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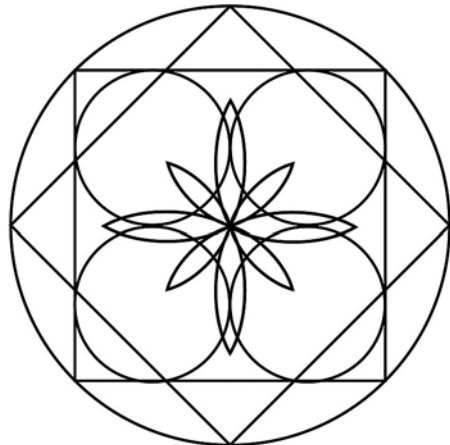
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The sacred relationship between people and place

by Miriam O'Grady

As a semi-abstract landscape artist, I am curious about exploring beauty in the everyday.

My art investigates aerial perspectives of the natural world, focusing on the fluid forms of rivers, mountains, and desserts.

Through organic compositions, I use pigments and natural materials to capture the vibrant textures of the landscape.

These works celebrate a deep connection to Country, honouring the sacred

relationship between people and place.

By depicting geological features with sensitivity to the materials of the earth, my work invites contemplation of nature's enduring presence and the stories it holds, fostering a sense of belonging and reverence for the land.

In this Nimbin Artist Gallery 'featured artist' collection, I will showcase a selection of works on paper, monoprints and prints.

Nimbin Artists Gallery is open seven days a week, 10am to 4pm (mostly). Phone 6689-1444 or find us on facebook and instagram.

A bold new exhibition from 3DayArt

3DayArt, Mullumbimby's not-for-profit arts initiative, presents its third exhibition of the year: 260 Rocks.

Over three days, the Civic Art Space at Mullumbimby Memorial Hall will be transformed into a hub of creativity and community.

Coinciding with the Chinny Charge 2025, the exhibition blends artistic inspiration with community spirit and physical challenge.

The exhibition showcases three distinctive works:

• **Richard Tabaka – 260 Rocks:** 260 ceramic rocks suspended from the ceiling, inspired by Lake Eyre's abstract landscapes and created using

the traditional Obvara firing method.

• **Suvira McDonald – Revistation Sentinels:** Sculptures made from materials of a bygone era, reflecting on the early settlers and their complex relationship to land and purpose.

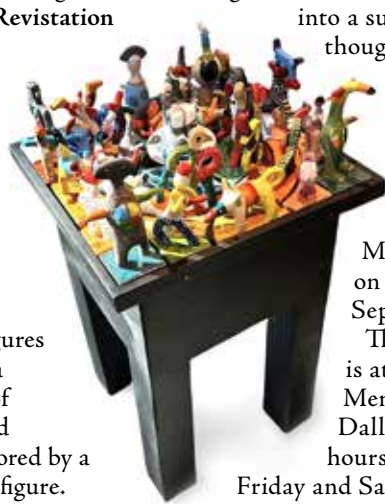
• **Stefan Mager – Mandala of Curious Spirits:** 33 ceramic figures arranged in a mandala – a playful assembly of animals, chimeras, and imagined beings anchored by a contemplative central figure.

Together, these works invite visitors into a surprising, tactile, and thought-provoking art experience.

The exhibition will run from 18th to 20th September, with the opening by Byron Shire

Mayor Sarah Ndiaye on Thursday, 18th September at 6pm.

The Civic Art Space is at Mullumbimby Memorial Hall, 55 Dalley Street, opening hours: Thursday 5-8pm, Friday and Saturday 10am-5pm.



Material gains at Blue Knob Gallery



by Ali Walker

The opening of the annual Blue Knob Fibre Show, Material Gains, was a vibrant and well-attended celebration of fibre artistry, drawing in visitors eager to admire the exceptional skill and creativity of our local artists. The atmosphere was brought alive with music by Peter Walker and Gery Mews.

From intricately crafted wearable art to beautifully functional woven vessels, this year's Fibre Show presents an extraordinary range of creative expression. The diversity of works on display reflects not only artistic talent, but a deep respect for sustainable practices and the beauty of the natural world.

A highlight of the exhibition is Sachiko Kota's remarkable felt garment (above left), a fusion of textile innovation and sculptural form. Using origami tessellation and kirigami techniques,

transforming wool and silk into a striking example of wearable art.

'Sustainable Harvest' by Renita Glencross (above right) is a delicate blue lotus basket crafted from indigo-dyed eri silk cocoons, which are allowed to fully pupate and emerge before the fibre is taken – an inspiring example of how fibre art can align with ethical and ecological values.

'Gratitude to the Fibre and Dye Plants' by Martina Driftwood (above centre), is a finely woven tribute to the gifts of the natural world. Created with hand-processed cordyline, pandanus, Bangalow palm and cabbage palm, the piece showcases the deep knowledge and skill required to transform raw plant materials into intricate, tactile works of art.

All the artworks are a testament to the power of fibre as a medium for storytelling, utility and beauty. The exhibition will run until Saturday 13th September.

Blue Knob Cafe – has a great selection of freshly made gourmet toasties, pies, savoury pastries, specials, cakes and coffee/drinks. We look forward to seeing you on the cafe verandah for food, art and a great view of Blue Knob.

Blue Knob Singers – meet on Thursdays at 3.45pm in the gallery. Everyone is welcome. For more info call Peter on 0458-487-865.

Moore Workshop Space – available to hire for workshops. Please contact the Gallery for more information.

Monthly Monster Flea Market – Saturday 6th September. To book a stall contact Gail Wallace 0402-347-399.

Blue Knob Hall Gallery – Blue Knob Café – Blue Knob Ceramic Studio can be found at 719 Blue Knob Road, Lillian Rock. Gallery and café open: Thurs-Sun 10am-3pm; Sat 8.30am-3pm. Ceramic studio open: Thurs-Sat.

Phone (02) 6689-7449, email: bkhgallary@iinet.net.au Web: <https://blueknobgallery.com>

Multiple September exhibits at Serpentine



Pictured (l-r): People's choice 'Beyond the Mirror', 'Envy' by Dervis Pavlovic, 'Bridhe, the Spring maiden' by Sylvan Mist and 'My Australian Friend' by Johnny Pink.

Serpentine Community Gallery presents a dual exhibition, 'Seven Deadly Sins' by Dervis Pavlovic alongside the 'Scarlet' members show. With 'Seven Deadly Sins', Dervis Pavlovic draws from an acute surreal sense of an apocalyptic shift taking place in world politics and a breakdown of social cohesion. His painting is figurative and expressively narrative in its imagery. To Dervis, "the human figure is central to my painting which aims to represent my fascination with human behaviour, as expressed in the Seven Deadly Sins."

"At the risk of severity and didacticism I nonetheless engage with my paintings as a personal statement from the view I hold of daily life today," he said.

Delve into themes of sexuality, love, lust, and the erotic, with the 'Scarlet' members show. This exhibition is sure to be a brilliant members show. Works showcase a wide variety of disciplines and mediums, including live performances on the opening night. Our gallery will be filled with this year's theme 'Love, Kisses and Connection.'

'Seven Deadly Sins' and 'Scarlet Members Show' run until Saturday 13th September.

'Wayfarer' by Meg K Nelson is an exhibition of images from a lifetime wandering wild places where nature is undisturbed by human activity, and the wild is free to be.

The beings of nature... seen and unseen. Sacred havens of solitude and tranquillity to retreat from

the noise and chaos. The mind free to wander and fly, seeking realignment. A wayfarer finding the way within... exploring the intertwined

The exhibition opening night is on Friday 19th September, 5.30-8.30pm, and closes on Monday 29th September.

'Life Story' is an exhibition based on events and occurrences that have shaped and reshaped the life of Lismore-based artist Beau Ravn over a 65 year period from the age of four until now; occurrences that led to the eventual creation of 'hybrid artist' Sylvan Myst.

While these events might have been powerful 'Rites of Passage' for Beau, perhaps they also convey stories that have shaped important and formative aspects of your life

too, as well as how we might choose to either connect or disconnect from the source of all life, both within and beyond this living Earth we call 'home'.

Two solo exhibitions are also here this month: 'Looking Here And There,' by Warwick Wright, and 'Johnny Pink's Artworks,' by Johnny Pink.

Mixed media artist Warwick Wright's body of work explores the interplay between local landscapes and imagery inspired by extensive European travels.

Through varied materials and perspectives, Warwick invites viewers to consider their own sense of place.

'Johnny Pink's Artwork' is a major showing of over 30 carved wooden sculptures. Pictured is his

work 'My Australien Friend'.

Johnny is renowned in our region and has been selling his delightful carvings for decades across the Northern Rivers. All welcome.

These exhibitions open Wednesday 3rd September, and close on Monday 29th September.

Drop in and see us for any of these events or to visit the gallery shop at 3/104 Conway Street, Lismore. Open Monday to Friday 10am-4pm; Saturdays 10am-2pm.

Come and join our sketch club first Saturday of each month between 2-4pm.

Our Annual General Meeting is on Saturday 13th September, 2-4pm, all welcome.

Please also like us on Facebook or Instagram. Visit our website at: www.serpentinearts.org



'Catbird' by Jimmy Willing



'Wreath' by Jenny Kitchener



'Blue Fairy Wren' by Alan Ussher



What bird is that?

by Jimmy Willing

The Joy Love Art Studio – phoenix rising in North Lismore

by Jimmy Willing

What can I say, it's three years-and-a-bit years after the Great Flood, and Lismore is a tragic mess and everyday it's getting worse.

Local democracy is under constant assault and we are overrun with carpet-baggers and grifters. Hundreds of boarded up houses and years of greed and economic rationalism have put the homeless all over our streets and our politicians rule instead of lead.

It is so cringeworthy how the polities front the media with their pants on fire blaming the poor and the downtrodden when the problem all along has been created and caused by a lack of good leadership.

Then there's the one that really gets my goat, and that is the reinvention of The Great Flood and the denigration of Tinnie Army heroes by keyboard warriors who suffer from The Dunning-Kruger effect. The simple fact of the matter is that if certain members of the Tinnie Army had evacuated in North Lismore

the death toll would have been higher.

These capable folks were right to not evacuate as asked by the State, they were brave to stay at their posts and fight the flood and they endangered no one. The truth is we all owe them a great debt and they should be celebrated and not slandered.

Let's face it, with the burning down of the old high school and the crushing of good houses into landfill Lismore now has a post-disaster disaster on its hands and as the fabric of the town breaks down and divides, I find myself living in an apocalyptic soap opera.

Like *Breaking Bad* or *The Sopranos*, our soap opera is very entertaining to watch but not very wholesome and take my word for it, it's very stressful to live in it. However, out of the mud and the flames of North Lismore has risen The Joy Love Art Studio.

Named after North Lismore matriarch Joy Love the studio in her old house is a colourful phoenix rising from the mud and the ashes and ironically, it's full of joy and love.

There are those who turn their nose up at The Joy Love because it is a squat, but may I remind them that squatting is nothing new. In fact, Lismore's founding father William Wilson was a squatter.

William took over the run in 1845 and named it Lismore Station and as such the simple fact is that the whole of Lismore is one big squat. Truth be told some folks should read a book or two before passing judgement and making themselves look foolish.

This season our Spring Arts Spectacular is called 'Strictly For The Birds'. The show is already going up and it truly is something to behold. Every day more and more artworks arrive. Some of these works are truly national treasures and it is a privilege to present them to you.

'Strictly For the Birds' is a who's who of Northern Rivers Arts and beyond. 'Strictly For the Birds' will be opened by Cr Virginia Waters at 12pm Saturday 13th September at The Joy Love Art Studio, 82 Lake Street North Lismore.

Don't miss this show for it will truly be a tonic for the soul.

It took a lot of effort to get this Neville Cayley out of the scrub and into town, but we did it.

As the bushies well know, the roads out in the scrub are a tragic mess these days and sometimes impassable. Take it from me it's pretty scary when you get bogged out in the wilderness beyond the range of mobile phones and you can't call for help.

However, we did it and 'Strictly For the Birds' now has two 1897 Cayley's going up on the walls.

Neville Cayley was famous for the classic Australian book *What Bird Is That?* and these wonderful treasures that were left to me with the passing of my parents were the inspiration that sent my art on a bird crazy trajectory.

For generations Australians have had a romance with Cayley's book and his illustrations show a wonder and awe for our birdlife. The detail of feathers and plumage has a beautiful naivety that is particular to old colonial works and is a zeitgeist that cannot be duplicated today.

I'm not sure how many kookaburras Cayley painted in his life but it seems to be his most popular bird and I've heard it said that he would pay his bills with kookaburras when things got tough.

It's interesting to me because these days I feed myself not from singing rock and roll or pulling the strings as a puppeteer but by painting birds, and I have the great Neville Cayley to thank for it.



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NIMBIN HEMP EMBASSY

Gallery-wide opening

Lismore Regional Gallery invites you to celebrate the opening night of three new exhibitions: Mark Maurangi Carrol, *Islands not to scale* (*Maru a'o*) – Act II; Sonia Levy, *We Marry You, O Sea, as a Sign of True and Perpetual Dominion*; and Melanie Valentine, *Active Stillness*.

Islands not to scale presents recent works by Mark Maurangi Carrol, developed during his 2024 residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris and refined during a return to Rarotonga in January 2025.

This evolving exhibition series explores themes of scale, movement and representation from a diasporic Pacific perspective.

The title references a 1980s Cook Islands tourism brochure in which a map carried the footnote “islands

not to scale”.

In *We Marry You, O Sea*, Sonia Levy engages with Venice and its lagoon from below, reshaped by centuries of expansion and hydroengineering.

Through underwater filmmaking and an original score drawn from extensive underwater recordings, the work unsettles Venice’s prevailing narratives, exposing an environment troubled by histories of dominion.

Melanie Valentine is a multidisciplinary artist and designer whose exhibition *Active Stillness* captures the tension between chaos and calm from the perspective of a neurodivergent artist.

Each artwork serves as a visual journal: autobiographical snapshots blending symbolism and personal experience,



‘Big Palms’ by Mark Maurangi 2025

documenting moments of emotional turbulence and the search for balance and stillness.

On opening night, Friday 5th September, 5.30-7.30pm, join artist Mark Maurangi Carrol in conversation with Nasha Gallery directors

James Stevens and Viktor Kravchenko for a rare and insightful discussion of his practice, followed by formalities.

All welcome, bookings encouraged. Phone 6627-4600 or email: artgallery@lismore.nsw.gov.au

‘We weave together’ returns to Lismore

A major cultural homecoming, the Bulaan Buruugaa Ngali exhibition brings together nine ancestral woven objects – returned to Country from the Australian Museum – with ten newly commissioned works by contemporary Bundjalung, Yaegl, Gumbaynggirr and Kamilaroi (Gamilaroi) artists.

For many visitors, it offers a rare opportunity to connect with ancestral belongings made by their grandmothers, great-grandmothers and Elders.

Curated by Bundjalung artist Kylie Caldwell and presented by Arts Northern Rivers, the project is a continuation of cultural reclamation, collective storytelling and community care.

“The Bulaan Buruugaa Ngali Exhibition, a unique and unprecedented local Bundjalung exhibition that celebrates women’s stories from ancient to contemporary forms, is sadly on its last leg of the tour,” Ms Caldwell said.

“It will arrive in Lismore this coming September, the last chance to see the outstanding, dexterous skills of our Bundjalung ancestral weavers.

We are impressed with the warm embrace from both Grafton and Tweed Heads community members, whose strong support and appreciation have been instrumental in making this exhibition a success.”

“Welcoming the Bulaan Buruugaa Ngali Exhibition to Lismore feels like the closing of a circle. As the final stop on its powerful journey across Bundjalung Country, this exhibition offers our community a meaningful opportunity to engage with cultural knowledge that is both ancestral and present.

We are honoured to host these significant works – held in the care of the Australian Museum – and through them, reflect on resilience, memory, and the enduring strength of living culture,” Lismore Regional Gallery director Ashleigh Ralph said.

The exhibition features artists Bindimu, Casino Wake Up Time, Janelle Duncan, Madeleine Grace, Lauren Jarrett, Tania Marlowe, Bianca Monaghan, Krystal Randall, Rhoda Roberts AO, Kyra Togo, and Margaret Torrens, each contributing a contemporary fibre work that draws from ancient traditions while speaking to present-day identity and connection



Bundjalung Ancestral Basket, Australian Museum Collection

to Country.

The Lismore season also arrives at a moment of momentum for several of the exhibiting artists. Curator Kylie Caldwell has recently been selected by the Aboriginal Regional Arts Alliance (ARAA) as one of five leading regional artists to present at the 2025 Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair (DAAF).

This marks a significant moment of national recognition not only for Caldwell herself, but also for NSW First Nations artists more broadly, as ARAA and the Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association (ACHAA) bring a strong NSW Mob presence to DAAF for the first time.

Meanwhile, exhibiting artist Bindimu is presenting her first solo exhibition, NUMBUH, at Lone Goat Gallery in Byron Bay (16 August – 13 September). This striking new body of work extends her exploration of woven forms, culture and connection to place.

For the Lismore iteration of Bulaan Buruugaa Ngali Exhibition, Bindimu has also created a new sound work; Ngali Yanbala – a sonic reflection of weaving that sings the ancestral objects home, featuring sounds of gathering fibres and weaving on country, as an ode to the skills passed down from Bundjalung foremothers.

Lismore-based arts and cultural leader Rhoda Roberts AO describes weaving as more than an artform, but a continuum. A practicing weaver, festival

director, curator, writer and broadcaster, Roberts has also contributed a work to the exhibition. Her piece, ‘Continuous Persistence’, is made from lomandra grass harvested on Country.

“Weaving is more than art; it’s an essence of the circular rhythm, something continuous, crafted from the provisions of Country,” Ms Roberts said. Extending this practice into the public realm, Roberts will join Aunty Janelle Duncan and Tania Marlowe to lead a weaving workshop during the exhibition opening event, inviting the community to experience the ancient practice firsthand.

The Bulaan Buruugaa Ngali Exhibition and accompanying book are a community-led project that honours First Nations women’s weaving traditions and cultural reclamation.

Roy Gordon was instrumental in providing Bundjalung language translation associated with weaving throughout the publication, giving the title to both the book and the exhibition, and a glossary of words for language continuity.

By sharing interwoven stories across three regional galleries, the exhibition plays a vital role in preserving and celebrating an unbroken lineage of ancestral knowledge.

The exhibition will conclude its celebrated regional tour at Lismore Regional Gallery, opening on 13th September.

Little Watego

by Kyi Van Hooff

Richard has been a volunteer koala rescuer for both the Northern Rivers Koala Hospital (Friends of the Koala) and WIRES for approximately two years. Last Friday he had a most unusual call out.

On Friday 17th August, a local fisherman walked on to the rocks beyond the Little Watego walking track and lookout. When he got to the Cape, he was met by a very unusual sight – a koala sitting in a precarious position on the rocks.

The fisherman called WIRES to report a koala in trouble on the cape and together the WIRES and FOK emergency hotline teams worked together to contact Richard who is one of the local Byron Shire rescuers.

“The koala was clearly in trouble. He looked very waterlogged and was essentially stranded on the rocks. He showed signs of exhaustion — no wonder, given what it must have taken to end up so far from his habitat. Thankfully, there were no obvious injuries”.

“I was very grateful to be accompanied by WIRES colleague Mark Badgery. I contacted Mark after receiving the initial call from FOK, knowing he was slightly closer and could reach the location



before me. As it turned out, the extra set of hands was invaluable. “The most challenging aspect of the rescue was the terrain,” said Richard. “The koala was a fair way out on the Cape, so after an initial hike up the Lighthouse track and down to the Little Watego track, we then had to climb around the outside of the lookout platform and scramble down the rocks to reach him. Often the hardest part of a rescue is containing the koala, but in this case, he was exhausted and quite easy to scoop into a bag. Of course, we then had to hike back up the same way carrying him, which added extra challenges”.

It is believed that the koala came from a population of koalas about 500m–1km away at Palm Valley (The Pass). Little Watego is estimated at around three years old and this can be a very difficult age for young male koalas. “He is at the age when young males are forced out by the dominant males to find their own territory”. Also known as “dispersing males”. It’s hard to say exactly how he got there, but



Photo: Brad Mustow

it seems likely he made his way to Wategos and followed the coastline along the beach, rather than the walking tracks used for the rescue.

Little Watego’s ordeal highlights the plight of our koalas. The issue of habitat loss cannot be understated. While it’s natural for dispersing males to be on the move at this time of year, their habitat continues to be depleted by human activity at an alarming rate. They are being pushed to the fringes where they face greater dangers from roads, dogs, and other threats. The rate of rescues in the Northern Rivers fluctuates quite a lot during the calendar year. In mating season (July – December), when they are on the move, rescues occur daily and even multiple times a day.

As for Little Watego, his is one

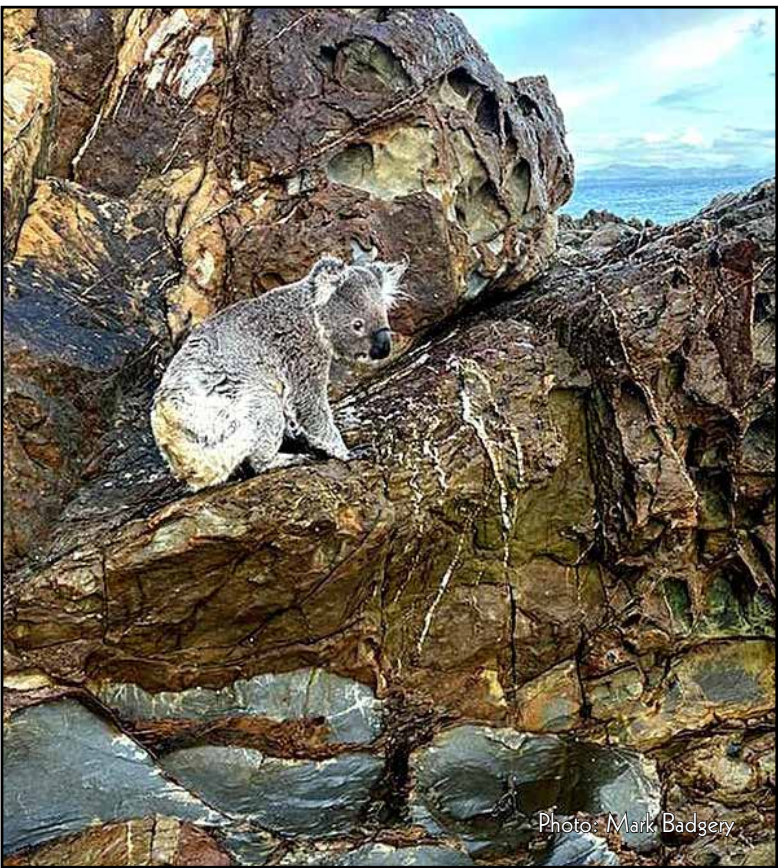


Photo: Mark Badgery

of the luckier stories. Dr Kate Thomas, superintendent vet reports, “Watego is doing really well. He underwent a repeat anaesthetic on Tuesday to reassess his electrolyte levels and chest x-rays, and both have shown a big improvement. He remains in care under continuous monitoring. We are now liaising with his release team to organise a

relocation, which requires special approval and can take a few weeks to finalise.” If anyone is concerned about a koala, please call Friends of the Koala on 02 6622-1233 or go to: www.friendsofthekoala.org or WIRES on 1300-094-737 (www.wires.org.au). Both organisations run a 24/7 rescue hotline.

Northern Rivers endangered greater gliders on the chopping block

Citizen scientists have found dozens of endangered greater gliders in a forest just announced for logging in Ewingar State Forest, west of Lismore. Local citizen scientist Jasmine Foster said, “Southern greater gliders are an endangered species whose very survival depends on intact forests with large old hollow trees within gliding distance. “We have surveyed this forest and have over 61 unique sightings over ten nights. Yet we have confirmed only 11 den trees, meaning that many of these iconic species, with young in their hollows, are about to be killed when the logging starts,” Ms Foster said. Because these shy and silent nocturnal species can only be protected once the



animal has been seen at the entrance of its hollow, most greater gliders in State Forests remain in grave danger.

Greater gliders are currently breeding, and logging trees are a death sentence to the whole family. North East Forest Alliance spokesperson, Dailan Pugh points out, “Greater gliders use between three and 20 den trees within their three hectare home ranges, and they need a 50 metre buffers around all hollow-bearing trees, not just the very few dens that are found.” These forests are also known to be home to other threatened species dependent upon large hollows for dens and nests, including glossy black cockatoo, powerful owl, masked owl, sooty owl, spotted-tailed quoll and yellow-bellied glider. The Gibraltar Range was severely burnt

in the 2019-20 fires, leading to the listing for Southern Greater Glider and Pugh’s Frog being upgraded to ‘Endangered,’ and the glossy black cockatoo and yellow-bellied glider to nationally ‘vulnerable.’ They have still not yet recovered. “It is reprehensible that the Forestry Corporation is now compounding these impacts by logging one of the few areas that escaped the worst of the fires,” Mr Pugh said. Ms Foster said that local MP Janelle Saffin was contacted to assist in the urgent protection of these endangered greater gliders, and acted immediately, only to be told by the Environment Minister’s office that the logging will not be stopped.



Photo by the author

ALWAYS WELCOME

by Scott O’Keeffe ecologist

For an animal that only weighs about 15 grams, these dynamos need a lot of space. They are sleek, manoeuvrable and built for life on the wing. Welcome swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*), like cattle egrets, have benefited from the removal of forests and shrublands to create farms and grazing land. Since the 1950s, welcome swallows have rapidly enlarged their range. They are now found across most of Australia, being absent from only the most arid areas. In 1958, welcome swallows first appeared in New Zealand, and by about 1970 they had colonised the mainland and all offshore islands. They continue to spread, and are now also found in New Caledonia, parts of New Guinea and on some other Pacific islands. The changes humans have made to the natural landscape have been enormously beneficial for welcome swallows (WSs). They feed on

moths, caddis flies, beetles, bugs, wasps, bees and ants; all abundant in agricultural lands and especially diverse around water bodies. Farm dams, water troughs, bores and even shallow puddles in fields are all feeding sites for swallows that capture their prey in flight, just above the water’s surface. If you want to get a good look at a WS and see its aerial acrobatics, spend a little time around a farm dam. WSs have mostly abandoned the natural structures they once used for nesting. They’ve adapted rapidly, taking advantage of the myriad of jetties, verandas, culverts, bridges and water tanks that humans build. But if you venture into more remote areas, you might still find some traditionalists using cliffs, caves or tree hollows as nest sites. In our region, WSs breed mostly in September and October; earlier in inland areas. WSs build cup-shaped nests of ‘adobe.’ Small pellets of mud mixed with shredded plant material are pasted onto vertical surfaces,

where there is a protrusion to support the nest from below. The mud nests are lined with fine strands of grass. Nests are mostly solitary or sometimes in small groups, and rarely in large colonies of up to 500. Males and females build the nests. Four or five eggs are laid, and mostly incubated by the female. Males often bring food to the female. The eggs hatch in about 15 days and both parents feed the chicks. Chicks become independent after about 20 days. WSs are very common locally, but their presence at any particular locality depends upon season. Some birds in coastal areas are partly migratory, while others move short distances. In other parts of Australia large flocks migrate between February and March and again in September and October. They always return because, like cattle egrets, welcome swallows are now very comfortable living with us.

Fear and the urge to control horses

by Suzy Maloney

Fear is a powerful force. It shapes how humans respond to situations where they feel vulnerable, uncertain, or out of control. When it comes to horses, large, powerful, prey animals with minds of their own, fear often plays a significant role in how people choose to interact with them.

Sometimes, that fear is obvious. Other times, it's buried under layers of control, dominance, or rigid rules.

But at its core, much of the desire to dominate or tightly manage horses stems from fear, fear of being hurt, fear of failure, or even fear of the horse's autonomy.

Horses are physically imposing, and it's natural to feel wary around them, especially when their reactions are fast, strong, and sometimes unpredictable.

A spook, a buck, or a bolt can happen in a second,

and for people who aren't confident or haven't been shown another way, the solution often becomes: control the horse more tightly.

Bits get harsher, reins get shorter, gadgets and restraints increase. The goal is to make the horse "safe", but what's really happening is that people are trying to make themselves feel safe.

Unfortunately, fear-based control doesn't foster trust, it erodes it. Horses, as prey animals, are highly sensitive to emotional states. They read tension in a body, tightness in hands, and anxiety in posture.

When people approach horses from a place of fear masked as control, the horse doesn't become safer, they become more on edge. It creates a feedback loop where the horse reacts to the person's fear, which then makes the person want to tighten control further. The

relationship becomes rooted in mistrust on both sides, and neither feel safe.

Many traditional horse training methods were built around the idea of breaking a horse's will, of asserting dominance. These approaches gave the illusion of control, but often they were driven by a fear of what would happen if the horse wasn't kept in line.

The horse was seen as something that needed to be subdued, shaped, and kept in their place.

Even in modern riding, fear shows up in subtle ways. Riders might avoid allowing their horse to make any decisions, interpreting independence as defiance.

Some avoid riding without bits and use "strong" equipment, not because the horse has truly shown a need for it, but because what if something goes wrong?

This fear of "what if" keeps many riders stuck in



cycles of micromanagement, always working harder to control rather than seeking connection.

So what's the alternative? It starts by acknowledging the fear, not suppressing it. Fear is not weakness, it's information. It tells us when something feels too much, too fast, or beyond our current skill level.

If we can recognise fear without judgment, we can make choices that are based on awareness rather than panic. This might mean getting off and working from the ground for a while. It might mean stepping back and reflecting on what's driving the need for control. It might mean asking for help.

True partnership with a horse comes not from overpowering them, but from learning how to communicate in a way they understand and trust. That often means letting go of the illusion of control and focusing on connection, feel, and mutual respect.

When a person meets a horse from a place of emotional balance rather than anxiety, the horse responds differently. They feel safer too. The power of the human shifts from control to influence, and influence is far more sustainable and respectful

than force.

Of course, this takes courage. It requires people to be honest with themselves, to step into vulnerability, and to do the inner work that horses so often invite us to do.

But the rewards are immense: a more responsive, relaxed, and willing horse, and a human who becomes more grounded, aware, and emotionally resilient.

In the end, fear doesn't need to be the enemy. It can be the teacher. And when we stop trying to control horses out of fear, we open the door to a more genuine, collaborative relationship, one that honours both the horse's nature and the human's capacity for growth.

Happy Horses Bitless
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Bushwalkers' get-aways



by Peter Moyle, Nimbin Bushwalkers Club

Walks Programme

Sunday 7th September
Broadwater National Park, south of Ballina

Leader: Michael Smith 0490-466-190
Grade: 3. Michael will be taking us on this short but rewarding coastal walk, 3hr but can be extended. The Spring flowers will be at their best. Walking on a fire trail and sandy beach with some sand dune and coffee rock to navigate, the coffee rock sculptures well worth the effort and then the flotsam between. This area known for its birdlife with white-bellied sea eagles, kestrels, whistling kites, terns, gull and oystercatchers about, and the whales will also be on the run south.

Meet: 11.30am at the picnic area at the end of Broadwater Beach Road, Broadwater (south of Wardell on the road into Evans Head). **Bring:** sunscreen, water, lunch, sunglasses and hat.

Sunday 21st September
Springbrook National Park, behind the Gold Coast

Leader: Helena Hodson 0403-144236.
Grade: 3. Helena knows this area well and will be taking us to a couple of her favourite short walks, Warringa Pools Walk and the Purlingbrook Falls Walk. These are two of the best rainforest and waterfall walks around.
Meet: 9.30am at the picnic shelter at the Settlement camping ground where the walks start. You may want to stay a night or two and there are some campsites available, but you need to book ASAP if you want one. There will be car-pooling from the NSW side. Ring Helena to book in and she will collate walkers for ride sharing.
Bring: Good walking shoes/boots needed as well as the usual, lunch, water and hat.

Sunday 5th October
Christies Creek between Burringbar and Murwillumbah

Leader: Mark Osberg 0408-113-125
Grade: 4. 8km walking off track and along creek beds. We follow a worn track up and down from our carpark. The creek walk is special and a highlight, as it will be at its best after the wet season. This is Peter Moyle's version, last time we ventured this way we deviated up a new valley and made it a real adventure, this time more subdued.
Meet: 9am Burringbar Train Station where we will carpool to the start. Ring Mark for more details and to register.
Bring: Good walking shoes/boots as well as the usual, lunch and hat.

Shedders united



View from the loo
by Stuart McConville

I am feeling very fortunate to have found connection with a great bunch of men who care deeply for our brethren and the community as a whole.

Earlier in my life I was engaged with community development through environmental activism and education.

I remember the same sort of camaraderie existing within those groups, where our common values tied us to a cause and a movement. It's all about being in service to something higher than self, which ultimately results in service to self anyway.

The big news is we have found a temporary headquarters, albeit in need of some shipping containers for a roof.

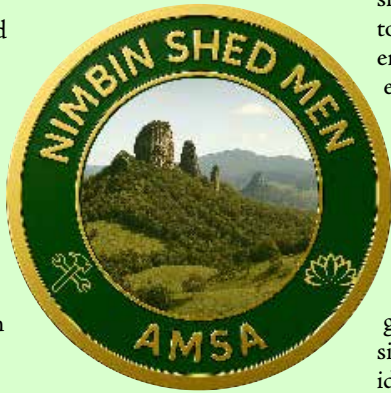
The Rainbow Power Company and Nimbin Shed Men have signed an MOU allowing us to use a 10m x 10m pad behind their shed to build our container sheds.

We love you RPC! When a great local business gets behind community like this they deserve recognition.

There are many other local businesses who have also contributed. Big thanks to: Nimbin Emporium,

Nimbin Limousines, Nimbin Unicorn, Nimbin Apothecary, Heart Connexion, Hemp Embassy, Northern Rivers Hemp, Byron Bay Community College, Nimbin Village Pharmacy, Nimbin Art Gallery, Perceptio, Nimbin Medical Centre and Nimbin General Store.

We've also been busy bureaucrats bustling paperwork, and are now Nimbin Shed Men Incorporated with charitable donation status (we can receive tax deductible donations) and an ABN.



We have joined the umbrella body, the Australian Mens Shed Association (AMSA), which has lots of benefits including cheap insurance.

We have been collecting bits and bobs for our bric-a-brac stall at the Nimbin Markets and in August we made \$764 with many items going for \$2-\$5 including hand-stitched leather bags for only \$5.

Anyone who wishes to donate saleable items can contact us and we'll happily accept. Alternatively, please come along to the market stall and find some treasure for very cheap.

We continue to live

in hope that the NSW Reconstruction Authority will donate us a shed that we have identified within their housing stock. So far they are refusing, saying the Shed Men won't contribute to community resilience or that natural disasters aren't sufficiently connected to mental health.

Please help by contacting Janelle Saffin: electorateoffice.lismore@parliament.nsw.gov.au and expressing your opinion.

Ultimately, we will have (by hook or by crook) a fully equipped workshop shed where men can come together to build, fix, engineer, dream, connect, explore ideas, play music, learn... all creative aspects of masculinity that help us feel good about ourselves.

Right now NMS is an organising committee with clear goals and targets. We have sidestepped the mens group ideology to some extent, so apologies to anyone who has come along to find a bunch of bureaucrats instead of a sharing circle.

The next stage will be fundraising and setting up our new space, so hopefully more men with skills in those areas will manifest in the coming months.

We are meeting fortnightly on Wednesday nights at 6pm at the Aged Care Centre opposite the Oasis. Next meeting Wednesday 10th September.

Stuart McConville runs Pooh Solutions Waste Water and Composting Toilets
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Web: <https://poohsolutions.com>

The curved line of beauty

by Peter Brooker

Confucius said, "Everything has beauty but not everybody sees it."

I imagine Sharon and Neil are grateful for the truth of this, because their house sat empty and forlorn amid five acres of land overrun by waist-high grass, lantana and every weed known to the Far North Coast.

When they arrived, there was no garden save a thin line of photinia that ran the length of the driveway, an iron bark that stood to the south of the house and, between it and the road, another native, *Araucaria cunninghamii*, sometimes called a hoop pine.

All these remain, but the photinias along the driveway were doubled, trimmed into a hedge, and now continue along the boundary with the road.

Behind the house, the land slopes toward the creek and when they cleared it they found piles of rubbish that, when added to the material found elsewhere on the property, amounted to a burn pile the size of a school bus.

The clearing took months; the ride-on mower could only cut to within two metres of the fence, the rest done by hand at the rate of a two-post distance each weekend, the only time they had because they were still working.

It was a massive undertaking, too big to rush; a task that could overwhelm. They had to have a plan, a vision.

That plan did not include a



lifetime of mowing, and that vision did not mean sitting on the verandah and observing their work from afar. It meant gardens that curved, gave a feeling of movement rather than the hard straight, blunt edge that says here I am not where am I going, and within those curves, places to sit with a glass of wine as the garden wrapped around you.

As Hillary Mantel informs us: "Straight is the line of duty, Curved is the line of beauty, Follow the straight line, thou shalt see. The curved line ever follow thee."

Those gardens are now edged with sleepers sunk into the ground after the failed experiment with Mondo grass. The timber border makes whipper snipping an easier task.

The mulch now comes from within the property. Fallen trees are fed into an impressive machine, imaginatively called a mulcher, and re-purposed. The mulch is then spread liberally around the many plants, including Xanthorrhoea which have been propagated from

one already existing on the property.

These can live for 600 years, so make sure you want one before getting it.

The Kangaroo Paw, also propagated in the seed house next to the donga, soon to be Sharon's studio, is growing particularly well, but the *Tradescantia spathacea*, also known as Moses in a basket, Moses in a cradle or Oyster plant, suffers from the frost. As Sharon has a 'don't survive don't persist' policy, a new ground cover is being sought.

Among the many plants are Irises and Cannas that attract native bees and birds but also numerous ornaments and a bronze bird bath with frolicking frogs that once stood beside a flowering gum that fell foul of a fungus so a *Buckinghamia cellissima* or Ivory curl tree now stands in its place.

Another garden under the trees at the front of the property was put on hold while Neil built a structure to house the pizza oven with the

footprint of a 'tiny' home. It is on hold again waiting for Sharon's studio.

As we move through and head back to the rose garden, there is a Magnolia, a lemon myrtle and Japanese maple. At the rose garden we find 13 different roses including one that climbs over yet another sitting area.

This garden will develop as the roses are also being propagated. Sharon's one stipulation is they must be scented.

There is a chicken coop that drew envious looks, a Queensland wattle and a port wine magnolia. Finally, we are at the back of the house with its orchard of citrus fruit, a new blueberry bush and views to Nimbin Rocks.

On the slope toward Greens Bridge are almost 400 koala trees procured from Friends of the Koalas planted, once again, on a curve.

We reach the vegetable garden of raised beds enclosed within chest-high fences and placed over the remains of a cracked swimming pool between the main house and that of Sharon's parents. The season's first asparagus is about to be picked.

We held our AGM and 25 members attended and re-elected the existing committee although Neil resigned.

Next meeting is to be held on Saturday 13th September at David and Heather's place, 1939 Cawongla Road, Cawongla, at 2pm. As usual please bring a chair, a cup and a plate to share.



Nationwide march for Palestine

by Benny Zable

On Sunday 24th August, I attended the Melbourne/Naarm rally and march for Palestine.

From outside the Victorian State Library, first Victorian indigenous Senator Lidia Thorpe (pictured) made it quite clear to the packed streets, the historic parallels of oppression and genocide existing between Aboriginal and Palestinian peoples.

Garry Foley who had just come out of hospital after a heart operation, let us know he is still here and his heart remains with the people of Palestine.

Senator Lidia Thorpe (pictured, right) went on to say that until the government imposes sanctions on Israel, until a ceasefire and liberation is achieved, we will continue to show up and disrupt.

A whole host of speakers, many of whom were from Gaza, spoke of their suffering and loss of relatives and friends.

Then we marched all the way to Flinders Station, up around to the State Parliament, where another rally was held, before the march continued on back to the State Library to pack up.

I have finished painting the lightweight fibreglass resin mobile life-size sculpture 'The Protestor' which will be used for many events around Melbourne.

Sculpture project

There is something special about having an image I had crafted over a number of decades through protests made into a sculpture in a studio with professional help.



For my 80th birthday on 1st October, I am considering planning an exhibition to show off this fibreglass sculpture. Check my Facebook page closer to the date for when and where it will take place.

The next sculpture will be made of bronze. I was hoping Nimbin would install one at the IMAGINE circle site, but was told the Lismore Council already has plans to redevelop that space. I am now hoping one to eventually be installed in the Byron/Mullumbimby area.

There are numbered and signed statuettes going for \$500 to help offset the costs, all going 100% to fund the project. To check out more about the project, go to the website: www.funderestudios.com.au/benny-zable-the-protestor

The Nimbin Environment Centre has a couple of statuettes in the shop for people to check out. There is one the Rainbow Chai Tent had purchased on display at the Channon Market.

Thank you all for your positive feedback on my Facebook page. The long-term plan is to have a bronze statue installed on the UN plaza in NYC.

May peace prevail on Earth.

Lawn weeds for medicine

by Trish Clough, herbalist

As readers are aware, it's been an incredibly wet year. I always understood August to be the driest month of the year, with farmers desperate for October storms to refresh the pastures. I emptied the rain gauge after two days in the last week of August, to find it overflowing at 140mm.

As a result of the continued wet, I have a new concept of a lawn made up of medicinal weeds. I have a shady area that's usually couchgrass (another medicinal plant as it happens), but it's now jumping with mugwort, chickweed and herb Robert.

I'm making a fresh plant chickweed tincture for the dispensary. Because it creates a lot of bulk for very little weight, it's difficult to make the preferred weight-to-volume ratio when covering it in the liquid menstruum (water and cane alcohol). So I am making a triple extraction.

What that means is I infused the first batch, which took 2-3 weeks, strained out the herb material, then repeated this twice more with fresh chickweed. So it becomes stronger/more concentrated each time.

Chickweed (*Stellaria media*) is another herb which has fallen out of favour in modern training colleges. It's rather meek and weedy, and common, perhaps that's why. Mainly used in topical applications for inflammatory



skin conditions, it is also valuable as a nutritive medicine.

The easiest way of course is to eat it straight from the garden, or the lawn, and it is delicious added to a salad. It has a taste very similar to fresh young sweetcorn, as my visitors are surprised to find.

As an internal medicine, chickweed is cooling, moistening and nutritive. Matthew Wood in *The Earthwise Herbal Vol 1* recommends it to drive off excess dampness and fats. However it also lubricates dry conditions. Thus it has a regulating action on water levels in the body.

He states that it decongests the "liver, lymphatics, endocrine, kidneys, skin, intestines, lungs." It drives off excess fat, including lipomas. "Thus, it is used to lose weight, not just short term water weight, but long-term deposits of fats." It can be useful for cellulite also.

Other conditions of inflammation or irritation can benefit, including coughs, intestinal inflammation (including constipation), and even arthritis.

For skin treatments, it can be applied as a poultice by mashing the fresh plant, or as a cream or ointment. It can be used to soothe boils, rashes and eczema.

While most herbalists prefer to use fresh rather than dried chickweed, it can be difficult to obtain the stronger concentration of herb material to make a cream or balm. A tincture from the dried herb can be made to a higher concentration than from the fresh plant. Even with my triple extraction chickweed tincture, I will need to reduce it further to add to a cream.

Here in the subtropics, the chickweed doesn't thrive in the summer heat, but it does seed profusely so there will be a crop next season.

To use it medicinally throughout the year, for home use it can be made into a vinegar 'tincture'. This is simple to make. Simply fill a jar with tightly packed fresh clean chickweed, cover with good quality apple cider vinegar, and leave for a few weeks. Strain out the herb and bottle the vinegar.

As a medicine, you only need a teaspoon dose if the vinegar was tightly packed with the herb initially.

Home-made medicine!

Trish Clough has a clinic practice in Iluka, and is available for consultations by appointment on 0452-219-502 or email: trishclough2@gmail.com

The information in the column is meant for general interest only and should not be considered as medical advice.