

Spring Arts Exhibition



'Peach Amongst Pecans' oil on wood panel, by Gareth Lindsay Deakin

For over 20 years, the Nimbin School of Arts has presented a major annual exhibition of new works by Nimbin artists.

This year's Spring Arts Exhibition presents the creations of a fascinating selection of Nimbin's fine artists, craft workers, photographers, sculptors, felt, textile and fashion designers and installation artists.

The popular exhibition is held through the busy Spring school holiday period, and attracts the

attention of thousands of visitors and tourists, giving them a good dose of Nimbin's unique artistry.

In turn, the exhibition provides an opportunity for local established artists to showcase their best new work to a wide range of potential buyers.

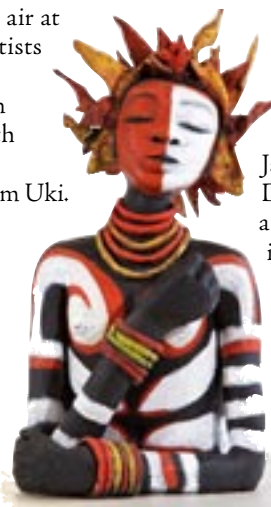
The Spring Arts Exhibition will be open daily from Saturday 22nd September to Sunday 7th October, and there will be a series of grand piano and other music recitals during the event.

Local art springs up

Spring is in the air at the Nimbin Artists Gallery, with a Guest Artist on show this month – Marie-France Boissoneault from Uki.

Marie-France is a sculptor and painter principally working with clay as her favourite medium. Her sculptures are hand-built using clay slabs to make hollow forms. This form then becomes her canvas as she uses oils and acrylics to add vibrant colour.

Marie-France says of her work, "My art could be described as naïve. My images are strong and arresting, largely as a result of the three dimensional technique. I am inspired by where I live and travel, the villages, the nature, the native and the human form."



There is also lots of new work to see from our regular local artists such as Pauline Ahern,

Janet Hassall, Donna Sharam and Joanna May. It is certainly worth dropping into the Gallery this month to have a look.

For more information, please contact the Nimbin Artists Gallery on 02 6689-1444.



Coraki Art Prize

From the wonderful workshops run at Coraki school by internationally renowned artist Digby Moran, to the always hilarious quiz nights hosted by Senator John



The quiz night

Faulkner, to the opening night and the exhibition itself, the Coraki Art Prize has something for everyone in the community – and, of course, stunning artworks in a wide range of media.

In winning last year's Richmond Valley Community Event of the Year, the Coraki Art Prize was described as "the glue that binds a community together" – and it's all done by volunteers.

Art Prize committee chair, Melva Thompson said she was able to muster such a broad group of volunteers because people understood the community harmony the Art Prize fosters.

"The Art Prize has become an important part of the fabric of Coraki and surrounds, not simply an Art Prize on one weekend," she said.

The quiz night is the Art Prize's major fundraiser and will be held at the Youth in Coraki on Saturday, 29th September.

Entries for the Art Prize are due on 17th October and opening night and the announcement of the awards will be at the Coraki Conference Centre on Friday, 26th October. For more information, email: info@corakiartprize.com.au

Home Sweet Home reprise

Home Sweet Home, the combined exhibition by members of the Blue Knob Hall Gallery, the Roxy Gallery in Kyogle and Lismore's Serpentine Community Gallery, has now arrived at Blue Knob Hall Gallery after a successful three weeks in Lismore.



This collective exhibition coming to a new home at Blue Knob Hall Gallery shows how different venues can highlight different aspects of the works. It is a treat for the local community to see works from artists that have not been seen here before.

With artists involved from three local but different areas, it is an interesting and stimulating exhibition with some heartfelt interpretations of the theme that have been creatively and beautifully realised.

This has been a first for the three galleries and is a show which highlights and strengthens the fantastic network between local Northern Rivers galleries and a chance to view and be inspired by artists who have been unknown to each other until now.

The exhibition will run until 21st October.

News and coming events

Artists and Friends lunch is held on the last Thursday of each month. Cost is \$15 per person for set mains and a selection of desserts. We welcome anyone who would like to come along for a really nice afternoon with other artists and friends.

The Cafe can now boast its own kitchen garden! Thanks to Paul and his lovely family, and the Blue Knob Farmer's Market, we now have a chook proof garden with lots of fabulous produce sprouting their tiny heads! Can't wait to start harvesting and using our own produce in the Cafe.

Weekend at the Bentley Art Prize

Fine weather made for an excellent weekend at the Bentley Art Prize on August 3, 4 and 5. There was record attendance for the presentation of prizes in over 14 categories competing for a prize pool of \$8,500.

The Tursa Open Painting Prize was awarded to Christine Porter from Goonellabah and the RSM Acquisition Prize was awarded to Robert Robertson from Tamworth. The 28th Annual Bentley Art Prize was officially opened by the General Manager of Richmond Valley Council Mr John Walker. Mr Walker remarked that he was thrilled to be part of this prestigious event.

Big crowds made it the best ever Bentley Art Prize and co-ordinator Helen Trustrum thanked all the sponsors for their generous support. She also thanked the members of the Bentley Hall Committee for their assistance in putting the event together.

The Primary School Art Prize for Champion Boy went to Josh Boyd of Casino and the prize for Champion Girl to Gabrielle Allen from Lismore.

Christy Kun from Grafton won the Reg and Phyllis Hartley Shield award.

The winner of the People's Popular Choice award was Kathleen Armstrong's Bentley Lillies.

Local wins first prize in photography

Local photographer and artist Darmin Cameron won First Prize in the Landscape Photography Section at the 2012 Bentley Art Prize for his photograph, 'Local Landscape'.

This is Darmin's second Bentley – last year he was awarded a Highly



'Local Landscape' by Darmin Cameron

Commended for his 2m high sculpture 'Mobile Phone Tower'.

At the award ceremony held at the Bentley Hall, Darmin said, "All artists need encouragement, and winning a First Prize at The Bentley is a helluva lot of encouragement."

He thanked organiser Helen Trustrum and the Organising Committee for their great efforts and the Judges for their obvious good taste.

His winning photo is an impressionistic rendition of a classic North Coast ghost gum.

"I don't use Photoshop, in fact I can't use Photoshop, I am a very primitive digital photographer. I use available light and the settings in the camera."

Darmin said, "I like to draw attention to the everyday, accentuate it or alter it to make it more obvious, hoping that people will see the amazing wonder that life is, or expose the shadow, shine 'a different light' on things that need to be seen, like in 'Local Landscape'."

Nimbin residents will be able to view 'Local Landscape' at the Nimbin Spring Arts Exhibition in September.



Glenn Costello from Tursa Employment and Training with the judge Helen Grant, editor Australian Artist Magazine, with Christine Porter Painting 'In the Hayshed' by Christine Porter



Popular Choice Painting 'Bentley Lillies' by Kathleen Armstrong

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The travelling permie

by Robyn Francis

I've just been exploring the Gruner Market in Erding, (pictured below) which for three years was my 'home town' when I lived in Bavaria in the 1970s. The Gruner Markt (Green Market) has a 900-year tradition, every Thursday morning in the heart of town. There are changes – now local producer stallholders seem to be in the minority and crowded out by large commercial trailer stalls selling goods from Italy, Spain and South America.



I pause for a while to chat with Rita, wedged in between two humungous exotic product stalls.

Rita has a small table selling Zwetchgen, a delicious local plum variety, hand harvested from her own trees, eggs from her free-range chickens and fresh rocket from her garden. She's initially a little sceptical of my camera, but when I speak in my faltering Bavarian of the old days of the Gruner Markt and tell her I have a farm in Australia where I can grow oranges, she warms to me and I buy a half kilo of her plump Zwetschgen.

I find another stall selling organic home-grown and regional produce. As I take a photo of one of the labels an old codger in lederhosen challenges me in broad dialect asking if I'm doing price control. I reply that there seems to be little local produce at the market nowadays so I'm taking a photo. He admonishes that we should only buy Bavarian products, and to his surprise I agree. He smiles and



wishes me a good day.

Another stall sells organic home-made goat cheeses and home-grown vegies. I treat myself to a slab of cheese and hope I manage to eat it all before I leave in two days.

Back at my hotel I reflect on my month in France, where I heard similar stories of the struggle of local producers to compete with supermarkets selling cheap produce from all over the world. The irony was not lost as I watched some of the French PDC participants with their raw food, fruitarian and other dietary fetishes consuming vast amounts of fruit from Spain, bananas from Ecuador and avocados from Peru. I stick to eating sweet, juicy local plums and apricots from the fruit bowl.

Catching up on the world via the internet, I read an article on how poorly equipped our Pleistocene Stone Age brains are to meet the challenges of climate change. It explains how evolutionary short-

term perceptions of self-interest, 'rewards', over-ride longer term reason when we make choices: "reasoning takes effort and we avoid it when we can."

In Paris, I gave a presentation to over 100 people about Permaculture in Transition Initiatives. I told the story of two communities with lots of colourful, inspiring pictures – of urban community initiatives in the USA city of Portland, and of Sustainable Nimbin and Djanbung Gardens. There were lots of questions seeking practical things people could do as individuals to make a difference. Most of my replies came back to the choices we make as consumers – buying local, reducing waste and living simply, and the importance of community collaboration.

I've had a wonderful time in Europe – starting with the European Permaculture Convergence in North Germany, where I met hundreds of dedicated people making major changes on a community level through transition and permaculture projects. Then most of my time was in France



Rita and her stall

teaching an intensive PDC to 62 participants followed by a two-day workshop on Social Permaculture and community facilitation to a further 44 participants from Belgium, Switzerland and France. I trust the hundred-plus lives I've connected with through this training, plus another hundred in Paris, will take the message to heart, and the fossil fuel investment in my travels will be recouped many times over by effective local actions for a more sustainable society in this part of the world.

Reflecting on an inspiring victory



by Sophia Hoeben

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Nightcap Forest Action, which brought rainforest logging throughout NSW to an end.

Although the Nightcap Range was declared a National Park as far back as 1932, it was never gazetted, resulting in the commencement of logging at Terania Creek in 1979. The local people, after years of unsuccessful lobbying, were forced into defensive action and the battle for the trees began, eventually bringing rainforest logging to public attention worldwide.

The environmental impact study which was called for at the time was never carried out, yet through public pressure, the logging ceased until 1982, The Year of the Tree, when another handful of committed souls faced the tyranny of the logging industry as they prepared to log Mt Nardi and much of the Nightcap Ranges.

Of the three camps established on the mountain,

the largest, called Stumps, was set up on Andy Frame's property and became the focal point of the protest. In the wet, sodden conditions of the camp, they found a depth of courage they didn't know they had.

Spending three and a half months in a protest camp, and being frequently arrested, came at a great personal cost for many as they placed their bodies in front of the logging trucks on a daily basis. Those same trucks would carry the carcass of a 3,000-year old giant, slain to spite the protesters and cruelly inflict more pain.



Behind the scenes, Di Kivi did not venture in front of the logging trucks, but bravely and without hesitation, put forward the large amount of money needed to take the matter before the Land and Environment Court, risking all she owned in life.

People from all over Australia came to join the battle, and make a stand for the trees. Top scientists from all over the world spoke out in favour of the

protesters, and warned the public at the same time about the rate of extinction of life on our planet. Yet, the Naggars as they were known (the Nightcap Action Group, or NAG), gained a media-generated image as radical rat-bags. The reality was that their passion and commitment to the forest freaked a lot of people out. As for Naggars, compromise was never an option.

Rainforest logging was subsequently banned throughout NSW, along with 186,000 hectares of forest saved by those radical rat-bags. It was an inspiring victory, and the largest area of forest ever saved in the world by direct action. The flow-on effect was no less than magic, as some of the Naggars morphed into the Nomadic Action Group and set off to save rainforests all over the world.

As the grandchildren of those initial protesters grow up, they may look to the mountains cradling Nimbin and remember what their grandparents fought so hard for, as they take in the astounding beauty.



Occupy Monsanto

The Nimbin Environment Centre will join the international community in educating the world about Monsanto (occupymonsanto360.org) by showing the French documentary *The World According to Monsanto* at the Nimbin Town Hall on 15th September at 7pm.

Directed by independent filmmaker Marie-Monique Robin, it paints a grim picture of a company with a long track record of environmental crimes and health scandals.

The US-based Monsanto, one of the biggest chemical companies in the world, has created some of the most toxic products ever sold, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and the herbicide Agent Orange which produced such devastating dioxin contamination of Vietnam. The movie reveals that Monsanto already knew about the systematic toxic effects' of PCBs for decades, but instructed its salespeople to stay silent because 'we can't afford to lose one dollar.'

More recent research has shown that Monsanto was also aware of the toxic health and environmental effects of its herbicide Roundup and of the active component glyphosate. Courts in New York and France have also found against Monsanto's claim that Roundup is biodegradable and it's no longer able to put this lie on the packaging. Besides the dangers of this product, it's also creating 'super weeds', which Monsanto will only be too happy to create another toxic chemical for.

In the US, Monsanto has a bad reputation for the promotion of growth hormones from GE organisms known as rBGH, which the company sells under the brand name Posilac. Monsanto claims that Posilac holds benefits to consumers. The reality is that rBGH growth hormones were banned in Europe and Canada



after the authorities found out about the health risks resulting from drinking milk from cows treated with rBGH hormones.

Monsanto's way of addressing this problem was to sue the Oakhurst dairy company in the state of Maine (US) – attempting to force them, and other dairies, to stop

labelling dairy products rBGH and rBST-free.

Monsanto is the world leader in genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Ninety percent of all GE seeds planted in the world are patented by Monsanto and hence controlled by them. Currently, the Agricultural Appropriations Bill before the US legislature, if passed in its present form, will allow a permit for the planting or cultivation of new GM crops without prior environmental or health assessment on the basis of 'substantial equivalence' with existing crops, even if a Federal court has given an injunction against them.

As a leader in genetically modified seeds engineered to resist its herbicide Roundup, Monsanto claims it wants to solve world hunger while protecting the environment. In the light of its troubling past, can we really believe these noble intentions?

Byron Shire Chemical Free Landcare is also coordinating a series of events in Mullumbimby for Occupy Monsanto. See back page ad for details.

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Koala Kolumn



During June and July, DSEWPaC organised presentations for government (yes, government is well practised in destroying koala habitat) and private sector proponents about the koala listing across Queensland, NSW and the ACT, 'workshopping' interpretations and process. In early September DSEWPaC is meeting with the scientists.

The bottom line is that humans and koalas are competing for the same space. Just how rigorous the final guidelines will be when they are released in a month or two is problematic, but we've got our fingers crossed.

A question hanging over the listing back in May was could existing projects require referral? The proposed Kings Forest residential development in Tweed had been referred to the Federal Minister by Project 28 Pty Ltd during March 2012, prior to the koala's listing. The proponent's application denied the proposal constituted a controlled action. Notice of the ten-day public comment period was advertised on 30 March. On 31 May a further notice signalled five business days in which to comment on koala issues only. We fired off our submission. The Minister's determination is still awaited.

So, a project that had been referred but for which the Minister had not yet made a controlled action decision may be affected by the listing. A project that has already been referred and on which a Ministerial decision has been made is apparently not affected. Presumably projects like the West Byron Urban Release Area, that will significantly impact the koala and is presently in the State pipeline, will require referral.

One of the aims of the Federal listing is to strengthen the protections that are already in place for the koala. Listing supporters have argued that State protection including the NSW Koala Recovery Plan and State Environmental Planning Policy No.44 - Koala Habitat has failed. Critics argue that the listing doubles-up assessment and approvals. We're very concerned that listing the koala has come at the very time when Federal and State politicians have committed to removing "green tape" and unnecessary duplication for environmental assessment and approvals; reforms to streamline assessments are under active discussion.

September is Save the Koala month and of course this September we have local government elections. Four years ago on the Northern Rivers not one council had commenced preparation of a comprehensive koala plan of management. Today five of our six councils have made some commitment to formalised koala management. We urge you to think very carefully about whom to vote for on 8th September if you wish to see koalas protected into the future.

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 or email 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.

by Lorraine Vass

It's four months since the koala populations of Queensland, NSW and the ACT were listed as a vulnerable species under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

Time to be asking what the Act does and what if any impact it's having on koala protection.

In a nutshell the EPBC Act protects matters of national environmental significance (NES), including listed threatened species. Any action that will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance must be referred to the Federal Environment Minister for determination whether it is a controlled action and therefore requires an environmental assessment and approval process under the Act.

An unapproved controlled action is a criminal offence and civil penalties apply, i.e. an individual or individuals can go to prison and be fined. The maximum penalty for a person who takes an action that has, will have, or is likely to have a significant impact on a listed threatened species in the vulnerable category is \$500,000 and for a corporation, \$5.5m

So, what is a significant impact on koalas?

In June, the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC) released Interim koala referral advice for proponents, which states "Significant impacts on the koala are most likely to result from direct or indirect impacts on habitat critical to the survival of the species and/or on important koala populations." The guidelines go on to specify direct impacts as loss, fragmentation or permanent degradation of habitat, permanent fragmentation of an important population, clearing or burning of the habitat of an important population, removal of primary food trees to the extent where an important population declines. Indirect impacts include an increase in vehicle-related koala fatalities and in dog attack-related koala fatalities, leading to a long-term decline in a population. Of somewhat more uncertain impacts are introducing the spread of disease such as Chlamydia and koala retrovirus, destroying unoccupied quality habitat and temporary fragmentation of important populations or disrupting the movement of koalas.

Actions considered unlikely to have a significant impact on the koala are those occurring in low-quality habitat where koalas are known not to occur; selective logging of eucalypt species identified during surveys as not being used by koalas as food trees, or the removal of a single primary food tree.

Clearly these interim guidelines need closer defining. Who's going to identify the important populations? For me they're all important but that's not going to wash. Fortunately for the koalas scientists have developed very good tools for providing robust answers. The question is whether their advice will be taken up.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Brush Box *Lophostemon confertus*

by Richard Burer

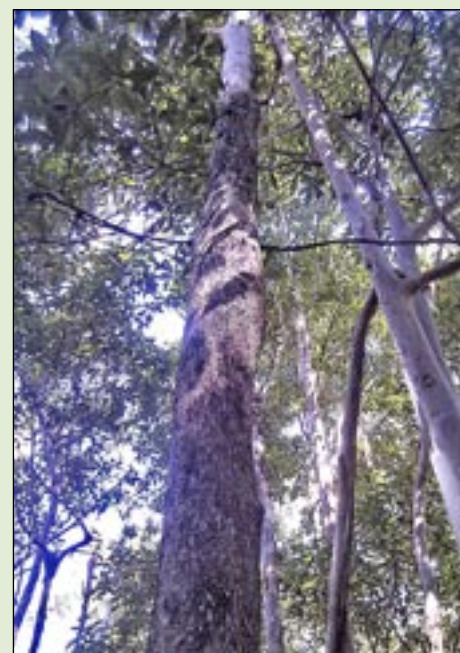
This large to very large tree is found in and around the margins of most types of rainforest, and is quite at home in drier tall open forest.

The smooth pink-orange bark makes this an attractive street and landscape tree, however as Brush Box grows to 30-40m, it gets lopped to a few metres under electricity lines, which dampens one's enthusiasm for street planting.

I have always been very fond of this large hardy tree, and always feel comfortable and optimistic when working under the evergreen canopy of glossy leaves.

In the next months, keep an eye out for white flowers, relished by bees, as they cover this beautiful tree, taking advantage of its bounty.

On the farm and in the garden, restrict this tree to fence lines and edges of large gardens, but it is a must on revegetation projects, as its fast growth rates and quick canopy



restore some balance in sites with little cover.

To grow your own, pick the capsules from the tree, place in a paper bag to dry out where they will drop the numerous fine seed. Sow in a light seed raising mix, Tabulam sand is good.



by Philippe Dupuy, President

Much has been said about sustainability, how we need to ensure that we recycle, reuse and make the big push towards renewable energy, but will this be enough?

No doubt sustainability is a very important issue but is it all we need to do? We have to be conscious that we have done some serious damage already. The trend of thought that keeps promoting sustainability ignores the fact that we are well past the post. We should be now in the restoration phase. It is time to say stop! Stop, go back and look at what we've done!

It's time to regenerate on a large scale because destruction has been on a large scale. To succeed we have to tackle the structures that are working feverishly to stop any kind of change to the status quo. The present system is a pyramid scheme that is parasitical and wasteful. The parasites at the top consume more than the rest put together. The irony of the whole thing is that real power lies at the base of this structure. If the lower levels refuse to cooperate and hold the weight of those above them, the whole thing will collapse. So how do we persuade the bottom layer to stop supporting the above layers?

Although there are many persuasive arguments we do not have the means to disseminate them. Our only hope lies with the individual. So I appeal to each one of you to look around you, to research, inform and engage with others to end the outright destruction, taking place.

We need to rebuild a society that is respectful of other creatures and ourselves.

It is not the use of resources that is wrong but rather their abuse. It's worth remembering Ghandi's wise words back in the early 1900s - "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need but not every man's greed". Had sustainability been properly implemented back then it might have worked but greed has increased ten fold and governments and big business have hijacked the idea of sustainability to create the illusion that all is well. Now the environmental destruction has gone too far and we need concerted and committed action to restore what has been lost. Sustainability can only work if there is something healthy to sustain.

This is why we at the Nimbin Environment Centre, along with other concerned groups, have to work together to repair the destruction of our environment. We need to put an end to hunting in national parks, coal seam gas mining and all the other activities that are destroying our world.

All at NEC were deeply saddened at the passing of Darcy Goodwin. Darcy exemplified the strong sense of community that the Northern Rivers is about. His concern for the welfare of others made him dedicate his time to the needy. In a time where the wealthy are amassing tremendous fortunes at the expense of others, he gave of himself. He was a source of motivation and inspiration. He is survived by many others all working to fill in the gap between the haves and the have-nots that the establishment does nothing about. People working with the hungry and homeless, with the disabled, with injured animals and the environment all help to fill this gap. It is because of people like Darcy that the Northern Rivers Community is the caring community that it is. Darcy helped make the world a better place to live in and will be greatly missed.

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Weed Words

by Triny Roe

Ageratum houstonianum – also known as Blue Billy Goat Weed, Flossflower, Blue Mink or Pussyfoot – is another import to Australia. It is commonplace in gardens, paddocks, roadsides, wetlands, creek banks and elsewhere in the bush. This plant is found just about everywhere so you'd be forgiven for thinking it was part of the natural landscape.

Known simply as *Ageratum*, it is a tough plant that hails from Central America and southern Mexico. Like many other plants from this region it has fled the confines of the garden and gone feral in parts of the world where it has been introduced.

Now established in Africa, Europe, the eastern USA, Hawaii, Taiwan, China, Japan and New Zealand, as well as Australia, *Ageratum* is considered invasive in all these countries. It impacts on native vegetation as well as crops and pasture. In Australia it is listed as an environmental weed in many shires, particularly in Northern NSW and Southeast Queensland.

A vigorous immigrant, it can form large dense patches excluding other herbaceous plants. Often found colonising disturbed areas it can also make itself at home in undisturbed bushland. In Queensland it has been discovered growing in



Ageratum will reduce the carrying capacity of pasture

intact open forest in Brisbane Forest Park.

It is named *Ageratum* (from the Greek meaning 'not growing old') for its long lasting flowers and *houstonianum* by surgeon and botanist, Dr William Houston. This erudite gentleman travelled through Central America and the West Indies in the 18th Century collecting and cataloguing plants. His namesake has long been esteemed as a garden specimen with award winning cultivars bred for the nursery trade.

As well as the ubiquitous and ever-popular blue flowered ones, there are pink, lavender, purple and white varieties. Considered a true blue flower, it is popular in the United States in patriotic floral displays of red, white and blue for July Fourth celebrations.

Ageratum flowers nearly all year round. Often used in mass plantings, this hardy herb is drought resistant and can tolerate a range of conditions from part shade to full sun. Growing from 30cm to a metre high and another metre wide, it

can also root along the stem if it falls over. The thick mats formed smother existing ground covers and prevent other plants from emerging. The mid green leaves are soft and hairy with toothed margins. They are generally positioned opposite at the bottom of the stem but alternate at the top.

This plant often grows where we don't want it. It will appear in paddocks but horses, cattle or even deer will not generally eat it. All parts of the plant are toxic causing liver damage in grazing animals. Generally stock will not eat *Ageratum* as it tastes bitter but if there's no alternative in drought conditions they will.

The seeds are numerous, small and light and easily distributed by wind and water. They have hair like scales and can be carried around on clothing, shoes, vehicles and mowing equipment. Contaminated fodder or mulch can also introduce it to new areas.

If you have *Ageratum* in your paddock or lawn and want to reduce its incidence, either mow frequently before flowering or use a catcher to collect the flower heads to minimise the seed load. As individual plants are short-lived, a reduction in seed production will lessen its spread. Increasing soil fertility can promote grass growth to compete more effectively.

In Mexican Indian traditional medicine it is known as *Micashihuil*. Decoctions of this plant are used to treat wounds and infections. Chemical analyses of plant parts have identified anti-microbial compounds. The presence of pyrrolizidine alkaloids confirm its toxic effects.

Stu's view from the loo

by Stuart McConville

Sunshine warms my shoulder through the diaphanous wall to the east. The sleeping goddess (Sphinx and Blue Knob) is smiling, warmth exudes from her bosom. I breathe it all in and wonder how my perception filters this experience. Am I looking through rose coloured glasses? As an eternal optimist, can I not see the writing on the wall, or do I choose not to read it, (is it really there at all)? Often times I am confronted with information that purports to conspiracy, global evil, chemtrails, the illuminati etc etc. I find it necessary to become a discerning individual, to process information and assess it using my perception filters. How can I, with my inbuilt failings, find truth amongst the plethora of information available to me?

We must all be a bit overwhelmed with information generally. Since the internet age began, availability of information has increased exponentially, as more and more people use the online environment to further their individual causes. This is by far the biggest jump in available information since the 16th century, when books were printed and common people began to read. How are we coping with the challenge of processing all this info and discerning between brilliance and BS? Some better than others. The trick is to unbridle your perception filters and stand naked and innocent before the information requiring assessment. Then slowly think through a process of re-clothing yourself in reason, logic and intuition.

I use the following methods:

Who stands to gain from your accepting the info as truth?

If the info in any way leads you to a conclusion you have to part with

\$\$, your BS alarm should be ringing. Many gains are not financial. Sometimes people have a vested interest in their own aggrandizement, or simply seek attention.



Can the info be tested?

Is there any other way that the same conclusion could have been reached, apart from the one that the info is telling you? If there are other pathways to the same answer, don't believe the pathway you are being told about unless the other pathways have been tested and eliminated. Real info will often tell you about all the possible ways and how they have been eliminated.

Has the source been peer reviewed?

If the information is the opinion of one person, it is likely to be flawed. When information is reviewed by independent third parties and confirmed it has a much higher likelihood of being factual.

Tune in to body language

If possible, read between the lines by looking at positive / negative inclinations in body language. Trust your intuition on this one!! Even politicians have trouble lying without letting on.

I have another rule for my own sanity. Don't go chasing random information, there is enough right in front of most of us to fully occupy our sensibilities. If you have not watched a sunset in over a year, switch off your TV, computer and phone 'til you have.

Stu runs Pooh Solutions compost toilets and consultancy, For more info check out: www.poohsolutions.com or call Stu on 0427-897-496.

Madeira fraterniser

by Geoff Dawe

Current cultural certainty that the exotics are out of balance, may be more an indicator of the way the culture sees the world rather than necessarily the truth. Negative emotions about anything occur because the behaviour one rails against occurs in oneself at an unconscious level, and the negative emotion is a means of pushing it back down or inhibiting its means of coming into full consciousness.

Tad Beckman, Professor of Philosophy, Humanities and Social Sciences at Harvey Mudd College, suggests "Humans enter every natural environment as an 'exotic', perturbing the existing balance of species and refusing to be part of any new balance." The conception that exotics are out of balance may be simply an unconscious concern that humans are out of balance, and anger and resentment is turned against the exotic to keep the concern repressed.

The possibility of this being the case was driven home to me, when I told two chemical



The aerial tubers of Madeira Vine

bush regenerators, at different times, that a king parrot had been observed nibbling a Madeira corm (*Anredera cordifolia*). The excitement that I experienced upon seeing it, with a young man ironically named Forest, was not the response of these regenerators when they were told of the event.

One said she preferred the parrot ate native food, and the other assumed that eating the corms increased the possibility

the plant would be spread further in parrot shit. The fact that the parrot nibbled rather than swallowed the corm whole, and that the ability of a corm to germinate would probably be compromised by that, was not what her mind was apparently reaching for. She appeared to have a deep-seated belief that madeira corms must remain the enemy, and the information I was giving must be from a madeira fraterniser.

Ian Walker in his book, *Bringing Back The Big Scrub Rainforest*, says that currawongs eat both madeira and privet, while Bill Peal in his rainforest restoration manual says the "...destruction of seeds by beaks or gizzards of certain birds represents a dispersal failure" His example of this is the King parrot. Bill goes on to say that King parrots have behavioural adaptations that enable them to deal with plants that thwart parrots by having bony seeds that resist their beaks, "by ignoring the usual bright colour signals that indicate when fruits are ripe, and deliberately feed upon green fruits..."

Madeira corms then, are likely to attract King parrots, whose feeding on them may

destroy the corms. It brings up the issue of our cultural readiness to vilify that which we throw on the outer, and how there are plenty of lists of vilified species, but no lists of exotic plants that feed native animals!

I half expect the next person who I tell the story about parrots and madeira to tell me anthropomorphically that since madeira corms are a laxative for humans, they have concern the parrots will fairly shit themselves!

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Positive step for the public: Chinese medicine is now a nationally registered health profession

by Michele Alberth

Chinese medicine practitioners must now be registered with the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia (CMBA) in order to offer acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine services to the public.

This move comes after the Chinese medicine profession joined the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions on 1st July 2012. This is the same scheme that regulates medical practitioners, physiotherapists, chiropractors, dentists, nurses and midwives.

The primary purpose of national registration is to protect the public. Registered Chinese herbal medicine and acupuncture



practitioners have to practice in accordance with national standards.

Michele Alberth is registered as a practitioner of Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine and is also a member of the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association Ltd (AACMA), the peak national body of qualified Chinese medicine practitioners, which

means an added layer of protection and reassurance for the public.

Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine originated in China more than 2000 years ago and has become well-established in the mainstream health systems of China, Japan, Korea and other parts of East and South East Asia.

Chinese medicine has been established as a profession in Australia for more than 35 years, being a system of primary health care that includes acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine, remedial massage (tuina), exercise and breathing therapy (such as qigong) as well as diet and lifestyle advice.

For further enquiries please phone Michele on 6632-1214 or (Thursdays) on 6662-4753.



Business Feature brings many years of local experience to massaging for relaxation or therapy. She is also a qualified naturopath.

Also on Mondays we welcome Chelsey Campbell in the mornings, offering emotional balancing. Chelsey adopts a gentle, energetic therapy which assists with clearing of emotional blockages, and life alignment.

Dr Jacqui has moved to Saturdays, with her deep emotional release work. Just a reminder that Jacqui does not work from *The Green Bank* as a GP. Contact the Nimbin Medical Centre for medical appointments with Dr Jacqui.

The first Saturday of every month, Jacqui takes a break and instead we have Anne Walker, our resident AromaTherapist. Anne offers aromatherapy facials, foot

baths, and custom therapeutic blends, as well as reflexology and therapeutic massage.

KaHuna massage is still available on Tuesdays, with Tina Featherfoot; remedial and relaxation massage on Thursdays with Kylie (utilising her Naturally Nourished range of organic skincare); polarity energy balancing with Zuela on Wednesdays; and Clinical Psychologist Vanessa Myles-Taig on Wednesday and Friday mornings.

Call *The Green Bank* on 6689-1881 for appointments. Or better still, drop in and see us. We've always got new and interesting stock coming in – such as our new range of Mongrel socks, made from pure, Tasmanian, non-mulesed wool, utilising machinery and wisdom from bygone years. We now have a range of gift packs to suit most occasions, and gift vouchers are available for the shop and some of our practitioners.

Custom medicinal teas are available on Mondays and Thursdays, and Kylie's custom oil blends and skincare products can be arranged on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. *Tea Medica* teas are brewing all day long (now kept warm by a couple of tea cosies that have to be seen to be believed!) and we welcome you for a browse and a chat whenever you have the time and the inclination.

The Green Bank girls would like to warmly thank the Lismore City Council contracted road workers for all their hard labour along Cullen Street over the last month or so. We eagerly await the day they are gone, traffic flow returns to normal, parking is no longer such an issue for everyone and, most importantly, the drain outside the Emporium no longer smells like death and decay. One day soon, this construction nightmare will be just a distant memory...

In the meantime, *The Green Bank* welcomes Anna Lusty to the team, working Monday afternoons. Anna

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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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A TEMPLE FOR NIMBIN?

by Govinda

Namaste Nimb-indians, Nimbin is the only place in Australia that reminds me of India. It has the lawlessness and chaos, the broken down and colourful look, the crowded walkways, stalls, buskers, spontaneous drumming and somebody asking or offering you something.

But one thing is missing. Even the smallest village in

India has at least one temple. We have healers, entertainers, dancers, dreamers, poets and visionaries, but the Temple Bells are not ringing.

My suggestion is to buy the Presbyterian Church next to the Green Bank and turn it into a Universal Temple or Temple of Oneness. There is even a kitchen there, so we can hand out some prasadam after each ceremony.

For the full Indian picture, Nimbin should also have some



wandering Holy Cows and a mob of monkeys (already we have lots of dogs, roosters, hens and birds).

Am I asking for too much? Whatever else, we cannot have a temple without a temple elephant blessing the pilgrims!

If you like this idea, contact me at: info@sundararetreat.net

Nourishment for Mind & Body



Bron and Holly: baby inversions

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

With this warmer weather I am feeling more inspired to be moving my body again. Our muscles are warmer and more open to being stretched. In fact, we had our first session of gentle yoga for mums and bubs last month and it went so well so that we are going to hold it more regularly. The smiles and squeals from the babies demonstrated they were enjoying this new view of mum too. Of course, there were breaks for breast-feeding in between stretches and the session flowed along quite nicely.

This month I have two new films to show you! The first is called *Freedom for Birth*. This is a new documentary that reframes childbirth as the most pressing global Human Rights issue today and will be being launched all over the world on the same day. Bronwyn Moir, local midwife and mother is making sure that we can be a part of this action!

Freedom For Birth is a 60-minute documentary featuring a who's-who of leading birth experts and international human rights lawyers, all calling for radical change to the world's maternity systems. To make it accessible to more people, we are holding the screening at night. It is on Thursday 20th September at 6.30pm and the suggested donation is \$5. Additional information about *Freedom For Birth* can be found on the website: <http://freedomforbirth.com>

The second film is *The Big Stretch Sequel*. After the wonderful revelations of *The Big Stretch*, prepare to stretch again, and stretch even further! Be uplifted, inspired, informed and impressed by committed and self-responsible parents. Through

13 individual chapters they show us how possible it is to work creatively with each unique birth and respond to challenges and the unexpected. This is a celebration of natural birth and the innate wisdom of parents and babies. See www.birthwork.com for more info.

We will also be nourishing our mental and emotional wellbeing by using art as a process to explore parenting. By allowing our creative juices to flow, we give voice to our subconscious and can explore deeper aspects of our selves and our journey.

Birth art is one of the many Birthing From Within processes that allow people to have fun whilst learning. I will be running the next holistic prenatal workshop on 6th October at Nurture Studio in Lismore.

Be prepared to deepen your understanding, awaken your intuition and build your confidence about birth and parenting. You will have the chance to explore birth like never before, build a coping mindset with proven practices, learn practical birth support skills and ease the transition to postpartum and parenthood. For more information check out: www.traditionalwisdom.com.au

Birth & Beyond September Schedule

September 14: Gentle yoga for mums and bubs.

September 20, 6.30pm: Film Screening *Freedom For Birth*.

September 28: Birthing From Within Art Process

October 5: *Big Stretch Sequel* Screening

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 To be added to the mailing list, just send an email or text.

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Love

by Zuela Christie

PART 3: Love Others

"The happiness of one's own heart alone cannot satisfy the soul; one must try to include, as necessary to one's own happiness, the happiness of others."

– Paramahansa Yogananda

"If you aren't good at loving yourself you will have a difficult time loving anyone, since you'll resent the time and energy you give another person that you aren't even giving to yourself."

– Barbara de Angelis

"Fear can stand powerfully in the way of trusting and experiencing Love. Fear may tell us that we are not worthy of Love. Or that the risks of reaching towards Love are far too great. Fear may also tell us that wanting Love makes us dangerously vulnerable.... the paradox is... Love can strengthen us."

– Stephanie Dowrick, 'The Universal Heart'

If your boundaries were disrespected as a child, you will be mistrustful of your own rights to draw boundaries. Loss of self, and potential loss of safety is not what Love asks. In thinking about Love, you don't abandon yourself or leave yourself out. Love excludes no one. Love comes to life only when you are able to consider other people alongside yourself, and yourself alongside other people.



The longing to care for others and to be cared for is fundamental to our shared human nature. Nothing will influence the quality of your life more profoundly than your willingness to accept responsibility for your attitudes and behaviour towards others.

Any shift of consciousness that allows you to think about other people more generously is highly significant: it can heal wounds. It can certainly save you from agonies of regret. It can restore your capacity to give and receive Love in all relationships.

Cultivating a sense of injury keeps your mind fixed on what's wrong. Love frees us from the self-defeating need to defend a shaky ego by being 'right' and making the other 'wrong'. When we assume goodwill and don't just focus on what's missing or doesn't fit our preconceived picture, we can receive with grace what others are willing or able to give us.

"Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies."

– Nelson Mandela

"Emotional acceptance is both the goal of Love and the means towards the goal. The experience of Love is created when

our perception is not being distorted by 'me versus them'; Love is the experience of others as 'us' and not separately as him, her or them."

– Ken Keyes Jr., 'A Conscious Person's Guide to Relationships'

As we practise loving generously, we slowly disentangle Love from need. We slowly shift our focus from whether we are loved, or loved well enough, to how we Love. Benefits flow in all directions.

Self-assurance and self-respect develop as your stance in the world becomes more open and stable, and you more securely trust your capacity to take good care of yourself. This arises from valuing your own life and journey – and recognizing how inclusive Love is – it includes all of who you are and a lively awareness of the world around you.

This attitude involves and develops trust, resilience, flexibility, self-awareness; the capacity to reflect on mistakes and learn from them i.e. the essential skills of Empathy.

It may be that no one has ever built a secure foundation for their life except through an active concern for others.

"Be kind wherever possible. It is always possible."

– His Holiness The Dalai Lama

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.

Practical help for hospital

Thanks to their enormous fundraising efforts, this year the Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary was able to purchase a wide-screen TV for the Nimbin Aged Care residence.

New publicity manager Christine Riley said, "A big thankyou to the Nimbin community for all your support throughout the year, and any help with fundraising

will be much appreciated by the aged care group."

Raffles take place once a month – tickets are sold in front of Nimbin Real Estate on Saturdays. Last month's raffle winner was Glenis Flynn.

The Hospital Auxiliary meet on the 2nd Friday of the month at Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Services in Acacia House, Nimbin Community Centre. The next meeting will be on 14th September at 10am. New members are very welcome.

Nimbin Hospital Information

We now have a physiotherapist at the hospital every Monday and Thursday. Please phone 6688-1401 to make an appointment.

Immunisation Clinic

For 0-5 year olds 2nd Tuesday of every month. Next clinic 11th September at Nimbin Hospital. Phone 6620-7687.

Womens Health Clinic

Pap tests, breast health, contraceptive advice and general health info every 3rd Thursday of the month. Next Clinic 20th September. Phone 6688-1401.

Nimbin Community Nurses

Monday-Friday. Assessment, treatment, wounds, advocacy, referral and palliative care in the home. Phone 6689-1288 and leave a message.

Drug & Alcohol Outreach Service

Riverlands Drug & Alcohol Centre provides an outreach service at the Nimbin Hospital each Thursday from 9am to 3pm for opiate and other drug addiction. Phone 6620-7600.

From problems to healthful solutions

by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
M Counselling, PhD



A friend shared with me a cartoon of a tortoise and a hare talking together. The tortoise says to the hare, "First one home, wins," and immediately pulls his head inside his shell. The hare says, "Damn," or words to that effect.

What a good little story, I thought, mulling, as I had been, about what to write about for this article. The hare had one version, one vision, of 'home' – something the tortoise knew about his friend – while the tortoise had a trick up his sleeve, "I'll get him. Finally. Hehee."

At the same time as idly checking my email, I was reading about the plasticity

of the brain – again. I know I've written about this before (NGT, July, issue), but I want to visit it in a different way. As you may remember, the term refers to the ability of the brain to fluidly adapt, physically, functionally and chemically, to change neurally and at the level of cells in response to encounters in the inner and outer world.

So what does the plastic brain have to do with a hare and a tortoise and their two ways of seeing home? Before I make my connection, I'll throw in another piece that I've been thinking about.

I'm currently reading more about Milton Erickson, a brilliant hypnotherapist, now deceased, and his subtle work with patients. His work enriches and delivers some of the most paradoxical and profound work to our current work in psychotherapy. I am becoming more and more aware of both the nature of his work and the deeper processes in the therapeutic conversation, particularly that of the use

and expression of paradox.

These three strands: the hare and tortoise cartoon, adaptable-plastic brain, and the profound and often paradoxical processes at work in therapy all share a similar characteristic, that of the power of the element of surprise, fluid thinking, and the use of what is already present.

The tortoise, in order to get home meant ducking his head inside his shell, and staying put. Getting to the hare's home for the hare meant running like the wind back to a burrow somewhere else. Though many of us try to sort out our problems by running hither and thither, the actual situation usually requires staying put with the problems and our attitude towards them. Psychotherapy and counselling offer a supportive, challenging and nurturing environment in which to work with the difficulties a person has in the here and now.

Indeed, it is here and now where solutions and change can take place. Erikson

observed that patients, though unaware of doing so, give the therapist their own unique solution to what troubles them often in the first few words they speak right at the start of the first session. Solutions and changes thus emerge from the patient rather than the therapist, and emerge from the healthful core of the person.

The quality of change is deep and physiological, functional and chemical and literally changes the whole self inside and relationally to the rest of the person's world.

Little is gained, however, by seeing the solution and going for it straightaway. The reason the patient is having the problems she is, is not because she doesn't have the answer to her difficulties (and no amount of telling her what "the" answer is will be helpful), but because that solution or answer doesn't have the necessary "grit" to be workable. The therapeutic endeavour is to give it credence, to integrate it into ordinary life. One technique

to encourage this process that I employ is the power of paradox.

The tortoise and hare cartoon, which uses the other story that we are most familiar with as an assumed backdrop, where the two race and the hare naturally wins, turns the old account on its head. The tortoise calls the shots, "First one home, wins" and immediately ducks inside his shell. This is home.

The answer to a patient's problem lies within as well, in as much as the problem arises within (obviously also in response to relationships and environmental concerns). A shift in approaching the problem thus doesn't require going far to find it, even though it may feel intractable. The problem and its solution go hand in hand, like yin and yang. They are both part of the same field and so to effect a shift a useful technique is to utilize hounding and exaggerating the problem itself to cause it to flip to its solution.

I used this technique recently. A patient came to see me because she had great difficulty falling and staying asleep. I told her that she must

not sleep, she must not allow herself to sleep. I found it really difficult instructing her in this way because she looked exhausted, frazzled and teary, and I felt cruel as they come, but I pressed on. She looked at me disbelievingly. How could I say such a thing? Her problem was not being able to sleep.

At her next session a fortnight later, my patient said she'd tried not to sleep, but instead she was sleeping like a baby all night ever since beginning the experiment, and was feeling wonderful. She looked wonderful: clear skin, shining eyes, fluid movement; back in her vibrant self. And feeling good, she can now do all the things around her house and generate natural tiredness and natural sleep. The destructive impediment of sleeplessness has been broken.

We don't have to go far for our solutions, for sure, but seeing them sometimes requires another person to hear them and give them back in a form that contributes to a deep and integrated healing.

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