

# Revolutionary agrarianism

Conversation with an eco-agronomist on eco-socialism

by Warwick Fry

Revolution takes forms that include many people. I am trying (a mental itch that I can't scratch) to remember a line from a poem written during the Nicaraguan revolution in the late 70s or early 80s about its' (the revolution's) meaning. It went something along the lines of '... the Revolution is a dream, a smile, a voice of mystery ...'. (I can't find the quote so it's probably inexact). The sentiment of the poem is that revolution is found in small, apparently trivial things – a smile, an unexpected greeting, a spontaneous gesture or act of unsolicited generosity – and understood by the larger context and shared understanding of need for (radical) social change.

A recent visit to Australia by a Venezuelan Professor of Agro-ecology, Miguel Angel Nunez (pictured), was a breath of fresh air to those many Australians who feel stifled by the parochialism, the dire lack of imagination and direction of Australian mainstream politics. Miguel spoke to audiences that included people (like me) who have often looked with interest to Latin America for social and political models that include revolutionary change. He spoke on the Venezuelan visionary concept of 'eco-socialism'. And while the Nicaraguan and Cuban revolutions have been framed as 'national liberation' struggles (the removal of oligarchic elites who were proxies for US interests) they were essentially programs whereby the redistribution of wealth and land would lead to enduring advances in health and education.

Revolution in these countries is understood as an ongoing process. Cuba's medical technology has replaced sugar as its main 'export' earner of foreign exchange. Cuba also 'exports' teachers – the literacy campaigns adopted by under-developed societies are modelled on the Cuban example (a Cuban educator recently piloted a literacy and educational project at a remote aboriginal community in Wilcannia,



which was so successful it looks as though it may be adopted by other remote aboriginal communities). And while not many Cubans would agree with me, Cuba has in some ways been lucky to be the subject of the US economic embargo. It has meant that Cubans developed methods and techniques like permaculture, to survive and subsist sustainably; techniques that the developed world has yet to learn to adopt.

Venezuela's process of revolutionary change is unique and differs from other revolutions in that armed struggle has not been part of its program. The country is sufficiently resource rich to be able to shrug off the hostility of hegemonic powers like the US. In doing so it has enabled neighbouring countries like Ecuador and Bolivia (not to mention more distant countries like Nicaragua) to escape the yoke of the IMF and the World Bank; which in turn has enabled the election of progressive governments – progressive governments that have since been enabled to introduce the social programs that emulate the example of Cuba.

Professor Miguel Angel Nunez brought to us one of the most exciting developments of a revolution yet. That is, the adoption by the revolutionary government of Venezuela of a program of 'eco-socialism'. Professor Nunez is a senior advisor to the Chavez government and has been tasked with setting up six new faculties of eco-agriculture – that is, sustainable agricultural practices that are at variance with the current corporate practices of agribusiness and extractive monoculture farming.

Professor Nunez' vision is not limited to agricultural technologies. He sees the human element as part of the overarching principles of ecology – hence his concept of Eco-socialism.

In his book *Vivir despierto entre cambios sociales* (roughly translated as "Living awake to social changes"), he devotes a chapter to explaining the subtle distinction in two Spanish expressions that don't translate well into English ('good living' and 'living well') which contrasts the idea of a 'life lived well' to the more commonly assumed 'living better'. He uses the examples of the numerous indigenous cultures in Latin America living a simple lifestyle 'well' in contrast to the consumerist mentality of those in more 'developed' societies constantly striving to live 'better'.

Professor Nunez is not alone in placing mankind in an ecological system, but he is the first academic I have met who tries to locate humanity seamlessly with nature, within a socio-political context. He left a workshop session on Human Ecology at the Centre for Environmental Studies at the ANU, where he was attending a three day international conference, to meet me for an interview. He was visibly frustrated. "That workshop was a waste of my time and everyone else's," he told me. "It was just talking around in circles, not getting to any point".

Although he was a guest of the Venezuelan Embassy, we walked the three or four kilometres from the University back to his hotel. We stopped and had coffee on the way. In our long conversation we discovered that although our paths hadn't crossed, we had both been in Nicaragua in the exciting years after the victory of the Sandinista revolution. We talked about Nimbin, and he expressed a desire to come here, see the Djanbung Permaculture Centre and give a talk, but his flight was booked to leave after the environmental studies conference. Maybe next time.

Then he had to leave to prepare his presentation to the conference the next day. I'd love to have been a fly on the wall then.

# Plant of the Month

by Richard Burer



**Hairy Walnut**  
*Endiandra pubens*

This common local tree is found most of the wetter forest types, particularly in subtropical rainforest and stream bank vegetation.

It has cream flowers, which are reputed to have an aniseed smell, though the flowers are so small and inconspicuous that I have never thought to smell them!

The fruit is a large red drupe that covers the tree and ground in mass throughout the early summer months. They look delicious but alas not edible, however it is also known as

Possum Apple and it sure looks like a treat for the larger animals.

The amber blaze of the new leaf growth is very attractive and its bushy habit makes it a nice landscape and large garden tree. It is also a good tree for your rainforest restoration projects, but I have found it to grow very slowly.

Easy to grow: collect the fruits and peel, place individual seed directly into a pot and plant in the ground for about a year and a half. A moist and protected place with good soil is recommended for better results.

# Year of the (big brown) snake

by Peter Hardwick

Great way to start the Chinese year of the snake – I nearly stepped on the largest eastern brown I've ever seen.

I jumped one way, and fortunately it jumped the other. I confess, I'm a wimp... but I really don't want to get bitten by a brown snake and end up in the ICU at Lismore Base.

This pic was snapped through the window. The snake was about two metres long. For a few hours our house was more like a "snake hide" as we watched it chase a skink around the house. Eventually it gave up on the skinks, sunned itself for a while and then departed for more fruitful pastures.

It was an amazing animal to watch close up. Apparently most of these big eastern browns are males. Eastern browns are among the most venomous snakes in the world, but considering how common they are there are



Photo by Sage Cartwright

reassuringly few fatalities each year – fewer than from horse riding accidents – because they don't always inject their venom.

What I especially noticed about this brown, besides its size, was how fast it moved... awesome speed. **Tip:** it's a real faux pas to call a big eastern brown a "king brown" – so my snake expert friends tell me...

Peter Hardwick will be writing a regular column, *Wild Things*, starting in April's NGT.

# Bins trap hungry possums

WIRES is calling for the lids on industrial bins to be kept closed after a second possum was rescued after succumbing to the temptation of food scraps inside.

Once inside the bins animals find it impossible to escape, and operators who empty the bins into a compactor have no idea that a living creature is inside.

WIRES rescue hotline received a recent call from a Lismore club to rescue a possum trapped in an industrial bin used for food scraps.

WIRES rescuer Ben responded to the call and had to hop into the bin himself to reach the possum. She was fairly easy to catch as she was extremely stressed and worn out from her attempts to escape. She was discovered to have a large joey in her pouch.

Both were taken into care by Leoni. Mum possum was given dehydration fluid and some native food and it did not take long before she was fast asleep. Lots of movement was noted within her pouch, a sign the joey was doing well.

The photo shows mum possum shortly after rescue, in Ben's basket en route to Leoni.

The following evening, the possum was



taken back to the club and released into a large fig tree. The joey popped her head out of the pouch to witness the activity during the release.

If you would like to join WIRES, our next training course will be held on 9th and 10th March at SCU in Lismore. In addition to handling wildlife, there are many ways to help. Phone 6628-1898 or go to: [www.wiresnr.org](http://www.wiresnr.org) for more information.

**Nimbin Market**  
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# Squelch, bubble and squirm

by Thomas Rose, teacher

## Garden notes from Tuntable Falls Primary School

Despite massive amount of rain, Tuntable Falls Primary School still managed to get a few gardening chores done between and during showers.

The children recorded rainfall data for their garden diaries, and almost all of our French beans, as well as the corn, germinated after less than a week. It gave us a great pleasure to transplant them into the garden beds.

The children carefully lift out the seedlings with a spoon, wash out the soil from the roots in a bucket of water, then place it in the prepared hole in the soil. We use a special cone shaped "dippel" stick to create a hole where the roots immediately find sufficient space. We then backfill the hole and wish the little plant good luck.

We have managed to get two 200-litre pickle barrels for our liquid manure station. We poured a few buckets of fresh cow poo in one and heaps of seaweed (after the salt had been washed off) in the other. The children were cautious at first, but now love to stir the magic potions on a daily basis, trying to harness life forces by creating a vortex and then reversing the process.

We are going to add some biodynamic preparations to add extra potency to the mix.

The Kindies have initiated the set-up of our worm farm. The process has started by preparing the



Planting Corn

different layers of rocks, mulch and fresh manure to fill up the old cast iron bath tub. The littlies can't wait for the couple of kilos of worms to arrive and start doing their job for us.

Our green manure crop of cow peas (sown just before Christmas) had matured and the children cut it down so it can break down to add more food for the healthy organisms in the soil. Our mandala garden bed will be ready for planting as soon the breaking down process has finished.

So, all you revolutionaries, get off the verandah and into the garden to grow your own... or come and visit the Stephanie Alexander garden at our beautiful green school.



Liquid manure

## Planting guide for March

Beetroot, broccoli, carrots, leeks, peas, silverbeet, tomato, also strawberries and tibouchina. In the flower department you can plant calendula, carnation, cornflower, more Iceland poppies, snapdragon, sweet pea, bulbs, lobelia and lupins.

# Herb of the month: A balm by any other name...

by Tom Culpeper

*Melissa officinalis*; Lemon Balm (from the Greek Melissa, honey bee); Bee Plant, Cure All, Dropsy, Honey Plant, Melissa, Melissenblat, Monarde, Sweet balm, Sweet Mary, Toronjil Morado.



Balm, Sweet Melissa, was one of the most effective herbs in the Apothecary's pouch of treatments against the plagues and ailments of the ancients.

The Swiss sage Paracelsus called it Primum ens Mellissa, life elixir, the giver-back of life, the expeller of the melancholy and the vanquisher of the dyspepsia associated with anxiety or depression.

The Arab physician, Avicenna, revered Melissa and sang its praises as a heart balm, a merry-maker, and "a women's panacea" for general discomforts, to be taken with wine as a memory enhancer for poets. All who regularly took it as a tea enjoyed a long and happy life.

Spirit of balm, the Carmelite Waters, sold as Eau de Melisse de Carmes, is an infusion of Melissa combined with citrus peel, angelica root and nutmeg in honeyed wine. It was the daily draught of French monarchs and their dames, he for improved potency and she to ensure the delivery of healthy heirs to the throne. Within the putrid airs of the Chateaux, Melissa afforded some health.

Meanwhile, down on the farm, the peasants out-bred the aristocracy and raised strong, intelligent, healthy revolutionaries-in-waiting on

solid bread, charcuterie pork, the grains, the vegetables, the pot-herbs and the aromatic, rural, pollution-free air.

Melissa is currently enjoying a renewed popularity among research chemists and herbalists in the treatment of alzheimer's, ADHD and herpes. With a few exceptions it is a safe herb. Investigations and a number of studies show a potential for food safety, particularly as a preservative in sausage formulation.

Aromatherapists are well aware of its general usefulness, brewers and distillers sing its praises – in particular, the compounders

of "The Green Fairy", absinthe.

Melissa is a common lemony addition to teas, salads, soups, with sorrel on fish, and in sauces and confections.

Lemon Balm loves part-shade for luxuriant growth and essential oil generation. Propagate from stem cuttings in late summer in water, the same method used for mint establishment. It is a mint and benefits from constant damp for stolen production. Melissa thrives in well drained soil, so a thin mulch helps.

The Northern Rivers are near perfect for its propagation needs, but nitrogen (N) will help it along splendidly.

On the matter of Balm, I have some stock available this Autumn. \$6.00 and \$10.00, I will be at the Channon Markets with Nimbin Delicious. You may order for delivery through [thewholeearthveg@gardener.com](http://thewholeearthveg@gardener.com)

# Rainbow Dreaming – Tales from the Age of Aquarius

by Harsha Prabhu

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Aquarius Festival, the unique cultural and lifestyle event that subtly shaped us all, that is the reason why we choose to live in this amazing part of the planet. To commemorate the occasion we give you 'Rainbow Dreaming – tales from the Age of Aquarius', a book of photographs and stories that celebrates the vision of the sustainability movement.

Rainbow Dreaming represented the region as an exhibition at the 40th anniversary celebrations of the Woodstock festival in venues in the US in 2009. Nimbin residents helped get it there by contributing to our fundraisers. We are now appealing to you again to help us fund this commemorative book, which will be published in a limited edition of 2000 copies. We need to raise over \$15,000 by 1st April and, with your help, we can make it happen.

Rainbow Dreaming features rare, archival photos from the Aquarius Festival and the work of over 100 of the region's best-loved photographers, writers and cultural visionaries. All proceeds from the book will go towards the Nimbin Sustainability Hub (see more at: [www.sevenonsible.com](http://www.sevenonsible.com)).

This project is supported by Byron Neighbourhood Resource



Centre, Nimbin Neighbourhood & Information Centre and auspiced by Nimbin Community Centre. The organisers are also seeking sponsorship from local businesses keen to support this project. Please contact Harsha Prabhu at: [rainbowdreaming1@yahoo.com.au](mailto:rainbowdreaming1@yahoo.com.au)

To find out how you can order a copy of the book at a special discounted price of \$25 (plus postage) and help us make our dream to publish it a reality, please go to: [www.pozible.com/rainbow](http://www.pozible.com/rainbow)



## Cook's Corner with Carolynne

### Chocolate Truffles



#### Ingredients

200g Block Lindt Dessert 70% Cocoa Speciality Cooking Chocolate  
1/2 cup Thickened Cream  
1 tblsp Baileys Irish Cream  
1/4 tsp Sea Salt Flakes  
Extra 200g Block Lindt Dessert 70% Cocoa Speciality Cooking Chocolate, Melted

#### Method

Break chocolate into pieces. Place in a medium heatproof bowl with cream and liqueur. Sit bowl over a pan of simmering water,

ensuring the simmering water does not touch the base of the heat proof bowl when melting the chocolate. Stir until chocolate is melted.

Remove bowl from heat. Stir in salt. Cover and refrigerate for 1 to 2 hours, or until firm.

Line an oven tray with baking paper. Roll 2 tsps of mixture into a smooth ball. Place onto prepared tray. Repeat with remaining chocolate mixture. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Using two forks, individually dip balls in melted chocolate to coat, allowing excess to drip away. Make sure

chocolate is on the cool side or they will melt (If desired roll balls in bitter coco powder). Return to baking paper lined tray. Refrigerate for 1 hour, or until firm.

Serve truffles in mini patty cases.

Orange or Coffee Liqueur can be substituted for Baileys if desired.

This recipe is the only recipe you will ever need for chocolate truffles.

"Til next month enjoy.  
– Carolynne.

For information, phone Carolynne at the Contented Tummy Cafe Nimbin, phone 6689 0590.

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# Rockin' in the free world

by Marilyn Scott

I really like rocks. When I go for a walk my eyes are usually glued to the ground, seeking out hidden treasures. I often come back with a few, not sure what the fascination is.

I could try to analyse it – with a Virgo Sun I'm inclined that way. Or is it my Capricorn moon?

Perhaps it's something to do with needing a solid base, something secure that'll survive the tests of time,

a secure foundation that won't move.

Some sparkle with slithers of quartz, others hide their secrets inside, so many layers of colour and texture, time, solidified, glimpses of history.

So many treasures under the ground, there to support us and provide the energy we need – the magic Alchemy of Life.

I like to believe there's a purpose: Enlightenment, to live in true peace, love and truth; the real purpose



of human existence, on which everything depends.

Yes we're living in a time that is unique in human history, so much potential yet so much challenge. We've reached the end of our "crazy professor" ways, thinking we're gods and can do what we like.

The Age of the Patriarchy, some call it, the solar plexus chakra, learning about power. Maybe the Earth community moves through these energy centres too, as we evolve as a species.

Next comes the Heart Centre. I believe we're preparing to cross over, and as in all endings and beginnings things can be fragile. If you've experienced a death or a birth there's an energy that's similar. Life itself is in the room, come to deliver or take away.

Some say we've chosen to be here at this time; I don't know. But I do

know we have a heart that feels, we know the difference between right and wrong, we were gifted with the ability to think.

We're made from the Earth and the stars, the crown of creation. We need to understand our own true power, the power of Love, of giving, of sharing, of conscious awareness.

When we listen to our heart we'll know what to do. We need to shine, to radiate vitality, the Vital Essence we all carry within us.

We can have hope, faith and trust, we can trust Life to care for us. We all just need to do our bit.

## ASTRO FORECASTS BY TINA MEWS

YOUR MONTHLY REVIEW OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE HEAVENS

### March

In our yearly round we have reached Pisces, the last sign in the zodiac and the end of the cycle. Symbolically, the two fishes swim in opposite direction, one fish is swimming towards individuality while the other one swims towards universality. In many ways Pisces is associated with the urge for fusing the material and spiritual realms without getting lost in either of them. More often than not, the choice seems to be either saving others through self-sacrifice and service or suffering the consequences of escapist tendencies and ego-denial. Being a water sign, many individuals who carry a strong Piscean signature find it difficult to define boundaries, since water is formless and can take on any shape or colour of its environment. Thus, they are like psychic sponges who can take on - mainly unconsciously - the moods and vibes of those around them. On a lighter note, the Piscean individual has a vivid imagination and can excel at dance, acting, music and many other forms of creative self-expression. Equally, many of them are gifted healers or dedicated health and welfare workers.

Sun, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Neptune and Chiron are all united in the Piscean waters since the end of last month and have bestowed us with heavy rains and floods. The Piscean period has traditionally been a time for introspection and reflection leading up to the equinox and a new beginning in fiery Aries, the sign that follows and initiates the new cycle. The New Moon in Pisces on March 11-12 offers great opportunities for aligning with our higher purpose and aspirations because our urge to unite with something greater than ourselves might be sensitised. Nevertheless, it will be helpful to add some realism to the mix as Saturn, the reality principle, warns of over-indulgence in fuzzy emotions and diverse mind-expanding substances. Instead we can make use of this moment in time and explore our true gifts and talents for working creatively. Or we might feel inspired to transcend daily routines, to let go of differences, and to 'flow with the waters



of life'.

March 20 is the day of our Autumn Equinox, when the Sun crosses the threshold into Aries, the sign of pioneering activities and new enterprise. We can expect that more volatile energies are entering our planetary field initiating a climate of collective unrest. The Moon, symbolising our shared emotions and instinctual need for stability, finds herself in stressful relationship with the difficult and crisis provoking Uranus/Pluto square (active between 2010 - 2016) which is triggered into impulsive action by the warrior planet Mars. On a collective level this could manifest as disruptions and surprising events that are extremely challenging, while on a personal level we are urged towards working through our frustrated desires with self-honesty and the courage to face our own daemons.

The Full Moon on March 27 in Libra, the sign of partnership and cooperation reminds us of being conscious of the effects that our choices and actions have on others. We basically are asked to balance our ego urge for independence and freedom (Aries) with our human obligation towards creating a harmonious and peaceful world (Libra). This will be difficult to accomplish because the Libra Moon is in a stressful configuration with the highly provocative Mars, Uranus, Pluto trio. Then, the next day, on March 28, Venus, the principle of the Divine Feminine, will be in conjunction with the Sun, when she transitions from the morning to the evening sky. The beneficial influence of Venus as the cosmic harmoniser and mediator is weak now because she travels at her furthest distance from Earth. So, we need to remain extra mindful of our motivations and desires. Additionally, she is in difficult alignment with the same grouping of planets (Mars, Uranus and Pluto) until April 2. On the one hand we have to be careful not to push too hard for getting our own way at all costs; on the other hand there is ample creative energy thrown at us by the cosmos and when channelled in the right way can do a lot of good.

For Personal Astrology Consultation contact Tina on 66897413 or 0457903957, e-mail: star-loom@hotmail.com Or visit my webpage <http://nimbin-starloom.com.au> Astrology courses at the Lillifield Community Centre: Introduction into Psychological Astrology: Thursdays from 10 am - 1pm; Advanced course: Wednesdays, 10 am - 1pm. .

#### Aries

Rams, especially those born between March 28 and April 3, have to be vigilant during this month and closely monitor their desires and motivations. Avoid going about things impulsively; be careful around hot items or anything to do with metal (cars) especially in the last week of the month. Is there any deeper issue that needs to be addressed urgently?

#### Taurus

You might enjoy the indulging vibes of the first part of the month and you could find extra time for relaxation and introspection. Then Venus, your ruler moves into action oriented Aries on March 22. Any undercurrents or previous excesses in your relationships might start surfacing now, demanding your attention.

#### Gemini

The large grouping of planets in illogical Pisces during the first part of the month might confuse your left-brain oriented view of the world. This is not a time for decisions; rather relax and feel into the flow of things. Once the Mercury retrograde phase has ended (March 17) you might find yourself on more secure ground again

#### Cancer

Don't you love the rain? It provides moments of stress release and relaxation. You will need it once things are heating up again around the Equinox. You might find yourself on a challenging roller-coaster until the end of the month. You have the courage to do whatever needs to be done!

#### Leo

Too much time spent in the Piscean waters feels suffocating for you fiery lions and lionesses. The shift to action oriented Aries starting already on March 13 will feel liberating and energising. However, know your tendency towards over-confidence and do not go overboard with your plans. Fire signs are by nature unreflective and you might be forced to look within.

#### Virgo

It is not easy to remain focused right now and you need to work hard on separating fact from fiction. Therefore, avoid signing on the dotted line until the Mercury retrograde phase ends March 17. You might also experience that for

some strange reason, everything in the universe seems to be interconnected.

#### Libra

You might find that your everyday routine is less structured than usual. Your sensitivity is heightened and you need to take good care of your body right now. There could be sudden upsets and tension in your relationships especially in the second half of the month. Own your 'stuff' and find out what really bothers you.

#### Scorpio

This could be a very creative period for you, and a time when new ideas get born. You easily can work out strategies that will produce great results later on. However, do not push your luck too far and overpower others with your strength of opinion. Instead, use your energy for the good of all and stick to the rules.

#### Sagittarius

It's your turn now to escape from the world. Spend time at home and tune into your inner self. There is a lot of creative energy that waits for expression once the new cycle starts again at the equinox (March 20). Watch your tendency towards extravagance and avoid squandering your resources on impulse.

#### Capricorn

At the moment you could find it difficult to make sense of your thoughts and feelings. With the start of the new cycle (March 20) your focus might shift towards your home and family. Unexpressed emotions can now lead to an explosive atmosphere in the home, commanding urgent attention.

#### Aquarius

Your urge to manifest your place in the world requests an honest clarification of your values first. How do your inner ideals and aspirations fit in with your experience of outer expectations? Nevertheless, avoid acting on impulse because frustrated desires can lead to accidents later on in the month (March 21 - March 30).

#### Pisces

It feels totally in synch to withdraw from everyday routine right now, contemplating on how to rescue yourself, your partner, your friends or the world from drowning. Once the new cycle starts (March 20) you will feel more energised to actively involve yourself in community projects that agree with your own values.

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# The bees, our true Earth companions

by Tom Culpeper

Of ones that we humans and most of life on this globe should be beholden to, it is arguably the bees. The true angels of the earth, the paddock toilers, the alchemists of transmutation, bees relentlessly, selflessly promote and create life on and for this one Earth. We survive and all before us lived because of the honey bee and its beautiful cousins and kith, their 'native' bee-brethren.

Theirs was not the the fruitless search for gold from lead or mercury, their alchemy was and is the esoteric creation of life, through the search among the blossoms for the means to their true gold, their bread and the sweet elixir that is one of life's panaceas, honey.

The bees, the working gals, the worker angels, the geniuses of blooms, blossoms, honey, wax and the hive, they give all, and take nothing. They bring on initial life and fill the breasts of most of the



Earth's lactating. From plains of grass, the fields of grain to the paddocks, the meadows and gardens of our herbs and livestock, they fly and hover, their long suit being, they are the selfless vectors of the pollens, the core of life.

The worker bees give freely of their labours: they carry, toil and pass, missed only by the blooms that now wilt, unattended by their gentle caress. The lucky, touched, continue their genetic faith.

Just about all that is land-born is dependent on pollination. Many plants do 'self', so to say, but the ones we require and enjoy the most, in general, the fruits and vegetables, are pollinated, in the main, by bees, birds, other insects and the wind.

Though bees do what none of these other pollinators do: they produce honey – though not all bees produce honey in quantities useful to people.

The western honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) is the dominant pollinator and honey producer in Oz. Their hive is the 'factory' and brood site for these busy sisters, the worker-bees are all under the demands of a single queen, she is the dam of them all, they care for her and the new bee larvae, make honey and bee-bread, feed the hive, air-condition it, clean it and guard it against invaders. When time impels they 'feed up' a new queen on royal jelly, she emerges, culls the 'competition' leaves with a swarm, mates with a drone-male and sets up a new hive. Wikipedia and your local apiarist will fill in all the other fine and relevant details about pollination, honey and bee predation.

Bees have some nasty enemies, one being people armed with insecticides, both good ones and nasties. General crop sprays do bees no favours, especially if the plants are in bloom. Monsanto crop systems keep bankers and corporate agri-

business wealthy, they do no good for bees! Bees worldwide are being decimated by environmental pressures, mites and disease. Innocent victims, among those identified in Rachel Carson's expose, *Silent Spring*.

The little sweethearts have some other nastiness to contend with, a couple of first rate killers, the aptly named assassin bugs, (*Reduviidae*), a family of spiders, the flower hiding crab spiders (*Thomisidae*) and the birds, in particular, the bee-eaters. They're life's challenges to the bees. Monsanto is another game!

Fill your garden with bee-friendly plants, the basil, fennels, angelica, almonds, the pomes and citrus. Take a moment or seven, fill a glass, park the tail and have a good look at 'your' bees in your garden. Observe and they will tell you what is useful. You will see some very special critters along with the honey gals, the 'natives' bees, the blue (bummed)-banded bee, the black wild hive native, the brown bear and the solitary, bumble bee, all of importance to your garden. Love 'em, they are the truth. They're the first Assangists.

## The world according to...

### Magenta Appel-Pye

#### Gifted

Everyone has inherent gifts. My neighbour's husband was well-known as the area's finest rooster castrator. I'm great at detecting bullshit and have a big mouth to go with it but it gets me into more trouble than its worth.

A latent gift can emerge at any time. An odd adult ukulele student, with no previous musical experience, picks it up like an old friend they're reunited with. It thrills and amazes them.

Is it genetic or a memory from past-life practice? Who knows? They lament that they hadn't found this gift earlier. Better late than never.

My students tell me I'm a gifted teacher, but in 14 years I haven't been able to teach my husband to put his plates in the dishwasher or to close the flyscreen door. My other gift is useless. I am a pinball wizard with such a supple wrist I can always earn extended play and extra balls. In my youth it was an impressive skill, except to my horrified mother. This once ubiquitous game is no longer seen in any milk bars in this area and I miss them dreadfully. A languishing gift.



My husband has exceptional hearing. Of the 200+ people auditioning to get into the Piano Tuning and Technology course in at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 1978, he was one of the six lucky ones chosen. Unlike untrained tuners who use scopes, Norman tunes every piano by ear. He can hear all those harmonics and bring them into order.

People are constantly intrigued that he can hear sounds they can't. But do you think he can hear me? No way. Bad case of spousal deafness.

Walking past Durrumbul school where I once taught music, I commented, "It's not easy teaching thirty little souls."

"Mmmm? What? It's not easy teaching dirty imbeciles?"

At least he was half listening.

## trivia@thebowlo

Devised by the Nimbin Bowlo's Quizmaster, Marty

#### Questions

1. In which city was RMS Titanic built? In which city was she registered?
2. Ikebana is the Japanese art of ...?
3. The Galapagos Islands are administered by which South American country?
4. Who is Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs?
5. What was the first Beatles #1 on the Apple label?
6. Name the actor/comedian responsible for Ali G and Borat .
7. How many wings does a bee have?
8. The Indian city of Mumbai lies on which body of water?
9. Who was the 'Pinball Wizard'?
10. Who was the American singer/songwriter who led the campaign to have Martin Luther King Jr's birthday declared a national holiday?

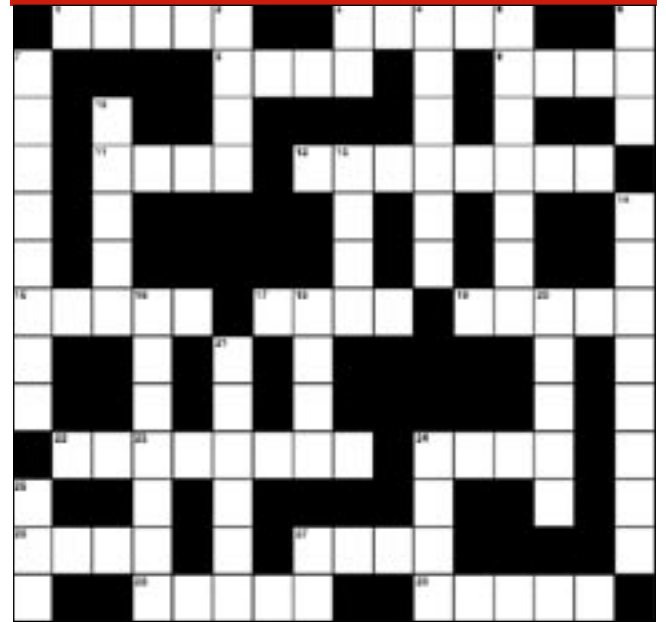


- Answers**
1. Belfast, Liverpool
  2. Flower arrangement
  3. Ecuador
  4. Bob Carr
  5. Hey Jude
  6. Sacha Baron Cohen
  7. Four
  8. The Arabian Sea
  9. Tommy
  10. Stevie Wonder

## Nimbin Crossword

2013-I

by Sunic



#### Across

1. Moral code
3. Amass weapons again?
8. calcium (hydr)oxide (in cement, for example)
9. Opposed to
11. See 2 down
12. New age chap(ette)?
15. English policeman? Hairpin or socks
17. Bigfoot
19. Jug band instrument
22. Lock the gate to this CSG mob
24. Myth and legend
26. Not uninteresting Dane – worked with Heisenberg on quantum uncertainty
27. Owl fun?
28. Close \_\_\_\_\_?
29. Nonspeaking part

#### Down

2. (and 11 across) The sound of hooves (4,-,4)

3. With regard to
4. Nearby star - brightest in the Aquila constellation?1970s microcomputer
5. Traditional girl's (swag's?) name
6. (And 10 down) Region's ancient rainforest (3,5)
7. Aboriginal nation
10. See 6 down
13. What 22 across should do before their share price falls to zero
14. Prevent access (as to 22 across for example)
16. Angostura (in cocktails, for example)
18. Serious, lengthy narrative?
20. Planned (for land use)
21. Wattle
24. Medieval western string instrument
25. Tide
27. 2nd element

Solution Page 26



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# "Barribe Lau Luhammaru!"



## Fruit of the Vine by Terry Beltrane

When I was there a few lifetimes ago, Livingston was an isolated village of red soil paths meandering between bamboo and frond roofed huts idyllically nestled between dense verdant jungle and the balmy silted waters of the Caribbean coast of central Guatemala. The only way to get there was by an ancient, and dubiously seaworthy, highly prow'd junk of wooden staved planks and an equally ancient diesel motor. Or alternatively, a jungle trek only for the most adventurous and of very sturdy disposition, across the mountainous jungle terrain east of Guatemala City.

The lissom, ebony-toned, glossy-skinned tribe that form this village of some less than several hundred people are descendants from the slave trade that defiled this Eden off the coast of Central America. They have their own language (Caribe), now

classified as of world heritage value, that lilts between a cadence of poetic rhyme and an earthy guttural timbre homogenised from the multifarious African tribal languages of the original escapees to this paradise. It's used exclusively amongst the locals with Spanish and a smattering of English used for the occasional visitor. "Barribe lau luhammaru", in conjunction with a smile and subtle nod of the head, is the morning greeting for young and old as the village comes to life before sunrise. Loosely translated it means, "welcome to this day of all things good".

The land and sea provide these beautiful and tenacious people with all they need – they are totally self sufficient and catch only enough prawns, which they sell down the coast, to provide them with beans, rice and 'Ron' (rum) to supplement their diet of fruit, manioc and seafood. They communally build their 'houses' and everyone is happy in their responsibility to feed, shelter, play with and guide the children in the ways of village life. There was less than 100 metres of paved road that runs uphill from the dilapidated landing jetty to accommodate the single vehicle that transports traded goods to a central collection point, though



I believe all this has now changed somewhat.

The local home brew is Chicha, made from fermented corn, which is made in most households and liberally dispensed to relatives and visitors; and it's excellent.

Making Chicha is a time consuming and labour intensive process, and is only made from freshly harvested corn. The predominant variety is a white maize with a peanut sized kernel, though some 'makers' prefer the yellow corn variety, claiming the final Chicha is more aromatic. The harvested corn is soaked for a day or two in water until it begins to sprout, then drained and placed on banana leaves to dry until the emerging sprouts (acrospires) are double the length of the kernel, during which time the natural enzymes within the grain begin to convert the starches into fermentable sugars.

The grain is then pounded, with a dedicated smoothly rounded branch, in a large and sturdy mortar made from adze-hewn tree trunks. The mashed grain is transferred to a clay or wooden pot and papaya skins are added to provide the yeast necessary for fermentation. As the fermentation draws to a close, the Chicha is ready to drink while still retaining the natural 'fizz' from the produced carbon dioxide.

Slightly higher in concentration of alcohol than commercial beers, Chicha makes for a savoury and heady drink used by the locals for an evening drink as well as in celebration of a significant event, like a Chugu – a celebration of a deceased member of the village.

More about Chugus, Chicha and baribbe lau luhammaru in the April edition of NGT.

terryb88@tpg.com.au

# Do or die at Doubtful Creek



## Mookxamitosis by Brendan (Mookx) Hanley

**Doubt:** a feeling of uncertainty or lack of conviction. (Oxford Dictionary).

I was at Doubtful Creek on D-Day... as I was at Terania, Nightcap, Canberra Anti-Nuke and other protests.

I don't like what happened to me and 300 or so other concerned residents on the day the people we elected into office forced a ghastly, eco-destructive industry into our little green region. And the police made it possible.

It was raining lightly in the morning. There were about 150 of us overnighters and more people were turning up every minute. Parked cars stretched way down the little country lane in both directions. I had a weird apprehensive feeling. I was totally out of my comfort zone, long before any signs of confrontation.

Many heroic actions took place, like a Granny knitting on a high bamboo tripod, underground lock-ons, Benny and co. standing for hours and hours on a small platform on top of a van. All 300 of us, kids, grannies, hippies, farmers, business friends, local residents, lots of local Gooris... not a bad vibe in sight, let alone a weapon.

We were totally unprepared for the assault: cultural, spiritual, physical and deeply psychological. Buses of dark-uniformed thugs came in, armed to the teeth, one guy grinning out the window and banging his gloved fist into



the other open hand.

They assembled at their quarry site, dozens of them, attack dogs and all. Until now, we had been dealing with local light-blue cops, under the lead of their female boss, and it had been all diplomacy so far.

Then the shit hit the fan. The underground tunnel, housing delicate human life, was collapsed and the occupants removed. The granny was hauled off the tripod by a cherry picker, and the tripod was demolished, Indigenous flag and all. Benny and friends were ordered down.

I headed down the road to get my camera and belongings and found myself face to face with a young bloke in a dark riot squad uniform, bristling with weapons and communication equipment. No number was visible. His gloved gun hand hovered, fingers splayed just above his obscene weapon.

"This road is closed, move back. You can't pass here."

"I'm sorry, I need to just go over the road to that white van."

"If you don't begin moving back, you will be arrested!"

He pushed me hard on the sternum. He acted like he was off his tits on speed. I couldn't see his eyes behind his dark glasses.

I tried for ten minutes to sneak back to the van, but they were everywhere. All over the road, in the forest opposite, in the paddock on the other side. They kept pushing us all back past the entry to the proposed CSG site.

I never felt so powerless and wronged in my life... well, not since my Catholic school days. The cops stood there being paid bullies, while an armada of trucks moved in to see if they could find gas that has already been pre-sold to China. The extraction of that gas will turn this area into a wasteland, and destroy our precious groundwater forever.

An ambulance arrived with low siren, inching through the crowd to rescue a woman injured in the police action. The cops held it back to allow the remaining trucks access, for maybe 10 minutes or more – money over human life. A Githabul Auntie let out a soul-piercing wail that came from beyond. A little girl next to me started crying.

I grew up in police stations, surrounded by policemen. My dad retired as Superintendent in charge of Northern Victoria. Neither protests nor police have ever bothered me – until now.

My dad was turning in his grave. This is not a policeman's job. They are supposed to prevent crime, not help it happen.

Something has gone very wrong. We all have to face up to the fact that the corporations own everything: government, fuel and energy, media, food, health care, banks, the lot.

And they have teams of amped-up, armed young androids willing to take money to make sure we don't get in the way of their plans. It's do or die I'm afraid, or we're all up Shit Creek. No doubt about it. We either stop this or lose it all.

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by Michael Smith and Len Martin

Grateful that the end of the world was cancelled, five members of the Nimbin Bushwalkers Club spent a few hours in early 2013 visiting some pleasure grounds of the Rainbow Region. Whian Whian Falls was our first stop to cleanse ourselves in the fresh water. This local swimming hole is not mentioned in the usual tourist literature. Nevertheless overseas backpackers seem to know how to find this beauty spot.

The falls were roaring, after the recent rain. We moved on to Dorrroughby Grass to dry off and have lunch. A natural wonder, even in the days of the Big Scrub this patch of kangaroo grass was open, and clear of trees. It is at the top of a prominent hill and through binoculars I could see my house on the Koonorigan Range 6km away.

Off then to Terania Creek and Tahooti Falls. There are no signs to find this place, another gem of the Northern Rivers. On the way to the falls I was approached by a youth aged about 14 years. He asked if I could give him some tobacco or anything to smoke. He said he had some hash oil, but nothing to smoke. My heart sank. A beggar at the falls. Too young to buy tobacco: too foolish to know about the dangers of the path he was on. The father in me wanted to help him, to show a better way. I guessed that his mind would not be open to any of my advice. I may be the one at fault here. In the 10 years that I have lived around Nimbin, I have been waiting for my karma to run over my dogma. I have chosen to hang on to my current precious brain chemistry. I told him that I had nothing to smoke. He asked the same question to the next club member that passed, with the same result. We saw nothing of him again. Everyone went for a swim,



naked ladies downstream and covered-up wrinklies in the swiftly flowing plunge pool. Rushing down the cliff, the water had a joyous roar, even louder than the cicadas. The energetic, aerated floodwaters washed our hearts pure. Up the road the Channon markets throbbed with earnest commercial passion. The valley was happy. We were living. – Michael Smith

Yes, there was life – even in this decrepit body. Given the wonderful write-up in last month's Nimbin Good Times, on the joys of rambling with the Nimbin Bushwalkers, I half expected a moderate crowd for our first walk of the year – particularly since it was a very easy one. As it was, the crowd comprised our present president, two past presidents and two members from Nimbin. It would have been six – with the founding treasurer – but persisting Ross River had laid her low. This was my first visit to Whian Whian Falls and very spectacular they were: they would have been fantastic after the flooding rains a fortnight later. I was not tempted to bathe, but contented myself by just standing, looking, listening, and photographing the falls and a spectacular, large, bright blue Damsel Fly – The Sapphire Rockmaster.

Our club formed in late 2005 and held its first walk in February 2006 – to Pholis Gap on Mount Nardi in the Nightcap National Park. This was our second scheduled walk for February 2013, one I was very much looking forward to leading, as

several Nimbin residents had indicated they would make it their first venture with us. It is a great introduction to bushwalking – well-defined tracks, easy grades, shaded, top quality rainforest and always something interesting to see. Last year saw our youngest walker ever – three years old – complete the circuit without being piggy-backed once, and so interested in everything! I was really looking forward to walking with him as an even brighter four-year old, only

0.75 of a century younger than me. Alas! Came the rain and the wind, with closure of the Nightcap National Park because of flooding and storm damage. Not that I could have led the walk, our low bridge over Goolmangar Creek was under several metres of water and we didn't get across until several days later.

That weather has also put paid to two walks scheduled for March, in the Border Ranges and Richmond Range NPs. So, anyone who planned on the basis of the program put on our web page or sent out by email in February, please note that these walks have been replaced by two delightful coastal ones, as detailed in the adjoining column. Just hope there are no late season cyclones or a tsunami. – Len Martin



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## Walks Program for March

**Nimbin Bushwalkers Club Inc.**

### Saturday 9th March

#### Broken Head to Whites Beach

Leader Michael Smith (6689-9291).

**Time:** 3.5 hours **Grade 4**, Difficult walking and rock-hopping, on and off track, 3-6 km (depending on if we drive or walk back). Moderately fit walkers only.

**Features:** Rugged, spectacular coastal views. Subtropical littoral rainforest, beaches and seabirds. A real adventure. If possible we will leave a vehicle at the finish, (the car park signposted 4B, behind Brays Beach). That way we will not have to walk back to the start along Seven Mile Beach Road.

**Meet:** Channon Pub 9.50am for leader and car pooling, 11am at the start of the walk at the car park next to the Broken Head Caravan Park, Beach Road, off Byron Bay Road, south of Suffolk Park. **Bring** food for picnic and water.

### Sunday 24th March

#### Two Coastal Walks at Brunswick Heads

Leader Michael Smith 6689-9291

**Tyagarah Nature Reserve:** Start Brunswick Heads Surf Club, South Beach Road, Brunswick Heads. Walk down a fire trail and back along the beach, 1.7km.

**Brunswick Heads Nature Reserve:** Start at end of North Head Road (off Orana & Rajah Rds) Ocean Shores. A short but rich walk with coastal rainforest, river entrance and beach, 800m, 45min. Lots of flowers and wildlife.

**Meet** Channon Pub 9am for leader and car pooling, 10.15am Brunswick Heads Surf Club, South Beach Road, Brunswick Heads. **Bring** swimmers, hat, and lunch

*Unless otherwise specified, visitors (non members) welcome, but will be required to pay a fee of \$5 per walk, deducted from membership fee when they join Club. Membership \$15pp. to Treasurer Kay Martin PO Box 20061 Nimbin, 2480 (Phone 6689-0254). Website: [www.nimbinbushwalkers.com](http://www.nimbinbushwalkers.com) Secretary, Len Martin ([pteropus42@smartchat.net.au](mailto:pteropus42@smartchat.net.au))*

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# Drunken dentistry and other adventures



by Bob Tissot

It's about 5pm, and Simmo and I are trying to unravel the local house numbering system, attempting to find the Blind Massage Clinic. It's proving tricky, as they use a non-consecutive system.

Eventually we find it about five blocks away from where it logically should have been. At this massage clinic, all the staff are blind and let their hypersensitive fingertips suss out where all your knots are.

A word of warning: this is not a massage for the faint-hearted, or those looking for something soft, sexy and sensual. It's a no-holds-barred therapeutic and sometimes painful remedial workout. Simmo and I stagger out on jelly legs and decide, some would say foolishly, to walk home. It took a while...

Later we all pop around to JJ's dentist friend with a bottle of 12-year old, duty-free scotch; and after a few, the suggestion that I should have an ultrasonic teeth and gum massage (in Oz we call it a descale and polish) doesn't sound bizarre. Simone, the dental hygienist, is only a tiny bit tipsy and anyway, how much



damage can one do with an ultrasonic pick? None, as it turns out, and before I know it I've bought a couple of crowns for the price of a filling.

And so next day, with muscles toned and teeth gleaming, I board the bus for the six-hour trip to Siem Reap, ancient capital and gateway to Angkor Wat. Bloody hell, Cambodia is flat. About an hour out of Phnom Penh I see a small hill, but as I get closer I can see that a voracious gravel quarry is determined to eat it back to a rice paddy. Everywhere I look there's standing water and yet, apparently, it's very dry for this time of year. Maybe it's normally knee-deep.

Siem Reap (well the bit that I saw) is just a crazy tourist town – like Kuta or Phuket, only without the beach. The streets are jammed with visitors (20,000 / day) and the roadsides lined with arts and crafts, western-style food, hotels and a million moto and tuk-tuk drivers trying to get your trade.

Got caught by the old baby formula scam. Little girl, scruffy and in rags, holding a tiny baby. "I don't want your money mister, I

just want some milk for the baby." And before I know it she's scuttling off with two cans of formula and I'm \$26 poorer. Her mum was there outside the pharmacy the next night with the baby. I figured they're probably the pharmacist's wife and daughter and those two cans have been sold 100 times.

I thought I'd be smart and beat the crowds. I organised a pre-dawn start for my tour of Angkor. Yeah right – me and the other 5,000 smart people, all there for sunrise over Angkor Wat. It was overcast so I left the crowd mustered on the side of the lotus-strewn pond waiting for the sunrise photo that would never come, and explored Angkor alone in the pre-dawn light.

Angkor is one of more than 20 wats in this temple complex which covers thousands of hectares. All are different and all are quietly succumbing to lichen, moss, gravity and tourism.

I watched every member of a tour group climb over a rope barricade to have their photo taken sitting on the roots of an ancient tree. What the hell do these people think the rope is for? Décor?

# Weird scenes in Varanasi



I am shaking and my stomach is clenched. I sit down and take a not-too-deep breath. A baba is burning barely two metres away. I can see his head. I can see his feet. And you can see his face. Clearly.

Viewed from a boat two days ago, the burning ghats of Varanasi were confronting, fascinating even, but not horrifying. The funeral pyre burns fiercely hot. My western sensibilities are reeling as I try to come to terms with this graphic scene. Too near the burning pyre a cow is scrounging for scraps, close enough to almost roast as well. There is a mountain of ashes on the water's edge. Blood, bone and wood. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

Savage and surprisingly big street dogs are forming small packs and getting excited. Goats, buffalo, local Indians, babas, street kids, chai wallahs, a smattering of tourists (mouths covered) tangled in a complexity of moving madness. Seagulls are swooping in astonishing numbers. No fish and chips here. Grey smoke is billowing and only fear must be keeping the smell of burning flesh from my nostrils. Oh wait: I'm holding my breath. In the waters barely 10 metres away a man is bathing, another is brushing his teeth. The water is oily grey. Fluorescent patches of green slime mixed with plastic, plastic, plastic. Mother Ganga is choking as she washes away the sins of her children, death and pain absorbed in her swirling depths.

Cows are eating cow shit and plastic rooted out of smouldering piles of burning rubbish. Bald and mangy dogs are roaming, their grey wizened skin covered in sores. Beggars with twisted limbs, children with grotesque facial deformities, a dog chewing on a raw



## Ironically Yours

Travel diary of the irreverent

by Dionne May

goat foot, under the nose of another goat.

The raw, un-saried, unadorned India. Varanasi, the oldest city in the world, majestic and macabre. Filthy one day, and then it rains. The rain does not wash this city's sins away. Faeces of humans and animals all mix together in a slimy toxic paste that chokes the narrow lanes.

On one of the many concrete platforms along the banks of the Ganges River, my baba friends are busy building their makeshift home for the next month. They have just arrived from

amazing event but patience and acceptance has paid off. Handy lessons in India. So instead of me going to the babas, the babas are all coming to me! Cool. They are arriving in droves. On overloaded boats, in buses, walking, they come. A sea of orange converges around me as I sit on their platform. The riverside is literally transforming into a tent ghetto before my eyes, with building rubble and cow shit slurry handy building tools.

Electrical cables appear out of nowhere and there is light and power to charge their mobile phones, a favourite baba toy. There are babas of every description. Naked Naga Babas, bejewelled, dreadlocked, bald, fat, skeletal babas. Babas pitifully young and painfully old, their brotherhood warm and embracing. I am honoured to sit amongst them but we are fast becoming a freak show within a freak show. I can do freaky. "All the freaky people make the beauty in the world," sings Michael Franti. And he's one of my idols... can't be wrong!

So how does it feel to be back in India? Exhilarating and exhausting! This morning I woke entwined in the arms of my two young baba mates. I smile and reflect on how far I have come on this adventure already. From the arms of the Dominican Sisters to the arms of young warrior babas. Gotta love this life!



Kumbh Mela. This year the festival was marred by tragedy and wild weather. A footbridge at the local train station collapsed under the enormous weight of thousands of pilgrims: 36 fatalities and many more injured. Later a fire broke out and another life was claimed. Wild rains and winds have flattened tents and put much of the area under water, bringing an early end to this year's festival.

So the Babas are bowing to the might of Mother Nature and are mostly moving on to Varanasi. At first I thought maybe I had missed this

## Nimbin Crossword Solution

From Page 23



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### Normal Mon-Fri Week

| Leaving                | Arriving                 |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Lismore Transit Centre | Nimbin – Main St. (Park) |
| 7.00am                 | 7.45am                   |
| 8.00am                 | 8.45am                   |
| 12.00pm                | 12.35pm *                |
| 2.35pm                 | 3.10pm                   |
| 3.20pm                 | 4.15pm                   |
| 5.30pm                 | 6.00pm                   |

### School Holidays

| Leaving                | Arriving                 |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Lismore Transit Centre | Nimbin – Main St. (Park) |
| 8.00am                 | 8.30am                   |
| 12.00pm                | 12.35pm *                |
| 2.35pm                 | 3.10pm                   |
| 5.30pm                 | 6.00pm                   |

### Leaving

|                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Nimbin – Main St. (Park) | Lismore Transit Centre |
| 7.52am                   | 8.50am                 |
| 9.00am                   | 9.35am                 |
| 12.45pm                  | 1.15pm *               |
| 3.25pm                   | 4.10pm                 |
| 4.25pm                   | 5.00pm                 |
| 6.05pm                   | 6.35pm                 |

### Arriving

|                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Nimbin – Main St. (Park) | Lismore Transit Centre |
| 9.00am                   | 9.35am                 |
| 12.45pm                  | 1.15pm *               |
| 3.25pm                   | 4.10pm                 |
| 6.05pm                   | 6.35pm                 |

### No Public Holiday Service

Town Service - Wheelchair access available upon request, 24 Hour notice required

Some Buses connect in Nimbin for Operators to Murwillumbah

\* Mondays & Thursdays Only



# You can bank on disaster

Reflections of a Refugee  
by Chris Aitchison

The fractional reserve banking system evolved as a means to ensure that banks, and banking systems, retain sufficient monetary reserves to meet demand for customer withdrawals.

Under this system, a minimum percentage of customer deposits must be held in reserve, while banks may lend or invest the remainder.

History is replete with instances of "bank runs", when customers panic in response to some sort of crisis and withdraw their deposits en-masse, leaving a bank – and banking system, in some cases – without sufficient cash to meet demand.

Australia takes a pseudo-fractional reserve approach not only to its banking system, but also to its management of the natural environment.

The bankers, in this analogy, are the legislators in all three levels of government, while developers are the banks' customers. Our natural environment – our old growth forests, rivers, beaches, dunes, fish stocks, biodiversity, air, and so on – is metaphorical currency.

The process works

something like this: at a particular point in time, the "bankers" decide upon the prudent ratio of "loans" (development) to reserves (conservation). Politicians tend to call this process "striking the correct balance" (typically between jobs and economic growth on the one hand and conservation on the other).

Developers take their percentage and log it, quarry it, build on it, or fish it out, until – when their allocation has been exhausted and monetised – they return with their hands out for more.

At this point, the politicians once again deliberate on how to strike the correct balance; that is, how much to allocate to development and how much to keep in reserve.

Here the analogy falls down, however, for unlike the banks, which make comparable decisions about a money supply in perpetual expansion, the "supply" of nature shrinks with each cycle, and our natural reserves decline.

You may think that this process will ultimately lead to the complete liquidation of our natural world. In fact, we are unlikely to see this, though not for the reasons you may think. One day, there will be a "run" on the

system; there will be a panic, and depositors everywhere will need to draw down on the remaining, depleted reserves.

Whether it is precipitated by runaway climate change or pandemic disease, we will one day find that there is a sub-critical mass in reserve; there will not be enough water to quench the population, or there will be inadequate biodiversity to ameliorate and protect us from the global march of deadly contagion.

We have for decades been drawing unsustainably on our natural reserves and consequently, a correct balance is only struck when it results in an increase in our reserves of natural environment.

Of course, this won't happen – isn't politically feasible – when the dominant economic paradigm insists that trees are more valuable in the form of paper than in their natural state, and coal is more valuable when it is burned to service our energy requirements.

The paradigm – the economic system itself – must be reinvented so that financial incentives work toward the restoration of our natural environment, and not toward its destruction.

# A good night's fishing

by Pixie, fishing reporter

Before the rain started and the river mud turned the ocean brown, Jessee and Ray went to sea with Arrow.

They went through Evans Head bar around 5pm heading towards 'northgrounds'. Fishing 'northgrounds' wasn't easy with the wind gusting. It was sloppy, choppy and the current was gushing, so after half an hour, they decided it was unfishable. They then decided to fish in close at one of Ray's 'secret' Jewie spots. Early in the night they were pulling in a few trag but it wasn't till round midnight when a big three quarter moon was sitting on the horizon and slowly rising that the fish really came on the bite. The guys were catching big trag while jigging for live



Jessee, Ray, Arrow and the jewfish

bait. Then while fishing with live yellowtail, Jessee landed an 18kg jewfish and Ray a 13kg Jew. At around 2am, Arrow baited up with a live trag and hooked up to the biggest fish fight of the night

and landed a 27kg jewie. Well done guys, what a good night's fishing.

For you guys going on the annual Fraser Island trip this year, it's all good news. There are only 87 sleeps to go.

# Ugandan Tales PART 2

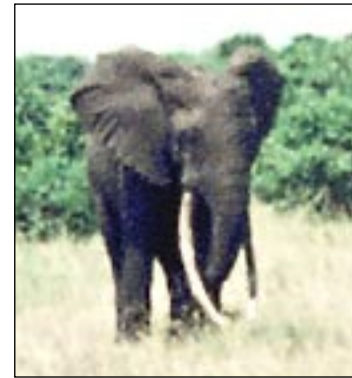
by Peter Atkinson

On one of my visits to Kampala, I was sitting in a sidewalk cafe attached to the only posh hotel in town, having a beer with a Danish guy (we were the only people there), when a large Landrover bus pulled up. Six or seven huge soldiers with weapons at the ready, formed a sort of corridor, with the guns pointed over our heads.

We both sat very upright and watched as Idi Amin himself strode in. He really was a giant of man. I said, 'Jumbo Bwana' (hello) to him, and he looked at us but didn't answer. The guards did not seem to like it, but the senior one said something we couldn't understand quite loudly to us and they all cracked up laughing. We decided it was time to leave.

After about five months of working as a surveyor, I was in Kampala when Idi Amin decided to deport all the Asian people. He gave them three months, no matter how many generations they had been there. This, of course, created pandemonium. Most of them set up camp in the main square in the middle of Kampala where all the government offices were, so they could queue to go through endless paperwork and get tickets of any sort to get out. I had been working without a work permit and changing my wages on the black market at a fairly good rate, but within days the rate went way out of reason.

Then my passport was stolen. The embassy gave me another one quickly but it was only valid for a month. I had to go to the Dept of Immigration to get an entry stamp or something, and during this process they discovered that I had been working. I was picked up by two huge Immigration police and locked in the back of a van while they went to my office. I was getting pretty worried by now. They then took me out to the house where I



was staying, saying they wanted to search it.

As we walked in, I got a little ahead of them and walked into my room, picked up the folder that had all my money, dollars, pounds, marks, you name it, and stuffed it down the front of my pants. They were actually in the room when I picked up my sleeping bag and tossed it onto a

chair that had the pygmy bhang under it and sat down on it. They then did a search under the bed, in the cupboard and through my rucksack. I'm still amazed at how I got away with it.

It was just on sunset when they told me I had 24 hours to leave the country. They said I was to stay in the house overnight and they would pick me up in the morning, and then left. All this time my boss had followed us and was hiding in the garden. He came in and told me how lucky I was that it was not the military that picked me up. I gave him all the hot money to look after.

If I had wanted to leave the country under normal circumstances, it would have been impossible for a fortnight or so because of the chaos downtown. The Asians were all camped in the square outside the Dept of Immigration, the Bank of Uganda and the airline offices, and there were soldiers all over the place. However, first thing in the morning, the same two huge men came and picked me up, put me in their van and drove me straight to the airport at Entebbe. They escorted me right to the bottom of the loading stairs, gave me my passport and a ticket to Dar Es Salaam via Nairobi. The company I was working for had an office there, so I still managed to keep the job.

I've still got that old passport with 'given 24 hours to leave the country' written in it.

# An exercise class with plenty of heart

When you ask Judy Ellis what she loves about her weekly Heartmoves class, the answer is simple. "Everything!" says Judy, 74.

Not only have the gentle exercises helped Judy physically, but she has made lots of new friends, and the class only costs her a gold coin.

"The leader, she's lovely, and I just really look forward to it every week. It's given me more energy," Judy said, adding that she was very happy everyone had formed such strong bonds.

"We can all laugh at each other and ourselves. That's good for our health too."

Heartmoves began in Goonellabah and Nimbin last year and has been so popular that two new Heartmoves groups are beginning on March 13 and 14 in East Lismore and Clunes.

The classes include light exercise designed for seniors and people with heart disease, diabetes and other conditions.

Heartmoves is run by Lismore City Council as part of the federally funded Healthy Communities Initiative, and is just \$2 per sessions for adults who are unemployed, seniors, ATSI, culturally diverse, refugees, carers or those with a disability.

Bookings are essential. Phone 6625-5377 or



Heartmoves participants Patsy Waters and Judy Ellis

email: [tarryn.corlet@lismore.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tarryn.corlet@lismore.nsw.gov.au)

Below is a full list of Heartmoves classes.

## East Lismore

From 13th March – Wednesdays 10.30am at East Lismore Uniting Church Hall, 125 Dibbs Street

## Clunes

From 14th March – Thursdays 10.30am at Clunes Coronation Hall, 11 Walker Street

## Goonellabah

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10.30am at Goonellabah Sports and Aquatic Centre, 50 Oliver Avenue

## Nimbin

Tuesdays 10.30am at Nimbin Aged Care, 81 Cullen Street

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# Nimbin Garden Club Notes



by Bernadine Schwartz

Our first garden visit on 16th February was at Goolmangar at the home of Georgina McPhee and was well attended by 26 members, despite the terrible weather conditions. Our last visit for 2012 was a scorching 37 degrees and we needed rain desperately, making it a stark contrast to the climate we are experiencing now. Georgina has owned the 12-acre property for 14 years, and has been creating a pocket of rainforest that she can be

very proud of over this time. Upon entering Georgina's long driveway, I felt taken back in time as we drove towards the beautiful rustic house. The old farmhouse is surrounded by a fence thickly covered in honeysuckle and varieties of jasmine, giving the garden that untamed quality. An archway laden with these climbers leads you onto the veranda, which must be an excellent spot to sit on a hot summer's day. Many plantings of yesterday, today and tomorrow shrubs grow along the edge of the veranda, and a wonderful old wisteria

wraps itself around the posts. Our tour of the property began with a grove of crepe myrtles of every colour overhanging the pathway that led us into an open area of lawn with plantings of many trees. These trees included: leopard trees, lilly pillies, blackbeans and red flowering gums. The main focus was a circular garden with fragrant old English roses of all colours growing along the perimeter and the centre planted with a mass of spider orchids and other annuals.

Continuing our walk up the slope we found a towering gum with a trunk that was easily 2.5 metre across, standing at the entrance to the rainforest. It is a credit to Georgina when you see her efforts with new plantings of many native trees such as rosewood, quandongs, foambark and Queensland waratah, which is a spectacular tree when mature.

As we entered the forest we were greeted with a colourful



dragon suspended from the trees and brightly coloured totems scattered about. Georgina is in the process of creating an understory with brommies, palms, birds nests and many other species that are vital for a truly functional rainforest. A grand red cedar stood at least 20 metres tall and many of us stood back so we could see it in its full glory. Continuing farther into the forest, we were led out to a pond with a tiled serpent path and low-lying shrubs giving it a natural look. Once again there was a variety of trees – grevilleas, liquid amber, flame tree and red-fruited ebonies to name a few.

As we headed back to the house for afternoon tea, we came upon a thick, lush Dutchman's pipe with its spectacular flowers and heart-shaped leaves covering a shed. One of our members informed me that

the European species of Georgina's vine (Georgina's vine is an Australian native) is deadly to our Richmond butterfly, which lay their larva mistaking it for the native species. This is another example of the impact an introduced plant can have on our environment.

This garden was another example of the effort our local gardeners put into their properties with the end result being a beautiful place to live and enjoy, for both us and the wildlife. Thank

you so much Georgina for allowing us to visit your garden as well as being the perfect host. I am sure everyone enjoyed themselves even though the rain persisted.

## Next Meeting

Saturday 16th March will be our next visit, to be held at Kath and Kerrie's garden at Jiggi from 2pm to 4pm. The property is located at 973 Jiggi Road, 9.7km from Goolmangar. Visitors are welcome – bring along your cup and folding chair.



Photos: Gil Schilling

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Very quiet and private location with undulating farmlands surrounding the property. Kick-back on the spacious deck which takes in 3 aspects so you can make the most of the breezes and sunshine and watch the wallabies play in the fields below. The owners have spent a lot of time and money getting this property to the state it is in now where you don't have to do anything. Good water storage, big double garage and ample downstairs storage space complete this idyllic lifestyle picture. Set in Doon Doon, one of the most picturesque parts of the valley and just 30 minutes to Murwillumbah and under an hour to the Gold coast. With fishing, sailing and canoeing on your doorstep just minutes away at Clarrie Hall dam. Put yourself in the picture. Inspect Today!



**BARKERS VALE \$599,000**



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Come fall in love with this slice of paradise nestled at the foot of the World Heritage listed Border Ranges National Park. A lovingly restored hundred year old federation home with classic tongue and groove boards, hardwood flooring, high ceilings and a gorgeous relaxed yet sophisticated feel. Enclosed verandahs on 3 sides and an entertainers deck with views to the Nightcap Ranges and Mount Burrell. Certified underground drinking quality spring water feeds the home, plus you have 5 dams and a permanent 50metre creek frontage to cater for whatever livestock you desire makes you drought proof! Capable of running horses and up to 40 cattle. Loads of infrastructure, including a 5 bay machinery shed, 3 car garage, original dairy barn, great fencing and 3 gated access points into this sprawling 107 acre sanctuary.



**NIMBIN \$260,000**



**NO MORE RENT**  
Still caught in the rent cycle? Well at this price you can buy your very own home and break the cycle. Priced below current replacement value is this centrally located 3 bedroom home in the colourful village of Nimbin. Beautiful western red cedar features with polished hoop pine and cathedral ceilings give a chalet style feel. Light and airy and set on a large 1200sqm garden block with views to the Nimbin Rocks.  
Open plan living areas and a large covered deck give it an easy going feel and you are just a 3 minute walk to every amenity offered in the village.  
Buy to live in now or invest with an eye to the future with great current rent returns.



**UKI \$599,000**



**What a Lovely Mix**  
This is a lovely mix of a good size home on a well fenced area kids, dogs or a pony. There is also a large area planted with a wide variety of fruit trees as well. Water is a feature of the property with a lovely picnic area and creek at the base of the property. Another feature is the magnificent view to Mount Warning.  
\* Four bedrooms, elevated with views  
\* Solar grid and solar hotwater, plus water pumping rights to snaths creek.  
\* Huge living area with high ceilings  
\* 11 x 7m shed - Lockable with plenty of room for the caravan  
\* Lovely creek and waterways for the afternoon picnics  
\* Well fenced area for the kids or pets  
\* Creek running through the property with pump and storage tank.  
\* 2.1 Ha - 5.1 Acres

