

Lismore Council gets its skates on

Lismore's recovery from the 2022 disasters is an ongoing process: the scale of damage needing repair, particularly across our roads, is immense. We've come a long way already, but there's still more work to do.

Lismore City Council has now received State and Federal funding to fully restore 60 landslips, many of them found in the hills in and around Nimbin.

This in-depth restoration work follows temporary make-do fixes that were done over the last few years to restore access and safety for the community. Locations include Blue Knob Road, Tuntable Creek Road, Mountain Top Road and Stony Chute Road.

Contractor, CNC who repaired the two landslips on Nimbin Road, will commence construction in October, and expects restoration will take about three years to complete, subject to weather.

Find out more by visiting: www.lismore.nsw.gov.au and searching 'Landslip Restoration Package'.

It was great to see so many skaters

From the Mayor's desk

by Steve Krieg
Lismore City Council

turn out for the Community Open Day for the new \$3.9 million skatepark at the Lismore Regional Sports Precinct last month.

It really is world class and has quickly become a place for youth to connect, be active and learn new skills.

It also creates opportunities to host events, and welcome athletes like Arisa Trew, who was at the open day and showed what's possible for the next generation of riders.

The facility includes 'street' and 'park' (bowl) sections, and a covered mini ramp, which is eagerly anticipated by the local skater community.

The design includes a rail, paying tribute to the late Travis Watson, who was an avid skater, mentor and advocate for skating in Lismore and the wider community.

Council is especially proud the facility supports greater



Left to right: David Buckley (Convic), Mayor Steve Krieg, Cr Battista, Sam James (36 Chambers), John McPherson (Convic), Janelle Saffin MP, Corey Mills (local inline skater). The tiny person in the back is Indy Davis (local skater).

participation for girls in skating, a key part of the project's grant funding.

A big thank-you to our project partners, Convic, Council staff, and the community for your input and support in bringing this space to life. I know there is a good skatepark at Nimbin, but this one

really is worth the trip to have a skate.

And finally, a couple of reminders: registrations are now open for Second Hand Saturday on 20th September. You can register your own garage sale or team up with family, friends, neighbours or a community group

for a joint sale.

For more information and to register, go to: www.secondhandsaturday.com.au

And, if you like watching a bit of social sport, make sure you get along to the 13th Lismore Workers Masters Games on 26th, 27th and 28th September.

Current regional sport developments

There's been so much news about sport for our region lately, it's been a case of "when too much sport is barely enough", to quote Roy Slaven and HG Nelson.

The big news was the announcement of the NSW Government's \$3.6 million investment in a new track and field facility at Southern Cross University. This world-class, weatherproof 400-metre track built to international standards will be a great boost for elite athletes, local and regional school students and the broader community.

SCU is already a hub for sport and health courses, including exercise physiology, sport science and allied health. This facility will support those programs and create opportunities for research and regional talent development.

It will also attract events and training camps and the timing is perfect for it to be used as a regional training facility for the 2032 Brisbane Olympics.

In August I cut the ribbon to officially open the new Lismore skate park, another world class sporting facility for our region. Skaters had been making great use of the park well before the official opening and have given it the big thumbs up.

This \$3.9 million park was funded through the NSW Government's Multi-Sport



by Janelle Saffin
MP for Lismore

Community Facility Fund.

I was proud to support the local campaign to get it built spearheaded by the late Travis Watson, a passionate local advocate whose vision helped bring this project to life. I also want to acknowledge Sam James who took over Travis's skate shop and carried on the advocacy to see this project through.

The park includes street and park-style skating, a covered mini ramp, and a Travis Watson memorial rail. Congratulations to the skating community, Lismore City Council, and contractors CONVIC for delivering this world-class park. It is fantastic to see it in action, day and night.

Having this hub of local sport and social activity back up and running is great news for the Uki and broader community.

From grass roots to elite level, sport is a valuable part of our community life and local economy. I thank all the players and volunteers whose passion and commitment make local sport possible.

Jets. It was also the official naming of the Craig Foster Grandstand in recognition of Craig's sporting career and leadership on and off the field, and his support for our region.

In July, the Lismore Workers Golf Club attracted professional golfers from across the country for the 2025 Ford NSW Open Regional Qualifier, which was televised on Kayo. The event showcased top-level golf and brought spectators and media coverage to our region. Events like this boost the local economy.

I had the pleasure of accompanying my colleague, sports minister Steve Kamper to Uki for the official reopening of the Vic Bianchetti Sports Club at the end of July.

This club was badly damaged in the 2022 floods but thanks to \$1.2 million in funding from the NSW and Australian Governments, it's been rebuilt and upgraded with flood-resilient design and modern amenities.

Having this hub of local sport and social activity back up and running is great news for the Uki and broader community.

It was great to catch up with my friend, ex-Lismore boy and former Socceroo Craig Foster, at Lismore's Oakes Oval recently for a pre-season game between Brisbane Roar and Newcastle

On the same Page

by Kevin Hogan
MP for Page

Lismore's mental health and crime issues

There is a mental health and crime issue in Lismore CBD. People are being abused, assaulted, and fires lit. Businesses and shoppers feel unsafe, which is not OK.

The government have a program (PACER), that places a mental health professional with police when they are responding to certain crimes. It gives police more support in dealing with situations.

People with mental health issues can be dealt with in different ways if appropriate. It gets them off the streets and from harming themselves or others.

Until recently, Lismore had this position at the station. It worked. The role is currently vacant. We are calling on the government to fix this immediately. Our police need it. Our community deserves it.

Holding Labor to account

Families continue to struggle with Labor's cost of living crisis.

Labor promised power bills would drop by \$275 – instead, they've gone up.

The PM also took

every opportunity to get his Medicare card out during the election.

He said you would only need your Medicare card when you went to the doctor, not your credit card.

But so far under Labor, GP bulk billing has fallen, and there have been 40 million less bulk billed GP visits in the past year alone.

These are lies and broken promises, and I will keep calling them out.

Respect for our flag

The Australian flag was burnt at a recent protest in Melbourne. This was not OK. In many countries, desecrating the national flag carries serious criminal penalties.

It is time Australia introduced similar laws. It should include custodial sentences, and cancellation of visas for non-citizens who commit this offence.

Our flag represents our freedom, our values, and the sacrifices of those who fought for them. It must be respected.

I will be seconding a motion in parliament in the coming weeks calling on this.



Kevin Hogan speaks with Mel Connell at her Lismore shop.

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We can meet and beat our climate targets if leadership steps up

At this Budget Estimates hearings, I asked Premier Chris Minns a direct question – would he consider issuing a premier's directive to help his cabinet ministers coordinate their efforts and actually meet our 2030 emissions reduction target?

It's no secret that while New South Wales has made progress on climate, we are at risk of missing the targets we fought so hard to have written into the law. That's not just a technical failure, it's a failure of leadership.

I raised the growing body of climate attribution science with the premier and reminded him that just this year, the NSW Court of Appeal overturned the expansion of the Mount Pleasant coal mine on the grounds that local climate impacts must be considered when approving high-emitting projects.

This is a landmark finding and it aligns with the International Court of Justice's opinion that governments can be held responsible for the damage caused to other nations if they fail to reduce emissions.

We are now in an era where climate consequences have legal weight and scientific clarity. There are real risks, and there will be real liability. But the opportunity is just as real and we still can meet our 2030 target as long as we act like we mean it.

I told the premier that from where I sit, and from where so many of our communities sit, there's no harmonisation in the government's response. Some ministers are clearly working hard to bring on renewables and reduce emissions, but their efforts are being undermined by other parts of government that are dragging their feet.

Without co-ordination,



by Sue Higginson
NSW Greens MLC

without serious direction from the top, we won't deliver on the ambition that this crisis demands.

In response, the premier said a directive might seem less significant than the law. I reminded him that only the 2050 target is legally binding, and that the 2030 goal is still very much in jeopardy, so he agreed to take the idea on notice.

That matters, because what we're seeing is not just political theatre, it's real negotiation.

And people like us are putting climate justice on the agenda.

Meanwhile, as communities like ours organise, plant trees, retrofit homes, and campaign for clean energy, climate deniers in Canberra are still trying to drag us back into the past.

Barnaby Joyce, backed by our own Federal Member Kevin Hogan, has introduced a bill to abandon net zero altogether, an idea that's desperate, unserious and dangerous.

These men are not building a future for anyone, rather they are trying to burn one down on their way out. Their fear of change, their lack of scientific understanding and economic reasoning must not be allowed to cost us the safety and wellbeing of future generations, nature and this wonderful planet.

Australians know and understand this reality that Barnaby and Kevin don't.

A recent Resolve Political Monitor survey showed that 44% of voters support lifting Australia's emissions target of 65% to 75% by 2035. Among Greens voters, support is at 64% and in marginal seats, it's even higher.

Even Matt Kean, former Liberal treasurer and climate change minister, now chairs the Climate Change Authority and is preparing to recommend a more ambitious target. That's how far the conversation has moved and the moderate position is no longer about compromise. It's about stepping up.

What we really need now is decisive leadership that matches the scale of the challenge. That means setting an immediate moratorium on new coal and gas developments.

It means ending public native forest logging and getting serious about regenerating and revegetating

our landscapes. It means delivering a just transition for communities currently reliant on fossil fuel industries, with a clear path to move away from coal and gas by 2030. And it means taking the next bold step, bringing New South Wales to net zero by 2035. These are the actions that would reflect the science, the law, and the will of the people.

At Budget Estimates, I did what every representative should do – I brought evidence, science, and the voice of concerned communities directly to the seat of power.

The premier listened, and while he didn't commit on the spot, he acknowledged the seriousness of the issue and agreed to consider stronger co-ordination. That matters, because policy shaped by truth and science is how we secure a liveable future.

Now we need to hold him to it.

No short-cuts for good governance

Local government works best when every councillor, regardless of political persuasion, is given a fair opportunity to contribute to decisions that shape our community.

The past few weeks on Lismore City Council have been testing ones, with a challenging ordinary meeting on 12th August, followed soon after by an extraordinary meeting held during daytime work hours.

For those of us who also hold jobs outside the chamber, daytime scheduling can mean exclusion not just of a councillor, but of the community voices we represent.

I do not want to dwell on blame. Instead, I want to focus on how we can move forward as a council that upholds best practice, ensures fairness and creates an environment where robust but respectful conversations are possible.

At the most recent meetings, councillors debated motions concerning the East Lismore housing pods and the revocation of long-standing council policies. I then supported rescission motions because of the issues at stake, the opportunity perhaps of housing for vulnerable people on-going past the December 2026 wind-up of the pods and exploring that opportunity, and the integrity of our policy framework.

This goes to the heart of governance. The Policy Making Policy (1.4.2) required that any change to policy be accompanied by staff analysis, consultation and clear pathways. These steps were bypassed, and have not been followed, raising



by Cr Virginia Waters

questions of due diligence.

So where does removing this key policy leave us in process? When due process is overlooked, even for expedience, it risks undermining trust not only among councillors but in the organisation and community we serve.

Good governance is not about speed, it is about clarity, fairness and inclusiveness. It is good to see that a new policy framework is coming soon, and I hope it strengthens these principles.

Best practice means putting in place processes that safeguard participation. Meetings should be scheduled in ways that give all councillors certainty and allow involvement. Policies that are earmarked for removal or amendment should first come to a councillor briefing so that risks can be identified and consequences weighed.

Transparency and accountability should be central, with the

community able to see not just the outcomes of votes, but the reasoning and debate behind them. Above all, respect for different voices must be at the heart of our practice. Robust disagreement is not a weakness but a strength of democracy when handled with openness and integrity.

Even in a difficult month, there were many positive moments, community celebrations such as Lola, opening of the Lismore Skate Park, the Jets v Roar soccer game, the Sound Lab performances at the Lismore Quad and I hope you caught the Archibald at the Lismore Regional Gallery.

These remind me that governance is not only about work in the chamber; it is also about celebrating our successes, acknowledging local achievements, and making space for joy.

I am learning every day as a councillor, and there are times I wish I articulated my concerns more clearly. But growth is part of this role, just as listening is. The way forward is not through exclusion or shortcut processes, but through leaning into improvement: being better, being fairer, and above all, creating an environment where conversation can flourish.

That is the council our community deserves, and the one that I'm determined to establish.

Please note, the opinions expressed here are my own and not those of Lismore City Council. Feel free to contact me at: virginia.waters@lismore.nsw.gov.au

Living in the USA

by Scott Sledge

I recently spent time visiting family and friends in the USA.

Initially I was worried that US Customs might learn that I have written material critical of the Big Blowhard (Trump) and ICE agents in masks would handcuff me and send me for an unscheduled "holiday" in El Salvador.

This didn't happen, and I was surprised that most people I spoke politics with seemed to be embarrassed by the excesses of the Trump regime. Few people wanted to defend Trump.

This had the surprising effect of making people actually be nicer to one another, unusual in this deeply divided country with two political camps hostile to each other... and to everybody they think is at odds with their political views.

The authoritarian style of the current POTUS, plus his enormous military parade in June honouring his birthday caused millions of Americans to demonstrate in 'No Kings' rallies right across the country.

Of particular concern has been the spectre of masked ICE agents deporting brown people without regard for due processes of the legal system.

Furthermore, the Trump administration is cutting back on all forms of government assistance, especially to states controlled by Democrats, in order to provide tax cuts for the rich.

I call this a reversal of Robin Hood: the government is stealing from the poor to give to the rich. This is increasingly unpopular.

American academic and commentator Robert Reich wrote: "Over the past month, Trump and his MAGA stooges in Congress have passed legislation to:

- Strip health care from 10 million people;
- Cut food stamp benefits for 40 million Americans, half of them children;
- Slash \$8 billion from life-saving foreign aid programs;
- Defund public radio and television stations nationwide;
- Kill hundreds of thousands of clean energy jobs;
- Hand \$4.5 trillion in tax breaks to Trump and his billionaire friends.

Never have I seen any president or Congress do so much harm to so many people in so little time.

This is no accident. It's a deliberate effort to hollow out the heart of our emergency infrastructure in the face of rising climate-fuelled disasters.

When people cry out for help, this administration leaves Americans to fend for themselves.

He's wielding unlawful power and ignoring our Constitution to execute his Project 2025 agenda by any means – because Republicans are scared of voters holding them accountable after they rammed through their Big Ugly Bill, gutting Medicaid."

It's a pretty comprehensive view of what's happening here.

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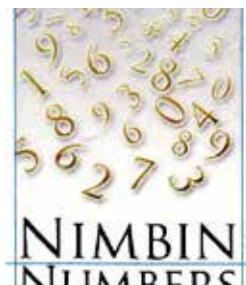
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In your neighbourhood...

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre News

Emergency Relief funding

We are disappointed to announce to the community that our funding for the Emergency Relief (ER) program, which we have been delivering in Nimbin for over 30 years, has been reallocated to external service providers as a result of a recent tender process.

ER was the backbone program behind all of our material aid and food relief programs, and the funds were used to support the wage costs of our community workers, as well as for vouchers and other material aid for clients.

Despite this, NNIC will continue to deliver material aid and food relief to the Nimbin community, but our capacity will be reduced as a result of the loss of the funding.

The amount lost is around \$20,000 per year. We are keen to explore the possibility of the Nimbin community raising the income to replace it.

To raise \$20,000 a year we would need around 200 donors donating \$8 each month OR 100 donors donating \$15 per month OR 50 donors donating \$30 a month.

Can we do this Nimbin?

You can donate by dropping in and asking at our front desk OR you can deposit directly into our gift fund account as follows:

BSB 728 728,
Summerland Bank; NNIC
Gift Fund a/c #22205341.

Reference: your name plus DON (name required only if you want a receipt, or acknowledgement).

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible*. Email us or drop in for a tax receipt.

* Donations to the 7 Sibley Street project are not tax deductible. To donate to this project, contact us for details.

7 Sibley Street workshops

Workshops and lots more have gone on-line. People can now join the 7 Sibley Street Patreon site to access on-line workshops and all sorts of tips and info and resources, plus book in and get discounts for on-site workshops.

NNIC members can join the Patreon site at less than half the price – just \$5 a month (non-NNIC members: \$12 a month). An absolute bargain to access a wealth of knowledge and resources.

See: <https://www.patreon.com/7sibleystreet>

Membership renewal

Be sure to renew your NNIC membership if you have not done so since May 2025. You can join or renew your membership simply by dropping in.

At just \$5.50 per year (inc GST), your memberships are very valuable to us, and if you haven't ever joined before come on down.

Tools Library membership is \$22 per year (inc GST) and you must be an NNIC member to be a Tool Library member (ie. total annual cost is \$27.50).

Nimbin Annual Country Show 20th-21st Sept

We regret to announce that due to capacity constraints we are unable to bring you Sustainability Alley this year and are working on a plan to bring it back in 2026.

In the meantime, be sure to get along to the Nimbin Show which we hope goes well and is favoured by great weather.

Nimbin NAIDOC Day

A million thanks to everyone who made this year's Nimbin NAIDOC Day a huge success on 11th July.

Special thanks to Blak Boi for taking on a heap of roles including MCing, running the music and PA, drawing

the Quiz winners and lots more. Many thanks also to Uncle Gilbert for the

opening ceremony, and to everyone who came along to join in the festivities.



Get On (the) Board!

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre (NNIC) is urgently seeking some new

Management Committee Members
New Secretary
Needed

Do you have what it takes to help us keep the NNIC ship sailing smoothly (through sometimes rough) waters?

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DEVICE ADVICE: Weds 9.30am-12.30pm, seniors can book for assistance with phone, tablet or laptop issues

SENIORS SOCIAL GROUPS - booking and fees apply
Nimbin Tuesday Morning Tea at centre
Garrimaa Café Group twice monthly Thursdays, 11-2

Wise Ones, Koonorigan Hall 4th Mon, bring plate to share
Bus Outings: 2nd & 4th Tues, scenic drives, cafes & site-seeing

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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

Third Thursday of the month, next is 18th September. Phone 6688-1400 for an 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 21st August.

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

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month, 9.30am in the conference room of the Nimbin MPS. New members always welcome.





by Scott Sledge, president

The NSW government is yet to announce the establishment of the promised Great Koala National Park near Coffs Harbour.

Communities around Lismore and Evans Head have started a campaign to bring regional public lands into a protected system of wildlife refuges to be known as the Richmond River Koala Parks.

You can see the proposal in detail at the NEC shop.

Reform of the Federal Environmental Planning and Biodiversity Conservation Act seems likely due to Ken Henry's submission to the national Productivity Roundtable held in August.

Henry recommended that a national Environmental Protection Agency be established.

Northern Rivers environmentalists are waiting to hear the results of the Environmental Defenders Office court challenge to approval of the Wallum housing development at Brunswick Heads.

Burning biomass for electricity

The NSW Independent

Planning Commission is currently considering an application to reopen the Redbank Power Station near Singleton.

For the first few years, the plant would burn predominantly native vegetation biomass instead of coal, claiming substantial emissions reductions and no negative impacts on biodiversity.

In 2022, the Albanese Government rightly ruled out the use of native forest wood waste as a source of renewable energy under the Renewable Energy Target. That decision aligned with science, common sense, and community expectations.

The Redbank proposal would use native vegetation biomass from tree clearing, which is a major source of CO₂ emissions. It will therefore not be eligible for Clean Energy Generation Certificates under the Renewable Energy Act.

It would also be contrary to Australia's international biodiversity and climate commitments, including to increase efforts in halting and reversing deforestation and degradation by 2030.

Land clearing was also identified in the Henry Review

as a major cause of biodiversity loss in NSW.

Mt Pleasant coal mine

In what could be a significant precedent, the NSW Supreme Court of Appeal recently ruled that planning powers need to consider the effects on climate when deciding a proposed development.

As the expansion of this coal mine would add to the world's rising level of catastrophes, it must be refused. This is a welcome change, and I hope it provides a model for future planning.

Greater gliders found

Local citizen scientists have been busy in Ewingar State Forest identifying greater glider dens. This forest has been scheduled for logging again.

Greater gliders are an endangered species of arboreal mammals that use three to 20 dens within a three hectare home range. Identified den trees legally require a 50-metre buffer zone, free from logging, which is obviously not adequate, considering that they move dens and need feed trees as well.

To confirm a den tree, the glider has to be seen emerging



Ewingar greater glider on feed tree

from a hollow, usually the first hour or so after sunset. Last August citizen scientists recorded 72 unique sightings and confirmed 13 dens in Ewingar Forest.

These have been uploaded onto official sites so Forestry Corporation NSW should respect a 50m circumference exclusion from logging... but will they? This government-owned corporation does what it likes, and if they get fined it's the public who pays.

Other threatened species that live in the forest are also dependent on hollows for dens and nests. These include the glossy black cockatoo, powerful owl, masked owl, sooty owl, yellow bellied glider, and spotted-tailed quoll.

I think all standing trees

with hollows should be exempt from interference.

See also story on p.21

Rainbow Walking Trail

NEC continues to support Aquarius Park and has donated towards another NCC project on the Rainbow Trail.

The birdlife is being celebrated with an informative sign depicting 24 birds frequently seen in the park.

Stories and poems about each bird have been contributed by locals, and a QR code will take interested people to a recording of the bird's song and more information.

The wildlife in the park is rich and diverse, so please leash your dog when walking there and keep your cats at home if you live in the vicinity.

The gliders inhabiting the

nesting boxes installed along the walk are vulnerable to predation by your furry feline friends, as are small birds and lizards.

Get involved

NEC meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 5pm in the Comskool Room in Nimbin Community Centre, 81 Cullen Street. All welcome. Next meeting is Wednesday 10th September.

Or drop into the NEC shop and Information Centre at 54 Cullen St and say 'hi'. The centre is open (mostly) seven days a week from 10am to 4pm. It stocks local, organic, handmade, ethical, and sustainable products.

Staffed by volunteers, all funds raised go to protecting the environment.

Insect numbers critical

by John Macleay



You can tell a lot about the state of the planet by what's on your car windscreen.

I'm old enough to remember the smear of insects on my parent's car windscreen, especially driving back up the Richmond Valley from the beach late afternoon or evening in Summer.

Grasshoppers and moths were plastered not only on the windscreen but the lights and bumper bar. Try that today and you'll hardly find any insects at all.

No, it's not just the weather, the time of the year or whether it's been a wet year or a dry one. Globally, insect populations are on a massive decline.

Without insects, our pollinators, we're not going to have any coffee, chocolate or honey, let alone the staples of our diet. When the insects disappear, we starve! So, is this an alarmist take on things? Won't science and technology come to the rescue? Do we really need insects? What if all the mosquitoes vanish, can that be a good thing? No, think again.

In his book, *The Insect Crisis: The Fall of the Tiny Empires that Run the World* (2022), Oliver Milman, a British journalist and the environment correspondent for *The Guardian* newspaper, examines the groundswell of research that suggests insect numbers are on serious decline all over the world and says this "hidden emergency" rivals climate change

as one of the key struts about to be knocked down that holds up life on Earth.

The issue isn't being taken seriously in Australia; at least not in political circles. It's absent in any planning decisions. It's off the news media radar and rarely, outside of a few television documentaries, makes any impression on the general public.

Milman writes that more than a third of global food production is dependent on pollination by thousands of bee species. The loss of bees will strip the world away from readily available items such as strawberries, plums, peaches, melons and broccoli.

Mercifully, staples such as wheat, rice and maize are pollinated by the wind.

Meals will become blander and less nutritious; a diet eking out on a bland mixture of oats and rice means that a simple mango becomes a decadent thought.

No more tomatoes or onions. Curries will become an historical afterthought, as they'll be no pollinators for cardamoms, coriander or cumin. Alfalfa becomes scarce, leading to fewer dairy herds and shortages of milk, so kiss goodbye to yoghurt, cheese and ice cream.

Milman puts the decline down to many factors, among them climate change, because a hotter world is not conducive to habitat retention, nor is it good for the breeding cycles of creatures. One of the biggest culprits are neo-nicotinoid insecticide sprays. These



Photo: Scott O'Keeffe

Cumulatively, that means a big bust in the ecosystem services that insects provide can be expected sometime around mid-2050. But not all insects are affected: those that benefit from humans – cockroaches come to mind – will benefit from bigger numbers, around 30% of all insect species.

There could be as many as an eye-watering 30 million insect species, or as few as five million. The job of describing all insect life on Earth will probably never have an end date.

While the causes of this overall decline are much debated, one thing is very clear, if the collapse is not halted, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems will collapse with profound implications for human wellbeing.

So, what of the future? There is hope in what some nations are doing. In the conservative state of Bavaria in Germany, which is incredibly pro-farming with sweeping fields of monocrops that are heavily doused with pesticides, voters had enough.

In surroundings devoid of bumblebees, crickets and butterflies, they managed to secure a petition calling on the government to enable laws that set aside 30% of farmland to be organic and insect friendly, for wetlands and hedgerows to be restored and for pesticide use to be slashed and light pollution to be curbed.

Around the world, there are the beginnings of a movement that is waking up to the fact that the tools of modernity have brutalised the insect world.

As Milman concludes in the book, we need insects far more than they need us; the insect crisis, from our own self-interest point of view, is a human emergency.

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Is the CSIRO model fit for purpose? Community says – not yet

by Jeremy Stewart

For years, our community has awaited the CSIRO's flood modelling of the Richmond Catchment, a tool promised to guide critical decisions on flood mitigation and community resilience in the Northern Rivers.

Now that the model summary has been released and public consultation is underway, I find myself more concerned than reassured.

There is immense potential in nature-based approaches to slow and store water across the landscape. These are often more cost-effective and at a scale necessary to reduce downstream flood impacts. But if the model doesn't recognise these possibilities, they may never be seriously considered.

At first glance, the report appears professional. But as someone involved in flood recovery, landcare, and nature-based mitigation planning, I see a model that dramatically oversimplifies the most human centred factor in flood dynamics: our relationship with the landscape and how we see it.

Even more troubling is that this flawed framework is being positioned as the scientific basis for decisions that will shape the region's future.

One of the most glaring shortcomings is the treatment of roughness coefficients: the numerical values used to represent how land surfaces and vegetation slow the flow of water. These coefficients are central to modelling flood behaviour.

Yet CSIRO's explanation spans just 87 words, condensing 7,000

square kilometres of varied terrain into 11 generic land categories, each assigned a coefficient with no clear methodology, local validation, or reference to international advances in this field.

There's no indication the model accounts for specific vegetation types, woody debris, or landslip material, all of which significantly influence how water moves across the landscape. Nor is there evidence that observations from local rivers or flood events were used to ground these coefficients to any significant degree. It reads like a standardised, remote desktop exercise, reliant on imagery and formulas but lacking field data that could provide real-world accuracy.

The methodology also risks misrepresenting complex, large-scale interactions within the catchment. By breaking the region into tiny plots (averaging around 700 m²) and aggregating them into a hydrodynamic model through computer processing, there's a high likelihood that broader-scale hydrological dynamics are missed.

Key processes such as tidal influence, landscape pinch points, domino effects from the stripping of riparian vegetation during major events, and backflows between arms of the river system appear to be overlooked. Without these considerations, the model may fail to reflect the real forces that shape flood behaviour.

This raises a larger concern about scientific rigour. The hallmark of science is independent peer review. Has the CSIRO's model been externally reviewed? And if



Log jam at Protestors Falls Creek

so, where is the summary of key findings?

More importantly, if the model is so computationally intensive that only two or three future scenarios can be run, shouldn't those scenarios themselves be subject to external review before simulations are undertaken to ensure that they reflect the best investment of public time and resources? Or are we to assume that CSIRO is exempt from the very standards of scientific practice that underpin evidence-based decision-making?

Equally absent is a serious examination of land management practices. How does the model handle the impact of agriculture on soil absorption, surface roughness, or sedimentation? What about post-bushfire runoff dynamics or

historical changes to vegetation cover?

The model also fails to present a clear comparison between natural and built environments such as concrete, rooftops, roads, and levees; and how these surfaces differ in their influence on flood behaviour. This is vital if the public is to understand the trade-offs between engineered infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

To calibrate the model, CSIRO used data from just five flood events over 15 years, a narrow slice of recent history in a catchment that has undergone significant ecological change. Whether such limited calibration can support decisions involving 150 years of flood history and vastly different land use regimes is highly questionable.

Verification is further undermined by reliance on satellite imagery obscured by cloud cover in key areas, and river height data from mid and lower catchment zones that have been extensively altered by human activity.

Despite these limitations, the model is being put forward as a trusted foundation for determining how we respond to future flood risks, including decisions about relocation, infrastructure spending, and whether to invest in large-scale engineering or in restoring natural systems.

I believe in science. I believe in the value of modelling. But science must remain grounded in the real world, in our catchments, our forests, our rivers, and our lived experiences. Right now, this model feels disconnected from those realities.

What's at stake is more than technical precision. It's public trust, financial accountability, and the safety of communities. It's the difference between repeating past mistakes, or learning from them.

CSIRO must do better. And the community must demand it.

Jeremy Stewart is co-creator of Nature Based Solutions - building flood resilience in the Lismore catchment Richmond Landcare; co-initiator of the Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative; past environment representative on the Lismore City Council Flood Mitigation Committee; past volunteer and committee member of Whian Whian Landcare & Richmond Landcare Inc; participant in Lismore A Way Forward Group; and South Lismore resident and business owner.

Act now to protect forests for our children, and their children

by Brett Thompson

In December 2024, I participated in non-violent direct action (by attaching myself to a forest harvesting machine with a D-lock) to bring a halt to the industrial scale logging of the Bulga State Forest.

Bulga Forest is about 65km west of Port Macquarie, NSW, and is a diverse ecosystem at the top of the Hastings and Manning River catchments.

The Bulga Forest is critically important in regulating climate by storing carbon and producing oxygen; holding soil together and reducing erosion; providing clean air and water; and sustaining human life.

Forests have intrinsic value beyond their utility to us humans. Bulga Forest is ecologically significant as a biodiversity hotspot and habitat for endangered species – the greater glider and koala, and many other species.

Earlier this year in the NSW Land and Environment Court, Justice Rachael Pepper noted Forestry Corporation NSW's lengthy record of prior convictions for environmental offences including polluting a forest waterway, inadequate threatened species surveys, unlawful harvesting of hollow bearing trees and harvesting koala and rainforest habitat exclusion zones.

It is also experiencing significant financial losses in its native forestry division: more than \$43M in the last 18 months.

Since logging Bulga Forest began



Brett Thompson locked on



Dominique and Helen locked on

in October 2024, we have delayed harvesting for several hours on most days.

The community of the nearby village of Elands (population 180) has been inspirational for their strength and commitment over the decades to stand up for the forests. People from the Gold Coast, Sydney, Newcastle, Melbourne, and other regional areas also assisted with the forest actions.

On 14th August 2025, two local Knitting Nannas, Dominique Jacobs and Helen Kveld and myself appeared in Forster local courthouse. Dominique and Helen were represented pro bono by Climate Defenders Australia, while I represented myself. We had a great outcome: no conviction, no fines and

a six-month good behaviour bond.

I take full responsibility for my actions and pleaded guilty to the charges. I felt empowered by representing myself in court. Magistrate Stephen Barlow noted that historically civil disobedience has resulted in many benefits to society. He thought my speech was compassionate and articulate.

I became aware of the imminent logging of Bulga state forest following the devastating floods in early 2022. The Elands community came to assist with providing food and support for the wider community after the devastating floods.

They set up a volunteer Trees Not Bombs cafe, to feed and provide a safe space for the many people



Supporters outside the court

affected by the floods. I helped out regularly during the four months they stayed.

The last time I was arrested for forest protection was in the Weld Valley in Tasmania over a decade ago. These forests are now protected and have been added to the World Heritage list.

I believe it is not 'if' but 'when' the native forests will get the protection they deserve.

In 2000 I attended a Forest Forever camp in the forests of East Gippsland, and became aware of the industrial scale logging of native forests in Australia. I knew from primary school that the Amazon was being destroyed, but I didn't realise it was happening in my own backyard.

I went on to study biodiversity and conservation at Flinders University, and continued my forest activism over the years.

We are experiencing an environmental, economic and climate crisis, and one of the simplest ways of mitigating this crisis is to protect our remaining native forests.

One thing I failed to mention to the magistrate was that I was taking this action for my son, Wirra, and my stepchildren, so they and their children can experience the forests, the life they give, and the creatures that inhabit them into the future.

Brett Thompson lives at Stony Chute and volunteers at the Nimbin Organic Food Co-op.

Our communities need sustainable solutions to flooding

by Dr Luke Robinson

Recently I attended the community consultation forums run by the federal government's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the CSIRO, on the newly released Richmond catchment flood model.

I am deeply appreciative of the hard work and expertise Jai Vaze and his CSIRO team have put into developing this complex model, but like many other people, I am disappointed that all 15 mitigation options put forward for modelling were hard engineering measures, and nature-based solutions (NBS) were not included.

NEMA has provided funding to Richmond Landcare for a pilot project trialling reforestation of riparian and floodplain areas in upper sub-catchment streams, and it makes sense for this investment to be utilised.

The CSIRO should work with Richmond Landcare, Southern Cross University, Australian National University and Macquarie University to determine the parameters for modelling nature based solutions.

It is important to remember that there are other benefits to NBS apart from potential flood mitigation, including



Luke Robinson with Lismore councillor Adam Guise, restoring Big Scrub rainforest in Whian Whian

decreasing erosion and sediment loads, improving water quality, and helping restore our badly damaged waterways to health.

NBS help restore precious habitat for native wildlife, and sequester carbon to help combat climate change.

Many who attended the forum said it was unrealistic to expect community members to rank their preferred mitigation options given they were vaguely defined and excluded information on their likely economic, environmental, social or cultural costs.

These factors need to be made explicit at each stage of the process, though this would appear to be the job of NEMA rather than the CSIRO with its more technical remit.

I was fortunate to be able

to attend the Woodburn and Lismore forums to gain insights from the broader community affected by proposed mitigation measures. Community consultation is for people to hear and learn from each other, not just the experts.

Clearly local knowledge and the effects of major flooding on different areas of a catchment are part of the bigger picture for informed decision making.

It is important to remember that mitigation measures are not the only way to deal with the impacts of flooding. In many places it may be more appropriate to get people off the floodplains.

Restoring wetlands in lower catchments will improve water quality and repair habitat for native fish and birdlife.

Done once and properly, these measures may be cheaper in the long term than dealing with repeated disasters, the cost of building reconstruction, provision for compensation and maintaining massive hard engineering projects that can't be guaranteed to work, especially given the vagaries of nature and a changing climate.

Our communities are working towards long-term, sustainable solutions that truly protect us and our precious natural home, and welcome ongoing deep and respectful engagement with the CSIRO, NEMA and all levels of government.

Dr Luke Robinson resides in the Richmond catchment, and was the recent Greens candidate for Page.

Byron Shire flood recovery projects

Landslip repair in progress near 803 Wilsons Creek Road

"Byron Shire Council continues post 2022 flood recovery and is gearing up for significant construction activity," Council's infrastructure recovery manager Phil Warner said.

"In June, we began embankment stabilisation works on Wilsons Creek Road. It's now full steam ahead with construction around the shire for the next few years," he said.

Wilsons Creek Road embankment stabilisation near 803 Wilsons Creek Road is underway and expected to be completed in September. Another embankment stabilisation project just west of the current site is expected to commence in mid August. Replacement and repair of 55 culvert crossings will commence in August as night works. Additional pavement and sealing works from Lavertys Gap to Malcolm's Corner will begin late 2025.

Before the end of this year construction is expected to start on:

- Coopers Lane – Damaged culvert and road repairs.
- Huonbrook – gravel road repairs are nearly complete. Council is seeking additional funding to upgrade a causeway to allow truck access and complete remaining works.
- Left Bank Road – works include embankment stabilisation, road works, and guardrail installation. Some intermittent road closures are expected.
- Main Arm Road – the project includes slope stabilisation, new unsealed road, and guardrail installation.
- Minor Landslip Repairs – multiple minor slips on Goonengerry Road, Left Bank Road, Main Arm Road, and The Pocket Road will be

repaired.

• Mullumbimby Road – works commenced in July and include safety upgrades from the Saddle Road to McAuleys Lane intersection. Additional works include new road surface, signage, guardrails, and line marking. Changed traffic conditions are in place.

"Many of the flood recovery projects will continue into 2026, 2027 and even 2028," Mr Warner said.

"There will be disruptions in these areas, and traffic control will be in place. We thank the community for their patience and encourage people to stay up to date via Council's website and communication channels, and Live Traffic," he added.

For updates and information about flood repair work please visit Council's website.

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GIG GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 2025

Lismore Supper Club Soul Band		THURSDAYS
WEEKLY	Lismore City Bowlo	
5:30pm Ukulele Club		WEDNESDAYS
WEEKLY	Lismore City Bowlo	
03 SEP	Not Quite Folk Open Mic Night	WEDNESDAY
05 SEP	Polish Club: Bangalow Bowlo	FRIDAY
05 SEP	Besties Bigsound After Party + Guests	FRIDAY
06 SEP	Krystal Rivers, Dante Knows + More	SATURDAY
06 SEP	Spike F*ck, Peter Bibby, Drover	SATURDAY
07 SEP	Lismore Jazz Club	SUNDAY
07 SEP	The Eltham Valley Drifters	SUNDAY
07 SEP	Apollo, Anna & the Morphics + More	SUNDAY
09 SEP	Earthless	TUESDAY
10 SEP	Monthly Irish Folk Jam	WEDNESDAY
10 SEP	Open Mic Night	WEDNESDAY
18 SEP	Jeff Lang Masterclass & Show	THURSDAY
18 SEP	Resonator Music	
20 SEP	Women of the Country	SATURDAY
20 SEP	Lyrical Masterpieces	SATURDAY
21 SEP	Northern Rivers Conservatorium	
21 SEP	The Inadequates Masterclass & Show	SATURDAY
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Resilient Lismore to host fundraising dinner

Dress up, it's time to shine!

Resilient Lismore (RL) will hold its first formal dinner, Hearts and Stars, at the Lismore Regional Gallery on Friday 19th September.

"We welcome locals to dress up, dine and celebrate our strengths, while raising our spirits," executive director Elly Bird said.

The evening promises glamour, fun, and community connection, while raising funds to support Resilient Lismore's ongoing recovery and resilience work across the Northern Rivers. There will be games to play and prizes to win, including a best-dressed award.

Events co-ordinator, Emma Newman explains the theme 'Hearts and Stars', "we're encouraging guests to wear their hearts on their sleeves and shine like stars; It's a chance to feel fabulous while supporting something really meaningful."

MC for the evening is funny lady Gabrielle Griffin (GG), from band duo Mutton, or previously from The Two Frocks. Local musicians will provide dulcet tunes, and games will be played



for prizes. Take Care Cafe will provide sumptuous catering at the Gallery's new cafe.

Funds raised will support Resilient Lismore to continue to offer a free tool library, community events, workshops in tool and repair skills and support

locals to be better prepared for future disasters.

The event kicks off at 5.30pm. Bookings are essential and can be made at: resilientlismore.org.au/workshops-events Early bird tickets are \$60 until 5th September, then \$70.

Vox Caldera concert - Mozart's Vespers

by Nicholas Routley

The chamber choir Vox Caldera, based at the Northern Rivers Conservatorium, has performed Mozart's *Vespers* several times, and each time we sing it we love it more.

Composed in 1780, when Mozart was 24, it is a work brimming with vitality and joy, and includes the famous solo for soprano, 'Laudate Dominum', which our wonderful Abby Parkes will sing.

We will be accompanied by a small instrumental ensemble led by the dynamic and inspirational violinist, Margaret Blades.

The concert includes some amazing works. We celebrate Ravel's 150th anniversary of his birth this year, and we are performing his racy set of three songs for choir, which include a very naughty version of the Little Red



Riding Hood tale.

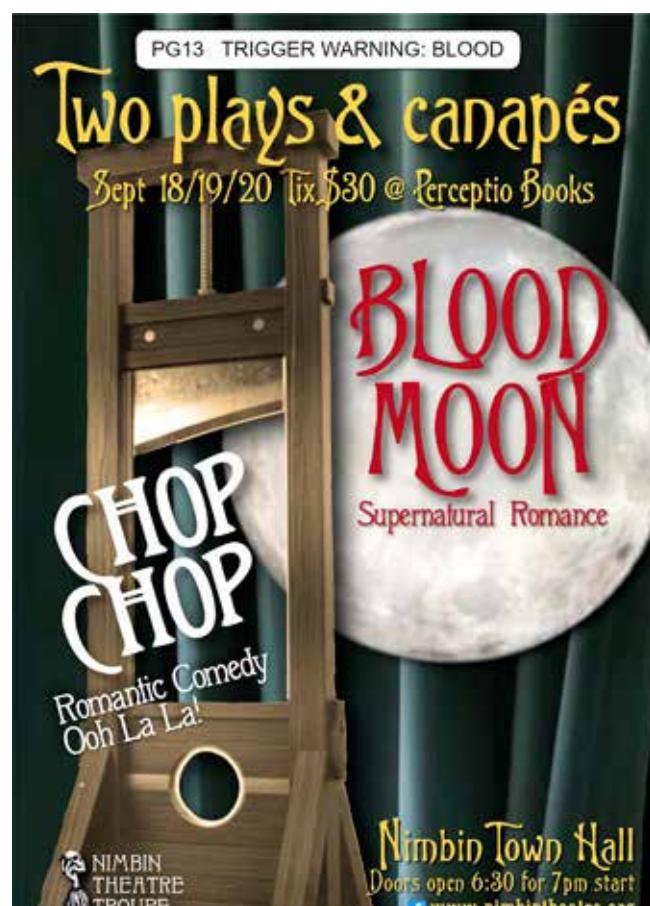
Ravel very much admired the 18th century French composer Rameau, whose gorgeous 'Hymn to Night' we include in the concert. This

is paired with John Wilbye's well-loved madrigal, 'Draw On, Sweet Night.'

Verdi's *Pater Noster*, a setting of the Lord's Prayer in a translation attributed to Dante, contains the whole operatic magic of its composer in miniature. And finally, we sing Mahler's profound piece *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen* (I

have abandoned the world) in an astonishing, spine-tingling arrangement for 16 voices.

All this takes place in the wonderful acoustics of the A&I Hall in Bangalow on Sunday 21st September at 3pm. You can buy tickets online through *Humanitix*, or at the door unless it is sold out online.



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A new chapter in film culture

by Dave Hyett

The Nimbin Bush Theatre currently show films every Friday night and plan to add weekend matinees if there's enough community interest.

In today's world of algorithm-driven content and binge-friendly streaming, the richness of shared cultural experience is quietly fading away. Our online feeds are curated to reflect what we already like, reinforcing familiar views and rarely challenging us to see things differently. It's comfortable, but limited.

However, film is different. It invites us to explore unfamiliar worlds, to walk in others' shoes, and to engage with ideas beyond our own. It offers a powerful tool for social commentary, cultural exchange, and human connection.

At the Nimbin Bush Theatre, we believe in the power of cinema to bring people together, not just to watch, but to reflect, discuss, and grow. That's why we're not simply screening films.

We're working to nurture a local film culture, one that values storytelling, sparks conversations, and celebrates sharing moments with others in the same space.

To support this vision, we're introducing pre-film introductions and post-film discussions. For some films, a local presenter will share why a



particular movie holds significance for them.

After the screening, the audience is encouraged to stay for an open discussion. The goal is to deepen our engagement and create a space where different perspectives can be shared.

We're also putting out an open call: do you have a film you love, one that challenged or inspired you? Would you like to share it with others, introduce it on the night, and help lead a discussion?

If so, we'd love to hear from you. We invite community members with a passion for cinema to nominate films for future screenings and help shape the conversation. You don't need to be a film

expert, just someone with something meaningful to say.

In addition to community-led discussions, we'll also host Q&A sessions with filmmakers, directors, writers, producers, and actors when opportunities arise.

We know that staying at home is easy, but the true value of cinema lies not just on the screen, but in the conversations that follow. Let's rediscover what it means to come together, think together, and grow together, one film at a time.

If you're part of the community and would like to nominate a film or contribute to this initiative, please email me at: david@nimbinbushtheatre.com

Who's putting on the plays in Nimbin?

by Jay Stephens

It's finally opening night on 18th September for *Two Plays and Canapés* and it's time to salute the hardworking crew giving their time and skills to staging some great theatre.

The tireless engine driving the troupe is Al Mustapha Al Shahid (AKA "Mussie"), the author of *Blood Moon*. Mussie is a director with a clearly articulated artistic vision for each role.

Backing up Mussie since *Wyrd Sisters* in 2017 are Christine Jones and myself. Christine brings her formidable organisational skills and is the troupe's script-doctor, stage manager,

set designer and poster artist.

I am the publicity and troubleshooting chap, and the sometime comic foil on stage.

Sue Gumley lends her talent to crafting the set and props, and will also be stepping in front of the lights.

Another old set-hand is Ewan McLachlan, whose handiwork continues to transform humble cardboard into striking replicas.

Dave Barbera's sound and lighting skills bring the stagecraft to life and has a rare treat in store in *Chop Chop*.

Calamus Maideneye and Sarah Stando will share their musical magic: Sarah is coaching our singers for a musical moment and Cal

(a psy-trance aficionado) is crafting themed soundscapes.

Ren Waterfall, who provided the atmospheric music to *Five Monkeys*, returns to provide music during the finger-food interval.

The wonderful KittyKittyMeowMeow will bring costumes to life – many thanks to her for access to her extensive couture collection.

The skilled and speedy Tay is back once again, doing hair and make-up for both plays.

Phil Brommers and Ryan Lane (plus anonymous stage crew) round out the troupe, doing the unseen yet essential magic behind the curtain and operating props.

Mandy Raval and Gina



Horsfield will again work front-of-house tirelessly, as they have since 2021.

Last but not least, a huge shout-out to David Hallet and the Hall committee. They've welcomed us, provided rehearsal space, and been enthusiastic supporters.

Tickets are \$30 from Perceptio.

choreography on stage throughout the evening.

The artist of the air – local trapeze artist extraordinaire from Tuntable, Hartje – will be twirling above the dance floor with another mesmerising aerial performance.

The DJ line-up will include Keir & Glockn'Spel playing out to the courtyard followed by Audiotronix opening up in the theatre, then La Fray, queen of the freaky-funkii dance floor and finally we are super-excited to announce Nimbin's own local Superstar, 'Rainbird' who will be showcasing his recently launched album *Breaking the Illusion*.

The Sonic Bloom Dance Music journey has been gathering momentum through 2024 and 2025 with the massively successful one-year anniversary party in January. This latest instalment promises to be another all-encompassing dance party extravaganza.

Tickets are available from the Nimbin Bush Theatre website: <https://sites.google.com/nimbinbushtheatre.com/nimbinbushtheatre> Hard copy tickets without a booking fee are also available from the Nimbin Craft Gallery.

See you on the dance floor...



until midnight. The will be large and small fires spread around the courtyard for a warm glowing atmosphere.

We are welcoming back the return of Altar of Fire, offering a tantalising feast for the eyes and igniting our inner flames with their other-worldly fire performances, a magical opening ceremony and electrifying dance

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GETTIN' SQUARE (M)

Step into the sharp, witty world of Gettin' Square. Screening Friday 12 September. Experience crime, comedy, and an Aussie tale of mateship, mischief, and second chances.

SONIC BLOOM VOL IX

Saturday 20 September from 2PM till late, celebrating the Spring Equinox. Two dance floors, local DJs, fire, and psychedelic projections, will create an unforgettable night. Early Bird tickets available until 6 September.



VIRGIN BEASTS (MA15+) & THE THIEF OF SYDNEY with live Q&A from director Toby Zoates

Friday 26 September for Film Bugs, featuring the underground cult classic Virgin Beasts and The Thief of Sydney followed by a live Q&A with director Toby Zoates.

THE PRINCESS BRIDE (PG)

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