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Exclusivity is affordable at Artists Gallery



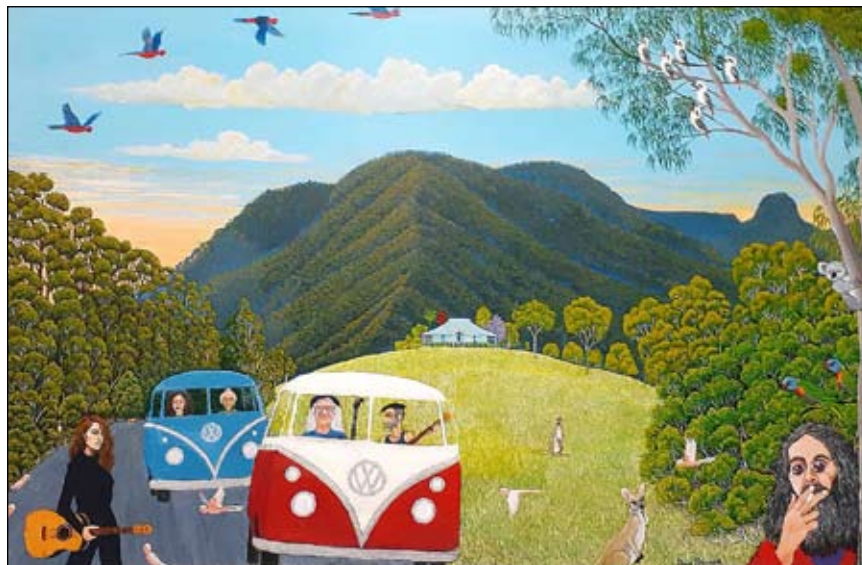
by Tonia Haynes

It seems that as far as the marketers are concerned, Christmas comes earlier every year and for many it is a time of serious consideration about one's available budget for buying presents for special others.

A scratchy inside a nice card can be fun. But when the scratchy is tucked inside a Jen Harkness hand-made paper card, with her own exclusive drawings on the front, and when planted in soil, grows things like oregano and parsley, one has received a gift where memories of the gift giver will stay sweet for some time.

Or perhaps more to that special person's liking may be some of Arnie Gautsch's hand-lasered wine glasses, or a tea-candle holder, all with delightful depictions of native animals, such as kookaburras, goannas, or dragonflies.

Donna Sharam's coffee mugs, place-



mats, shopping bags etc, with their brightly coloured paintings of cute looking animals and birds, are always a winner for the young and young at heart.

Dennis Meagher's hand-painted artworks of Nimbin and surrounding areas, colourful and slightly surreal, lift the look of any room, no matter the style.

Jean Cooke's pottery cups and bowls, made with excellent precision, are the perfect gift for that special person who likes the feel of the earth in their hands.

These are a few of the exclusive delights offered by the Nimbin Artists Gallery, all created by artists who live within 50km of Nimbin.

None of them will break the bank in price, even though in a way, they are all

Above: Denis Meagher Left: Donna Sharam

priceless, due to the individual creativity of the artist involved.

There are many cards and prints at the gallery, plus hand-made jewellery. And who knows, while looking for gifts for friends, one may find a painting that is irresistible, or a garment made from Melissa's gorgeous felting on silk for oneself.

All of us deserve a Christmas present, even if the present is for ourselves and bought with our own funds.

The Nimbin Artists Gallery in Cullen Street is open Tuesdays to Sundays and run by volunteers, happy to answer your questions without salesperson pressure.



The opening for Ten Green Bottles by The Clay Sisters in The Solo Space and Earth's Treasures on Sunday 16th October at Blue Knob Hall gallery was a very happy affair with delicious nibbles provided by Blue Knob Café.

The Clay Sisters are five women who teach at the Blue Knob Ceramic Studio. Opened in 2016, the studio was run by Heather Kimber as the founding member and has continued to run as a popular learning experience for the novice and experienced potter.

These five women have given their time teaching as volunteers over the last four years. The opening of their exhibition was also a celebration of the over 7,000 hours teaching and attendance of around 1800 students over the six years.

Heather Kimber, Genevieve Davies, Ali Walker, Cathryn Binstead and Tomoko Houtzager were celebrated, and this exhibition expresses their dedication, friendship, and diverse creativity.

On the day a student commented that 'these women have 'molded' a community within the pottery studio, which is more than just creating a bowl'.

As an 'honorary' Clay Sister, Christine Wynyard's still life artwork is also a part of this exhibition.

Earth's Treasures

This members and artists exhibition has manifested some very diverse artwork, which reflects the theme and covers everything from the real to the imagined.

The exceptional beauty of 'Gecko Eye' by Avena Osborn reminds us that the flora and fauna of this planet are the Earth's treasures.

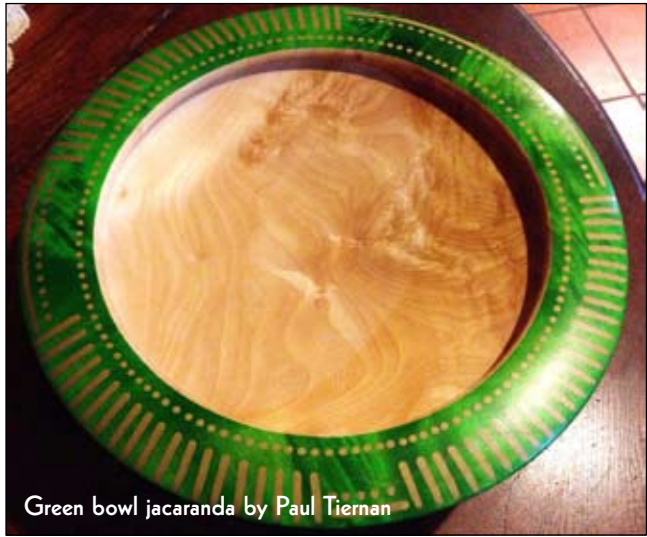


Blue Knob Cafe and Gallery

Blue Knob Café is open from 9.30am to 3pm, Thursday, Friday and Sunday, and on Saturday from 8.30am to 3pm, with a regular menu of all-day breakfasts and specials available until 2pm; coffee and cake available until 3pm.

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Note: The Blue Knob Community Market has moved and is no longer operating from Blue Knob Hall.

Seeing with new eyes



Green bowl jacaranda by Paul Tiernan

by Ruth Tsimbinis

Three local artists will exhibit at the Roxy Gallery from 10th November to 11th December in an exhibition coined 'Chrysalis – to see with new eyes'.

Representing a diverse set of skills in areas of painting, photography and woodwork all artists have approached their creation of new bodies of work with a focus on discovering new ways of seeing art and the world around them.



'Dainty Ladybird' (detail) by Debb Mills

Debb Mills explores the intimate world of nature through her photography and has recently been involved in exhibiting her photographic work in Amsterdam.

Bev Leggett Simmons explores extending her painting of landscapes to incorporate still life, experimenting with constructing tensions between the unpredictability of nature and vulnerability of domestic or personal objects.

Working in the medium of wood, Paul Tiernan is revisiting some familiar ideas he has pursued in his work while exploring the natural edge of the shaping, through wind, rain, fire and the ecosystem of the timber he employs in his art practice.

The event opens on Saturday 12th November from 1pm to 3 pm, and members of the public are welcome to attend to meet and talk with the artists.

A woven life that flourishes

by Adriana Perrin

An oeuvre of Moksha's wonderful weaving works was exhibited at Flourish Art Gallery, South Lismore.

The opening night of 'A Woven Life' was a great success with many friends, family and admirers attending and showing love and support. 'Healing Voices' also shared their magical tunes. The exhibition mostly sold out!

A long-time resident of Nimbin, Moksha, also known as Granny Breathweaver, has shared her extensive creative weaving wizardry, organising the annual Weave & Mend Gatherings.

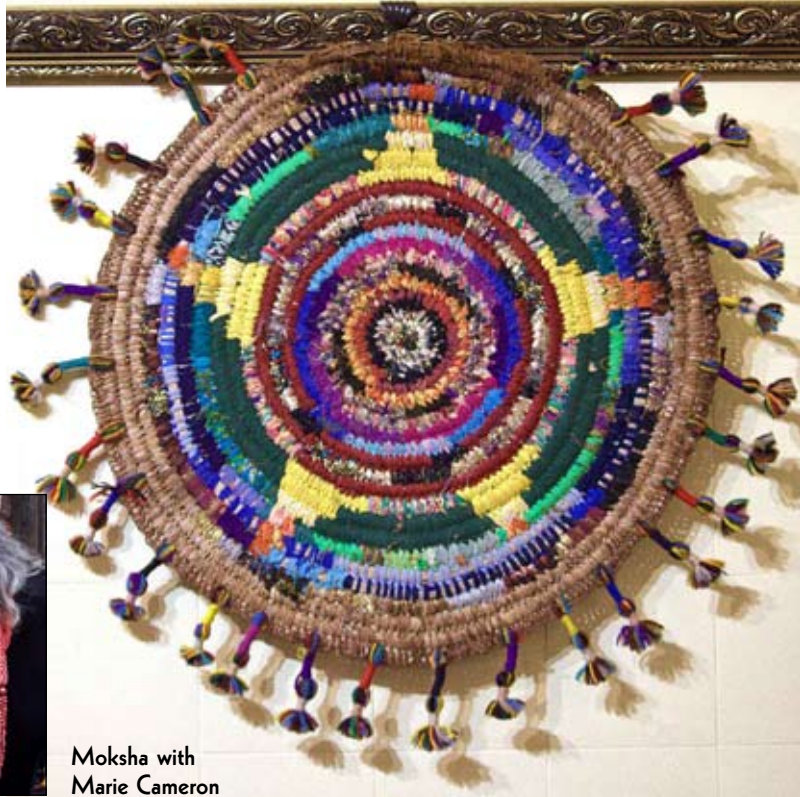
For 30 years she has lived an alternative to capitalism, without electricity, telephone, walls or vehicles.

She has been an immense support and inspiration to many in our community, sheltering and providing guidance and care for many people in their times of need.

Moksha has now retired from weaving, but she is available for hugs.



Moksha with Marie Cameron



2022 Weave and Mend Gathering

It's time to gather and weave again in Nimbin at the Annual Weave and Mend Gathering, held at the Nimbin Showgrounds from 26-27th November.

After the plague and the great floods we can be together again and share our love of weaving and mending and reconnect in the embrace of our beautiful valley.

Come with your fibres and your skills or come to learn something new.

This year our theme will be 'Old Ways, New Ways' focusing on the way our woven life is changing and discovering and learning about new fibres and designs.

To see images and keep updated, visit the Facebook page: Weave and Mend 2022



www.nimbingoodtimes.com

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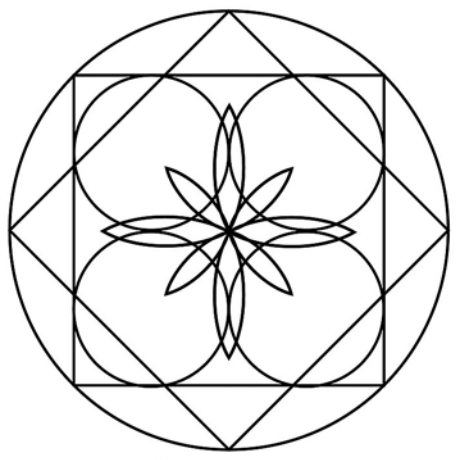
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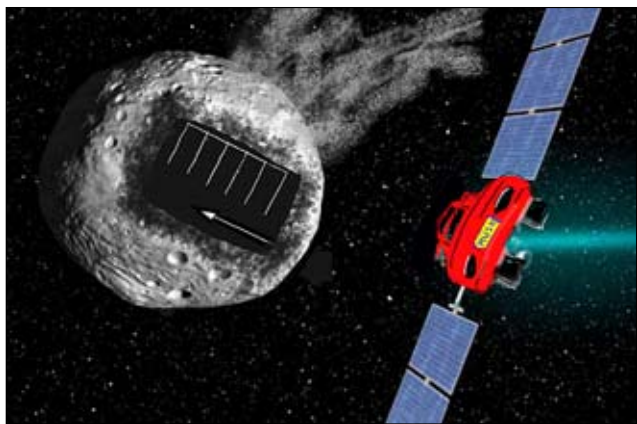

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A moment

by S Sorrensen

I'm not a conspiracy theorist. I don't believe that chemtrails are a government plot to drop chemicals on us that activate the nano-trackers injected into us via the fake vaccine administered to us to combat a hoax virus foisted on us to make us compliant to the intellectual elite's attacks on our sovereignty as hardworking Americans – I mean, Australians. I believe chemtrails are vapour trails resulting from the pressure a flying aircraft wing makes causing water to condense from the air. Call me a puppet; call me gullible; call me scientific – whatever insult you like – but I'm not a conspiracy theorist. For a start, I'm better dressed. Check out what Trump supporters wear. Would you buy a used factoid ("Trump cares about women") from a bloke dressed in a flag and gun earrings? Wrong looks ugly. That's how it can be identified. Wrong has a comb-over. And lots of money. Wealth destroys taste. I'm not a conspiracy theorist: the world is not flat; politicians do not order children through pizza joints, and climate change is real.



However... the DART thing. Double Asteroid Redirection Test. Hmmm.

America's space agency, NASA, recently blasted a missile, carried into space by Elon Musk's SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket, into a distant asteroid's moon.

It cost a lot of money, made a big mess of Dimorphos (the moon) and altered its orbit around its mother asteroid, Didymos. Why did the Americans do this?

NASA says it's part of a plan to protect the Earth from an Earth-bound asteroid, if one were discovered in the future. A NASA spokesman said: "As NASA studies the cosmos and our home planet, we are also working to protect that home..." Aw, I'm tearing up.

Not that Dimorphos and Didymos were a threat, mind you. They are (were) a small moon spinning peacefully

around a larger asteroid, 11 million kilometres away. They were there for practice.

I don't buy it.

Is the American government, which funds NASA, spending all that money (US\$324 million so far) to protect us from a possible future asteroid attack because they care about the planet? I don't think so.

Sure, asteroid hits are a threat. Look at what happened to the dinosaurs when an asteroid hit... 66 million years ago. But the odds are pretty slim. The planet definitely has more urgent threats, like climate change. What is America doing about that? How much carbon did Musk's rocket inject into our atmosphere for this target practice?

So, I don't buy the whole we're-shooting-up-asteroids-because-we-love-the-planet story. The capitalists that run

America (and most of the world) don't love the planet. They love only money. So why bomb Dimorphos?

America just loves to shoot stuff, blow stuff up. Foreign countries, mountains, schools... anything. I don't know why they do. Neither do Americans, I suspect. The moon and its parent were useless anyway, they say. No harm done. Like shooting a tree.

But it's ugly. (Like shooting a tree.) And that means it's wrong.

Interestingly, Didymos was a Greek musician and philosopher who lived around the time of Christ. (Remember Christ? He knew rich people were trouble.)

Didymos was fascinated by rhythm and harmony. That's ironic: His namesake asteroid is no longer dancing peacefully with its moon. Wounded Dimorphos is now bleeding a tail of debris into space.

Ugly, right? So why did NASA shoot the moon?

I believe Elon Musk is blasting a carpark on Dimorphos to park that Roadster sports car he launched into space in 2018 (also on the back of his SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket – now there's an earner).

#Dimorphosparking

Yes, it's ugly. It's wrong. But he's rich...

Crying wolf

So that's major flood false alarm #2. The first major flood warning didn't even produce a minor flood.

The risk of crying wolf every time it rains is a very real one, as complacency in a catastrophic flood seriously increases the risk to life and property.

What is happening at the Bureau? The science of meteorology has been replaced by a butt-covering exercise where every rain event is labelled a possible major flood.

For we people who live in areas that get regularly inundated, the threat of a major flood is a very significant call – everything stops as we lift and carry and prepare.

Friends are called and people work late into the night.

Leaping up screaming at every cloud burst isn't helping.

Surely by this stage in our development we can do better flood predictions. We gather masses of rain data from dozens of gauges instantly.

Honestly a frog in a matchbox would provide the equivalent predictive capacity



Revenge of the Loon

by Laurie Axtens

that BoM does now.

For all that, I'm going to continue to take the phrase 'major flooding' seriously even if it's a bad joke, because I have to.

And I encourage you all to keep doing the preparatory work every time that phase is mentioned. The BoM however need to get serious... it's not a 9 to 5 gig, it's not about your social media profile... it's a serious science called meteorology.

You need to produce dynamic flood predictions on an hourly basis.

And fix your gauges. Frogs.

Help Aquarius rise

It may have taken a million years to evolve humankind from hunting gathering primates, via Neanderthals and Homo Sapiens groups, to today's budding international Global Village and Space Age.

Success not only due to individual IQ, but in working together – social intelligence, SQ. Not just knowledge, but compassion too.

Maybe the world was made by 'God' in thousands of years, who knows?

Along the way, humans outlawed a lot of behaviour to improve community viability. One could say, shrank individual habits to progress community viability.

Are humans forming hives, groups of likeminded, where rogue individuality is frowned upon? Where persons hide aspects of behaviour?

The outlawing of certain plants suggests so.

Yet alcohol is actively promoted, even though it can cost dearly, certain acts are outlawed. Doctors, police and other groups speak

Shapeshifting

by Anand Gandharva

against the many costs of inebriation.

Selling alcohol is lucrative and a part of taxes. As Biden just showed in America, a soft drug may have benefits, but society approval is gained when it generates revenue: expand user minds and public wallets.

It is not only individual freedom, but common utility: Yin and Yang, heart and brain, empathy and hard logic, left and right.

Light is almost useless without dark to contrast. Every artist knows: outlines cannot be made in one tint.

It takes two to tango. Individual freedoms must show public benefit to the future.

Humanity is approaching Aquarius, a new era where the balance between individual and the community is further shifting, away from being organised as predators,



lone wolves, who define everyone and everything 'other' as a target (even

those who smell different from the same species) and who hunt in small groups (family, friends, clans, tribes, faiths, nations, etc), to herbivores who

graze (or consume) from soil, water, plants and sunshine.

In other words, from small, competing groups of opportunist apex predators to large, co-operative teams.

Society is integrating the world, occupying the galaxy, evolving from individual skills in natural selection (like bloodlines) to genetic choice by parents (eg Race of Tan with a bit of Einstein's brain, McCartney's art or Gandhi's leadership genes).

No need to panic about what is now consumed.

Personality comes from nature, DNA, morals come substantially

from nurture. There is no strong link between a fine spirit and food. Most people have beautiful minds and hearts.

Taste is educated in childhood.

It may take Ahimsa laws as late as 2100 to cement the course of society and save the environment from exploitation. (Ahimsa is an old Eastern word for non-violence.) Long from now.

Meanwhile we have to widen our circle of care, empathy, to include all mammals. Respect flora and fauna.

Be gardeners rather than exploiters.

Humanity, and sustainable economy, needs a healthy biosphere. We cannot keep on subsidising lifestyle, by robbing environments for stomach habits.

We were a few feuding clans, now we are eight billion sharing a planet (the United Nations project eight billion humans this November). Our relationship with nature has shifted.

We once were warriors, subduing the land; we are becoming co-dependent inclusive multicultural meritocrats. Soon to become interplanetary. Needing new ethics.

One can no longer separate

observer from observed. Not just in quantum physics, but social sciences too. You are what you eat: society becomes what it consumes.

There is a relation between what one buys, and the environment one gets.

Terania is a beautiful place. One thanks forebears, including Widjibal, farmers, Sydney students and New Settlers who nurtured it.

Harvested because its nature was bountiful, now it needs to be preserved. The old business case fed people, but has run out.

Logging became another word for denuding. Domestication becomes another word for slavery.

Considering other mammals to be expendable is not much different from discriminating against other clans, believing God made a mistake creating blacks, stoners, people who vote for another party, or warlords who believe one has to be unsentimental to conquer and hold land.

Don't blame the system for one's bias. The world is created in people's image.

If one consumes like a predator, at least advise children about sustainability and help Aquarius rise.



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A big step forward: ACT decriminalises illicit drugs

by Michael Balderstone

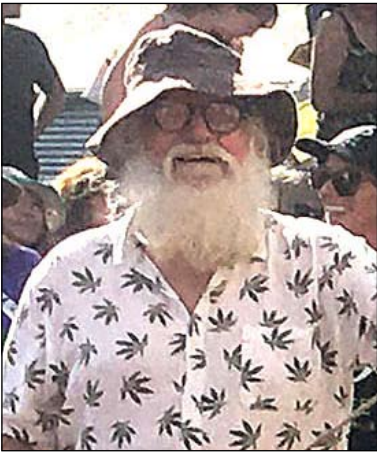
Let's hope the ACT government decriminalising small amounts of commonly used illicit drugs last month is a big step forward in Australia towards us genuinely treating drug use as a health issue.

Everyone agrees it is, we just disagree on how to deal with it. Is punishment the answer? Some think getting arrested by police and getting a criminal record is the way to help you. Trying to force people to change their habits.

Is that what they mean by tough love? We are into love aren't we, in this Christian society?

I got caned endless times at boarding school, which I guess they thought was tough love Presbyterian style. And for totally trivial things, like talking after lights out, trying to force us to follow their rules.

Some activists from Malaysia who came to MardiGrass showed me footage from prisons there, where inmates get formal caning military-style on their bare arses, until they bleed, the number of strokes depending on how many grams of weed you were caught with.



Our society has made anxiety and depression the two major points of suffering, if we go by what pills are being doled out the most by doctors.

Millions of people are helped to enjoy their day more with the millions of pills swallowed every morning across the country. All aiming to enjoy their day more.

But also millions of people every day use cannabis to help them enjoy their day more. And enjoyment is what it should be about, feeling good. Everybody wants to feel good. All drug use is to help people feel as good as possible, isn't it? Physical and mental, less pain and

confusion. Wanting to feel good is the aim for everyone. Is it that simple? Am I smoking too much?

And beyond that it should be about trying to help each other feel good as well. Isn't that what compassion is about?

So, of course the changes in Canberra are a fantastic step forward out of an embarrassing and shameful period in our history where we are filling our jails with people who need help. People caught trying to feel good with unapproved substances.

But is the war on drugs finally in decline as real compassion peeps its head around the corner in Canberra?

Under the new laws, to start in a year after police are re-trained, people found with small amounts of certain drugs may still be fined but they will not be arrested, instead they will be referred for counselling.

Young Labor backbencher Michael Pettersson introduced the legislation last year. He also initiated the laws legalising the personal use of cannabis and spoke in the Hemposium at MardiGrass this year (see Youtube: <https://youtu.be/on2syCPEW5U>).

"There will still be a penalty for possession of a small quantity of a decriminalized drug, a \$100 fine that will not need to be paid if the person chooses to attend an illicit drug diversion class, or a caution," Michael Pettersson said.

Ice being included is controversial, and of course the Liberals are trying to undo the changes, to which he says, "People who use methamphetamine are often the most in need of assistance from health services."

"We need to make sure that we do not continue to criminalise them and instead make it easier for them to come forward and access the support that they might need."

ACT Health Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith said the reforms were focused on harm reduction and had been called for by people with lived experience of drug use, the alcohol and other drugs sector, and the advocacy group Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform.

"We know that the ACT has a progressive community and supports evidence-based changes, and the evidence to support decriminalisation of the possession of small amounts of a range of drugs is there," she said.

"We know that treating drug use as a health issue rather than a criminal one is not only reducing harm for those individuals who use drugs, but also ultimately ends up building a safer community."

"This is responsible, progressive change absolutely in line with the national drug strategy commitment to harm minimisation," she said.

And on and on she went, nailing it to the wall. Proper compassion for us people dependent on illegal drugs! It's called the *Drugs of Dependence (Personal Possession) Amendment Bill 2022*.

Of course it's better than arresting people, but make no mistake there is no sign of the drug war slowing down on any drugs not authorised by Big Pharma. They control the pain relief business, they own the drugs and make the rules. If you want pain relief you have to use their pills, by law.

It will be interesting to see how it goes in Canberra where it could get worse if other states don't follow them and they become a Vancouver honeypot.

But it's a brave new step in the right direction, which ultimately has to be about ending this unwinnable war.

Enlightened Insanity

You are a New Age 'enlightened' being blissfully ignorant of the functioning of your own brain instead putting everything down to God or Spirit again, and Oh Universe, again.

You openly flaunt practising your meditative Yogic exercises breathing shallow and rapid to experience 'The Mystic' even though all you are really doing is increasing the carbon dioxide in your lungs and blood . . . which you tell yourself is so damn holistic . . . man.

And so you chant repetitions Sutras, psalms and mantras (HolyMaryMotherOfGod OmManiPadmeHum OurFatherWhoArtInHeaven) playing didgeridoo or staying up all night dancing, or singing, or praying Rejecting the fact that this is merely sleep depravation pumping more carbon dioxide to stop your brain properly functioning.

Oh, and hey, your diet is the balanced kind of border-line vegan starvation and you say . . . "Dude, there's nothing wrong with the occasional (cough cough, every night) Joint For brain chemistry has nothing at all to do with it no matter what all of those 'Establishment' 'Experts' think."

You are a little self-flagellating neo-egoistic being forcing your body to produce heaps of adrenalin and all of those other feel-good endorphin chemicals that are wickedly related to the hallucinogenic drugs lysergic acid and mescaline.

And your 'Trip' into 'Being-ness' 'Is-ness' is but a Mind-Trix 'No-thing-ness' illusion believing your ayahuasca experience is so much better than the philosopher's existential intention.

So you just keep on believing in Spirit instead of facing your own self-inflicted insanity hoping like Heaven things work out for the better . . . and if they don't . . . well hey . . . I know you'll just blame 'unenlightened' humanity.

– Azan Männ

Palliative care for pets

by Donna Connolly

It is always a huge honour to meet a silver muzzled senior animal; their beautiful essence and wisdom shine through.

I remember hearing the saying: "You can have an old dog or a bold dog. There's no such thing as an old, bold dog."

Although, I've met some pretty sassy gals and guys in my time that have reached double digits.

Often times these beautiful creatures have been with us for a significant amount of those years, and I wanted to address a few common themes that seem to come through with the older generation.

They want you to see them just as they are. In all their ageing glory. Getting to see their wisdom whiskers is a huge privilege!

It's okay that they are slowing down; in fact, they would encourage you to slow down and also enjoy these precious moments with them. It's an honour to be their guardian and escort through these later stages.

Sometimes they don't need to be fixed, they just want acceptance and the ability to embrace the small joys each day.

One pattern that I have seen with some clients is that they will try everything. Spend all their time researching. Which is all good and well, as long as you keep your beloved pet's best interests in the forefront of your mind.

Sadly, I have seen some people be so caught up in finding a "cure", that they



Dora enjoying her 12th birthday

can miss these precious last moments, which can lead to some regrets later.

Please note that like anything, every pet/guardian relationship is unique and there will be different dynamics and needs in each situation.

This subject is close to my heart, as My Dora has been diagnosed with cancer. It is a soft cell sarcoma, in the ankle joint of her front foot. We have been managing the symptoms and pain well, with natural remedies and Reiki.

Although I am heartbroken, I make sure I check in every step of the way and see if she needs anything else, and adjust accordingly.

Giving Dora agency to make choices at this time is so important. She walks most mornings, although she has slowed down a little bit, she still loves the wind in her wrinkles and the views on our

early morning sniff-ari.

How did I know? I had my suspicions, as I could sense the energy change in her, and heard the word "sarcoma" telepathically at the same time as she "play-bowed" one afternoon and it was then formally diagnosed at the vet's.

It has certainly been an emotional roller-coaster. Dora is 12 years young and still loving life.

She's always had the strength and ability to know exactly what she wants. Dora has always lived her life on her terms, and as she ages, that trait has just got stronger, and I love her for that.

Her needs and wants are clear. Although I understand naturally that our physical days together are numbered, I know that our relationship will transcend our Earthly connection.

Dora will continue to work

with me from the other side and because of the bond we have developed here.

Although I literally would do absolutely anything for Dora and I'd love her to live forever. More important is her quality of life, and my being willing to be her advocate and listen to her with an open heart and open mind, while savoring every moment and making sure we create special memories.

So here are some words of wisdom from my best friend, Dora:

- ♦ Live in the present moment (as much as you can) with your beloved pets.
- ♦ Please don't be tempted to show them pity.
- ♦ See them just as they are for the beautiful souls they are, while acknowledging and celebrating their amazing inner light, that will always shine bright.
- ♦ Unconditional love is a two-way street.

Some of the most powerful and memorable readings and healings I have facilitated are for pets and their guardians when they are approaching end-of-life decisions.

Sometimes the pets want to reminisce, sometimes they have instructions for their last moments and sometimes there is a type of bucket list that can really assist in acceptance and allows the guardian to feel helpful in creating loving memories.

Please contact us if you would like to connect with your best friends. Email: rivergem88@gmail.com Animal communication can be life-changing at any stage of life.



Nimbin Garden Club notes



by Kerry Hagan

We once again had a beautiful spring afternoon for our visit to Sharon and Neil's place on Stony Chute Road.

This is one garden I have been particularly looking forward to, as I have been watching its progress for about the last two years.

Sharon and Neil, with the huge assistance of Sharon's parents, Beverley and David, have been transforming great expanses of lawn into really lovely garden beds.

Set behind hedges of Photinia, the ensuing results are not only gorgeous, but have greatly reduced the amount of maintenance in terms of mowing and slashing.

A very large tree waratah and an enormous

bottlebrush are just a couple of the very mature trees that abound.

Behind the house, what was once a swimming pool is now filled in and paved. Here, behind the pool fencing is a very extensive food production area. Many raised garden beds are full of wonderful healthy veggies.

With stunning views of Nimbin Rocks and

bounded by Goolmangar Creek, this is five acres of absolute delight.

Thank you Sharon, Neil, Beverley and David.

Our next meeting is at Black Sheep Farm, 449A Gungas Road on Saturday 19th November, 2-4 pm. Please bring a cup, a chair and a plate to share.

Visitors and guests are always welcome.

Plant of the month



Red cedar *Toona ciliata*

by Richard Burer

This month, prolific flowering of Red cedar looks definitely on!

It has white cream flowers in November and early summer followed by a small winged seed which will drop and fly about in later summer.

It's really stunning this year. I love the new pink leaf emerging early spring followed by a lush green November flush and the lovely summer shade this iconic species provides.

I have over the last years limited planting this tree in my contract plantings, often due to tip moth damage that can affect the tree and cause poor habit.

Lately I'm having some luck in getting this tree to reach some metres before tip moth damage, and it's a fast and great pioneer plant.

In Nimbin I'm finding my best plantings in low cold places, but it can be affected by frost.

In the garden it's a great deciduous feature tree, letting sun in the winter and shade in summer.

From Afghanistan to Papua New Guinea to Australia, this handsome fast-growing tree is a good one for your planting projects.

Richard Burer is a Nimbin-based natural area restoration contractor and consultant: richard.burer@gmail.com

Nimbin bushwalkers explore granite country

by Peter Moyle

A bit of a broken record, but the weather and particularly the rain made it hard enough finding an interesting walk in an area with an abundant supply, but with the storm damage and soggy environment most local National Parks have closures and restrictions.

We have had to travel a bit this year, but we have been rewarded with some great walks. Next year?

The coastal heathland walk at Lennox Head was a very entertaining and informative day. Postponed by a week due to rain, we meandered through the scrub on the fire trails.

The abundance of wildflowers and varied shrubs, and trees identified and described by our very knowledgeable friend Ian, who shared his lifelong passion for all things flora with us, made a very rewarding walk. Hopefully we can remember the detail.

Our getaway weekend took us to Girraween National Park just over the border in Queensland not far from Tenterfield.

A new expansive campground had us set up and walking straightaway and the number and variety of walks had us all marvelling at the great views from the many prominent granite boulders, some hundreds of metres high.

A big change for us, as no soggy feet as the soil drains so well, and is perfect for walking and exploring. As one member said, "We love our rainforest, but you cannot beat Granite Country views."

Walks programme

Sunday 13th November – Koonyum Range in the Mt Jerusalem National Park

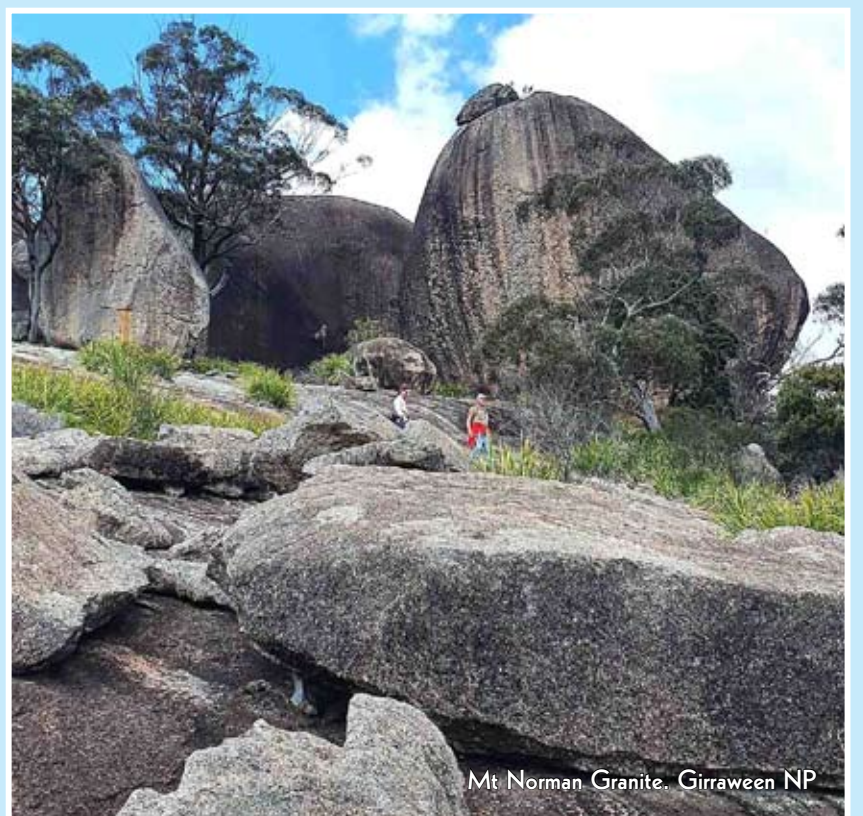
Leader: Sue Maklin 0402-220-973
Grade 3. Meet for a 9am start at Wilsons Creek Road opposite the Golf course at Mullumbimby, then carpooling. Not a long walk but interesting with waterfalls and great views. Ring Sue for more details.

Thurs 24th to Mon 28th November – Lake Arragan in Yuraygir NP, near Brooms Head

Leader: Peter Moyle 0412-656-498
Grade 2-3. Meet at the camping



Ian explaining at Lennox



Mt Norman Granite, Girraween NP

area. Most will be camping but you can come for 1, 2 or all days. On the Friday we will be going for the short drive to Sandon River and a paddle on the pristine river with the tide each way for easier paddling.

On the Saturday morning at 9am, a walk to Shelley Headland and return with its lovely coastal scenery. In the afternoon, paddling on Lake Arragan

or fishing from the beach. On the Sunday we will be walking to Sandon River leaving at 8am.

This is a very busy camp area and sites are limited so please get in early if you want to join us. Peter has some spots left for sharing, ring him. \$14 per person per night and a vehicle pass required, \$8 a day or better value is a yearly pass.

How bit-free riding calms horses

by Suzy Maloney

When I switched from riding with a bit to riding bit-free, a lot of things changed and shifted. I found myself connecting and communicating with horses more and it changed the way I ride, improving my feel and understanding of how my whole body communicates with the horse.

For the horses, it changed their riding experience too in huge and profound ways. They were less fearful and reactive, trusted me more and were calmer.

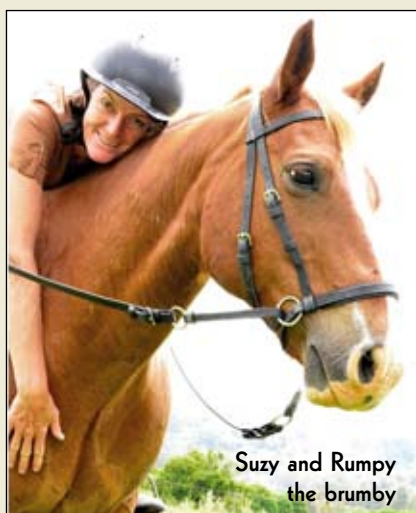
I was working at a large riding centre. There were 65 horses there and I would take groups of riders with varying skill level out for rainforest rides. I had my favourite guide horses that I rode.

These horses were steady and listened well to their rider. Sometimes I would ride a new horse who needed some on the job training.

One of these horses in training was a five-year old green-broke brumby. He had huge potential as a guide horse. He would go in the front or behind and could canter up beside a runaway horse and stay steady if I needed to lean down and grab their rein to stop them.

He was also fantastic in the bush, watching where every hoof fell. I never had to worry about holes or snakes when riding him.

As a green-broke though, there were still many things in the world, especially those of human design, that caused him to startle. I was working,



Suzy and Rumpy the brumby

so I needed to always have full control of my horse.

When he startled, I had to correct him instantly and as strongly as needed to get him back. I was riding him with a bit, and after these corrections he would be stressed and energetically high for quite a while.

This meant more work for me to keep him safe and under control while I did my job.

And then bitless bridles entered my world, and I started using them with my horses at home and then with those at work. I tried the brumby bit-free back at the ranch and had a few rides with him, just the two of us, and he went so well I was given the OK to ride him bit-free while working.

The difference was astounding. He was still very green and continued to react to things in the environment, so my corrections still needed to be

strong. But straight after the correction he was back to normal and calm. He no longer maintained elevated stress levels after the correction.

It took me a while to work out what had happened, as I was new to bit-free riding. What I was doing in both situations was exactly the same. It was later that my riding style changed. Initially I rode the same way when bit-free as I would have with a bit.

I realised that when I corrected him with the bit, it worked, but the pain that he felt in his mouth created a fear reaction in him. This fear was what resulted in the elevated stress levels.

When I used the bitless bridle it worked too, but as there was no pain involved in the correction, he had no fear response, and so he remained calm afterwards. It also accelerated his training, and it wasn't long before he stopped startling altogether.

This was a huge 'ah ha' moment for me, I totally understood the whole situation from the horses' point of view. This insight snowballed, and I started looking at everything I do from the horses' point of view.

This changed how I am with horses completely. By getting out of my mind and into theirs, a new perspective of the world arose. It is from this perspective, through the horses' eyes, that we are able to be considerate and compassionate horse people.

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Dealing with dog aggression

by Les Rees

A few days ago I was walking my dogs on a quiet road when two dogs suddenly emerged from the bush onto the road ahead of me. The biggest dog stood looking at me with a somewhat disturbing intensive stare.

I was half a kilometre from the main road where my car was parked and although there are a few properties in the bush, they're all situated some distance from the road. So I decided to keep walking.

As we neared them, the larger of the two dogs lunged into a full scale, completely unprovoked, attack on my dog. He had him pinned to the ground and was out to kill him.

I tried to separate them, but the dog was not going to be deterred. My poor dog was crying and terrified and all I could think of to do was to grab the dog by the base of its tail and pull him off my boy.

I couldn't hold on for too long because he was too strong for me, which led to more attacks on my poor dog. I have absolutely no idea how I managed to get hold of the attacking dog again and ended up pulling him all the way up the road to my car.

I managed to get help from a passing car and the driver took my keys and put my dogs into my car whilst I was still holding the aggressive dog. Finally I let go and jumped into my car.

Even when I drove off, this dog continued to chase us down the road. By this time, although I was shaking from head to foot, I still had to drive my poor beautiful boy to the nearest vet in



The dog in question

Kyogle.

By the time I arrived I was a complete mess, and my poor boy was in a terrible mess with multiple wounds and a thick layer of mud all over his body.

The Fairymount Vets were wonderful and immediately took over sedating my dog. He had to stay in overnight as his poor body had taken such a huge beating.

The following day he was extremely sore and swollen with a massive hole in

his front paw. Now, several days later he is beginning to hobble around and nurse his wounds.

The experience was so traumatic for me I keep having a replay of the event in my head and I'm having trouble sleeping.

The reason I'm writing about this is to make people aware of how much damage can be done when pets are allowed to roam. Dog owners have a duty of care to ensure they are under effective control at all times and to ensure that they're not roaming around unattended causing a nuisance and grief to the community.

I am told that there have been several dog attacks on the main street of Nimbin and I know a few people are afraid to take their dogs with them anymore. They find this very disturbing because our vibrant loving community is being held to ransom by a few thoughtless individuals who refuse to be responsible for their dogs.

All it takes is to put aggressive dogs on a lead whilst you're in busy areas, or better still don't subject them to a place that stimulates this unwelcome behaviour.

I'm sorry if my graphic description has upset anyone, but it needs to be said because it is extremely traumatic to be on the receiving end for both dogs and their owners.

As for me, I'm not only shattered, but somewhat poorer for having to fork out for an expensive vet bill.

Les Rees is an equine naturopath and sports therapist. Phone 0437-586-705.
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