

Being in the moment

by Marilyn Scott

Over the New Year period I spent many days down in Faerie Gully... a very special spot, here at Magickal Mahalia, where I live.

The bottom boundary fence had not long been completed... a wish I'd harboured since I'd been here, over two years. I visualised it often! This boundary fence was incredibly important, on many levels.

Having the history and astrological signature I do, boundaries have been an 'issue' for me. This fence was important... it secured my space... I gave thanks again and again.

Faerie Gully is pure magick! There's even a Faerie Tree... she speaks to me. I felt like I'd found my place, I felt so at home... I fit right in. I sat down there every day for two weeks... here was where I welcomed 2013.

Just across from the Faerie Tree is the dam... the most amazing dam... with water I've not seen anywhere. Most days the black, green water shimmers in the sun, reflects everything around, like a clear sheet of reflective glass... it radiates and sparkles with life-giving Prana... the water, most obviously healing. The residents of the dam... the Dragonflies... blue striped, brown striped and a fawny tan; the Willy Wagtail, brown and blue... and the slender, red billed black ducks feasting in the rushes... plus all the other daily visitors. Oh, and the gorgeous turtles. I felt like I was the luckiest girl on Earth... to be given such a place to be, feasting on the most exquisite magickal moments.

One evening I decided to go for a sunset swim... I'd become pretty addicted to swimming in the dam... morning, noon and night! As I left the house block, unlatched the gate, I turned to watch the Sun begin to set. I stood there for a while, soaking it in... and of course, capturing the moment on my faithful camera... then turned to walk down the hill to the dam. This was my first sunset swim... I slid into the water... ahhh, feels so good. I began my gentle breaststroke along the length of the dam... the dams pretty big... my body loves it. And then it started... the most magickal experience I think I've ever had! First it was the Dragonflies... they



began their dance; this way, that way, round and round. Zooming right over my head, inches away... as I continued to swim slowly along. I felt ecstatic... they were playing with me. This went on for quite a while, their joy was palpable... they were including me in their play. I was overcome with joy.

Then there was more... the Willy Wagtails began, it was now dusk but I could see them all clearly. There must have been dozens of them... they started doing the same thing, only their dancing circles covered a greater space. They too, flew close, over my head... crisscrossed the dam, flew high flew low. So many different patterns they created... back and forth, high and low, left to right... round and round, and then down over my head once again. By this stage I was treading water, my mouth agape, just watching... feeling the most incredible elation... and not quite believing what I was seeing. They were playing with me... they were welcoming me to their home... they were including me in their play... they were dancing with me. I will never forget that evening as long as I live.

On New Year's Day... I tried to do the New Year thing... letting go of the past... planning the future... with pen in hand, journal on my lap... you know how it goes. But it just wasn't happening. At that moment, I realized quite clearly... that I just wanted to experience the moment. 'Cause, gee... it can be just so super amazing... Dreamtime stuff... really.

We have courage... we have focus... we have Love... we have Beauty... we can do it. Lotsa luv to you all... and enjoy the year of the Water Snake... xxx

Inspiration or insanity?

Nimbin's temporary public art installation



Photo: Michael Skinner

Reflections of a refugee

by Chris Aitchison

'There's plenty of money out there. They print more every day. But this ticket... there's only five of them in the whole world, and that's all there's ever going to be. Only a dummy would give this up for something as common as money. Are you a dummy?' (Grandpa George in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, 2005.)

I hold to be self-evidently true the assertion by the late Terrence McKenna that cinema and TV are, generally speaking, tools of the elites in a malign cultural engineering experiment (I paraphrase). Nevertheless, I am prepared on occasion to endure a couple of hours of Hollywood-style propaganda in the interests of marital harmony. In any case, for those who are prepared to attune themselves to a movie's cultural sub-texts, Hollywood movies can be rich in material for effective culture jamming. The 2005 rendition of Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, which I found myself watching one recent rainy day, was no

different in this respect.

While Johnnie Depp was a delight, the movie was entirely forgettable. (I think I would enjoy watching Depp – his funny affectations, ambulations, and general oddities – in silence at least as much as watching the feature itself). It was forgettable, that is, with the notable exception of Grandpa George's principled remonstrance, which opened this column.

Grandpa George, you may recall, was referring to Charlie's suggestion that he should sell for five hundred quid his ticket – one of only five in the world – which would enable him entry for one day into the fabled Wonka chocolate factory. 'Only a dummy would give this up for something as common as money.' Indeed. Why would one trade a once-in-a-lifetime experience – the dream of three generations – for something so ordinary, so replaceable, and so incidental to the prerequisites of happiness and a meaningful life?

And yet, most people in our society tacitly or expressly accept the assumption that nothing is beyond the reach of monetisation. Nature, identity, love, and even life itself (as evidenced by our wholesale willingness to accept an ongoing dependence on fossil fuels), are all assumed to be subject to the money economy. All have price tags attached.

This assumption is playing out presently in the Northern Rivers as the exploration for coal seam gas gathers pace. Everything is for sale from the perspective of this industry's proponents; our water, our air, our communities, our food production and our way of life. Very few people would argue that a gas field is beautiful. Even fewer would argue the desirability of poisoning our aquifers, or the long term merits of turning neighbour against neighbour. However, it is equally evident that these devastating features of coal seam gas mining are widely accepted in the community as necessary evils, subsidiary to the all-important project of generating and accumulating money.

We have, as a society, bought into the great lie – now convention – that money is pre-eminent; an end in itself. We learn from an early age, and go on to instil in our own children, the dictum that money is to be coveted above all things and sought after.

And until we allow our minds and actions to be informed by the wisdom of Grandpa George – until we acknowledge that there are things that defy measurement in terms of money and make the conscious and collective decision to reclaim them from the money economy – we will pay increasingly dearly for our folly.

Do the things you hold dearest have a price tag? Are you a dummy?

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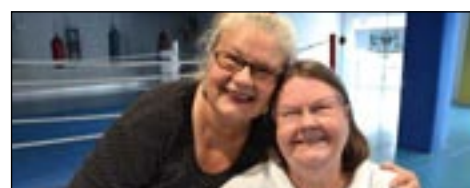
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This initiative was funded by the Australian Government.



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Felting, an ancient craft for everyone

Learn the fascinating art of felt making and create your own stunning piece of felt art!

Felting is one of the oldest forms of wool processing, the earliest examples dating to Neolithic times. The process has been around for maybe as long as 30,000 years.

Although it has such a long history, felt making only became known in the Western world relatively recently and the craft is undergoing a resurgence in popularity.

In the process of felt making, wool fibres shrink and come together to form a dense mat when subjected to heat, friction and a change of alkalinity – hot water, soap and a lot of rubbing and rolling!

At a microscopic level, tiny scales on the surfaces of the individual fibres become tangled and locked together.

To create a Nuno felted object, you incorporate a knit or woven fabric into the structure of wool felt by wet felting. As the wool shrinks

it buckles and bubbles, the fibres and fabrics that don't shrink, yielding some pretty wonderful textures.

Black Sheep Farm felt-making workshops are designed to introduce the basic techniques used to make felt where students will be able to create a flat felted piece like a wall hanging, a table runner, a wrap or a Nuno-felted scarf.

There is also the opportunity to work three dimensionally to produce felted slippers, a tea cosy or a hot-water bottle cover.

These workshops will be an opportunity to explore colour combinations, surface design and embellishments that can be incorporated into the felt without sewing.

The next Felting Workshop will be held on Saturday 9th March in the Black Sheep Farm Learning Centre.

For more information and bookings go to www.blacksheepfarm.com.au or phone 6689 1095.



Blue Knob Hall Gallery

Small is Beautiful

Blue Knob Hall Gallery is sailing into a New Year with exciting opportunities and plans for another series of exhibitions. As always, the themes offered to artists and members are suggestions to stimulate inspiration and which allows for a certain

focus to each show.

The first exhibition for 2013, titled *Small is Beautiful*, is an exploration of the finer details of a flower, writ large, or a small painting depicting small things.

The word 'small' certainly does not mean that only small works are on show. Small has been made big and vice versa.

Often we miss the details of the everyday world we have around us, and this exhibition gives us a chance to see that very often small is beautiful.

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'Hinterland Wonderland' diptych by Janet Hassall (detail)

by Peter P

The Nimbin Artists Gallery is currently enduring its own fiscal cliff, after having enjoyed a busy Christmas/New Year. It seems people have recovered from the excesses of the holiday period and realised how conscientious they have been in supporting the economy - and Nimbin's worthy artists. They're still enjoying the art but a wallet or purse is currently a good place for moths to hide it seems.

But art is to be enjoyed, so that's fine by us. And the breather is giving us time to gear up for the 2013 Nimbin Autumn Arts Extravaganza! (AAE). This year it's held over four weeks from Saturday 30 March to Sunday 28 April, inclusive.

The gallery is now accepting proposals, which are to tell us about the artist, their art, and must include images of

work. There is no application form. The proposal is particularly important for artists not known to the gallery, as the Extravaganza is open to all artists, not just those from the Nimbin area, and is the basis for initial screening.

Important points include the AAE is for original, not-previously-exhibited work; all work must be ready to hang; it is free to exhibit in the AAE but the gallery curates the exhibition and our crack curating team decides what finally goes on the walls or plinths. No correspondence (or heated discussion) will be entered into!

More information is available on our website at www.nimbinartistsgallery.org or drop into the gallery with any questions you may have. And while you're there, enjoy the new artwork from our recent hanging.



'Birds of Paradise' by Marie-France Rose



'Caesar' by Christine Robinson

Scratchboard workshop



Workshop (above); 'Loving Lick' scratchboard by Rikki Fisher (below)

Due to popular demand, Rikki Fisher will be holding another scratchboard workshop on Saturday 2nd March. The workshop will be held at Blue Knob Hall Gallery and is limited to 12 participants.

Previous workshops have proved extremely popular and anyone interested in learning scratchboard techniques should register early.

For more details, contact Rikki on 0410-340-512 or email: rikkifisher7@gmail.com



Prayer mandala

Doubtful Creek/Ettrick site 'Point of No Entry' – drill hole Prayer Mandala for No CSG made by Kerry, Kids and Andrea on Australia Day. Photo by Daniel



The exhibition will be opening on Friday 15th February at 6.30pm. A set meal is available at \$15 mains and \$4 desserts. Bookings are essential by phoning the Gallery on 6689 7449.

Studio Build

The new ceramic studio is well underway, thanks to an incredible amount of generosity of spirit from a great volunteer community. The kiln has been positioned on the slab,

with the building going up around it and will continue through February.

We are waiting to hear if a CBP grant application will be successful in March. This will enable us to finish off the projects under way – fingers crossed.

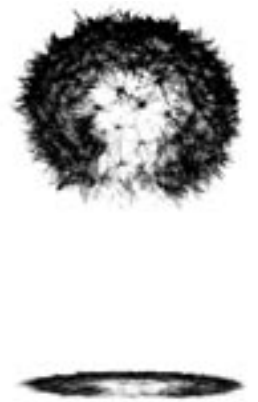
In the meantime, if anyone out there has any leftover building materials, i.e. insulation, colourbond, etc. that you would like to donate or that we can buy cheaply, we'd love to hear

from you. Please phone Jeni on 6689-7236. Many thanks.

Artists and Friends Lunch

Our popular Artists and Friends lunch will be continuing this year with the first one being on Thursday 28th February at 12.30pm. Lunch is a set menu with a mains and a choice of desserts for only \$15 per person.

Please phone the Gallery if you are intending to come. We'd love to see you!



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Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass

The storm surge that engulfed all of us over the Australia Day weekend has left a lot of cleaning-up but, thankfully, no loss of human life on the Northern Rivers.

The same cannot be said for the Region's koalas. Those wild winds and the torrential rain don't present much of a problem for healthy animals but they can be the death-knell for koalas already close to the edge.

Tuesday's sunny skies were a bit lost on the Koala Care Centre's volunteers who were taking phone call after phone call reporting animals on the ground, apparently thrown from trees by the wind-gusts: nine incidents, three involving mothers and dependent young, three back-young without their mums and three adults.

We are so appreciative that people take the trouble to report to us koalas needing help. Only occasionally do they witness the event. More often they see the consequences and we all speculate as to what may have happened.

Over the weekend a Rosebank family saw a koala falling from a branch, hooking her arm in a fork on the way down. Fortunately that koala (she was found to have a pouch-young) was able to be bundled up and kept warm and safe until we could get a rescuer to the scene. With so many roads closed, no easy feat. One of our many heroic volunteers spent six hours during the storm collecting and delivering, including this particular animal, navigating her car through some of the most terrifying road conditions she had ever experienced.

Regrettably, two of the mothers and the three adults, all suffering from underlying disease had to be euthanased. Happily, the three back-young without their mothers are hanging-in. These and the two orphans are in home-care and we wish them all the luck in the world.

It's at such times that team support really comes in to play – a hug and a few heartfelt words from a fellow carer can be enough to dispel the stress of seeing (and hearing) animals in pain, not to mention the added anxiety of being out in conditions which compel extreme caution.

Warrumbungle koalas

It seems crazy that only a matter of days ago our attention was focussed on the fate of koalas in the Warrumbungle National Park where fire started in mid-January, burning out 56,000ha and completely destroying the Visitors' Centre. Park rangers have been quoted as saying that the fire was so hot that they don't believe the koala population will have survived, nor will there be any vegetation left capable of supporting wildlife. There have been no koalas brought into care by the local wildlife rehabilitation group.

At the same time as the Northern Rivers copped its pasting, 50mm of rain fell on the Warrumbungles, helping to put out smouldering logs and hopefully ending the emergency. At the time of writing however slippery conditions underfoot were holding back access by ground crews.

Warrumbungle koalas are an important source population for the Pillaga and Gunnedah koalas. Recent survey work out there put the number at about 13,000 and



This little fellow, Dexter was brought in from Goonengerry. He was heard squawking for his mum during the storm but she was nowhere to be found.

they are relatively healthy animals. While the current situation is undoubtedly rosy compared with other parts of NSW and Queensland, that balance can be quickly overturned. If the Warrumbungle population has been wiped out, there could be disastrous consequences in years to come.

Koala ecology workshop



On Saturday 16th February, Friends of the Koala is hosting a workshop to be presented by acknowledged koala authority, Dr Stephen Phillips (pictured), a consultant ecologist

with nearly 40 years of experience in the conservation and management of free-ranging koala populations, and Dr Ross Goldingay, a lecturer in Wildlife Ecology at Southern Cross University.

Titled 'Hot Topics in Koala Ecology, Conservation & Management', it will cover Steve's current work in New South Wales, with a particular focus on the Northern Rivers and Ross will present the results of the Goonellabah-East Lismore radio-tracking study undertaken by Friends of the Koala under his supervision.

The workshop will be held at Southern Cross University's Lismore Campus from 9.30am for a 10am start (sharp) until 4pm. Cost will be \$5 for Friends of the Koala members, \$10 for other licensed rehabilitators and concession registrations and \$15 for others. Morning Tea will be provided but participants will need to self-cater for lunch. Booking is essential.

Happy koala spotting in 2013.

To report a koala in trouble, or a sighting, please ring Friends of the Koala's 24/7 Rescue Hotline: (02) 6622-1233. For information about koalas, their food trees, how you can assist koala conservation visit: www.friendsofthekoala.org

or email: info@friendsofthekoala.org or phone 6622-1233. You can also 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.



by Philippe Dupuy

Glenugie campaign

Resistance is alive and well at Glenugie even though Metgasco, with heavy-handed riot police assistance, broke through the blockade. Locals have staged a number of delaying tactics and maintained stiff opposition. People from all over have been coming in to offer support, bringing needed items and food. There are plans to keep them there...

Doubtful Creek

On Wednesday, Metgasco started pegging the location for its core drill sampling at Doubtful Creek. Locals are ready. A base camp in Dunns Road is providing the logistics necessary to deal with the incursion.

A bulldozer was blocked at Booths Road and was finally allowed to go as a gesture of goodwill. No such kindness from Metgasco, as one of their staff members came close to severely injuring a protester. For now, not much has been achieved by Metgasco: no pads, no pilot holes as yet. They are behind schedule and the blockades are biting. Be sure to be on the alert list so we can send them packing – our strength is in numbers.

Community van

The community van has been active providing support and transport for those in need. It is a focal point and also is a communication hub. Donations are welcome, to Summerland Credit Union, BSB 728-728, for Nimbin Environment Centre, account number 22292987.

Leard Forest

This is a unique forest that is home to 396 native species of flora and fauna, including 34 threatened species, yet there are plans for three large open-cut coal mines which will spread across the full length of the forest. NEC plans to go in solidarity as soon as the weather improves.

Car pool

A car pool has been set up at the Environment Centre to help those in need of a lift to get to the blockades. NEC is also setting itself up as a hub for up-to-date info and support. Although there are GAG groups everywhere, NEC is the only centre open seven days. We hope to have extra volunteers to help run the shop when the rig hedges closer into our valley.

Comments on Glenugie

'Police Break CSG Blockade': that is how the mainstream media related the story of landowners attempting to prevent Glenugie turning into a gasfield. In a few words, they constructed a headline that implied a mob of unruly hippies was trying to block the mining industry. Had the media been concerned about the continuous intrusion in our lives of both government and conglomerations, the headline would have read: 'State Fascism at Play – How



government dresses thugs in uniform to protect mining interests.

Sounds harsh? Not if you were there and had some understanding of the forces at play. Big companies have an iron grip on government. That is why an industry as destructive and counter-productive as CSG is given the cloak of legality and respectability. In Glenugie's situation it is clear that police resources were placed at Metgasco's disposal. Rescue units were instructed to disregard real emergencies. The local police stations were forced to accommodate SS Nazi-style hoodlums prepared to twist arms, wrists and use headlocks to move ordinary people trying to protect their way of life from a rapacious industry.

Unlike the local police who are part of the community, the so-called Riot and Public Order police unit is a different breed. They are a law unto themselves. On that day, they contemptuously and illegally declared the road where the protest was a no-go zone, and ordered protesters to clear the area without prior warning. This in itself was nothing more than an attempt to incite a riot. Indeed they were ready for it, as, dressed in riot uniforms, they pushed and shoved people indiscriminately of age and sex: young and old were manhandled and treated like criminals.

Those at the Glenugie protest no doubt witnessed riot police brutality, inhumanity and complete disregard for human rights first hand. Not content with outright bullying, they ordered people to stay away, denying them access to their cars and belongings.

Brad Hazzard's revenge was complete.

The riot police and Metgasco's contractors must be held to account. The over diligent ones must face litigation in civil and criminal courts for endangering lives and the environment.

As for the private media, it is time to place a boycott on their activities. They are clearly guilty of dereliction of duty, their reporting is pitiable and their claim of impartiality ridiculous. The assertion that they must report both sides of the argument for fairness' sake is ludicrous. It is like saying that if most people see the earth as round and the rest of the people as flat, the media should report that the earth is a bit of both?

Had mainstream reports stuck to the facts, CSG would be as dead as the dodo today. A discussion / debate about the role of the private media needs to be had.

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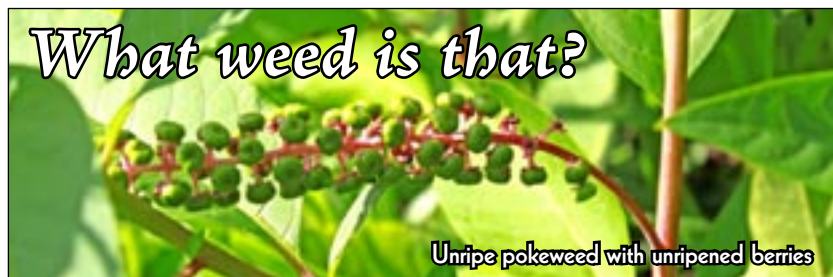
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Unripe pokeweed with unripened berries

by Triny Roe

A native of North America, Pokeweed, also known as Pigeon Berry, *Phytolacca americana*, can grow quickly to an impressive three metres. It is another of the many exotic plants in Australia that pop up uninvited. Seed is spread far and wide by birds, which eat the ripe berries, so plants can come up anywhere. Pokeweed can be found on roadsides, along fence lines, in paddocks, in the bush as well as in gardens.

Pokeweed is a striking perennial with large smooth shiny leaves that are dark green on top and pinkish underneath with prominent pink veins. The thick smooth stems are purplish red and can be multiple. The ripe berries are purple black and filled with crimson juice. The name 'pokeweed' comes from the native American word for blood. A red dye can be made from the berry juice though it is not colourfast and soon fades. The dye was used by the Native Americans to colour feathers and clothing. Early settlers used ink made from the berries.

So why get rid of it? It is a Jekyll and Hyde plant. Though the young leaves are considered delicious after thorough boiling in two or three changes of water to leach the toxins – it's a popular dish called poke sallet in southern USA – all parts of the mature plant are poisonous. The toxins isolated include an alkaloid, a

saponin and a protein, lectin. Lectins are found in the world's deadliest seeds.

It is not a good idea to have this plant in gardens where small children play, as they are attracted to the colourful berries. Though the berries are the least toxic parts of the plant, they still contain enough agents to cause harm. Most poisonous are the seeds and roots. It is not officially recommended to eat pokeweed, as the boiling may only remove some of the toxins, not all. There are many cases of poisoning of people who tried to eat pokeweed. Stock can also be affected though most will avoid it as it has a bitter taste.

Pokeweed is also a folk or herbal remedy used to treat a range of conditions from rheumatism to syphilis, from fungal infections to haemorrhoids. The Native Americans used it as a heart stimulant.

Each berry contains several seeds so a single plant can produce thousands. They can remain viable in the soil for forty years. One plant can quickly lead to more. With a deep persistent taproot, established populations are hard to get rid of, if you choose to do so. Pokeweed will readily re-shoot from the root crown, so care must be taken to dig up all the roots. To control large infestations, plough if practical, and plant a crop of corn or soybeans for a year or two. Gloves should be used when handling the plant, to avoid skin irritations.

Bangkok style

The sun rises through an oppressive layer of thick brown haze, nearly obscuring the furthest phallic towers that litter the Bangkok cityscape. A solitary bird somewhere in the near distance produces a cry that could be interpreted as a sad indictment of bio-diversity in this hot, dirty city. Bangkok awakens, canvas covers removed to reveal the street vendors' workplaces, traffic showing early signs of entropy, the morning's warmish sewage pulsing beneath the iron clad sewers. The odours here range from intoxicating tropical delights to foul stench, all filtered through the insidious solid smog that resides astride my nasal hairs.

An elderly western gentleman sits casually with his young Thai lady friend (or lady boy?), eating his western breakfast while I sip my coffee and indulge in a green papaya salad. As the morning progresses, the scenario repeats itself over and over. Sex tourism, Bangkok style. Fifty-year-old-plus western men of a peculiar stereotype are the most common. Outwardly they appear awkward with their Thai ladies, not quite knowing how to relax. My guess is these are the men who find it difficult with women in the west. The easygoing friendliness that the Thai girls offer helps break down their performance anxiety, alleviating their self-consciousness. Perhaps their Christian sex guilt complexes are so entrenched it takes a Buddhist culture to relieve them.



View from the loo

by Stuart McConville

The ladies, for the most part, are not bar girls. They represent the growing number of women who inhabit the grey area between outright prostitution and genuine dating. Young and quite often of a beauty that western men appreciate more than their Thai counterparts, they use dating sites to chat, message and cam with incoming Farangs (white fellas). They all appear to be genuinely looking for love, any age, any nationality (except Thai).

I've met a lady that is out of work, and running low on cash. She is a hospitality worker, looking for work in a hotel. She has a disability. Her eyes cross and wander around in her eye sockets, giving her the appearance of a blind girl. Even though she is fluent in English, very pretty and quite intelligent, it is hard for her to find work. Anti-discrimination laws are not what they are in Oz. She lives in a one-room apartment you couldn't swing a cat in. She has virtually no possessions (in this I am envious) and sends regular payments to her parents in impoverished Surin province. From her I learn that there are many more women

in Thailand than men, and that, as there are so many lady boys, the remaining male statistics are all the more diminished. Why this is so she cannot say, although I suspect that the role of Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals in the environment are rampant here, due to years of lacksadaisical pollution laws.

She has been using the dating site for a couple of years and it helps her get through tough times, though she says she is sick of one night stands. The *modus operandi* is something like this: She meets a guy, they go out to dinner at a nice place, she's charming and sexy, dressed to the nines. They go out for a drink afterwards and if all is OK back to the hotel all tipsy and amorous. The next day is a shopping day, where she will quickly determine if the guy is a 'Cheap Charlie' or not. She will hang out with him as long as he is paying the bills, or until the next date is due, whichever comes first. I think there is a genuine hope that every guy will be the last one, and she will meet her life's love, but the tourist always has to leave and the merry go round never seems to slow down enough to jump off.

P.S. Before I left Bangkok, my friend found a job at a hotel reception, but is struggling with migraines and nausea linked to her eyesight. I've offered to help her find \$\$ for an operation to correct her eyes, simple laser surgery, but she refuses. She is proud... and life is tough.

For more info check out www.poohsolutions.com or call Stu on 0427-897-496.

The marrying kind: Biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture

by Geoff Dawe

Biodiversity conservation takes place primarily on cleared land rather than in direct engagement with the bush. This statement may appear to be a concern for biodiversity advocates as well as farmers, but the cleared land is not primarily native plant restored, but used for growing human food that is the foundation of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable agriculture. After all, the bush was mostly cleared because we felt we could not eat reasonably with it intact.

The response in these areas is not primarily to regenerate them to native ecosystems, nor is it to farm them according to conventional ways of farming. It is to grow food forests of mixed

fruit and nut trees as the foundation of human food supply. In this there is the side effect of regeneration of bush, for unlike wholesale dependence on grains and animal production that require extensive linear metres of land, fruit and nut trees produce their tonnages more vertically. Less land is required. As a side effect, tree agriculture supplies a more permanent and resilient agriculture. Peter Andrews in his book, *Back from the Brink* argues that, "The point about trees is that they extract relatively little material from the soil. A big tree may weigh 500 tonnes or more, and the bulk of that huge mass will have been extracted from the air by photosynthesis."

Most grains, while of use in human diet in supplying

necessary dietary fats and oils, are acidifying in the body. For health's sake, only small quantities can be eaten, and they need to be eaten as whole grains.

With animal products too, while humans are omnivores and able to consume them, the scientific evidence is they cannot be efficiently consumed by the human body. In other words, humans are not obliged to consume animal products to be healthy. The world's largest organization of professional dieticians, the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics says, "that appropriately planned vegetarian diets, including totally vegetarian or vegan diets, are healthful, nutritionally adequate and may provide health benefits in the prevention

and treatment of certain diseases."

Corresponding with that, in regard to land, both the CSIRO and the University of Sydney have found that 92% of land degradation in Australia is caused by 'animal industries'. Furthermore, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, "The livestock sector may well be the leading player in the reduction of biodiversity, since it is the major driver of deforestation, as well as one of the leading drivers of land degradation, pollution, climate change, overfishing, sedimentation of coastal seas and facilitation of invasion by alien species."

The movement in bioregionalism or rural interdependence, is for farming to be carried out

more at a gardening level by a denser rural population than exists now, on smaller blocks of farming land, farming primarily mixed fruit and nut trees with associated vegetable gardens, and with co-ordinated exchange of excess with neighbours. This has the effect of reducing traditional farm work, reducing technology dependence, and of closing nutrient cycles.

The closing of nutrient cycles retains nutrient and carbon in the area where it is grown. Tim Flannery in *The Weather Makers* writes that the "Earth's vegetation and soils are reservoirs for huge volumes of carbon,

and are crucial elements in the carbon cycle. The development of agriculture has largely been one of using up this resource, and today the world is mostly deforested and its soils exhausted."

Biodiversity conservation is intimately connected with sustainable agriculture. Larger gardening/farming populations in rural areas can notice that the more successful biomass producers of naturalising immigrant plants can be used to increase soil organic matter levels, and, at the same time relieve nearby wildlife corridors of overrun by the immigrant plants.



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Unique School of Arts opens in Wiangaree

by Leandrah

Enrolments are now open for Autumn 2013 at Sonmata, School of Natural Medicine and the Arts, in Wiangaree, 10 minutes north along the Summerland Way out of Kyogle. Sonmata offers everyone learning that complements all forms of qualifications, skill and experience whilst nurturing confidence in the individual.

As a bastion for the naturopathic arts, we provide a service that rounds the education and experience of therapists, farmers, parents and everyday people; giving skill, promoting confidence and trust in prescribing and treating with natural medicine.

Leandrah (Lee-Anne Young) BA, DipEd, BNat, MATMS, tutors in homoeopathy, herbalism, nutritional therapy and body therapy. Autumn 2013 has several courses and a workshop on homoeopathy and an energy hygiene workshop.

Russell Davie BNat, MATMS, will hold a full weekend 'Touch for health' workshop.

Future naturopathic arts courses to be offered include chelation therapy, herbal medicine, food therapy medicine, detoxification, mineral therapy, ONE diet, gut master class and alkalisation.

As a bastion for the Mantic Arts, we aim to nurture skills in divination and prophecy. Four branches of the Mantic



Arts are offered by our Mantic Arts Master, Charmaine Clarke, *HH Dips.*: Parapsychology, Angel Therapy, Shamanism and Colour Therapy.

Michelle Taylor will co-facilitate an 'Innerchild Healing' workshop with Leandrah.

Free events include Maypole dance on 15th September at 11am and meditative yoga on the 1st Sunday at 11am during Autumn and Spring.

As a bastion for the visual arts, Leandrah will offer life drawing groups and painting with colour classes. In Spring 2013 Harry Armstrong will hold a calligraphy course.

As a bastion for the performing arts, we encourage jam sessions, soundscaping, piano, drums, semi-acoustic recording, concerts and puppet shows.

Sonmata is housed in a charming old church, in the village of Wiangaree. The building is designed with good acoustics and has a small stage, drum kit and piano ready to go. Semi-acoustic mixing with impromptu bird song, and charming architecture and furnishings, make this a great venue for filming, recording, and intimate concerts.

Wiangaree is a unique environment, separate from the stresses of everyday life. Diverse bird life and water life is a feature of this village. Wiangaree is the gateway to the Border Ranges adjoining South East Queensland. It is only a short drive to such important landmarks as Blackbutt and The Pinnacle. Wiangaree Lagoon is famous for its long and short neck turtles. The pure waters of several creeks flow into the Richmond River, which in turn meanders around the Sonmata home and is well known as a place to spot platypus.

Let us know which arts you have an interest in and what you would like to learn or share, via email to sonmata@mail.com You could involve yourself at Sonmata as an enrolled student, tutor, or participant in events.

The website: www.sonmata.org will answer many of your questions about our school, with details on courses currently offered, tutors and how to enrol. Otherwise, phone Leandrah on 6636-2356.

The importance of birth support



Sarafine and Zehra enjoy yoga together



Katie feels well supported with Leif and Kirrah

by Kirrah Holborn

B. ClinSc (complementary medicine)
Traditional Wisdom

Birth companions can play a significant role in the mother's experience of birth. Most women will go deep within themselves as they call on all their inner resources to birth their baby. But, feeling safe and well supported enables this deepening and opening to be enriched and encourages the birthing journey to be as smooth as possible.

Men haven't always been involved in birth...

Up until the mid 1970s most fathers didn't attend the births of their children. Today, we are lucky that we have more options and choices and many fathers do decide to be present and are welcomed into the birth space. However, being privileged to join in doesn't mean he is instantly 'equipped' and knows what to do. Just expecting the father or partner to be wonderful (with little or no preparation) can lead to disappointment.

We don't send anyone on a big adventure without some skills or tools. For example; if someone was heading out to go bushwalking, we'd make sure they had a compass, some water, some food and some idea of where they were going. Boundaries and guidelines can help people accomplish what they set out to do.

During the 'Birthing from Within' workshops I help couples to understand birth from a deep level. I foster strong relationships and a belief in each other's abilities. I help the partners learn to be present, guide visualisations and use touch and massage to help the labouring woman. Birth companions learn how to create a safe and loving space, read subtle cues and have confidence to help the mum if she starts to feel overwhelmed.

Fathers or birth companions come away from these workshops feeling that they have a purpose and can be intimately involved. The mothers find great relief knowing that her partner will be able to meet her needs and actually know how to be helpful.



Doing these Birthing From Within antenatal classes together, really helps build a strong foundation. I have two group workshops coming up; Discover Birth Wisdom (Sat 23rd Feb) and Navigate Birth & Beyond (Sat 16th March). Both workshops cover essential labour support skills. They will be held at Nurture (upstairs at 115 Keen Street, Lismore). See www.traditionalwisdom.com.au for more information. I also hold weekly private Birthing From Within workshops for couples.

Here is a testimonial from one of the Dads I helped recently; "Kirrah made me feel calm, at ease and confident with the birth process. She has given me the tools and belief in myself to be a perfect birthing partner." (Leif Taylor).

Also, a reminder that Nurture Birth & Beyond in Lismore is happening every Tuesday. Pregnancy yoga (with Karenza) is at 9.30am and different information topics from 10.30am - 11.30am. In February, Midwife Bron and I will be holding a Birthing From Within taster class, 4th trimester discussion, pelvis mapping and active birth discussion and demonstrations on baby-wearing.

Nimbin Birth & Beyond schedule

- 1st Feb: Attachment parenting
- 8th Feb: Birthing from within taster
- 15th Feb: Sarafine's 1st birthday party
- 22nd Feb: Mums 'n' bubs yoga
- 1st March: Not on this week

Nimbin Birth & Beyond meets every Friday from 11am-12.30pm. Sessions are run by donation. For more info (or to hold a session), 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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CONSTITUTIONAL HOMCEOPATHY
Prevent disease in those you care for. Treat your family & animals safely & cheaply.
6 classes Mondays 9.30am - 11.30am Fee: \$120

DAIRY FARMERS HOMCEOPATHY
Treat signs of disease in the herd as they manifest whilst decreasing dependence on vets, expensive medications, optimising milk quality & quantity.
8 classes Thursdays 9.30am - 12.30 Fee: \$240

MAKING HOMCEOPATHICS
Be the maker of your own remedies. Homceopaths can now utilise the power of their own medicines including implementing allergy desensitisation programs.
Workshop Saturday 18th May 2013 Fee: \$80

ENERGY HYGEINE
Sensitives & healers alike, learn safe cleansing & protection techniques guarding self, clients & loved ones against energetic infection.
Workshop Sunday 23rd May 2013 Fee: \$60

TOUCH FOR HEALTH
The bones of Kinesiology as a holistic system of practice. The skill of muscle testing can be developed as an energetic screening tool.
Friday evening + weekend 26th, 27th, 28th April Fee: \$150

INNERCHILD HEALING
As adults, we often find we are dysfunctional in some areas of our lives as a result of unhealed wounds. This workshop will instil confidence in the healing process & its timing.
Saturday 23rd March 2013 Fee: \$60

MANTIC ARTS
Mantic Arts involve skills associated with divination & prophecy. This weekend workshop with Charmaine Clarke will orientate towards one or more branches as a course of further study: Shamanism, Angel Therapy, Parapsychology, Colour Therapy.
Weekend 20th & 21st April 2013 Fee: \$120

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by Rebecca Ryall

Well, we're through the yuletide madness, and straight into back-to-school. Where did the time go?

The GreenBank is your local go-to for back to school supplies, with our popular range of stainless steel lunch tiffins in all shapes and sizes, drink bottles and lunch wraps. We are firm believers in delivering quality

merchandise that you won't have to replace each year due to breakage. We also continue to expand our range of quality art supplies and fun and educational toys for kids and kids at heart.

We have recently become the proud and exclusive local suppliers of the Swamis range of funky and functional footwear made from natural rubber. These sandals are affordable, super comfortable, easy on the eye and have our eco stamp of approval. And for all the local women who have converted to the comfort of bamboo underwear, we are happy to announce the imminent arrival of our first order of bamboo bras and camisoles. We know how

much you've loved your bamboo knickers, as you keep coming back for more! So we can't wait for you try this new range.

In therapist news, we are happy to welcome Karen on Wednesday afternoons. Karen is a well-established Billen local with many years' experience in remedial massage and Reiki and extensive overseas experience working as a physiotherapist. Karen is affordable and approachable, and we invite you to drop in and meet her.

Our Japanese Acupuncturist, Tom, has extended his workday and is now available for appointments all day on Fridays, between 9.30 and 5.30. Be quick though, as he's booking fast

with repeat happy customers.

Michelle (astrologer) and Chelsey (life alignment practitioner) continue to alternate Monday mornings, and Anna Lusty is with us each Monday afternoon from 1.30pm offering a great deep tissue massage. Tina Featherfoot is in on Tuesdays, specialising in Kahuna and pregnancy massage. Wednesday morning is still the domain of Vanessa Miles-Taig, a psychologist attracting Medicare rebates, and Dr Jacqui is in Saturday mornings. Anne Walker is available each first Saturday of the month, specialising in aromatherapy and reflexology.

Keep checking in with us for treatments on Thursdays. Kylie is

nursing an injury, which prevents her massaging at present, but is still available for Reiki sessions. We'll let you know when she's back on track to deliver her special nurturing massage for relaxation or remediation.

The GreenBank wishes to show its support for local CSG blockade participants, defending our right to clean water, arable land, but most importantly, to not be dictated to by government and heartless big business. We are collecting donations of food items for those staying on site.

As always, you are welcome to drop in for a cup of tea and a chat, and to let us know what products you'd like to see on our shelves.

Great energy at Nimbin's Mystic Fair



by Jazmin, clairvoyant and tarot reader, Fair organiser

The Nimbin Mystic Fair on the Australia Day weekend was not as successful as we had hoped, with attendance cancelled because of the weather, but the energy was great, and there was a lot of positive feedback from those who attended.

We were lucky to have some very good Readers, and some wonderful stalls. Mel had her jewellery stall as always, and it always looks good. We also had Monica Ward from Queensland, and Desire, Jessica and Kim, along with myself who are

locals, and Rhonda and Joy from the coast.

Everyone put in fabulous energy, to provide a rewarding experience for those who attended. Renee kept everything moving in a positive way, Jenny Love helped with decorations and in lots of other ways, Darrell kept tea, coffee and cakes happening for everyone, and The Nomads dance group did a wonderful Bellydance performance. Plus Peter and Pixie of Blue Knob Printers did a fabulous job on the posters. Thanks to all who volunteered to help.

The next show will be on in a few months, and I'm sure it will be fantastic.



Nimbin Hospital Information

Garage Sale

Saturday 9th March at Nimbin Hospital from 8am

Immunisation Clinic

2nd Tuesday of every month. Birth to five years. Next Clinic 12th February, phone 6620-7687 to make appointment.

Women's Health Clinic

3rd Thursday of the month at Nimbin Hospital. February Clinic fully booked. Please phone 6688-1401 for appointments in March. Service includes pap smears, contraceptive advice, postnatal checks and general health info.

Physiotherapist

Available at Nimbin Hospital Mondays and Thursdays. Phone 6689-1400 to make an appointment.

Nimbin Community Nurses

Monday - Friday, now 8am-5pm. Assessment, referral, treatment, advocacy, palliative care in the home, co-ordination of Aged Care Packages. Phone and leave message on 6689-1288, will respond ASAP.



Speaking mindfully

I often wonder how I can speak more truly in a therapeutic session. By that I mean, speak accurately and not miss the mark: to really reflect through speech, as close to my intention as possible, what I feel is most appropriate at that time and with that client and to speak in response to what is arising in our dialogue, as well as to do my job better.

The therapeutic conversation is just this. It isn't the same kind of conversation that occurs in everyday life. In the kind of therapeutic conversation that I engage in, I draw upon the direction and style of Narrative Therapy as well as Solution oriented Therapy. I also use, when it is needed, a much more intuitive integrative style. The first two therapeutic approaches have a definite aim: to look for and find experiential exceptions to those feelings



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
M Counselling, PhD

of stuckness a client feels is holding them back from living a more healthful life. So, in this endeavour it is useful to find and speak the words that will have the greatest effect.

This is an active and collaborative therapy where client and therapist are both engaged in the healing process. It cannot be successful by merely sitting back and listening to

the issues a client brings. I have to be actively engaged in listening and responding in speech in a way that is as accurate to my intentions as possible.

It isn't always possible to know exactly how my words are received. When I do speak, I am looking intently at the person in front of me. I can see when my words hit the mark by a lightening of the face, a smile, a glimmer in the eyes, and mouthed words of "Yes!". I can see, also, when I've missed the mark horribly. I see, then, confusion, or a raising of an eyebrow, or worse, total disinterestedness. But, what is the client thinking when their face doesn't change at all? Where is the conversation heading then? I don't know.

So, how do I speak truly, to speak those words that are required at that moment? Before I mull about this further, I shall take a short detour.

I have been fundamentally

and enduringly influenced by a book by Eugen Herrigel, first published in 1948, called Zen in the Art of Archery. Archery is all about hitting or missing the mark, and its art relies on the establishment and intense practice of judging distances, understanding wind intensity and direction, holding in tension the bow, fingering the arrow, twisting the body just so, having one's feet firmly on the ground, yet easily able to move quickly, being mindful, absolutely present and able to simply let go of the arrow. It is a skill that takes a lot of time to acquire.

Most skills are like that. As with archery, the practitioner of any acquired skill must practise and practise and practise. She needs to have an intention of doing it well. Interestingly though, while she has to have confidence that she will succeed, she cannot let her ego get in the way. She has to sort of hold her confidence present, as

well as her doubts, and yet - almost uncaringly - let go of the arrow. Only then, in this lightness of touch, can the mark be hit.

Speaking truly, with intention, within the therapeutic conversation is not so dissimilar. Speaking truly for a therapist is an art and a skill. We are trained in the art, but only become skilful through practice, and then, rather sweetly, we become artists in the craft, but never perfect.

I have seen master therapists at work, and have had sessions with them, and what I've noticed is that what they say can be still a bit hit and miss. There is however a purpose to the hit and miss-ness (and maybe the therapists are not conscious of this), as it allows the client to say, "Yes, that's right, or no, you've got it wrong,.... or, maybe..." What is going on here is the recognition that a therapist doesn't have it all in the bag, and that the client is still the expert of their lives,

and that it is actually in the conversation, in relationship, that the work is happening. Things are not being done to the client; the client and therapist are working together on this thing called "stuckness". In this way, the therapeutic conversation is not archery; it is something much more rich and wholesome. It is bringing health, playfulness, and creativity to our lives (mine as well) so that problem stories no longer take hold and make us stuck.

One final observation. An endeavour to speak truly by the therapist and hit the mark, or not, is an exercise in mindfulness, and as such is useful as a model for the client. One of my clients has incorporated, very deliberately, this mindfulness, and is thereby becoming very conscious in all her interaction in life. I thank her for the wisdom she shares in practising speaking truly.

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