

## Nimbin poets rule

The outcome of the 2006 Lismore Poetry Cup has further established Nimbin's excellence in this ancient performing art, with Nimbin local Robin Archbold winning the prestigious Cup with his poem "Falling Man" (reproduced below).

The Encouragement Award went to another local, Robert Rose, while the People's Choice Award went to Max Strong of Kyogle, who has previously competed in the Nimbin Performance Poetry Cup.

Nimbin's Community Economic Officer David Hallett, himself no souch at penning the odd couplet, compered the enthralling night at the Lismore's Rous Hotel.



Poetry nights are held on the second Thursday of the month at the Nimbin Oasis Cafe, with a big one coming up in November to launch the third edition of new poetry performed at the venue.

Nimbin is a veritable incubator of poetry, it seems.

## The Falling Man

*The Falling Man is calling me  
Captured in a shutter's blink  
Suspended halfway from the 92nd floor of The World Trade Centre  
Head pointing to the ground so far and near  
He gives me time to think*

*He stands inverted  
Posture slightly back with one leg raised  
Foot beside opposite knee as if leaning against a wall  
Just chillin' on his coffee break  
Outside frame the skyscraper burns  
But The Falling Man doesn't seem to care  
His universe stripped of all but air*

*It's like the camera has frozen time  
He isn't coming  
He isn't going  
He's just there*

*His surrender amidst the terror and chaos  
Is the image that America can't bear to see  
For its culture prefers homicide to suicide  
There are no Americans strapping explosives to their bodies*

*He's a cook in a restaurant on the 92nd floor but no nearer my  
God to thee  
He ain't thinkin' about the good ol' US of A  
Not today  
The scorch of death licks at the door  
And the mortgage is not on his mind*

*The Falling Man seems so serene that my spirit pays attention  
Then I realize  
He isn't falling  
He's flying  
He's free*

*He looked like an angel to me*

©Robin Archbold September 2006

# An Inconvenient Storm

A freak isolated storm tore through the Larnook area last Thursday night, with cyclonic winds uprooting huge trees and blocking access on several roads. Lismore City Council and SES crews responded to calls and worked during the night to clear roads in the vicinity. Two huge trees fell either side of the Larnook Primary School, narrowly missing buildings.

In an ironic turn of events, Andy Gough, the Greens candidate for Lismore, was driving home with his wife and neighbours from the premiere Lismore screening of *An Inconvenient Truth*, the new documentary film about climate change, which attracted a crowd of about 250 people.

"The irony of driving home from a film about climate change only to find our neighbourhood trashed in a freak storm - what can I say? This is no coincidence. This is an issue that is slapping us all in the face, and saying 'Do something - NOW!'. We should all volunteer with the SES and the RFS because there's going to be more and more demand for emergency services as climate change gets worse



**Freaky.** One of several trees uprooted by fierce winds at Lamook Primary School (not a shed) last Thursday night. Picture: Georgie Gough

and these incidents increase, which they will, the way governments are currently dragging us. This is going to be a big clean up job," Andy explained.

"There were branches and leaves all over the road. We also picked up a bird we came across while inspecting some fallen trees across a neighbour's driveway - it had been injured, so we took it to a nearby wildlife carer, who had also just seen the film. I can't help but wonder

how many other animals were injured in the storm," Andy's wife, Georgie, said.

"About this time last year a freak hailstorm appeared out of nowhere and trashed six skylights in my house. This time I was lucky. And I'm insured. But my neighbours - many of them aren't. The carnage on the road started around where the school is, it's lucky to have escaped damage. Most likely if it had been hit, the NSW govt would have

simply closed the school rather than repair it," Andy said.

The cost of the cleanup works has been estimated at close to \$10,000 at this stage.

"I encourage everybody to go and see *An Inconvenient Truth*, then vote for solutions - not smokescreen," Mr Gough said.

• More climate change reports on pages 8 & 17.

## Disaster team shortfall

Nimbin would face a shortage of trained people to deal with victims of a disaster, should one strike the area, according to Vahideh Hosseini, Regional Manager of Red Cross Northern NSW.

"The urgent need for appropriately trained emergency services personnel has been highlighted by the bushfires and floods in NSW. Fortunately, we haven't had a lot of natural or man-made disasters in Nimbin, but if disaster does strike in the area, there is a shortage of trained people to care for those affected," she said.

Red Cross provides personnel to care for those impacted by a disaster, meeting and registering people at evacuation centres, taking time to listen and care, providing information on other participating organisations, and a variety of other practical tasks to assist those in need at such a time. Red Cross is a participating organisation in the NSW Disaster Plan, recruiting members of the local community to provide Personal

Support to disaster victims, usually in their own or a neighbouring area.

Vahideh Hosseini said, "It is extremely important to increase the number of trained volunteers in this region so that they can work in shifts if necessary, and the one-day course is essential. Often people are moved to offer their services when a disaster arises, but without proper training their good intentions are of little help. Employers are sometimes willing for their workers to become involved, but unless people are trained beforehand they cannot be effective in times of disaster."

Red Cross will be conducting a free Personal Support training course in Nimbin, with Morning Tea and Lunch also provided, from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm on Thursday, 23rd November 2006 at the Nimbin School of Arts.

"Personal Support volunteers need to be team players, caring and practical, with a good deal of common sense and a listening ear," Vahideh Hosseini said. Red Cross are looking for people with the



following qualities:

- 18 years or older; able to work an occasional shift of six to ten hours
- A good listener, people from different backgrounds and cultures; literate in English
- Willing to be trained and work with others in a team led by Red Cross
- Practical, with commonsense; calm in emergencies

To find out more about the course, or if you are wanting to register, please call Lyndall on 6622-3244.

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# Women's Dinner

This year's Nimbin Women's Dinner will be held on Wednesday 6th December at Nimbin Town Hall (School of Arts) with the meal starting at 7pm. As the food was so good last year we are having the same caterers this year, with a Middle Eastern banquet being served to the tables.

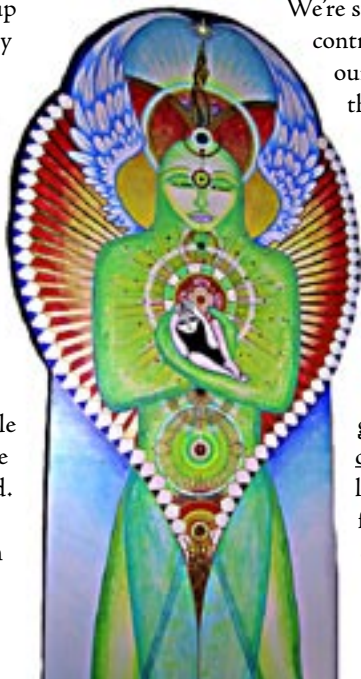
To strengthen Nimbin's community of women by providing an opportunity for us to get together, meet new people, have a great time, be informed and inspired and celebrate being a woman.

This year the evening's entertainment will kick off with something different: a short documentary film featuring Nimbin's young women, highlighting the positive aspects of growing up here. The film will be followed by a tea/coffee and cake break with a surprise activity that will get women up and chatting with each other. Live entertainment will include Williamina, the Tap Bitches, Christine Strelan, Jeddah Bayles, and Bobbin, finishing up with the beautiful voice of Gabbi Bliss. It promises to be a fun and uplifting night out. A photographic display 'The Female Journey' will be on show so come along and be moved and inspired.

Tickets are \$10 conc; \$15 waged and will be available from Perceptio's bookshop from 20th November. Tickets sold out last year so book early.



## CALLING ALL FEMALE PHOTOGRAPHERS!



We're still looking for contributions to our exhibition at the dinner, with the theme 'The Female Journey', so if you'd like to show your work ring me on 66891145, email me on [garden@nor.com.au](mailto:garden@nor.com.au) or leave a note for me with contact details at the Nimbin

Neighbourhood Centre. For ease of display we are asking for unframed work. You don't have to be an expert... you could contribute a photo or series of photos documenting an aspect of your own life, such as building a house or being with your children. It would add meaning to the work if you could include some text explaining the images.

## DO YOU LOVE TO BAKE??

The women's dinner is heavily subsidised by fundraising and donations so that we can keep the ticket costs to a minimum. If you would like to help by baking a cake we will reimburse you for the ingredients, (and love you forever!) and you will be helping us to continue this event. If you can, let me know.

The Women's Dinner is an initiative of the Nimbin Domestic Violence Committee with support from the Nimbin Safe Community Project.

# Oasis of poetry

Nimbin Performance Poets of the Oasis Cafe invite you to the launch of "Midflight at the Oasis," the third book of Poetry from the Oasis poets.

From the beginners to the winners of various awards and Poetry Cups, this collection of poems showcases the diverse talents of the performers brave enough to share their thoughts, ideas and ideals with us all.

Poets appearing on the night will be doing readings

from the newly published book. So, please, come along and share.

A voice of sanity in this insane world we find ourselves a part of.

We will also be celebrating Scorpio's birthdays - bring your instruments, your sense of humour, your joy and party on into the night.

Hope to see you there on Thursday 9th November from 7pm.

Gail M. Clarke  
Nimbin Performance Poetry

## Golden oldies onscreen

As a fundraiser, the Nimbin Open Learning Centre will present a feast of films and food with 8 weeks of Silver Screen Classics from the 20s to the 50s, at the dance studio, Community Centre in Cullen Street.

You get two movies for \$7, with fabulous, cheap, nutritious, fresh food available. Tea, coffee, cordial and other drinks.

### Programme

Wed Nov 1 *Cat on a Hot tin Roof* (Paul Newman), *Some Like it Hot* (Tony Curtis, Marilyn Monroe)

Wed Nov 8 *Pink Panther* Night

Wed Nov 15 *Notorious*, *To Catch a Thief* (Hitchcock)

Wed Nov 22 *Days of Wine and Roses* (Anne Bancroft), *An Affair to Remember* (Deborah Kerr)

Wed Nov 29 *Easy Rider*, *Midnight Cowboy*

Wed Dec 6 *Citizen Kane*, *Dr Zhivago*

Wed Dec 13 *Wuthering Heights*, *Under Milkwood*

Special Session: *Gone with the Wind*, date to be announced.

## Nimbin Central School Orientation Days

Kindergarten: Monday, 16th November 2006, 9.30 - 11.00 am

Year 7: Friday, 24 November 2006, 9.00 am - 3.00 pm

Please come to the front office of the school with your child/ren. You will then be shown where the activities will be happening. We have planned a variety of fun and information sessions which will make you and your child/ren look forward to the coming school year with excitement and anticipation.

Enquiries: Manuela Matheson-Geiss, (CLO), 6689-1355 Wednesdays, 6689-7457 other times.

## Auction of antiques and old wares

The Nimbin Women and Children's Health and

Wellbeing Centre Inc is having a fundraiser to help establish a Safe House in Nimbin at the Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre, Nimbin Community Centre, from 12 noon on Sunday 19th November. Michael Balderstone will be Auctioneer.

This will be followed by food and drinks afterwards.

For any enquiries about the auction phone 6689 7129 or 6689 1170.

## Nimbin Players Meeting

A meeting will be held in the Nimbin Town Hall on Saturday 25th November from 10.30 am to discuss the future of the Nimbin Players. We would like all current Players, and any one interested in being involved in this great group of thespians, to come along to this meeting.

# The 'Too-Hard Basket' Case

by Moksha

The Nimbin Women and Children's Health and Wellbeing Centre Inc will soon be opening its doors to local women and children. The name for the Centre will be fondly known as "The Too-Hard Basket".

This is the 'too-hard basket' by government authorities and others. We aim to show that nothing really is too hard to overcome, especially in our unique and wonderful Nimbin, where the spirit of family, sharing and caring is strong.

The news of the establishment of this Centre has been widely welcomed by a large cross-section of our community including many of our brothers. Many expressed the view that the Centre was long overdue.

Regular community consultations took place at the Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre (community centre) and

an Interim Management Committee was voted in to take care of the business of setting up this centre. Our first Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday 10th November, from 10am at the Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre, where a new management Committee will be voted in to take care of future business. After six months of consultation we are ready to be of service.

The Centre will have a range of services available to women including crisis accommodation. More information on these services will become available once our negotiations with government funding bodies are completed. In the meantime we are asking for support and assistance from our generous Nimbin community for the setting up of the premises.

Donations to the centre can include furniture, kitchenware, bedding, office goods (paper, pens, computers, etc).

As well, we are having an AUCTION of old wares/ antiques - donated by our community - on Nimbin Market Day, Sunday 19th November at the Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre at 12 pm.

Any goods you have can be taken to a safe lock up with one of our voluntary members before the auction. All goods will be receipted and gratefully accepted. To organise your antiques to be dropped off before the date, please phone Natalie on 6689-1170. Goods will be accepted on the day but please let us know what you are bringing.

The chief auctioneer is Michael Balderstone who used to run the antique/old wares shop where the current Museum is. After the Auction, food and drinks are happening, so please bring something to share.

Anyone interested in further information on our new Centre can phone 6689-7129.

## A great place to stay



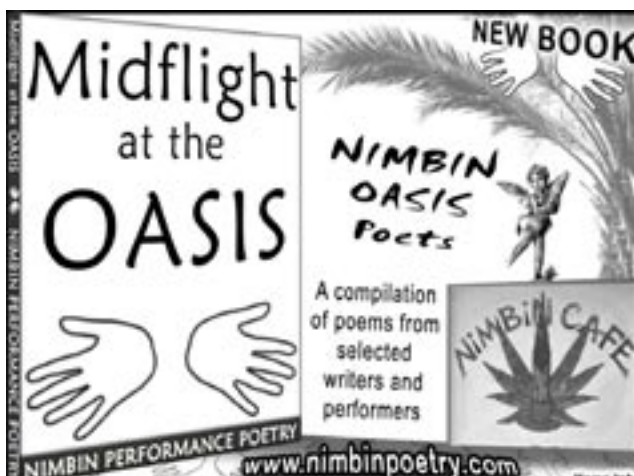
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# Celebrating our Children

*"It takes a village to raise a child"*

by Mel McMillan

The children of the Nimbin district celebrated International Children's Week on 26th October, with a huge street parade and fair in the heart of the village.

Around 300 children and their parents marched down Cullen Street in a colorful swirl of costumes, flags and banners, while onlookers lined the streets and cheered.

After the long march from Nimbin Community Pre-school to Peace Park, the children were entertained by puppeteers, clowns, stilt-walkers and face painters.

Event organiser Lishia O'Rielly described the day as an overwhelming success and said the community had wanted to come together to acknowledge Nimbin as a child friendly place and to celebrate their children.

"Nimbin is the most child-friendly community in Australia. In other places it is unusual to have events that include children. But here, every event includes children. They are cared for and are a part of everything we do."

Lishia, who spent her own early childhood in Nimbin, said, "There's more to Nimbin than the street scene. Out in the hills are many amazing people. It's a magical place for children."

Nimbin dad Phil Hawkins took his son Jasper along, and said that in the six months he has been living in Nimbin he and his partner, Tara, have been blown away by the amount of support they have received. Tara gave birth to their second son, Cooper, just



12 days ago.

"We've had people dropping in meals, we've had other people providing a nappy service," Phil said. "We feel we have been embraced by the community very quickly. It's an amazing place. You just don't get this kind of stuff in the city."

Early childhood educator and mother of three, Maree Conway said the day would help families connect. "Many people in this area do not have a traditional family network for support. We rely on our friends and the community for that support. There is a lot of isolation in Nimbin. Events like this help people build networks."

The Nimbin Children's Parade was attended by Nimbin Pre-school, Tumble Falls Pre-school and The Channon Pre-school, and was organised by a group of parents and the Nimbin Family Centre.

Marie Hainaut, co-ordinator of the Nimbin Family Centre said, "On behalf of the Organising Committee, I would like to thank a few people for making the Childrens Celebration Day

the success it was." She went on to name 30 people and 18 organisations, with details of their individual contributions, too much to print here, but you know who you are.

She concluded, "Most of all thank you to the children who were the inspiration for this day of celebration, who created such beautiful Art & Craft for the exhibition and decorations for the site. Their smiling faces were the best reward."

**WANTED** Pregnant women who have not yet made a decision about immunisation to participate in a reality radio program. Contact Mel McMillan 6689-7041



## Need to correct inequities in preschool funding

The NSW state government presides over a dual system of pre-school funding. Over 800 pre-schools are funded by the Department of Community Services (DoCS), while 100 preschools receive funding from the Department of Education (DET). The 100 DET preschools receive funding of approximately \$240,000 per centre with parents contributing approximately \$2-\$5 per day. DoCs funded pre-schools receive on average \$74,000 per annum and parents of pre-schoolers in those centres can pay over \$30 per day.

The preschool funding lobby group Children's Choice is calling upon the Labor Government to correct the two-tiered system of funding for preschools within the state and calling on the premier to explain why his government has failed to correct this inequity.

### Community based pre-schools - funding crisis

Imagine if a state government fully funded 10% of the state's public primary schools, where parents paid minimal fees of perhaps \$2-\$6 per day, but only partially funded the remaining 90%. Parents whose children attended these schools were forced to pay up to \$35 per day. Imagine if people whose children attend Nimbin Central School paid \$150 per term, while those who attend Coffee Camp or Barkers Vale schools had to pay \$1000's to send their child to those schools. This is not an issue about private versus public education - most pre-schools are publicly funded but some receive considerably more funding.

*NSW has the lowest pre-school participation rate in the country - 59% compared to 96% nationally.*

*NSW parents pay the highest pre-school fees in the country and community-based preschools in NSW are seriously under-funded and face closure - all 800 of them.*

### The Benefits of Pre-School

Research both within Australia and overseas recognises the importance of early childhood education. Research demonstrates the importance of a quality preschool education in giving children the best possible start to their formal schooling years. Children who receive quality play-based education between 3-5 years of age usually transition to formal education more easily and demonstrate long term benefits in their social, numeracy and literacy skills.

According to director of Nimbin Pre School and member of Children's Choice, Dianne Gregory, the benefits of early childhood education are far-reaching. "Research by early childhood educators clearly demonstrates long term benefits to children in their social, numeracy and literacy skills. A quality pre-school education is a springboard to positive outcomes in later education."

Spokesperson for Children's Choice, Jennifer Bell said, "In most other

states families are provided with free preschool education. NSW has the lowest participation rate in preschool education, with only 59% of our four year olds attending a preschool, compared to 96% nationally. The reason for this is quite simply that the fees community based preschools are forced to charge parents is out of reach to 40 % of NSW families. The Lemma government is shirking its responsibility for our kids and our future. 40% of children in this state are missing out on this vital step in the education process."

"Aren't our preschoolers worth more than \$200 per year to this government? In the lead up to the state election in March next year, parents in NSW must ask themselves what this government is doing for preschools in their area," Jennifer Bell explained.

### Children's Choice

Children's Choice, "the voice for NSW preschoolers", is a grassroots organisation established by preschool staff, parents and other preschool stakeholder groups from across New South Wales.

There are presently over 350 pre-schools under the Children's Choice 'banner' and the number is growing daily as parents across NSW realise the inequities in the present system.

• Contact Dianne at Nimbin Pre-School by phoning 6689 1203 or call Jennifer Bell (Sydney) on 0414 763 595.

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# Rainbow Ridge Cabaret Night



**Flashback.** Past students (left to right) Max Ryder, Eileen Hodgkins, Yumula Mariussen, Khadi Wolf-Brooke, Ariana Weiherman, Lucia Schulz, Lisa Scott, Georgena Schulz, Taam Cooper-Se Poy.

Rainbow Ridge Steiner School is holding its 3rd Annual Children's Cabaret Night Fundraiser and Reunion at Hanging Rock Hall, Williams Road, Barkersvale, on Saturday 11th November at 5pm sharp.

Dinner and Dessert on sale at 6.30 pm, and all proceeds will go towards the school's snow trip and library books.

Come and support the students, past and present, in a night of performances from brother and sister song and dance duo Lear and Eileen Hogkins, classical and contemporary dance with Khadi and Jarieus Wolfe- Brooke, as well as comedy, drama, piano, violin and song.

For more information contact Elizabeth Wolf, ph 6689-7033

# New hosts at the retro Café

Nimbin's newest café, the retro, changed hands a few weeks back, and the new owners have shown they can keep just as high a standard of fare as their popular predecessors.

For Garry and Carolyne Scott-Bridges and their son Shannon, running a cafe is a new venture, though they have had plenty of experience in related fields - Garry as a manager of a Gold Coast nightclub, and Carolyne's work in a busy hamburger joint at Circular Quay - valuable experience in catering for the lunch time rush!

They moved to Nimbin's Basil Road from Brisbane two years ago, following Shannon's lead. "It's a great village," said Garry simply.

He is obviously optimistic about the future of Nimbin, and keen to help reinvigorate the ailing Chamber of Commerce, in the doldrums during the tourist season's cyclical quiet time.

"Trade was slow when we



started, and we expected that, but we've been flat out in the past week or so," he said.

Garry and Carolyne have plans to further develop the services of the café, notably by introducing extended hours on Friday and

Saturday nights for dinner.

Additional screening of the courtyard is also on the agenda, to support the café's aim of providing "a different Nimbin environment," one that is well worth checking out.

See their ad on this page.

# Revitalising Nimbin Markets

Cat Anderson is the new co-ordinator of the vibrant Nimbin Markets, held 3rd and 5th Sundays each month in the grounds of the Community Centre.

Cat says she love the vibe of the buzzy markets, which bring crowds of people from near and far. More stalls are wanted. Phone Cat on 0429-194-248 if you are interested.



**Marketing.** Cat Anderson (above) clothes-shopping; Talia and Melody (left) might talk Scott and Sara into taking home a mushroom or two; the chai stall (right).



# Cup fever



The Melbourne Cup is one thing but Raven and Carla of the Nimbin Pony Club are happy to walk their horses around the hills of Nimbin. Photo: Sue Stock

## Nimbin Turf Club presents *The Lovin' It Bistro* Melbourne Cup Special

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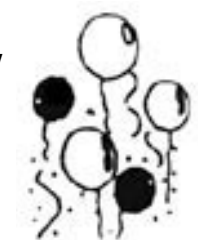
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### Great solar fantasy

I see in the October issue that the readers are once again subjected to the great solar fantasy of no power bills.

The author and local Greens candidate, Mr. Gough, writes the piece "Red Tape...Solar Incentives" because he is replacing his batteries.

Replacing his batteries! They are not cheap Mr Gough writes. Now I don't know what planet Mr Gough is from but it seems to me he has a power bill and a quite substantial one at that.

I sold my solar system and went back to the grid as it was cheaper over the life of the solar system to get the same amount of power from the grid, it was also no surprise that it was also greener to get that amount of power from the grid.

At the level of use Mr. Gough talks about, it is common that the user is paying more and doing more environmental damage than an equivalent user on the grid. "There is no better feeling," Mr. Gough writes.

Solar power, as it stands, has its place but it needs to be applied appropriately if it is to be cheaper and/or greener than the grid. I'm glad I don't get "solar" power bills.

S. Jones  
Billen Cliffs

### Reply to Mal Rothwell

I write in reply to Mal Rothwell's attack on the integrity of the NCDA and Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre. Mal's derogatory and misogynistic comments are not deserving of a response, but I'd like to correct some of the untruths he is trying to pass off as facts.

While it is true that the NCDA and NNIC are the two largest organisations in Nimbin, this is as a result of years of hard work, dedication and public support. These two organisations in no way replace or compete with smaller organisations. In fact, NNIC has in many cases supported the establishment of other organisations and projects, or used our status as an incorporated body to

auspice other projects. To say that our two organisations are the 'only two left standing' is to fail to recognise the many other valuable organisations thriving in Nimbin.

As for 'jobs for the girls', NNIC, as I'm sure is the case with the NCDA, employs paid staff in strict and demonstrable accordance with the EEO requirements. If there are more female workers than male in these organisations, it is because they were the most qualified for the position.

The inception of the NNIC was, as far as I can remember, in the late seventies not the early nineties as Mal suggests, with the aim of helping all those in need and supporting community development. It is not, and never has been, an exclusive 'club', and membership is open to all. Both NNIC and NCDA have only one committee each, not a 'conglomeration' as Mal suggests.

As for the suggestion that NNIC and NCDA monopolise and control the flow of funding that flows through our town, what a joke! There is no flow of funding for Nimbin, and we certainly don't have any control over funding. When I started work at NNIC as a Welfare Worker nine years ago, very little money was coming into our community at all. It is thanks to the efforts of organisations such as NNIC and NCDA that public money has in the past few years come into Nimbin to fund new services and projects. Some of these include the Nimbin Family Day Care Centre, Nimbin Safe Community Project, Nimbin Neighbourhood Improvement Project, Nimbin Domestic Violence Committee, Vacation Care.

New services and resources don't just magically appear. Funding becomes available through various sources, for specific purposes, and can be applied for by any organisation. Mal seems to be under the impression that we get funding which would otherwise go to sports clubs

### About us

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or the show society. This is not true. Public funding is made available for a variety of services and projects including welfare, sports and the arts.

As a Welfare provider, NNIC applies for the kind of funding that relates to our core business, but we encourage other interest groups and organisations to do the same and we have on many occasions given support to other organisations' funding applications. Funding is often the end result of years of hard work. Workers from our organisations have spent many (often frustrating) years attending meetings, both local and regional, to lobby for better services in Nimbin.

Workers spend many hours searching for possible sources of funding, and writing submissions of which only the occasional one is successful. We apply for funding in response to need in the community.

An example of this is the childcare centre. The NNIC welfare service recognised an unmet need for childcare in Nimbin, conducted public consultation, approached funding bodies, and eventually put in a successful submission to establish a childcare centre before passing on the auspice to Lismore Family Day Care Service. The establishment of the centre would not have been possible without the availability of a suitable building at the NCDA's Community Centre.

Similarly, the Nimbin Family Centre owes its site to the NCDA. Both organisations were also

involved in the initial stages of establishing this service in Nimbin. Without the NCDA there would be nowhere to house the range of services that are sited in the heart of the community.

As for being incompetent, to obtain funding an organisation must demonstrate a capacity to successfully manage the project and acquit the funding. Our long and successful record of welfare provision is what has enabled us to attract any funding we have received, and that funding is spent on projects to benefit the community. Our own core funding is woefully inadequate.

Mal's description of our organisations as the 'uptown money machine' which has had access to 'millions of dollars' would be great if it were true, but the reality is that both organisations have had to manage on very small budgets, which has at times threatened their existence.

In my time working at NNIC, I have seen staff and volunteers from both organisations selflessly giving untold hours and a lot of blood, sweat and tears for the betterment of our community. To see them libelled and insulted in Mal's letter is very disappointing.

Mandie Hale

### Midwife or doula wanted

I am looking for a doula or midwife (registered or unregistered) in the Nimbin area who could help facilitate a homebirth. This is my second child (the first was

also a homebirth) and he/she is due in the first week of February.

Please contact [nomadnell@inorbit.com](mailto:nomadnell@inorbit.com) or call 6689-7001.

Nell Berry

### Open Letter To Truckies in The Region

On Thursday evening, October 12th, my car was parked in the Main Street of Alstonville - a semi travelling towards Ballina happened to have his rear door fly open as he came through town. My car copped damage up the drivers side, and another gentleman parked two spaces behind me had his side view mirror obliterated. The truck kept on going through the roundabout, and because number plate details weren't noted it is hard to track down the driver responsible.

I'll give the driver the benefit of the doubt, and maybe he didn't realise he'd hit a couple of parked cars.

The incident was reported to police Thursday night, the Alstonville officer was at Lennox on a job and the Woodburn police were somewhere else as well. No clear ID on which trucking company the vehicle belonged to, no chance of finding the driver, hence my desperate plea!

If you (or one of your drivers) were going through Alstonville just after 7.30 p.m on Thursday October 12th, could it have been you? Please, do the right thing and come forward....with a young family we don't need the added expense of fixing my car. I can be contacted on 6628-1431.

Michela Brown

### Meetings

#### NCDA

Nimbin Community Development Association  
Annual General Meeting  
Thursday 2nd November, 2006  
6pm - Dance Studio, Nimbin Community Centre  
Enquiries to Marcus 6689-0000

### A&I

Nimbin A & I Society Inc  
Annual General Meeting  
Tuesday 14th November, 2006  
6pm - Nimbin Showgrounds  
Any enquiries to Secretary 6624-8379

### CTC

Nimbin Community Technology Centre  
Annual General Meeting  
Thursday 16th November  
5pm - Nimbin Community Centre

### Obituary



#### Allan Robson

On Sunday the 1st of October 2006 I was informed that Allan Robson, formally of Websters Creek Community and lately from Murwillumbah passed away in Murwillumbah Hospital at 1.40pm at the young age of 45 after being diagnosed with liver cancer in November 2005.

Allan and I had been close friends for many, many years. He was one of the most honest friends and straight-dealing businessman I have ever met. Allan touched the hearts of everyone he knew. He was extremely well liked within this community, and it is indeed sad that he left us so soon, after finally finding true happiness again with his new partner.

Everyone I have spoken to that knew Allan is totally devastated that he left us at such a young age. He is survived by his elder daughter Ester and his son Jera and also by his youngest daughter Laylani, whom have all lost a loving and devoted father.

Rest In Peace

Dave C

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# NRUN Forum

Northern Rivers Social Development Council and Northern Rivers Unionist Network are hosting a community forum on WorkChoices and Welfare to Work on Wednesday November 15, 4.30pm to 6.30pm in the Fountain Room at Lismore City Hall.

The forum will look at the impact of these two pieces of legislation on people in our area. Speakers include Michael Raper (Welfare Rights Centre), Peter Davidson (Australian Council of Social service), Paul Doughty (ACTU), Dr Yvonne Hartman (SCU) and Angela Pollard (NRUN).

This is an important opportunity for Nimbin people to learn about the changes, to express your opinions and tell your stories of the impacts of these new laws.

Auslan interpreters will be provided. Childcare is available but must be pre-booked at NRSDC by 10th November on 6622 3030.

**COMMUNITY FORUM**  
**WORK CHOICES & WELFARE TO WORK**

Are you an employer or small business owner?  
Are you a welfare recipient?  
Are you a single parent, a person with disabilities?  
Are you from an Aboriginal background?  
Are you from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background?  
Are you currently unemployed?  
Are you thinking of entering the workforce?  
Are you a student or a young person about to enter the job market?  
Are you the parent of a young person about to enter the job market?

**IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS, THIS FORUM IS FOR YOU!**

Dr Yvonne Hartman - Southern Cross University  
Michael Raper - Welfare Rights Centre  
Peter Davidson - Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS)  
Angela Pollard - Northern Rivers Unionist Network (NRUN)  
Paul Doughty - Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)  
+ other local representatives for a panel discussion

**FOUNTAIN ROOM**  
**LISMORE CITY HALL**  
**WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 15TH • 4:30 - 6:30PM**

## Slow Down, You Hoover Too Fast

Humans consuming planet's resources at unprecedented rate, warns WWF  
Humans are consuming the planet's resources 25 percent faster than the earth can renew them, a rate "unprecedented in human history," the World Wildlife Fund said today in its 2006 Living Planet Report. If we keep it up, we'll need two planets' worth of natural resources by mid-century, and "exhaustion of ecological assets and large-scale ecosystem collapse become increasingly likely," says the report. The United Arab Emirates is stressing the planet most per capita, followed by the U.S., Finland, and Canada. Humanity's ecological footprint more than tripled between 1961 and 2003, outpacing the global population, which more than doubled in that time period. Pollution, deforestation, habitat loss, and overfishing have caused the populations of many species to decline by about a third since 1970, WWF said. But hey, good news -- if we reduce carbon dioxide emissions and fish catches by a full 50 percent, we could break even in resource use by 2080!

## It's Bout Time

Humanity faces the fight of a lifetime against heavyweight climate change  
What floats like a butterfly, stings like a bee, and wreaks havoc all over the globe? Yes, folks, it's the modern-day version of Muhammad Ali: climate change. Auden Schendler says it's time for us to screw up our

courage and get into the ring with this new brand of heavyweight. Will it hurt? Oh, hell yes. But aren't a few bruises better than idly watching the world as we know it come to an end?

## Pretty in Sink

Carbon trading market could help save rainforests  
Rainforests are worth far more intact, acting as carbon sinks, than if they're cleared for farmland or pasture, the World Bank said yesterday, and therefore countries should be compensated for keeping trees standing. Enter: the global carbon market, where polluters must pay to offset excessive carbon dioxide emissions. The World Bank's Kenneth Chomitz explains that a hypothetical deforested pasture may be worth \$300, while the carbon offset provided by a rainforest could be worth \$7,500. (Maintaining habitat for endangered wildlife: priceless.) "Compensation for avoiding deforestation could help developing countries to improve forest governance and boost rural incomes, while helping the world at large to mitigate climate change more vigorously," says World Bank economist Francois Bourguignon. It's an idea whose time has come: The planet's forests are disappearing at a rate of 5 percent every decade, and the World Bank estimates that deforestation contributes up to 20 percent of global CO2 emissions.

## Fire Rage

A Rosebank Fire Brigade Fundraiser will be held on Saturday 4th November at Repentance Creek Hall, from 8pm till late.  
Enjoy live music with Tex Perkins, Michelle Fitness and friends, Dan the DJ, and

other local bands  
Sausage sizzle, licensed bar, food and beverages  
Tickets cost \$10 on the night. Strictly no BYO.  
Come and enjoy the music, rage on supporting your local RFS.

# Om around the world



The universe is calling. The time is now. On November 11th, at 11am, OM for peace at Nimbin Peace Park or wherever you are. OM

## Council Jottings by Jenny Dowell

### Marathon meeting

Council's October meeting was a marathon with over five hours of listening, debate and considered voting on a wide range of issues. At every Council meeting there is an opportunity for up to 8 speakers to address Council on different agenda items for up to 5 minutes each in the Public Access Session. In addition, people in the gallery are invited to ask questions of the Councillors or staff on any Council matter in Public Question Time.  
In front of a full gallery, the business of the meeting commenced with four motions from individual Councillors including motions not to proceed with the fluoridation of the Lismore water supply (lost 3/9), to review the code of practice for rodeos (lost on Mayor's casting vote) and to investigate options for a larger Goonellabah Recreation Centre (unanimous).

Also on the agenda were applications for rezoning two areas in Macleans Ridges to allow 97 rural residential lots. These were both carried and the amendments will be placed on 28 days public exhibition for comment.



Lismore Park

One of the most important items on the agenda was the Draft Plan of Management for Lismore Park, the vast tracts of open space between the CBD and Lismore Square that have been described as the 'green lungs' of our city. Readers may recall that Council discussed a flawed version of the plan in September and, following a successful rescission motion and a workshop, this improved version will now go on 42 days exhibition.

In addition, copies of the Plan will be sent to groups with an interest in the park and an independently chaired public hearing will be held in the new year. There is considerable detail requiring careful consideration and I urge everyone interested in the future of this wonderful asset to take some time to read the Plan and provide your feedback.

Readers will also recall

the discussions on the flying foxes in Rotary Park and the need to restore the preferred but degraded habitat area at Currie Park. Council will consider a regular monetary allocation for works in the Park during our budget deliberations in the new year. Meanwhile, works are progressing in Currie Park while the flying foxes, having returned to Rotary Park are now birthing.

Residents considering development of land may also be interested in the Draft Regional Policy for the Management of Contaminated Land that will also be on public exhibition for 30 days.

### Skatepark

There is little more I can add to the regular updates provided on the Skatepark but I understand that Council's Community Services staff will hold another working party meeting in the next couple of weeks to update members on the progress and outcomes of testing and funding requests.

### Red Cross

On a personal note, thank you to Nimbin residents who helped bail me out of the Red Cross Jailhouse. Your efforts helped raise over \$900 for the Australian Red Cross. Many thanks.

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Opposite Nimbin Community Gardens, Cullen Street  
Lots of books of all kinds  
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# Global Warming: It's only the beginning

by David McMinn

In 1974, I wrote about global warming in an ANZ Bank energy report. (Yes I did have a real job many years ago.) I did not realise at the time how quickly this issue would begin to have an major environmental impact.

The basic principle of rising atmospheric carbon dioxide levels and higher temperatures has been appreciated for decades (since the 1890's?). Yet it has still been ignored by the powers that be until now it is a critical problem. Parts of Australia are going into permanent drought, the Great Barrier Reef is bleaching and cyclones are becoming more violent and destructive. This is only the beginning of a long term trend.

Alas, we are ruled by conservative arseholes and that is why the world is now in such a mess. Neocons are incapable of innovative thinking, seeing the big picture or empathising with the people and world around them. They suffer from a rigid mindset, which is very dangerous when you have power. Changes are only made when the situation becomes critical.

Nobody is doubting the concept of global warming now, even though well known proponents (eg: Al Gore, David Suzuki and Bob Brown) were ridiculed by conservative reactionaries in the 1990's. All this has come too late, as the Earth will soon cross the 'tipping point' and an environmental calamity is looming on the horizon.

John Howard's solution to global warming is to develop nuclear power. This is what one would expect of Howard - solve one environmental problem by creating another. Nuclear power is not a cheap energy source, can lead to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and results in the need to dispose of highly toxic radioactive waste that

lasts for 100,000 years. Build a reactor and you have built another terrorist target, with dire consequences if ever it were bombed. Nuclear power is not an option.

Howard also wants Australia to become the world's depository for radioactive waste. In the media, you can read comments like, "Australia's wonderful geology", "politically stable", etc etc. Get used to this spin. Many Australians think he is a wonderful leader and still vote for him, which is the most depressing part of the story.

## Changing Weather Patterns

Global warming's impact upon Australia is now severe. The whole of southern and eastern Australia is in chronic drought. Farmers in the Murray - Darling region are hoping that the good times (wetter) will return soon, but the drought may become permanent with serious consequences. Some inland NSW towns have no water and need to truck in all of their supplies. There is discussion about having to evacuate some towns if the situation does not improve in the medium term.

Aren't you glad you live in the Rainbow Region? Even though we have had our big dries over the past decade, the droughts have not been catastrophic. Even so, the weather is going to become much more extreme and cyclones are predicted to come further south within a decade. The long term



rainfall outlook for the Northern Rivers remains unknown. You have to treat predictions by climatologists with a dose of scepticism. In the 1990's, they were

forecasting that our region would have higher rainfall, whereas there has been a definite drying trend.

Aren't you glad you do not live on the coast? In the

1966 cyclone, the whole of Coolangatta airport was flooded by the accompanying storm surge. We have not had a big cyclone for decades, with 1974 being the last big one from memory. Any low lying coastal land will be inundated by cyclones at some stage in coming decades. Then there is also the problem of rising sea levels. One extreme forecast estimated that they would rise by 4 metres by 2100. There goes the Gold Coast, Byron Bay and all other coastal towns.

## Grow Your Own

Under the best case scenario, food is going to become expensive. Under the worst case scenario - you do not even want to think about it. We need to plant fruit, nut trees and vegetables to meet more of our own food requirements. We should have been doing this for years, but it is easier to buy what you need at the supermarket. You may not have this option in the future.

One friend commented that if the inland crop fails, we can import food from overseas. They did not consider that other countries could have their own difficulties with global

warming and the food may not be there to import anyway. The world's store of grain supplies is now at a 25 year low and falling. Extreme weather events will also impact upon food supplies. Cyclone Larry in northern Queensland this year destroyed banana plantations, resulting in \$12 a kilo bananas.

## More Bush Fires

Higher temperatures will mean more bush fires. It has been 1969 since we have had a severe fire rage through the Nimbin valley and that was in an era when there were far fewer trees. Eucalyptus and camphor laurels explode in a crown fire and there are a lot more of them now than in the 1960's.

For a long term project, plant fire retardant trees around your home, especially on the west and north side. These are the directions hot winds will blow in from the interior. A devastating fire will happen in our region again, but I hope it will not be in my lifetime.

The situation with global warming is going to get a lot, lot worse. I am just glad to be on the right side of 50 and never had kids.

## The government doesn't care about climate change. We know you do.

The government will only take real action on climate change and protect our kids' futures if you tell them to.

Join thousands of other Australians in a peaceful walk urging action on climate change now. On Saturday November 4th meet at 9.30am at Peace Pole, Main Beach, Byron Bay

This day of climate action coincides with UN talks and rallies all around the world.

Bring family, friends, kids, and umbrellas with your climate message painted on for a fun walk along main beach after a few local speakers.

For more info contact Jim on 6684 0330 or [econcern@bigpond.com](mailto:econcern@bigpond.com) and



check out the website, [www.walkagainstawarming.org](http://www.walkagainstawarming.org)

Join Climate Movement today and add your voice to the growing call for immediate action on climate change.

Every day Australians are getting active and local groups are forming

across the country to demand governments act to stop global warming. Join or start a group now!

Local climate action groups already exist in Byron Bay, Lismore and Grafton.

To find out what you can do visit: [www.climatemovement.org.au](http://www.climatemovement.org.au) and Get Up! Action for Australia [www.getup.org.au](http://www.getup.org.au)

Grandma wished to rest peacefully in a garden near her favourite tree.  
We celebrate her life and cherish all she gave.  
We bless Grandma with flowers when we visit her grave.  
Sending our Love as we whisper her name - HIPPY -

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# PM wrong on base-load solar power

The Australian Greens have accused Prime Minister John Howard of misleading the community about the potential of solar power to help address climate change.

Greens energy spokesperson Senator Christine Milne said Prime Minister Howard was wrong to claim that solar power will not be able to provide base-load power in the way that coal and nuclear can.

"Solar power can provide base-load power. It already does in California, where a base-load solar station has been operating for 20 years," Senator Milne said in Hobart.

"If the government would get behind solar in the way it is backing geosequestration for coal-fired power then solar power's potential in Australia would be realised sooner, rather than later."

She suggested Prime Minister Howard read the report commissioned by the Cooperative Research Centre for Coal in Sustainable Development, Comparing Emerging Technologies - Techno-Economic Assessment of Power Generation Options for Australia.

"The report states that: 'Concentrating Solar Thermal technologies are

capable of meeting the requirements of two major electric power markets: large-scale dispatchable markets comprised of grid-connected peaking and base-load power, and rapidly expanding distributed markets include both on-grid and remote/off-grid applications,'" Senator Milne said.

"The report also concludes that an area of 35 x 35 kilometres could produce Australia's entire current power demand, and the cost of this electricity may become equal to coal-fired electricity by 2013.

"Concentrating solar thermal technologies

are just one of several renewable electricity technologies that are ready for commercialisation in Australia.

"Wind, solar photovoltaic, solar thermal, geothermal, biofuels - these are not technologies of the future, they are ready today and underpin the booming renewables industry in Europe, the USA, Japan and China.

"There is no technical reason why Australia could not produce a very high proportion of its electricity from renewable sources, backed up by natural gas as a transitional fuel. All that is lacking is political will."

# The Greens visit Nimbin

by Sophia Hoeben

NSW Greens MP Lee Rhiannon visited Nimbin on Friday the 13th to launch local Greens candidate Andy Gough's campaign for the seat of Lismore next state election.

Andy, who lives nearby at Billen Cliffs community, was recently married to Ganja faery Georgie, who described her new spouse as not only talking the talk, but also walking the walk when it came to being green. Andy launched his campaign at Heritage Park in Lismore, highlighting the fact the only train service operational in the district is the children's mini-train.

Over a coffee, we talked over some current issues of importance to Nimbin such as the real estate drive to develop Nimbin well beyond the capability of its current infrastructure, and the next Private Logging Code in the making. I asked Lee about the ten questions put by the Greens on Nimbin's behalf at State Budget time last August. The answers from the government are slow coming as usual but not as slow as the now-dissected Police Ministry which has still not worked out the real



Launching the Greens campaign at Rainbow Power Company in Nimbin (left to right) candidate Andy Gough, his wife Georgie, Lee Rhiannon MLC and Sophia Hoeben.

cost of the police overkill last Mardi Grass. It's now been four months since Greens MLC Ian Cohen demanded the cost of the futile exercise be made known to all, however, we still await an answer. Ho-hum.

As we strolled down to the Rainbow Power Company and passed by Skate Park languishing in a state of disuse, Lee conveyed her disbelief as to why it was not in use. It was difficult explaining the dilemma

beyond the current idea of soundproofing it from sensitive neighbours. There are I believe many local folks who hope to see the kids having fun there one day.

At the RPC, Peter Pedals conducted an interview for Nim FM in which both Andy and Lee spoke passionately about the Green's push to make a recalcitrant government and opposition deal with the effects of global warming, such as the current Australia-wide water crisis.

The local issue of losing our trains, thereby placing even more vehicles on the road exuding carbon dioxide, was a main talking point. The removal of public transport in this hotted-up polluted world would have to be seen as an absurd and immoral act by any person.

We can only hope the majority of Nimbinites will put on their thinking caps next election and vote Green. After all is said and done, unity is most important.

**GRIST NEWS**  
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## Go for Choke

Deliberate forest fires cause choking haze in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia has been suffering through hellish smog over the last few weeks thanks to Indonesian farmers and owners of timber and palm-oil plantations who have set massive fires to clear land. Slash-and-burn practices are illegal in Indonesia, but nonetheless take place every year and rarely result in punishment. This year, the air quality is particularly bad, triggering health problems, causing traffic accidents, forcing children to stay indoors, and putting a damper on outdoor recreation and tourism. James Hosking, a Brit vacationing in Singapore, complained, "I'm supposed to be brown. I told my friends I'd be lazing out by the pool sunbathing. I've been here nine days and I haven't seen an hour of sun." With visibility as low as 650 feet in certain areas, the thick smoke has shut down some airports. The haze -- which experts fear could last until late November -- could cost the region more than \$9 billion. Ironically, some of the palm oil that will come from newly cleared plantation land will be used to make "eco-friendly" biodiesel.

## We Put the "Pro" in "Procrastinate"

Twiddling our thumbs on climate change could cost \$20 trillion a year by 2100

Failure to fight global warming could cost \$20 trillion a year by the end of the century, says a new study from Tufts University -- and that doesn't include costs of biodiversity loss or unpredictable events like the shutdown of the Gulf Stream. That enormous figure -- representing the cost of doing nothing while the global temperature rises about 7 degrees Fahrenheit -- is equal to about 6 to 8 percent of projected world economic output at century's end. But relatively moderate spending now of about \$3 trillion a year to curb emissions could avoid \$12 trillion in annual damages, and could keep warming to about 3.5 degrees F, thus avoiding the worst of climate chaos. That sounds like a smart investment, says Friends of the Earth, which commissioned the study. According to separate research by oil giant Shell, finding solutions to global warming could create \$58 billion in annual business for British companies alone. "The cost-benefit equation of action to tackle climate change is favorable," says Shell Chair James Smith.

## E.U. launches action plan for reducing energy use

The European Union has adopted an action plan for reducing energy use 20 percent by 2020, saying increased efficiency could save it \$125 billion by that year. Under the plan, the 25-nation bloc will expand building energy-efficiency rules to apply to smaller structures, and develop binding minimum efficiency requirements for electric, heating, and cooling systems. It will develop new energy standards for 14 product groups such as copy machines and TVs, paying special attention to the machines' energy-sucking standby mode. The EU also intends to review energy tax rules and introduce stricter standards for energy-efficiency labeling, and it might introduce legislation to limit vehicle CO2 emissions. As yet, the plans are broad and not thoroughly fleshed out, but when formally launched, they could very well set new global standards, as all imports into the EU, as well as goods made in the EU, would have to comply.

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# Traditional Aboriginal land threatened

by Sinem

## Government Changes to Lease & Permit Laws on Traditional Lands

On November 30th, traditional land owners are expected to make a decision about the future of their ancestral land. Amendments to the Land Rights Act 1976 will see some of the last standing traditionally owned and occupied lands taken away from Aboriginal people across Australia under harsh Government reforms already underway.

Four traditional Aboriginal communities are being targeted in the Northern Territory, (one of which I am currently working and living in, Elcho Island in Arnhem Land), are being heavily pressured to give up control of their lands to a Government body called the ICC on a 99-year lease.

This is an urgent matter. Traditional owners and community members have a right to more time and less pressure from the Government to make this decision in just 5 weeks. Most community members and council members are ill-informed about the Bill, due to the heavy use of legal jargon as well as basic literacy barriers. How can we expect these people to make an 'informed' decision when they do not understand even the most basic concepts of the Bill?

The proposed lease provisions will effectively take away the rights of the traditional owners to decide who and what takes place on their ancestral lands for 99 years. Companies, services and non-traditional owners will be able to lease land from the government rather than obtaining consent from the land-owners on a case-by-case basis. In effect, the land owners will lose control of their land for four generations.

"The provision for extension of the 99-year leases means that the land may never be returned to my people should this experiment fail," said Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Tom Calma.

*"Basic services such as education and health care are the right of all Australians and should not be used as bargaining chips to pressure traditional land owners to hand over their land on 99 year leases."*

– James Ensor,  
Oxfam's Director of Public Policy.

"While I believe that economic development opportunities are essential for the well-being of Aboriginal communities, I don't think 99-year leases will provide that economic opportunity."

Under these amendments to the Land Rights Act 1976, what will most likely occur is that previously Aboriginal owned townships such as Elcho Island in Arnhem Land, will be leased to non Indigenous people, and the subsequent leases internally may - if they are lucky or fortunate - go to Aboriginal residents. It is highly unlikely that any Aboriginal from such townships will be able to afford the primary lease. It will provide many white people previously without the opportunity for commercial success to gain it at the expense of Aboriginal communities. It will also make things a lot easier and quicker for the mining corporations to wheedle more pristine land out of Aboriginal communities.

Agreement to the lease is voluntary in the sense that it does not have to be taken out, but the conditions resemble the current Government's rules of 'wash the kids' faces or you get no petrol.' In other words, if they don't do it, they will lose services such as education, health and housing provided as an integral right to all Australians.

In contrast, if they agree to 99 year leases, they will automatically be given: "Around fifty houses [...] and real jobs [and] if the community is safe and signs up to full school attendance, a no-drugs no-violence policy and agree to a 99 year lease to support home ownership and business development opportunities."

According to the Bill, there

appears to be no safeguards to ensure that leases and headleases are approved with ministerial AND land council AND the full understanding of traditional owners and residents who may be affected. The Bill outlines that these things must take

place, but goes on to say that the subsection which insists upon these requirements is irrelevant to the legitimacy of the lease should they not take place, as long as 'fraud' is not committed. It seems like a convenient loophole included to be just that; an easy way out of such implicit dealings with the actual people affected.

Many aspects of the Bill breach the UN Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal people in Independent countries. (See Article 6)

This decision is expected to be made in three weeks! The first Bill has been quickly and quietly passed without any media attention and has come

into action as of October 1st, 2006.

Commissioner Calma said: "I urge the government to postpone the passage of this Bill until there is more detail regarding the impact of the implementation of the legislation and until land owners have been informed and given the opportunity to provide input into this process. The federal Government has not consulted with Aboriginal land owners on significant aspects of the legislation."

We are asking:

- That these traditional communities have the right to more time and more assistance in understanding the legalities of the Bill before deciding on the future of their land.

- That these traditional communities should not be pressured, bullied or used as bargaining grounds.
- That these traditional communities have a right to be part of the legislative process of making laws about the use of and entry into their communities.
- That these traditional communities have a citizen right to the decent housing, health, education and business enterprises that are being promised in return for the 99 year lease.

Write an editorial, talk to friends, post it on your website... If you can be of help please contact Sinem on Elcho Island, phone: (08) 8970 5134 or email [sinem@gypsysister.com](mailto:sinem@gypsysister.com)

## White man's dreaming

by Warwick Fry

The late Irish-Australian bush poet and activist Denis Kevans (also known as Australia's "Poet Lorikeet") will always be remembered by his best known, and finest poem: "Ah White Man. Have you any Sacred Sites?" ([www.nowwethepeople.org/poetry/sacredsites.html](http://www.nowwethepeople.org/poetry/sacredsites.html))

It's a bloody good question. And it takes the dark poetry of black culture to throw some light on it.

"Songlines, or Yiri in the Walpiri language, are tracks across the landscape created by Mythical Aboriginal ancestors when they rose out of the dark Earth and travelled, creating mountains, valleys, waterholes - all the physical features of the land.

They are ceremonial songs that pass on these stories. As the ancestors underwent various adventures, the laws for living, and hunting skills were established. The songs, and the stories which make up the content of the paintings, are intertwined. The land was literally "sung" into existence." ([www.nanou.com.au/songlines/](http://www.nanou.com.au/songlines/))

The baby-boomers, 'flower children', rock apes, and activists, hippies, yippies and nippies, or whatever ... of the sixties thought that they too, had a dreaming. And it involved not just the privileged and sometimes overindulged white kids, but the disenfranchised, marginalised, blacks, Hispanics, and native Americans and Australians, and Asians, and in Europe, Algerians, Turks, and Palestinians. Otherwise, it could not have been a 'real' dreaming.

It wasn't a Dreaming of rocks, trees, billabongs, rivers, and mountains and valleys and streams, and how

plants and fauna got their colours, and skins and skills and abilities. But it was a dreaming nevertheless. It was a modernistic, rock dreaming, of survival in the face of urbanised environment; of dealing with fear, war, conspicuous consumption (commodity fetishism aka 'greed'), and hypocrisy (aka 'cognitive dissonance') with the non lethal weapons and tools of fun, music, play, and of course, attitude.

An urbanised cultural desert, to be managed and survived, by any of many of the more flexible means necessary.

And for a while (or more accurately, for some moments) it seemed that 'something' was being sung into existence.

There were writers and critics and publishers and producers who lent to this dreaming. In this country alone, the short-lived but influential *Digger* magazine took on the task of becoming an Antipodean and radical version of *Rolling Stone*. Mushroom Records set up as a producer of independent Australian music. The Craig McGregors, the Richard Nevilles, and others in the alternative and pop media reviewed, and wrote books, and interviewed pop stars. (Some of them are here in Nimbin). And their writings subtly formed and guided and gently mapped the media contours of that dreaming. And the 60s, became, as they say, a 'place'.

A little different to the 50,000 year old Dreaming of the native Australian people, but a shared dreaming, and a good dreaming, nonetheless.

And in this 'place' sacred sites were formed. Smoky (when I still smoked) coffee-fuelled nights of conversation and passionate argument and writing,

and poetry, playing Dylan, staying up that extra hour until dawn just to play *It Takes a Lot to Laugh, it Takes a Train to Cry* at sunrise. A Rolling Stones track that traces a song line that evokes every party where and when it was felt and played, like a rainbow serpent undulating through the fears and hopes, the aspirations and disappointments, the sine curve of the vicissitudes of the early 70s, the late 70s, the 80s and beyond; an intertwining of histories, a vibrant vision of a Time.

And now I understand how it feels to an Aboriginal person, when he or she sees and experiences the desecration of a sacred site. I know it when I hear the Stones' song "I can't get no Satisfaction" - a rage against mindless consumerism - used on a MacDonald's ad to sell hamburgers. I know it when I hear the tune "Rock On" and the name of James Dean invoked to sell jeans (or was it a Big Mac?) I feel it when I hear a Beatles' song used to sell a ridiculously expensive, fuel inefficient sports car. This is the trivialisation of a history, a sacrifice of decency and taste, the pillage and mutilation of one's dreamscape for crass, unimaginative, uncreative greed and commercial opportunism; but it is trite, compared to what must be happening to Aboriginal land, and how that must feel to the Aboriginal people.

The beat goes on, wherever it may be. Like the song lines of the Rainbow Dreaming the sacred will continue to exist. The sacred is robust. But will the hegemonic white man ever learn to give to the sacred, time and place and respect and the peace to rest and grow in wisdom with human minds? Do we have any sacred sites? Sacred sites that can be respected by and in, present past and future societies?



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# Impropereganda about our skate park

by Wal Davies  
Residents Action Group

## Eco-friendly Fire

One of the world's biggest arms manufacturers, British Aerospace, is investing heavily in eco-friendly weapons. Soldiers and civilians may now be blown up by a recyclable explosive, hit by a reduced-toxin rocket, or bombed by a fuel-efficient fighter jet. Biodegradable land mines and their victims both turn into compost over time. Quieter warheads reduce noise pollution, less smoky grenades reduce air pollution, and reduced-lead bullets, if left in the environment, "do not cause any additional harm," says Deborah Allen, director of corporate social responsibility at British Aerospace. Meanwhile, British troops will stay safe in their armored vehicles -- hybrid, naturally. "No company, regardless of what they make, can now just make a product, bung it out there, and then forget about it," says Allen. "We all have a duty of care to ensure that from cradle to grave products are being used appropriately and do not do lasting harm."

## Lutsel Make a Deal

The Canadian government and a tiny Native tribe have agreed to work together to create an 8.3 million acre national park in the Northwest Territories. Three decades ago, the Lutsel K'e Dene tribe turned down a similar proposal, fearing national-park designation would interfere with hunting rights for their main food source, caribou. Now, however, they welcome park protection, which will make the area, almost four times the size of Yellowstone, off-limits to burgeoning diamond and uranium mining interests. "The people of this community have a very, very close connection to the land," says tribal representative Stephen Ellis. The Dene hope to call the park Thaydene Nene National Park, meaning "land of the ancestors." Canadian Environment Minister Rona Ambrose also committed to pushing ahead with an expanded national park system in the larger surrounding area, which conservationists hope will mitigate the effects of an also-planned 800-mile gas pipeline in the region.

Aaron (Luke) Molloy's story, in the October issue of SCU student paper "Properganda" about Nimbin's skatepark is pure fiction, concocted by those responsible for this major planning cockup. It is a pity he did not bother to check the facts with me or others in the Residents Action Group, rather than perpetuating the tired old stereotype of the lone dysfunctional "sombre" figure who wants to spoil the kids' fun because of his selfish personality. Scapegoating is an ugly business. It invites actions for libel. It will not help get Nimbin a functional skatepark.

The requirement for sound mitigation in construction of the ramps was stated by Lismore City Council in its consent to both the original Development Application and the modified (Section 96) Development Application which, without residents knowledge, quadrupled the area of metal ramps and doubled their height. As early as June 2004 a sound engineer's report, commissioned by the developer of the skate park, Nimbin Community Development Association (NCDA), identified major planning errors. The engineer tested noise levels and warned that the necessary mitigation measures would be extensive and costly. However, this information continues to be withheld from the local community, and no plans were made to obtain funding for the necessary works.

The NCDA and TURSA's response to the engineer's report was to put the project up for an award. Such an award is well deserved by the young people of Nimbin but not by the planners who so badly let them down. In March 2005 all the immediate neighbours of the skate park (14 households), petitioned Council to pressure the NCDA to recognise the need to plan for noise mitigation measures. Council requested a copy of this first sound engineer's report and it was not finally published until March 2005. The report confirmed the concerns of the residents that sound mitigation had not been planned for.

Council then requested a more detailed investigation (and a second opinion) by a second sound engineer.



As work progressed, noise from the skaters on the partially built ramps began to become intolerable. Our homes were becoming uninhabitable. The nearest resident requested that Council move his house onto land occupied currently by the caravan park. NimFM requested

## Brakes on at Nimbin Skatepark



soundproof glazing for their windows overlooking the park, and I requested a wall along my boundary opposite the park. A Residents Action Group was formed to protect individual residents from scapegoating and, as spokesperson, I relayed the group's concerns in several letters to Council and to the councillors. However, scapegoating did begin. One vocal resident had a bullet placed in her letterbox, has since sold her house and left Nimbin. I appear to be the current scapegoat.

The second sound engineer, Greg Aldison, made a thorough examination of the problem. In his report (June 2005) he recommended that a 5 metre high wall be built. The cost would be over \$100,000. This construction would require a new Development Application and

Council advised the NCDA that it would not be approved because of the likelihood of it creating opportunities for anti-social behaviour. A Skatepark Working party was formed and for the first time neighbouring residents, including myself, were included in the planning process. The group asked for a second report investigating alternatives to the wall. This report (Nov 2005) was discussed at a second and final meeting of the Working Group on Dec 15 last year. Despite warnings from the engineer and Council staff that the various mitigation measures investigated would cost over \$100,000 and could prove to be inadequate, the NCDA elected to continue construction work. A major dilemma was that rust-prone metal supports beneath the ramps need safety inspection each year in order to renew insurance. Sound mitigation measures involving infilling below the ramps would not allow this access.

At its Dec 15 meeting the Working Group agreed to allow the current TURSA Work for the Dole group to complete their 6 month term, due on March 15, in order for the NCDA to implement the sound mitigation measures they claimed they had always planned. The group was to meet after March 15 following another sound test. Despite Council undertaking to present results of the Working Party to the community this has still not been done, and misinformation has been allowed to circulate. The testing was delayed until August 2006 and, as per the

engineer's warning, the mitigation measures proved ineffective.

It has been suggested that the ramps be moved to Council-owned land beside the bridge near the Bush Factory. However, the engineer recommends that any new site for a metal construction should be at least 200m from the nearest receptor. The giant metal drums are at present 7 metres from the nearest house. The Peace Park site would be suitable for a concrete construction. Rather than perched on top of the tennis court, however, the ramps should be on the lower level of the park itself, allowing audience viewing.

Rather than seeking to blame the residents who were excluded from the planning process, why not pressure the Lismore City Council which has the funds to make restitution for their mistake in approving the metal construction in a residential area. This requires that NCDA representatives accept the expert advice of sound engineers rather than seek to denigrate whistleblowers such as myself.

The NCDA's response has been to encourage scapegoating such as contained in Aaron Molloy's article and to form their own committee excluding skatepark neighbours. They have called for "expressions of interest" from "local sound engineers" in carrying out yet another investigation. This attitude explains why a skatepark that should have taken 6 months to build is entering its sixth year of construction with no opening date in sight.

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