

## Home Sweet Home



'Home and Heart' by Sandra Joran

Based in the beautiful Northern Rivers, three galleries have got together to bring to the public an exhibition by members of the Blue Knob, Roxy and Serpentine galleries.

After a year of discussion and planning, they are proud to present Home Sweet Home - a collective exhibition that explores the feeling of Home. Whether human, bird or animal, home is where the heart/hearth is. With artists involved from three local but different areas, we

look forward to an interesting and stimulating exhibition with some heartfelt and creative interpretations of the theme.

We live in such a lovely region, a place many of us have chosen to call home, and this exhibition aims to celebrate that which is Home in all its forms.

Opening night is Friday 3rd August at 6pm at the Serpentine Gallery at 17a Bridge Street, North Lismore. Then the exhibition will travel out to Blue Knob Gallery, opening there on Friday 31st August.

These opening celebrations are family friendly events. Everyone is welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be available.

Home Sweet Home is a show that highlights and strengthens the fantastic networks between our local Northern Rivers galleries and the cooperation experienced in our local arts community. Here's to continuing to build a strong and diverse arts community in our beautiful region.

### A little about the galleries

The Serpentine Community Gallery, a not-for-profit organization



'Homestead' by Gareth Lindsay Deakin

started in November 2006 by a small group of local artists, is dedicated to promoting the artistic culture of the Northern Rivers region through community arts projects and regional promotion. Known as a gallery that encourages artists to engage in freedom of expression in their arts practice, Lismore's Serpentine gallery has an active and dynamic annual calendar of exhibitions and performances.

Similar to the Serpentine, Blue Knob Gallery is a membership-based group incorporated as a volunteer association. Its major aim is to promote the awareness and appreciation of art within the community and to visitors, and

to foster professional art practice. Housed in the Blue Knob Hall and with a Cafe offering lunches Thursday to Sunday, Blue Knob Gallery is also dedicated to completing the refurbishment of the hall building. The multi-staged plan includes workshop space where artists can provide training and skill-sharing, or attend workshops offered by invited artists, as well as extensions to the cafe space.

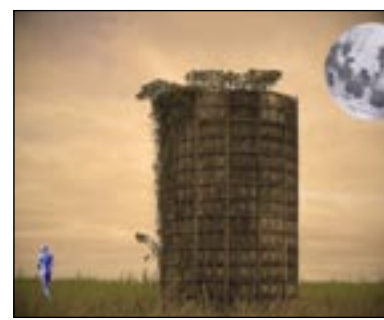
A joint initiative between Kyogle Council and Kyogle and District Arts Council, the Roxy Gallery aims to provide local and regional artists with a professionally managed exhibition space, and to provide the community with a cultural space where they can engage in contemporary art, resources and information. The Roxy Gallery, situated at 143 Summerland Way, Kyogle, holds 12 ever-changing exhibitions a year that support and promote cultural diversity in the creative fields.

For more info:

[www.serpentinearts.org](http://www.serpentinearts.org)

[www.blueknobgallery.com](http://www.blueknobgallery.com)

[www.visitkyogle.com.au/index.php/things\\_to\\_do\\_details/roxy\\_gallery](http://www.visitkyogle.com.au/index.php/things_to_do_details/roxy_gallery)



'Still Searching Home' digitally enhanced graphics by Rob Harle



'Mother & Inheritance Father' by Jenny Inheritance

## Back Alley Gallery hopes to hit the silver screen



The Back Alley Gallery project, which started in 2011, has seen laneways of Lismore change from blank, dull brick walls to lively works of art. Now, the artists are looking to put Lismore and their art on the silver screen in a short film to be used in film festivals, online, cinemas and more.

The Back Alley Gallery creators have embarked on a campaign to raise the funds needed to make the documentary happen - and they need as much help as they can get. There is \$3000 needed from the community in two months to get the short film created.

Creator of the Back Alley Gallery project, Nathan Eyres said initially a documentary wasn't on the horizon but it seemed to make sense after people seemed so interested in photographing and filming their progress.

"Lismore people have been so supportive of the project, this is a great way to bring the world into what is happening in Lismore," he said.

The first two stages of the project included artists from Lismore, Nimbin, Byron Bay and Brisbane, as well as international artists who

came from as far as Germany.

Katie O'Rourke, Lismore City Centre Manager, who has been involved with the project from the beginning, explained they are sourcing corporate sponsorship to go alongside funding allocated from the Lismore Business Promotion Panel, but for the documentary to really go ahead, they need the public to pledge their support.

"We are using an online platform called Pozible, which is a crowd sourcing tool," Ms O'Rourke said. The link to donate is: [www.pozible.com/thebackalleygallery](http://www.pozible.com/thebackalleygallery) where you can also view a trailer for the doco.

People can also donate by visiting the Lismore City Council CBD

office at 55 Magellan Street.

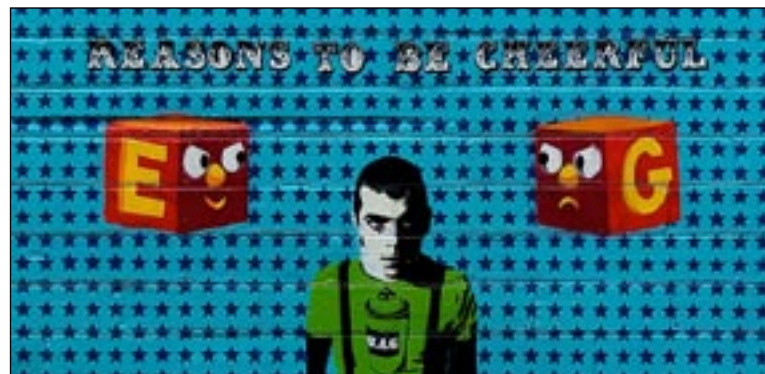
"Each donation over \$20 will get to have a piece of the Back Alley Gallery in some form, and know that they have contributed to the film themselves," Ms O'Rourke said.

The third stage of the Back Alley Gallery will commence on 25th and 26th August, with a street party and demonstrations. For more information, go to [www.facebook.com/backalleygallery](http://www.facebook.com/backalleygallery)

Artist at left: Barek



Artist above and below: Kiki  
Photography by Natsky



## Nimbin Artists Gallery

by Peter P.

Wanting to escape the cacophony of Cullen Street? I'm not sure which is worse, the Council upgrading the drainage or the delicate art of conversation as practised by some of our community during vigorous social intercourse.

If you visit the Nimbin Artists Gallery however, your aural senses will be serenaded by sweet sounds, guaranteed to enhance the visual delights you'll find within. Depending on who's behind the desk on the day, the music will be as diverse as classical, jazz, whatever's on Nim-FM at the time or, if it's me, probably some blues (the other members won't let me play Black Sabbath anymore).

A young German backpacker once asked, on an afternoon when the Teutons had taken over Nim-FM, if I understood German. "Aachh, they're everywhere," I replied.

At our most recent hanging we were very pleased to receive work from Harumi Hayashi (mixed media) and Gery Mews (watercolour). I don't believe either of these artists have displayed in the gallery during recent times and their work looks fabulous. Susanne Walden has new felted vests and Sandra Joran, Denis Meagher, Roslyn Parry, Kach Perrott and Emma Poletti-Cook all have new work hanging. Or just come listen to some music.



'Transition' by Gery Mews



'Mind Scope II' by Harumi Hayashi



'Dove of Peace Yantra' by Sandra Joran

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# Findhorn Travels



by Sue Stock

Last May, I hopped on the train in Berwick on Tweed, south of Edinburgh and traveled five hours north to the carbon neutral eco village of Findhorn. I had read about Findhorn in the '70s and was interested to find out what it was like now. The train traveled past the Turness nuclear power station (I'd never seen one before), past golfers putting away on golf courses precariously on the edge of huge cliffs, past wonderful coastal scenery, passing through the cities of Dundee and Aberdeen on the way, to the little station of Forres near Findhorn.

Findhorn is a spiritual community, an ecovillage, a transition town and a centre for holistic education. It is one of the largest intentional communities in the UK. It also houses about 40 community businesses such as the Findhorn Press, a bakery, pottery, Findhorn Flower Essences, Trees For Life, a Steiner school and an alternative medicine centre and operates a LETS system which allows trade in goods and services without the use of money.

Findhorn was started by Eileen Caddy, her husband Peter and Dorothy Maclean in 1962 and is now home to 400 residents and visited by thousands of people each year. It is based on the interconnectedness of life and cooperation with nature. The community has developed as a place where spiritual principles



Straw bale house

common to all religions and with no doctrine or creed are put into action in everyday life. The Findhorn Foundation run many courses in spiritual practice, nature and ecology, permaculture, sustainability, creative arts, relationships and healing. They are celebrating their 50th birthday this year.

Findhorn's residents are proud of the fact that they have the lowest measured ecological footprint of any community in the developed world, and also half of the UK average. It is a founder member of the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) a non-profit organisation that links together a diverse worldwide movement of autonomous ecovillages and related projects. The Findhorn Foundation Ecovillage Project has received Best Practice designation from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements.

Within this ecovillage, sustainable values are expressed in the built environment with ecological houses, innovative use of building materials such as local stone and straw bales and houses made from recycled whisky barrels (pictured). I stayed in a very comfortable straw bale house there. There is a comprehensive building code that all new buildings are required to meet. This includes features such as very efficient insulation, double glazing, non-toxic organic paints, wood preservatives manufactured without the use of toxic glues or resins and roofing with natural clay tiles. Many houses do not even need heating in winter. Shared facilities such as laundry, kitchens, etc. are encouraged, thus avoiding unnecessary duplication. Bicycles are everywhere. The ecological sewage treatment system was put in place in 1995. Here grey water and sewage run through a series of tanks, containing plants and



Planting beans and peas

bacteria that break down the waste without the use of chemicals.

I saw wonderful vegetable gardens (with unusually friendly birds) that provide more than 70% of the community's fresh food requirements. These are supplied with vast amounts of compost from local organic farms where animals are housed in large sheds during the freezing winter. The residents see their gardens and the community as a microcosm of the larger world. How they interact with the land and soil always has a ritual aspect where they are trying to invoke kinder, more sensitive and more attuned ways of working with the Earth. When they have to trim a hedge they do what needs doing in the kindest way possible and in a way that allows them to be in touch with the living plants, so by hand and with secateurs, not machinery. Findhorn people talked about work as love in action. At the start of any Findhorn work shift, there's an attunement: the work team join hands, connect with the purpose of the task, and ask to be guided to do it well. At the end of the shift people gathered together for a chat and a cuppa and scones with lovely home-made jam.

I was interested in the four wind turbines. They were decorated Nimbin-style with paintings (pictured) and it was interesting to stand underneath and hear how silent they were. Much of the electricity is used onsite through their private grid as well as export to the national grid.

I would like to thank former Byron residents, Carin and Christine from Findhorn's Communications Unit who



Christine at one of the whisky barrel houses



Serious compost-making

answered my many questions and also former Tuntable resident Graham Meltzer (pictured) who expressed his joy at living in Findhorn. Graham gave me a copy of his book *Sustainable Community: Learning from the cohousing model*.

I'll finish with a quote from Graham's book by David Suzuki and Holly Dressel from their book *Good News for a Change*:

*"No matter where people live on the earth, when they focus on this vision of community equality and long term sustainability rather than on wealth or personal financial security, they evolve similar management methods and attitudes that create much healthier and more stable societies. The new precepts for living, that are developing not only are increasing our chances for survival, they have an unexpected dividend; they are helping to discover very deep forms of satisfaction and joy."*

For more information about Findhorn, visit [www.findhorn.org](http://www.findhorn.org)



Nature sanctuary



Graham Meltzer



Communal kitchen



Two of Findhorn's wind turbines

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# Koala Kolumn



by Lorraine Vass

Local government elections will be held on 8th September. Councils are the closest level of government to daily living, including environmental protection and sustainability which is valued so highly in the Northern Rivers.

Under the NSW Local Government Act (1993), a council is required: To properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

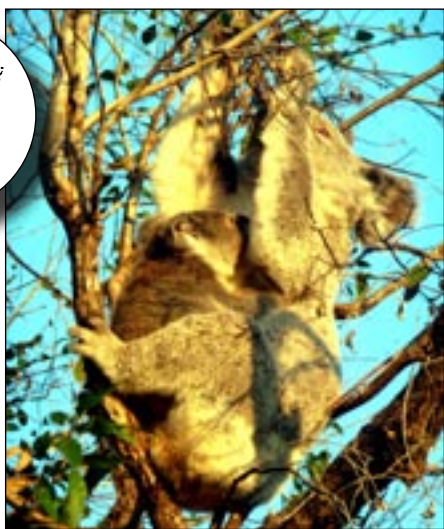
The Act also requires a council to produce annual State of the Environment (SoE) reports. This year, North Coast councils will join forces and in conjunction with the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority and relevant State agencies, will produce the first Northern Rivers regional SoE report (2011-2012).

Until the recently released planning Green Paper with its Regional Growth Plans, Subregional Delivery Plans, Local Land Use Plans (and community acceptance of them via a Public Participation Charter) become law, the three main legislative requirements for councils relating to koala protection are the Local Government Act 1993, the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and State Environment Planning Policy (SEPP) 44, Koala Habitat Protection.

The importance of elected representatives in effective environmental stewardship cannot be underestimated as has been demonstrated by the pleasing progress in developing SEPP 44 Comprehensive Koala Plans of Management across the region since 2008. Lismore City Council has already adopted a plan for South East Lismore which is with the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for signing-off. Tweed and Byron are engaged in drafting plans and Ballina has resolved to prepare a plan.

Friends of the Koala is again keen to ascertain the level of support it can expect over the term of the new Councils elected in September. In the next few weeks, we will put to each candidate standing for election in the Northern Rivers' six local government jurisdictions four questions related to koala conservation and management in the region. Responses will be assessed for their koala-friendliness and published on our website, Facebook page and in the media. Watch this space.

But while we are encouraged that koala conservation is gaining traction with local government, on the ground we continue to lose animals at an alarming pace. The last five weeks of our reporting year, to 30 June, were disastrous with 26 mortalities. Eleven animals required euthanasing. Nearly half succumbed to disease. Road hit and dog attack were the next main



Healthy mothers with young are our delight and their future

causes.

On a happier note, public art has long played a role in promoting and articulating community interests, values and aspirations. Over the past couple of months Friends of the Koala has benefited from the passion of Lismore-based indigenous artist, Karla Dickens for koalas and for our koala conservation endeavours.

Karla has been commissioned by Woolworths to create the 18 x 6m installation featured on the wall of its new store in Goonellabah. Her work is a stylized, boldly-coloured depiction of a koala and gum leaves which incorporates recycled fabrics. She has titled it, Dreaming of a Koala Haven. Digitized, enlarged and printed onto large photographic panels, the mural overlooks the aquatic centre and skateboard park.

Karla loves koalas and came up with the idea of auctioning the original artwork with half the proceeds going to Friends of the Koala. Being a 'can-do' type of woman, she has since grown that idea into an online silent auction involving donated works by 20 other artists. The on-line auction will run through August and September. Check out what is on offer at: <http://eightcollective.com/endorsement/silent-art-auction-for-the-koalas>

To report a koala in trouble, or a sighting, please ring Friends of the Koala's 24/7 Rescue Hotline on 6622 1233. This number can also be used for information about koalas, their food trees, and other ways in which you can assist the koala conservation effort on the Northern Rivers.

Also visit: [www.friendsofthekoala.org](http://www.friendsofthekoala.org) or email [info@friendsofthekoala.org](mailto:info@friendsofthekoala.org) or follow us on Facebook.

To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat, phone the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 13-15-55.

Until next time, happy koala spotting.



# PLANT OF THE MONTH

by Richard Burer

Quick close the window here comes balloon vine, climbing through as the warmth of spring and summer help it spread its tendrils onto the house and garden, but mostly over the native vegetation of our beautiful waterways and forest edges. This exotic climber is a very common invasive species in the Nimbin area, it can be seen just about anywhere in the valley where this vine has smothered and covered vegetation and sadly degraded native trees along our creeks and roadsides. Flowering in spring the fruit becomes an inflated balloon shaped capsule, papery with a fairly hard black seed. Then on maturity, wind and water spread it along creeks and forest edges where its massive growth rates soon start to degrade remnant vegetation.

While it would be good if all the basket weavers had their festivals in Nimbin and focussed on using balloon vine unfortunately other approaches might be needed if you're thinking that balloon vine is detrimental to the environment. If vine weeds are threatening your creek bank and you live on Goolmangar



## Balloon vine *Cardiospermum grandiflorum*

creek there is an opportunity to be part of current project controlling exotic vine weeds. Nimbin Rocks Co-operative Landcare Group has received funding from the NSW

Environmental Trust to control vine weeds, including balloon vine, cats claw creeper and madeira vine.

They are hosting a workshop on Friday the 31<sup>st</sup> August from 9.30 am to 11 am at the Nimbin Rocks Co-operative Landcare site. Come along and hear about the project, there will be vine weed control demonstrations and an opportunity for attendees, if you have land along Goolmangar Creek, to have a professional bush regenerator work with you on your site to provide practical support with the control of these invasive species.

For more information and to register contact Georgina Jones at EnviTE Environment on 6621-9588 or [georginaj@envite.org.au](mailto:georginaj@envite.org.au) Bookings essential.



by Philippe Dupuy, president

### The Lizard (Kalta) awakens at Roxby Downs

"Olympic dam is a state within a state" says Jim Green and he is not wrong The Amended Roxby Downs Indenture Act makes BHP sovereign. Water, Aboriginal Heritage and even Freedom of Information laws come under BHP's jurisdiction. This clearly shows who is the boss. But that did not stop protesters from pouring all over the country to be with Uncle Kevin Buzacott, elder of the Arabunna nation.

The Nimbin Environment Centre was there too and flew the flag high. It was well represented by Benny the legend ( he was arrested) Lisa, Omega, Sandra, Brigitte, Spectra and Linda.

It is at times a costly exercise for cash strapped NEC to make a presence but the costs of not being there to support our brothers and sisters is incomparable. So thank you to all those who took the time out to be there and thanks for those who supported us.



### Shooting in Nightcap National Parks

The Nimbin Environment Centre came into life to protect and nurture the local national parks and this is still our priority. The NSW government's extremely shameful deal with the Shooters and Fishers party puts the parks at risk and that is unacceptable. This region has fought long and hard to protect and preserve the forests and we are not about to sit back and let a few grown-up kids trash it.

These guys have no idea about conservation. Feral animal control is not just a matter of shooting on sight otherwise farmers would not have a feral animal problem. It is just an excuse, another fantasy by these immature boys who dream of big game and the excitement of adventure but in a quasi safe place. Most of them would be unfit for some of the parks' challenging tracks. So will they access the parks using SUV's perhaps? This is an outrage and I urge you to maintain your rage. We need to occupy our parks in huge numbers, we will need to take risks even if that means putting our lives in peril.

We must do whatever is necessary to safeguard and protect the animals of the parks who do not have a voice. Our commitment for the future rests with firm action. We will fight in the bushes, in the trees wherever it is needed.

Join the Nimbin Environment Centre and join the fight. Whether it is CSG, open cut coal mines, fluoridation or shooting in the National Parks it is the same fight. It is about forcing our government representatives to represent us. State governments do not have a constitution. We need to formulate one that will enshrine and protect us all. Let us have a public meeting to put an end to this abuse of power. When unjust and downright destructive laws are enacted then it is the citizen's duty to right them.

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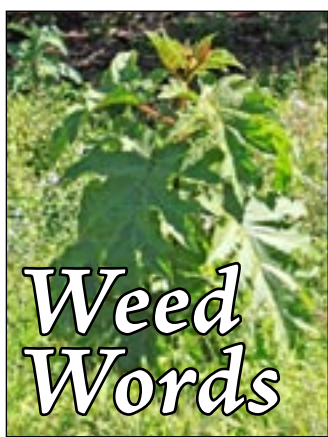
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by **Triny Roe**

Before white fella came much of the Northern Rivers was rainforest, rich in cedar and other desirable timbers species. The rainforest stretched from the coast and up into the mountains covering thousands of hectares.

Rainforest, as well as having the largest biomass, has the richest biodiversity of all ecosystems. This means it has the most amount of vegetation and the greatest number of different species existing together in the one area.

The timber cutters came first, followed by the farmers who were required to clear even more of the forest as they built their homes, grazed their cattle and planted crops.

Today only a small fraction of the rainforest remains. However the moderate weather, mild climate and fertile soils still exist so the local environment has the capacity to support a huge biomass. This helps make

the Northern Rivers region the weed capital of Australia. A vast range of plants not only survive here, they thrive here. Without their natural population and growth inhibitors some of these plants can also take over. These are the ones which have been designated 'weeds' and can appear on various gazetted lists indicating control is warranted.

Weeds which aggressively compete, invade new areas and can form a single species stand do not contribute to biodiversity or a healthy ecosystem. They don't only colonise disturbed areas but can appear anywhere, in paddocks, gardens, orchards and on creek banks, distributed by people, wildlife, vehicles, water and wind.

Weeds can be managed in a variety of ways depending on needs and purpose, the landscape itself and individual weed species. Not everything has to be sprayed or poisoned. Manual methods can be just as effective, though sometimes more labour intensive. Peter Andrew's Natural Sequence Farming uses weeds as pioneer species to develop biomass. These are then trampled or slashed and desired species planted amongst the debris.

The key to developing a sustainable environment is the follow up. Land management is not a one-off event.

The fruit of the Ice cream Bean, *Inga edulis*, is not a favourite with children, as promised on the internet. My

nephews and nieces were very unimpressed. This species is considered by many to be an environmental weed due to its high germination and growth rate. It is however a nitrogen fixing legume and can be managed as a mulch crop. Cutting and laying leafy branches will suppress weeds and condition the soil. *Inga* is used for alley cropping in Central America as an alternative to slash and burn agriculture.

There may not be any point to clearing the lantana off a steep hillside if you don't replace it with something else. It might be a weed but it is protecting the soil. On the other hand, lantana that grows up and over a tree will exclude the light and eventually smother it. The roots entwined at the base compete for water and nutrient. The weight of the interweaving lantana stems will break limbs. Secateurs and patience can rescue the tree and allow it to reach its full potential, be that food or habitat for humans or wildlife.

Many people hope to achieve balance in many facets of their lives - balance between rest and activity, work and play, sleep and waking. Some would also like to see a balance in the environment but it needs help. Unless you want to see a landscape dominated by a few rampant species, look to your weeds. Identify new plants which appear on your property and strike early to minimise the workload.

## Stu's view from the loo

by **Stuart McConville**



The Kookaburras are laughing, I watch from my perch as they chase about and get all strumpety at a crow that's munching on my mandarins. The crow sees them coming and avoids the strife by high tailing it over to a big gum nearby. Whoever said nature was peaceful had to be in the tundra. It's a war zone out there.

I've been up on the Gold Coast recently, getting a reality check. I think we should all take the time to go and visit Babylon once in a while, just to make sure it's still as glitzy?, trashy? (is there an adjective that sums up all the worst traits of humanity?) as we remembered. I used to go into McDonalds once every four years or so to find out if anything had changed... gave up on that one a while ago though... The cultural dichotomy between the North Coast and the Gold Coast never fails to throw me into a spin, I get all cynical....I feel like hosing off all the spray tan and makeup with a water cannon just to get a glimpse of something real (which would possibly result in something scarier!).

The pile of compost below me is real, and not scary (though some may disagree). It took two years from the time I began using this loo to the first harvest of compost. Two years of moldering decay to produce a friable, odourless material that did not resemble human faeces in any way at all. The process of transformation is an interesting one, because it does not usually involve a typical "hot compost" approach to killing pathogens. Composting loos should

really be called "mouldering loos" because mould is a large part of what is happening down there. Finished compost is full of fungal spores and hyphae, indicating a healthy process of lignin (woody stuff) breakdown via the fungal pathway. The hungry fungi also prey on micro-organisms, as do invertebrates like bush roaches, mites, worms and many other exoskeletal critters creating a clean safe compost that can be used in your garden.

Faster composting processes produce more heat initially, killing off organisms quickly then leaving the mouldering process to finish the job. This rarely happens in a loo, as the material is added slowly and breaks down as its added, meaning the pile inside never really reaches the critical mass required for a "hot" compost. The Australian standard for compost loos recommends about 50 days at 24 degrees Celsius, so to be safe, double the time period to account for cold days / nights and leave it for at least 100 days.

To provide consistency in temperature, thermal mass is required. Heavy materials like concrete or brick are far better for composting toilets than plastic, as they retain the heat of the day and release it at night, keeping ambient temperatures higher on average. If you have a plastic bin loo, lug it out into the sun and spray it black (don't spill it!!) and leave it for at least a year, as the lack of thermal mass will mean that spores / bacteria die off during colder weather.

My heavy concrete Thunderloos have excellent thermal properties for composting and volume to hold at least two years worth of humanure, a great formula for excellent compost.

*Stu runs Pooh Solutions compost toilets and consultancy, For more info check out: [www.poohsolutions.com](http://www.poohsolutions.com) or call Stu on 0427-897-496.*

## Provisioning Immune Systems: Natural Monocultures

by **Geoff Dawe**

The monoculturing of plant species in nature, need not be seen as a negative influence providing it is the long, rather than the short term, that is uppermost in the perceiver. Arguably, an environment crisis cannot be overcome unless humans become aware that the use of the cerebral cortex to make factories and chainsaws is a danger for everything unless cerebral cortex use also encompasses a wider or more wholistic view of causes and effects.

Clearing of forests in this North Coast area has created rapid deterioration of soil fertility and in some steeper areas there is soil slip. Reasonably one could presume the monoculturing of plant species occurs primarily in areas where soil is particularly threatened. This is not the reduction of biodiversity, but the scaffolding or ground work for a multiplicity of species. It is known for example, that rainforest requires relatively moist soil conditions to germinate and that moisture availability is compromised in poor soil conditions. The litter fall of monoculturing species may be required for years before soil is sufficient for rainforest species to germinate.

The thought that a species is 'wrong' and should be removed because it monocultures is not making use of in situ provisioning of biomass from exotic species, but unnecessarily using human energy to bush regenerate because it is thought species must be certain types and nature has got it wrong again. In land areas down on their back legs and now desert, there is often only one or a few species, but one would not run out

and poison them because they were monocultural. One would be glad they were there. Same in this region. In the 1980s, red scars of krasnozems soils could be seen in cattle paddocks in hilly land where grasses were not sufficient to provide cover. It takes time for these kind of conditions to be healed by nature. We can be grateful that particular 'weeds' supply impenetrable thickets. Efficient biomass production is taking place. Weeds are part of biodiversity. They are not some anomaly here to make life difficult. They do their best to ensure the land is supplied, but the Euro-Australian consciousness that still shies at the recognition that it is itself that is the cause of habitat loss, attempts to blame naturalising species.

The demonising of those we war with is entrenched in our culture. Despite the amazing availability of communications media at the time when Saddam Hussein was captured, there was no attempt to bring his point of view or that of his countrymen into our lounge rooms. It was obvious that Iraq culture was immersed in tribal pay-back and very different to our own, yet there was no attempt at understanding, even though we had previously made this same mistake with the Australian indigenous people. The West was busy trying to produce a monster to take eyes off what the West was doing in Iraq. Exotic species are demonised to move attention away from realizing we created them with wholesale land clearing, and to keep eyes off deteriorating soil quality and other effects that have compromised ecosystems on the North Coast.

I have seen written, "Currawongs can be aggressive and chase other birds away, altering the balance of species." It was land clearing that altered the balance of species, and it is the privet and currawongs that are busily engaged in re-balancing. One cannot assume the environment, after the ecological disaster of land clearing, should straight away right itself with the 'correct'

species, rather than that there will be a gradual evolution of species. Many Ironbarks on Lillyfield community for example, may yet die before a new balance is struck with the bellbirds that farm the lerp. One can conceive that Lillyfield in future may have many species of trees that are not conducive to the psyllids that produce the lerp. Given the environmental damage carried out by our forefathers' wholesale removal of old growth trees, who can say that the die-back of the Ironbarks is not a natural consequence of this, and, that dysfunctionality extends into more than just one generation of trees, as it does with humans? It was not just native people who suffered a stolen generation. The native forests of Australia lost their older generation!

Plants are also blamed for being pollen producers triggering allergies, yet human degenerative diseases are increasing and one can reasonably expect it is because immune systems are depressed. Ensuring the terrain or environment is provisioning immune systems with healthy food, water, air and lives of reduced stress, is the first step, not just in reducing allergies, but all disease. Warring with the pollen in nature is a simplistic attempt to placate symptoms, rather than the extension of one's humanness to embrace the wider, long-term view of looking at the causes of depressed immune systems. It is in looking in depth at causes, that the responses of nature are no longer seen as inadequate or imperfect.

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# Housing: Give people a chance



by Beth Shelley

There's a part of all of us that knows what it feels like to be alone in the world and to have no one who cares.

A few years back I was working for a housing service when a colleague, John, and I went to help an man sign a lease. Dave had been on the streets since he was 12 years old and in juvenile detention or gaol on and off for most of his life. He'd just been released and offered a year's accommodation in a DOH property to help him get on his feet.

I'd worked with Aboriginal men in his situation before and found that, while they might seem tough on the surface, when offered support these men would often soften.

So I didn't feel any fear when I met Dave, even though he had that intense look people get when they're hyper-aware of everything around them and are ready to take action to defend themselves. He was like a

coiled spring and when we discussed the lease with him, he admitted he'd never had his own place before.

"Well, this is your chance," I told him.

"All you have to do is pay the rent and make sure you don't let people come around who make noise and cause you problems. You've got your own place, and having your own place is a great thing.

He said, "I'm not going to let anyone blow it for me."

We took Dave to his new home and gave him his keys. It was a brand new unit, and he was blown away that it was going to be his place. Six months later Dave was a volunteer at Vinnies, had paid his rent, had no complaints and was keeping the place spotless.

John told me that he and a female support worker from the gaol had arranged to go and visit him for his 40th Birthday. They had decided to get him a card and some chocolates. "We just want him to know we think he's doing well." John said.

"He's pretty distant with her because she's from the gaol but he's okay with me now. "Although one time I turned up without letting him know and he got a bit scary. He was like, 'What? You're kicking me out?'

"And I said 'No, nothing like that,' and he's been okay with me since then.

"But I'm going to have to tell him he's only got six months left and he has to start looking for another place."

Later I asked John what happened?

"We got him a card and wrote what we thought about how well he was doing and gave him some chocolates," John said. "When he looked at the card he just put his head down and started wiping his eyes. He was wiping away tears."

"Oh," I said, "Maybe he's never had a birthday card in his whole life."

John said that the support worker had given Dave a bit of a hug and then he and Dave had given each other a bear hug and Dave was thanking him.

"I told him, 'I'll do whatever I can to help you man,' and the thing is I still feel that way, I just want to do whatever I can to help him get another place."

I said, "That's great because he's unlikely to get a place in the private rental market because he's Aboriginal. If you help him at least he'll have a chance."

For people who lost their family early or have known nothing else but violence, it can be hard to know that life can be any different from what they've known. When they feel cared about even for a moment it can change the world.



Molly, Kai, Holly and Clarisse with kiddies

by Kirrah Holborn  
B. ClinSc (complementary medicine)  
Traditional Wisdom

The words we use can have myriad meanings. A workshop I recently attended explored the many words we use to describe vaginas and yonis. Some build respect and a sense of awe whilst others, like 'downstairs', can manifest confusion. This three-day workshop called Creative Ways of Making Space for the Baby was well described. It was as it sounds. Jenny Blyth and Fiona Hallinan helped us understand the mechanics of birth. It was enlightening to see and feel how our bones, muscles and ligaments can soften and open to allow a baby to be birthed.

I have been exploring topics about pregnancy and birth for around five years now. My awareness has deepened and my respect grown. I am honoured to be able to help people prepare for this profound rite of passage. The workshops I run are based on Birthing From Within and aim to help people re-learn to trust their intuition. The processes help women to discover and validate what they already know and help them prepare to birth from within.

Unfortunately, much of the media portrayal dramatises birth, and TV shows like One Born Every Minute can be damaging to the young. These shows tend to normalise the medicalisation of this event and make people doubt their abilities to give birth without drugs and intervention. Instead of seeing birth as SACRED, they grow up being SCARED.

Many classes and books teach about birth 'from the outside' (like how to birth in a hospital and how birth is managed). The Birthing From Within prenatal workshops help women to understand what labour will be like from their perspective. There is more focus on emotional and spiritual preparation and how to birth as a woman and mother (rather than as a trained professional).

This combined with the wisdom and exercises to open physically can provide a potent recipe for helping women to gain confidence in their bodies. There are ways to help the body to soften and make room for babies to enter the world and I am delighted to share these dynamic processes with the women of the Northern Rivers. For more information go to: [www.traditionalwisdom.com.au](http://www.traditionalwisdom.com.au)

We are continuing to build friendships and a sense of community at Birth and Beyond. Come along and say hello!



Workshop: shrine

## Birth & Beyond August Schedule

- 10th August:** Zuela Christie will discuss energy balance for self and babies
- 17th August:** Yoga exercises that mums 'n' bubs can enjoy together
- 24th August:** Not on (I will be away)
- 31st August:** Not on (I will be away)
- 7th September:** Discussion on Natural Remedies for Children

Nimbin Birth & Beyond meets every Friday from 11am to 12.30pm. Sessions are run by donation. For more information phone 0429-308-851 or email: [kirrah@traditionalwisdom.com.au](mailto:kirrah@traditionalwisdom.com.au) To be added to the mailing list, just send an email or text.

## GreenBank up and running

The Green Bank girls, Kylie, Lishia and Rebecca, would like to extend our thanks to our many supporters. Our official opening in June was a roaring success, with friends, family and well-wishers enjoying delicious food prepared by our favourite caterers at the Grapevine Café, music by the divine

Andrea Soler and Elvis, and the great vibes that always accompany any event co-ordinated by the wonderful Cat Anderson.

Our new venture was officially opened by Lismore mayor Jenny Dowell, and we would like to express our gratitude to her too, for coming out to Nimbin,

and her kind words of encouragement.

We've had a terrific first few months of trading, and continue to grow and respond to the needs of our customers. We've enjoyed the feedback from locals and tourists alike, and are always interested in hearing of products you'd like to see in the shop. Nimbin's own Naturally Nourished and Tea Medica continue to expand their ranges, and all the talented felters, woodworkers, toy makers and assorted artisans are slowly but surely coming out of hibernation in the hills to share their work with you through our shop.

So, if you haven't already, please do drop in and see what we've created. And if you've already been in, come again! We've no doubt changed it all around since you were last in.

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## 5 week Iyengar Yoga course with Jo Walter

Fridays 5.30pm - 7pm starting 14th September  
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Iyengar Yoga is a form of Hatha Yoga focusing on the structural alignment of the physical body through the development of Asana's (postures).

It is known for its use of props i.e belts, blocks and blankets. These props enable students to perform the asanas correctly, minimizing the risk of injury or strain, and making the postures accessible to both young and old.

The development of strength, mobility and stability are emphasized through the asanas and through the practice of a system of asanas, it aims to unite the body, mind and spirit for health and wellbeing.

Jo has been practicing Yoga for 14 years and teaching for 7, the last 21/2 of which she has been focusing on Iyengar Yoga.

The course of five classes costs \$70 and there are only 10 places, to ensure everyone gets plenty of attention so we can work on their particular idiosyncrasies.

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# Love

by Zuela Christie

## PART 2: SELF – LOVE

Love is your original nature.

We all need to feel safe, loved and connected. The rules of scarcity of the external material world do not apply to Love. The more freely we give Love, the more we have to give. The vast inner wealth of Love belongs equally to us all. No-one is more deserving of Love than you and no-one is less. Love mends broken hearts.

Before you were born, you existed in a merged oceanic state of all-engulfing cosmic oneness. There were no boundaries and no separateness. This is where our drive comes from for unity and Love, in the memory of this original bliss.

Within a few short years, whether your parents were well-intended or grossly dysfunctional, we are all compelled to close down parts of our selves, to move away from Spirit and grow a defensive worldly ego instead. It is very lonely to be real among the falsehoods of personality, particularly in a modern, 'civilized' culture that doesn't even value the fundamental state of beingness. The child is not supported in being themselves, but only in being as others want them to be, to conform with our parents



desires and their own limitations. When the child's essence is not being met by the parents, it will be because they no longer know these qualities in themselves.

This is the true nature of 'original sin' – how we are cut off from the Source by inherited human blockages, passed on through the generations.

We all come into this life bearing gifts, the gifts of Love or honesty or strength, or whatever aspects of essence we come particularly blessed with. Very seldom does a parent open to these gifts and accept them with all their heart. It is one of the deepest sorrows that these beautiful and inherent inborn qualities are so seldom seen by our parents. It is the loss of nature itself. Carrying the inducted energies of others, turned away from ourselves and the hollowness within, and projecting all our attention outside for clues on how to behave to get the love we lack.

The basic formative strategies are simple. We hide our emptiness from ourselves by projecting the problem onto someone else; and by maintaining a tension within so that we can keep our attention exclusively focused on the outer drama. When we blame or judge another we are usually projecting some hidden and disliked part of ourselves onto them. They are like a blank sheet onto which we project a slide of our inner fears; so that we come to hate just those things in others that we have

repressed in ourselves. Thus we do not have to look inwards.

As well, tension will hide the profound grief of loss of Self. To do this we create a conflict which will usually consist of two contrary ego decisions held in opposition to one another – such as wanting to hide from a hurtful parent yet yearning to be found and loved by them. These tensions are formed automatically for every major attachment or rejection causes its opposite to arise within the psyche.

We do this everyday, and if we could remain conscious they would form and dissolve and re-form like breathing. But when we are not conscious, one aspect seems darker and gets hidden so we don't have to see it in ourselves. When we have hooked onto some energy in passing, such as suffering; then whenever we are offered suffering we will continue to hold onto it – growing the complex. Instead of letting the feeling flow through and away, it becomes dammed up inside, constantly replenishing us with more and more suffering.

In adult life, the child within is a psychic reality. Most adult lives are to some extent conditioned by the traumas and imprinting of childhood. The child within is compelled in daily life to recreate the situation that led to being hurt – such is the attachment to the need for the parents love and approval that the child will go on

trying desperately to reproduce the childhood situation so they can correct it and overcome it. The paradox is that you also preserve the situation to prove you could not have overcome it, because to do so would expose your real powerlessness and vulnerability.

We are all effectively stuck in our own warped version of *Groundhog Day*. The child within has established a certain, if precarious comfort level from which they believe that somebody, sometime will come to rescue and love them. Our tragedy is that our present happiness is constantly frustrated by our child's strategy. The way to rectify this is to trace a current problem back until it reawakens the original childhood hurt so that the energy can be cleared.

Healing occurs when the adult separates from the child so the light of consciousness can then be shone onto the situation to create the opportunity for resolution. The great benefit of unearthing the true nature of the child is the positive qualities of audacity, creativity, fun, beingness, spontaneity, and the restoration of the flow of Love.

*Zuela Christie is a Polarity Energy Balancer working at the Green Bank. This modality works with the energy of unconditional Love to clear blockages to the free flow of Love simultaneously on the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual levels to restore the blueprint of our original energy.*

## Nimbin Hospital Info

### Immunisation Clinic

For 0-5 year olds  
2nd Tuesday  
of every month.

Next clinic 14th  
August, 2012 at Nimbin  
Hospital. Ring 6620-7687  
to make an appointment

### Womens Health Clinic

Nursing Service. Every 3rd  
Thursday of the month  
at Nimbin Hospital Next  
clinic 16th August, 2012  
Ring 6688-1401 to make an  
appointment

### Nimbin Community Nurses

Monday-Friday. Assessment,  
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care in the home. Phone  
6689-1288, please leave a  
message. We return calls  
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### Hospital Auxiliary AGM

Friday 10th August, 11am  
at Nimbin Aged Care and  
Respite Services in Acacia  
House, Nimbin Community  
Centre. All welcome to  
attend. New members  
urgently needed.

## Evocations

by Dr Elizabeth McCardell  
M Counselling, PhD

Not so long ago a friend came to visit for the first time and commented on the near absence of photographs in my house and wondered aloud whether perhaps I had something to hide. I replied that for sure, I had few photos, but that did not mean my house is empty of presences. I am surrounded by gifts from friends and family and all the gifts are rich with stories. Indeed, I live in a multi-storied house.

There are the ornamental teapots chosen by an old friend and her daughter, each painted differently. There is the carapace of a large black beetle and a bronze dove feather given by another lovely friend who knows my delight in the natural world. A small orange glass bottle from a woman with whom I had a 'like me one moment, dislike me the next type of friendship', sits among the exuberances from others. An exquisite red Norwegian porcelain vase stands wonderfully next to a miniature snow



covered pine tree. The little tree is actually a Christmas decoration that I never put away, because I like the evocation of a northern hemisphere winter scene. There is a shell given to me by a mentor who encouraged me into my current profession. Those who have seen my business card know I use the image of the whirls of a shell. It is my mentor's shell gift that inspired me to use the image to speak of what I am connected to (sea pictures are always close to my heart), and secretly, whom I am connected to, for there is a lineage here, a Tao of relationships.

I have bought very few things in my life and, apart from the treasures of musical instruments, mountains of books, and necessary household items, the rest are gifts from those who have cared for the me-ness of me. No photo gives me this,

for photos, in the main, are studied little numbers that hardly ever capture vivacious life as it happens.

A multi-storied house is, as the name suggests, a multi-narrated dwelling. A multi-narrative is a story told from many perspectives. The gifts that surround me are rich in story. My red vase is not just a vase. It speaks of Norwegian birch trees in winter, it hearkens silence and close listening, of strength and fragility. The giver of the vase is a very talented counsellor who works with the bereaved parents of sudden infant death syndrome children, listening closely to their fragility and profound loss.

The black beetle and feather came to me from a dear friend for whom the connection with the natural world is a deeply spiritual one, something we share. Together we have worked on polishing her first novel, a book in which the voices of people and wolves intermingle with the deep voice of rock, water, air and twig.

We are all multi-storied beings. There is nothing within us nor around us that has a single strand of

meaning and thus no single line of interpretation and misinterpretation (for we do not always get it right). No single story means we have a complexity of possible ways to respond to the same thing. A glass bottle evokes in me memories of hours spent in the back shed at home (I was about 15 at the time) working over a Bunsen burner with pieces of glass, melting and twisting them into fabulous shapes. The wizardry of moulten glass – at once liquid and solid, a substance that could be shaped but felt under pressure as hard – mesmerized me. The orange glass bottle given by a former university colleague contains for me these two contradictory motions of emotion: of hardness and softness, of resistance and fluidity, of dislike and like. The coloured glass parallels the red/orange of my colleague's hair, and so on.

Our capacity for evocation means that everything we bring into the therapeutic space sings to a multiplicity of songs upon the breath of pain, according to our feelings and memories and ancient and not so ancient embodied experiences.

The fluidity and resistance to what is brought can be shaped into new ways of seeing. There is always that possibility. Sometimes the old way of seeing ourselves and our relation with others dominates and dominates and seems resistant to change, but with support and challenge (and this is what I offer my clients, as a glass worker provides the alchemical substance of glass), shifts in awareness and understanding can begin.

I saw a client recently who had resumed the alchemical work that is counseling several months ago, following on from earlier work she had undertaken in Sydney. I knew as soon as she came into my room that she

was different; she was self assured, she was fluid in her movement, her face was relaxed and rested (she'd suffered years of insomnia), and when she said she thought this would be her last session I felt the two contrary-flow emotions of "I'll miss you," and "Yes, it is right, this is the ripe time to complete this work, at least for now."

It is a multi-narrated gift for me when a person reveals their fundamental healthfulness even while recognizing more work has to be done at some time. Being a person is being a meld of old accounts of being easily evoked in the presence of the new, plus a drive towards health, balance, and hope.

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