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Year 12 Formal

by Cath Marshall, principal

Nimbin Central School's year 12 students have done it! They have reached their final milestone in their school lives, besides getting their HSC results, that is.

At the end of Term 3 we sent the students off with a formal farewell assembly. We congratulated and honored them as the amazing young people that they are. They received awards and heartfelt messages from all the students at the school wishing them good luck.

They then sat their HSC exams during early Term 4, and then finally we held our Year 12 Formal. What a beautiful evening it was. It was held at Armonica in Nimbin and it was lovely to keep such a special event within the community.

Students first met at school where they boarded the school bus and were



driven around town, nosily advertising the fact that they had "Just Graduated". We wanted everyone to know how amazing these people are and what they have achieved to get this far.

The night was filled with good food, good company and lots of laughter. A beautiful way to send off a special bunch of students. We wish you well always.

Vision for a flood-proof future

Living Lab Northern Rivers has been launched, a multi-disciplinary hub for research, community engagement, public conversations and education, focused on increasing the region's resilience and building local capacity following the February and March 2022 floods.

The initiative is a collaboration between the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation (NRRC) and Southern Cross University, in partnership with University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Vice President (Engagement) at

Southern Cross University, Ben Roche said the Living Lab will partner with all levels of government, communities, industry and educational institutions to provide a testing ground for solutions to complex issues.

"Together we have established a community shop-front presence in Lismore, with regular outreach across the region and opportunities for the community to share their ideas. There will also be information sessions on resilient building and design, exhibitions and community engagement.

"Open to community, the shop-front



Living Lab exhibition manager Dan Etheridge

Photo: Chibo Mertineit

will support and encourage participation in the recovery, resilient rebuilding and adaption of the Northern Rivers region," Mr Roche said.

NRRC Chief Executive, David Witherdin said, "This is a long-term effort and a transformative program of work focused on providing a more sustainable outcome for all Northern Rivers communities to remain safe and better cope with natural disasters in the future.

"The Living Lab provides a genuine opportunity for community, business and industry to participate in and

contribute to programs and initiatives which improve the future sustainability, productivity and resilience of communities in the Northern Rivers, NSW and across the country," Mr Witherdin said.

The Living Lab is holding the first of a series of exhibitions showcasing innovative ideas for the rebuilding of Lismore.

The shopfront and exhibition is open from Tuesday to Thursday, 1-4pm at 11 Woodlark Street, Lismore.

For more see: www.scu.edu.au/engage/living-lab-northern-rivers/

Nimbin Village Laundry

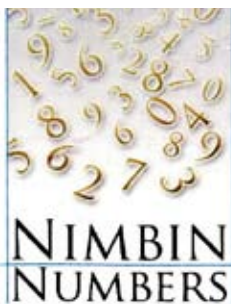


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Festival and special event management course

Johnny Allen and Dr Robert Harris, two of Australia's most experienced event management researchers and practitioners, are conducting a course which runs over three days at the Nimbin Bush Theatre from Sunday 22nd to Tuesday 24th January.

The course is presented at a pivotal time in Australia's entertainment and event history which faces some of the biggest challenges to date.

The Covid-19 pandemic in the short term shut down

many events, and its long-term impact is far-reaching, profound and yet to be fully played out.

As restrictions are lifted, the vitally important contribution that live entertainment and social commentary have on our lives and society will once again be realised.

The course is designed for both aspiring and established event managers who want to gain the benefit of many years of direct experience, research and networking in

the event management arena that both Johnny and Rob have to offer.

The stimulus for the programme to be presented in the Rainbow Region at this time is preparation for the Aquarius50 celebrations.

The original Aquarius Festival 50 years ago shaped the area which we now know as the Rainbow Region, and Johnny Allen was the one of the key organisers of that event.

The time has again come for "the counterculture to roar."

The 10-day Aquarius50 event from 12th to 21st May will be the platform for the revival of our utopian dream. Participants in the course will have the chance to hone their skills through direct involvement in this event.

For further information on programme details and costs please contact: admin@aquarius50.com.au

A limited number of places in the course will be offered as scholarships in return for participation in the Aquarius50 event.

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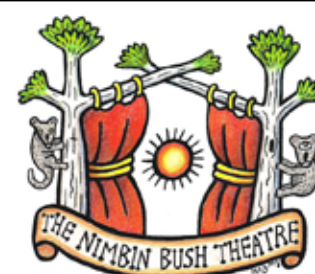
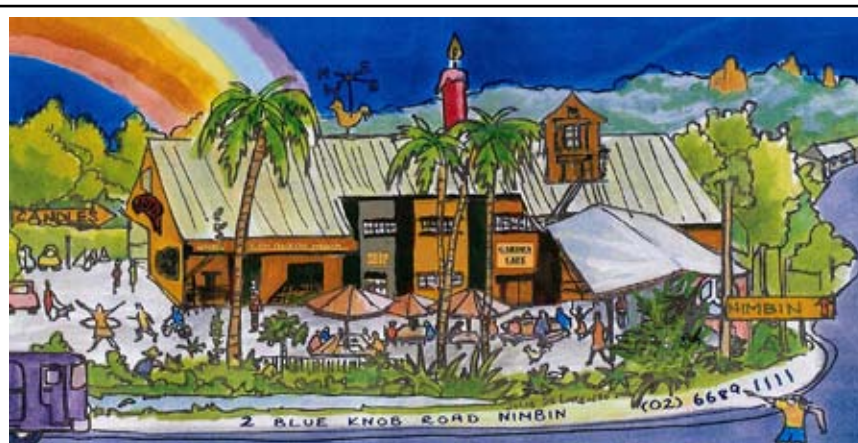
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Waste incinerator mooted for Casino

Photo: Sue Stock

by Liz Stops

The Richmond Valley Jobs Precinct at Casino is one of four sites designated by the NSW Government as being suitable for a waste-to-energy (W2E) incinerator.

The regulation permitting this was passed during the catastrophic floods earlier this year with minimal community consultation. Waste incinerators have been knocked back in Sydney because of concerns about air pollution and impacts to health.

There is growing community opposition in the Northern Rivers to the prospect of a dirty incinerator. If approved, it could burn residual waste from up to a dozen Northern Rivers councils for over two decades. Waste may also be brought in from other regions to meet contractual quotas.

Plume mapping shows that air pollutants, including dioxins, nano-particulates and PFAS or 'forever chemicals', would be widely dispersed across the Northern Rivers region. Air pollution would be worst for the Casino community. Furthermore, up to 25% of the incinerated waste becomes toxic ash, which needs to be securely disposed of.

Independent research shows that a waste incinerator could adversely affect community health, the environment and agricultural, tourism and associated industries. There are few jobs associated with an incinerator.

At the November Richmond Valley Council general meeting, Councillors voted unanimously to 'pause' investigations into waste disposal strategies, although the only two options discussed were untreated landfill or W2E. The reason was uncertainty surrounding the state election in March 2023 and the outcomes of the proposed W2E facility at Parkes.

Despite the recommended 'pause', it was apparent from discussions between the general manager, mayor and almost all councillors, that there was enthusiasm for an incinerator.

The National Toxics Network recently commissioned an independent report by Eunomia Research & Consulting to compare landfills with waste incinerators. The report found that properly managed landfills are a better option to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Incineration also destroys resources,

pollutes the air, and has higher greenhouse emissions than coal. It is also a very inefficient way of producing energy. An incinerator burning 300,000 tonnes of waste will produce only 30MW of power, while a coal plant with equivalent levels of pollution will produce over 800,000MW.

Although the NSW Government says that incinerators can be part of the circular economy, the fact is turning residual plastic waste into fuel just perpetuates our fossil fuel dependency and gives plastic manufacturers a reason to keep making plastic.

Properly managed landfill that has undergone advanced Material and Biological Treatment (MBT) does not leach toxins into the environment, emits less greenhouse gases, and is essentially carbon capture and storage. This waste treatment method is also scalable to accommodate local needs, cost competitive and climate-friendly.

Buried, inert plastic waste is a potential future resource that could be mined to become part of a circular economy as recycling technology advances.

For further information, visit: www.ntn.org.au

Sue gets an Edna Award

Nimbin's Sue Edmonds (pictured) was awarded an Edna Ryan Award on the 18th November, at Trades Hall, Sydney. This is presented to women who have advanced the status of women, the battlers and the unsung heroines who show commitment and determination.

The Edna Ryan Awards, convened by the Older Women's Network NSW, were created in 1998 in recognition of the achievements of Edna Ryan, who in 1974 presented the Women's Electoral Lobby

submission to the National Wage case, arguing that women should receive the same minimal rate of pay as men.

As the family breadwinner, Edna Ryan's mother earned just over half the wage paid to men. She worked tirelessly for 30 years with the union movement for equal pay, and published two books, *Gentle Invaders* and *Two Thirds a Man*, arguing for equal pay for all workers.

The Ednas are awards for women in NSW and the ACT who have made a feminist difference, by making

a significant impact on the social, economic, and political status of women and girls across a range of fields.

Sue Edmonds is a feminist songwriter, singer, musician, entertainer, creator of the hubaphone, and a social activist whose cultural work has segued with the many issues facing women in the domestic and personal sphere, in the workplace, and socially and politically.

Sue has been on the frontline for more than five decades. Her feminist arts and cultural work make clear bold statements



that inspire women to action to improve the status of women. She shows that feminism is, like other serious social change movements, about lived experiences, and that women are strong change agents.

This issue remains relevant today.



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Towards Nimbin Aquarius 50th anniversary

by Benny Zable,
NAFI president

I acknowledge elders past, present, future of the Wyabal/ Wyjabul people whose lands we occupy: "Always was and always will be Aboriginal land."

We wish Wyabal/ Wyjabul elder Uncle Ces Roberts a speedy recovery from a car accident and return home to Nimbin.

Covid is doing the rounds of our community, and I advise all to wear and carry a mask at all times.

AGM

Sorry I had to cancel the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc.(NAFI) AGM meeting.

Both our Treasurer and Secretary were unable to attend the original meeting.

I am rescheduling Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc AGM before the year's end.

It will be held on Friday 16th December, 3.30pm at the Nimbin Community



Centre Comskool room.

Please mail me if you plan to attend: bennyzable@gmail.com

Aquarius50

I have been attending weekly Aquarius 50th Anniversary Festival (Aquarius50)

Committee meetings with Annie McGovern at the Nimbin Bush Theatre.

The development of the Aquarius50 is crucial to a successful, fully community engaging event for next year.

NAFI will be discussing these developments, proposing amendments aligning itself with this re-organised structure.

I have designed a logo to go with the other logo designs to be used for promotions and grant applications with the Aquarius50 committee.

Alternative architecture

Back in 1979 I was a representative from Australia at a 'World Symposium' in the Pasadena Convention Center near California USA.

It was one of a number organised by the Humanity Society based in Toronto Canada, taking place simultaneously around the world.

Besides me playing around in my Zany Bubbles self-liberating, crowd-motivating costume, I met up with many of the great luminaries of that era. Palo Solari was one of them.

I visited soon after the symposium to participate in his building of ARCOSANTI, an Arcology-principled workshopping ritual process towards solving the suburban dilemma.

For those interested in solving the suburban developments unchecked taking place around Nimbin, I am interested in meeting



"alternative" architects engaged in these issues and interested in discussing planning human settlements of the future.

See: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/existentialreckoninglive>
<https://www.arcosanti.org/tours/>

"May the long time sun shine upon you, all love surround you, and the pure light within you guide your way on."

JOIN US FOR AQUARIUS50

by Pat Miller

Next year sees the 50th anniversary of the 1973 Aquarius Festival, the catalyst event for progressive thinking in Australia, long before its time.

For better or for worse, the original festival put Nimbin on the map as a destination, as a haven for the alternative and as a community in its own right.

Next year we celebrate the 1973 Aquarius Festival with Aquarius50, a modern celebration of the legacy of the original festival.

Aquarius50 reimagines the future, with a respectful nod to the past, over ten themed days between 12th and 21st May, 2023. We thank and pay our respects to the Bundjalung nation on whose unceded land we will celebrate, hand-in-hand with the original owners. The keynote of the festival is respect and support for First Nations people with the first day devoted entirely to indigenous lore and country.

The world has radically changed in the intervening half century with the advent of the digital age changing the meaning of community and the nature of society. The mythology of 'connectedness' has led to increased alienation.

Aquarius50 seeks to change that, to re-examine the issues important to the original 'counter culture' that are now mainstream and still badly addressed. The anniversary festival will convene thinkers, activists, people with lived experience to create time and place for thinking and renewing, for political action and local improvement.



Photos: Peter Derrett



Aquarius50 aims to give an economic boost to the Nimbin region through rural and community renewal with a focus on sustainability in all its forms. Together we can achieve this through workshops, know-how, engagement, art, celebration and mirth as a basis for economic viability.

We recognise Nimbin has limited capacity for visitors, and a huge influx of people for a sophisticated, modern celebration will be counterproductive. In the spirit of outreach and inclusion, Aquarius50 will feature satellite programs in surrounding villages, convening speakers and locals for film, workshop, discussion and linked events.

In local communities, the lead-up events will support broader engagement. Aquarius50 seeks to engage

people across the region, as well as having a presence on the international stage.

While we aim for local grassroots change, microeconomic improvement and engagement with the issues, we will capitalise on the vast array of platforms to get international attention and support.

Make no mistake, Aquarius50 is a call for government to act more effectively. It's a call for people to pick up the activism and translate this into real-time benefit for the Nimbin and surrounding communities.

Aquarius50 is structured by themed days:
May 12: First Nations
May 13: Spiritual – Let there be light
May 14: Alternative Health and Healing
May 15: Alternative Energy

and Agriculture
May 16: Politics, Democracy and Disaster
May 17: Art and Artists
May 18: Community
May 19: Day of the Dead
May 20: Youth
May 21: Day of Renewal
These may change as the program develops.

Join us for a fresh look at how we live peacefully and sustainably in a world that doesn't always appreciate the effort it takes.

For enquiries, email: admin@aquarius50.com.au and use the QR code (below) to sign up to the Aquarius50 e-newsletter.



Bruce Macdonald remembers Aquarius 1973



The surprises started early. We were walking on the roadside at dawn, trying to hitchhike from Lismore to the Aquarius festival in Nimbin. Four naive teenagers carrying backpacks and a huge bundle of long bamboo poles.

Cutting the poles to use for a shelter seemed a good idea at the time. "We're never going to get a lift!" and suddenly a mini-bus pulled over, "You boys going to Nimbin?"

We piled in, poles stacked in the aisle, and headed off. "You lads are gonna see some things!" I had never been there before, when the Nimbin Rocks appeared shrouded in early morning mist, I sensed a magical time ahead.

After setting up our primitive bamboo and plastic A-frame shelter, I went for a wander. We had come to perform *Images of Man*, an experimental theatre production directed by Peter Derrett of Lismore High School. I had no idea what the festival was about, but it sounded fun, and now it certainly looked like it.

So much activity, people setting up tents, playing guitars, clambering on geodesic domes. Lean pony-tailed work crews were building circular toilet blocks out of hessian and star pickets. On the main street, artists were painting huge murals on the buildings, folk milling on the road in sunny, chaotic happy anarchy.

I stopped briefly to watch a mime artist, Zany Bubbles, who was to appear again sporadically as a performance activist at many of the environmental protests I attended, including the Franklin Dam blockade. I had never seen people like this before, it felt like one huge friendly family party. Colour, music, sights, smells and sounds swirling around me.

"Hey!" a young woman in a purple velvet skirt and bead-braided hair approached me, "Why are you poisoning yourself?" pointing at the baked beans can I was eating from.

I stared at her, bewildered. "The military industrial complex makes that stuff so you get addicted to it." She stubbed out her rollie cigarette. "Come and have some real food with us."

I followed her to a campsite, a handful of brightly clothed people around the fire. A couple were playing guitar, stopping to exchange a strange-smelling cigarette back and forth. Presumably savouring their last one.

"It's tofu and rice," she handed out

overflowing wooden bowls. "Whole food, gives you strength."

I bit into the chewy manna, rice is brown? What's tofu? That woman has hair on her legs, women can grow hair on their legs? All girls at my school had smooth shiny legs that left a light coconut oil slick on the seats.

A life of stodge meant the meal was utterly alien, but surprisingly edible. We ate in companionable silence, a couple of naked toddlers were scooping it up with their fingers.

I thanked them for the meal; they seemed pleased that I had shared their food, grinning broadly. I had never really thought about my diet before, perhaps that interaction led me on a path to being a life-long vegetarian.

Later that day I heard something about a sauna, so I put on my swimmers and went to have a look. The sauna was made from timber, rocks, mud and plastic sheeting. I pushed through the flap door, as my eyes adjusted to the gloom, I saw maybe ten bodies squashed together, all older than me and all completely naked.

Suddenly ashamed, my lack of nudity was embarrassing and their nudity normal, I felt a freak. I stripped off and joined in. Everyone was dripping sweat, some soap appeared, a couple of women were scrubbing people up.

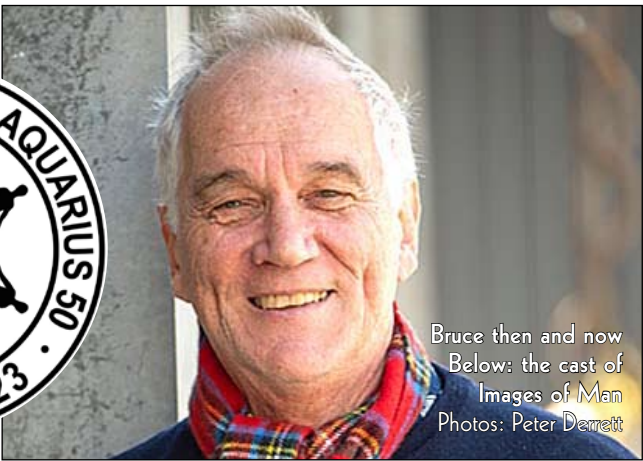
One of the guys started getting an erection, twisting his body to hide it. The women around him reassured him, "It's natural, don't worry". I felt so bad for him, what a vulnerable position to find yourself in, I would be so embarrassed. Then all of us burst out of the sauna and headed towards the river.

Spread out in a line, we ran across the meadow laughing and holding hands in the sun. I looked across to my right and saw this rock-hard schlong bouncing proudly in front of us. An image seared into my memory.

That evening I went up to a main street filled with people, jugglers, even a fire-breather. Men were stringing coaxial video cables that led to a media room. Some guy was tying a rope between two lamp posts, he leapt up and walked along it.

He's pretty good, I thought. It was Philippe Petit, who would later famously tightrope walk between the Twin Towers in New York.

Walking back to the campsite, small groups would appear out of the dark singing, "May the long time sun shine upon you," strumming guitars. In the



distance, drumming and chanting, drifting campfire smoke, I felt like I was at a medieval fair.

Next morning the unaccustomed fibre overload from the wholefood was making itself known. As I approached the toilets I realised they were still not complete, people were sitting on the cans in the semi-circle, facing each other! The doors had still not been put on.

I retreated and looked for another set of toilets, to my dismay none of them were complete and I realised it was deliberate.

You could sit in a circle opposite your companions in the inwards-facing style, or bare yourself to the world in an outwards-facing semi-circle. I was stunned. It seemed beyond me to expose such private intimate business to others, let alone the entire campsite.

I finally found an outward-facing style where one of the stalls backed onto the riverbank and there was no foot traffic, about as private as I was going to get. I lowered my trousers and sat down, there was no-one around but it still took time to relax.

Finally, as the joy of relief commenced I heard a lilting melody. A young woman playing a flute danced in front of me, wearing gold bangles, a bright silk scarf and nothing else. We locked eyes momentarily, mine mortified, hers playful.

By now my own thunderous concerto had commenced, there was no holding back. Sitting on the can, the fibre tearing my soul out, she twirled, then sat cross-legged directly in front of me. I wallowed helplessly in a pit of embarrassment deeper than the long drop below me.

We reached a crescendo in our mutual performances and then she was gone. I was mortified and deeply conflicted, a naked woman had sat in front of me whilst I did a shit, but it was kind of OK, something had changed in me.

Subtle but distinct changes that altered the shape of my life, I had seen an alternate lifestyle: variety, vibrance, community, a connection with the world.

In the evening we performed our show in the Nimbin Town Hall. One of my parts was standing in a mud-filled wading pool and daubing myself whilst delivering my lines. The eager audience was crowded in, lots standing at the rear.

I should have done this in the nude, I thought.

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In your neighbourhood...

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre News

Xmas closure dates

NNIC will be closed for two weeks as from Saturday 24th December and re-opening on Monday 9th January.

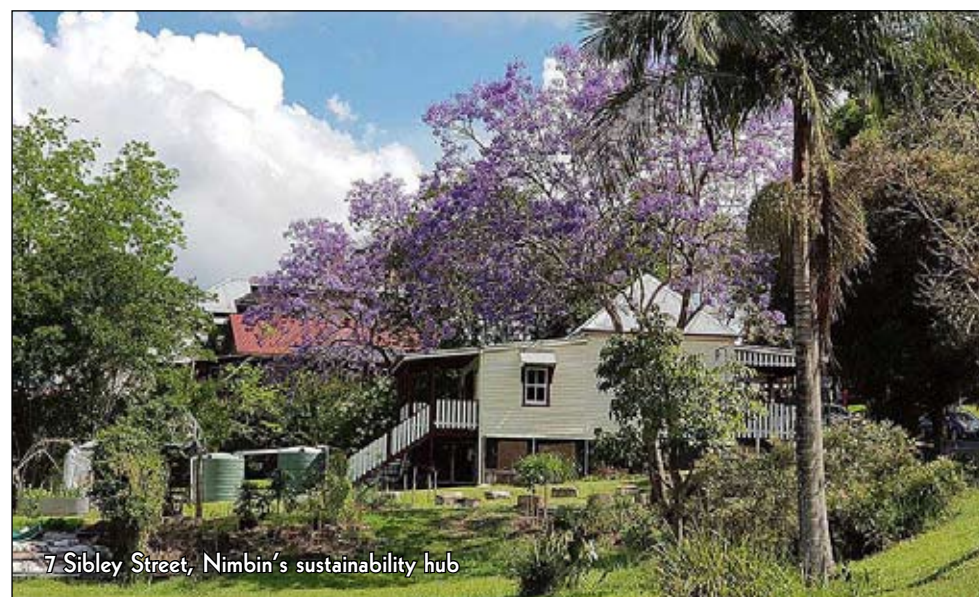
Our Services Australia (Centrelink) Agency will be closed from Monday 26th December to Friday the 30th. Re-opening on Tuesday 3rd January.

The whole team at NNIC wishes everyone a peaceful and enjoyable festive season. It's been a very tough year for many of our community members and disaster recovery is a slow and ongoing process.

We will be here for the duration, doing whatever we can to assist.

The Annual Big Community Xmas Lunch

Thursday 23rd December at Nimbin Town Hall. Doors open at 12 midday. Santa will be there around 1pm with gifts for kids 12 and under. All welcome. Come along and join in the yummy Xmas lunch and general



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Nimbin Recovery Support Service

Nimbin Recovery Support Service (RSS) offers disaster recovery support for impacted people in the Northern parts of the Lismore LGA and nearby parts of the Tweed and Kyogle Shires.

The service offers a

dedicated support worker to assist you through the complex journey of disaster recovery including support with working out a recovery plan, grant applications and administration, linking with key services, suppliers and expert advice and housing support/solutions.

You can register by emailing: nimbinrss@nnic.org.au or call/text 0488-144-647 or drop by 7 Sibley Street, Monday-Friday to sign up.

The RSS program is rolling out across the Northern Rivers region – we can help you find the right RSS provider for you.

Nimbin Community Disaster Plan

The feedback deadline has been extended to mid-December. Please be sure to get your feedback in ASAP. We cannot do this without community participation so please get on board and check it out. You can view the revised plan on-line and access the feedback form via our website in the Disaster section. OR you can come by NNIC to view hard copies.

Community Care Team

To register your interest in becoming part of the CCT, please complete the EOI form which can be downloaded from our website (Disasters tab) and send it back to us.

7 Sibley Street update

7 Sibley Street workshops etc will take a break over the Xmas and New Year period... you can find out what is happening on the 7 Sibley St Facebook page or in this edition of the NGT.

The hemp has been installed at the compost loo and we are waiting for it to cure before commencing the rendering of the walls (the render is also made of hemp).

Many thanks to everyone who helped with the hemp masonry installation: Adrian Medcalf and his team Brayden and Riley (Green-e Building), Klara Marosszeky (Australian Hemp Masonry Company), Steph Seckold, Steve Hale, Brad Moulton, Bryon Burke, Tim Greene, Vicki Thrower, Sarah Muston and to Andrew Kavasilas for generously donating to us some extra hemp and binder on short notice when we ran out before we finished.

A massive team effort.

Did you know?

NNIC is a registered DGR charity, which means that donations to our charitable activities, or bequests in your will, are tax deductible. Your donations help us to help and support our local community.

www.nmic.org.au

Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Services

We assist frail aged people, NDIS participants and carers to stay living at home and connect socially.

All NACRS support workers are qualified, certified, experienced, police checked, Covid-Safe trained, insured and locally based.



SOCIAL CENTRE with Veranda – Monday-Friday 10am-2pm. Drop in for a cuppa, access support services, info and computers.

DEVICE ADVICE – Wednesdays 9.30am-1pm. Seniors can book for assistance with phone, tablet or laptop issues.

SENIORS SOCIAL GROUPS – booking and fees apply

- Nimbin Tuesday Morning Tea, 10.30am-1pm. Tea/coffee, conversation, music and snacks, weekly \$5
- The Outsiders Group 1st and 3rd Thursday, 11am-2pm at various rural cafes, self-funded plus donation to NACRS
- Wise Ones at Koonorigan Hall/Dunoon 4th Monday, 11.30am-1.30pm, bring a plate to share
- Bus Outings – 2nd and 4th Tuesday. Scenic drives, cafes for morning tea & lunch (you pay), bookings essential, fees apply.

Phone 6689-1709 or visit NACRS at Bottlebrush Studio, the rainbow building at Nimbin Community Centre.

www.nacrs.com.au

Nimbin Hospital information

Child immunisation

By appointment, please phone 6630-0400.

Early childhood nurse

Every Tuesday. Baby checks, weighs, post-natal support. For appointments, phone 6630-0400.

Women's health nurse services

Confidential service, checks, advice, general health information. Phone 6688-1400 for appointment.

Wound clinic

Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8am. For self-referral, phone 6688-1433. Referrals also from Nimbin Hospital and GP clinic.

Drug and alcohol counselling services available

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

Nurse practitioner clinic

Diabetes clinics: third Thursday of the month, next is 15th December.

Community Registered Nurse

Monday to Friday, 8am-4.30pm. Assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy, provision of palliative care in the home, medication support. Phone 6688-1433 – leave a message, will return call swiftly.

Nimbin NSP

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

Health advice line

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

Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary

Monthly meetings are held on the 1st Wednesday of the month, 9.30am in the CWA room. New members are most welcome.



by Scott Sledge, president

Climate conferences

In late November the UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) agreed to start a fund for poorer nations to mitigate the effects of climate change.

This appears to many as a sop to the third world so that the weak resolution allowing “lower emission fuels” can be treated as an acceptable alternative to renewables. Is it any wonder when so many of the COP27 participants were delegates from fossil fuel entities that they influenced the outcomes in their favour?

While gas may emit less pollution when burned, its extraction and transport leaks massive quantities of methane, so it is NOT a solution to anyone except those making massive profits from gas.

WWF Global Climate and Energy Lead and COP20 President Manuel Pulgar-Vidal said the loss-and-damage deal risks becoming a “fund for the end of the world” if countries don’t move faster, and he insisted, “Without rapid and deep emissions cuts we cannot limit the scale of loss and damage. By failing to agree to phase-out fossil fuels at COP27, leaders have missed the chance to accelerate the elimination of fossil fuels, keeping us on course to climate catastrophe.”

COP15, another climate conference, will begin this year in Montreal, Canada. ‘Living in Harmony with Nature’ will set 2050 targets for biodiversity that will be used as a benchmark to track global loss of wildlife and habitat. COP15 will set out a plan to halt this deterioration, and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is relevant to this effort.

As Greens environment spokesperson Sarah Hanson-Young says, “We need to stop making the problem worse by opening up new coal and gas, and COP15 is our chance to create a global movement to tackle the biodiversity crisis with an ambitious plan to live in harmony with nature.”

To support this, we need the Labor Government to:

- Commit to a Post-2020 framework;
- Halt the extinction crisis with a ‘zero extinction’ target;
- Create plans to implement the 2050 vision for biodiversity;
- Strengthen Australia’s weak environment laws; and
- Implement a ‘Climate Trigger’ so polluting projects are assessed for the emissions they create.

As COP15 kicks off in Montreal, the Federal Environment Minister, Tanya Plibersek, will respond to the Samuel Review, an examination of Australian environment laws. We must have a strong, nationwide response.

In my opinion, the Australian government needs to tackle the issues of climate change, biodiversity loss and the failure of the EPBC Act to protect listed species head-on. Otherwise the Commonwealth ratification of international conventions is meaningless.

At COP 27, President Biden announced that contractors supplying the US Government would be required to present a responsible carbon emission plan with accountable benchmarks if they want government contracts.

He said it is a waste of taxpayers’ money for the government to pay companies that are not aiming to reduce their carbon emissions and then have to compensate communities for damages their pollution had a part in causing such as extreme weather events and sea level rise.

Meanwhile, journalist Maya Menezes wrote: “Here in Egypt it feels like there are two COPs. In one, some governments and climate advocates battle over the text of negotiations to make a liveable world possible. In the other, private corporate interests cast a long shadow,

and carbon credit systems are shuffled back and forth in an effort to maintain fossil fuel subsidy regimes prolonging the life of oil and gas extraction and delaying climate action.”

We must ensure the climate crisis can’t be eclipsed like that in future agreements.

Exposing forest biomass as false climate solution

Climate campaigners helped call out Big Forestry’s presence at COP27 by hosting a panel profiling frontline voices from communities on five continents who are directly impacted by this dangerous false solution to the problem of coal. Menezes reported:

“We strengthened our relationships with a powerful network of biomass energy justice campaigners around the world, helped shape the media narrative, and built some strong momentum that we’ll be taking into the upcoming UN conference for biodiversity being held in Montreal in December.”

The good news is that people worldwide are waking up to the climate crisis and applying innovation to reduce waste and pollution. The cost of continuing to ignore our problems has become a major issue, so even those profiting from fossil fuels use see a need to reform.

Will it be enough? I suppose it has to be. I used to say, “There is no problem so great it can’t be run away from.” Humanity can run, but we cannot hide. Mr. Musk and others who dream of living on the Moon are simply lunatics.

Logging

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Private Native Forestry) Bill 2022, which would have ended NSW local government involvement in regulating land used for logging and extended private native forestry plans from 15 to 30 years, has been withdrawn.

Wildlife campaigner Sue Arnold said NSW Premier Perrottet has shown complete ignorance of the plight of endangered koalas and has diminished his chances of re-election next year by re-igniting the Koala Wars.

North East Forest Alliance (NEFA) spokesperson Dailan Pugh joins me in thanking Tweed MP Geoff Provest for following Catherine Cusack’s example and threatening to cross the floor and vote against the retrograde legislation, though he warns that it is likely to rise from the dead for the third time if Perrottet’s government is re-elected in March.

Dailan said, “On the same day Koala-killing Bill II was withdrawn, in an apparently politically co-ordinated move, Kyogle Council voted to scrap the dual approval process for native forestry on private land, leaving approvals entirely in the hands of Local Land Services. It transpired that while Council requires consent, 133 of 146 current PNF operations in the Council area have not even applied.

“In an ABC north-coast radio interview, timber merchant Andrew Hurford said they have been working on these legislative changes for at least six years and been promised them for two years, maintaining logging is actually good for Koalas. He claimed he wasn’t aware of the necessity to get council approval.”

Border Ranges

I attended the Kyogle Council November meeting and suggested they may want to change their motto from ‘Gateway to the Rainforests’ to ‘Gateway to the Rainforests Destruction’.

Local forest defenders may use as a test case recent logging on land adjoining the World Heritage-listed Border Ranges National Park and seek a Court order to stop.

The Cherry Tree State logging has been suspended pending a Court decision, which will likely be handed down in 2023.

NCCI – the year in review

by Centre management team

The NCCI management committee is responsible for valuable and significant community assets – the eight buildings that comprise the Community Centre, Birth & Beyond at 54 Cullen Street and 11a Alternative Way – the site that will become a feature of the Rainbow Road Walking Track.

We recently held our AGM and while the same people were elected to the committee, there has been a role change as the aged move aside for youth.

Dr Wil Polson is now our president, Darren Maxwell our vice-president and the remaining positions are held by Diana Roberts, David Hallett, Michael Balderstone and Louise Graves.

We are a solid team that is facing some significant challenges.

While the previous pandemic-afflicted year had significant effects on our income and tenancies, the past year has amplified many of these problems.

There have been various requests for rent reductions and special considerations from tenants at a time when our operating costs are rising exponentially. Consequently, major structural improvements have been postponed or cancelled.

This is not sustainable into the future, so we have embarked on a strategic planning exercise to review our business model, exploring how we can operate more efficiently and reduce our reliance on rental income into the future.

Sounds boring? Believe you me, it’s not. We have some very difficult decisions to make. To support our efforts we have engaged, free of charge, an external business consultant who brings fresh eyes and experience.

Consultation will be key to our decision-making but,



at the end of the day, the difficult decisions we must make will rest with the committee.

It’s not all doom and gloom. Our achievements include:

- Establishment of a new website and on-line room booking system (nimbincommunity.org.au);
- Direct involvement in the planning of the Rainbow Road Walking Track. This grant will see development of Aquarius Park – 11a Alternative Way. To assist with maintenance into the future we have established a Landcare group and will be seeking active members sometime next year;
- Grant funding for NAIDOC celebrations and installation of CCTV with the capacity for remote observation in the grounds at 81 Cullen Street (deemed necessary after the theft of all our grounds equipment);
- \$29,000 from developer contributions for the replacement of one of the final stretches of covered walkway within the Community Centre grounds;
- Lismore Council has received significant funding to provide safe pedestrian access from the western car park through to Cullen Street adjoining Birth & Beyond;
- NCCI-auspiced funding received for the very

successful Nimbin Youth Rocks events and the Creative Koori Wai:bal art project – in train at the Wai:bal Cultural Centre;

- The Chamber of Commerce contributed 50% of funding to the upgrading of the mural above the front windows of the Nimbin Apothecary and the Environment Centre;
- A significant grant application has been submitted to replace the southern side internal and external walls of Birth & Beyond (estimated at \$47,000); and
- We have highly committed staff – thank you.

In closing, we manage wonderful assets in the growing village of Nimbin. Our tenants provide a wide range of essential services which, without these buildings in community ownership, would possibly not exist.

Please feel free to engage with us. We would welcome new, preferably young, management members (sit in on a meeting and see what’s involved). If you have spare cash (hahaha) send some our way or, if you have fundraising in your genes, think of us.

Season’s greetings to everyone. May 2023 be flood, fire and pandemic free, and may our community assets continue to flourish.

ncci@nimbincommunity.org.au



NIMBIN'S SUSTAINABLE LIVING HUB

7 Sibley Street

December What's On!

\$10 unless otherwise noted

Bookings: text 0475-135-764 or email: sibley@nnic.org.au

Workshops

- **Sat 3rd & 4th: Wild clay** – No-kiln firing. Turn your own clay into ceramic using low temperature primitive techniques (not suitable for glazes). Sawdust kiln, pit firing and surface firing. On day 2 we explore options for waterproofing your creations. \$30, bookings essential. Off-site, 10am start each day.
- **Sat 10th: Ancestral beading** (4-7pm) – Visiting guest host Mami Watta shares an indigenous Latin-American beading technique using hoops and multi-coloured miniature glass beads with unique cultural insights. \$70, all materials provided. Bookings essential.
- **Sat 17th: Knitting with Sue** – \$10 donation.
- **Community Tools Library:** Every Saturday, 10.30am – 2pm. For home repairs, garden tools, food and craft equipment. Basketballs & pumps available, \$5 deposit.

7 Sibley Street will be closed from 23rd December to 8th January. We look forward to seeing you again in the New Year.



Shop 1, 66 Cullen Street

Plenty of fresh lobster in store now

BOM not guilty

I read with interest the Loon's complaint about the BoM (Bureau of Meteorology) announcing false alarms of flooding each time it rained heavily. Sorry Loon, but you have not been following the plot, as a lot of serial blame-placers tend not to do.

Instead of whining you may have observed some heavily plot-following articles in the *Saturday Paper* and *Crikey* and *The Conversation*, investigations of why and how the BoM was stripped of its best personnel, of its resources well before the floods because the Morrison government was downsizing and outsourcing.

Scores of experienced meteorologists were replaced by inexperienced newly fledged BSc graduates still finding their feet. There was also a lot of defunding going on with both the SES and the Bureau of Meteorology.

Meanwhile the 'Gummint' of Morrison spent several hundreds of millions of dollars on the BoM 'image' (which included the inane advice that the name change be simply 'The Bureau'). Sounds like we have too many overpaid MBAs and marketing graduates from our underpaid University system.

The BM (or BoM if you like) came under severe criticism (perhaps correctly) because their early warning system was not effective for the first flood this year. I would suggest that this was a result of defunding

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.

and wilful ignorance of expert recommendations.

Perhaps the BoM is guilty of overcorrecting, but I would hesitate to load the entire blame on the staff. Perhaps senior management should take some of the responsibility. As well as the 'gummint' of that day that imposed impossible neo-liberal ideological decisions on civil society.

But yes, that's worth a howl or two.

Warwick Fry
Nimbin

Loose unit

Former High Court judge Virginia Bell finds ousted prime minister Scott Morrison's conduct "inexplicable on any reasonable measure" in her judgement on Morrison's extraordinary actions of installing himself into five ministerial portfolios.

Politicians like Morrison will continue to embarrass us. It seems stupidity is necessarily



written into their resumé.

I've long held the view that Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Theory of Stupidity explains the behaviour of too many politicians precisely:

"Against stupidity we have no defence. Neither protests nor force can touch it. Reasoning is of no use. Facts that contradict personal prejudices can simply be disbelieved."

Pithily observed: "Our former PM was indeed a loose unit" – a good deal looser than we realised at the time.

Michael Brooke
Kyogle

Rail not roadworks

Locals know that a state run and publicly funded train service on the Casino to Murwillumbah (C-M) rail line, valued at many billions, will be a more cost-effective way to provide public transport and reduce traffic gridlock than spending billions on roadworks to move it around.

They want to know why local politicians and councillors seem prepared to waste untold millions of taxpayers' money destroying

a valuable train line to build a bike track that experienced rail engineers have stated could be built alongside the rail line for a fraction of the cost.

The Liberal and National Parties (LNP) and the Member for Tweed, Geoff Provest, agreed that this train service was needed. Their promises to get six daily train services running on the C-M line, and to start planning the rail connection to the Queensland rail system, have been well documented.

This fast-growing region and millions of tourists need this train service now more than ever. So why hasn't the Labor Party been doing their job and holding the LNP to account, demanding they honour their promise to provide this service, rather than voting with them to allow the line to be destroyed?

Why are local councils ignoring the transport needs of their communities and spending taxpayers' money destroying this valuable train line to spend untold millions of taxpayers' money to build an expensive bike

track which will not provide public transport for one person while our roads are gridlocked?

Why should locals have to tolerate so much dangerous traffic congestion when there are train stations in so many town centres? Why are taxpayers being forced to pay billions for roadworks that increase traffic, when repairing the train line for a commuter train service is not only more cost effective but will also reduce carbon emissions?

Surely our politicians and political parties aren't compromised by donations from the fossil fuel industry?

The criminal destruction of this valuable rail line has nothing to do with any perceived benefits of a bike track for a few fit cyclists. It's all about politicians grifting and rorting, Labor and Liberal/National, who have run down the public transport system and will waste any amount of taxpayers' money to destroy the line regardless of the cost to the community and the planet.

When the bike track is unused, destroyed by torrential rain and covered in weeds, they'll sell the valuable land off to developers to build high-rise, just as they did on the Gold Coast.

What we need are decent, honest politicians who aren't compromised by corporate donations, but will put the community's needs first and provide the accessible, traffic busting, environmentally sustainable, cost-effective public train service, with a bike track alongside it, as thousands of locals have been calling for many years.

Louise Doran
Ocean Shores

Devine intervention

I just wanted to write and express my sincere Spiritual Gratitude for my favourite columnist... Marilyn Devlin.

Every month... I await... the delightful paragraphs at the end of the paper... (next to the Stars)... the reassuring ramblings of Marilyn's Stream of Consciousness... and her unique punctuation. After all... why use commas... when you can use... ellipses?

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.

Rosie and Trevor
Bookkeeper Martha Paitson
Web www.nimbingoodtimes.com
And find us on Facebook

NGT is published by the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation, 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin.

NEXT DEADLINE:
Friday 30th December

Email nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

Notices

For sale

Two three-year old house batteries for sale due to upgrade of system to different battery type. Model No: LiFe2433P, 24V, 3.3kWh, 128 Ah, 2RU. \$1200 each or \$2300 for two. Location: Jiggi. Phone Faye on 02 6688-8244 (8am-8pm) and leave message if unavailable.

Christmas BBQ

A Police/community Christmas BBQ will be held in Allsopp Park on Saturday 10th December at midday.

WISHING EVERYONE A WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR

TAMARA SMITH MP

MEMBER FOR BALLINA

02 6686 7522

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THE GREENS

Nature-based flood mitigation: The disappearance of Corndale Hall

by Jeremy Stewart

In terms of the scale of impact on buildings in the region due to the flood of February 2022, Corndale Hall would have to rank amongst the most extreme.

While many buildings were inundated, some were shifted inches to tens of metres from their foundations, Corndale Hall by comparison, was destroyed, being swept away and broken into small pieces by the floodwaters.

The hall's piano was even carried in the floodwater; it must have been moving with extraordinary power to do this.

Pondering the question of why Corndale Hall was so heavily impacted, I began to think more about the conditions that may have made it particularly vulnerable to floodwaters.

Pinch time

Although having driven past the hall on numerous occasions I suddenly realised the landscape adjacent to the hall consisted of two ridges coming down and narrowing the cross section of the floodplain considerably.

Utilising SIX maps and doing a five-minute exercise, I measured an estimate of 300 metres between the ridges where the floodwaters from upstream would have had to pass.

Utilising six maps again, I drew a rough polygon to estimate the catchment that had to flow through this pinch point in the landscape. About 190km² of catchment rainfall had to pass through here. Given the intensity of rainfall it would have been absolutely charging through this point.

Dinosaurs in the landscape

During a Natural Sequence Farming workshop, Peter Andrews used the curious term of listening to the dinosaurs in the landscape. By that he meant perceive the landscape's immense, ancient, and primary features and use them to your advantage when working with water.

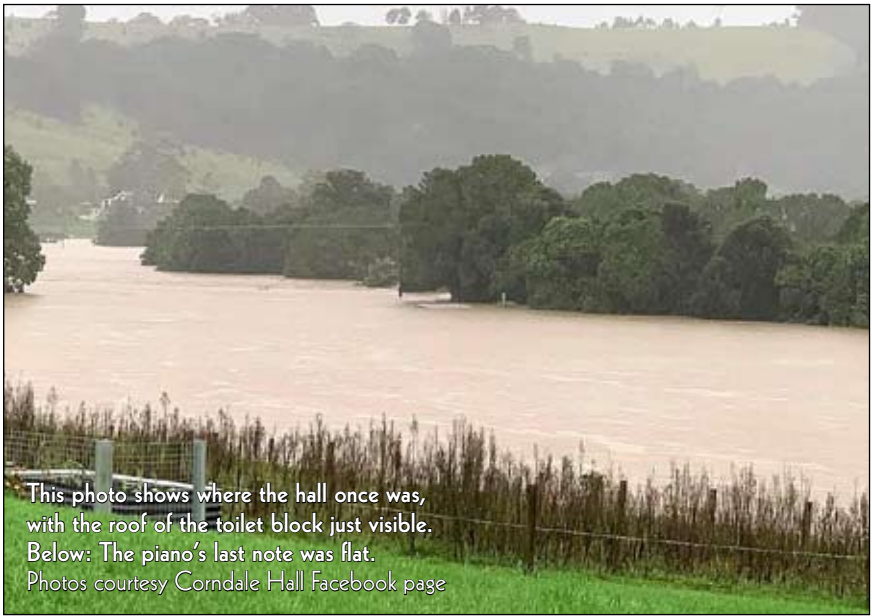
There has been talk in the Lismore City Council Flood Mitigation Committee – both in the mid 1980s (Sinclair-Knight Report) and in more recent years, of the possibility of constructing a series of earth dams placed at strategic spots to hold back water in upper catchment floodplains where there are less built assets (compared to urban areas).

What the Corndale Hall environs demonstrate is that the construction of earth dams for flood storages is unnecessary if you observe the landscape and utilise these pinch points: Nature has done it already.

Pinch points occur at different scales throughout the landscape and can be deduced from a straightforward reading of a topographic map. They



Site of the missing hall at Corndale. Photo: Annie Kia



This photo shows where the hall once was, with the roof of the toilet block just visible. Below: The piano's last note was flat. Photos courtesy Corndale Hall Facebook page



occur at different scales of course, but are commonplace throughout the landscape.

Upper catchment floodplains often signal the presence of pinch points downstream as the landscape has amplified the effects of (now cleared) vegetation in holding back/slowing water and releasing the sediment that created these landforms.

The dinosaurs at Lismore

The extensive floodplain under Lismore is where the Leycester and Wilsons Rivers (water serpents with much older roots than we care to name) meet. Lismore is the meeting place for water and sediment from over 1400 sq.km of catchment.

Just downstream of Lismore between Sandy Point, South Gundurimba and Riverbank Road, Monaltrie the floodplain constricts to 1.6km (six maps). Catchment area to cross section

ratio this pinch point is roughly proportional to the Corndale Hall example.

Those who visited the settlements at Sandy Point after the February 2022 events would know that dwellings here suffered tremendously from flood height, velocity, and debris. Any rubbish and debris that made it through the teeth of Lismore bumped and crashed through here.

The Roads and Maritime Service and residents are continuously and expensively battling shifting ground in this area even in lesser floods.

The living dinosaur

Native vegetation is also remnant from our ancient past and could be considered our living dinosaur, endangered as it is from our lifestyle preferences.

A catchment pinch point can be made a much more effective water-slowing device with the addition of intensive native revegetation around it. Grow a green wall that slows fast water! It's nature's design.

Would exchanging some cow pasture for a simple lowland forest plot have saved Corndale Hall? Would a series of strategic plantings minimise peak flood levels in the settlements downstream more than any other flood mitigation strategy?

The landscape tells us so.



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