

"Pacific" Highway

....There's me rocking up the Pacific Highway in the rain in my cop bait antique car and trailer, cringing in the left lane as a clot of traffic looms in the mirror.

A big truck pulls into the right-hand lane, unwilling to lose any of its hard won 100. A flurry of fat 4wds pull out in front of it. The dreaded Bonville "left lane ending" sign appears. I do my estimates, slow down to 80 and figure I can just get the clot past me before my lane ends.

As the procession tears past in the spray I look for the back of the truck and floor the accelerator. Oh no! There is a white ute tailgating the truck where I could not see it and it could not see me (as if I mattered).

For the good of my mood I blow the horn while raising a finger and hit the brakes, aiming for a space in the temporary white posts.

Wiped off again!

This contribution is made in the wan hope that there might be an 80k limit on trucks someday - for lots of reasons.

Kali McLaughlin
Tuntable Falls

Open Letter to the Nimbin Community

The Nimbin Players would like to apologise to our supporters who were anticipating our Autumn production in May.

Unfortunately, due to lack of availability of the community School of Arts, we have been forced to postpone our production to the advertised Spring season in September.

We would like to make it quite clear to the community that this situation is beyond the control of the Nimbin Players. We have been rehearsing our production since the start of the year,

and have just found out that the School of Arts will be unavailable for a solid six-week block, from mid-March through to the end of April, due to the Autumn Arts Extravaganza. Factor in MardiGrass and we were left with a mere ten days access to the hall from mid-march to the opening night.

The Players' proven commitment to presenting productions of the highest quality means that this timeframe is completely unacceptable. Not only would our ability to rehearse on-stage be severely limited, we would also be forced to cram dress rehearsals, technical rehearsals, sound and lighting set-up and set building into this ten day period.

Given that the Autumn Arts Extravaganza is a commercial event (run for profit), and that Nimbin Players is a long-standing community based non-profit organisation, we feel that this situation is completely unacceptable. The good folk of Nimbin should be up in arms that the pursuit of profit is preventing the presentation of quality dramatic productions.

The Cast and Director of the Nimbin Players Autumn Production

Whatever it Takes

Apparently the above piece printed in the last edition of the NGT has stirred a few sentiments out there in readerworld. Some people thought it was a blackly humorous observation of certain interactions between the sexes (men particularly), and some people thought it was angry and savage and perhaps a reflection of my own circumstances.

It was meant as a wry comment on various things I saw in my years at the real estate office in town and far

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Email: nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in the ComSchool's pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

removed from my own happy experiences. When performed it has audiences laughing at the strange union of the two misfits involved and even won the Writers At The Rous Slam a few months ago.

Both parties are flawed - the woman who allows the needy besotted man to renovate her house etc and the man who won't take the hint (her recurring headaches) and will settle for sex as compensation for his overly devoted efforts.

So, just relax people. I am not a meanie but enjoy making humorous comment on human foibles in the rich, bizarre field of relationships between men and women.

I would also like to thank the NGT for their support of the written and spoken word, and the quality of our local newspaper. Keep up the good work Bob and Co.

Robin Archbold

Eds note: read another of Archie's poems Tales from the River on page 17.

From the Earthly Connectors

On behalf of Warwick Saxby, Shirley Miller and Heather Kimber, we would like to thank the Nimbin community for their fantastic support in this first exhibition 'Earthly Connections' at Shirley's studio home.

It's been a great week with a fantastic opening, lots of positive comments from

people about the work, and sales!

We're already planning an 'Earthly Connections II' for later in the year, so we hope to see you at our next opening. Cheers and many thanks.

If you'd like to be put on the mailing list for an invitation to the next show, please contact us as below:

Shirley Miller, 6689-1793,
shirley@artstudiomiller.com
Warwick Saxby, 6689-0067
hartzpeek@aapt.net.au
Heather Kimber, 6689-1120,
hanganatic@bigpond.com

Excalibur found



Four local boys found a near-new bike in Mulgum creek, while swimming in the aftermath of the recent floods.

Jake, Finn, Otto and Cameron said the bike was wedged under a log, and was fully submerged. After retrieval, the bike was cleaned and assessed, and found to be in near perfect condition.

The boys would like to find the owner, as it may have been a lost Christmas present. The bike was located in the creek near the corner of Anderson and Gungas Roads. To claim Excalibur phone 6689-1763.

Notices

For Rent

Beautiful A-frame timber house with mezzanine and balcony plus separate studio; both set into private forest clearing. Northerly aspect with views to Blue Knob Range, Sphinx Rock and Mt Burrell. Spring fed, Solar HW and 240 mains. Suit 4WD access and only 7kms from Nimbin village. \$160 per week (>2 adults = additional \$80pw each) plus M.O./ Community rates. Contact 0428-221-290 or marcus-nca@aapt.net.au

Wanted to Rent

Mature, reliable woman wants reasonable dwelling up to \$150 per week, between Lillian Rock and Coffee Camp. References available. Contact Tonia via Nimbin GoodTimes, 81 Cullen Street Nimbin.

Dance Classes

Israeli dance classes starting Thursday 14th February at Nimbin Community Centre dance studio. Contact Leora on 6624-4216 or 0412-367-092

For sale

Near new bar fridge \$80, Toyota Seca '87 excel motor 6 months rego \$800, Mahogany dining table & 6 chairs \$80, Microwave good condition \$20, Good TV \$30, Chainsaw petrol 18" bar good cond \$150, Fax brother 645 excel cond \$65, Double bed giveaway will deliver, Near new metal bunks with mattresses \$60, Lawnmower Briggs & Stratton \$30

All above items must go, ONO, car available 15/2/08, discounts to the truly needy. 39 Basil Rd Nimbin, ring first: 6689-0576

Wanted

Mobile food van/ trailer etc. Renovate OK. Call Joanne 6674-4342 or 0401-002-249.

Annual General Meeting

Mousetrap Media Inc. producing the Nimbin Magazine and 'Beyond the Rainbow' are having their AGM on Tues 4th March at 2pm at the Nimbin Community Centre.

Chinny remembered

A remembrance gathering was held on the deck of the Nimbin Hotel for the man known as Chinny, a Nimbin resident for 25 years, when he wasn't in his beloved Goa, India, where he died.

James David Balshaw was remembered for his perception, insight and great generosity. His Scouse cultural values, his spiritual side as a one-time Rajneeshi, and even his fondness for hairy women were recalled. Diana Anaid sang a moving requiem.

RIP Chinny.



Golden Paint Brush Award

Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre vice president Reg Saunders and helper Mikey Batori-Payne have been recognised for their outstanding volunteer effort.

The pair were bestowed with the Golden Paint Brush Award for painting the new extension of the Neighbourhood Centre building, during the combined Christmas do for the NNIC and Nimbin Health at the Bowling Club in December. Thanks to Reg and Mikey's neat and speedy work, the extensions are now operational, providing additional counselling and meeting spaces for the busy Centre.



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Majority of villagers agree – Dunoon community does *not* accept Hardies' proposal



by Paula McDougall

A public meeting was held at Dunoon Hall on Thursday 24th January regarding Hardie Holdings proposed urban subdivision for Dunoon Village.

Seven out of twelve Lismore City Councillors attended: Mayor Merv King, David Tomlinson, Jenny Dowell, Ros Irwin, Vanessa Ekens, Peter Graham, Frank Swientek, Councillors Meineke, Chant, Crimmins and Hampton sent their apologies. Councilor Meineke had met the DCG committee the previous week.

Before the public meeting, members of The Dunoon Community Group (DCG) met with councillors at the Sports Club for an on-site meeting. We wanted to show them exactly where this urban development and its sewerage plant were to be placed in our village.

Approximately 200 people attended the public meeting. The revised DA from Hardies is almost identical to their original DA in 2006 - it completely ignores any community concerns outlined in our submissions and completely ignores Lismore City Councils' DCP and LEP documents. We discussed the impact that such a development would have on the amenity of our village: the social problems that could occur, conflict with future residents and the Sports Club, the concerns regarding the sewerage system and its impact on the



extensive wetlands lying below it. The community called for a full Environmental Impact Statement to be done.

Most alarming is the fact that this will be an urban type Community Title development with a sewerage plant and stormwater treatment plant sitting on the headwaters of Numulgi Creek, near the boundary of Avondale Estate and a stone's throw from Dunoon village's main street. Therefore, the residents of this new subdivision will be responsible for the maintenance and running of the sewerage system.

If this development is approved, it could set a precedent for high density development in our villages, with small satellite sewerage systems being established throughout the catchment area and Rous Water has absolutely no control over them. The fact that Council Staff have not at any time attempted to consult with the Dunoon community regarding a large piece of infrastructure such as a sewerage plant beggars belief.

Lindsay Walker from Council Staff also attended

the meeting and patronisingly told us to focus on village amenity - the reasons why we live here - in our submissions and leave the technical data of the DA to his department.

These amenity points were covered extensively in our original submission in November 2006. This is a department who wanted the developer of Avondale to

increase the number of lots as Council Staff are encouraging 'maximum land usage'. The local developer of Avondale followed Council guidelines laid out in their own DCP and LEP and therefore had no more room for extra lots.

DCG are currently going through Freedom Of Information avenues to acquire documents regarding correspondence and discussions between Council Staff and Hardie Holdings over the last 15 months as Council Staff refuse to give us that information.

175 signatures have been collected for the community submission that will be put forward on behalf of the community by DCG. The submission deadline was Friday 1st February, but Lindsay Walker has said that he will accept submissions that arrive shortly after that date.

The Council Staff are expected to have their report on Hardies' proposal before Council in the March Council meeting, and we'll need as many bums on seats as we can muster at the Council chambers.

Lismore Council Jottings

by Cr. Jenny Dowell
6625-2206 email Jenny.
Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au

Australia Day

Council is traditionally quiet over January with the occasional working party meeting in the last couple of weeks and the celebrations for Australia Day on January 26.

In October, City Hall was badly damaged by the hailstorm that hit Lismore so this year's Australia Day celebrations were held in Trinity's sports hall instead.

Our Ambassador for the day was Ben Austen, dual Paralympian and Commonwealth Games swimmer with a swag of gold and silver medals to his name. Ben, Janelle Saffin MP and Aboriginal dancer Chris Phillips all talked about the hope for a new era of reconciliation.

For me, the highlights of the morning are the Citizenship ceremony and the awards to locals who volunteer to make our community a better place. Among the 62 nominees for 11 awards was Nimbin Central School's John McDonald. Well done John.

The big event for young people is the traditional Survival Day Aussie Battlers hip-hop afternoon at the PCYC with break dancing, MC-ing, graffiti artists and beatboxing. It was a spectacular display of skill and energy in a competition filled with a great spirit of respect and harmony.

If you've never been to an Australia Day event in Lismore, I'd really suggest you come along next year.

February/March meetings

Council meetings and workshops on all but confidential matters, are open to the public. If you'd like to find out how Council works and especially if you are considering standing for election in September, I'd really encourage you to attend.

I also reckon that if you attend a Council meeting you are also better informed as a voter so how about giving us a visit from 6pm some Tuesday night?

Here's the diary for the next few Tuesdays to whet your appetite:

February 5 – workshops-
Goonellabah Recreation



Centre; Nesbitt Park; Tucki Tucki Creek rehabilitation plans at the GRC; CBD vision

February 12 - Council meeting

February 19 - workshops- Masters Games report; Fire Safety; Lismore showgrounds trusteeship; 08/09 Budget parameters; Financial Reserves

February 26 - workshops – Community Consultation, TTM study on CBD traffic and parking. Lismore's Local Environmental Plan (LEP), Bushland cemetery

March 4 - workshops - Public transport, Water and Waste Water, Asset Management

March 11 - Council meeting

March 18 -workshops- Lismore Park Precinct 1, Community Satisfaction Survey results, LEP

Nimbin Forum

It's a long way off but you might like to note Monday November 10, 7 pm in your diary for Council's Nimbin Contact forum.

Readers may remember that Council used to hold three meetings each year in rural halls and occasionally one of these was in Nimbin. When the decision was made to abandon those meetings because of the costs involved and the difficulty

discussing confidential items, I successfully argued that one of the extra Contact forums every year should be held in Nimbin.

My reasoning was that Nimbin's size, its distance from Lismore, the low rate of car ownership and poor public transport warranted special consideration. At the forum, six Councillors and some senior staff are usually in attendance.

With Council elections due in September, some new Councillors will undoubtedly be present.

A Stack of Chairs

As well as Chairing Council's Community Services Policy Advisory Group, I am also President and Chair of the Northern Rivers Social Development Council. Another local Chair and I have identified the need for Chairs to get together to discuss opportunities for training, mentoring and support.

If you are a Chair of a community organisation, we'd love to see you at the inaugural Stack of Chairs get together at Caddies in Lismore on Monday February 11 at 5 pm. You can contact me for more information.

Community Vs Hardies

Communities from all over the Lismore LGA are keen to see the outcome of the Dunoon vs Hardies Holdings battle being waged in Dunoon.

The Dunoon Community Group are fighting to protect their village and are setting a great example to other communities through their efforts.

Finally, the views expressed are mine and are not intended to be a reflection of the Council as a whole or of other individual Councillors.

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Naked Truth radio show lights up Bay-FM

The infamous 'Naked Truth' radio show from Nimbin's FM radio station was invited to present their show on BayFM 99.9, by radio host Hudson Burden.

Hudson, a local academic and presenter of the "Post Modern Backlash" music show on Bay FM, had sat in on a few Naked Truth shows in Nimbin. "These guys are smart and as funny as hell," said Hudson.

The Naked Truth show has gone to air for many years on Nimbin's Nim-FM on Fridays. The three stalwarts of the show include producer Bob Tissott, Michael Balderstone (president of the Nimbin Hemp Embassy) and Gerald Taylor (aka The Goddess). Naked (they maintain "it's harder to lie when you are naked"), irreverent, provocative and informative, this group tackles the big issues of drug law reform, using wit sliced with fact.

The phone lines lit up as listeners rang in to offer support for the show, following an announcement by Michael Balderstone that this year's Nimbin MardiGrass is focusing on



getting drug law reform back on the national agenda. "We are going to un-gag the experts on industrial hemp, medicinal cannabis and look at improved ways of dealing with the small number of drug users who have problematic drug use," said Michael. "As for the six million cannabis users in Australia, by any measure 'we are not criminals' and it is time laws reflect that."

The hosts of the show are

some of the key organisers for the annual Nimbin MardiGrass Festival held in May. Michael told listeners that "this year's MardiGrass will be show-casing industrial hemp as the only economic and environmentally viable option in Australia. Other countries are doing it, for clothing, building, paper and omega 3, 6 and 9 in food. The hemp is non-psychoactive, requires minimal water, and it's ecologically sustainable.

We are inviting international experts involved with medical cannabis. Most people don't realise that medicinal cannabis is quite legal in some areas of the US now."

According to Michael Balderstone, "Australia was once a leader in harm minimisation, now we have some of the most draconian drug laws in the developed world." These views may or may not be the same views held by the Board of Bay FM.

MGo8: "Plantem The Seeds"

Meetings have started for the 2008 MardiGrass, Nimbin's annual weekend of cannabis law reform activities on the first weekend of May every year.

This year's MardiGrass will focus on three key issues related to the use of the cannabis plant - industrial hemp, medical cannabis use and social use. The industrial hemp focus will continue to lobby the NSW government who are decidedly backward with regard to supporting industrialisation of hemp. Unlike most other states, in

NSW the laws still include industrial hemp as a drug plant under the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1986.

MardiGrass will look at getting beyond the prohibition of industrial hemp, including food products, across Australia so we begin to catch up on other countries who are fast developing large hemp industries for clothing, building, nutrition, fuel and paper. Despite the planetary environmental crisis, the great potential of industrial hemp is rarely considered

in Australia for problem solving. The formation of an Australian Hemp Board has been proposed which will please many farmers across the nation.

A feature at MardiGrass will be an industrial hemp marquee with demonstrations of hemp masonry construction, making hemp compound or Zelfo, hemp papermaking, displays of hemp clothing and information on hemp food products that have been available in Canada, the UK and the Scandinavian countries for well over ten years.

As always, the medicinal and social use of cannabis and the ludicrous mess prohibition has made will be a key area of lobbying. Special focus will be given to the controversial random roadside drug testing now used in almost all States and Territories.

At MardiGrass this year in honour of Chicken George, the recently departed Plantem, there will be a new Hemp Olympix gold medal



presented to the best all rounder, the Plantathon award. Already one new Plantem has appeared with more expected, locals recognizing the honour of continuing the valuable role.

Ray and Elizabeth from Happy High Herbs are sponsoring three major awards, (\$2000, \$1000, \$500) for the best Rally Floats this year, which has already created plenty of interest. Already we have been promised the Pope on a Rope Smoking Dope with the Chaser Team as security! Floats cannot be motorised unless they are hempowered!

Phone Elizabeth on 0266797052 for submissions and assistance with material costs for Floats.

Aquarius brings peace and love to the heart of Lismore

by Paul Joseph

Lismore is joining the celebrations for the 35th anniversary of the Aquarius Festival, with an exhibition in the Lismore Regional Gallery and a week of events and activities in several of the city's cafes. The show, to be called "Aquarius 08 - May the longtime sunshine upon you" will tell the story of Aquarius in a spectacular multi-media exhibition.

The opening ceremony on April 26 will begin a month of festivities in Lismore and Nimbin that celebrate and focus on the impacts that the Aquarius culture has had upon this region.

"It is a real honour to be invited to create this exhibition for the Lismore Regional Gallery," said Paul Joseph, president of the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation. "It is very appropriate to tell our stories through art because one of the legacies of Aquarius is this very rich creative community that has grown here. The Aquarius influence has brought whole new industries to this region, arts being the most prominent."

"The Rainbow Region has enjoyed incredible growth in population and lifestyle directly attributable to the Aquarius invasion," said Paul. "The region has a remarkable reputation for both its natural beauty and the character of its people. It is unique for a rural regional community to develop such strong industries from arts, healing and earth repair. The decline of the timber and dairy industries was depressing for the local economy but the spirits have been raised with the development of these new sustainable activities."

Paul Joseph said that it was also appropriate to host the Aquarius 08 exhibition in Lismore as it is the service centre for the region. "It's time we share our successes with the world and Lismore is the best place to start," explained Paul. "Lismore draws people from all over the region and this exhibition will help build awareness and pride in our community."

"It will also help to promote the region in a

positive and constructive way. After the local celebrations conclude at the end of May, the exhibition will be packaged up and taken to our sister village in Woodstock, USA," said Paul. "We are also negotiating to tour the show to other places and we believe it will be a very effective promotion for the region and all our products and services."

A group of Woodstock people are coming here to celebrate the Aquarius 35th anniversary. Two of them, Nathan Koenig and Shelli Lipton, founders of the Woodstock Museum, were here 5 years ago as ambassadors from Woodstock and shot 100 hours of footage for a film called "Woodstock Downunder".

Besides returning to show the piece, they will bring a comprehensive film festival which traces and documents the hippie movement and legacies from the 60s in America, including "60s Revelation", "Native American Prophecies", "Bob Marley Tribute", "Summer of Love 40th Anniversary", "Spirit of Woodstock", "Tibetan Green Tara", "Lifestyles of the Solar Famous" and "They Lied to You in School", to mention a few. They will also show some of the best films from their annual Woodstock Museum Film Festival and project light show effects during live concerts.

"Our Sister Village relationship between Woodstock and Nimbin is vibrant and very relevant now," said Nathan. "We share a culture as creative communities. Woodstock has had an impact on the world through the arts and the progressive thinking that has attracted so many creative individuals since its founding as an art colony in 1902."

The Aquarius Foundation is seeking contributions and artwork for the Aquarius 08 exhibition. If you wish to enter your work or participate in the Aquarius 08 celebrations you will be warmly welcomed. Go to www.aquarius.rainbowregion.com and register to join the website community and keep informed.

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Dragons, Orcs and Ogres in Broulee

by Warwick Fry

Verifying life beyond Nimbin can be a death defying experience.

I took on the challenge, but unlike Bilbo Baggins I avoided Dragons Orcs and Ogres, and more humbly, explored the environs of Broulee on the South Coast of New South Wales.

What could be more peaceful than a quiet coastal enclave where the academics and senior public servants happily roam, cleverly catching weekenders that turn the neighbourhood into a tasteful, progressive, and ultra refined retirement home? Broulee bears the same relationship to Canberra that Lennox Head has with Lismore. It took me a while to get out of the habit of referring to Canberra as Lismore.

A retirement village? Almost. But not quite, a death trap. A few years ago the pensioners and retirees led a demonstration (grandchildren taking up the rear) to stop the construction



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of a charcoal factory – using old growth timber off cuts from Eden.

And it didn't take long to find a local electronics expert hobbyist who is setting up a dish to be the first man to bounce his voice off the moon ... feral musicians from the Araluen Valley descend on sleepy Moruya for regular music festivals, Aboriginal fishermen defend their traditional fishing rights from the predatory trawlers shackled up at Batemans Bay a few miles up the coast. It's not such a bad neighbourhood after all.

Nevertheless, being so close

to Canberra, a few dragons and orcs will inevitably raise their hairy snouts. A few had a little howl during the election campaign.

I made contact with the local community radio station, 2EAR through a blues musician (I met him at a neighbourhood birthday party). The committee of 2EAR was very interested in the podcasting project that community radio 2NimFM had pioneered. "We might have a few problems with a clique that want to turn EAR into a purely Country and Western music station," I was told.

Sure enough, according to my sources, the C&W faction threatened to resign, and sabotage the existing committee if any presenter dared to interview a Labor Party politician during the election campaign. And sure enough, they got their way.

The worked-over-by-rednecks committee members that I have spoken to since tell me how lucky I am to be working with a community radio station like 2Nim-FM. I played back a few Playspace, Hemp Hour, and Dirty Laundry shows, and they were blown away. And hey! 2Nim-FM - we are cutting edge. Not only our podcasting, but also the recently piloted Internet streaming is making the unique style of our unique presenters available to a receptive and intelligent audience.

It's nice here. I could coddle the pensioners and get my fair share of surf and sun ...

Aaah! But we needs our Nimbin, don't we ... precious...

The Nimbin Financial Times

The October Panic: A little late this time around

by David McMinn

As regular readers would be aware, I was expecting another October panic in 2007. This was based on various cycles between the October events in 1987 and 1997, with 2007 unravelling in a similar manner (NGT p 8, Sept 07)

DJIA 1987	Interval Days	DJIA 1997	Interval Days	DJIA 2007
Spring High	3704	Spring High	3705	Summer High
Apr 06, 1987		May 27, 1997		Jul 19, 2007
Spring Low	3614	Spring Low	3615	Spring Low
May 20, 1987		Apr 11, 1997		Mar 05, 2007
Summer High	3634	Summer High	3634	Summer High
Aug 25, 1987		Aug 06, 1997		Jul 19, 2007
Autumn High	3658	Autumn High	3654	Autumn High
Oct 02, 1987		Oct 07, 1997		Oct 9, 2007

The forecast was based on the 123 lunar month cycle (Triple Hepton cycle), to which one added/subtracted small integral and half integral numbers of lunar months to obtain the exact timing. I do not know why it is necessary to add/subtract lunar and half lunar months to various Moon Sun cycles. However, the approach is clearly supported from financial history and many examples may be given.

Intervals of 123 and 124 lunar months were very important during the 1987 and 1997 panics. The 123 lunar month interval also appeared between the October 27, 1997 panic and October 9, 2007 record high for the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA). It was also apparent between the summer highs in 1987 - 1997 and 1997 - 2007.

DJIA Event	DJIA 1987	Interval Lunar Months	DJIA 1997
Record Peaks	Aug 25, 1987	123	Aug 06, 1997
Panics	Oct 19, 1987	123 + 1	Oct 27, 1997
Recoveries	Oct 21, 1987	123 + 1	Oct 28, 1997
Lows	Dec 04, 1987	123	Nov 12, 1997

I thought that the panic would occur around October 8 or October 24, based on adding small integral and half integral numbers to 123 lunar months. However, the interval extended out to 123 plus 3.5 lunar months between the panics in October 27, 1997 and January 21, 2008. Unusually,

there have been no major US panics in the months November 1 to March 20 since 1928 and this outlook was completely unexpected. This illustrates that you can never take historical cycles too seriously. Cycles do change over very long time frames, but in an unpredictable manner.

The problem now is to attempt to forecast the market low. All the best on that one. From history, we probably have not hit bottom and it will take place in the next few months. But.....

The January Barometer

The US share market movement in January is a reliable indicator of how the market will perform in the ensuing year. If the market finishes the month ahead of the January 1 level, then a bull market for the year could be experienced. However, if it was lower for the month then there would be a bear trend. This is completely contrary to what could be expected, as there is no reason why the January trend should also apply to the whole year.

The January Barometer was supported by US academics Cooper, McConnell and Ovtchinnikov (Journal of Financial Economics, Nov 2006), who found that January returns from 1940 to 2003 were "surprisingly robust" predictors of for market returns over the next 11 months.

Statistically, if stocks had a positive January, they returned on average about 14 per cent over the next 11 months. If January was negative, they lost nearly 4 per cent during the rest of the year. The researchers could not explain how the January barometer arises in financial activity.

Overall, the dramatic declines in equity markets during February 2008 indicate that the next 11 months ahead will probably be grim. This outlook aligns with the wider economic picture of a US recession, the debt crisis, falling US\$ and soaring oil prices - not pretty and could get worse in the coming year.

Commonsense Human Values

Tenth in a series by Laurie Stubbs



Human notions force changes to 'human nature'. Article before last showed we deny inborn skills. I mentioned a series of quite 'ordinary' abilities including Intuition, foretelling weather, sensing the presence of people, and more -

Those are everyday things for lots of people, but science has not been able to 'prove' them. And so they don't exist? Particularly in the late 1800's and early 1900's, science beat the crap out telepathy, teleportation, prescience, awareness of past lives, psychokinesis, and so on and on. Joy, too, the basic nature of life and humanity has been all but extinguished by today's social constructs.

We need to step aside from all this. (Later on, you'll read me saying "if a thing has always been done one way, that's a good reason to challenge it") Change is the only constant in the whole spectrum of life. So we need to re-think.

If we open the blinkers we can focus on what abilities and capacities are possible for humanity. "Humanly possible" then expands almost out of sight. Aborigines

can and do communicate by telepathy between family members over hundreds of miles. Indian Yogis can project themselves bodily and appear in two places at once. Cases where genuine foreknowledge has been shown are legion.

Some people can see personal auras, most can't. Children may start with the ability, but lose it as they grow up. There are documented cases of awareness of past lives (a living example of this is Sai Baba, head of a religious group in India). There is evidence for spirit presences in our world. We even have a local --Byron's "Space Cowboy" -- who bends metals at a distance. (There is a plausible theory of how power is created to bend objects).

Accepting a link between cosmic and planetary patterns and human behaviour makes sense. Recent work by Lyall Watson and others on cyclic patterns of planets and stars -- and how they affect us -- show these cycles predispose people to character, career, and more. So we have the skills of Tarot, Numerology, and others.

Other seminal research is being done. Fish, birds, move together as one. What are the mechanisms? Ants, bees, and many another insect have the ability to work in groups where individuals fill a role, but can change roles. How is this organised? What communication is there? Human crowds seem to borrow some of these

abilities and capacities when packed densely enough. How does it happen? How does the human brain function?

Armed with probes, isotopes, television and other technology scientists are seeking the rudiments of thought. How do the two brain halves work together? Is the link between the two (corpus callosum) the only way they link up? De Bono has suggested a series of analogous processes to thought. If he is right, then systems found inside our heads will be more complex than anything else we know. Most science would agree the research is in its very early stages.

It boggles us to think how much understanding will be required. If we go back to our list of mankind's "denied abilities" research could show the locus and method the brain uses for atrophied para-psychological capacities. Maybe there is no locus as such, but the brain switches into different modes. Alpha, Beta and Delta brain wave patterns are known, there may well be others appropriate to parapsychological states. Will scientists recognise all the possible ways the brain might function? Remember they are human -- and we humans are prone to being opinionated

Our theme here is to open our minds to what expanded human abilities and capacities might be. Before we start setting values that guide our lives we need to have a working understanding of what we can and can't do.

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