

Doubtful Creek lock-on saga

by Michael Balderstone

We took a hemp coffin from the Embassy for a mourning ceremony, which the cops agreed to, of slowly walking east ahead of the truck convoy when they could finally get out from the drill site. Which was after all day digging out someone buried in the gateway.

Then they suddenly turned the trucks west in a surprise move, but they couldn't make the turn, it was too tight for the big trucks. Reversing back and forth a couple of times gave people time to realise what was happening and run back to get in front of them. In the photo (below), the cops are trying to keep them off the road but don't notice what's happening behind their backs and Gareth crawls



under. Marie Camera-on captured the moment.

After this, the cops remained distracted pushing people off the road while urging the young truckie to drive on, and his foot is poised above the pedal. It's a

downhill run, but their plan is screwed by the sharp turn slowing down the exit.

Suddenly women are screaming, "Stop, stop, there's a lock-on a lock-on" and the truckie, a young sweet-faced country boy, is frozen. Should he listen to the cops or the protectors? I got to the front at that time and saw his utter dilemma and confusion. Fortunately others did too, jumping in front of the truck, and he sensibly decided to stay still and finally turned the engine off.

A little while later, a cop came up and checked it was all off and braked. I'm not sure if the capsicum spray and 'pain compliance techniques' had been used by then or not!



Photos: Marie Cameron

CSG devil stalks Eden

FROM FRONT PAGE

The main protectors' camp had to be moved to the roadside entrance, because Forests NSW decided to close the forest to the public. Although it is now called the Forestry Corporation of NSW, the staff still take orders from the state government.

Many of the protectors were local landowners, and they kept up a supply of water and food to the camp. A few severe rain periods tested the resolve of the hardy campers, but a rotation of volunteers kept spirits high, and the planned mock funeral for the rig's return to Queensland on 26th February turned into a day-long celebration of courage for those willing to lock-on, and sent a message that destructive mining practices will not be allowed in the Northern Rivers.

It was nearly 5pm when police removed Nimbin resident Ingo Merek, but decided not to charge him, but then Gareth Devenish, from Mullumbimby, locked on to one of the trucks in the convoy. He was removed about 7pm. Possibly because he had been unlawfully sprayed in the face with capsicum spray, Gareth was also released without charge.

The remainder of the equipment, including the drill rig, are at the time of writing still stuck in unfriendly country.

Will Mergasco bring more drilling equipment into the Northern Rivers? If they do, new struggles will result. This region is not for sale.

There will be more jobs and sustainable profits from industries that provide renewable energy for a viable future. We will stand together as one people: farmers, environmentalists and the Original Australians to secure a future for our children and grandchildren.

To them we say, "We won't let you down."



Photo: Jo Evans

Police act on Gareth



Photo: Peter Barnyngoz

A Simmo is cut from her car

Statement from Earth

On 1st March, the group of earth protectors gathered at the CSG protest site at Doubtful Creek issued the following statement:

"We are gathered at the gates of the CSG site on the sovereign land of the Githabul people to bear witness and to passively resist the ongoing development of this incredibly destructive and divisive industry.

We are local farmers, Indigenous peoples, concerned citizens, mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers and your neighbours. We range in age from our teens through to our eighties. We have remained here for the past 5 weeks, braving extreme weather and difficult conditions in order to draw attention to the fact that the CSG industry is opposed by 87% of our community.

We have been heartened by the ongoing support of the community in supplying food and assistance through this time. We stand in solidarity with the Customary Law of the Githabul people who hold the earth sacred in their spirituality and whose ancient wisdom must guide our community vision for this country. We stand in solidarity with local farmers whose livelihood is threatened by the pollution of the water table by CSG mining, as evidenced in the experience of the communities of Tara and Chinchilla in Queensland.

We are ordinary people driven to



Protector Freya

extraordinary and desperate measures in order to have our voices heard. We will continue to hold vigil on the drill rig so as to prevent it from moving to other communities. We feel sympathy for the police, security and workers who are put into an untenable position by the O'Farrell government's foolish decision to allow this industry to go ahead, in the face of overwhelming community opposition.

We call for a permanent end to all Coal Seam gas activity in our communities and appeal to Barry o' Farrell to respect the community's decision in saying NO to this industry. We are staunch in our resolve to continue to oppose all attempts by any companies to bring this industry to our communities. We invite the public to come and meet with us, show support and stand with us in protecting our environment."

Costly logistics



Photos: Peter Barnyngoz

The message is loud and clear

by Aidan Ricketts, Spokesperson CSG-free Northern Rivers

It should by now be clear that local communities will not accept having CSG imposed upon them by force or in haste.

The state government and CSG companies are acting in concert to push this industry on NSW at a breakneck pace and without adequate environmental safeguards. This follows a similar flawed implementation in Queensland.

The United Nations, the Federal Government and numerous scientists have warned of irreversible harms associated with CSG, yet the NSW government seeks to rush ahead without looking at the science.

Communities are asking "Why the hurry?" There is no need for this unseemly haste by



Aidan Ricketts Photo: NStar

government.

The truth is the industry is panicked, as it is being rapidly overtaken by renewable technologies and overseas competition.

CSG is unsafe, unviable and we do not need it.

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Nimbin Artists Gallery



Teapot 2 by No Mad Potter

by Peter Ptschelinzew

What is art? Something that moves you? Resonates with you? Something that speaks to you?

There's a "...you" in each of these questions, as I think it's intensely personal, and of course subjective - must be, did you see last year's Archibald Prize winner? "Human agency" is talked about in the creation of art, which is far too complicated a concept for this scribe so I'll stop that conversation right now.

But what physical form does art take? Should it take? Can it take? And I'm talking about the visual arts here - somebody brought up only on a diet of bands doing poor Led Zeppelin



Upcycled jewelry by Pauline Ahern

and Deep Purple covers is in no position to talk about the performing arts.

If I look back on my pieces in the *Nimbin Good Times* you'd think art had to take the form of a painting, or drawing, perhaps a stone or ceramic sculpture. Can you wear a piece of art, like one of Melissa Hume's felted



4-way felted vest by Melissa Hume

vests? Or a piece of upcycled jewelry by Pauline Ahern? Can it be utilitarian and brew your tea like one of No Mad Potter's teapots? Yes, of course, to all of the above. We have them all, and a lot more.

By the time you read this we will have had a rehang in the gallery, so it's always worth dropping by to see what our artists have produced for us.

And for those wanting to exhibit in this year's Autumn Arts Extravaganza, we need to have your proposals in by Friday 15 March. This gives us the chance to see what's coming in and organise our space.



Aquarius magic in town hall

Lewis Walker performing with Gumaroy Newman, Jessikah Newman, David Barnett, Michael Baker and Mitch Looyen from Yidaki Yulugi.

by Lisa Hogben

The Nimbin Aquarius Foundation hosted Gamilaroi/Wakka Wakka man Gumaroy Newman and Sydney-based Aboriginal cultural performance group Yidaki Yulugi on 26th February.

They joined Bundjalung elders Uncle Lewis Walker, Uncle Stevie (Didge) Johnson and Uncle Gilbert Laurie in holding a traditional corroboree to celebrate the upcoming 40th anniversary of the Aquarius Festival in

Nimbin.

The corroboree was an important celebration of Aboriginal culture, and mesmerised those who attended the event in the Nimbin Town Hall.

Also performing on the night were didge musician Matt James, from Queensland, and Azadoota, a fusion band which travelled from Sydney for the gig, (and nearly missed it by relying on GPS directions after bypassing the flood).

The crowd danced until midnight to their infectious,

foot-tapping, hand-clapping, body-whirling slice of exotic rhythms. (Azadoota's new album, *Beyond Bridges*, has scored a four-star review in *The Australian*.)

Thanks to Darryl and Tania, Adam Bell, Connie and Michael in the kitchen, Pauly and Star Earth Tribe, Jenny and Benny for flags and banners, Kaleidoscope Chris for lights, to name a few.

Thanks also to all who came, donated and participated, especially the children. What an amazing night!

Small is beautiful



Crazy about felt

Felt Artist Suzanne McGauley (pictured) will teach you about the fascinating art of felt making! Create your own stunning piece of felt art.

Next felt making workshop is on Saturday 13th April from 9am to 5pm in the Creative Learning Centre at 'Black Sheep Farm' Nimbin.

The cost is \$80, including all materials and morning tea. Classes for all levels.

More information and bookings: www.blacksheepfarm.com.au or phone 6689-1095.



'Flowering Kangaroo' by Darmin Cameron

The exhibition 'Small is Beautiful', now showing at Blue Knob Hall Gallery, is an exploration of the finer details of life.

The works on show are a wonderful example of how a theme can be interpreted. Small has been made big and vice versa.

A set of hand-embroidered buttons by Eric Smith show how a small everyday item can be elevated to a subtle work of art while Darmin Cameron and Len Martin's images take us into the realm of the small and delicate, writ large.

With this exhibition you get a chance to see how often small is beautiful.

The next Artists and Friends Lunch will be held at the Gallery on Thursday 28th March at 12.30pm. The cost is \$15 per person for set mains and a choice of desserts. Please contact the gallery if you are intending to come. We



'I See You' by Deb Wild

look forward to seeing you there.

We are still looking for any leftover building materials i.e. insulation, colourbond, etc. that you would like to donate to the Ceramic Studio build, or that we can buy cheaply. We'd love to hear from you. Please phone Jeni on 6689-7236. Many thanks.

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JOURNEY DEEP FLY HIGH

Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass



A local living at the bottom of Blue Knob saw her first koala in about eight years just a few weeks ago

At long last Lismore has an approved Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (CKPoM) in place for the south-east. The approval was announced only a month ago but already our jubilation is tempered by the review that is currently underway into the application by Kyogle, Tweed, Byron, Ballina and Lismore councils of the standard State-wide template's environmental zones (E2 Environmental Conservation, E3 Environmental Management and in Byron Shire, E4 Environmental Living) and environmental overlays in their local environment plans (LEPs).

As always in koala conservation, for every step gained we take one back.

So what's the problem with the E zones for the koalas? Put simply SEPP 44, under which the CKPoM has been prepared, expects that vegetation used by koalas will be included in a zone for environmental protection in the local environment plans of those councils where koalas are known to exist. SEPP 44 is only triggered when a DA is lodged so E zones give stronger protection.

The review in progress is in response to a relatively small number of submissions from rural residents who do not want an environmental zone on their land. In Lismore, almost as many land-owners lodged submissions supporting environmental zones in Draft LEP 2010. The vast majority (70%) of submissions were to do with rural zones, not environmental protection. Notwithstanding Lismore pared off 537ha, which had been zoned environmental protection (nearly 20% of the LGA's E Zones) and removed Clause 7.9 and the Natural Resources Sensitivity- Biodiversity Overlay Map.

That was not enough for some landholders who apparently want to ditch environmental protection zones altogether.

Friends of the Koala acknowledges that there are many areas in which the Northern Rivers' potential and core koala habitat have yet to be adequately mapped. Even where CKPoMs have or are being prepared there may be gaps. The vegetation mapping for Lismore's south-east, for example, has a .5ha limit. It is also a fact that many koalas in the south-east occupy what is termed marginal habitat. Lismore's Natural Resources Sensitivity-Biodiversity Map, had it remained, would have served as a fail-safe for protecting koala habitat.

At the very best this review could identify vegetation used by koalas that is not protected by environmental zones or overlays and include it. In Lismore for example that would entail reverting to Draft LEP 2010 as it was exhibited and picking up the .5ha mapping limitation; in Tweed returning to environmental protection zones over 1,240 ha of mostly koala habitat in the shire's coastal area, which had been zoned for environmental protection in Draft LEP 2010; and in Byron returning the 131 ha of environmental protection which has been removed in Draft LEP 2012.

This is unlikely to happen because for the most part it is the vocal minority that is

being heard in the review process. It is far more likely that environmental zones will be removed by the State Government against the wishes of the silent majority.

Friends of the Koala's position is that the councils under review have already bent over backwards to address and accommodate the concerns of a small but vocal dissenting cohort at the expense of properly protecting vegetation used by koalas. Besides, nature and all species have a right to exist independent of human usefulness. Indeed the health and integrity of ecological systems is paramount to our social and economic well being.

If you wish your voice to be heard, email: ezonesreview@planning.nsw.gov.au by 25th March.

Tell the reviewers that LEPs should be fundamental in assisting koala recovery; that the environmental zones and overlays are underpinned by years of scientific study, government conservation policies and community consultation - they have been arrived at with the best mapping the various councils can afford; that you reject claims that environmental zones and overlays unfairly limit current land uses when the facts are that existing use rights are maintained and all lawful existing activities can be continued; that you reject claims that environmental zones and overlays reduce land value (the claims are speculative with no evidence base and should never be used to guide land-use decisions) and that you reject claims that environmental zones and overlays duplicate existing laws (in fact most environmentally sensitive areas are not adequately protected by other laws; where other laws apply only commonwealth and state values are protected, not local values and their enforcement is virtually non-existent).

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

Doubtful Creek

What an amazing campaign! A solid alliance of people from all walks of life has blockaded Metgasco in appalling weather for weeks on end.

The resolve has been persistent and protracted. They have resisted everything thrown at them from police badgering, forestry harassment, Kyogle council criticism and the lies of the pro-gas land owners.

The claims that those land-owners were harassed is pure chimera. They have not an iota of evidence, we on the other hand, have video footage of verbal and physical abuse including the ramming of a protector's car.

Thanks goes to the Githabul's steadfast support, Won's magic fire truck, White Constructions, the Community Watch Van, the local farmers Don, Jim, Peter and Don, Yarn's Kitchen and a whole mix of hippies, in-betweens and yuppies for this amazing effort.

Leard forest

This forest is in real danger of collapse. There will be a State Forest event on 9th and 10th March. Everyone is encouraged to come. Plenty of entertainment is planned. The Community Watch van will head down if all is well. Leave your contact details at NEC if you want a seat in the van.

The Pilliga

Some good news. It appears that Santos is pulling out of the Pilliga following a federal challenge based on the EPBC Act. Lisa Costello from NEC lent a hand helping with a Koala count that was critical in this decision. See: www.santos.com/coal-seam-gas/csg-noticeboard.aspx

NEC shopfront

The shop has been doing well thanks to Phil, Corrie, Lisa and Rob, Mark, James, Roger and Lisa C. We hold a number of locally-made goods such as soap, jam, honey, rice, coffee plus many others. NEC raises its own funds and is totally independent of governments. So come and browse, stay up to date with the latest campaign. Have a motivating conversation or tell us how you can help. It is such fun to shun the big companies, and in Nimbin you can do just that. Nimbin is simply fun.

Richmond Valley Council

This council is unashamedly pro-gas, clearly against the majority of its constituents. So why pay rates when your mayor is devaluating and rezoning your homes to industrial? Send them a clear message. Bank it, don't waste it and watch them squirm.

About the anti-CSG movement

To many people it seems as though we were unable to once again stop Metgasco from drilling as it pleases. I watched as many protectors sighed with disillusionment as the prime movers roared through the gates. The tripod, dragon and underground



Philippe in the tunnel at Doubtful Creek

tunnel were cleared one by one, almost too fast. People stood helpless as our own police service enforced laws designed to protect vandals and criminals. It seems CSG companies can go from one project to another ostensibly unstoppable.

However, behind the facade of victory Metgasco is turning grey with fear. They are sweating as the share price goes down. They have abandoned Banyaba and Bentley. They claimed to have achieved their targets at Doubtful Creek but that is doubtful, no pun intended. The support from their friend our arrogant government, is wavering.

So take heart! There is no doubt in my mind that they will be beaten as long as we remain steadfast.

We must also address the problems in the movement. There is criticism with the perceived leadership, consequently fewer and fewer of the regular faces turn up at blockades and some people are getting disillusioned.

However, this is a people's movement. No single group owns it or should be responsible for it. As hippies mix with yuppies, and conservatives with progressives, sparks will fly, egos ruffled, but no pain, no gain. What a small price to pay to be rid of this curse. So relax and allow others to be. Form your own affinity groups; plan your own actions; be effective but not spiteful or violent towards others. This is our great learning opportunity.

As for those who live in towns and think they are safe, I say let's not be fooled by this latest concession of the State government. It's a Trojan horse! It's nothing more than a cheap trick. When they've done with the rural area they will come into the towns and cities. Then there will be no one left to defend you. So don't wait for another gig to fight the rig or some super-simmo to make them go. The solution is to remain active and vigilant. Camaraderie at the bivouac around a campfire in bad weather rates far higher than TV or the other small banalities of the average suburban house.

Being out there with others warms the heart, refines the senses and strengthens the soul. If you want freedom and democracy, then rain, hail or shine be there. This is not negotiable - it is how democracy is won.

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Weed words



Giant Devil's Fig reduces biodiversity

by Triny Roe

The wet weather is perfect for weeds. Add hot summer days and the scene is set for high germination rates and rampant growth for immigrant plants from tropical America, Africa and Asia.

The wet weather is also perfect for weeding. When the soil is moist plants with deep tap roots slip out easily. Hand weeding can be very productive and satisfying. Hold the stem firmly near the base, give it little shake, visualise the tap root releasing its hold of the earth as you pull it up.

Deal with weeds when they are small and the job is made easier. After rain, inspect for emerging seedlings of the larger woody weed species such as Camphor, Golden Rain Tree, Giant Devil's Fig, Cassia, Privet, to mention just a few. Work smart, not hard.

Far North Coast Weeds is targeting several species that have severe environmental impact. So far, they are not widespread in the Northern Rivers and it is believed they can be brought under control. Landholders are urged to keep an eye out for new plants appearing on their properties. Act early to identify potential aggressive invaders and avoid long-term problems.

Giant Devil's Fig, *Solanum chrysotrichum*

Is steadily spreading across the Northern Rivers from its site of introduction at Tuntable Creek. Another species that can form a dense stand, displace natives and impact on land use, GDF is easily recognised by its distinctive large lobed leaves. As well as spreading along waterways, seeds are carried by birds so it can appear in new locations. Tough and hardy, GDF grows to 4 metres

with a deep taproot in a range of soils and situations. Don't let it set seed.



Alligator weed, *Alternanthera philoxeroides*

Is one of the WoNS – Weeds of National Significance. It grows in water, choking waterways. Surviving dry periods it can also grow on land. Alligator weed can be carried to new locations by floodwaters, in stock feed, horses' hooves and landscaping supplies and on boats, trailers, agricultural machinery and excavation equipment.



Water Lettuce, *Pistia stratiotes*

Is another aquatic plant which can choke waterways, dams and reservoirs. New infestations have resulted from aquarium dumping, eel traps and movement of boats from one water body to another.



Miconia, *Miconia calvenscens*

Is a striking ornamental plant. It has large leaves with three prominent veins and a purple underside. While luckily not yet a problem it has a huge potential to devastate

native forest by overgrowing and replacing the understory vegetation. In Tahiti it is called Green Cancer. In Hawaii they call it Purple Plague. FNCW are keen to nip this one in the bud and eradicate all occurrences. Let them know if you see one or have this plant in your garden.



Tropical Soda Apple, *Solanum viarum*

Also reduces biodiversity by completely replacing native vegetation. It can grow to two metres in the open or semi-shade forming impenetrable prickly thickets. Seed is spread by birds, feral animals as well as stock. It is recommended to hold cattle from infested paddocks for 48 hours in weed free areas before transporting. Manual removal must include all root and stem material as vegetative reproduction is possible.



Hymenachne, *Hymenachne amplexicaulis*

A semi-aquatic grass, was introduced as a pasture fodder in Queensland and NT. It likes boggy areas and moist river banks, making it easy to spread by flood waters. Several occurrences have been discovered on the North Coast including one at Lillian Rock.

Weeding is a way of life. Land management will always include removal of undesirable species to maximise potential of the property. Happy Weeding.

Beating climate change one poo at a time

The rain has set in and the orchard gully is flowing merrily through unmown kikuyu, which sieves and filters the road run-off until it's clean and clear.

The wet season is well and truly upon us, along with some of the compromises many of us allow to bring us closer to nature. My toilet paper is slightly damp, making things quite tricky toward the end... one must apply just the right amount of pressure. Normally I incinerate my used TP and add the ash to the loo below, but today all I can manage is a smouldering wad of paper. The wet season is definitely the price we pay for living in paradise the other nine months of the year.

I've just been listening to Auntie rave on about carbon farming and how farmers can get paid for sequestering carbon. It would seem to me that I've been sequestering my own carbon for years.

In fact anyone who owns a composting toilet is doing just that. The concept that, as individuals, we are taking responsibility for our own by-products by composting them is not only sustainable



View from the loo

by Stuart McConville

in the short term, but combats climate change in the long term. In fact, we are making a contribution to reducing climate change every time we poo.

People who have a septic system, on the other hand, are actively contributing to climate change. Septic tanks break down our carbon by-products anaerobically and produce methane, a potent climate change gas. The gas may leach out slowly through the soil so you don't smell it, but it's still there, and being much lighter than air, it will rise into the atmosphere.

If you're going to produce methane, you'd be much better off producing biogas. If you've ever lit a fart, you'll know how flammable methane is. Millions of people in China and India use biogas every day to generate heat

and light. Biogas for cooking is produced using a reactor vessel into which the by-products of the whole family PLUS a dozen or so pigs, chooks, goats etc.

The biogas produced is often quite dirty, containing significant proportions of sulphur dioxide (SO₂). This is highly corrosive, so the system needs to be entirely plastic or masonry. One way to remove the SO₂ is to bubble the gas up through a scrubber, such as Sodium Hydroxide (NaOH).

This will remove some of the impurities and results in a cooking gas that won't stink the house out if you leave the tap on. Unfortunately you are left with a highly corrosive waste product, good only for stripping paint.

Whilst traveling in Vietnam, I saw quite a few bio-digesters. One I remember well used a large clear plastic sausage bag about three metres long to store the biogas in. It was tied off to pressurise it with bits of what might have been pigs.

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

Scientists chase their tails

by Geoff Dawe

The building of watertight doors between Venice and the ocean to prevent flooding at high tides and experiments with different fodders that cause farm animals to fart less are brilliant examples of human ability with science and technology, and great foolishness.

The Venice aqua-doors are an attempt to use technology to overcome problems that previous technologies had created. The flooding in Venice is a result of climate change brought on by a blind spot, where humans choose not to scrutinise the side-effects of technology.

The ability to look ahead is the preserve of the adult human. If the ability is used only for technology creation and is neglected in examining its long-term effects, humanity reverts to a pre-human state.

In the long term, Venice is lost. The \$5-billion plan provides present generations with the beauty of Venice at

the cost of bulwarks against climate change for future generations.

Instead of tail-chasing, \$5 billion could have placed a lot of compost heaps on the Earth's surface.

Compost heaps do more than sequester carbon as a strategy to reduce carbon emissions. They are a foundation of sustainable agriculture, and they aid in purifying watercourses, as nutrients in humus form are not as readily leached. In short, they work toward repairing air, water and soil; the three foundations of life.

Losing sight of what is important can also be seen with scientific work on farm animal methane emissions. The work is actually based in the unscientific belief that humans are required to consume animal protein. It also apparently assumes there

is no plant alternative for wool fibre.

It is already scientifically recognised that most environmental degradation in Australia is caused by animal industries, and that humans should move away from leaning on the animal kingdom. Moreover, with fibre production there could be a change from wool to say, hemp production, and kapok could have a renewed status rather than being poisoned as a noxious weed in Western Australia.

A question might be why the scientific work on the yogic technique of the production of body heat is not a good long-term alternative to examining fibre needs. Perhaps Tolstoy nailed it when he said, "Everyone wants to change the world; no one wants to change their mind."



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Nimbin Hospital Information

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Childhood Immunisation Clinic

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Women's Health Clinic

3rd Thursday of the Month. Next Clinic 2st March, please ring 66881401 to make appointment. Service includes pap smears, contraceptive advice, postnatal checks and general information.

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Preventing birth trauma

by Kirrah Holborn

B. ClinSc (complementary medicine)
Traditional Wisdom

I love to study. It seems just as I'm finishing up one course, another one pops up that takes my fancy.

I've just completed a Birth Story Medicine course with Birthing From Within. It helped improve my listening skills and taught me a lot about myself, birth in our culture and people's self beliefs.

It is incredible that even women who have had ultimately positive "picture-perfect" births can still have emotional disturbances or trauma. It is thought to stem from a few potential places. My aim with this article is to give some tips to help prevent birth trauma.

Try to remember the first time you heard about birth. Maybe you were a child and your remember your mum telling you how you were born, maybe you grew up on a farm and witnessed an animal birthing, maybe your image of birth came from the media.

Think back: who was your first childbirth "teacher", and what message did they send you? What rules or agreements did you make with yourself?

By taking time to consider your first birth story, you can reassess how this belief has affected your life, and whether or not it is serving you positively.

Birth in our culture is more complicated than ever before. There is so much to know: when intervention may be needed, who to trust, what decisions to make. We also have a multitude of options available for doing our own research and joining



Katie and me in the studio

pregnancy groups and antenatal classes. It is important to find a balance.

Anything that is absolute or too romanticised can lead to high expectation, and thus disappointment, when these are not true for the individual.

Statements like "pain-free birth" or "you'll feel so empowered" can make women feel inadequate if their birth is anything less than this. Find support groups or classes that are honest and provide balanced information.

Foster your relationships to yourself and to others. The support you receive during pregnancy, birth and postpartum can be paramount to your level of satisfaction.

Engage yourself with activities that help build confidence in yourself and create a strong bond between you and your birth companions. Solid relationships can help you through even the hardest of times.

Take a little time to look at any worries or fears you have. Burying or ignoring them does not make them go away. In fact, the opposite is true. Once you are able to look at your worries and come up with some workable solutions, you can then release your fears more easily.



It can be useful to know a bit about medical interventions so that if this becomes a part of your birth you can feel more prepared and able to cope.

If you (or anyone you know) needs birth debriefing, would like to find new meaning or gain deeper understanding, I am now offering Birth Story Medicine sessions at the Traditional Wisdom Studio in Cawongla (15 mins from Nimbin). Sessions run for 45-60 minutes and cost \$50. Phone 0429-308-851 to make an appointment.

I am also helping facilitate the Lismore Birth & Beyond group at Nurture every Tuesday morning following prenatal yoga (9.30am-11.30am). Topics in March include: Face of Birth DVD, belly dancing, breastfeeding tips and exercises that are safe for pregnancy.

Birth & Beyond schedule

8th March: Ezekiel's 1st Birthday party
15th March: Be kind to yourself talk with Jannese Parkes
22nd March: What mothers want: happy babies/families with Jannese Parkes
29th March: Benefits of Bellydance
5th April: No session

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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6 classes Mondays 9.30am - 11.30am Fee: \$120

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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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New school of natural medicine

BUSINESS FEATURE

Enrolments are now open for Autumn, beginning March 2013 at Sonmata, School of Natural Medicine and The Arts, in Wiangaree. Sonmata offers everyone learning that complements all forms of qualifications, skills and experience whilst nurturing confidence in the individual.

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.

Leanndrah (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, holds a full weekend Touch For Health workshop.

Future Naturopathic Arts courses to be offered include: Chelation Therapy, Herbal Medicine, Food Thy Medicine, Detoxification, Mineral Therapy, ONE Diet, Gut Master Class and Alkalisiation.

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 Innerchild Healing workshop with Leanndrah.

Free events include: Maypole Dance on 15th September at 11am and Meditative Yoga on the 1st Sunday at 11am during Autumn and Spring.

Visual Arts

Leanndrah will offer life drawing groups and painting with colour classes. In Spring, Harry Armstrong will hold a Calligraphy course.

Performing Arts

We encourage jam sessions, soundscaping, piano, drums, semi-acoustic recording, concerts and puppet shows.

Let us know which arts you have an interest in and what you would like to learn or share, via email: sonmata@mail.com You could involve yourself at



SONMATA as an enrolled student, tutor, or participant in events.

A visit to www.sonmata.org will answer many of your questions about our school, with details on courses currently offered, tutors and how to enrol. Otherwise, please phone Leanndrah on 6636-2356.

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Ten reasons not to heal

by Zuela Christie

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear; but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."
– Nelson Mandela.

1. Change is scary.

'Better the devil you know.' We all tend to try and maintain the familiar no matter how uncomfortable and dysfunctional it may continue to be – until we learn to accept that change is inevitable and can become our ally if we reframe it as exciting potential opportunities to grow and improve our situation. 'Feel the fear and do it anyway.'

2. It might not work.

See, that proves it – I was right – I'm so screwed I can't be helped, nor do I deserve it. I'm stuck down here in suffering where I belong. I learnt the punishing parent/God model. I reject any attempts to heal.

3. It might work.

I could change. Things could change. I might emerge from pain and feel better and lose my primary excuse not to embrace life and become a wholly effective, happy, fulfilled human. If you never try, you can never really fail.

4. I might find out who I really am.

Love is your original nature. Who we really are is not the crap we were fed and swallowed whole when we were young and vulnerable and then carried on replaying endlessly within. Who you really are is a drop

of the Whole, of the Source, of Life-force, of love, of infinite consciousness, of the beauty and uniqueness and rightness of all creation. If your practitioner can 'see right through you', lucky you. As a caring, compassionate, non-judgemental member of the confidential healing profession, they can help and support you through the inner minefield and out into the light.

5. I might release negative beliefs and attitudes.

I might be able to become free of the need to constantly find people to blame.

I might be able to let go of the past, and live in the here and now.

6. I might release negative emotions and habits based on them.

Holding emotions down is the opposite of what they are designed for – they are for motion – they really need to flow. Guilt, bitterness, unforgiveness, self-pity and self-rejection are blockers to forward motion.

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

– Nelson Mandela.

7. I might release painful holding patterns of tension and blockage which underlie disease in the body.

I might have health, energy, optimism and enthusiasm.

8. I might remember my spiritual mission on Earth.

I could discover real purpose and flow with Life and feel supported in that.

9. I might meet my higher self.

I might get past my limiting, fearful, defensive ego that no longer serves my best interests as an adult – but keeps me locked in with my pain, and others at a distance, and sabotages all efforts to get better.

10. I might open up to and reconnect with the source.

I might regain my birthright to be in the whole flow of loving life energy.

Here's a big clue – if your current m.o. doesn't involve loving, supporting, nurturing, accepting, trusting and encouraging yourself at every turn; then the part of you that is currently in charge doesn't have your best interests at heart. It is time to hand over control to your Spirit, i.e. 'Self-surrender to a higher wisdom.'

So, if you choose not to heal and grow, it is certainly a courageous option. Once you realise that you are carrying all your lifelong pain trapped down within you like a pressure cooker, and attracting experiences which resonate with that pain as your psyche makes efforts to become whole by re-enacting the past to enable healing and release all that trapped energy,

It is not only brave but requires great effort to keep walking around like that than to face the alternative which is to lovingly release and clear all that pain and free up all that energy to be able to live freely in peace, joy and gratitude.

"We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, handsome, talented and fabulous? Actually' who are you not to be?"
– Nelson Mandela.

GreenBank investments



BUSINESS FEATURE

by Rebecca Ryall

The GreenBank is happy to announce the arrival of two new therapists, Jacqui Smith and Kristy Wright.

Jacqui has extensive experience in the field of remedial massage, musculo-skeletal therapy and myofascial release, treating dancers and performers from Bangarra Dance Company and circus companies including Circus Oz and Strange Fruit.

As a dancer, Jacqui has an intuitive approach to healing which complements her professional massage training. Since having children she has also developed a special interest in pregnancy massage.

Jacqui is keen to share her talents with you on Tuesday afternoons, and is offering a half-price (\$30 for one hour) deal for the first four bookings for the month of March. Just call in or phone the GreenBank to secure your appointment.

Starting Saturday, 9th March, beauty therapist Kristy Wright, of Four Elements, will be offering her services. Kristy has been working in the industry for more than 10 years. With an emphasis on natural products and providing a safe and nurturing environment, Kristy offers services including waxing for men and women, lash and brow tinting, and facials on Saturdays.

This is a great opportunity to road test the locally made organic skincare range Naturally Nourished, handmade



on the premises at The GreenBank.

Kylie is back on board doing massage and Reiki on Thursdays. Hooray! Her injury is much improved and she's happy to be back doing what she loves.

Our much loved acupuncturist, Tom, was involved in a serious car accident on his way to work a couple of weeks ago, and remains in Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney with serious spinal injuries.

We continue to support him in his recovery, and hope to see him back home soon. Messages and well-wishes can be left with us at the GreenBank, and we will pass these on to Tom.

If you haven't done so in a while, come down and check out our new Tea Bar and enjoy a complementary tasting of some of our own Tea Medica herbal teas.

We endeavour to keep the shop feeling fresh and inviting, despite the rain, so don't be mistaken in thinking if you've seen it once, you've seen it all! Lishia, Rebecca and Kylie (pictured above) look forward to sharing a cuppa and a chat with you sometime soon.

Listening to the call of the little

The tables have turned. For the past month I've been the one on the couch, as it were. I've seen my clients, and they have seen me, from the perspective of me half lying on the sofa in my living room, rather than the more professional space downstairs. I think we have liked this turnaround a bit. I know the shift in my position has made the relationship that I share in this therapeutic space much more horizontal (excuse the pun) and quite useful overall.

I've been ill and uncomfortable in my body this last month. I'm healing, though, and with my growing strength I am appreciating the subtleties of small things.

In deprivation of a capacity

to perform big dramatic acts, when "doing" something has actually been difficult and time consuming, when you have to think about its completion a long time before actually getting down to doing it, then you have to deal with exactly what is at hand. I am somewhat slow to appreciate this, and yet in coming to know it in my own bones I also get a better sense of the value of being gentle with time, of being patient with very little. I am realizing in myself what I've said to others, that it is in incremental shifts that brings change of an enduring kind, not the big sudden changes that perhaps we all hope for.

There is a walking meditation I like to do, and

which sometimes I suggest my clients do, that consists of nothing more than bringing focal awareness to the act of walking slowly. Each foot carefully placed on the ground, rocking this way and that, of finding the centre point, of rolling and twisting slightly, of regaining equilibrium, and the urge to place the other foot down, and slowly lifting the first foot, and feeling the shift in balance, and so on, brings challenge to something usually taken for granted.

The mindfulness achieved in this meditation can be expanded to every other act a person might engage in, in the course of her life. Nothing ever needs to feel as though it just happens; that things are

being done to oneself that one has not agreed to. The act of mindfulness restores a sense of agency as well as an awareness of the interconnectedness, and rhythm, of all things.

Each movement in this walking meditation brings to awareness its reliance upon all that has gone before and what is about to be achieved next. Without this proper consideration you are liable to fall.

In the rhythm of nature there is a flux and flow and a counterpoint to big acts are the gentler small ones. It's when we try to do the big stuff, without balancing it with the little bits, that we come unstuck. I realize that my recent illness was probably promoted by my



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
M Counselling, PhD

lack of listening to the call of the little, for I was caught up in the grand designs of life-changing restructuring, of new directions planned for but confined to tight pieces of time. I have been like an actor trying to perform Cats, playing all the parts, on a stage the size of a shoebox.

It is in the attention to the little that, paradoxically, a

sense of expansiveness arises; a timelessness that emerges from the concentration upon the minutiae of attending to the little things in this small moment.

It is in this attention to the small ordinary acts of everyday life that healing takes place. The poisonous excesses of big acts unrelieved by gentleness literally do poison the soul, and the body (in my case). So after the big stuff, I urge you to enjoy the small, to savour every drop of its sweetness, its ordinariness, and delight in not what this little piece of life can bring to you, but what inventiveness and creativity you can deliver into this small space of gentle – and exceptional – littleness. Therein lies healing for us wounded ones, therapist and client alike.

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