



Vandals fail to prevent Nimbin ANZAC Day being an inclusive event

The overnight removal of the flagpole from the newly-renovated Nimbin cenotaph was overcome in time for a respectful ANZAC Day observance with the largest turn-out for many years.

The early morning hiccup was remedied by swift action by Nimbin community members and police, and the Australian flag was flying by 9am, long before the pipers started their sworl.

Organiser Paul Le Bars said, "It's great to see such a good turn-out. The numbers seem to be growing, both in the march and as onlookers to the formalities."

The occasional address at the cenotaph was given by local WWII veteran Arthur Pike, who spoke of the sacrifices made in war, and the need to learn from the lessons of the past.

The Aboriginal flag featured in the front line of the march, and speeches at observance ceremonies highlighted the role of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the Australian Defence Force.

Master of ceremonies at the



cenotaph observance, Anton Eldridge told the large crowd at the memorial, "The role of indigenous soldiers should be recognised and celebrated."

Following the piper's lament, the Last Post and a respectful one-minute silence, a Service followed at the Nimbin Bowling Club, where the memory of Captain Reginald Walter Saunders MBE was honoured by parade organiser Paul Le Bars.

Reg Saunders was the first Aboriginal Australian to be commissioned as an officer in the Australian Army and fought in the Middle East, Greece, Crete, New Guinea and later Korea.

His grand-daughter Carmel

Knight attended the Service and gave an Aboriginal perspective on ANZAC Day to the Bowling Club crowd.

The afternoon continued with a well attended two-up school on the back deck of the Nimbin Hotel, which continued in good spirit late into the day.



Carmel Knight



Arthur Pike



Otis Pike



Nimbin farewells Don Sharpe



Nimbin turned out in force at Nimbin cemetery to farewell long-term resident Don Sharpe, who died in April aged 65, following a protracted battle with emphysema and lung cancer.

He was laid to rest in a brightly decorated cardboard coffin with rope handles.

Don, a former

Vietnam war photojournalist, was a regular contributor to local media, particularly 2Nim-FM.

His film, *Cullen Street Rainbow*, which won last year's 39 Hours short film festival, was screened at the wake that followed at the Oasis Cafe, where mourners celebrated what Don had called his 'careless life'.

Burial at Billen Cliffs cemetery



Victor Locke, a long standing resident of Billen Cliffs, died on the 17th April in Byron Bay aged 89. Victor was buried in Billen Cliffs' private cemetery on Saturday 26th following a ceremony celebrating his life at the Billen Cliffs community hall, surrounded by friends, relatives and neighbours.

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to discuss an appointment

Bright, white war memorial



Team Effort. Volunteers (left to right) Vic Florey, Mark Jackson, Wayne Fuller and Mat Cook install the renovated flagpole to complete the upgrade of Nimbin's war memorial.

After months of organisation, Nimbin's WWI war memorial has been restored in time for ANZAC Day.

The project was co-ordinated by Paul Le Bars, chairman of the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre, who, together with Vietnam veteran Anton Eldridge, conducted this year's ANZAC observance.

"At one stage I didn't think it was going to happen," Mr Le Bars said. "I was just about to give up on it when the restorer rang and said he was ready to start."

Repainting of the flagpole was carried out by Wayne Fuller, who also donated the paint and was on hand to install it.

The restoration work was funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs with the support of the Lismore Sub-branch of the RSL.

Pole for Peace planned for Peace Park

by Mira

Growing in the village of Nimbin is a vision of a Pole for Peace in Peace Park.

You are now part of it, this growing vision of a Rainbow Serpent coiling, spiralling from the Land.

The design of the Rainbow Serpent has been suggested to bring together the different aspects in our community as the Rainbow Serpent combines all the colours in the One Love.

The very special character of our village is enhanced by continuing to give Honour and Respect to the Land, and to Her Original People and their Dreamtime stories.

Our very special Aquarius heritage is enhanced with all the colours of the rainbow in celebration of Peace, Love and Harmony on our planet. This Pole for Peace will mark a place for gathering for Peace, similar to other gathering places in a network around the planet.

The process of bureaucratic paper shuffling is being undertaken by a sub-committee of the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc. A Development Application

will shortly be available for perusal and discussion at the Goonellabah Council Chambers and at our local Neighbourhood Centre.

The envisaged pole will be a be a hardwood (bloodwood or turpentine), 4 metres tall, carved with hexagonal surfaces and on it the words, "May peace prevail on earth".

Already letters of support have been received from the Nimbin School of Arts, the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce, the Nimbin Visitor Centre, the Hemp Embassy, the Museum and the Nimbin Good Times.

Our local aboriginal people smile and seem positive and we await reply from their Council of Elders. More letters of support are being sought for the Grant Application, all part of this happening process.

If you would like to be part of the team, more helpers are always appreciated, so drop in to the Aquarius Headquarters.

We would like this Pole for Peace to be made with many hands joined in harmony, working in peace for a kinder world, loving and caring for our planet together.



Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the Australian Defence Force

Nimbin's ANZAC Day commemoration paid special tribute to the indigenous Australians who served their country in wartime.

The recognition was well-deserved and overdue, according to observance organiser, Paul Le Bars.

"These blokes fought for their country alongside white fellas, but with the laws at the time, they couldn't even have a drink with them when they came home," he said.

Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders have contributed to Australia's military forces for many years.

Though exact numbers are not known, Aboriginal trackers served in the Boer War and approximately 400-500 served in the First World War.

In the Second World War as many as 6,000 Aborigines



and Torres Strait Islanders served as enlisted servicemen, members of irregular units or in support units.

The Second World War Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion had around 745 indigenous Australians in August 1943. The Northern Territory Special Reconnaissance Unit was

one of several irregular forces raised.

Reg Saunders (pictured) was the first Aboriginal Australian to be commissioned as an officer in the Australian Army. He enlisted in 1940, and after active service in North Africa, Greece and Crete, became a sergeant in 1942 and a commissioned officer in 1944, after which he fought as a platoon commander in New Guinea until the end of the war.

During the Korean War, Saunders served as a captain in the 3rd Battalion and fought in Kapyong. In 1967 he joined the Office of Aboriginal Affairs as a liaison and public relations officer, and was awarded the MBE in 1971.

He died in 1990, survived by 10 children, and remains an inspirational figure.

Autumn mists



Early morning in the Nimbin valley. Panorama by Sue Stock

Song is a community building tool

by Ave Hawk

A word on harmony – at an Oz short film festival hosted by Barkers Vale School back in the days when it was still down in the valley, one of the films was set in the 1950's and featured a small, mainly immigrant community on the Great Ocean Road.

A stranger showed up and noticed exclusivity was rife, and particularly evident in the discrimination shown towards his only friend, a differently-abled young man. His young friend was among other things forbidden to sing in church.

This was enforced by subtle and not so subtle behaviour norms which, apart from isolating the young man, affected the whole town detrimentally. Exclusion erodes social trust.

Using unconditional positive regard, the stranger encouraged his friend to re-engage in the community and even to sing in church. His friend was badly out of harmony, but his joyfulness was so overwhelming that he broke down the barriers between people and trust was able to grow.

Follow your bliss.

Birth

(Canberra Convergence)

How many years still born so afraid to move? afraid to speak? knowing any dissent would be dealt with efficiently via ridicule, baton, pepper spray, TASER, prison... now new children ask the same olde question: "When can we determine our country's direction?"

They converge upon our nation's capital to sit in circles round fires of hot chai to save rainforests, whales, dolphins, lakes, wilde rivers and to ask why this has not been seen as obvious

(our world we visit - it is precious and ancient

and we need leave it better than when we entered)

Apologizing to indigenous is only the beginning -

respect for non-intrusive lifestyles need educate our "reality" 100% recycling, no uranium mining, preserve sacred land for dreaming

And this is just the beginning what happens next is unknown-change means more than weather patterns drought hearts cyclic emotional storms blood tides

too many deaths of wilde life..cease the abattoir machinery war and gardens can grow again as they were before -

bush tucker, hunter-gatherer, tribal-culture! **Tell me more!**

Thom the World Poet

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Chlorine in the creek

One afternoon I was on the banks of Mulgum Creek near the end of Gungas Road, and saw a large platypus swimming against the current. The water was crystal clear, and the sun shone on the multi-coloured gravel stream-bed.

Imagine my horror ½-hour later to find the chlorine plant overflowing a short way upstream. Two of the 6-inch pipes that come out of the ground just below the tanks, were rapidly discharging water, flooding the ground adjacent to the creek. They had been flowing, possibly due to a broken tap, for hours. Above the tanks was a large haze of gas.

Darren Patch, operations manager of Lismore Council wrote to me, "Council normally flushes after flood events... We do not discharge chlorinated water directly to Mulgum Creek, however discharge adjacent to the creek at designed flushing."

Another spill was reported recently further downstream towards Sheathers Bridge. The Council puts sodium hypochlorate into the village water. In Lismore and districts there is anecdotal evidence that this chemical is killing the organisms that make septic tanks work.

Also there have been reports that after a flood, the chlorine level keeps getting raised until the desired reading is attained. Then of course, we are being threatened by fluoride.

Vyvyan Stott

Global food shortage catastrophe

At the Empire Club's 14th annual investment outlook conference in Toronto during January, Donald Coxe, global portfolio strategist at BMO Financial Group, warned the financiers that a global food shortage catastrophe is about to strike, starting this year, that will be more crippling to the world's economy than anything ever experienced before.

He based his outlook on the sharp rise in raw food prices caused by the demands of the biofuel industry and the massively increased demand by the growing middle class around the world for meat and dairy products, particularly in China and India. There has been a 92% increase in wheat prices, a 44% increase in corn prices and a 22% increase on the price of other raw foods.

The American Midwest produces 54% of the world's corn supply and this year a third will be consumed by the biofuel industry that is already causing food shortages in Mexico. He stated that this imminent catastrophe will make the credit crunch and soaring fuel prices pale in comparison and devastate the world's economy. Remember he is a financier worried about the global economy.

Ten year ago the world had a month's supply of food but that is now down to one week. With the global economy running out of both food and oil it is time that we turned our attention to the survival of our

community. Food giants like Woolworths and Coles could collapse overnight, plunging Australia into a recession with businesses closing and little work available.

We should be concentrating on re-establishing the production of locally produced sustainable organic food. We may shortly find that the backyard fruit and vegetable garden and supporting the local farmers markets are essential for our continued wellbeing.

Gary Opit
Mullumbimby

New cooks

Local couple Sam and Marnicka are excited to take over the pub kitchen, formerly Lovin' it Bistro.

We have both worked in several local establishments including Lovin' it, with Sam most recently cooking at the award winning Sphinx Rock Cafe.

We intend to showcase some of our region's outstanding produce and to source as much as possible locally. We are keen to incorporate tantalizing native flavors and ecologically sound foods.

We plan to build upon a simple, quality menu and will also be looking to reduce the operation's environmental impact by switching from chlorine to oxygen based detergents, reducing food



Birthday Girl. Our venerable cakemaker and community worker supreme, Judy Hales celebrated her 60th birthday with a crew of friends at the Nimbin Community Centre. Congratulations on another instalment of a life well-lived. What's in the bag, Judy?

miles and avoiding GE foods. (as much as our insanely loose labeling laws allow!)

We open the Thursday after MardiGrass and look forward to seeing you all soon."

Sam Dowsett
Nimbin

Employment opportunity

Nimbin Community Centre is advertising to fill the position of Site Maintenance Manager. Experience with property maintenance, OHS, and risk management highly regarded.

Please contact Marcus at the Community Centre office at 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin, for a position description. Phone 6689-0000 or email nca@nimbincommunity.org.au

For Rent

House plus studio on beautiful spot 5km north of Nimbin. Rent \$180pw + community rates. More info phone Saskia 6689-1628 or 0419-265-238.

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Please visit us on birthrite.com.au or phone Monika on 6689-7490 for a chat.

Time for a Reunion

Calling all the people who have worked on the Nimbin News, Nimbin Magazine and the GoodTimes.

A grand reunion will be held Sunday 18th May 2008, from about 12pm, for a (pay-for-yourself) lunch at the Rainbow Cafe; where we will

network, gas-bag or generally mill around and be social.

A nice rounder off for the 35th anniversary of the Aquarius Festival.

Gloria Constine, 02 6689-1184 for details (*leave a message if not there*).

Self-Publishers

"Off the Shelf", the annual self publishing book fair sponsored by the Bangalow Writers Group, will be held at Bangalow on Sunday 24 August, 2008.

The fair, unique in Australia, is for local writers who have self published, and anyone associated with writing, publication and marketing of books.

To be part of this exciting promotional and networking activity, book your table now. Rates are \$25 per table, or share for \$15 for small displays. Contact Jean on 6687-8094.

Book Sale

At Kyogle Library from Tuesday 6th May to Thursday 15th May, from 10am when library opens. Prices start at a low \$1.

Contact Kyogle library staff ph 6632-1134 or call into the Library in Stratheden Street.

Bonsai Classes

Ever wanted to know how to grow bonsai plants? Roberto is willing to teach people the art. Contact him on 0404-987-446 after 5pm.

Drumming Workshop

Latin American, Level 2, with Philomena. Traditional playing techniques, parts cater to all levels of drumming experience. Saturday 10th May, 9am-4pm at 50 Gabal Road, Lillian Rock, \$65/\$55/\$22.

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* Photo comp open to all, \$5 entry per person waged, \$3 concession/child. Bring your entries by 10 am on the day mounted on cardboard with 1" border. Winners announced at 3.30 pm

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Council rate increase a blow for road users



Wear and tear. A Nimbin school bus bumps its way along Mountaintop Road.

The decision of the State Government to limit the increase in council rate income to just 3.2 per cent next financial year is bad news for Lismore's road users, according to Cr David Tomlinson.

The increase, which is down from 3.4 per cent a year earlier, comes despite rising inflation and cost increases at Council level around five per cent.

"The lower limit means Council will have to be extremely frugal over the next 12 months and postpone indefinitely or abandon any new capital works such as CBD beautification and upgrades," Cr Tomlinson said.

"We are going backwards financially and we can no longer cut into existing services to fund new projects."

"Our task over the next

several years will be to concentrate on our existing infrastructure including roads, to ensure they are maintained and hopefully improved," he said.

Consultants have told Council it needs to spend an additional \$2 million a year on its sealed road network and address a backlog of \$79 million in substandard roads.

Cr Tomlinson, who is the chair of council's infrastructure advisory group, said unsealed roads also need an urgent injection of funding which has been cut by 30 per cent over the last five years.

The small rate increase will make improvements extremely difficult," he said.

"Councillors and staff will have to put aside their pet projects until the financial situation improves and we are properly funding our core activities," he said

Lismore Council Jottings

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

McLeans Ridges and Dunoon

The April meeting of Council considered a recommendation by staff not to proceed with advertising of the rezoning application that would permit 25 rural residential lots in Roseview Rd, McLeans Ridges. The developers had requested a significant reduction in the amount of money they were required to pay to LCC for the construction of roads and other services and facilities. Despite the staff recommendation, Council resolved on the Mayor's casting vote for a completely new 6 part motion that appears before us without any preparatory discussion. My move to defer the matter until further discussion could take place was unsuccessful and I would suggest that most Councillors came away from the meeting with no recollection of what they had voted for.

In the meantime, it now appears that, contrary to requirements, Rous Water has not been consulted about either the Roseview or the Camerons Rd proposals. Water run-off from these sites flows into the Wilson River where Rous draws our drinking water. The on-site sewerage treatment systems and other developments have a direct influence on the quality of that supply so Rous' input is vital.

Meanwhile, Council's May 13 meeting is also expected to consider the controversial Dunoon village development. I hope that Council staff see this proposal as incompatible with the existing village and that they recommend rejection.

Water Reform

The NSW government has proposed a major shake-up of the water industry by proposing nine alternate models and asking Councils for comment. Throughout the state, water is controlled and delivered by a range of different organisations. In our region, Rous Water County Council is the service provider for most Councils but the Councils own most of the assets, provide much of the staff and reap the profits from on-sales to consumers. Any change could be quite challenging and



some alternatives have been likened to the current sell-off of electricity. Lismore Council has recommended a County Council model that owns the water and sewerage assets.

Buy Local

In my December Jottings, I told readers about Council's consideration of the social and community benefit in our tendering policy. At the April meeting we went a step further and voted unanimously for staff to develop a buy-local component in our procurement policy. Buying local goods and services does make a difference but Council must be careful to recognise the risk of corrupt practices. We will hold a workshop on this important matter on May 20. The session starts at 6 pm with a report on Council's Reconciliation Action Plan so it promises to be an important evening for social justice.

SK8Park

I was really impressed by the young people of Lismore who met me to talk about the SK8Park last month. They have been amazingly patient over the seemingly slow progress towards the resolution of the issues since the facility was closed last year. The petition they gave me consisted of almost 500 signatures and simply asked for the SK8Park to be opened. That week I also met with FONS and they too want to see a resolution. All were happy for a partial opening during Mardi Grass to trial some new soundproofing measures.

Nimbin V.I.C.

The Visitor Information Centre in Nimbin is giving Council great information on the huge numbers of people who visit the village each day. Council held a workshop recently to consider the results of a tourist survey conducted through the Nimbin Visitor Information Centre. The

survey of about 250 tourists gave us some valuable information including:

- 77% of visitors visited for less than four hours in Nimbin.
- In that time they shop, eat, visiting art galleries and museums.
- Most visitors come from overseas or Brisbane
- They like Nimbin's atmosphere, friendliness and the natural scenery
- Nearly 90% of them were satisfied or very satisfied with their visit

Council provides the staff and facilities at the VIC and I congratulate Andrew for the job he is doing in conjunction with local businesses.

Aquarius 08 and Autumn Arts

It was wonderful to see so many Nimbin friends at the opening of Aquarius 08 exhibition at Lismore Regional Gallery recently. The 35 year gap disappeared as Paul Joseph's singing, Benny Zable's installations, Graeme Dunstan's memories and the Chai Tent brought it all back-even if some of us were not there in 1973. Nimbin remains a centre for art, environment and social change and is to be treasured by all of us. I hope all readers get to the gallery to see the exhibition.

In my frequent visits to Nimbin, I always make sure I leave time to visit the regular Arts exhibitions in the hall. This year's Autumn Arts exhibition was truly fantastic! The hall was filled to overflowing with the creativity of locals and I'm sure many people will be eager to see the Spring version.

LCC Raid

Like many residents, I was perturbed to hear about the presence of Council compliance staff in the Police raid on the Hemp Embassy and Museum. My concern was the possible damage to the relationship between Council and Nimbin residents and businesses and my belief that compliance checks can happen at any time in a less confrontational manner. When I asked about the raid at the Council meeting, I was told it was to check on food handling, fire safety and land-use permit activities- nothing that would require Council to need Police presence I would think.

Electricity cables

Country Energy's move to replace powerlines in Cullen St

prompted residents with good memories to contact me about the presence of underground conduits that were believed to have been installed some years ago. Apparently \$50,000 was set aside for this work but it did not proceed. Any attempt to underground the cables now would require a significant share of the costs to be met by Council. Sadly the likelihood of that happening anytime is remote but in a year of extreme budgetary tightness is just impossible.

Budget

Speaking about Budget, Council will hold its first workshop to consider submissions on May 6. The word within Council is that senior staff are not recommending support for anything but essentials so it looks a lean year for even minor expenditure. The Oral Presentation night that I proposed last year is on again for this budget. Community members who have put forward a submission can book a speaking time for Tuesday June 17 to argue for their proposal before Councillors make the final budget on June 19. I will report more on the budget and Management Plan for 08-09 in my June Jottings.

Elections

There is little doubt that the incoming Council will be met by a year of spending restraint. Just like households, Council is affected by interest rates, the worldwide credit crunch and rises in costs of petrol and other goods.

Having said that, our community including Nimbin, needs better representation. With elections now only four months away, I hope those of you who have thought about standing are preparing. On Thursday May 22, the Local Government and Shires Associations (LGSA) will be hosting an information session for prospective Councillors. The session starts at 7 pm in Council Chambers. On Friday May 30 at 6 pm, the NSW Electoral Commission is also hosting a seminar on the technical aspects of standing. These two seminars are essential for prospective candidates. I also recommend reading *Becoming a Councillor* available on the Department of local government website, www.dlg.nsw.gov.au

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.

Candidate information nights

For those thinking of standing for the Lismore Council elections later in the year, a forthcoming pair of information nights may prove to be very useful.

On Thursday 22nd May, Gerry Holmes and Jan Strom will give a joint presentation on the roles and responsibilities of councillors, at the Lismore Council Chambers, Goonellabah from 7pm.

The following week, a Candidate Information Session will be conducted by senior staff of the NSW Electoral Commission,

This 'technical' session will explain the nuts and bolts of elections - the timetable, nominations and groupings, registration of how-to-vote material, election funding obligations, pre-poll and postal voting, the counting arrangements and recount procedures.

It will be held on Friday 30th May from 6-7.30pm at the Lismore Council Chambers, Goonellabah.

All prospective candidates are encouraged to attend both presentations.

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Sk8park soundwork to follow FONS fundraiser

by The FONS

At the request of local young skaters, Friends of Nimbin Skatepark has submitted a Section 96 DA amendment to Lismore City Council, requesting that they allow the skate park to be opened for limited hours after school and on Saturdays.

Following consultations with Council staff and local residents, we are not confident that this amendment will be passed unless the planned sound-proofing is completed. With this in mind, we are currently working to raise funds to continue with sound mitigation.

The large MardiGrass crowds presented a perfect fund-raising opportunity. The FONS raised \$2,591.10 over the Mardi Grass weekend selling T-shirts and Raffle tickets. Thanks to everyone that helped us to raise this amount, of whom there are many.

There was a big effort from many young Nimbin locals selling raffle tickets and collecting donations over the weekend. With a bit of lateral thinking, this turned into an opportunity to get themselves T-shirts. All of us on the stall were very impressed by this.

Nimbin Hemp Embassy donated 100 t-shirts for us to sell and a \$50 voucher, and have promised some of the door from Peace Park. A huge thankyou to the Embassy for all of the support they have given us.

Many local businesses also donated prizes for the raffle which was drawn at 3.30pm on Saturday.

Prizes donated were:

- One night's double accommodation at the Grey Gum Lodge
- Three course dinner for two at the Spangled Drongo Thai restaurant



Support. Young skaters present a petition in support of the DA amendment to Cr. Jenny Dowell

- Concrete Lizard garden sculpture from Nimbin Craft Gallery
- \$50 Voucher from Susukka Trading
- \$50 Voucher from the Nimbin Hemp Embassy
- \$25 Voucher from Lismore Underground
- \$25 Voucher from Bringabong
- Dinner for two at the Hard Wok Café to the value of \$25
- One Toxic Dutchies t-shirt donated by Jeremy
- 7 anime DVD's donated by the University Co-op Bookshop
- Caps and stickers from 36 Chambers

Local godfather of skateboarding, Franco, put on a massive performance on Saturday, entertaining

the crowds and whipping up donations by doing handstands and elbow stands down the hill on Sibley Street. The highlight of

of the show was a 3-board handstand down the hill. Franco, we love you.

The money raised this weekend will go towards dealing with the rust which is now on the park, completing the welding that needs to be done to finish the construction certificate, drawing up plans for enclosing the subvoids and securing the funds to soundproof the park.

We are confident that the park can be soundproofed and opened to the approval of nearby residents and the wider community. After many months of meeting regularly, it seems that a map for soundproofing the park is forming.

Our next step is to work with Klara Morasszky in trialling the hemp masonry walling which may be used as a sound deadener to enclose the subvoids, so hopefully, another open day is coming soon.

P.S. We are still selling the rest of our T-shirts, there are limited sizes still available which can be bought directly from the FONS, or possibly through the website, or by calling Duncan on 0427-889-815.



Toddlers and their parents had to step through broken glass on their way to Nimbin Day Care Centre on the last Thursday of the April school holidays.

The mess appears to have been caused by young locals binge-drinking in the courtyard of the Nimbin Community Centre, and it is not an isolated incident.

A few nights earlier, the

Centre's rainwater tank was drained after the tap was broken out of its housing.

Community Centre co-ordinator Marcus Mantscheff said that vandalism in the grounds always increased during school holidays.

"It typically happens at night," he said. "Parents should know where their kids are, after dark."

Men's health across the lifespan

Thursday 15th May, 5-7pm at Nimbin Physical Activity Centre, Cecil St Nimbin.

This presentation by David Hughes, a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Men's Health, will include issues such as: Boys to Men; Marriage; Ageing; Retirement and some specific health issues such as prostate cancer.

The Mobile Men's Shed will provide a free BBQ.

The Men and Family Centre will present their "Community Mates" program that they wish to establish in Nimbin.

In addition, the fitness instructors will explain and demonstrate their style of classes to the participants.

Mature men are especially welcome to attend.

Commonsense Human Values

Thirteenth in a series by Laurie Stubbs



Life Develops Itself is a clear principle -- at work now -- on our planet (as we saw last article) -- and for all we know, it may be so throughout the whole cosmos.

Evidence on this planet is very strong; from no life, to self replicating molecule, and over 4.8 billion years, to beings intelligent enough to manipulate the planet. If we accept the principle as truth -- then we should learn to work with it. Suppose we try working with the principle "life develops itself" -- how would this affect us? Given that our value systems are producing conflicts and threats to humanity; and to Earth itself, then we desperately need to do something different.

For simplicity we should look for a "yes/no" test to guide humanity's actions. Can this idea "life develops itself" be used as a basis for such a test? Perhaps if we turn the idea upside down, then a test question, for every

human occasion and every human situation is "Does it help life to develop itself, or no?"

Could this be the beginnings of a new value system? Sounds simple enough; perhaps it could work? Using the LDI test could be straightforward. We apply the test in life's big questions, about life, death, bearing children, human interaction and so on. (A much more detailed look at applying this broadly to people's concerns will be in a future article.)

Probably LDI won't be the ultimate base for a value system. Humanity's problem is today, right now. What we need is guidance for today and the foreseeable future. Ultimate guidance we may be able to understand and seek at some future time. If this question "Does it, or does it not, help life to develop itself" can work for humanity today then we may be on the right track.

Where this statement might lead is a question that needs no firm answers. What matters now is whether the test is a useful and practical guide to action today. As with the ancient Greek and their idea of "atoms", answers may take hundreds, maybe thousands of years.. The early Greeks found their analysis useful; getting that much right when

starting from "earth, air, fire, and water" was good insight.

So for us now the question is not where the statement might lead, but rather: "Does it look like pointing the right direction?" If it is thoroughly grounded in fact, helps humanity to understand itself, and time is a useful guide to daily action at the same, that statement will be working overtime.. (We'll look at likely problems with general acceptance of the test in next article)

Whether the test gives us the right direction needs an analogy. Where you and I are now, on our life paths is the centre of a circle of choice. Half the circle is behind us, half in front. Clearly we won't be going backwards; so where do we aim in the half circle that's ahead? Straight on we know is dangerous, and no small change of direction will beat our problems. What's left is a big change either to right or left. Sounds a bit frightening? Not really.

Remember the old rule "If what you are doing now isn't working, then do anything else!" And, -- there'll be a gut feeling to guide the choice.

So choose: Can't go back, can't go straight ahead; so left or right? The life develops itself test (LDI) may help us find the right new direction.



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