



Lucky escape

Quick thinking by local musician Tonto almost certainly saved an itinerant man from burning to death in his van.

The man named John had been unable to escape from the vehicle parked in a Cecil Street

property, after its interior caught alight at around 6am. Tonto, sleeping nearby, was alerted by the noise.

"I could hear this thumping and yelling, and at first I thought some neighbours must be having a blue. Then

I saw smoke coming from the van," he said.

"He couldn't get out from the inside because the door was jammed or something, but I got it open from the outside and got him out."

In quick succession Tad arrived, then the RFS fire tender, and the blaze was extinguished with only minor scorch damage to the adjoining timber building.

John was taken to Nimbin hospital, where he was treated for severe lung damage, and was for some time unable to talk.

Tonto was loath to see the rescue as an act of bravery or heroism. "I just did what anybody would do," he said.

Major film on press freedoms

"Goodnight, and good luck" was Ed Morrow's sign-off piece for his news show *See it Now* on CBS from 1951. It was a time when broadcast journalism was in its infancy. Free speech was called into question in 1953 when reporting critically on Senator MacCarthy's anti-communist committee hearings could have dire consequences. To your livelihood, or indeed to your very life.

George Cluney's directorial debut (he also plays Morrow's producer Fred Friendly), this docu-drama takes you into the well-heeled, smart but seedy setting of 50s New York from its first monochrome frame. Antique production equipment, everyone smoking incessantly (including on-camera), decisive sharp-talking meetings all help to define the working environment at CBS, where slur and innuendo are rife, and people are whispering in corners about having to sign loyalty oaths.

In another studio within the CBS building, a singer and her trio are recording the popular jazz ballads of the day, which permeate the film, underscoring its melancholy tone. The singer is pre-eminent jazz



vocalist Diana Reeves, whose virtuosity has a powerful storytelling instinct, is an apt counterpoint for Morrow under pressure.

The absence of colour and the archival shooting style help the dramatised action to integrate seamlessly with the wealth of original source material, both of McCarthy, dammed by his own increasingly edited words, and also of product advertisements. Continuing sponsorship deals for CBS would usually outweigh efforts to advance democratic ideals. Usually.

Actor David Strathairn embodies Morrow, his voice as distinctive as the terse prose style of the brave,

Compelling. David Strathairn as Edward R. Murrow, whose television documentaries set the standard for illustrating social and political issues by putting a human face on them.

measured scripts penned by Morrow. Frank Langella's (non-smoking) portrayal of William Paley, who headed CBS for over 50 years, and had promoted the development of its news division, is of a reflective, sorrowful man, who wears his mantle gravely.

This is a highly insightful and relevant film about the man who pioneered, some say defined, broadcast journalism, well worth a look.



Wine Tasting

Tasters (left to right) Julie, Cath, Kylie, Red, Donna, Marcelle, Deb and Jen.

A good night was had by all who attended the ladies-only wine tasting at Nimbin Hotel on Tuesday 28th March.

The front balcony of the hotel was transformed by Deb for the occasion, with drapes, ornate table decorations and floral arrangements. To further set the mood, live music was provided by Phil Levy and Leo Glass from the Romanians.

Over sixty women attended, resplendent in their finery, plus Red in drag, who waitressed. When the official tasting host failed to arrive, the women took matters into their own hands, and Deb, Julie and Red drew on their own wide



(left to right) Zoe, Robyn, Tanya and Julie (again).

Pics: Sharon Staples

experience, and the tasting notes, to announce the wines.

The event was the brainchild of new licensee Marcelle James, who was very pleased with the evening. "I'd like to do it

again as a monthly ladies night," she said. "The next one will probably be a bingo night, because I've just bought a bingo set and I'm dying to try it out."

Be on the lookout for this in April!

No ice here

Despite warnings of increased popularity of the speed concoction known as "ice" there appears to be none currently available in Nimbin. Neither is it likely to occur.

Police commander Bruce Lyons told *The Northern Star* there was anecdotal evidence to indicate a rise in local users. "All indicators suggest use of crystal meth is rising," he said.

National Drug & Rehabilitation Centre worker Amos Hee also made comments about the drug's prevalence in the area, in the wake of the Four Corners story of the previous week: "The drug's always been around, but now it's easy to



cook up and there's more of it around, of higher purity, and we're seeing an escalation of its use (in Byron Bay)."

The Star seized on Mr Hee's comments to beat up the story, headlining "drug epidemic" and referring to his briefing of Nimbin police.

An investigation by the NGT failed to find any ice to photograph. A common response was, "I'm not into it. You get psychosis." Another common view was that there were "three or four" of the lads who were into speed, and had been for five years, their numbers neither increased nor declined. "You can get it."

According to staff, admissions at Richmond Clinic do not seem to indicate an "epidemic," but "there are some who know how to work the system."

It will be of interest to see what grounds there are for Mr Hee's assertions at the Buttery's community seminar on the topic on 12th April at the Byron bay Community Centre from 10am - 4pm.

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Local heroes recognition scheme

On 3rd March 2006 the NSW Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon Milton Orkopoulos, unveiled a new recognition and rewards scheme for the unsung heroes of Aboriginal communities across the State.

The Local Heroes Recognition Scheme has been introduced to recognise the contribution and positive efforts of Aboriginal people at a local level, working towards improving education, health, wellbeing or general living circumstances of Aboriginal people.

In launching the scheme the Minister said, "It's clear that in many cases these local heroes offer advice and support for those doing it tough, and deserve our support and encouragement. They are a source of inspiration for many, and most importantly are positive



Yes, Minister. Member for Swansea and new Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Milton Orkopoulos

role models for Aboriginal people."

Aboriginal people who reside in NSW can be nominated if:

- they participate and contribute in their community by making a positive difference for Aboriginal people
- their contributions are an example and inspiration to others

- they have the general support of the community
- there is no known reason why they should not receive this acknowledgement.

Recipients will receive a certificate of recognition and will be invited to apply for a small amount of funding (of up to \$1,000) to assist projects he/she is involved with.

Some initiatives that could receive funds include:

- breakfast programs and transport to school
- tutoring
- equipment to support health and educational projects
- support for elderly
- teaching Aboriginal languages.

Nominations can be made by completing and submitting a nomination form, which can be downloaded from www.daa.nsw.gov.au. There is also a fact sheet on the scheme at this site.

Now snipping heads in Nimbin

How do you find a catchy name for a hairdressing salon that hasn't been used before?

Penny Wind (rhymes with "kind") is facing this quandary as the new proprietor of the Nimbin Hair Salon. A hairdresser for 23 years, she has worked in the UK and on catwalk shows in the ACT before moving to Cawongla, where she has lived for four years. She was working for Kaye one day a week when "the opportunity came up and I went for it."

"I like being here," she said.



"It felt comfortable, and I'm really enjoying it." She has inherited most of the salon's clientele and is gaining new customers.

Penny likes to keep up

to date with the trade, for example she will be travelling to Sydney for the Hair Expo in June. She likes doing glam hair, formal hair, and retro styles. "I'm not doing anything too different to Kaye, but I have my own styling," she said. "I love cutting and colouring."

Some of her ideas for MardiGrass hair include "stencilling, ponytail swatches, and colour, colour, colour," and she is introducing more eco-friendly colour products.

"I'd like to say a big thank you to Kaye and to Nimbin town for accepting me. There's been a very positive response to the change," she said. The change, including a new name, 'Snipping Heads', will be more apparent when her signage goes up, and when the ramp under construction in front of the salon is completed.

Incidentally, the salon walls are available for artists to hang their work, for sale or for show. Contact Penny at the salon on 6689-1000.

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Hotel Sorrento a hit



Convincing. Ingrid Foraita (Marge) and Chris Harris (Dick) illustrating the changing face of Australian society, on opening night.



Nimbin Players have launched their first ever autumn season with a confident production of Hannie Rayson's *Hotel Sorrento*.

An ample first-night house was impressed by the slickness of the multi-stage transitions. "They laughed in all the right places," said stage manager Angus.

The playwright said she wanted "to provide the audience with something to talk about over the show," and judging by the audience reaction, this smooth, assured production has certainly achieved her goal.

Director Deborah Wild expressed her thanks to all the players and non-players who lent a hand in bringing this work to life.

The play runs until Saturday 8th April.

Optimistic timeframe for Skate Park

from Graeme Wilson,
Lismore Council

Council discussion of the Nimbin Skate Park was postponed from the 7th March 2006 Workshop due to competition for time with the Lismore Memorial Baths Marketing Plan and Lakeside Pool. It is anticipated that a report to Council or Workshop will be planned for April.

The Skate Park project is managed by the Nimbin Community Development Association

(NCDA). The NCDA have development consent to construct the skate ramp and have exercised their right to complete the project as outlined in their Development Application, but will only complete part of the ramp, sufficient to allow the sound generation to be tested. TURSA have indicated the works will be completed in 3 weeks. Further sound testing of the structure will take place when this stage is complete (est. March 2006).

Completion of the project has been delayed due to the

generation of unacceptable noise levels when the ramp is in use. Council is assisting the NCDA in resolving issues regarding the project and to this end, in late 2005 a working group was formed by Council involving staff, NCDA representatives and the local community. The next meeting of this working group will now be held towards the end of March.

Concurrently, Council and the NCDA are discussing the future management of the skate ramp and Peace Park.

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Rainbow Ridge extensions opened



by Mel McMillan

Rainbow Ridge Steiner School at Lillian Rock held the grand opening of their newly completed extensions last week.

Aboriginal elder Aunty Agnes also took part by welcoming everyone in attendance to Bunjalung country and Local member Ian Causley was there to cut the ribbon.

Tony Gain, the school administrator said, "It has been a long and hard struggle to get the school

built. It has also been a great learning opportunity for the students to watch the building going up around them."

The two new classrooms and undercover area were constructed with labour from the local community. Four German Zimmermen, builders renowned for their attention to detail, also participated in the project.

"We designed the building to make the most of natural light," said Laurence Forrester, one of the building's designers. We also

considered the importance of the children being able to see nature at all times. The low lying windows allow children to look outside."

The federal government contributed \$100,000 and the school raised the remaining \$190,000 required to complete the extension. Ian Causley said the government's contribution was part of its commitment to education.

The opening ceremony finished with the Rainbow Ridge students singing songs.

Pop on in



A warm hello to all the families of Nimbin and surrounds from the Nimbin Family Centre.

Thank you to all the parents who have participated in choosing new toys and equipment. This sounds like fun, which it is, and it's also serious business: babies, toddlers, and children learn primarily and essentially through play. Having fun is a great incentive for learning no matter how old we are.

So next time you see adults rolling around with the kids, know that they are hard at work teaching them some valuable skills.

As parents it is often difficult to find the time or the head space for this important task. So many things can come in the way, and having fun with the kids ends up being a chore! At this moment, remember the Family Centre. All you have to do is turn up and it's

all there, set out specifically so you and your children can have the hard earned quality time you deserve. If you wonder where to find the Family Centre, it's the beautifully purple house across the road from the skate park on Sibley St.

Toddlers Group is on every Mondays from 10.30am to 12.30pm. The New Bubs Group is on every Tuesday at the same times. Please note activities at the Centre continue through the Easter holidays, and you are welcome to pop in outside playgroup time.

Dates to remember for April

Sunny is our guest speaker this month. On Tuesday 11th, Sunny will talk about No Nappy Baby and how to go about it. Imagine doing away with nappies and potty training!

The Early Childhood Nurse Health Clinics are on Tuesdays 4th, 18th, 25th and Monday 10th from 10.30am to 1.30pm. The Immunisation Clinic is on Monday 10th from 1.30pm to 3pm by appointment with

Community Health on 6620-7687.

The Centre is closed Monday 17th (Easter), Thursday 20th (training), and Tuesday 25th (Anzac Day)

Coming events in May

Alison from Tiny Talk is coming from the Gold Coast on Tues 9th May to talk about sign language for our pre-verbal children. If enough people are interested, a class to learn sign language and how to teach our children can be held after the presentation. Cost is \$15 per person. Please put your name down as soon as possible.

A six-week P5 parenting program will be offered on Thursdays, from 11th May to 15th June between 10am and 12pm. Babes in arms are welcome. If babysitting is needed, come in and talk to Marie about it.

If you are interested in the Tiny Talk class or the Parenting Group or want to know more about what's happening at the Family Centre, drop in either Mondays, Tuesdays or Thursdays between 9am to 4pm, or ring Marie on 6689-0423 same days, same times.

Be well and happy.

Hospital helpers

Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary has certainly been making a difference to the new hospital since it opened in September last year.

The group conducts a Saturday morning stall outside the newsagency, and meets monthly to review its fundraising initiatives, and to decide on how the money will

be spent.

By February this year, they had funded over \$13,500 worth of improvements to the facilities of the hospital, on equipment and decorations to assist patients' recovery by making their hospital stay more comfortable.

Purchases have included a TV and DVD player, a mobile bath and two chairs, a barbecue, bookcase, flags, paintings, and a set of drinking mugs. Thanks are due to the generosity of all in the community who have supported the fundraising drives.

But thanks are also due to the unsung heroines and heroes of the Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary, whose tireless efforts are continually making things better for patients.

Cartoons bring history to life

Local cartoonist Peter Gibson has been lending a hand with high school history classes at Nimbin Central School.

Class teacher Moira Kenny was teaching a unit on propaganda, using source material from the world wars, when one of her Year 9 students, Elijah Gentle, suggested getting in touch with Mr Gibson, who had introduced him to the pleasure of cartooning.

Ms Kenny did so, and the rest is history. "I wanted the students to understand the power of political cartoons," she said. The issue is particularly relevant in the wake of the kerfuffle over political cartoons recently.

The classes were very practical, as Gibbo (as he signs his work) helped get the students to represent their ideas visually in linework.

Ms Kenny was very pleased with how the classes went. "Kids find history wordy, there's a lot of writing," she said. "It's good to look at other forms



Gibbo (centre) with Year 7 students (left to right) Noah, Taylor R, Sapote and Phoebe.

Picture by April Hard.

of communication for expressing ideas and points of view."

The response from students was very

positive, and teachers are now looking at further ways of involving Gibbo in the curriculum.



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Samaya Events



Movements for the mind

Cerebral. Satu Linnamo (right) conducting the workshop for teachers at Nimbin Central School.

Eighteen teachers from Nimbin Central School, five community members and three counsellors recently took part in a three-hour training workshop to learn the techniques of Brain Gym.

Brain Gym is a program of physical activities that enhance learning ability, developing the brain's neural pathways through movement. Developed by Paul Dennison in California in the 1970s, the program is based on the techniques of kinesiology, and has had great success around the world in assisting people of all ages to overcome learning difficulties.

Satu Linnamo, the educational kinesiologist who conducted the workshop said, "The exercises help

settle hyperactive children, alleviate stress and improve concentration. They are simple to do, and have benefits for left brain/right brain integration, which can greatly improve reading, writing and listening, as well as hand-eye coordination."

The teachers plan to use the exercises to help improve students outcomes in communication and organisation tasks, and to help build their confidence.

For those interested in learning more, an accredited four-day course is being held from Thursday 20th to Sunday 23rd April at the Byron Bay Brain Gym Centre, costing \$450. Contact Satu Linnamo for more details on 6685-3923 or email satu@spot.com.au

The next Samaya Gathering will be held on Saturday 15th April, 10am to Midnight at the Samaya Retreat, Lot 12, Emerson Road, Rosebank.

The idea is to get together with some good food, good music and good company and have a great time.

Please bring a plate of food, your musical instruments and your ideas. We expect a range of fun activities spontaneously and freely provided by some of the participants.

On current estimates we will have a few musical performers, yoga sessions, dancing, a 2km long sacred labyrinth walk in the forest, meditation, games, psychic readings, story telling, poetry readings, playback theatre, dream explorations, swimming in the creek, bush walks and a bonfire to finish the day. Bring your friends, bring your kids and enjoy the good life. The event is free of charge.

The next Samaya Retreat, "The Art of Awareness" will be held from Friday, 21st April, 10am to Sunday, 23rd April, 5pm

The Retreat is three days of direct experience. It is a subtle process that explores the apparent paradoxes of one's existence. It is an opportunity to come face to face with the



Sanctuary, Fiore and Anudasi, caretakers of Samaya Retreat at Rosebank.

essential nature of your self and the essential nature of being.

It is an opportunity to allow the natural processes of the self, confronting its conditioned tendencies,

obstructions, distractions and contradictions in the light of its inherent desire for freedom, love and union.

It prompts nothing less than transformation from non-acceptance to acceptance, from distraction to a deeper sense of reality.

It is a simple and kindly process, in which each person's unfolding occurs in his or her own time. Yet it may well be one of the hardest experiences of

"To the awakened there is nothing out of place, not even ignorance, bogus future or suffering; for he is blissfully beyond ignorance."

your life.

Although there is a modest \$50 fee by Samaya for the three days' use of facilities, the retreat itself is free of charge. For a map and further details please visit www.byronevents.net Phone: 6688-2000 email: samayaretreat@hotmail.com

Making a safe community

by Lizette Twisleton

Nimbin Aunty Afternoon Tea

A gathering of women interested in becoming involved in the Nimbin Aunty Project will be held on Friday 21st April, 2pm at Birth & Beyond. Please come along and be part of this exciting and worthy mentoring program.

Contact Lizette on 6689-1692 (Thursdays), 0429-363-850 or email safenimbin@hotmail.com for further info.

Stop Violence Against Women

Following on from last month's article about the myths and facts of sexual assault I would like to further explore both domestic violence and sexual assault. Information raises awareness and awareness empowers and increases our ability to make healthy choices. So although this information may be confronting, heavy and challenging I hope that the process is



Safe visit. Busloads of attractive young women come to Nimbin daily.

one that encourages reflection of your own experiences; whether it be as a survivor/victim, a witness or friend or one who chooses to use power and control to abuse another.

Amnesty International's Stop Violence Against Women campaign defines violence against women as nothing less than "the greatest human

rights scandal of our times" (Amnesty International 2004a: 1). Amnesty International estimates that violence against women constitutes the most widespread and prevalent human rights abuse in the world (Amnesty International 2004a). The freedom to choose or refuse sex, even within marriage, should be a human right globally. And it should be a basic human right based on its own merits.

The crime of sexual assault is one of the most violating experiences anyone can endure. It can have immediate, short and long term effects on physical and emotional wellbeing. Domestic violence and sexual abuse create isolation, alienation, lack of self-esteem and worth, shame, feelings of helplessness, confusion, fear and an inability to make decisions and choices. The impact on children who experience family violence or sexual assault can be long lasting and deeply traumatic.

Within a small community such as Nimbin, the fear of reporting

either a sexual assault or family violence can lead to further isolation. The subsequent lack of support, compounding the trauma, drives the painful story deeper. Alongside the very real concerns about reporting such crimes to the police and the debilitating self-blame and shame that victims experience, are the practical problems that are unique to living within a rural community.

"Survivors attending services are recognised by people walking along outside the service. Most things that happen in country towns are known about within hours. Privacy and confidentiality is a huge factor. Some workers in these services could be a relative of the perpetrator or indeed of the survivor, which would make it extremely hard for a survivor to attend the services to seek help. In the country areas the impact of shame is much higher." For sexual assault victims this translates into a near total lack of anonymity when attempting to access medical, counseling or legal services, and the corresponding fear of services being unable to guarantee confidentiality.

Knowing this and recognizing the

difficulties that are faced by someone experiencing abuse, we can offer our support not only in practical ways, but also assist in creating a safe and caring environment where privacy and confidentiality are respected and victims are encouraged to seek help.

I urge readers to reflect on the impacts of abuse both personally and within the wider community. To make a personal stand and say NO to violence.

Contacts

If you have in the past, or are currently experiencing abuse and would like support you can contact the following services:

Rape Crisis Line
1800-424-017 (24 hr service)
Lismore Sexual Assault Service
6620-2970
Men & Family Centre (Lismore)
6622-6116
Mensline 6622-2240
Domestic Violence Helpline
1800-656-463
Nimbin Police 6689-1244
Nimbin Hospital 6689-1400
Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre
6689-1692 (10am-4pm weekdays)

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Mardi Grass plans



by Michael Balderstone Colour and movement. A vies of last year's Grand Parade.

I can't remember who wanted MardiGrass meetings on Mondays at 5pm! This week's meeting saw the numbers double, from two to four. Gail Clarke came and she's going to bring back Pot Poetry Breakfasts in the Rainbow. The meeting emanated confidence in everything coming together. All a bit scary except it's similar to the last few years...

We talked a lot about Jungle Patrol, which is the only hole in this year's dreaming, or the only one we've thought of so far! Tom, our Red Cross man from Sydney is going ahead with the training days for Jungle Patrol, on Monday and Tuesday 1st and 2nd May, like we normally do. There's a book in the HEMP Embassy to put down your name as a volunteer, either with Jungle Patrol or not. We'll get plenty of help when the time comes but we need locals with experience to use the radios etc and be guides for our other visiting back-packer volunteers.

Lismore Council is again very supportive and rubbish, toilets, security and parking is organised, along with fences, tents, slashing and so on. We can always do with more parking paddocks and it would be great to use the showground if the weather

is fine.

Weather is a bigger unknown than JP and we live with this until the last moment. Peace Park gets cold, so plans are to have a program there until only 9pm on Saturday. There's plenty of other venues including the Town Hall, Bush Theatre, Bowlo, the market stage, Oasis and other cafes, behind the Museum and the pub. And the street! All market enquiries to J at 0409-045-016 or kahootz@mad.scientist.com.

Most of MardiGrass this year will be similar to last. A bigger forum and discussion on Saturday afternoon with a focus on relevant issues like saliva testing and psychosis. Please get involved and bring your questions, answers and experience along. The Cup is moving back to Sunday evening, Spaces' new Pot Art Tattoo competition in the Town Hall garden and a bigger Peace Park program are a few changes that come to mind. Ian Glover's comedy with S has been a highlight at the Hemp Olympix and the Oasis for some years, this year he's bringing his band

the Recliners from Sydney.

We are looking for someone to do hemp paper making in Peace Park.



Breakfast guest. Popular poet Gina La Costa

Any other educational, informative, creative hemp ideas that will entertain all ages will surely bring buckets of good karma. Anyone want to organise Pot Art in the shop windows? We plan to travel to Canberra with the Big Joint and a message for Howard on the day after MardiGrass.

A few people are telling me that 'no one wants MardiGrass', which is very unfortunate but happily not true. I am sorry it has such an impact on the whole community. It does have a bit of a life of its own now and has grown by popularity and reputation, particularly overseas and throughout the cannabis culture. Fortunately many local groups and businesses do well enough these days to offset some of

the less popular impact on our tiny village. We do try hard to minimise harm over the weekend and many locals and MG annual visitors have already confirmed they will be here again to play their part in keeping it a peaceful protest, and celebration.

Sergeant Garry Acton, who has recently transferred to Murwillumbah, told the *Daily Telegraph* in a recent story that Nimbin was a town that stands alone on its attitude towards the war on drugs. That's not something I feel ashamed about. We are an extraordinarily well educated community in this field and do have something to offer.

Does the wider Nimbin community want MardiGrass? How many people care enough about cannabis law reform? Who cares? Or is it all about personal comfort these days? I came to Nimbin to be alternative.

The Museum..... now that's another issue, and I do understand the people who want to close it down. Somedays I feel the same, but I'm not sure that whatever's troubling them, and me, will leave town if the Museum closes. Meanwhile I'm hoping to ride out the storm,

change is inevitable and then perhaps we'll be inspired again to give the Museum a big facelift? Maybe even Botox! Still I remain amazed at how often visitors enjoy walking the Rainbow Serpent path as it is. Do feel free to come and help make it a better show.

MardiGrass meetings are on Mondays at 5pm on the back veranda of the HEMP Embassy, via the laneway next to the pub. Fridays same time in the Hemp Bar is also good. All welcome, if you can't make it then please get in touch. Sane good locals in Jungle Patrol is the obvious need. We are indeed a unique community. It would be a pity to get too normal!

Nimbin HEMP Embassy
Phone 6689-1842.

Drugs policy failing says Australia Institute

Australia's 'Tough on Drugs' policy has failed to significantly reduce domestic drug markets or confront drug-related mental health disorders according to a new report from the Australia Institute.

The report, titled *Drug Law Reform: Beyond Prohibition*, by the Institute's Deputy Director, Andrew Macintosh, calls on governments to shift the emphasis in dealing with illicit drugs from law enforcement to treatment and prevention strategies. The issue of drug abuse needs to be confronted as a health rather than a legal problem.

"Four out of every five state and federal dollars allocated to dealing with illicit drug issues are going to law enforcement," Mr Macintosh said. "This hugely disproportionate spending of funds has not been accompanied by significant reductions in drug use and drug-related harm, but it has been accompanied by increased mental health and other social problems."

"Treatment on the other hand has been shown to substantially reduce drug and mental health problems and drug-related crime and corruption. Studies have shown that treatment is extremely cost effective, yielding savings of up to \$12 for every dollar invested."

Mr Macintosh said the Council of Australian Government's strategy to address mental health issues, which is due out in June, should adopt a treatment-oriented approach to drug misuse rather than the counterproductive stance

currently espoused by the federal and several state governments.

"We are coming at the problem from the wrong way. Eighty per cent of drug arrests in 2003/04 involved consumption offences and 60 per cent were for using or possessing cannabis," Mr Macintosh said. "This is back to front thinking. Users are at the end of the line. Moreover the statistics show that legal threats are not deterring them. Prevention and treatment programs within a health context hold far more promise."

The report finds that strict drug law enforcement policies have failed to dent illicit drug markets and have exacerbated the social cost of illicit drug use.

"There is much that is illusory in present claims to success in confronting the illicit drug trade," Mr Macintosh said. "The recent heroin drought for example is not so much the result of law enforcement but of a decision by heroin producers and traffickers to switch to methamphetamines. The Federal Government pats itself on the back for the decline in heroin use, while methamphetamine problems have increased dramatically."

"When you lay the facts on the table, they are indisputable. If we really want to get anywhere with this issue, we must start taking viable alternatives seriously."

For comment, please contact:
Andrew Macintosh 02 6125 1273 (bh) or 0403 804 540



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Cyclone Larry a Godsend for hemp industry

**Banana and Sugar crops to make way for Industrial HEMP
Massive boost to N.O. Farmers with the Cyclone Larry Hemp Rescue Package**

by Jimmy Lovechild

In many discussions, several phone calls and hundreds of emails between dozens of high profile political representatives it has been noted that the Hemp Rescue Package has been given the green light and thumbs up. So far the package contains instructions for the cultivation of broad-acre Industrial HEMP crops.

The Cyclone Larry HEMP Rescue Package will quickly create employment and provide long term financial benefits to the entire region recently devastated by Cyclone Larry. HEMP is a very fast growing crop and will produce a primary source of protein from its' rich seed oil in less than six months, the Bananas would still be babies. Hemp has a historically proven success record in producing durable and viable products from the plant material such as Hemp bricks, chipboard, plaster, rope, cloth, paper plus many others. Hemp will become the answer to the prayers of many the Farmers stricken by this hellish disaster.

Sister Serene, of the Marijuana Mercy Mission, has faith in being capable of providing sanctuary for the many homeless victims created by Cyclone Larry's fury. Sister Serene says the Hemp Rescue Package will give relief to those who have been traumatised

because Cannabis has therapeutic properties that no other herb can deliver as cheaply and effectively.

"I will pray to God, Allah, Krishna, Buddha and all Goddesses that the Australian Government will finally come to its senses and mercifully give these honest hard working Aussie Farmers a fair go. Let the Farmers grow HEMP to survive. Liberate Hemp on our Planet," she said.



San Monto seeds will be the most suitable, according to legal advice. San Monto CEO Mr. Gene Pirate was quoted saying, "We'll make a fortune from our monopoly on hempseed." Mr Pirate has yet to reply to the invitation sent last week to join in on the debate discussing the ethics of cloning seeds that

Mother Nature has designed intelligently to evolve without any justifiable interference from Corporations that always put profit before anything else. The HEMP debate has been scheduled to be held during the 14th annual Nimbin MardiGrass & Cannabis Law Reform Rally – May 6 & 7, 2006.

Official test results to determine whether Hemp Seed Oil is an effective treatment for the Bird Flu Virus in humans are still missing. But we do know that hempseed makes canaries sing.

Nimbin Community Drugs Action Team

by Marcus Mantscheff,
Nimbin CDAT Coordinator



On the bus. Youth participants headed for the camp.

With some strategic partnerships between the Nimbin CDAT, the Men & Family Centre, Lismore City Council Youth Activities, Community Connections & the NCDA; an Anger Management Training Course was held at Gunundi Camp & Conference Centre, East Ballina in early March.

The training was initiated by the Nimbin Community Drugs Action Team (CDAT) to provide opportunities for youth to develop their anger management skills. It was hoped this training would contribute towards Youth Events Management skills as well as sincere personal development outcomes for youth.

Sixteen participants aged 16 to 18 shared their experiences and feelings to identify personal barriers and different levels of anger. Using the Green – Amber - Red / Traffic Light model, participants were able to establish how their anger rises & diminishes according to physical and emotional indicators.

The impact of the workshop on participants opened emotional doors for some & increased assertiveness & self-confidence in others. The feedback showed the training was intense, stressful and overwhelming with positive outcomes of realization, fulfillment, respect and mutual support. This pilot workshop included a large volume of training to which the participants contributed significantly.

Filmmakers documented the entire weekend and facilitated a short drama film written and starring the participants. The drama played out the critical choices individuals make when dealing with anger and the consequences of those decisions.

This binge drinking drama and the poster design session were the highlight activity of the weekend, creatively exploring the anger management theme.

Thanks to all the youth who made the weekend such a positive event with their mindfulness & honesty. Thanks also to the facilitators Lizette Twisleton & Bill Taylor of the Men & Family Centre; Independent Filmmakers Grant McGifford & Shar Hill with their support team; and Maire Barron from the NCDA.

Where to next for the Nimbin CDAT? An application was lodged early March, to support a Nimbin Aboriginal Broadcasters film project around the Rainbow Lane, a critical target area for CDAT activities. Unfortunately the Peer to Peer Training from Red Cross has been postponed until August & may need to run independently of the current project. We expect to be providing a free breathalyser service for the forthcoming Mardi Grass, so look out for us if you have any questions.

Youth Events Management training is the next module to run with a facilitator confirmed and participants being sought now. Contact Marcus at the Nimbin Community Centre (6689-0000) or Lizette Twisleton (0429-363-850) to register your interest.

We don't shoot up our buds

A small but dedicated band of activists kept the cannabis flame alive in this year's Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras.

The group called 'The medicine that dare not speak its name' included long-term HIV patient Justin Brash, fellow patient Marcos Garcia-Roncero, broad-acre cultivator Andrew Katelaris and former Nimbin resident now Melbournite Chibo Mertineit. They were sandwiched between two large glitzy floats, but still managed to make their presence felt.

Mr Katelaris, who spent the previous week in court in Newcastle fighting a charge of cultivating a crop of 50,000 plants carried the main banner with Brash which read 'Medical Cannabis



Justin Brash & Marcos Garcia-Roncero before the parade.
Photo and story by Chibo Mertineit

– side effects include criminal prosecution and loss of liberty'. Chibo's cookie monster was a crowd favourite as usual. Marcos' placard read 'Dying for a smoke'.

The large police presence on the night did not stop most of the group lighting up as the parade started. In an encounter with a drag queen with a microphone, Brash got his joke of the night out "We're not like Dick Chaney

– we don't shoot up our buds" to roars of approval from the audience. The other comment on the night was that they were representing Schapelle Corby, due to the fact they were behind a float called 'The Bali Boys & Girls'.

Andrew Katelaris will be attending this year's Mardi Grass in Nimbin. Brash is unable to make Nimbin but plans to join The Big Joint's Canberra visit.

Laid-back activism

Sam Bernard was talking about the Hemp Bar. "It's not a business, it's a venture," he said of his kiosk, open for hemp information and coffee. "It is all about creating a political platform for the village."

The bar's bench is packed most days with faces from around the world, talking and exchanging world-wide views. No sign of psychosis anywhere.

"The moment you walk in the door, you become an activist," Sam said, referring to the web cameras broadcasting live to the world. "The whole venture is a demonstration model, directed towards reform."

Sam maintains the kiosk

is not directly challenging the law, though it did have a brush with the law as part of the great café clean-up of 2001. "We want to bring about change by networking," Sam said. "Our aim is to harmonise and minimise."

How to become an activist? BYO, roll up and have a coffee at the Hemp Bar. Alcohol free venue. Or go to nimbinhempbar.com



Dave Cannabis with mini-Sam.

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Clarification from the Goddess

Greetings mortals.

From the tone of Lynne Oldfield's grouchy letter in the last *GoodTimes*, it's obvious that my position as the Goddess needs some clarification. Lynne complained that Gerald Taylor was masquerading as the Goddess in his various letters and articles in the *GoodTimes*. Lynne is incorrect.

As Granny Breastwaver so poetically pointed out, Gerald is a boy and neither female nor divine. In fact the poor chap isn't a particularly useful specimen even of mere maleness. From personal experience let me tell you this manthing thinks only of chess, sex and politics, and his thoughts concerning all three topics are childish, muddled and confusing. Mostly I think of Gerald as 'the husk'. But it's this mental vacancy that makes him so useful to me; with his head like an empty drum I get to channel through him with almost no interference. Dumb as a lump maybe, but he is an excellent conduit for my pure divine purpose.

As for the reason for the MardiGrass and my place in it, it is a political rally for the legalisation of cannabis by fair means or foul and I, the Goddess am the official head and patron deity of Nimbin's very own church; the Church of the Holy Smoke. It's a registered and legal religion and I'm its registered and legal deity.

I hope this makes more clear to you Lynne my place in the great scheme of things and hopefully it will encourage you rowdy Sheilas to stop throwing things at my annoying husk; Gerald.

For further revelations I channel weekly on the Hemp Hour, 12 to 2 Fridays on 103.3 FM where the holy trinity: President Bobalong, the Mayor Baldandstoned and myself, the Goddess, trawl over the week's drug news and global gossip. It's live, nude radio where we and our guests strip down and beat the naked truth into submission.

We encourage our listeners to be

nude also, don't ask me why but it's easier to understand the program when you're naked. Or I'll see you when you rock up to a MardiGrass organising committee meeting back of the Hemp Embassy, Monday evenings at 5pm.

Blessings on the flock

The Goddess

Motorhome Club

On behalf of myself and the Auswide Motorhome Club Inc. we wish to sincerely thank you for your assistance in notifying the readers in your area of our intention to form a new branch of the Auswide Motorhome Club in your area.

The Northern Rivers Branch was officially formed with outstanding attendance and success over the weekend 17th-19th February. The new President is Mrs Judy Shields (07 5524 3430) and Secretary Mrs Joy McKew. Monthly venues are currently being finalised, however the 19th-21st May venue has been confirmed at Copmanhurst Rodeo Ground & motorhomers are most welcome.

Thank you very much for your support.

Cyril Hutchesson
NSW State Representative
(02) 4946 1076

Road safety grants

The NRMA is offering Community Road Safety Grants up to \$5000 for behavioural programs and solutions that address local road safety problems. The grants are for stand-alone projects or enhancements of existing projects. All must be completed by June 30, 2007.

The money is only available to government and not-for-profit non-government organisations. The closing date is 24th April with winners announced in June.

I have copies of the application forms and fact sheets. Further info can be obtained from John Brown Policy Advisor NRMA 02 82222162 or john.brown@mynrma.com.au

Jenny Dowell

Council jottings

Jenny Dowell

Over the next few months, much of Lismore

Council's attention will be on the budget and management plan for the 06-07 financial year. As is usual, the demands will far outstrip the money to meet them and many will be disappointed with the process and outcome.

Added to the list of **budget submissions** from staff, individual Councillors, community groups and individuals will be the priority areas as determined by the seven Policy Advisory Groups. Last year only half of the number and a smaller proportion of the financial value of the submissions were successful, and this year will be even more competitive, given that there are several large projects vying for consideration. These include the construction of Stage 1 (Gallery/Museum) of the cultural centre on the site of the old Lismore High School in the CBD, and the design and construction of Goonellabah Recreation and Leisure Centre.

Other major proposals of the PAGS include the mapping of vegetation across the LGA, development of a cycleways plan, and much needed major works on our ailing rural roads network. In addition, there will be proposals to increase shade and seating at the Memorial Baths, introduce a new waste management system and undertake a scoping study for the establishment of a youth enterprise project.

All residents have the opportunity to provide input into the Budget process when the draft is placed on public display for 28 days on 20th May. Submissions are also welcome at that stage before the final Council sign off in mid June.

Unfortunately the **Nimbin Skate Park** is one project on which Council is still awaiting some information. The workshop planned for 7th March was postponed as staff awaited more information and as yet, no further date has been allocated.



Council held its March meeting in the beautifully restored Koonorigan Hall and while most items on the agenda related to the closure of unformed roads, several significant items caused considerable debate. Readers will be aware that the flying foxes in Rotary Park became an issue for debate in a Mayoral Minute. This is a last minute prerogative of the Mayor and gives the community no notice of oftentimes major items for consideration. Whilst acknowledging the need for this process at times of urgency, Councillors have little opportunity to gather supporting or opposing information on which to form considered opinions.

Also up for debate was a proposal to raise additional Lismore houses for flood protection. Unfortunately the claim in the business paper that community consultation had taken place on this issue was stretching the purpose of the July 05 post-flood meeting held in North Lismore just a tad.

The most controversial item on the March agenda was the proposal to reclassify 'certain public lands' from Community to Operational. This innocuous-sounding Amendment to the Local Environment Plan (LEP) has resulted in the reclassification of Lismore Park- the land bounded by Magellan, Dawson, Brewster and Uralba Streets and consisting of Oakes Oval, Crozier Field and numerous other sporting fields, tennis court and Continental Club.

The argument put forward by the proponents was that such reclassification would allow for long term leases for all or part of the land. There was no compelling evidence that such leases were not possible under 'Community' land but nevertheless the recommendation was carried. As is required when Council reclassifies its own land, not only is there a statutory exhibition period, but there must be a Public Hearing and an independent party to report on submissions received. I certainly hope that all the sporting and other user groups and people concerned about this retrograde step will make their voices heard to stop this 'thin end of the wedge' that could, in time, result in a proposal to sell off one of Lismore's finest assets

Finally folk - if you are a young person or a senior or care about either, happy Seniors and Youth Weeks especially to Nimbin residents!

In Memoriam

Julie Bell

Our darling Jules, one year has passed since we lost you.

Not a day goes by without an ache in our hearts.

And the Guinness doesn't taste as good any more.

From mum, Peter, Michael, Caroline, Marlie and Anth.

Slante Julie.

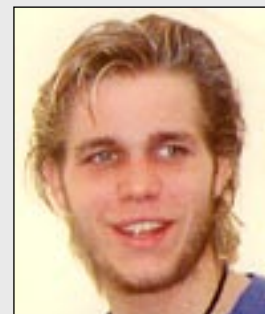


Marcel Le Bars

On the 4th anniversary of Marcel's passing, let's remember the quality of the youth we have around us.

Generous hearted and loving of all people, Marcel's legacies have been left with his family, Josh and his family, and Paul, Mark, Dianne and Toby.

Cool bananas. We love you Marcel. His love will never be lost.



About us

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Staff photographer: Sue Stock
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Drug War goes on around me

In Feb 05 I wrote 'Goes On Around Me' Drug war goes on around me
Will I get hit this year?
The pressure mounts
As the plant grows
Whispers abound
What do they know?
We will resist
Whatever they throw
Whatever they miss
Is what we let grow.
I'm not alone
Friends tell me quick
Chopper at home
I feel quite sick
This is no drill
I execute
War seems so real
Hope they don't shoot.
Injustice burn
Passion increase
Till we can turn
War into peace
Till harvest fest
MardiGrass day
Herb is the best
What do you say?
Plant the seed
Pick the crop
Share the weed
Tell the cops
Pot must be free.

The poster is OK

Andy Putnam

Notices

Mulgum House Community Forum

Thursday 27th April at 2.30pm in the Central School's MPU.

Representatives from Council, Dept Housing and Anglicare will be present.

All interested parties are called on to attend.



Deja vu. NGT Oct 2004 featured a similar shot of Mulgum House on its front page.

Stay True

by Binnah Powell

I am a purist at heart. I still hold on to ideals of a new world based on the good 'ol foundation of Peace and Love (is there anything more sustainable than that?) – dreamt of and up for the last thirty odd years.

To see a Mardi Grass poster with a guy with a military uniform on is such a... I believe it's called an oxymoron. Now, to my understanding, an oxymoron is not some idiot running around with a welder, it is a statement or situation that appears so hypocritical that each other cancels the other out.

No doubt that it's a great piece of Art by one of the family over on the coast side of the world who hasn't yet got the bigger picture quite in focus.

Here we have in the poster a person who is a supposed 'hippy' I assume, admittedly a bit of a hackneyed phrase. Shall we call him an 'alter-native'? Anyway, there he is standing there with a joint in his mouth and in full regalia army uniform – resplendent with ammo sash of scoobs and all.

Looking at the poster leads me to entertain the thought that the whole Aquarian/New/Sustainable Age credo is in great danger of slowly being eroded and watered down, if this view of the alter-native is seen to be accepted in the general public's eye from now on.

One of the Children of Aquarius' visions all those years ago was for a world at PEACE. In fact, in case we are forgetting it or if it wasn't clear in the first place - we are supposedly visioning in a world that isn't just anti-war but a world that doesn't even involve war in it - so there is nothing to be anti about. It is a whole different way of looking at the world – a whole new paradigm.

Please picture paradise in peace now. As the movie *What the Bleep* pointed out and proved, we are creating this, so watch out what you say, ask for, or in fact draw or paint.

The poster could suggest that the alternative movement condones the riotous wanton destruction and futility of war. This is not to mention the fact that the alter-native cultures' drug of choice, that is, Cannabis/grass/pot/ganja is our favourite - mainly because of its pacifying and chill-out qualities, non? So what has war and army got to do with getting stoned? Remember the chorus to that old anti war song? "... absolutely nothing!"

Sure, it may appear that the 'reality' is that we are 'fighting' a drug war – undesirable verbs in a world without war (I can't really see many people actually engaging the 'enemy' anyway) but to 'fight' is only if you really want to fight, and if you continue to choose to see it like that. As the alter-native nation has proven and despite what the



Embattled. Detail of the controversial MardiGrass poster.



Binnah-approved posters

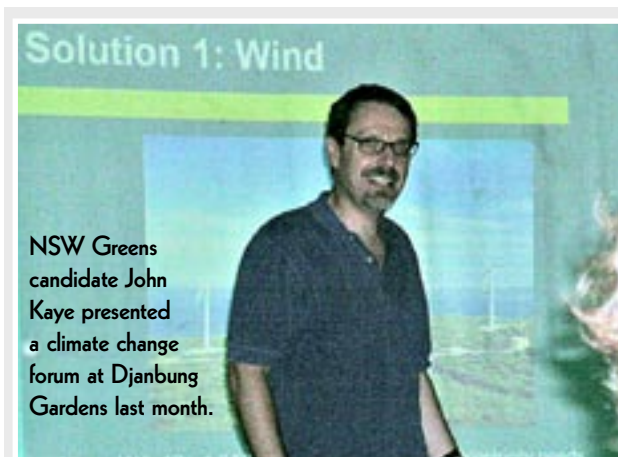
'mainstream' may say, we do have choices.

What is the alter-native to war?

Well, we could start with talking more.... we could write plays and songs and poems about the issue of concern, attempting to win the others hearts and minds over to our side of seeing things. We could have huge extravagant and gi-normous international no-expense-spared Eisteddfods – you know...like when all those high schools get together and sing their heads off at each other...that would be much more fun and entertaining and a lot less emotionally draining – maybe our army alter-native would be better off dressed like Priscilla of the Desert?

Alter-natives and army uniforms look too hypocritical for my liking. I know I wouldn't like to be an oxymoron. Let's not get sucked back down to playing the less enlightened games of war of our distant relatives. We are more creative than that.

Stay true to peace, eh?



NSW Greens candidate John Kaye presented a climate change forum at Djanbung Gardens last month.

Green briefs

Greens survive Tassie elections

Despite negative media reports it looks like the Greens will hold all four seats in Tasmania following the recent state election, despite being targeted by both major parties in a grubby smear campaign. During his concession speech Liberal Leader Rene Hidding declared – now infamously – that the Greens had only won two seats. In fact, one in six Tasmanians voted Green.

The media said the Greens couldn't win the Tasmanian seat of Bass and that the Greens candidate Kim Booth was gone for all money. It now looks like Booth will be elected after he beat off a challenge from the third ALP candidate. At no stage in the count has the media given him a chance. *The Age* newspaper claimed the Greens were suffering 'winter blues' and had been 'swept aside', and of course the Greens hater from the ABC, Antony Green, wrote the Greens off more than once. Paul Recher jumped on the bandwagon locally with a ranting 'eulogy' in the *Northern Star*.

Despite the unprecedented scare campaign involving hundreds of thousands of dollars from big business, the Exclusive Brethren and the major parties – the Greens have shone through to hold all 4 seats in Tasmania.

Counting continues in SA but it looks like the Greens will have their first MLC elected in the SA parliament. So despite the negative spin in the media, the Greens are far from losing support.

Greens legislate on jobs for ex-Ministers

Greens NSW MP Lee Rhiannon is planning a private members bill on political accountability that will include legislating ICAC's recommendations that ex-Ministers be barred for a period from taking jobs with the corporate sector.

"In NSW there is legislation restricting what jobs ex-police and liquor and gaming officials can walk into, but not MPs who have far greater power and influence," Ms Rhiannon said. "The potential for corruption is significant when ex-Ministers leave Macquarie Street and take up jobs with big business. Bob Carr, Nick Greiner, Richard Face and Craig Knowles have all taken this step up to lucrative jobs, without clear safeguards in place."

"The major parties have shown they can't be trusted to properly regulate this area because doing so would undermine their own interests. Premier Iemma has thumbed his nose at ICAC's June 2004 recommendations, showing Labor has little time for the corruption watchdog's work. The Premier seems to have taken pity on his Ministers, saying they have a right to earn a living after leaving politics." Ms Rhiannon said.

"The US and Canada have a good legislative model of a two year ban on positions in areas covering former portfolio responsibilities. In the US a breach attracts imprisonment, a fine or both."

Lets wait and see who supports Lee's Bill and who's snouts are in the trough...

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Going the extra mile for kids charities

Andreas Dagelet rolled into Nimbin with little fanfare, but Tuesday 28th March was no less an auspicious date.

It had been a year since this can-do paraplegic was last in Nimbin, and in the meantime he has completed 15,678.2kms of his round trip of Australia, with some 320km to go to finish his journey where he started, Coochiemudlo Island, Moreton Bay Queensland. This should qualify him for inclusion in the Guinness Book of Records.

"I wanted to do something that no-one's done before," the 49-year-old explained in the front bar of the Nimbin hotel. Having travelled extensively overseas sometimes with his handcycle, a technology that is only 15 years old, Andreas had acquired a great deal of experience, good and bad, and knew how to set up for such a journey.

Crucial to this set up was the equipping of the support vehicle, which towed a caravan as sleeping quarters. Solar power was an essential element of the set-up, allowing 240 volt power wherever they pulled up for the night. "It kept the beer cold," quipped Andreas.

He approached major sponsors for the trip, but was passed over by both Toyota



and Jayco. "When I couldn't get a sponsor, I thought I'll do it anyway," he said. He also wanted to raise money for children's charities, but when he approached them, they seemed to think it wasn't possible.

Undaunted, Redlands Shire Council set up a trust fund, and all monies raised, other than for tour expenses, go into that fund. The trustees make decisions on donations to worthy projects; those with simple realisable gains for particular kids, and a feasible budget, are supported.

Andreas said, "There were four believers in my journey, the Rainbow Power Company, my mother, Redlands Shire Council and the Coochiemudlo Island Progress Association," which raised \$1,000 in a raffle of artifacts, crafts and produce from the 300 residents, "plus untold mums and dads who chucked in \$5 or \$10 on the way, which

was essential to keeping us going."

To achieve his feat, Andreas rode 5-8 hours a day, averaging 70km per day at up to 15 km/hr, 5 days a week. The longest distance he travelled in a day was 182.98km across the Nullabor with a tailwind, and the fastest speed recorded was 84.4km/h down Break-neck Hill near Hobart.

He insists, "I'm just an average Joe, not a superman. I don't go to the gym or anything. I did it all on beer and pies, with the occasional steak." His typical day was to rise about 5am, depending on the sunrise, have a glass of water and jump on the cycle. He'd stop for a break at some point, sometimes having a snack, then pedal on, having some fish in the afternoon, and a big meal at night, such as T-bone steak and veges.

"What's the first thing I want when I get off the bike?" he asks his support crew. "A beer,"

they answer in unison.

The only other significant, and essential, creature comfort is a \$700 Roho cushion, made of dozens of large rubber air cells, each connected with individual valves. The 27-gear cycle originally cost \$4,500, plus \$2,000 of extras, and the support car and van.

His support crew of one or two was made up of family and friends as far as Perth, but on the way back he has had eight crews of backpackers. Between Adelaide and Melbourne he was fortunate to have a masseuse, Wendy, as a crew member, who knew the Hawaiian kahuna technique. Since Tasmania, the crew members have been Fabian from Germany and Gareth from Wales,

The vehicles carry high visibility warning signage, but this didn't stop him being pulled over once, by a puzzled policeman in FNQ. "He asked what I was doing. Riding my bike. Did I have a permit? No. We were travelling very slowly. Yes. Then he took half an hour talking to his superiors on his radio before he let us continue on," Andreas said. Nor did the signage prevent a motorist near Port Macquarie from ploughing into the back of the van at about 100km/h, writing it off.



Pictures: Dave Christmas

On the up-side, he has not had a puncture for 8,000km, and it is 12,000km since he replaced the cycle's front tyre, which is looking threadbare. "I'm not replacing it if I don't need to," he said simply.

Andreas discovered schools might be interested in his odyssey when he stopped at St Lawrence, a little town about halfway between Brisbane and Townsville. According to the rules, dignitaries must sign his book to verify his visit, and when he approached the town's CEO, he suggested it, and rang the principal of the local school, who said "Come on down."

"The reception by the 28 students was great. The kids were stoked, they were amazed I'd gone that far - less than 500km - and they all had rides on the bike," said Andreas. Since then he has done 50-60 schools, and has polished his presentation. "I would have liked it to have

been more, but I had to ride the bike," he said.

Andreas spent the Wednesday doing media interviews, speaking to students at Nimbin Central School about goals, dreams and self-belief, and taking the donations bucket around local businesses.

"It was the quickest \$500 I've ever collected," he said at a reception held for him at the Rainbow Power Company on Wednesday night. "100% of the people I approached gave money. Everyone in Nimbin is interested and generous. I'm so glad I changed my itinerary to be here."

Supporting his stay in Nimbin were the hotel, the pizzeria, Mick Martin and the Rainbow Power Co. Andreas rolled out of the village on Thursday morning, heading for a civic reception on Coochiemudlo Island on 3rd April - exactly a year since he started.

Moving South - Crocs, Gators & Global Warming

by Ian Browne

In relation to the UK Government report in February warning of dangerous levels of greenhouse gas emissions due to the world's dismissal of renewable energy technology, I would first like to state that the following information isn't folly, but it is based on research that I have been formulating for some time now. My hypothesis is that crocodylus porosus is moving south and we had better ready ourselves to facilitate its needs, considering it is 'we' as a human species that has more than likely caused 'tropification' of the environment around us.

Crocs won't be the only beasts on the move. Increased numbers of migrating birds from Northern Queensland and

Papua New Guinea are sure to be mobile also as well as the infamous box jellyfish.

So when are they coming? Trends and statistics are debatable as to just how fast average annual temperatures will rise. Considering that ocean temperatures along the Southern Queensland/Northern NSW coastline have at times reached into the high 20's centigrade (at least in the past 5 years or so), and as croc numbers at present have exploded to an estimated 80,000 in tropical Australia, we will at least see a few salties wandering south over the warmer months within the next 5 to 10 years in search of prey and habitat. Despite the diverse and negative implications of coastal urbanisation and industrial impacts, winters at present are far too cold to facilitate this very tropical reptile's physiological and biological needs. Many other environmental factors will hamper the actual colonisation of crocodiles, including a lack of suitable riparian zone nesting sites (e.g. such as reedy-grass banks) and perhaps a lack of suitable fish and mammal prey species. Intensified global-warming induced storm frequency and intensity, similar to the category 2 cyclone we just accommodated recently, will modify the environment and cause pressure on desired ecosystems, thus impacting greatly on the ecological functioning of these aquatic habitats.

But fear not, the 'tropification' of our subtropical regions is a reality that is occurring right now! Look around you; cock your ear to the evening springtime sky, what birds are migrating south? The diversification of mangrove communities will occur and improve aquatic tropical species' adaptation to this southern environment. Some look only at the bitumen line transporting us to work and back on a daily basis. I'm just gesturing to you all as a community to better understand your environment and ready yourselves to welcome the hordes of animal species that will need refuge as they travel south in search of a home which allows them to survive in changing climates and ecology.

We are currently on the threshold of a huge fauna and flora extinction phase and should adopt a nurturing role as caretakers not hindering discriminators. We should formulate community driven policies to facilitate nature's varying needs.

I'm not here to spread hysteria, I just want people to be strong and provide for a concerted effort in the protection of wandering species. I speak for the many people who care for the environment, which you and I do not own, but share.

• Listen to the whole free to air broadcast download with Ian via Martin Jansen at <http://nimbinradiomedia.libsyn.com> ('Moving South--' as in above title.)

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