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A chance to be heard, four years on

by Andrew George
Reclaim Our Recovery

On Tuesday 18th November, the NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) facilitated the first of four meetings of the Community Reference Group (CRG) for Disaster Adaptation Planning (DAP) for the Northern Rivers (NR).

This is a positive step for democratic, community participation in disaster preparedness and adaptation in collaboration with the RA. It is also a sliver of hope for deliberative democracy for the region.

It is living proof of an alternative to politics-as-usual, to the short-term thinking of the elected cycle, and vested interests corrupting politics and making life harder for everyday people. Yet there are issues with the CRG.

Forty-four months after the second major flood in March of 2022, the CRG is the first attempt by the NSW government to enable democratic community participation in any of their projects.

Of course, their program has constantly evolved as the public have either brought to their attention, pushed-



Protest gathering in 2023
Photos: Byron Echo

back, or outright protested against aspects of their top-down recovery.

The CRG represents a change from reacting to collaborating. If, as Minister for Recovery and for Lismore, Janelle Saffin said, we want a community 'driven' recovery, then this is the chance for it to leave the bumper car track and finally take to the road in an orderly fashion, in a vehicle that passes the roadworthy.

Reclaim our Recovery are supportive of this first step towards deliberative democracy and collaboration with the community from the RA, which the community has been calling for since the floods.

However, the process to create the CRG needs some scrutinising. Reclaim Our Recovery has approached the RA to find out more details about their selection

process. So far, what we know is that from 120 applicants 40 people were selected.

Unfortunately, only 21 people came to the first meeting. Hopefully this low turn-out can be remedied by enabling a mixture of in-person and on-line meetings, and to offer reimbursement for travel costs.

To get a truly representative CRG, the RA needs to put the money in to recruit people from across the region and across the socio-economic terrain of the NR.

Clearly what they did to advertise the CRG was inadequate if only 120 people applied. Particularly as all those 120 have demonstrated the 'self-selection bias'.

A truly representative group would not be able to self-select, but rather random selection should lead to their nomination, and they then could choose to participate.

We are very concerned that key cohorts – youth, elderly and lower socio-economic members of our community – have not even had the chance to nominate and thus participate.

Reclaim Our Recovery will be keeping a close eye on the CRG and their outputs, and we encourage everyone in the NR to do the same.

Community comes together for Gaza

by Susanne Schneider

In November, the Star Court Theatre held one of those evenings that linger long after you've stepped back into the night air, as more than a hundred locals gathered for film, lived experience, and determined solidarity.

What began as a simple fundraiser became something deeper: a reminder that here in the Northern Rivers, far from Gaza – yet connected to its people's resilience amid heartbreak and suffering – community members stand together, ready to show up for each other and for justice.

The event raised an impressive \$3,723, with every cent going directly to the Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team's women-led arm (AMURTEL) to support urgent relief work in Gaza's refugee camps.

This effort, brought to life by local Ananda Marga members and supported by Northern Rivers Friends of Palestine, including the Lismore, Kyogle and Nimbin groups, was a true example of community collaboration in action.

Just as the fundraiser wrapped, AMURTEL shared good news from the field: their hot kitchen, serving 500-1000 meals daily, has funding secured until the end of January.

That means the money raised here can now go toward another urgent need: repairing a broken desalination plant so clean water can continue to reach families in the camps.

AMURTEL already operates two such plants and is desperately trying to establish a third. Access to water remains one of the most critical issues for camp residents.



Stories from the heart

The evening opened with a panel of four speakers (pictured): Surya McEwen, one of six Australians aboard the Global Samudra Flotilla who was tortured in an Israeli prison; Dr Annie Pfingst from Jews for Palestine Northern Rivers; Subhi Awad, a Palestinian refugee and leading voice in Northern Rivers Friends of Palestine; and Dada Jitendrananda, representing AMURTEL Australia.

Each offered a deeply personal insight into what drives their work: supporting the people of Gaza, challenging oppression, and building awareness and social change. They spoke from the heart about Palestine, solidarity, and the impact of showing up in whatever way they can, even if that means risking their own safety to bring aid and challenge the blockade.

The feature film, *Where Olive Trees Weep*, was haunting, tender, and beautifully crafted. It weaves together stories of Palestinians living under occupation – activists, journalists, farmers, mothers, children – while showing the emotional labour of healing work carried out by people like Dr Gabor Maté.

The film holds the viewer's gaze, revealing not just



suffering but endurance, hope and humanity.

Short, raw videos from AMURTEL aid workers in Gaza and Egypt followed, their unpolished immediacy bringing the reality of the camps close to home. Many left the theatre thoughtful and visibly moved.

Community in action

No Northern Rivers fundraiser is complete without chai and treats. Volunteers brewed fragrant dandi chai and offered trays of homemade vegan and vegetarian sweets all evening.

Funds for AMURTEL were raised through ticket sales, plates of cake and sweets, chai cups, and donations slipped into collection buckets.

The Northern Rivers Friends of Palestine stall buzzed with activity, selling fair-trade olive oil and soap, keffiyehs, badges and more. They sold plenty and signed up new supporters on the spot.

The story behind the new bird sign at Aquarius Park

by Diana Roberts

If you've wandered along the Rainbow Walk lately, you might have spotted something new in Aquarius Park: a bright, beautiful bird sign tucked near the dam.

At our recent Landcare workday someone asked me how it came about, and I realised the story is very much a Nimbin one – full of coincidence, generosity and a bit of stubborn determination.

I've had a dream for years to add a small bird-watching area to the park.

When the original grant for the Rainbow Walk came through, the budget didn't stretch that far, so the idea quietly parked itself on my 'one day' list.

Then, at last year's Bluesfest, fate intervened. I bumped into a woman I knew from my Lismore Council days, someone I hadn't seen in years who is now the secretary of BirdLife Northern NSW. When I mentioned my bird-sign idea, she told me to apply for their support.

It turned out to be an arduous process for what was, in the scheme of things, a modest amount of money, but it opened up an enthusiastic and very helpful connection.

Once the idea was in motion, I spoke with Ross Wallace, who designed the other signs on the Rainbow Walk. Ross immediately loved the concept and offered to design the new sign.

To make sure we chose the right birds, I turned to two seasoned bird watchers, Tony Gibson and Malcolm Scott. They spent time in the park compiling lists, cross-checking names (who knew birds get renamed?) and making sure we captured some of the species that call Aquarius Park home.

Our original plan for 12 birds grew to 25 almost overnight, which meant the sign needed to be double-sided – a delightful complication.



The little anecdotes you'll see beside each bird were Ross's idea. At first, I groaned at the thought of collecting them, especially as the bird list expanded, but it turned out to be one of the most enjoyable parts of the project. I reached out to people who'd been involved in the Rainbow Walk over the years, to our project sponsors, and to a few younger locals as well. Some declined shyly, unsure about their storytelling skills, but most answered with warmth, humour and surprising candour.

Here's a delightful contribution from 12-year-old Marley Tan:

"The superb fairywren is one of my favourite birds. Every morning at breakfast, the little blue-faced bird would hop into our kitchen with its brown female friends and eat the crumbs my little sister Stevie and I had dropped. Whenever I see them around the garden now, it reminds me of that happy memory."

We were also fortunate to include Bundjalung names for many of the birds,



thanks to the generous contributions of Gilbert Laurie and Uncle Lewis.

Each bird has its own QR code linking to a webpage where you can listen to its bird song to assist identification.

Finding copyright-free material was harder than I expected. BirdLife had some information but not all. Wick from the Aether Agency kindly stepped in, researched the missing material, wrote up the final batch of bird profiles, and published everything on the Nimbin Village website so the QR codes would have a permanent home.

Our sponsors, acknowledged on the sign, were essential not only in funding the project but in sharing their own stories. The result is something more than a field guide: it's a community storybook rooted in our shared landscape.

And that's how the Aquarius Park bird sign came to life. A small idea, nurtured by many hands, now standing proudly among the trees – a celebration of our birds and the community that loves them.

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Doctors are taking over the dealing

by Michael Balderstone,
 president Nimbin HEMP Embassy

Like many others now living in the Rainbow Region, I spent a decade wandering the planet looking for my tribe, a community of people who saw life like I did.

Plenty of loneliness in that decade, not always helped by being in places where, few spoke English. One of the reasons I was lured back home. I'd visited Nimbin in the 70's, camped in the visitors' area at Tuntable, but couldn't settle down, still trying to work stuff out.

In the mid-eighties I came here on the road with a young family and never left. I'd been here a few years before I realised this was the community I'd been dreaming of.

I thought Nimbin would be full of hippies but in fact it was even more full of weed smokers, which are not necessarily hippies at all. Even then I didn't understand it was the medicine attracting people to Nimbin, as much as any spiritual insight.

There were epileptics we never knew were; alcoholics who smoked instead. Not just alcoholics but weed is wonderful for keeping at bay all sorts of heavy addictions. What did Fat Freddy say? "Better to run out of money rather than run out of weed." Weed puts your worries to bed.

So I borrowed some money, spent it at the tip mostly, and opened a second-hand shop I called the Nimbin Museum. And only then was I forced to have to think about the drug war and what it was about.

Most of the street dealing then was done by addicts who were desperate enough to take the risks. Selling weed got them the money for their addiction. Virtually all of them had been to jail. Nimbin had the reputation that you could always score weed here and there was only one cop in town.

The dealers moved into the junk-filled museum and it was them who forced me to think about the drug war. Then Bob Hopkins came along. I chased him to learn more and kept him up all night once with questions. He gave me books to read and a light turned on. Suddenly it all made sense, the drug war was of course about money.

The profits to be made from pain relief and helping people feel good are the richest vein in capitalism, but 100 years ago when the war on cannabis began it also competed with wood chip just starting up and the cotton farmers.

But the big money is in pain relief; pharmaceuticals had just arrived and soon the competition, all of nature's best pain killers, were made illegal. Cannabis, the opium poppy and the coca plant. Not to mention all the entheogenic psychedelic healing plants, all now illegal as well.

In biblical times, cannabis was called 'God's gift' as it was the best fibre, food and medicine going around, as well as giving people a taste of heaven. The transition from being the most prized and useful plant on earth to being illegal is extraordinary. All the work of vested interests, as it still is. I think they believe their own lies.

Now we not only have Big Pharma and their army of police lobbying to maintain the war, we also have corporate cannabis joining the church and alcohol industry.

Suddenly, thanks to covid, out of almost nowhere, weed is legally available over the phone from any number of tele health clinics. Legal in the mail the next day, or even at the chemist on the same day. Yes, these are the very same doctors who've been saying the plant has no medicinal properties and us hippies were the ones lying. And they are lobbying hard now to make sure we can't grow our own plants and need a prescription to drive. It's all business greed with no integrity.

The legal corporate factory buds are quite a different product to the local outdoor-grown buds Nimbin has been providing for decades. Many prefer the local sun-grown pot to the imported irradiated hydro legal product. It's like comparing organic to 'Black and Gold', in quality and price.

So, what's to become of the growers and dealers who've been going to jail for decades so people like me and you could get our choice of medicine? They're still filling our jails.

In America, various states legalised many introduced social equity provisions to prioritise people and communities who were disproportionately harmed by cannabis prohibition.

Many states gave applicants for licenses bonus points in the process, or even offered interest-free loans to affected people to help them get started. Explicitly designed programs designed to repair some of the harms from prohibition.

In over 30 years of protesting in Nimbin to be allowed to grow our own, the police always told us it's the politicians who make the rules, so we formed the political party Legalise Cannabis and now have four MP's trying to allow home-grown etc.

Suddenly, like an Aussie Rules footy, the ball has bounced in an unexpected direction with the doctors now the dealers, and as well they're undercutting the green market considerably with their imported super-high-THC weed.

So, what is to become of the people who've held the fort all these years supplying our medicine, knowing the law is the real crime? They should be prioritised when we get real regulations with permits for dispensaries and micro-growers. Plus they have 50 years of invaluable cannabis knowledge and experience.

It's important to legalise them as well as the plant.



by Daniel Buckley, Year 12 advisor

Nimbin Central School students from Year 12 marked the end of their school journey with an evening of celebration at this year's highly anticipated formal, held at the picturesque Summerland Farm.

The beautifully decorated venue brought together classmates, teachers and families to honour 13 years of schooling. Guests arrived in elegant gowns and sharp suits, posing for photos before sitting down to a carefully prepared two-course dinner.

The atmosphere was one of excitement and pride, as students reflected on milestones, achievements and the friendships that carried them through their senior years.

After dinner, guests enjoyed a stunning white-chocolate mud cake with ganache icing and a fresh-cream filling, served as dessert.

A popular highlight of the night was the photobooth, where groups of friends lined up to take keepsake pictures that captured the joy and personality of the cohort. Laughter echoed through the venue as students struck poses, swapped props, and shared their photos.

The evening was a warm, memorable farewell to school life, and a final chance for the Class of 2025 to celebrate together before stepping into their next chapter of life.



Introducing... the refresh of Italian cuisine in Nimbin

When 23-year old Italian, Tom Cau (pictured), landed in Nimbin many years ago, he knew he had found something really special. A town that accepts us for who we are, believes love conquers all, respects a 'can-do' attitude, and encourages its people's creative growth and vision.

And slowly, a vision started forming in Tom's mind. If only all the pieces could line up so that he can merge his two favourite things into one – Italian cuisine and Nimbin's quirky, peace-loving attitude.

Continuing his travels around Australia, Tom ended up almost being caught in Melbourne during the longest Covid lockdown in the world. Thankfully, his mother suggested that he get out of there right before it began, and Tom instantly knew, there was only one place in the world that he wanted to be... Nimbin.

Having fallen in love with this country, Tom worked extremely hard to gain his Aussie citizenship, perfect his cheffing skills, and follow his heart. And now, only 11 years later, that vision is finally here!

Introducing Nimbin Pizza and Cucina.



Tom's vision is to channel all of his Italian passion into his food and business. Nimbin Pizza and Cucina's mission is to produce excellent quality contemporary/traditional Italian pastas, overflowing-with-topping pizzas, and supported by a network of high quality local producers, utilising exceptional seasonal fresh produce.

One of these collaborations is with the renowned North Coast business, Bellingen Pasta. As co-Italians-turned Aussies, Tom has known

business. Their flour is grown exclusively in the 'Golden Durum Triangle', north of Tamworth, where the rich, dark soil and climate are well known to provide the perfect grain growing conditions. Since the 1970s, Bellata Gold has developed a reputation through exporting their flour to Italy, where they are known to make pasta 'as good as Nonna used to eat as a child'.

Bellingan Pasta will be supplying Nimbin Pizza and Cucina with a range of both fresh and take-home dried pastas, such as gnocchi, lasagna and more. They will also be stocking their small batch pasta sauces made in Bellingen Shire, but with the finest tomatoes imported from Italy.

And fear not, gluten-phobes! Nimbin pizza, pasta and gnocchi will also be available gluten free.

As Tom and his team work hard to get things just right, there is no exact date for their opening yet, but it will be soon!

Stay tuned to socials, and keep your eyes and your noses open, for you will soon be smelling the scent of olde Rome wafting down the streets of Nimbin.

Voluntary Assisted Dying rights protected

Older Australians will retain the right to access end-of-life healthcare in their homes, regardless of where they live, following a conscience vote in NSW Parliament last night.

Labor, Liberal and National party members were granted a conscience vote and were divided on the issue, but the amendments were ultimately rejected by the Legislative Council, with 23 votes against and 16 votes in favour of the changes.

According to Greens spokesperson for health and former rural GP Dr Amanda Cohn, aged care and health care advocates have welcomed Parliament's decision to reject amendments to the Voluntary Assisted Dying Amendment (Residential Facilities) Bill 2025 introduced by Liberal MLC Susan Carter.

"The proposed changes to the bill could have denied elderly people living in faith-based aged care facilities access to voluntary assisted dying in their homes," Dr Cohn said.

"The bill threatened the health rights of individuals based on the religious views held by facility management.

"Residential aged care facilities are people's homes. We know that elderly people have limited choice of providers and, in some regional communities, there is only one facility available."

"Moving frail and terminally ill people at the end of their life is far from simple. Most people want to die at home, not in a hospital."

"Changes to access would have meant that anyone living in a faith-based



Advocates unite to protect access to voluntary assisted dying. Left to right: Shannon Wright, CEO, Senior Rights Service; Jill Nash, patient advocate; Katrina Bough, assistant general secretary, NSW Nurses & Midwives Association; Penny Hackett, CEO, Dying with Dignity; Dr Amanda Cohn, Greens spokesperson for health; Dr Linda Swan, CEO, Go Gentle; Brett Simpson, president, Australian Paramedics Association (NSW).

facility, whether they shared that faith or not, would have fewer rights than everyone else. This is completely unjust."

"Voluntary assisted dying laws in NSW were hard-fought and carefully negotiated in 2022. The upper house has strongly rejected this piecemeal and poorly considered reform. We have heard clearly that the community does not want to see access to voluntary assisted dying eroded."

There was widespread opposition



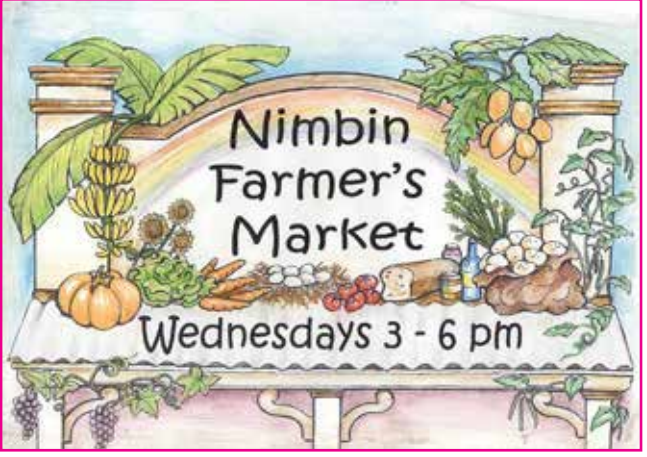
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Aquarius Archives modest launch

by Greg Bork

Please join us on Friday 12th December, 5-6.30pm for the Aquarius Archives end-of-year and launch celebration, at the Nimbin Community Centre.

A big thank you to everyone who's contributed to our first year in all ways, big and small. It's a chance to reflect on our amazing achievements, relax and get to know each other. We'll be in the fledgling exhibition space in the hallway, where we can share our thoughts and ideas.

This celebration marks our official opening to donations from the public. We've kind of, almost, mostly already begun accepting donations. The time has come to make it official, so this is the moment we've been waiting for.

After a year of preparations, we now feel ready and confident to grow our collections with you. Please contact us or come in to discuss looking after your stories with us.



In honour of this auspicious occasion, we share our new official logo by artist Franca Wolfe. Franca's wonderful artwork can be found throughout the community archives since the 1980s.

Franca is a star weekly volunteer at the archives, who contributes a wealth of local knowledge and deep care for the community and people's stories.

It's been an extraordinary year and we're so grateful for our growing team of dedicated volliies who've made it possible. We are now able to open two days a week: Thursday and Friday.

What a treat to have Benny

Zable join us this week. Benny has so much passion and inspiration and is so supportive in keeping the dream alive. This place has a story to tell.

One exciting part of our collection is our library of books, newspapers, magazines, photos and audio and visual recordings. Our plan is to open a reading room early in 2026.

We are super-keen to hear from responsible volunteers who may enjoy simply opening the doors and looking after the space next year, with the aim of opening as many days of the week as possible.

As it will be a quiet, library-like atmosphere, it may suit a volunteer who is happy to sit and hold the space as a weekly commitment to reading, writing or other appropriate project.

Thanks heaps to all you legends for supporting Aquarius Archives to get off the ground! Here's to growing and thriving with you next year.



by Michelle Agioritis

After another successful show this year, the Nimbin A&I Society are turning their thoughts to 2026.

In past years, various groups hosting local events have made use of the showgrounds for their own AGMs, other meetings, events and gatherings.

The A&I Society has a process for casual hire of the grounds, whether open space or buildings, and kindly requests that all groups wanting to use any part of the grounds follow this process.

The form for 'casual hire' of the showgrounds is available on the website: www.nimbinshowsociety.org.au and should be submitted to: secretary@nimbinshowsociety.org.au with a minimum of two weeks' notice.

Please note that not all buildings are available for hire, and hire charges are likely to apply to enable the Society to cover costs of wear and tear and maintenance and will be made known to the applicant following a review of the application.

Consideration will be given to not-for-profit groups and the intended use of the grounds when advising hire charges.

The Nimbin A&I Society Annual General Meeting is scheduled for 6pm on Tuesday 13th January.

Membership fees of \$5 pa will be collected at the meeting, so if you would like to join the society, or have an interest in the operation of the showgrounds, please enquire at the Secretary's office.

We look forward to an eventful 2026.



Lismore to Yelgun Railway Revival Project approved in principle

by Lydia Kindred,
Northern Rivers Rail Ltd (NRRL)

Northern Rivers Rail Ltd (NRRL), trading as Northern Rivers Railway, is still hard at work to extend climate friendly train services throughout our region.

For over four years we have worked with the Northern Regional Railway Company (NRRC), who have spent over \$300,000 providing all the required reports, including a comprehensive Degradation Study showing that the cost of restoring the tracks to return train services to the line will be much less than has been previously stated.

As all documents have been submitted and a business case provided by NRRL, UGL Regional Linx has now given an Approval in Principle to our Lismore to Yelgun Railway Revival Project, which has been sent to Transport for NSW to be approved by them. This is very exciting news for those living in and visiting the Northern Rivers region!

Our railway companies are happy for a recreational bike/walking path to be built within the rail corridor (separately funded), and more available passenger transport has never been closer in the 21 years since the nighttime XPT service was stopped.

In recent public forums held in the region, the lack of public transport has been often stated as a major stumbling block for many members of the community. We deserve regular, all weather, non-road public transport, and this is our chance to save our tracks and extend similar services to that provided by the world's first Byron Solar Train, which only currently runs for three kms from Byron Town to North Beach Station.

The proposed extension will run to Mullumbimby, another 12.6 kms, and then up to Bangalow. The third stage will extend a much-needed service to Billinudgel for the 7,000 residents around Ocean Shores, New Brighton and South Golden Beach. The fourth stage will reach Lismore to support locals and businesses there.



NRRL has been asking businesses to sign a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), as requested by TfNSW. Over 95% of businesses are in support of the return of train services to the Northern Rivers, and so far, 145 businesses and organisations have signed. If you would like to have your business included, email: northernriversrailway@gmail.com

The proposed renewable-energy-powered passenger service, the 'Country to Surf Train' (CTST), won't just carry passengers but surfboards, luggage, prams, bikes, light freight and wheelchairs.

The need now is to find the funds, via grants and those with vision for social impact investments, to move forward with this state-of-the-art railway project, a game changer for our region.

To create and sustain many more jobs, to reduce emissions and wear and tear on the roads, to lessen drink driving and accidents, and counter climate change; a safe, frequent, affordable, comfortable, train service will provide relief for so many people!

The Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan (SRITP) is what the Regional Transport Minister and TfNSW are looking at currently to make their decisions on local transport systems! Please make a submission by 31st December, go to: haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/sritp/north-coast This is crucial for returning our trains!

Looking forward to meeting you on the train between Lismore and Yelgun sometime.

There goes the neighbourhood

by Jimmy Willing

The 'sound and fury' increased tenfold as the Ricketts house next door was cut from its foundations and lowered on to two black matching Mack trucks called 'We Never Sleep' and 'Getting It Done'.

Then the roof was pulled off, and the house was cut in half. It's now sitting half out on the street and half in the front yard all tarped up and ready to roll at 3am Monday morning.

To be frank, it's deafening and not even playing Motorhead will drown it out, so I decided if you can't bear them, join them and I cranked up the mower and mowed the lawn instead.

With every cut and bang the creaky old weather-beaten house gets a little closer to moving up the hill to Modanville, which is about to get a culture shock akin to Jed Clampet and family arriving in Beverley Hills.

It's been good for me to witness the house moving process, for like many I've been shocked by the wanton destruction of my neighbourhood after the Great Flood.

However, this is different as the house is moving out of the floods and I'm coming to accept that "You have to break eggs to make an omelette."

Lake Street has always been our Cloud Street, but instead of Tim Winton's Pickle's and Lamb's we had Rickett's and

Willing's.

We were a loud raucous bunch, our kids were always screaming and yelling as they smashed open pinatas and jumped on trampolines. There were always dogs barking, roosters crowing and a Rock & Roll band rehearsing in the shed, but now when lads have knocked off from work in the evening it falls eerily silent as my little dog Burrito and I are the only ones left.

However we will remember, our heads swirling with wild adventures of times past for by that time we will be the last of the old timers of the riverbank and our kids will be the last generation of Richmond River Rats, because at 3am Monday morning, there goes the neighbourhood.



Chamber Chat

by David Hyett, president

It's been an energising few weeks in Nimbin, with local projects, collaborations, and community spirit all moving from strength to strength. There's plenty to share in this month's Chamber Chat.

A strong AGM

This year's Annual General Meeting was one of the most engaging we've held in recent years. The team from CMC Hull (pictured), responsible for the major roadwork program surrounding Nimbin, presented a detailed update on the project.

They covered progress so far, upcoming timelines and their commitment to working respectfully within the community. Importantly, they reinforced their preference for using local contractors and outlined clear expectations for their workforce to ensure positive interactions.

For those wanting to see the scale and detail of the works for themselves, you can explore the Interactive Roadworks and Flood Restoration Map here: <https://caportal.com.au/lismore-city-council/project-pipeline>

We also heard from Councillor Virginia Waters, who shared insight into current council matters and answered questions about topics directly affecting Nimbin. Her presence was very well received, and further notes from her talk will be available soon.

Another highlight came from Wick of Aether Agency, who introduced the growing platform: nimbinvillage.au

This site is evolving into a central, community-driven hub for local events, activities, business listings and neighbourhood information, providing a digital space to match Nimbin's vibrant real-world community.

Economic activity

One of the immediate and noticeable effects of the roadwork project has been a strong economic uplift throughout the village. With more than 100 workers now based in or around Nimbin, we've seen increased patronage across cafés and eateries, the Nimbin Hotel, street vendors, retailers,



hardware stores and accommodation providers.

For many small operators, this extra activity provides invaluable stability during a time when regional businesses face rising costs and inconsistent visitor numbers.

We also want to acknowledge a significant local business transition: Nimbin Trattoria has recently changed hands. The Chamber warmly welcomes Tom Cau, the new operator, and extends heartfelt thanks to Gina, who has served the community for many years with dedication, warmth and good, honest food.

We encourage everyone to continue supporting this much-loved local eatery during its next chapter.

Road upgrade benefits

While the short-term economic impact is already being felt, the road upgrades promise lasting benefits. After years of delays, detours, potholes and vehicle damage, the return of safe, reliable, high-quality roads will be transformative.

For visitors, better roads mean more confidence to travel, improved access for festivals and events, and the return of bus tours and day-trippers who previously hesitated to make the trip.

For locals, the improvements will mean safer commutes, reduced vehicle repair costs, better access during wet weather and stronger regional connectivity.

Back Roads in Nimbin

Nimbin has also been attracting national media attention. The ABC's *Back Roads* program recently spent over a week in the village filming a feature focused on Life After Aquarius.

The crew immersed themselves in the community, staying in local accommodation, eating at our cafés and restaurants, exploring shops and street stalls and engaging closely with residents.

Their presence provided another layer of economic benefit, but more importantly, their upcoming episode will present Nimbin to a national audience through a positive and contemporary lens.

Resilient Lismore relocates

After three incredible years in the heart of Lismore's CBD, Resilient Lismore will be relocating to a new home in South Lismore, and expects to re-open some time in January.

"Our Hub has been a place of support, connection and hope during some of the toughest years our community has ever faced. As we move into our next chapter, we're proud to be relocating to South Lismore, and proud to become Southies," Resilient Lismore executive director, Elly Bird said.

The Keen Street Hub has been a cornerstone of Lismore's recovery since opening in 2023. It has provided a central, welcoming space for the co-ordination of its Two Rooms and Repair to Return program, which has delivered more than 750 repair jobs to support flood-damaged homes across the Northern Rivers.

Over this period, the Hub has welcomed more than 40,000 visitors, facilitated 3,000 tool loans through its free Tool Library, connected over 2,000 people to vital services, co-ordinated 577 volunteers who have contributed 25,256 volunteer hours, valued at \$4.8million, and brokered \$900,000 in support for those in need.

"We are so grateful to everyone who has visited, volunteered, partnered or shared a cuppa with us at Keen Street," Elly Bird



said. "You've helped make it such a special home for our community."

"As we prepare for this move, we're also proud to release our 2025 Annual Report, now available on our website: www.resilientlismore.org.au reflecting on what we've accomplished together and where we're headed next," she said.

Stay up-to-date about how to access services, contact our team and stay connected during this transition through their website, social media and email newsletters. Sign up to the mailing list at: www.resilientlismore.org.au

Resilient Lismore will continue its key programs and activities into 2026 and beyond.

Repair to Return will continue, providing up to 80 additional essential home repairs across the Northern

Rivers thanks to support from GIVIT and the NSW Reconstruction Authority.

Resilient Lismore will also keep delivering its core services: volunteer co-ordination, the tool library, and community events and workshops, while rolling out new initiatives to strengthen community recovery.

One of these is the Building Advisory Support Service, a free, one-on-one support program for homeowners referred to us through the NSW Reconstruction Authority's Resilient Homes Program.

Their team helps people make sense of their repair and rebuild options, understand requirements, and move forward with confidence as they navigate the next steps in the RHP.

For updates during the move, visit their website.

Delivering for Lismore
Flood Restoration Portfolio

Lismore
City Council

Road pavement repairs will soon begin at approx. 50 locations across Lismore LGA, to remediate surface damage from the 2022 natural disasters.

Following geotechnical investigations, it has been identified that road levels will be modified in some locations to facilitate the road pavement design. This will improve drainage and strengthen our road network. Council will contact residents if the works are predicted to impact their properties.

Location information and road height changes, where applicable, is available on the Council website - visit Lismore.nsw.gov.au and search for 'Pavement Restoration Program' or scan the QR code below.

This work is in addition to landslip restoration taking place between now and late 2027.



Road surveys completed earlier this year.



Jointly funded by the Australian and NSW Government under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

