

ASTROLOGICAL TRENDS FOR APRIL 2008



by Bev Murray

BIRTHDAY – Aries

These guys are the instigators, the freedom lovers and the feisty daredevils of the Zodiac. There is a generally positive attitude to life and a sense of adventure present too. They can find organization and planning ahead a real chore however!

Give them an adventure holiday, a hot air balloon ride or a bungee jump!

Aries

Your levels of charisma are heightened this month and relationships are set to really take off. Anything that has been slow to move up until recently should start to push ahead at last! The new moon on the 6th heralds a new beginning in lots of areas for you guys. Be prepared to think outside of the square.

Taurus

This month provides a perfect opportunity to step back and take a look at the bigger picture! You might be able to finally make those changes you've been thinking about. A new vision of where you want to take your path is likely. There can however be a creative tension between reality and dreams.

Gemini

This is a good month to take risks and try new things. The rewards will stagger you! Financial ideas that you had late last year can put into practice this month. Something you have had your eye on may suddenly become available. Health matters are favoured in the second half of the month.

Cancer

Late April is best for romance. Family issues can be troublesome around the 6th and it will be hard to focus. After this date however it is quite easy to clear up misunderstandings so go for it. Saturn and Pluto favour business plans and turning ideas into reality.

Leo

New relationships can become serious now. Old relationships that are obviously not working can be dealt with properly now too. It is a time for getting your emotional life in order. Late April favours business and family matters. Real estate options can become viable then.

Virgo

Those working in people contact jobs will be unusually busy this month. It is overall a month of working out a balance between mind and body activity and work and play. Harmony is the key. Use the new moon to begin any new ventures you have planned as this will add a positive edge to them.

Libra

The Full Moon on the 20th can leave you feeling a little low and perhaps even undervalued. Try to plan a quiet day and stay away from problems. Make decisions well after this date as otherwise you can be tempted to just dump everything and start new. Providing for your family is important now.

Scorpio

The full Moon on the 20th is a great time for relationships and for meeting new people. Get out and about to make the most of this. Health looks great this month too and old niggly problems will find new and helpful solutions. Your self healing ability is high also. Old projects get a revisit.

Sagittarius

It is time to take a risk or two and let your fears take second place! If you follow your gut and grasp the initiative you will succeed. Turn inward and identify your real needs for the best results. April 20th can have you feeling a little down and out of sorts but it is only transient.

Capricorn

This is a great month for you guys. Everything conspires to make it easy for you to flow directly towards your goals. With Jupiter in your sign it is easy to be in the right place at the right time and make connections with the right people. Watch the first two weeks of the month though and do not try to please everyone else.

Aquarius

This can be a good time for you guys to get your health in better condition. Try to avoid all those toxins and get the fresh air and exercise you really need. The early part of the month and especially around the new Moon on the 6th is excellent for financial matters and making money generally.

Pisces

Watch spending this month, you will really blow the budget if you are not careful! Take it easy around the full moon on the 20th as accidents are likely. Your impatience is high at this time too! The gift of the gab can be yours mid month but do be careful what you talk yourself into!

Email Bev: insightbevmurray@yahoo.com

Letters

nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com

Great art

I have been attending Nimbin Spring and Autumn Arts Shows since they began (I can't remember how long they've been going but as I'm from Nimbin that's OK), and would like to say that this year's Extravaganza has the best variety and quality of offerings I've seen.

I would really encourage everyone who reads this to get along to the Nimbin Town Hall and see it.

Congratulations to Margaret McLaren and all the artists and volunteers who co-operated to present it.

Bloody marvellous reflection on one of Nimbin's finest aspects.

Robin Archbold
Nimbin

Agenda-free zone

The recent Nimbin Skate Park fiasco has provided yet another tiresome episode in protocol, politics and the banal bureaucracy that we adults have created.

By the same token, credit where it is due to the hard working, sincere volunteers who genuinely support our youth and had a dream, appreciating the great need for free, safe, supervised recreational spaces where our children can 'hang out' with their friends and simply play and socialise.

Our youth are looking to the grown-ups for leadership, guidance and boundaries, and encouragement to fulfil their dreams. They are the future. Some of these children will give up, become disillusioned by the petty personal disputes, ego clashes and power struggles that they see acted out by the 'grown-ups', or worse still, imitate these behaviours.

Hopefully, one or two of them will learn about the failing of the human condition, and learn how to work around these in positive, creative, life-affirming ways.

We live in an adult-focused world where there is very little free recreation for children and where adults have more rights. We live in the land of plenty also, so please let's get the Skate Park safely up and running asap, and declare it an 'adults agenda-free zone' while we are at it.

Remember, the children are always watching, and learn by our example.

Ellen Beaven
Larnook



Bic-a-brac. Get there early for the bargains at the second-hand stalls at Nimbin's Aquarius markets, held the third and fifth Saturday of the month.

Violent women – what hope for the kids?

This is for the young and some older people who ought to know better by now that, despite what it looks like elsewhere in the world, violence does not fit anywhere in the Nimbin paradigm.

To see a woman knee-lifting into another woman's face in the main street on a Saturday morning is something I don't sit easy with. She kicked her when she was down and used all the dirty tricks in the book. To say it was ugly is an understatement.

Anytime a woman acts as aggressively as an excessively violent man can, I get the shivers...

Men acting aggressively is one thing, but when women are doing the bashing, what hope have we? I don't want to think about how that woman lifting her knee into her 'sistas' face behaves around children when she 'loses it'. What hope have the kids?

Losing control of oneself is no excuse. Get a hold on yourself. Have a good look at what you are turning into.

Please people, find another way of working off the frustrations this world can bring. We weren't given love and a tongue for nothing. Use it as you will.

Binnah Pownall
Nimbin

Even Paul Recher doesn't get it!

In the March letters column, Paul Recher commented that growing trees to offset carbon emissions was a 'scam'. His reasoning is completely flawed.

He assumes that when my trees die they will rot down

to CO2 in a few hundred years and there will be no net benefit. However, this ignores any prospect for tree regeneration. Hopefully, subsequent owners of our farm will maintain a good forest cover and the trees we plant now will be replaced by yet more trees in time.

Additionally, we are looking at having parts of the farm classified as a wildlife refuge, so that the forest will be protected in perpetuity. Thus, converting pasture and weedy lantana to permanent forest can fix carbon for thousands of years.

So even the great Paul Recher can get it wrong - seriously wrong. What do you do Recher to offset your carbon emissions when you drive into Lismore or fly to the USA?

With our affluent lifestyles, we are all guilty of contributing to atmospheric carbon. Planting trees can be part of an overall strategy to reduce your carbon impact - other ways include flying less, investing in green energy, greater energy efficiency, reducing consumption of consumer goodies, etc, etc.

On the bottom line, the whole world economy needs to be restructured into an intense shade of green, if humanity is to have an environment worth living in. This is not going to happen anytime soon, given the types of people holding political and financial power.

Planting trees is at least doing something about atmospheric carbon and it is infinitely better than doing nothing. We live in a carbon economy and there are very few options.

David McMinn
Blue Knob

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Notices

Work wanted

We are two girls from Jersey, Channel Islands, aged 21 and 23 who are in the Nimbin area until the weekend of MardiGrass and we are seeking work. We both have working visas and our own transport.

Anything considered and separate jobs are OK too. We can start asap. Contact Kellie or Ciara on 02 6689-7184

Country Labor

The Nimbin Branch of Country Labor will next be meeting Monday 14th April and Monday 12th May at 5.30pm at the Bowlo.

Visitors welcome.

A Vital Festival

Have fun and experience vital energy, wellness and calm at the Australasian Qi/ Chi/ Ki Arts Festival on 25-26 April.

Community classes, workshops, talks, demonstrations and performances on Japanese Tea Ceremony, Feng Shui, Calligraphy, Music, Origami, Haiku (poetry), breath and meditation, Aikido/ Aikikids, Qigong, Tai Chi and more.

A & I Hall, Bangalow, admission \$10-\$30, kids under 12 free. Participate in the free 'World Tai Chi and Qigong Day' event at

10am Saturday.

More info www.myspace.com/qifullnetwork or 0434-230-042.

Luncheon

Calling all pre-production staff (the pixies) who have worked on the Nimbin Magazine, Nimbin News or Nimbin GoodTimes, for a get-together lunch at the Rainbow Cafe on Sunday 20th May at 1pm.

More info, ring Gloria at the mag, on 6689-1184.

Free notices

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Lismore Council Jottings

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



Early mark

The early finish to the March Council meeting left most of us in mild shock. We are not accustomed to being out of the Chamber before 9 pm, so many of our partners were surprised to see us home at a reasonable hour.

Certainly there was some debate, particularly over the recommendation from staff that we consider the purchase of the Star Court Theatre, but in the end we voted unanimously not to do so. Councillors are well aware of the tightness of the coming budget and to enter into more capital expenditure would be foolish - no matter how valuable the asset is to the performing arts in Lismore. Fortunately the owner is also committed to NORPA and seemed to be only testing the wind.

On ya bike

Councillors also rejected Cr Ros Irwin's request for \$80 to provide a bike for a woman politician in Cambodia. While I would normally argue that we do not consider ad hoc expenditure, the amount is so small and the need so great that I supported Ros' motion especially as it unleashed a torrent of unrestrained ridicule from some of our male colleagues. Inevitably the vote was lost but it was pleasing that several Councillors give Ros a contribution to purchase three bikes through Unifem, the United Nations support agency for women.

Dunoon passion

About 100 Dunoon residents attended the rural forum held in the village on March 17. Often the six rostered Councillors outnumber residents but the concern in the village that has continued to grow over the proposed development of 57 new lots assured us that there would be a big turn-out. The first hour was focussed on roads and Councillors really copped a spray! I assure readers it was not fun but we do understand that we are the decision makers and are fair game for the anger and frustration of residents.

Fortunately the drive out by Councillors and staff gave us first hand experience of the condition of Dunoon Road and we have been reassured by the General Manager that repair work will be commenced soon.

The second hour was a long-overdue outline of the general process and policies for any land rezoning or redevelopment along with the constraints on Council from the NSW planning system. The planner managing the

and assets are owned by a County Council. It has been made quite clear that Option 9, retention of the status quo throughout the state, is not an option at all.

Bangalow By-pass

There is growing interest from both the Byron and Lismore areas for the RTA to reconsider its plans for the Pacific Highway. Under the current plan, the major interchange for the exit to Lismore would be at Ewingsdale. This would mean that all west-bound traffic would still go up St Helena Hill and through Bangalow. The design that many Byron and Lismore Councillors would prefer is an interchange south of Bangalow that links across to Bangalow Rd. The RTA response is that the cost would approach \$30m and is unfeasible. A meeting to progress the combined efforts of both Councils is due to be held just prior to NGT publication so more news next month.

We hear you

Many thanks for the open and honest feedback from the 727 residents who responded to Council's latest Satisfaction Survey. We value your opinions and will take them into consideration in our budget process and beyond. We hear you when you tell us you are generally satisfied with what we do but are not so pleased with a few areas of our performance.

Those areas that scored highly compared to the previous study in 2005 were the organics collection, waste generally, our cemetery and crematorium, sporting fields and promoting a caring community. Those areas where we have gone backwards are infrastructure such as roads and bridges and core services, parking and economic development.

Of particular note was the low level of satisfaction with the development and maintenance of both rural and urban roads. This sends a strong message to the current Council and the Council that will be elected in September that we must invest more in our roads. The current roads budget has not increased in real terms for some years and the money we spend on sealing of gravel roads each year remains at \$200,000 which will seal about 1km only. Unfortunately it is estimated that we need to spend \$7.9 m each year just to keep our sealed roads in the condition they are in now. It would take a massive \$79m to bring it all to the required level. Currently we spend about \$17m on all our roadworks - you don't need to be a genius to see that the challenges are great.

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.

CDSE Grants available

Community groups are invited to seek financial support through the Community Development Support Expenditure (CDSE) Category 1 Funding Program, which is funded through New South Wales Registered Clubs.

Community groups that fit within the guidelines for Category 1 applications as outlined in CDSE Guidelines are eligible to apply.

The maximum amount of funding per project is \$5,000.

CDSE guidelines, application forms and eligibility criteria are available from the Clubs NSW website: <http://www.clubsnsw.com.au/>, or by calling the

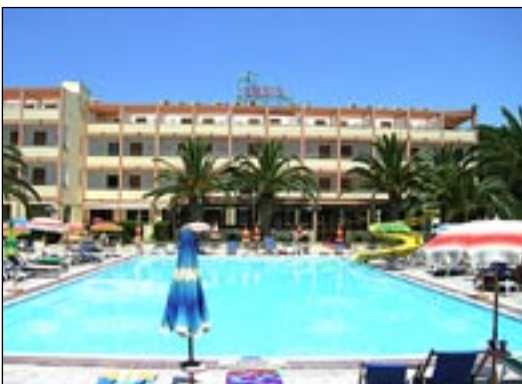
CDSE Convenor, phone 6625-0500.

Applications are particularly encouraged for projects that assist children and families, people with a disability, older people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, women, gay and lesbian community and young people.

The following application categories are applicable:

- Community welfare/ social services
- Community development
- Community health services
- Employment assistance activities

Applications close at 4pm on Friday 25th April, 2008.



Things to come?

The sign atop this hotel resort complex reads 'Oasis'. Could we see something similar developed on the Cullen Street site in Nimbin?

With the building on the market, perhaps the time is ripe for Nimbin's first resort...



About us

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MardiGrass Preview

by Michael Balderstone

The MardiGrass Organising Body, 'MOB' have been busy putting the final touches to the program for the big weekend, 4-5 May.

This years "Beyond Prohibition" Forum sees the cream rising to the top with Dr. Alex Wodak from St. Vincent's Hospital in Sydney, probably Australia's most respected voice for cannabis law reform, presenting a model for regulated, taxable cannabis supply. He will be supported by Professor Paul Wilson, Chair of Criminology at Bond University on the Gold Coast, local solicitor Steve Bolt among others, and Ed Rosenthal who packed the Nimbin Town Hall with his slide show and talk a decade ago has fortunately for us been granted a visa to visit again from America.

MardiGrass will also concentrate its focus this year on Industrial Hemp for building, food, 'plastics', clothing and paper making, with plans to have a hands on Expo in Peace Park where visitors will be able make their own hemp products and learn how to build a house of hemp. There will be experts from various hemp fields available throughout the day after Dr. Keith Bolton chairs an Industrial Hemp Forum at 11am on each day.

There has been a lot of interest stimulated by Happy High Herbs prize money for the best floats (see ad this page) in the Parade and Rally for Cannabis Law Reform, the main event of MardiGrass on Sunday at 2.30pm. Graeme Dunstan plans to be in Nimbin by mid April and there will be a workshop building lanterns and floats in the week or two before MardiGrass.

The MOB is keen to help "FONS" (Friends of Nimbin Skatepark) use the

MardiGrass weekend to raise awareness about their situation and much needed money for the soundproofing of the area and ongoing maintenance. We would like FONS to make some money out of the MardiGrass weekend as so many other community groups do these days.

Any profits after meeting all the costs of MardiGrass we will be donating to FONS this year, and perhaps some other businesses or events will donate a portion of their profits also. To ensure we make the SK8park a priority and in case we don't make a profit the MOB will give the Peace Park gate takings for the Saturday and Sunday concerts to FONS. Another SK8park fundraiser is being born as the Goodtimes goes to print which involves a mass drum-in on the giant steel ramp drum! If you can, keep an eye on www.nimbinmardigrass.com as the program emerges in more detail.

Other traditional events happening again include The Hemp Olympix, Hemplore Pot Art Tattoo, Oasis Comedy, Seed Swap, Cannabis Cup, DOTYA'S, CWA (Cooking With Attitude), Kombi Konvoy, Pot Art (bring entries to the Rainbow painted Regional Gallery opposite the Oasis, where Helen or Elspeth will be for at least a week before the event).

The Woodstock Museum couple Nathan and Shelli are coming again with a whole new program of movies and the Bush Theatre will be open all weekend. The Museum Black Yard will have the Chai Tent and Goori Stage again, which proved to be one of the most popular and talented spots last year. Zennith is a reggae band from North



Queensland who come with a big reputation and promise to do workshops with our local youth. There are many other new bands and entertainers coming, so much so that all the stages are booked out as are the market stalls.

Volunteers are the papers that hold the MardiGrass joint together. Many locals who help every year have already contacted us to say they will be here again, but we always need more and love local knowledge. We get lots of backpacker volunteers from all over the world who need local guidance, so come along and sign up at the Embassy to do a couple of 4 hour shifts.



Heidi has a growing list of volunteers for Jungle Patrol but is still keen for more locals to put their name down in the pink book at the Hemp Embassy shop for a couple of shifts during the weekend. First Aid and Training sessions will be happening in the week before MardiGrass free of charge for all who want to partake.

All Jungle Patrol volunteers will be as per usual taken care of in the best possible way over the weekend, so if you are a newcomer to the area don't be shy to join our team.

The showground camping spots are already being booked and we are encouraging visitors to buy the \$50 gold pass, entry to all events plus a campsite at the showgrounds.

All other enquiries please feel free to drop into the Hemp Embassy, or phone 02 6689-1842, or come to a MOB meeting Fridays 5pm at the Embassy.

The Goddess has guaranteed fine weather for the weekend.

Hemp Party not dead yet

The Nimbin based HELP END MARIJUANA PROHIBITION party is in limbo, undead, neither registered nor de-registered.

We did not contest the 2007 Federal elections because we had not been re-registered in time. The Howard government had arbitrarily de-registered all political parties without a representative in Parliament in December 2006.

Our application for re-registration, complying with all the requirements of the Electoral Act, was submitted early in April 2007. The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) took until August, three weeks before the election was called, to advise us that we had failed their membership test. We replied asking that our application be accepted as is, or be reviewed by the commissioners. We intended to appeal any negative review. The calling of the election froze this process and nothing has happened since.

Last month the AEC informed us that they would be reviewing their own test. Apparently they have taken our objections on board. So we wait for their new test before deciding whether to resubmit or continue with an appeal.

If we do resubmit we will probably still need a membership whose addresses and phone numbers are current and contactable and who will not ignore an enquiry from the AEC. This has been the crux of the test.

A membership drive will be conducted at MardiGrass.

New to Nimbin Custom Tattoos

Opening Friday 4th April

Nimbin is getting its first on-site tattooist.

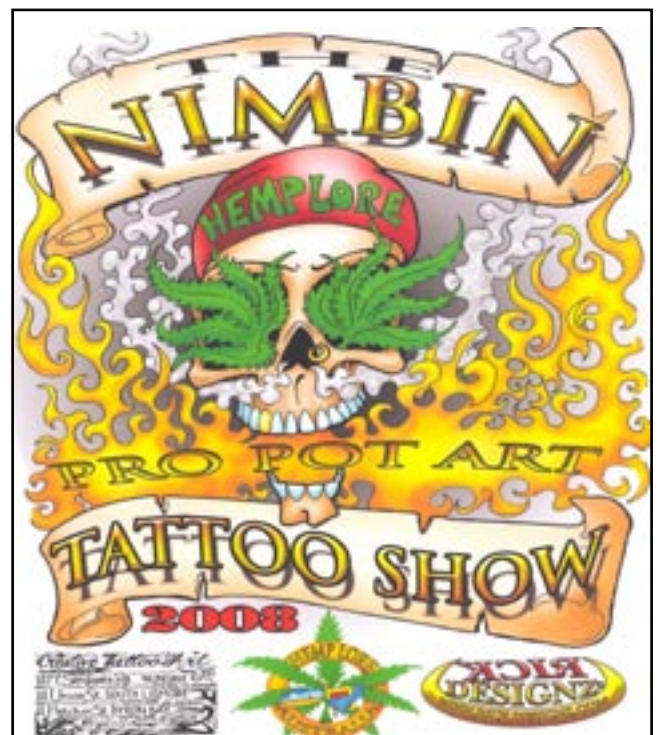
Steve Mantle (pictured) is 28, is married to his wife of 4 years Beka with a 2 year old son Rylan, and only moved into the area from Tuncurry two weeks ago. Originally from England, Steve has been in Australia for nine years and plans to become a longtime resident of Nimbin.

Steve said, "My tattooing interests come from a long background of pencil art which is a big passion of mine. I enjoy creating unique designs for people that helps better reflect what they want to present, but in saying that, I still enjoy tattooing in all other styles."

The All Holes Barred Rainbow Body Piercing Studio is providing Steve with a professional



environment for the sterile equipment. He is developing a range of pot-oriented tattoos for MardiGrass, and is taking appointments now, phone 0428-607-355.



Bigger and better than ever

The Nimbin Pro Pot Art Tattoo Show will be held this year at the Nimbin Town Hall on Saturday 3rd May.

Registration time is from 12-4.45pm, and Showtime is 5-7pm. There will be live entertainment with the Anti-Bodies, and a lucky door prize.

Event organiser, Space, has announced details of the competition. Two sections will be judged, the Pot Art section and the General section, with 13 categories in each.

The categories for arm, half-arm, leg, half-leg, best tribal, best small colour and best small back are all open to both men and women, with separate categories for back, chest and front, and best overall.

All contestants must be registered in competition, and over 18 years of age. The Tattoo Show is sponsored by Hemp Lore, Rick Designs and Creative Tattoo Art.

Entry is included in the MardiGrass wrist band or by \$5 donation at the door, with all proceeds going to the Nimbin Soup Kitchen.

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Happy hippiness in the beating heart of Lismore

by Paul Joseph and Benny Zable

The Launch Party for the Aquarius 08 Exhibition at Lismore Regional Gallery on 26th April promises to be a Rainbow Region Circle of Love.

From 3pm there will be music, performance, kids activities and a family friendly environment with the Chai Tent, market stalls and interesting demonstrations. The Exhibition will be launched at 5pm and then the heart of Lismore beating to the sounds of the Rainbow Region Drum Circle.

"Aquarius 08 - May the longtime sunshine upon you" is an exhibition about the Aquarius legacy and the impacts that Aquarius has had upon this region, from the early 1970s to now. The Aquarius Festival went for only 10 days, but its influence in the development of new ways of thinking has undoubtedly changed the nature of our region.

"After 35 years since the Aquarius Festival, it is an honour to present elements of our growing culture to share with our whole community," said Paul Joseph, Nimbin Aquarius Foundation President. "We hope this exhibition will bring people closer in understanding, but also inspire pride and enthusiasm, especially for our youth, to make our community more sustainable."

"Dress up in your rainbow finery and join the Rainbow Region Circle of Love from 3pm on 26th April at Lismore Regional Gallery," said Paul.



Archivists. Woodstock Museum Board of Directors Nathan Koenig, Gerd Stern, Richard Gottlieb and Shelli Lipton receiving the Manes Peace Prize with a grant of \$25,000.

"Let's bring peace, love and hippiness alive in our city centre."

A range of events, gatherings and celebrations are to be held in the Rainbow Region throughout May to celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the 1973 Nimbin Aquarius Festival.

A Nimbin-Woodstock Film Festival is planned for the Nimbin Bush Theatre. Nathan and Shelli, founders of the Woodstock Museum who were here five years ago as ambassadors, are bringing a comprehensive selection from the Woodstock Film Festivals, with a recent edited version of "Woodstock Downunder", taken from 100 hours of footage they shot in Nimbin and the Rainbow Region in 2003.

Also planned for Nimbin are:

- A "Welcome to Country" and barbecue up at the Nimbin Rocks, with an Elders gathering and storytelling.
- Aquarius celebration events will take place at the Channon Market on

11th May.

- "Some Children of the Dream" exhibition at the Nimbin Regional Gallery.

- "Imageneering", (Art, Archives and Action), on the site for the Aquarius Eco-village.

- A Nimbin-Woodstock cultural exchange in the Nimbin Town Hall on the 16th May.

- A BIG Aquarius gig, "Trip the Light Fantastic", in the Nimbin Town Hall on the 17th May.

- A night of Woman's entertainment in the Nimbin Town Hall. (Date to be announced).

To support us, join Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc. (Membership, \$10 per annum on the website), or post to NAFI, PO Box 12, NSW 2480, or see us at our headquarters on the Nimbin Community Centre grounds, and on Market Days.

For updates and information on Aquarius 08, go to <www.aquarius.rainbowregion.com>

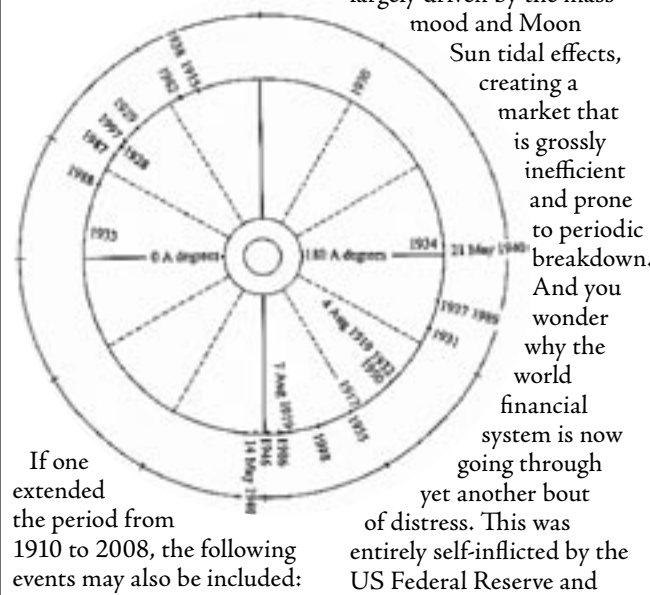
The Nimbin Financial Times

Lunar Phase & US Panics

by David McMinn

The most amazing correlate in Moon Sun finance arises between lunar phase and the timing of major US financial panics. The accompanying diagram shows the relationship between lunar phase and the annual one day (AOD) falls over -4.50% for the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) during the 1915 to 1999 era. Lunar phase nearly always showed up in two quarter segments, between first quarter & full Moon and third quarter & new Moon, the only exception being in 1930. This diagram was first presented by yours truly in 2000 and published by the Australian Technical Analysts Association. (NB: The annual one day fall is the biggest one day % decline in the DJIA in the year commencing March 1.)

Lunar Phase & Major DJIA AOD Falls 1915 - 1999



Date	Event	Phase Angle
Jan 20, 1913	AOD fall -4.90%	153
Jul 30, 1914	AOD fall -6.63%	099
Apr 14, 2000	Tech Wreck	130
Sep 11, 2001	WTC attack	281
Jul 23, 2002	AOD fall -4.64%	122
Jan 21, 2008	Stock market panics	169

Of the total 29 major US stock market panics since 1910, only the 1930 AOD fall did not have lunar phase within the two quarter segments noted in the diagram. The finding was extremely significant (p < 10-6) and would be like tossing a coin 29 times

and getting 28 heads. This and many other correlates support a very strong Moon Sun effect in market activity, thereby creating a major problem. According to modern economic theory, financial markets are both efficient and random in their movements and such Moon Sun correlates should not arise. One of the theories has to be wrong - modern economics or Moon Sun effects.

Free market capitalism fails the most fundamental test in economics - that is efficiency. What is more ridiculous than a world financial system highly dependent upon the heavenly positions of the Moon and Sun. Trillions of dollars in financial assets are traded every day worldwide. This is supported by a massive investment in research, trading infrastructure, communications and so forth. All this activity is largely driven by the mass mood and Moon

Sun tidal effects, creating a market that is grossly inefficient and prone to periodic breakdown. And you wonder why the world financial system is now going through yet another bout of distress. This was entirely self-inflicted by the US Federal Reserve and international bankers via corrupt policies and an abysmal understanding of economics. A more realistic evaluation is essential if economic theory is to progress,

although adjustments will not be made anytime soon. As commented by the famous John K Galbraith, "Economists are economical, among other things, of ideas; most make those of their graduate days last a lifetime."

Isn't American capitalism wonderful?

Commonsense Human Values

Twelfth in a series by Laurie Stubbs



In the last several articles we have suggested that humanity is basically joyful, and that we have a big range of capacities and abilities. Many of these are denied by the social rules we set ourselves - though we can recover them if we set about opening our minds to change.

Perhaps the key mind expansion change is around the seminal idea Life Develops Itself. --- suggested in articles 5 and 6.

So let's review. 4.8 billion years brought us from nothing to concept wielding intelligences (sometimes); to humanity; top of the heap of life. (I'm leaving out for the moment the other "sometimes" when we fight, brawl and kill one another; then we're more animal than human) We reckon we're pretty smart, because we have the ability to ask and answer tough questions; and so understand (some of) the complex building blocks of the

universe; and to (partly) control our environments

Stop there. "Who" did this ?? Did we do it? No. Life did.

Humanity could be merely the vehicle Life chose to develop intelligence. If this is true, then humanity is an artefact of life, not the other way around as we traditionally see it. Maybe it's true what we humans create is pre-set by who/whatever created us. Can we take credit for any of this? Well, yes, to the same extent that a racehorse can take credit for winning a race, but can't boast because he's a horse. Life created humanity. Humanity is (perhaps) doing what life created it to do. Life tried dinosaurs, and many other forms but they didn't make it through cosmic changes. Life is flexible, and if humanity destroys itself, Life will most likely develop another living form. Life's options are wide.

So the challenge about opening Sminds is "How do we stand in relation to this idea that Life Develops Itself?"

First thought, perhaps, is despite our being concept wielding intelligences, life hasn't yet finished developing. Given the big range of abilities and capacities we could re-activate, is there a growth

path there? Or - for example - brain sizes doubled a few millennia ago; is another brain re-vamp likely?. These are guesses of course. Second thought, perhaps, is maybe we are stuffing life about with the way we are damaging our planet? Other ideas may come to mind for you.

Maybe we should recognise what life is doing and start steering our values to let it get on with its job? This could be the key perception. It denies no ideas about God or whatever religion you profess. The idea that Life Develops Itself needs no "leaps of faith". It comes from looking at the 4.8 billion years of history, and an analysis of what is provable. It's like looking back at the road you've travelled. Easily seen and simple.

So we need to ask the question how do we stand in relation to the idea that Life Develops Itself. When we tackle the question, it's a clear the rules must change. Our focus shifts from "Us", to the part we are playing in the planet.

There are intriguing and real possibilities of what changes might flow from "building in" Life Develops Itself to a system of values that steer human action and ideas. We'll look at these next article

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