

Desecration in Nimbin

I could not believe my eyes when looking in at Choices Cafe to discover that Rodney Sharpe's amazing painting had been painted over.

I know there is new management at Choices and the desire to create a new look must have been foremost in mind, but a reality check please. This is Nimbin. The most decorated and artistic town in Australia. What naive person would come to a town like Nimbin and operate a business without the least scrutiny of what makes Nimbin tick in order to benefit the most from their own new business venture?

Nimbin is unique because it has great artistic merit in its heritage buildings. The incredible painted facades of 99% of Cullen Street businesses that attract tourists from the wide world over as well as giving great pleasure to Nimbinites and its artistic community.

Maybe it's not too late to restore this sacrilegious (I speak from an atheistic point of view) painting, by a clever washing away of the overlaid white paint?

My heart bleeds for Rodney when he discovers for himself the loss to the artistic heritage of Nimbin as well as to the lack of respect for a truly talented and well-loved Nimbin artist.

Mac McMahon
Secretary, Nimbin Artists
Gallery

Murals Fundraising

In the July NGT "From the Mayor's Desk" column regarding the Nimbin murals - I would like to set the record straight.

Cr. Dowell states: "I am delighted that the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce took up my suggestion of starting some community fundraising to restore the iconic Nimbin murals."

How bold of you Cr. Dowell - or is it a momentary memory lapse? As an informed member of our Chamber of Commerce, I recall two previous failed submissions for Murals 'seed funding'. This was their effort to 'kick off' the fund raising!

The idea of the mural project was conceived some eight years ago by Benny Zable, Peter Wise and me.

Apart from the collaboration of artists such as Burri Jerome and Elspeth Jones to mention a few, the famous original mural artist Vernon Treweeke, who volunteered his time to repaint some of his past visits during significant Aquarius anniversaries etc., many may not be aware of other 'in kind' support that the community has already given to the cause in the past.

My partner Peter and I personally have contributed in order to motivate and encourage Benny and other artists to continue this arduous work since then by supplying materials, paint and life-time meal subsidies through our restaurant. The hospitality we extend to all of Benny's associates, overseas visitors and ambassadors who value and embrace this village for its uniqueness. Some include Woodstock Museum's Nathan Koenig and Shelly Lipton.

From the inception to the recent launch of this fund, I have seen the passionate and relentless pursuit of this dream by Peter, Benny and

recently, the newly formed Murals Fund Committee members.

Nimbin is a major asset and a key tourism 'drawcard' to the wider Lismore area. Credit should only be taken when funding budgets are better prioritised and directed to more significant projects like these.

Thank you Jenny for your kind contributions of \$150 from your discretionary and personal funds, it is much appreciated.

I would like to personally thank the Rainbow Power Company for their generous first donation of \$500, and all the community who have donated. Please continue to support the Mural Fund, by either donating to the tins around the village or direct deposit to:

Bank: Summerland
Credit Union, BSB: 802-222, Name: Mural Fund Account, No: 22279160, Surname: Nim (for Electronic Transfers).

Helen (Elena) Wise,
Proprietor of Nimbin Pizza
& Trattoria (Est.1991)

have included Bakunin and Kropotkin more than Karl Marx and the socialists who, like feudalists, feminists, humanists and capitalists, are just different versions of, self-righteous, social engineers.

Evolution mentors have included Teilhard de Chardin, the Jesuit priest. Holism mentors have included E.F.Schumacher, who said small can be beautiful.

Gnostic mentors have included Jesus ben Joseph, who was born of egg and sperm like thee and me, and became enlightened at the river and in the wilderness.

We GA's expect, as a logical imperative, an apocalyptic realisation-revelation, of the total truth, in association with a bifurcation, globally, including locally, of homo sapiens, into its good and evil halves, to end our exponential evolution to illumination, within a year or few from now.

Doug Ogilvie,
Bilambil

Gnostic anarchists

We gnostic anarchists are a minority group of non-violent nonconformists who don't get much space in the capitalist media, which promotes a majority rule type of political democracy that is really the tyranny of a majority, which we find objectionable.

We believe in the pleasure principle, i.e. that life has a telos or intrinsic purpose which is happiness and that the best happiness comes because of helping others, as spiritual siblings, to reduce their suffering and increase their sense of happiness.

In our opinion, everybody is currently a hypocrite, i.e. fallible because of believing false assumptions. The meek know this and try to live together, consensually, accordingly; governing ourselves by the golden rule of universal love; do unto others as you would like others to treat you. The self-righteous don't, and enforce-enact-obey instead some other type of tyrannical law, such as sharia, the torah or Rafferty's.

Our anarchistic mentors

Orwellian Abbott

George Orwell noted that the politics of fear relies on the "other" to be feared. It doesn't really matter who the enemy is. They just have to be different to us.

Given that the politics of terrorism is on the back burner, the feared Other is the 0.2% of our immigrants that come to Australia in boats from Indonesia. 87% of these arrivals are found to be genuine refugees.

John Howard was the master of this fearmongering. He demonised the boat people and did it so well it is still resonating with many people.

In an important book by David Marr and Marian Wilkinson entitled *Dark Victory*, it is shown how Howard micromanaged each boat arrival with absurdly expensive and confrontational tactics.

Now Tony Abbott promises to do the same. Many other similarities between Abbott and Howard will become apparent should Abbott become Prime Minister.

Eric Kaiser
Kyogle

Notices

Volunteers Wanted

Nimbin Music Festival requires volunteers on and prior to the event. Please contact Tanya, phone 0429-792-875.

Stallholders opportunity

Stall Holders also required for the Nimbin Music Festival. Please contact Mick, phone 0457-583-534.

Young People's Activities

Information is being requested about any events/programs/classes that are run in and around Nimbin for young people and children - gym and dance classes, music lessons, drama, ponyclub, other sports etc.

The idea is to create a list of activities, contact numbers and perhaps a calendar, which could be a great resource for parents and newcomers to the village.

Contact Lizette Twisleton, Youth and Community Devt. Officer, Lismore City Council, phone 1300-87-83-87 or email: lizette.twisleton@lismore.nsw.gov.au

Women in Local Government

There are too few women Councillors in NSW. The next elections for local government are on Saturday September 8, 2012. It is never too early to start thinking about standing for election, so Lismore Mayor Jenny Dowell is hosting a seminar on Wednesday September 8, 2010, 5-7pm at Lismore City Council Chambers, Oliver Ave, Goonellabah to allow women to learn about getting elected and to support women who are interested in standing as candidates.

There'll be a presentation on the basics, then a panel of local women Councillors, then open discussion. 2010 is the Year of Women in Local Government. If we work together now, we can boost women's representation in Councils in 2012.

RSVP by Monday 6th September to Jenny.
Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au or phone 0402-651-394.

Imagine...if John Lennon was still here!

Nimbin Aquarius Foundation would like to celebrate John Lennon's 70th birthday on Saturday 9th October with Fantasy Dress Extravaganza. If you would like to perform at or help plan this event, feel welcome to call in to the Aquarius HQ in the Nimbin Community Centre, or contact Katie on 6689-1938 or Helmut on Mob:0458-048-565, or email aquariusnetworking@gmail.com

Free Listings

If you have something to advertise in under 50 words, that we think would be of interest to our readers, we'll run it for free for you. Send Notices to nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or mail to us at 81 Cullen Street Nimbin 2480, or place it in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

About us

Editor: Bob Dooley

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Bookkeeper: Martha Paitson

Website: David McMinn
www.nimbingoodtimes.com

NGT is auspiced by the Nimbin Community School Co-operative Ltd.

Next deadline:
Wednesday 29th September

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

Please limit contributions to
600 words or less.

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The wooden bridge within an inch of its life

by Monika Boenigk

As some readers may have heard, ABC Coast Radio recently aired an interview with myself and then later Garry Hemsworth, Executive Director of Infrastructure Services at Lismore Council regarding the plight of the old wooden Cullen Bridge in Nimbin which is earmarked for demolition once the two-lane concrete bridge is in place.

In the interview, I encouraged Council to consider the significance of a myriad of small things coming together to make a place worth living in but also stand out as tourist attraction. Gradually removing irreplaceable bits and pieces will slowly but surely convert Nimbin into an "everyday-village" where "lumps of concrete" and conventionalism gradually but surely overtakes "soulful timber" and uniqueness, with grave consequences not only to tourism but the quiet enjoyment and delight of valley residents. Removing the wooden bridge would also destroy a much-photographed, welcoming ambience, which puts a smile on many a visitors' face and sends a warm feeling to their heart.

Some of the proposed uses for a minimally restored and maintained wooden bridge left in situ would be that it be only accessible to pedestrians and pushbikes and converted into an artistic/historical installation as gateway to the Rainbow Region and as a link to the historic Butter Factory with its Bush Theatre, Candle Factory and cafe. The bridge could host a series of plaques outlining the economic and cultural history of Nimbin, a platypus lookout, markets, and an annual bridge festival, all of which could be utilised as fundraisers for maintenance work. I am



currently researching the historical significance of the bridge by contacting respective heritage groups and individuals of the bygone era, as this information may also have bearing on decisions made.

In his interview, Garry Hemsworth from Council stated that the bridge is scheduled for demolition in March 2011. He said that it had been let go for some years now with the anticipation of replacement with a concrete structure, providing some safety and maintenance challenges. He said further that there are funds available to remove the old bridge and upon questioning by the interviewer Fiona Poole, he agreed that it may be feasible such funds be used for maintenance instead. I was very pleased that, in his response to my points raised, Garry Hemsworth indicated Council's willingness to discuss the future of the bridge in some more detail with Nimbin residents.

I would like to propose that concerned residents and community groups form a "Bridge Committee" for the purpose of collecting the information needed to put a proposal to Council which outlines our interest in the bridge to remain, our plans for its use and some suggestions towards funding the project. Please contact me on 6689-7490 or m.b@idl.com.au to register your engagement with this project.

LISMORE CITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Public notices, updates and information for the Nimbin Community

MORE CONSULTATION FOR THE NIMBIN COMMUNITY

In March 2009 Nimbin Chamber of Commerce and the Nimbin Community Centre Incorporated hosted a forum on Nimbin community engagement with Council. Twenty six recommendations were forwarded from this forum to Council for consideration.

In response to these recommendations Lismore City Council's May 2010 meeting resolved that:

- Council will work with Nimbin community organisations and the wider Nimbin community to establish a community reference and consultation structure
- Council's activities in the Nimbin area are communicated through the local media. This may be through a newsletter in the Nimbin Good Times and also a public notice board and information distribution point.
- Council's welcome and information for new residents will include information specifically related to Nimbin.

Initial informal consultations suggest that a Community Reference Group would, very likely, be the ideal consultative mechanism and the following suggestions about the establishment of the Nimbin Community Reference Group were put forward for consideration:

- the Reference Group would include representatives from the community, from groups who deliver services or represent groups within the community, an Indigenous Elder and youth representatives
- the group would number between 8-10 people and would be formed through an election process which, in the first instance, would require an Expression of Interest to Council from interested parties, and finally, a decision by Councillors at the October 2010 Council meeting.
- The reference group would meet on a tri-monthly basis, or more frequently on a needs/issues driven basis.

An Information Session will be held at the Birth and Beyond Meeting Room in Cullen Street on Thursday, 9th September 2010 starting at 6.30pm. All community members with an interest in the community reference group process are encouraged to attend.

CRIME PREVENTION PLANNING - COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Council has recently commenced consultation with community members, groups delivering services and other representative groups within the community to share information about the development of its new Crime Prevention Plan. This plan will identify priority crimes and strategies to reduce those crimes and make opportunity for Council to apply to the NSW Attorney General's Department for funding to deliver programming within the Lismore Local Government Area.

Lismore City Council is keen to have input from the Nimbin community. You can 'have your say' about your experience of crime in a brief survey on Council's website.

Go to www.lismore.nsw.gov.au and scroll down the tabs on the left hand side of the page and click on Have Your Say to access the survey.

NIMBIN NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE RECEIVES \$50,000 THROUGH NORTHERN RIVERS FOOD LINKS - VILLAGE SHOWCASE PROJECTS

The Northern Rivers Food Links Project is a council cooperation initiative of the seven Northern Rivers Councils and will implement a range of initiatives identified within the Northern Rivers Food Links Business Plan. The Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre was the successful applicant for the Lismore local government area, receiving \$50,000 for their project 'Nimbin Food Security'. More information: www.northernriversfoodlinks.com.au/

UPDATE ON NIMBIN SUPERMARKET DA

Council planning staff are currently finalising the assessment of the development application for the Nimbin Supermarket and subdivision proposal located off Sibley Street that was lodged in April 2009. Once the report is finalised it will be presented to a Council meeting for consideration and determination. Anyone who lodged submissions to the proposal during the public exhibition period will be notified of Council meeting dates at which the Nimbin Supermarket and sub-division proposal will be considered by Councillors.

NIMBIN SKATE PARK

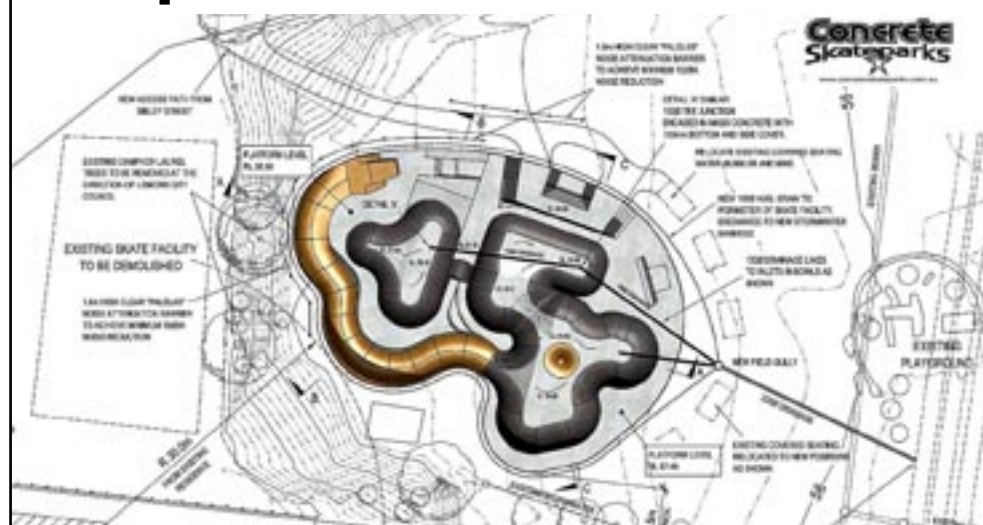
The development application for the Nimbin Skate Park has been lodged. The final design was developed in consultation with representatives from the local skating community and includes features which are sure to offer challenges for skaters of all ages and abilities.

Noise barriers have also been included in the design to control noise from the facility. Residents living in the immediate vicinity of Peace Park have been notified of the application. A copy of the application will also be available at the Visitor Information Centre. All residents are invited to make submissions to Council on the proposal and these will be received until 17th September 2010.

A NEW HOME FOR THE NIMBIN VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The Nimbin VIC has recently moved and now has bigger, brighter premises further along Cullen Street, at Number 46, Shop 3. It is the site of the old NRMA and closer to the heart of the village, the post office, bank and retail area. Call in and say "hi" to the friendly staff and have a look at their larger display of arts, crafts and produce or check out Nimbin Rocks from the back window. The phone number remains the same: 6689-1388.

Site plan for new Nimbin Skate Park



National Water Week 2010

Photography Competition

Australia's Most Precious Resource

Lismore City Council is holding a photography competition to celebrate National Water Week 2010, recognising the importance water plays in our lives. National Water Week runs from the 17th to the 23rd of October 2010.

The photography competition is themed "Australia's most precious resource" and entries can depict water landscapes, water in your life and water for your livelihood.

Photographs entered must be taken within Lismore Region and there are four competition categories - junior primary (K-3), primary (4-6), high school (7-12) and open.

Entries close on Friday, October 15 2010. The photographs will be displayed at the Lismore Show which runs from October 21-23, 2010.

The winner of each category will receive a cash prize of \$100 and the runner-up will receive \$50.

Entry forms are available from Lismore City Council Offices or can be downloaded from www.lismore.nsw.gov.au.

Competition terms and conditions apply - these are listed on the entry form.

For more information please call the Water Hotline on 1300 87 83 87.

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Corporate Centre 43 Oliver Avenue, GOONELLABAH 2480
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Phone 1300 87 83 87
Fax (02) 6625 0400
Website www.lismore.nsw.gov.au
Email council@lismore.nsw.gov.au



Lismore - a great place to live and work

Print media perceptions of Nimbin

by Graham Irvine

In some ways the village of Nimbin has come a long way since the 1973 Aquarius Festival, which was the largest assembly of alternative thinkers Australia has ever seen.

Even the nearby town of Lismore, which for decades ignored or denigrated its potential, is now embracing it in their tourist brochures. They would be foolish not to do so, as Nimbin is now the third most visited place in regional New South Wales, after the Blue Mountains and Byron Bay.

However in the Council's events calendar, there is no mention of the hugely successful MardiGrass Festival, which attracts thousands of people to this village of some 750 souls. But how much of Nimbin's change has entered the consciousness of the Australian print media and its readership?

Every so often these newspapers despatch a reporter and sometimes a photographer to do an "exclusive" on our little village. So what do they see and how do they report it? As a long-term resident I was curious to know their themes, their "spin", their mistakes and their attitudes to what they saw. I decided to use the Factiva database to find newspaper feature articles as far back as possible and to conduct a content analysis of this data. The methodology employed was quite simple, being based on the numbers of un/favourable characteristics ascribed to Nimbin, so as "to indicate the attitudes held by the writers, their readers or their common culture"¹ towards Nimbin. The papers sourced were a combination of metropolitans, (*The Australian, Adelaide Advertiser, Brisbane Courier Mail and Sunday Mail, Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney Daily and Sunday Telegraph*) and regional newspapers, (*The Gold Coast Bulletin, Townsville Bulletin, Cairns Post*) and one piece each from the *Toronto Star* and *Chicago Tribune*. All in all the database rendered thirty four articles ranging from 1989 to 2010 which formed the basis for the subsequent analysis.

Unfortunately the Factiva database only begins in 1989 but fortunately a book chapter written by my colleague Rhonda Ellis and ex-colleague Fiona Martin devotes a few lines to the attitude of Lismore's *Northern Star* towards Nimbin before and after the 1973 Nimbin Aquarius Festival. Their research indicates that "in the last three months of 1972, the *Northern Star* carried only one 'neutral' mention of the area's new arrivals. All other accounts related to 'Indian hemp' and narcotic drug charges, a protest outside the Lismore courthouse after a drug raid, and a piece entitled 'Surfies asked to move on' sourced from Victoria.

In early 1973 this trend continued, although as the Aquarius Festival gained growing attention, most *Star* stories were positive and enthusiastic about the business opportunities for Nimbin. Only days after the festival started however, an editorial raised concerns about health hazards and child welfare, complaining about the 'scruffy' newcomers, whose 'primitive and permissive lifestyle', it suggested, 'the majority will reject.' Subsequent articles that week examined: unfounded rumours of a venereal disease outbreak at the festival and the details of drug charges laid against visitors; ugly scenes between police and festival-goers; vandalism of Nimbin by persons unknown; and protests about government funding of the festival."² In the same book, Wilson claims that even today, "there is still a tendency in popular discourse



to spectacularise hippies and ferals as different, unruly and... threatening."³

Of the thirty-four articles analysed, eighteen were generally favourable in their reporting and attitude to Nimbin; ten unfavourable and six equivocal. The more right wing publications, for example the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, tended to be more negative than the rest.

As expected, the most common theme was drugs, both hard and soft, and hippies. There was not a single article that did not mention drugs, and very few which did not refer to hippies. The more sensationalist press overflowed with negative hyperbole on drugs, like, "dope-crazed hippies"⁴ while another claimed, without a shred of evidence, that, "Today, the free-spirited hippie of the Nimbin fairytale is more likely to be a bikie whose clandestine laboratory pumps out hundreds and thousands of dollars worth of speed."⁵ Said another, "the Aquarius Festival of 1973 [was] organised ... as a victory celebration for the withdrawal of Australian support for the Vietnam War."⁶ One wonders whether the scribes who made these allegations had imbibed too much of the local green herb.

Hippies were variously described as "unwashed"⁷ or "ageing"⁸ but more maliciously the "lost souls of the Whitlam experiment white trash."⁹ and Nimbin was "the hippie capital",¹⁰ or "the mecca of psychedelia"¹¹ In the more favourable accounts Nimbin is still on about "the counter-culture, peace and sustainability ... [and] ... occasionally of retirement villages for old hippies,"¹² whereas the more pejorative pieces spoke of "The dope capital's foul face,"¹³ "How Nimbin's dream [had] dissolved to a dark nightmare."¹⁴ and how the "real hippies have fled to the hills."¹⁵ But the most troubling piece was this comment, which related to a world tour car rally in the Nimbin area in late 2009 - "Hippies were respected [sic] to be different up to the weekend rally. Now they are the most hated variety on the whole coast. Watch out you ferals, wearing retro and having dreadlocks has never been so dangerous. The wildlife is safe, the hippies amongst it have just gone to number one come the hunting season."¹⁶

Another frequently mentioned topic was the counterculture /alternative lifestyle and the landmark Aquarius Festival of 1973. The main street is reported in some detail and that is about as far as most of the hacks got on their visits. Since the street is the locale for petty drug dealers it is not surprising that their stories are negative.

"Communes" or intentional communities often get a run - usually favourably, although there was much confusion over their numbers and their success. The *Sydney Morning Herald* could only find "about six"¹⁷, "but the two overseas papers reported "sixty two communes surrounding the village."¹⁸ and another hack reported that "hundreds of communities [had] sprang up in and around Nimbin."¹⁹ The real figure is about twenty, depending on your definition of "community."²⁰ While one writes that, around Nimbin, "the rural communes flourish,"²¹ a few months later another writer asserts that, "the days of the commune are over [and] the last were dying."²²

Nimbin businesses also frequently feature, as do the

successful "straights" (non hippies), who run them or who practise a profession at home or in Lismore or Nimbin. Latterly the scribes have been writing about the boom in tourism which sees seven buses a day visiting the village, disgorging dozens of tourists from all over the world, from backpackers to grey nomads.

One of the two more bizarre stories reports on the launch in Nimbin of the latest Volkswagen Kombi, the Caddy Life, whose PR Manager is quoted as saying, "There will be a lot of people who know Nimbin from thirty years ago who are now well off and interested in a vehicle like this."²³ But perhaps even more bizarre is a poisonous piece from the notorious Piers Ackerman in an article entitled "Pay no mind to paranoid hippies." Conflating the Greens and Democrats with "dole bludging fringe dwellers at Nimbin" who want the navy to release videos of refugee boat people, he insists that, "The navy must not accede to the wishes of ageing hippies and dysfunctional children."²⁴

About a third of the reports contained errors of detail. Given their distance from Nimbin it is excusable that the two overseas reports were mistaken in erroneously claiming that, "at least 10,000 hippies and others live in the New South Wales town of Nimbin."²⁵ However there is no such excuse for papers like the *Townsville Bulletin* which also claimed a population of 10,000²⁶ while the *Sydney Morning Herald* claimed "about 250"²⁷ and the *Courier Mail* "three hundred residents."²⁸

Some of the more egregious errors include the completely false assertion that, "Before the Age of Aquarius ... [Nimbin] was a thriving agricultural district."²⁹ It was not. A teahouse 15 kilometres from Nimbin is described as being "on Nimbin's outskirts."³⁰ But the prize for the most muddleheaded misstatement should go to *The Australian* whose reporter wrote about, "the neighbouring coastal town of Dharmananda".³¹ Dharmananda is in fact not a town at all but an intentional community situated 50-odd kilometres from the coast.

So what are we to make of these findings? Well, firstly that Nimbin still retains the uniqueness that stemmed from the 1973 Festival. Secondly, that there are too many newspapers whose reporters and editors won't let the facts spoil a good story.

But let the late Rick Farley, who was known when he lived in Nimbin as "Rick Far-out" because of his radical views, have the last word of advice for journalists writing about Nimbin: "The great legacy of Nimbin is having an open mind, being inquiring. Being able to cross boundaries and not be stuck in your own little world."³²

Footnotes

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- Susan Acret, "A dream trip in timeless Nimbin", *Sydney Morning Herald* 8 January 1990.
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- Taylor note 14.
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KIMI HANDYMAN



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Simon says...

by Simon Clough
Lismore City Councillor



The Jasmine is out. I love being ambushed by its perfume and having to look around to discover where it's coming from. Part of my affection for that perfume and plant comes from the fact that I always associate with the birth of our daughter, a jasmine baby.

Wow! What a result in the Federal election. Like many others I believe the result reflects the feelings of the Australian community. I was delighted in equal measure to see Janelle Saffin increase her vote and the Greens get a Senator in each state and a member of the House of Representatives. It would have been so unfair if Janelle had lost her seat having worked so selflessly for Page. I do hope the new balance of power will mean we can get effective action on climate change. I guess it will depend on whether the Labor party gets to be the government and whether the Greens can influence them to act on "the greatest moral challenge of our time". I can't believe "that dude in the red swimmers" as one voter described Mr Abbott on election day, will do anything because he has said, "Climate change is crap".

On more local matters I attended a meeting about the draft Local Environment Plan (LEP) attended by a large number of rural landowners and addressed by some very angry people. Some of the gems of comments were the threat to take me personally to the Supreme Court should I support the LEP and that some Councillors were "communistic" (I think he meant me). I wonder if that's better or worse than "socialist"?

Seriously though, there are lies being spread in these meetings that are causing many landowners distress. Some examples are that environmental protection zones will become "National Parks", farmers will have to get permission to change their agricultural activities, Council is under the control of extreme greens and that Council is opposed to farming and food production. Having

lived and worked on a farm for 20 years I know nothing could be further from the truth.

I was disappointed that Cr Vanessa Ekins' motion to investigate "rate reductions and other incentives for landholders with ecologically sensitive vegetation" was rebuffed with comments that it was "just a sop". It seems to me if we want landholders to manage environmentally important areas it's only fair that they receive support and compensation.

I've started to think about getting back on the river, so it must be spring. Along with Rotary Park and Tucki Tucki Creek in Goonellabah it's one of the great secrets of Lismore. As Rat in "Wind in the Willows" said, "There is nothing better than messing about in boats." Especially when you have almost a whole river to yourself and about ten minutes paddling to reach stretches where you can't see a house or sign of humanity (except for pesky coral trees!)

August's Council meeting was very interesting. My motion which was supported unanimously was aimed at trying to prevent Sydney Airport (owned by Macquarie Bank) from increasing Regional Express' parking charges by a factor of five to \$3.6M. The impact of this increase could see Rex's services become unviable for Lismore or its services moved to Bankstown, neither of which would be good for Lismore's economy.

Cr David Yarnell created a media frenzy with his motion that Council should only purchase free range eggs. Unfortunately some local media trivialised Dave's motion. On the other hand a media crew fly up from Sydney to interview him. I was delighted that his motion was passed (on the casting vote of the Mayor) because I believe it is Council's role to take leadership on such issues as cruelty to other creatures.

Enjoy a wonderful spring! And don't forget, you can contact me at simonclough@internode.on.net or on 6624-2894 or 0428-886-217.

From the Mayor's desk

by Jenny Dowell
Mayor of Lismore

Jenny.Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au

Federal Election

Well the dust has settled and the members for Page and Richmond have been re-elected but as I write, the make-up of the Federal Parliament and the Government is still unclear.

While the waiting is agony for some, we are so lucky that we live in a country where there are no riots in this hiatus. Whatever the final result, I am confident that the needs of regional Australia will be highlighted and we may well have a better Parliament as a result. Here's hoping anyway.

August Meeting

With eight Notices of Motion from four Councillors, we covered a wide range of topics at our August meeting even before the main agenda commenced.

Footpaths, cage eggs, airport charges, water holes and land-use planning were all debated before we turned our attention to the Nimbin Business Rates.

Nimbin Business Rates

The Nimbin Chamber of Commerce had expressed concern that the repayment of interest on a 2004 loan for security cameras had not been part of the understanding of the terms of the loan.

Council had been asked to forgive the balance of the loan or reimburse some portion of the repayments for other purposes.

Councillors decided to direct part of the Business Rate to the Visitor Information Centre and the balance of the indexed funds to be redirected to other projects determined in conjunction with the Chamber.

Management of City Hall

Council considered an

application by tender for the management of City Hall by NORPA. Council declined to accept the tender but will negotiate with NORPA and report back to Council at a later date.

As I accepted the donation of a newspaper advertisement from one of the NORPA directors in the lead up to my election of Mayor, I declared a perceived conflict of interest and absented myself from the vote.

LGA Conference

For the first time in my memory, Council decided not to send any Councillors to the Local Government Association Conference in Albury in late October.

The Mayor and two voting delegates are entitled to attend but with the costs estimated to be in the vicinity of \$2000 per attendee, Council decided that we will save our money this year. All Councillors have accepted a cut to our travel and professional development allocations in line with the overall budget restraint of Council.

Quarterly Budget Review

While it is pleasing to see our March deficit of \$32,400 reduce in June to a deficit of \$2400 and increased savings in areas such as street lighting and loan repayments, some costs are still unacceptably high.

Goonellabah Sports and Aquatic Centre continues to cost more to operate than anticipated as did the Memorial Baths. Councillors will watch the next Quarterly review with great attention to detail.

Local Environmental Plan

In other news, Lismore's Draft Local Environmental Plan (LEP) is continuing to cause much concern in our rural community. I can assure NGT readers that this Council wants to make the new LEP as good as it

can be.

The exhibition period of four months closes at the end of August. All submissions will be carefully considered and changes to the LEP will be made where necessary. A local property rights group has held several public meetings to galvanise opposition to the LEP and has made failed attempts to have the draft withdrawn.

Councillors and staff are accustomed to receiving criticism from some sections of the community.

We take the brickbats as a natural consequence of our roles but I am disgusted by some of the scaremongering that has taken place over this issue.

Council has had an elderly farmer in tears having been told by opponents to the LEP that if the farmer goes on holidays, Council will send a truck to round up her cattle and take them off her property.

Others wrongly believe the LEP requires them to fence off access to waterways. Others have been phoned by someone falsely representing herself as from LCC, saying Council was intending to lock-up their farm.

I would suggest that the first step for anyone is to read the LEP. It can be found at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au

BRE Survey

In late August, Council launched its Business Retention and expansion survey.

When we know what businesses are operating here, we can use that data to leverage funding and attract other businesses to Lismore. In doing so, we can strengthen our economy and create jobs- especially for our young people.

I encourage businesses from large to micro to complete the Business Survey on-line by clicking on the link at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au by September



15. There are great prizes for completing the survey too.

You can contact Mark Batten, Business Facilitator, on Mark.Batten@lismore.nsw.gov.au if you need more information.

Fun Run

At time of writing, I am looking forward to starting and walking in the Nimbin Fun Run on Sunday.

Congratulations to Cassandra Jefferys for all her organization of what promises to be a wonderful community event.

Blue Moon Ball

I'm also looking forward to attending the famous Blue Moon Ball on September 11 and catching up with lots of Nimbin folk.

If any readers have not been to a Blue Moon Cabaret or Ball, you are really missing a spectacular night of talent and fun.

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Jayne's Tax Tips

by Jayne Wolf



Well it's that time of the year again – Tax Time.

Some employees have received their group certificates early, i.e. July, some have received theirs in August and some haven't got theirs yet. That would be because businesses have three months to supply their employees with their group certificates.

If an individual is submitting their own tax returns via E-Tax or manual forms then the return should be lodged by 31st September each year, or else they are looking at a possible fine.

If an individual goes to a Tax Agent then they can have an extension until 15th May the following year with no late fines as long as they are a registered client of that Tax Agent which only requires signing a form nominating the said Tax Agent as your agent.

Business Activity Statements (BAS) are due by the 28th of the following month, but a Tax Agent can get you an extension until the 11th of the next month e.g. Jayne has done her BAS for March 2010. Jayne had until the 28th April 2010 to lodge it.

If Jayne misses this date and is a client of a Tax Agent, she would have until the 11th May 2010 to lodge her BAS. This gives Jayne an extra two weeks to lodge her BAS.

What I have noticed with a lot of people coming in the door at Nimbin Tax & Accounting, is people are not

really aware of what they can claim and what they can't.

When people come and see me to do their tax and it's their first time, I like to have a cup of tea with them and spend a good hour explaining what they can and what they can't claim. I have been quite startled by the lack of knowledge due to the fact that a lot of Tax Agents do not spend the time explaining these things to their clients.

A very important thing to have is your ordinary garden variety diary, which you can buy at any newsagent. One that is stamped with dates and months, not just a little blank notebook. A diary can replace receipts when you lose them or it is a very good record that you can then use at tax time to claim lots of bucks!

For example, you can only claim \$150 for laundry but if you keep a diary you can claim a \$1 per load if it is just your work clothes or 50c if you have your ordinary clothes in the washing as well. It is also a good record for the hours you work at home or all the phone calls to work. Get the idea? Diaries are GOOD.

Following are some helpful hints:

- The most important hint is KEEP A DIARY. One that has stamped months and dates on it, not just a little notebook.
- Every time you wash your work clothes note it in the diary. You don't need to do long explanations just something like the letter L

every time you wash. This could be a deduction of \$365 a year!

- If you do work at home, keep a diary of the hours that you do because it is a tax deduction of .26c per hour. This can accumulate to quite a bit after a year. This hourly rate is set by the Tax department and it basically covers the electricity you use and the wear & tear on your chair and desk. Also calculate the ratio of the workspace relative to the rest of the house and you can claim that percentage off the interest payments each year.
 - If you work outside you can claim protective clothing e.g. Hat, sun cream, sunglasses, protective trousers (not Shorts), protective shirts (not singlet) and boots.
 - If you work in a food shop you can claim aprons, hair nets and non slip shoes
 - People working in Pubs can claim aprons and protective boots. (Beer is notorious for eating through shoes quicker than acid)
 - If you use your car for work, keep a vehicle log book. You only have to keep it for 3 months and then it is calculated pro rata. It's amazing how much more you can claim with a vehicle log book e.g. a percentage of your registration, Pink Slip, Driving License, Motor repairs, services, tyres, batteries.
 - Keep all your medical expenses because when they are more than \$1500 for the year there is a rebate in the form of a Tax Offset. Medical Expenses include Dental Bills, anything medical from a chemist (e.g. Asthmatic sprays, pain killers, prescriptions, band aids, and bandages), Doctor Bills (or the gap between what you pay and what you get back from Medicare).
- I hope these few titbits give you an idea of what you can claim.

Benny Zable's 2010 New York diary

It is now over a week since arriving in the Big Apple from Sydney on Wednesday 11th August, and it seems I have been here a month, with all the drama experienced here in that time.

First there is the EcoFest drama with the New York City Hall ban on our 21-year old annual environmental event. After last year's Central Park huge success, the NYC parks department has disallowed a permit to any of their parks to stage this year's EcoFest, because mainly it is getting too big.

Well some quick footwork by my boss Nanci Callahan has secured a revived Ground Zero Battery Park precinct known as Monarco on the Hudson, owned by the NY state, for our 350.org/ 10-10-10 event.

This site incidentally is where on 23rd September 1979, Musicians for Safe Energy, (MUSE) staged their legendary No Nukes rally concert. I happened to be a volunteer helper at that event, which was a major change experience for me. Google and check it out on You Tube.

Before leaving Nimbin for the Big Apple, I left my 350.org signs with the Channon Market committee and



the Rainbow Chai Tent to remind them of that day of action on 10th October, which falls on a Sunday Channon Market day. To all interested parties, this is a major international media Thinking Globally/ Acting Locally Climate Action day.

In New York we are teaming up like last year with Pete Seeger and the Clearwater friends, re cleaning up rivers and streams, solar, wind and tide energy alternatives etc. For this event we are being helped by the 350.org director Bill McKibbins. There are many young New York activist alliances partnering with us.

This first week I also decked out and performed

at the Beacon Sloop Club annual Corn Festival, and the weekly Peace vigil with my flags.

I voted The Greens here in the Australian Consulate and watched the coverage of the Federal Election count on ABC 24 News early Saturday morning here on my laptop and in the evening treated to Twyla Tharp's *Come Fly Away* at Broadway's Marquis Theatre. New York! New York!

Will be up Woodstock way at the end of August, to help with the Woodstock Museum's annual Woodstock Film Festival and start preparing painting a Zany Bubbles mural duplicate here as planned.

No rally group responds to flawed report with letter-writing campaign

by Andrea Vickers

What kinds of events do you want to see in the Northern Rivers? What kind of community do you think we really are?

The NSW Treasurer, Eric Roozendaal, released the World Rally Championship review 13 hours before the polls opened for the Federal election, ensuring it would be ignored by Sydney media. Roozendaal inherited the rally issue after Ian MacDonald's spectacular fall from grace.

When you read the review, you can see why they tried to bury it: written by a marketing company, it lacks procedural or structural credibility in our view. We also find its economic findings laughable, as the figures are ultimately based on counting multiple stage pass sales and attendance at free events: every freckle on every patron. Other data sources are kept hidden, either as 'commercial in confidence' or due to convenient 'privacy concerns'.

The review appears to scapegoat residents for the State Government's poor judgement in bringing the event to the region, describing opponents in unsavoury terms and as 'a tiny minority' despite

acknowledging 75% of submissions received were against the rally. Its main aim seems to be to save face for the State Government when it is presented to FIA in Paris on September 10, when they will decide the fate of the Australian leg of the rally.

If you think the Northern Rivers is about much more attractive things than motor sports in national parks, and you don't like being used as a pawn by politicians and their friends, add your voice!

Write to them and tell them as a resident how you feel about the rally and/or the review. Don't let the government blame us for their crazy choice to impose the rally on this region.

Send your message to these people, and to your local papers:

- Bryan Hardman HMRA bryan.hardman@hmra.nsw.gov.au
 - Eric Roozendaal enquiries@treasurer.nsw.gov.au
 - Copy to NRG info@norallygroup.org
- You can download the review at: <http://hmra.nsw.gov.au/publications/Pages/default.aspx>

You can check our website for more information: www.norallygroup.org

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Luck of the Draw

Performance Poetry World Cup Wash-Up

by Gail M. Clarke

The organisers of this year's Nimbin Performance Poetry World Cup wish to extend a great BIG thank you to everyone involved in making this an absolutely fabulous weekend of sharing and exciting poetry performances.

Surprise, surprise, two winners, the judges couldn't separate Tug Dumbly and Elizabeth Routledge's performances, therefore a first for the Poetry Cup, and an absolute last.

Sharing of the prize money, easy enough, though not so satisfying for the winners. Tug was gallant enough to allow Elizabeth to take home the Cup on the night and enjoy drinking her champagne from it.

The following Sunday at the Writers at the Rails we presented Tug with his Cup. Hopefully both winners will be back next year as finalist judges.

The People's Choice Award this year went to Craig Nelson from the Bellingen Bello Bards group who experienced their first Poetry World Cup weekend and left the village inspired to return next year.

To everyone who purchased a raffle ticket and helped boost the prize money, thanks, the first drawn was



Tug Dumbly belatedly presented with his Cup by Gail M. Clarke, on stage at the Byron Rails Hotel.

Faye Scherf and she chose the petrol credit cards, second drawn was another local Pamela Baxter who was delighted with the amazing array of goodies in the hamper and lastly for the gift voucher was Nat from NNIC.

The Nimbin School of Arts deserves an extra thank you for all their continued support and the use of the Town Hall for all the heats and semi-finals. The venue worked really well and will be the main venue again next year.

The way the interest is growing in this great event, we may have to have two venues next year, all depends

on the number of courageous Poets signing up to perform in the heats. One of the main aims of this weekend is to encourage as many people as possible to "have a go".... so let's wait and see.

The DVD of the 2010 NPPWC finals will be available, thanks to Garry Mimlich from the Billen, at the next monthly Oasis Poetry night on the 9th September, and hopefully the finalists will be up on the web page soon.

Nimbin Oasis Poetry night celebrates its 10th Birthday, come along and join in the fun from 7pm on 9th September.

Love and goodwill to all,

White Birds

I watch and wait,
always they return
year after year with the season's change
flying in a formation of Euclidean perfection
they soar from the Secret Cave
invisible beneath the sacred rocks.

The ginger flowers perfume the morning mist
replenishing my faith in the mysteries of
nature,
honey flows off the mantel of wisdom
the bees unconcerned about the stresses of
peak hour traffic.
Clover leaves cover the rotting corpses of old
philosophers
brave souls - absurd - but brave none-the-less
two thousand years and not a single answer,
then a thorny thought penetrates the silence
What if there are no answers?

They wheel to the west a single white delta
wing
then scatter into fragments as they descend,
the ancient tallwood with a hundred
perches
all appropriated in the morning sun
happy they have returned to adorn its

gnarled old limbs.
Like dark clouds the corpses roll over
agitated at their absurdity but too spent to
care,
the leaves rustle for a second then settle,
the birds unperturbed by the philosopher's
folly
clean and preen in the warmth of golden
mist.

My serene contemplation is blasted crudely
away,
the phone relentlessly pierces my ears
and so my day starts, hectic - fast - intense
more searching, more questioning
What if there are no answers?

Dusk settles easily on the valley of secrets
the fragrance of eucalypt rises from the
evening fire
as the white birds rise from the pond's edge,
winging into formation, precisely,
they soar eastwards towards their cave
silhouetted against deep greenness
greenness that hides the mountain's face like
a mask
they turn sharply and disappear into the
Secret Cave

Rob Harle 2010

NIMBIN STREET SHUFFLE

Journal of the North Coast's longest serving covert

by Undacuvva

One of my recent missions I have to share with you.

The insanely spontaneous Polite Force and their giant joint scooted off to the ALP Campaign Launch in Brisbane on a few hours notice. I was down the beach and got the full alert call from the Unda HQ.

I've been working the buses for the Boss. He's determined to find the source and goes on about it at every meeting. "We're spending half our dog budget on your bloody village Virginia, or whatever your name is this week. Find me the source. Who's in charge of the circus out there?"

He doesn't get it and if I say, "Unorganised crime, sir," as I have before, I'm liable to get screamed at. "Work the buses, find the source." He's convinced there's a giant crop hidden in the hills.

I didn't mind, I was down the beach with some Danish backpacker hippy doper types suggesting a day trip to Nimbin to score some weed for the day. Some job this eh? Suddenly the jolt in my wrist. I couldn't hide the shock on my face either as I remembered the Boss grinning insanely as he gave me the watch. "It records everything within twenty metres and, by the way, in extreme urgency, you may get a little shock call."

I had to tell the backpackers I was psychic and it was a message from my sick mother. "I must go to her." I think they believed me, even were impressed. The message 'DENNMW bris south bank conv centre polites idiots loose. Drop everything now no matter what.'

I was there in a personnel record fast time and sure enough there were my old smoking mates from the Hempbar, their polite overalls blending in with our boys in blue so well I didn't see them at first. It was easy to stick a hole in their massive joint and it quickly began deflating. None of them noticed.

I soon organised Julia and Kevin to arrive through the back door so the subject of cannabis had no chance of making it onto the agenda. Just doing my job. The rest of what turned out to be the ALP Election campaign launch went smoothly until near the very end.

And this is the story that made the boss love



me again.

The huge Expo entrance has a hundred steps a hundred feet wide and it was covered with journos slowly descending the steps at the end of the show. Many of them were coming over to the polites and their nearly flat joint in the protest area, trying to score.

Then, at the top of the stairs, an apparition appeared. A giant Oakes Burger I thought, as the famous redneck journalist, hero to the Bosses, gripped the one and only handrail beside the wide steps and started his delicate descent. He was surrounded by minions, the entire family moving in slow motion as his enormous bulk shuddered downwards. One slow step at a time. If he tripped it would have been horrendous, and he knew it. We all knew it.

Now the Hempsters from Nimbin are hated by BIG Laurie as much as refugee smugglers and they spotted him early, only ten steps from the top. Like a rabbit in the spotlight, he was more exposed than a streaker who makes it to the pitch at the Boxing Day test on the MCG. In front of the nation's journalists big Laurie was at the mercy of the hippies in a perfect auditorium for their hand held megaphone. But they started arguing over what to say, and who got the megaphone.

He was fatter than fat. It was too easy. "Hempseed oil. Let's tell him about hempseed oil," said a kind girl. What if he trips and falls? There was dead silence as everyone pictured the horror of it. Long enough for me to slip the batteries out of the megaphone and put it out of action.



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