November 2015, my proposal to get Ballina Council to support the fossil fuel divestment campaign was supported by the majority of Councillors.

At the time Council had 57% of its cash investments with financial institutions that the lobby group Market Forces had rated as 'fossil fuel aligned'.

As of December 2020, that figure had grown to 64%. So despite a clear policy direction from the elected Council, the percentage had gone backwards.

That is a clear failure by Council management to enact the policy of the elected Council. The problem is that most of the investments are held in the big four banks and they are all classified as fossil fuel aligned.

So how does local Government, which together hold over \$13 billion in cash investments, convert that 'buying power' into a lobbying tool that forces at least one of the big four banks to stop providing finance to new fossil fuel projects?



According to a recently released report by the United Nations Environment Program, Australia is the world's third largest exporter of fossil fuels, and our contribution to the world's production of coal, oil and gas is increasing.

As we know, the vast majority of countries (including Australia) signed up to the Paris Accord, which recognises that global warming needs to keep below the 1.5°C increase to avoid catastrophic and potentially runaway climate change. The trouble is, Australia is still approving major new fossil fuel projects which, if developed, will make it impossible to keep global warming under the 1.5°C.

So basically what happens in Australia matters, yet we still have State and Federal Governments not only subsidising the fossil fuel

industry, but approving and facilitating new coal and coal seam gas projects.

Westpac has promised to stop supporting thermal coal mining by 2030, but in 2018/19 it increased its new investments in fossil fuel projects by 8% when compared to the previous year.

The ANZ bank has also stated that it won't support any new finance agreements for the Newcastle Port, the world's largest coal export terminal. However, NAB recently stepped up and provided the finance.

The major banks are now engaged in some serious greenwashing by offering investors 'Green Bonds', which help to fund renewable energy projects. This in itself is great, but if that same bank is still providing finance for new fossil fuel projects then it needs to be called out and not supported.

At Council's February meeting, I moved a motion calling on Ballina Council to commit to an aim of having no investments in fossil fuel aligned banks and for Council to write to all of banks and ask them what their policy was when

it comes to supporting new fossil fuel projects.

To my absolute disbelief the motion failed. Some of the reasons for the non-support included: writing a letter was too onerous for staff; the banks would simply ignore the letters; that reducing the amount of paper at council meetings was enough; or that the only consideration should be the highest interest rate.

I had a second motion asking for Council to take this matter to the NSW and National Local Government Conferences calling for a co-ordinated campaign to lobby the banks to stop supporting new loans to the fossil fuel industry. At least this motion was supported.

I believe the local government sector, if united on this issue, could convince one of the big banks to bring forward the inevitable decision to stop supporting new fossil fuel projects, and if one does, it's likely they all will.

The bottom line is that if countries like Australia continue to develop new fossil fuel projects (think Adani) then we have no chance of staying under the 1.5°C limit.



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MEMBER FOR BALLINA

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# Premier betrays region by slashing over 30 TAFE jobs

by Janelle Saffin MP,  
Member for Lismore

The axing of over 30 TAFE NSW jobs from the Northern Rivers and Northern Tablelands is a betrayal by Premier Gladys Berejiklian, who gave an iron-clad promise in 2019 that there would be no public service job cuts in regional and rural New South Wales.

Deputy Premier John Barilaro and his Nationals are just as responsible here too; not lifting a finger as the Liberals continue with their deliberate actions in dismantling TAFE.

Figures provided to me by the CPSU-NSW show that we are looking at up to 31 local jobs going under two major restructures – in educational support and in student services, facilities management and logistics.

The Berejiklian-Barilaro Government's hit list includes:

- Electorate of Lismore: Lismore TAFE Campus, six positions; Murwillumbah TAFE Connected Learning Centre, one position; Tenterfield TAFE, two positions.
- Electorate of Ballina: Wollongbar

TAFE Campus, eight positions; Ballina TAFE, one position.

- Electorate of Tweed: Kingscliff TAFE Campus, 13 positions.

Regardless of whether the Government's spin doctors call them roles or positions, it's frontline jobs that are being targeted – almost 700 of them across New South Wales, 470 of these in our regions.

I'm a product of TAFE because it was through this pathway of vocational education and training that I went from an early school-leaver to teaching stints in community development and social welfare at Lismore and Wollongbar TAFE campuses.

I know from personal experience that TAFE changes lives for the better, which is why we need to protect TAFE as a respected, well-resourced public institution.

TAFE is ours and should remain in public hands, so hands off, Gladys.

I stand with TAFE staff and their union, and with TAFE students, against the NSW Liberal-Nationals' push to further downgrade TAFE campuses so they can be eventually privatised.

Enough is enough.

**Transparency expected**  
John "PorkBarilaro's" credibility has taken another beating after he defended as "investment in the regions" the alleged robbing of joint NSW-Australian Government bushfire relief funding to favour electorates with Nationals/Liberal members of parliament.

While no-one begrudges any of the 71 grant recipients (two Kyogle-based timber companies received a total of \$2 million in the electorate of Lismore), us locals didn't get a chance to promote other worthy projects for bushfire-affected communities in the Kyogle, Lismore City, Tenterfield and Tweed shires.

An investigation by Michael West Media found that 99% of a \$177-million stream of Local Economic Recovery (LER) funding for 71 projects last November flooded in to Nationals/Liberal-held seats in New South Wales. NSW Labor seats were given just 1% of the funding.

This LER funding was never advertised. Instead, the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government identified "known priority community and industry recovery projects" and the



Lismore MP Janelle Saffin and North Coast-based MLC Ben Franklin worked together on securing a new shower project for CWA Tabulam's Rooms. Joining them recently were, from left, Sandi Hill (CWA Nimbin), Vicki Stebbins (CWA Tabulam), Felicity Cahill (Tabulam), Susan Stock (Nimbin), Dr Kitty van Vuuren (Nimbin), Linnet Pike (Nimbin) and Jan Mills (Tabulam)

Morrison-McCormack Government agreed to them, following what they claimed to be "local and industry consultation".

Public money should not be used as a private slush-fund for any government. People expect transparency and a level playing field for all potential applicants.

Grant programs need to be widely promoted, have clear guidelines,

eligibility and assessment criteria, and an acquittal process.

The Berejiklian-Barilaro Government needs to start governing for all, not just the few.

It is not good governance to dole out public money using secretive processes. This is what authoritarian regimes do, not democratically elected governments, and John Barilaro should know better.



## On the same Page

by Kevin Hogan MP, Member for Page

Australia is one of the safest places to be right now. Because we have done so well as a community managing this pandemic, we are leading the world in the economic recovery as well.

A recent Deloitte Access Economics report says, "you'd rather be here (Australia) than almost anywhere else" in the world. It continues by saying our economy is "bouncing back rapidly and outperforming expectations".

As a Government, our focus is on fighting the virus and continued economic recovery.

We have managed the virus better than almost any other country and have rolled out over \$250 billion in economic support.

This support has allowed our region to receive unprecedented funding. There are many exciting projects I look forward to seeing progress in 2021 – road improvements, sporting upgrades, supporting important industries, and improving community infrastructure.

Confronted with the greatest challenge Australians have faced since the Second World War, we are proving once again how resilient we are.

## New brooms at Lismore Council

At Lismore Council's February meeting we voted for a new Mayor, Vanessa Ekins, to lead us through to the council elections in September.

Vanessa has been a Lismore councillor for 16 years and has extensive experience in many facets of council business, including being a representative to Rous and chairing their Aboriginal Advisory Committee, chairing the Floodplain Management Committee and being an enthusiastic landcare advocate and bat lady!

Lismore Council resolved to terminate our General Manager's contract under the no-fault clause; and to make a fresh start to the leadership of the council. We have appointed Michael Donnelly as Acting GM while we resolve on a recruitment process for a new GM.

Mr Donnelly is a qualified engineer and holds a Masters of Law degree. He has previously been the Chief Executive of a state-owned trading corporation which had a 3000-strong workforce and revenues of \$500 million, as well as the Regional Director of NSW Public Works for the North Coast.

We also have a new Director of Planning, People and Engagement, Eber Butron, who will work closely with the Nimbin community as we

consult about updating the Development Control Plan for Nimbin and surrounds.

Eber has come to us from Townsville, where he was their Director of Planning, Environment and Cultural Services and Acting CEO. He has over 20 years' experience in planning and economic activation across Australia.

### Womens Fest

The fifth Lismore Women's Festival is being held from the 5th to 8th March, with many events held at Lismore City Hall. See the website for details: [www.ywca.org.au/lismore-womens-festival](http://www.ywca.org.au/lismore-womens-festival)

The International Women's Day lunch, hosted by Lismore Council on 8th March, will conduct our second annual Awards ceremony recognising women who have made a significant local or regional contribution in the fields of Service to the Community, Economic Sector, Health Sector, Sports Sector, and Arts/Entertainment Sector. You are invited to nominate someone you believe has really made a difference.

Tickets to the lunch can be bought at: <https://events.humanitix.com/lismore-womens-festival21> and nomination forms for the Awards are at: <https://lismore-lcc-councillor-forms.app.oneblink.io/forms/6771>

### Candidate Information Sessions

There are two information sessions being run in Lismore in March to encourage community members to consider running for council in the local government elections held later this year in September.

The first session is specifically for women interested in becoming councillors and will be held at the Lismore City Hall from 9.30am-12pm, and on Zoom, on 6th March, as part of the YWCA's Lismore Women's Festival.

It will be facilitated by Cassandra Coleman, president of Australian Local Government Women's Association, who will be joined by past councillors Jenny Dowell, Sue Meehan and Diana Roberts.

The second session is for all prospective candidates and will be held on Thursday, 25th March at the Lismore Regional Gallery. Registration for both sessions is available on the website: <https://yoursay.lismore.nsw.gov.au/become-a-councillor>

### Dunoon Dam

The rescission motion lodged against the decision by Rous County Council to scrap the Dunoon Dam from their Future Water Project was defeated at the February meeting. However, I've been informed that one councillor will raise the Dunoon



by Cr Darlene Cook, Lismore City Council

Dam yet again at the March meeting.

There are so many reports coming out into the public sphere from the Environmental Protection Agency, the NSW Productivity Commission, and Water NSW about the blow-out in costs of constructing dams, an average of 49% increase, as well as many concerns about the impacts of dams on local and regional environment systems, that make planning to build a new dam so out of touch with community expectations.

Climate change is a reality and we can expect longer periods of time with reduced rainfall and hence reduced surface run-off of water to be collected in storage dams.

We must explore all the other options that are available to us and give our region a water supply sourced from non-all dependent systems to make us truly resilient to the impacts of climate change.

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



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# We all live in the same backyard

by Bernadine Schwartz

Hasn't this summer been an absolute godsend and such a relief? But now look at us. We're all splashing about in the rain and I'm full of appreciation as I watch every single life-giving drop fall to the ground. My gardens are rejuvenated and so am I, but I'm feeling very guilty knowing there are millions upon millions of people on the other side of the world who haven't seen good rain, or any for years and still none forecast.

Before global warming arrived on the scene, society never gave the weather a second thought, it was something that just happened without incident and for thousands and thousands of years it has kept us relatively comfortable.

Not surprisingly though, while the world's been busy doing nothing, global warming has been lurking in the shadows, quietly consolidating its power and gathering momentum, as the weather goes to and fro like an erratic pendulum in full swing, and it's not going to come to a standstill.

Many parts of South America are in the grip of an historic drought and this includes, Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, Argentina, Colombia,

Guatemala, Chile, Venezuela, Mexico and Honduras. The people of Guatemala are into their seventh year of drought, and rivers that always flowed are now down to a trickle or just a dry riverbed, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to abandon their lands where they have lived for generations, or face starvation.

In North America, the entire region from the California coast to the eastern borders of Colorado and New Mexico are also drought-stricken and according to Jon Meyer, who's a research climatologist for the Utah Climate Centre, even a good year of rain won't be enough to break free.

In Arizona, 94% of the state is experiencing a severe drought, and in Colorado virtually all of the Colorado River Basin isn't awash with water but dust, due to extreme or exceptional drought conditions. This water crisis also takes in Utah, where they've had to live through their driest year on record.

Mother Earth is really starting to feel the full brunt of humanity, from the ground all the way up to the tips of her glaciers that sit high above the world, and they're in desperate trouble, particularly those situated near the equator, where the length of daylight

doesn't vary much, giving no respite from the sun's direct rays. The Northern Andes is home to the world's last big tropical glaciers, and they're melting at an incredible rate, forming hundreds of new glacial lakes that are threatening towns, including the Andean city of Huaraz where 120,000 people are on high alert. The city sits below Lake Palcaraju, that's on the verge of rupturing, which would cause a catastrophic flood and landslide, entirely destroying everything below.

A similar crisis is unfolding in the Himalayas, where thousands of glaciers are also retreating and threatening the people of Nepal, Bhutan, India and Pakistan. Last month disaster struck in Uttarakhand in India, when a glacial lake burst, sending water and rubble roaring down the steep mountain valleys, leaving 200 missing and 21 dead, and destroying two recently-completed hydro electric dams.

There are roughly 150,000 glaciers in the world, excluding Greenland and Antarctica, and they cover an area of around 200,000 square miles. These innumerable glaciers feed the great river basins of Asia as well as major rivers. The Indus in Pakistan, the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers

in India, the Yellow and Yangtze rivers in China and the Mekong in South East Asia that provide essential freshwater to hundreds of millions of people. The loss of ice from these glaciers will also affect the production of hydro electricity that millions if not billions depend on, and what makes it all the more disturbing is the world's glaciers have reached a point of no return, with melting now outstripping the accumulation of ice and snow.

No-one can deny that over-population has played a significant role in driving global warming, but I believe the changes that have occurred to society's behaviour overall, have contributed immensely.

We divided the planet into nations, and when communities began to grow, we sliced the land up again and again into quarter-acre blocks, 'til eventually everywhere we looked there were demarcation lines.

So society thought that it wouldn't come at a cost to them when the war on the forests began to escalate, because it wasn't their garden facing the axe. And when they discovered the oceans and rivers were dying, it wasn't their concern when they had running water.



Photo courtesy Thomson Reuters Foundation

Now the foundations of Mother Earth are sinking, but they're not too troubled because it isn't their floor caving in. Well society couldn't be more wrong! We have all been living in an ancient garden in one backyard, named Mother Earth.

If we can't even manage to smile at a passerby in the street, how could we ever possibly unite and save Mother Earth, when that's always mine and this is yours.

If society had thought collectively maybe they would have put up a good fight, but instead they didn't even enter the ring and now it's time to start saying farewell to the Mother Earth we've always known.

## Grandmothers against removals



On 12th February, the Lismore group of 'Grandmothers Against Removals' (GMAR) protested at FACS (Family & Community Services) offices against the on-going practice of taking children of indigenous parents away, in some cases straight after birth from hospital.

Since the Kevin Rudd apology to the 'Stolen Generation' 13 years ago, the number has increased exponentially.



Photos: Chibo Mertineit

The documentary *After the Apology* is available until 17th March on SBS on demand. Connect to the Facebook group: *Lismore GMAR*

## shapeshifting

by Anand Gandharva

Are we the last generations of Homo Sapiens, or 'wise man'? Linnaeus lived in a male-dominated era and could not paint the right picture in classifying, valuing yang over yin, head over heart.

We should be balanced: smart, but feeling. Being 'wise' is not good enough, you have to be empathetic. In harmony! What good is a high IQ, when our SQ is deplorable?

The desires of the individual Homo Sapiens do not coincide with the social needs of society. The French Revolution established new ground rules: freedom, brotherhood and equality. Democracies today offer make-believe freedom, tribal brotherhood, and no equality.

We have replaced the cruel rule of tyrants with the absurd wealth of today's 1%. Deckchairs on the *Titanic*? Revolution by Spartacus clones and exploitation by 'an elite class' must stop. It has lasted for millennia. Why?

Long before Smith's *Wealth of Nations* we have 'maximised opportunity'. Capitalism works with a framework

of religious morals, supposed class and tribal superiority, but unfortunately is not designed to unite Earth. It works best where a country can use the work of poor people or 'developing' nations. But the chickens come home to roost. The West is inundated with illegal migrants.

The other problem is Darwin's 'struggle for life', a cage fight. Society worked on the morals of faiths, but not today. The state loses credibility by being the lap dog of 'the elite'.

Perhaps the greatest problem is Machiavelli's advice to 'divide and rule'. It worked with competing nations, but is hopeless to unite the Global Village.

Using population control in a universe full of exoplanets traces to Malthus and Ehrlich's alarmism, the UN *Limits to Growth* report. There is no need to limit our species in an empty universe if we do not form a danger to others. There is only a need to limit our consumption.

Since Spinoza, his ethics have ruled the West. A son of Portuguese refugees, his world was small. He judged not eating animals to be 'womanly', lived in a time of environmental plenty. But



little who do not belong to its clan.

Since time immemorial, we have selected the best and brightest in society. Since long before Mendel we have consciously applied our skills in selected breeding. We are cracking our DNA code. In future, no disease may pester us.

The messages of Covid-19 are clear: 1. Virus problems are only solved co-operatively; 2. Eating animal chemicals is bad for shared health, and begets us the diseases of the animal kingdom; 3. All of us are essential to community wellbeing.

So far, we have not yet refined the genetics of human DNA, but the science will come. We have survived genetically modified food stuffs. Humanity will be a short-lived species, unless it adapts its habits due to the demands of climate change, and respects nature.

society becomes what it eats.

Homo Sapiens can be unreliable, tribal omnivores that work together in packs, harming enemy. Sapiens thinks, like Descartes *cogito ergo es*, but feels empathy for beings,

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## NIMBIN HEMP EMBASSY



# Another Medican in March

by Michael Balderstone

Nimbin's HEMP Embassy hasn't held one of its popular educational Medican gatherings in over a year and reckons time is up.

It's just a one-day gathering in the village Town Hall but with three major speakers: two experienced medical cannabis doctors and an ex-magistrate who is passionate about changing the drug driving rules. It should make for excellent listening.

We are really pleased to have Byron Bay's Ananda Clinic director Dr Jamie Rickord speaking in Nimbin for the first time. He has already made quite a name for himself on the North Coast with his interest in developmental trauma and helping people move into recovery.

Dr Rickford is an authorised prescriber of medicinal cannabis, and



uses cannabinoid medicines frequently in his practice. He is also trained as a psychotherapist and is actively developing the major role cannabinoids and psychedelics have in the next paradigm of mental health treatments.

With him is Dr John Teh, founder of Brisbane's PlantMed medical cannabis clinic. He has been working within the industry since the legalisation of cannabis for medicinal use in Australia in 2016. His presentation on

the endocannabinoid system we are all walking around with every day should be compulsory for all doctors, and will be one day.

Recently retired NSW Magistrate David Heilpern completes the trio. He used to speak in Nimbin decades ago, and it's a great pleasure for us all to be able to welcome him back on stage now he has derobed. He is outspoken in his criticism of the drug driving laws which he cites as a major reason for him quitting the bench.

This Medican is on Saturday 27th March in Nimbin's Town Hall, and plans to start at 11am and finish at 4.20. Admission is free with donations appreciated.

We hope to live stream the Medican on [www.facebook.com/nimbinhemp](http://www.facebook.com/nimbinhemp)

For more info, email: [head@hempembassy.net](mailto:head@hempembassy.net) or phone the HEMP Embassy 6689-1842



Over the past year, the uptake of hemp growers' licences has been spectacular, with many new growers putting a toe in the water and finding a ready market for their product. Could it be this is the decade we overgrow the government? Photo: Gerald Taylor

# MardiGrass plans are heading up

by Michael Balderstone, President, Australian HEMP Party and Nimbin HEMP Embassy

Nimbin's 29th annual MardiGrass is coming together nicely, although we're not sure if we'll be allowed to dance! And the way they're talking it's possibly the last jab-free MardiGrass.

Whatever the future, the ongoing unfair persecution of cannabis users means there is plenty of passion for the weekend of 1st and 2nd May.

The program is condensed on previous years and all events are in the Town Hall and Plantem Park behind it.

We're allowed a maximum of 3000 people in the Park for the HEMP Olympix and other events, and also in the Sunday Rally up the main street, which is plenty.

A bit over 200 in the Hall is not plenty though, and that may have to be first in and very orderly, as the Covid rules stand now.

David Hallett has organised a terrific lineup for the Great Green Cabaret in the Hall on Friday night following the HEMP Fashion Show and Opening Ceremony with new Lismore Mayor Vanessa Ekins.

Saturday's program is full of speakers on all things cannabis with a particular focus this year on legal weed versus illegal. What's the difference, which works best, why can't we grow our own?

David Heilpern is chairing a Q&A on the drug driving rules, which currently mean you cannot drive and use pot, even if it is legal. It's



a huge roadblock for the entire cannabis industry. A masterstroke by our enemies, you might say!

Also, we are trying to put a spotlight on the difficulties for veterans to access medical cannabis and how important it is for them and how being allowed to grow their own would literally save lives.

The HEMP Olympix officials are raring to go after missing a year, and the Growers Iron Person and Bong Throw and Yell course in Sativa Stadium is looking as manicured as the nightly news.

There will be comedy a-plenty with the Laugh Mob coming from Sydney as well as Sorrensen and Glover doing their special Saturday night Cannabis Comedy Show after the Joint Rolling heats, and before the Pickers Ball.

Pretty much everything else is on the program as usual... lots of music and hopefully we can dance by then, Mullaways Tony Bower is coming again, Fiona Patten, five legal pot doctors at least will be speaking and available to talk to, along

with hemp farmers, healers and medicine makers.

Pot Poetry, Pot Art, Legal Advice, the Kombi Lift and the famous Kombi Konvoy from Byron Bay are all in the program, as is Stoned Chess, Correct Weight (guessing an ounce), Seed Separating and the best Dread Stash.

Yarndi Yarns around the fire, growers circles, extraction and cooking classes, building with hemp, hempstone and weed-block making, hempseed as super food, the Ganja Faeries and the Big Rally and Parade on Sunday for Cannabis Law Reform where everybody will be socially distanced but still able to pass a joint, if you wanted to!

Meetings to pull the MardiGrass weekend together are held every Friday from 4.20 in the HEMP Bar. Volunteers, hemp related stalls, ideas, educational and peaceful protest ideas are all very welcome...

Various contacts are on: [nimbinmardigrass.com](mailto:nimbinmardigrass.com) or phone 6689-1842 or email: [nimbinmardigrass@hempembassy.net](mailto:nimbinmardigrass@hempembassy.net)

# MAGICAL WOMEN

by Aniko Papp

Black magic, sprites, spirits abound in indigenous everyday life, and are alive still in stories handed down across countless generations.

Working with indigenous families in the top end of the NT and hearing such stories, made me regard the country I was allowed to be on in a very different light.

I recall climbing on a hilltop with one of my indigenous co-workers, both gazing across to the red dusty flatness with the occasional dusky green bush.

With the deep purple and pink of sunset bathing us in colours, she pointed to a verdant slash in the ochre plain, sharing: "That there is a water hole. I haven't been there as this is not my country. Waterholes and waterfalls are women's places. That's where the water sprites live."

I wondered out loud if those sprites were evil or benign and I was told, "They just are, they're like mermaids. They keep an eye on women who give birth at the water. But they can be really tricky. You don't want to piss them off."

She explained that the sprites gather and live beneath the splashing waterfalls and watch out for visitors to their realm.

An Arnhem land elder advised me to seek the local water serpent's permission before I entered the hot springs at Mataranka. "You have to respect the spirits and if you show them respect, you'll be fine."

She herself never entered the hot springs, telling me that she could not as she was a healer, and I was never offered the story as to why: and of course, I never asked.

As I approached the turquoise water lined by semi-burnt pandanus and bright green palms, I chanted to myself, "Water serpent who looks after this special place, let this white woman swim here. I ask for your permission."

As I floated beneath the hot sun in the cool clear waters, past pink flowering water lilies, I fancied I felt a benign immense presence beneath and around me. Perhaps I was given permission. I did this every time I entered these and other hot springs. Just in case.

I was often told about black magic being used by certain people.

Someone was jealous of a woman, so cursed their baby so it got sick. Someone jealous of a man being with a certain woman; he might be spelled and have an accident.

Women told me that they always bound their long hair in plaits so not only were they not able to be grabbed by the hair, but it would keep strands of hair from being secretly taken from them. "Why?" I asked.

"A clever man can take your hair and use it to make love spells so you sleep with them, even though you shouldn't. It's like you are a slave to them." She shivered and hid her plait inside the back of her shirt.

One young woman, no more than 17 years old, who lived in an especially remote community near the desert, was known as being a black magic woman.

Quite matter of factly, this baby-faced young woman related: "When I was about three or four years old, I started drawing in the sand and my grandfather told me that I was drawing men's paintings. I was not allowed but I kept doing it."

"My grandfather was one of the elders. I stole his paints and



Alma Bay  
Photo: David Tranter

brushes. I just knew what to paint. All the old men were upset, but then they saw how I was painting stuff that was very secret men's business, I was never shown but I just knew. Then the old men left me alone.

"My grandfather said I was special and that I would do something for my people. I was going to lead them as I have men's and women's business in me."

She confided that she hoped to be a leader that was strong in culture blackfella way but knew the white way too, and to stop the violence in her community.

I had a neighbour come visit, sharing tea with me, on my wooden hill top verandah which is surrounded by thick bush. She is indigenous, but not from this country, working with the

Wulgarukaba (meaning the Canoe People) community. She spoke about a strange dwarf-like man who she has seen scampering in the rocky ravines behind our homes.

"He comes out when there are kids about. I tell my kids to watch out for the hairy man. He'll come and get you." I fancied spying the wee hairy man peeking out at me behind pandanus and palms on the very island I am now living on: Yunbenun (Magnetic Island).

This beautiful island is a ferry ride across the bays from Townsville. Apparently there are rock art and midden sites located in Florence Bay and on the north part of the island. These are situated on and behind bays, located along pothole-ridden roads and creek crossings: but that is an adventure for the dry season here!



# Takin' care of business

by Diana Gosper,  
Rainbow Power Company

The orders for solar power systems here at RPC have not stopped or slowed down – if anything, they have ramped up! So much so in fact that we have need to expand, once again.

Originally doing all of our work out of the back of a car, the business progressed from a market stall, a shop front, a small building on current property, and now, a massive 500ft showroom with 1000ft new manufacturing area and larger still workshop and warehouse.

We were not in a hurry to have such big premises: but we are determined to help as many customers as possible.

Hence we have had dedicated builders and team members working around the clock these past couple of weekends to get the space finished, so we can get on with business. A bigger storage space means extra saving for customers as well, and less wait time.

Theoretically, where last year we could manufacture two boards a week, now we will be able to do two in a day. It doesn't sound like much difference but for people waiting on a solar system it means having what they want when they



New manufacturing space

want it.

For people buying, selling, renovating, extending, downsizing, holidaying, investing – time is always an issue and a factored consideration when deciding whether and how to go solar. We try to make everything as easy and trouble-free as possible for our customers.

The above is one of the many reasons why our pre-wired kits are so popular (check out our new YouTube channel for videos about our awesome and popular DIY kits), because they are hassle-free and you don't need to call an electrician to install them.

We have done all the techy and legal stuff here at the workshop, all pre-wired and manufactured to Australian standards, and you know you are in safe and trustworthy hands with

RPC who put their money where their mouth is to make their solar products design and installs second to none.

Too many solar companies these days enter the industry for a quick buck, and then are gone when something fails.

With one company a week in Australia going under, will it be a company who sold you a cheaper substandard system and install? I hope not. That's why you are better off buying right once, with the locals who you can rely on.

RPC have been your solar specialists since 1987, and with our new expansion you can expect even greater service for your system requirements.

We aren't going anywhere in a hurry.

Call us on 02 6689-1430 or visit: [rpc.com.au](http://rpc.com.au)

# Me and the law – a CV

Meeting up with an old friend 30 years later, she asks how I got into the law.

Back then I was a new-age therapist called Sindhu. She got the short version; how, in the early nineties, in the back bar of the Tatts in Lismore, me bemoaning the postponement of the naturopathy degree, my drinking mate, of learned counsel, told me about the new graduate law degree. I was 45.

Why not? I thought, and enrolled.

My study of the law had begun much earlier, when I left high school with a Commonwealth scholarship and joined a mob of private school boys and a handful of girls in first year law. Gowns were worn to all lectures and all of The Law was in books. We used pens.

Fortuitously, first year was comprised of two law units plus any two from arts, so, by the time I'd studied legal history twice, I'd completed first year arts as well as first year law.

I never wanted to be a lawyer. It was my father's fantasy, not mine. I wanted to be an artist. I put up with it for two and a half years then, deciding it was not a job for young people, escaped to adopt, for a few months, the grand title of records clerk to the Minister for Police & Chief Secretary. When I re-enrolled, this time in second year arts, it was to read English literature.

This was a scam, getting marks for 'studying' stuff written to entertain. Anyway, I got my degree, then taught high school for a bit. The Arts Council gave me a Young Writer's Fellowship which ruined me for gainful employment. A couple of decades later I was said new-age therapist in Keen Street, Lismore.

The graduate law degree at Southern Cross was radical. Graduates from widely disparate



by John Adams

disciplines emerged from the hills and joined in. I graduated at the grand age of 49. Life would have been different if I hadn't procrastinated over being admitted as a solicitor.

Across the road from the clinic the Northern Rivers Conservatorium Arts Centre (as it then was) ran diploma courses in music, dance and drama. The staff and students, finding that it was run by an incorporated association,

all joined, threw out the old committee, and sacked the director and administrator.

I was asked to find a pro-bono lawyer to defend the claims for unpaid entitlements and found myself on the committee. Others joined and then left as the true situation revealed itself.

The finances and building itself were in a bad state; even a developer's dream. Four years later, as unpaid principal executive officer, I was asked to resign, the organisation having been, allegedly, trading insolvent.

That's when I became a lawyer, a freelance instructing clerk, first in a trial in the Supreme Court instructing a silk, then descending to the District Court to instruct junior counsel.

In 2004 I was finally admitted, and a year later was employed by a lawyer in Liverpool. Half my files were Local Court Small Claims against ex-clients who refused to pay him. Why, soon became obvious.

After two years there, another two in the Riverina, six in Armidale, and a couple back on the farm recovering from 10 years on the wrong side of capitalism, after the flood I ended up back in Lismore. Which itself is starting to recover.

And South Lismore is palpably taking off. I sit in my new office, admiring the all-day free parking. Procrastination can be a blessing.

And law is more fun when you're old.

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# Music and more at Nimbin Bowlo

by Mel Williamson

After a very long (Covid) hiatus, Open Mic nights have returned to the Nimbin Bowlo, on a new night.

They are now being held fortnightly on Thursday nights from 6.30pm.

All welcome – musicians, singers, poets and comedians. Please bring your instruments with you; drums and PA supplied.

Next Open Mic will be 18th March. Next month it will be 1st, 15th and 29th April.

Other music at the Bowlo in March:

- Friday 12th: the lovely Mish Songsmith
  - Friday 19th: local wonder Nina Lotus
  - Friday 26th: Northern Rivers stalwarts, the Dinkum Bohos
- Music on a Friday kicks off around 6pm.

Dinkum Bohos (pictured) are multi-



Pat and Mark at the February Open Mic

instrumental twosome Vasudha Harte and Jem Edwards, who share a passion and expertise that is a pleasure to behold.

They have entwined their diverse talents for the last 12 years on many local and international stages.

These two well-travelled “bohós” are



relaxed and in the moment as they move seamlessly from sweet and mellow to upbeat and wild, setting an intimate and interesting atmosphere. It's been a long time between live performances for them, and they are thrilled to be coming back to Nimbin.

Also happening every Wednesday night is a poker night for you card sharks.

And for you trivia buffs, the first CWA

Trivia Night will be happening on Saturday 20th March, with prizes and raffles; dinner from 6pm, trivia from 7pm.

The Greenkeepers Bistro is now open Wednesday to Saturday for dinner from 5 to 8pm. For bookings, phone 6689-1473, or to book the courtesy bus, phone 6689-1250.



John McPherson as Dr. Freudelstien and Chris Kitchner as Travis

## Cabaret returns to the region

*Dr. Freudelstien will see you shortly...* is an hilarious new cabaret featuring a stellar cast of the finest Northern Rivers theatre and cabaret performers, taking place at three theatres across the region.

It is touching, irreverent, hilariously joyous and life-affirming in our current world.

Alan Raabe was inspired to create *Dr. Freudelstien will see you shortly...* after a holiday visit to a sensational cabaret in Berlin that demonstrated how talented local artists could produce a truly exceptional show.

*Dr. Freudelstien will see you shortly...* tells the story of Miss Claudia Smith who arrives 10 minutes early to visit her nanna, a long term resident of the 'Riverview Asylum'.

Forced to wait in the canteen, she meets the residents and staff of the asylum: the magician who desperately wants to appear on Penn & Teller's Fool Us; the opera singer lost in her memories of glorious times past; the burlesque dancer still hoping to meet her sugar daddy; and of course, the good Doctor entrusted with their care.

This motley group of isolated souls, each searching for acceptance in their own way, pose the question – are their dreams and aspirations really any different to our own?

The cabaret is written and directed by Alan Raabe, a professional magician on the Sydney club circuit and cabaret performer

at Hobart's Wrest Point Casino.

Assistant director and choreographer is Fleur Letitia, formerly a ballet dancer with Sadler Wells, the London Ballet Company and Vienna Festival Ballet before becoming Artistic Director and Choreographer of the NSW Ballet Company.

Peter Lehner is the musical director and lighting and sound designer is Luke Kane.

It has been brought to sparkling life by the cream of Northern Rivers actors, singers, cabaret performers, staff and crew, including Veronica Lovejoy, Carl Moore, Chris Kitchener, Carl Taylor, Junia Wulf, Krystle Manshanden and John McPherson.

This show is a co-operative production, whereby everyone involved shares in the profit.

*Dr. Freudelstien will see you shortly...* will be performed at these Covid-Safe venues. Duration approx. 1hr:

• **Nimbin Bush Theatre**, 18th, 19th, 20th March at 8pm. Dinner available 6-7.15pm. Tickets via: [www.nimbinbushtheatre.com](http://www.nimbinbushtheatre.com)

• **Mary G's Hotel**, Cnr Keen and Woodlark Streets, Lismore, 25th, 26th, 27th March at 8pm.

• **Drill Hall Theatre** Mullumbimby, 9th, 10th April at 8pm and 11th April at 3pm. Tickets via: [www.trybooking.com/BNGSB](http://www.trybooking.com/BNGSB)

For more information, see: [www.facebook.com/Dr-Freudelstien-will-see-you-shortly](http://www.facebook.com/Dr-Freudelstien-will-see-you-shortly)



## A WORD AND A SONG

Two of Nimbin valley's top performers will be teaming up for an evening of poetry and music at the Eltham Hotel on Wednesday 10th March.

Titled 'A Word and a Song' the show features popular and charismatic singer Andrea Soler along with award winning performance poet David Hallett.

Andrea Soler has performed both solo and with diverse bands in shows and festivals all around Australia, together with two European Tours and



recently with the colourful and fabulous Bellafontes. In December Andrea launched a Covid lockdown recording of her latest work titled 'Things look better in the sunshine' which is available



on all streaming platforms.

Poet David Hallett, twice winner of the Poetry Olympics at the Sydney Writers Festival and winner of the 2019 Reciter of the Year award, has been

hosting poetry venues in Lismore and Byron Bay for the past 30 years.

In 2020 David published his latest collection of performance poems titled *Out of the Blue*.

The Eltham Hotel show will feature a set of David's poems together with a mix of Oz poetry from the past century; followed by a set of Andrea's original songs and distinctive covers.

The show starts at 7pm, entry is \$10, and bookings for 'A Word and a Song' are available via Ozitix.

## Family fun day on the Wilson River



Bugs are part of the building blocks of life. Love 'em or hate 'em, life will not survive on this planet without bugs.

A little known fact is that native fish like the Australian Bass, rely on land (terrestrial) bugs for a large percentage of their diet.

'Bugs and Bass' will be an educational and engaging day for families and Landcarers.

Learn about fascinating water and land bugs, get advice on freshwater fishing, native plant advice by experts, and nature games for the kids. There will also be

demonstrations and music.

There's plenty of fun for the whole family with BCF prizes, a Casting Competition, Bug finding activities, and information about canoeing.

'Bugs and Bass' is a Family Fun Field Day on Wilson River at Eltham. It will be held on Sunday 28th March, between 10am and 2pm, and is a Covid-compliant event.

For enquiries, go to: [www.facebook.com/boatharbourlandcare](http://www.facebook.com/boatharbourlandcare) or phone Dot on 02 6628-4270.

## Renew Fest returns this May

Renew Fest is returning in 2021. After cancelling in 2020 due to Covid, the festival of regenerative full system change will be once again held on Mother's Day weekend, 7th-9th May at the Mullumbimby Showgrounds.

"This year presents a significant opportunity. If the fires, floods, pandemic and housing crisis of Byron Shire has taught us anything, it is that deep community change is needed more than ever," says festival director Ella Rose Goninan.

"We need inspired solutions that honour the planet and our place in the web of life, empower grass-roots activism, and put an emphasis on real human connection. This is what we'll be offering again at Renew Fest this year."

"The community buzz is already building. Last year we sold 700 early-bird tickets in a whirlwind one-week crowdfunding campaign. All these tickets are valid for this year's festival, and spirits are high to be finally coming together."

To celebrate its return, Renew Fest is releasing 300 second wave of early-bird tickets available from 12th February for a limited time only. Applications are also open to present, perform, volunteer and more. See: [www.renewfest.org.au](http://www.renewfest.org.au)

