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Putting foreign corporate interest first

by Isabel McIntosh

The Lock the Gate movement formed to counter the tsunami of mining never before seen in Australia. More than fifty percent or 437 million hectares of our land is covered by coal and gas licenses or applications. There are 11 of our 16 National Landscapes under threat from mining projects. Coal Seam Gas threatens groundwater. It produces contaminated wastewater that there's no effective way of disposing of. It destroys regional jobs and futures. And now a Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) is being planned with provisions that would block our right to stop or even reduce its havoc. 'Investor state dispute settlement' (ISDS) provisions that are being discussed for the TPPA will lock the door on our electoral democracy.

The proposed TPPA will protect the rights of corporate investors at the expense of democratic governance. These are the people that want to jeopardise land and water security for the short term – and diminishing – profits of fossil fuels. If the mining industry is allowed to carry out its business plan, the planet tanks. Whether thru invasive mining or the impact of catastrophic climate change Australia's agricultural land will diminish to a fraction of what it is now.

Lock the Gate movement works in two ways: Firstly to delay projects through blockades and court cases and Secondly, to improve government regulation of the mining industry. At the core of this is a grassroots organiser model which is continually increasing community awareness and building a broad base social movement.

By delaying projects it costs the companies money, adding costs to the projects, reducing the profitability. It also adds risk in the investor's eyes. Delay also gives us time to raise court cases, get heard in the environmental court which again can add delay. It creates media coverage which in turn also raises more and new broadbase awareness, locally and nationally and puts pressure on government to improve

Hidden away in the heart of Nimbin village are two well-surfaced tennis courts, a somewhat rundown clubhouse with toilet, and lights for night tennis.

The Cullen Street courts were built in 1939 by Bill Gradwell and Barney Stewart on the site of the first Nimbin Butter Factory. Barney owned a sports store in Nimbin and ran the courts in conjunction with his shop.

The courts and equipment were sold to Nimbin Tennis Club when it was formed after the war. According to the Nimbin Centenary book, 1982 was a good year for the club, with new lighting and fencing and a membership of 60 people.

Interest in tennis has fluctuated over the years, and in 2009 the Department of Fair Trading wound up Nimbin Tennis Club Inc. Under section 77 of the Associations Incorporation Act, all property of the association now rests with the Director-General Department of Fair



Bob Irwin at Kerry, 2012, generating media coverage of the CSG blockade.

regulations, protect water, protect health and the agriculture and tourism industries. The Kerry blockade in January 2012 against Arrow Energy drilling in SE Queensland lasted twelve days and delayed the project and achieved significant media coverage. That image of the riot squad holding back farmers and then Arrow's trucks driving over the farmers' hats is not easily forgotten. Arrow drilled its well, supported by dozens of police, but it's never been back, a win for the community and a win for social license. And there are many other examples.

Delay cost the companies money as they can't progress with their projects and if this is foreign investor money that's where the TPPA will kick in. In Canada the US-based Lone Star energy company is currently using the 'investor-state dispute settlement' (ISDS) provisions in the North American Free Trade Agreement, to sue the Quebec provincial government for \$250 million, because it suspended shale gas mining pending a study of its environmental impact. The Quebec government was acting in response to concerns from the community. The NSW Government has already enacted new regulation in response to community concerns— think of the 2km no go zones, the protection of vintners and equestrian lands and policy to improve the storage methods of coal seam gas wastewater.

If Abbott signs the TPPA and we continue to delay destructive mining projects in Australia or force the

suspension of projects with a majority foreign investment the ISDS provision will mean our governments could be sued for millions of dollars. The TPPA will be an even greater reason for the government to ignore the voice of the community and our demands for reviews and regulation. The TPPA will put the power firmly in the hand of the mining giants and give them even greater control over our governments.

We are in the last days of the fossil fuel industry and they will throw everything at us as we push for the change that has to happen. At the heart of democracy are our legal rights as citizens to protest, our right as citizens to raise questions and concerns.

If the TPPA and ISDS go ahead it will firmly undermine the environmental and justice systems at the core of our communities and fundamentally shift the balance of power to mining investors. It will create a cascade of power where federal government can discipline state governments for representing citizens with progressive environmental and social policy. It will mean more corporate government decision-making that represents foreign corporate interests ahead of its own citizens. Do we want Australia to be a place of innovation, inspiration with thriving tourism, education and manufacturing sector, strong regional communities and empowered citizens? Or do we want Australia to be a foreign-owned quarry?

You can tweet Isabel@mumdaze



Trading.

This situation only came to light recently when Nimbin Tennis Club received a letter advising that an outstanding rates debt had been forwarded to a debt collection agency.

While people were still playing tennis, and electricity and water rates were being paid, no-one was taking care of the rates owing. Including this year's rates, the debt to the council currently stands at around \$5500.

The Lismore City Council has generously halted action to collect this debt while the community tries to regain

ownership of the courts.

After discussions between tennis players, community organisations and interested community members, a quest is under way to transfer ownership of the courts to Nimbin Headers Sports Club Inc.

The tennis courts would be a wonderful addition to the club and over time the Headers hope to attract funds to turn the courts into a multi-purpose facility to include futsal (five-a-side soccer), netball and basketball. About \$7500 is required to do this.

However, the Headers

Club is not in a position to cover the outstanding debt to Lismore Council, so if the community is keen to keep the courts, people need to join the tennis club or start using the courts.

Annual membership is very affordable – \$100 per family, \$75 for singles, and you can play any time for free. For non-members the charge is \$10 per hour per court. There is an additional charge for lights of \$15 per hour. Bookings are made through Pixie, who lives next door, phone 6689-1728.

If you would like to help save the courts and return them to community ownership please see Byron at the post office with your membership fee.

Why not give a gift of membership as a Xmas present? Even if you never want to play tennis a donation would be greatly appreciated and if you have any doubt about the value of the courts, take a peek and see for yourself. The entrance is the driveway just before the Granny's Farm.

Who loves the smell of napalm in the morning?

by Mark Broomhall

During the early hours of the morning of 30th August, the Mt Nardi area in the Pholis Gap region of the Nightcap National Park was subject to sustained incendiary bombing from a helicopter during a mission that was accomplished by the NSW division of the Parks and Wildlife Service.

What the locals have experienced is a severe lack of public liaison: No official notice was given to private landholders adjacent to NP, or to the Nimbin community of this proposal, and no notification to close access to NP to general public in regards to incendiary activities. With the benefit of a little hindsight we surmise that they had chosen this method as a means of trying to locate foliage that would burn and nip the job in the bud by the time the total fire ban was enforced for this year. Various fires in various eco-zones flared up but due to the forest

type the fires did not take.

The incendiaries landed in old growth brush box, some hosting strangler figs of around 200 years of age, mature crab apple and 300-year old coachwood, the signature species of sub-tropical rain forests. What National Parks had identified and described as wet sclerophyll is a very narrow tract of this forest type, only existing on rock outcrops and directly along the cliff line.

Whilst there is old growth sclerophyll in these areas, it exists in harmony with a fully developed rainforest canopy, understory and gallery, confirming that historically a natural wildfire event hasn't affected these areas for around 300 years.

Parks and Wildlife returned on Sunday 6th October and lit a fire in the region of the incendiary bombing, the bottom end of Pholis Gap walking trail. The following day they admit to responding to the fire, again, in the early hours, bulldozer at

the ready on a Labour Day weekend. When community members informed the entire working team of the World Heritage status of the region and of the previous understanding with Parks and Wildlife and the community, the police were called. They came and they intimidated members of the community to the point where they had to withdraw in fear from the situation. Using the fire as an excuse, they bulldozed over an old logging track that had been previously left to re-vegetate for thirty years by the Park Service themselves because of the nature of the vegetation and the exalted nature of the legal status of the area. The ostensible reason for this recent behavior was that the previously delicately placed, eco-sensitive walking trail had been damaged in the cyclone of January this year. The trail did need some repair.

Mebbin National Park in the nearby region was fired on the same Labour Day

weekend, in the National Parks own online reports both fires were simultaneously 'brought under control' by 5.30pm on the Monday, the coordinated action having been successfully completed during a total fire ban period.

Apart from the serious breaches within the inter-departmental fire regime that as I have indicated earlier we will revisit shortly, the management of species sensitive areas is protected by Part 5 of the EP&A Act which deals succinctly with threatened species and via the more recent Protection of the Environment Act, a license may be obtained to carry out activities in a species sensitive area, but only after a visit and report by the Forest Compliance Unit and the Threatened Species Unit. We have requested to see their recent reports of the area that allow the actions that the parks unit have carried out.

If the officer of the National Parks Unit that carried out this operation had listened to the community member who was informing them of the status of this region they may have checked their actions. He was the community member who gave court evidence prior to the declaration of the Nightcap National Park in 1982 and has been recognized as the national expert of this region for thirty years. Instead he was threatened and had to flee. It seems uniforms only talk to uniforms and the community is fair game.

However, an informed community is a pillar of the mandate of the fire regime. A community consultation with the experts who live there could have nipped this travesty in the bud. Instead, the National Park was fire bombed, ignited by hand, dozed and the community was left out of the loop, then when they tried to speak they



were threatened. Instead of incendiary bombing being used to ascertain the volatility of forest types the National Parks could have enjoyed a walk in the park with the local experts. What better way to come to an understanding about the forest that it is their mandate to protect? All they had to do was ask. They would have received a much-needed botany lesson and an update in the recent evolutionary status of the entire region re-growth and all. They have always respected the community in the past.

We understand that we have a percentage driven process from above applied post haste since the Victoria fires. We understand that the bottom line of this top-down, heavy-handed approach is the insurability of the peoples' assets, assets such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the

Forestry Commission. The insurance for the community and government alike is that the existent legislation, finely wrought through decades, is respected. It cannot just be swept aside. Since when has National Parks subbed out to the Forestry Commission to install a fire regime that operates on the premise that all of Australia's eco-systems behave the same? How absurd.

The whole understanding revolves around the 'fire thresholds' of different vegetation. This is Australia. It is vast, beautiful and subtle beyond human imagination.

The Mt Nardi incident highlights the ignorance and exposes an about face of the National Parks at least locally. We, the community are left in the dark and we are requesting some respect and courtesy and an explanation for the said events that does not insult our intelligence.

Stylish major works



Kyleaha



Alice

by Marg Canning

Nimbin Central School's Year 12 textile students have successfully completed their stylish major works. Due on 12th August and already sent to Sydney for marking, the garments were created by Kyleaha McDonald, Alice Matheson and Jade Ryffel-Hughes, who are extremely proud of their efforts.

Working to a tight schedule can be stressful, especially when textile items must be accompanied by a very prescriptive portfolio displaying and explaining student's inspirations, design, manufacture (with specified trade drawings), experiments and evaluation, both textually and visually.

Kyleaha's evening ensemble of midnight blue satin dress and black overlay 'coat' are rich in elegance and texture and so professionally completed. Originally inspired by *Alice in Wonderland*'s costume designer, Colleen Atwood and others, the dress's full skirt is emphasised by a complementary black organza petticoat.

Alice's striking blue oriental patterned

brocade cape and vintage style high-waisted, plum satin crepe, slim-line skirt, portray with an original twist, a contemporary re-interpretation of historical beautiful designs. Her embroidered pockets add another feature to the skirt.

Jade's exquisite costume of panelled corset and skirt reflect a theme of the peacock feather in colour and design. The corset consists of contrasting teal cotton and Japanese printed (stylised peacock-feather design) panels with highlights of gold metallic thread, gold eyelets and lacing. This is balanced by the swing skirt of harmonious gold satin and green organic cotton panels and ruffle for the hemline. To maintain volume for the skirt, Jade has created a black tulle/teal cotton petticoat. The synthesis results in a delightful costume. Jade is planning a peacock-feather styled hand-held mask to add an extra dimension.

The garments will be returned from HSC marking early in Term 4 when we hope to display them in the school foyer. Once again girls, congratulations on such a wonderful effort.

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Abundance, pleasure, planet and plate

by Alison Drover

Sustainability. This is definitely not as tasty a word as abundance.

Climate change can be argued and debated, but one thing I usually get consensus on is that things don't taste the same as they did in the past. When things don't taste the same, we need more energy to fix them with sauces, additives and flavourings. This can be great cooking, but if food is produced using tried and true natural and organic methods, we are starting from a far more flavoursome base.

Relating to food on a similar vein we also have that 'heightened' affinity when we can identify with the grower or producer. I watch people at the farmers' markets, they cherish their tomatoes and place their peas carefully in their recycle bag. It is a very different relationship to the trolley ride of a supermarket.

I am encouraged to see abundant participants from all ages and abilities even those with disabilities at my community cooking classes, which are designed to address food waste, teach cooking skills, learn about soil and how we live pleasurably without compromising people or planet. From the workshops I see people discovering they can be teachers too, and also the masters of community resilience as they are all individually key to our abundance.

Thank you to ACE College for taking the time to host these workshops for the second year.

Panzanella Salad

Italian bread salad made when tomatoes are juicy, sweet and ripe.

The best way to use up old bread and is a delicious crunchy, nutritious and filling salad. Simple in ingredients, it reinforces the importance of taste and quality. Save the odds and ends of loaves in a bag in a freezer or if you have a loaf that has gone stale.

Ingredients

- ½ loaf approx leftover/stale bread (must be a good artisan loaf or the saved ends of loaves that have been kept in the freezer);
- 15-20 Roma tomatoes in season grown or local and ripe;
- green olives or black pitted – * Summerland Olives from Farmers Market;
- 2 unwaxed lemons, zested;
- ½ cup olive oil – * Summerland Olive Oil;
- 5 tspns red wine vinegar;
- salt and pepper;
- fresh basil, fresh thyme or rosemary – small bunch;
- 1 red onion finely sliced.
- Optional:
 1 tub Nimbin Valley goat fetta cheese.
- Flowers: nasturtians or violets – good for your heart and also we eat with our eyes.

Method

Take your loaf and slice up into rustic pieces – small chunks randomly cut so they have different shapes and there is a large surface area.

Place on a baking tray and drizzle generously with oil. Sprinkle with herbs like rosemary and the lemon zest and then place in the oven on 190 C for about 10 minutes or until the bread is dry and crunchy. The bread should not burn so check the oven after 5 minutes and turn over to ensure even cooking.

Slice each tomato in half lengthways. If you have some vine ripened cherry or tiny tomatoes in the garden these can be added whole. The idea is to have a tasty, textured salad so that with each bite of tomato you have a bite of crunchy olive oil soaked bread.



Choose a large platter so you can showcase the beauty of luscious seasonal tomatoes. Arrange the tomatoes on the plate add the zest of one lemon to the tomatoes and season with salt. (Tomato is one vegetable that needs salt to bring out the flavour). Add the red onion to the tomatoes.

Drizzle more olive oil over the salad and add olives and some fresh herbs: oregano, basil or parsley – whatever you have available. Take the crunchy bread and arrange this throughout the tomatoes on the platter. Cover with red wine vinegar.

Enjoy!

Leftovers: If you don't use all the salad, pop it into the blender and you have the basis of gazpacho soup – add some natural yogurt, grated cucumber, mint and basil and serve cold with croutons and lemon zest.

Eat local, taste global

A diet focused on local foods and supporting local economies need not be at odds with culinary cosmopolitanism, argues a Southern Cross University academic.

How can one experience "real" Italian cuisine if you only buy locally-made parmesan? How can one justify pouring Megachef oyster sauce on the eggs, chili and spring onions all grown in your own backyard?

This seeming dichotomy between buying local and embracing cosmopolitanism in food was explored by Tammi Jonas in her paper – *Chinese Oyster Sauce On Backyard Eggs: Cosmopolitan Locavorism* – recently presented at the third annual Regional Food Cultures and Networks Conference in Daylesford, Victoria.

The university's conference convenor, Erica Wilson, says the conference continues to grow in stature.

"While food has become truly a global trade, increasingly, consumers are focusing on food from a local perspective," she said.

Southern Cross University has established the Regional



Food Network (RFN), a group of scholars and practitioners in the field.

The RFN is focused on the development of multidisciplinary, collaborative, knowledge-

Local food on the agenda at the third Regional Food Cultures and Networks Conference.

Photo: DMP.

driven partnerships in the Asia Pacific region.



by Steven Strong

What follows is the "Conclusion/Hypothesis" taken from our archaeological paper written on the Standing Stones found near Mullumbimby.

During the brief period between the site's first investigation and its destruction, Frederic Slater (president of the Australian Archaeological and Educational Research Society) claimed this mound was the oldest form of temple in the world and contained within it "the basis of all knowledge, all science, all history and all forms of writing" and the foundation of "all knowledge past, present and future".

Our brief was to return to the site and determine whether Slater and his on-field colleague were justified in making such sensational claims.

What was our check-list and have the questions asked, been answered? In the case of the small mound/burial ground, yes.

It is definitely an import, made from materials brought from some distance. There are sandstone rocks – not naturally occurring in this area – by the thousands within and scattered around the edges, most used for fill but a few worked and shaped.

We have found quite a few of the stones that originally formed "the Mystic Track of Life," and have a map identifying

the position of each rock which was charted about four months before it was ploughed.

The second, much bigger mound was most definitely leveled and terraced before the site was ploughed in 1940, this was also unheard of, but of even more importance was the message written on this boomerang-shaped mound.

The Original Sacred Language is a sublime, sophisticated and spiritual merging of symbols, arrangements, hand signs, body parts, animals and numbers into the first spoken and written language.

There are more questions unanswered than resolved, and no doubt some of our explanations are quite radical and not without alternatives. Nevertheless, something, whether the participants in attendance or technology applied, was part of an equation which just doesn't fit into any accepted account of pre-1788 Australia.

Slater believed the Egyptians came here as apprentices to be tutored in the esoteric insights and cultural refinements that were a part and parcel of the Australian landscape and original philosophy. "There is no mistaking the fact that the aborigines ... gave not only to the Egyptians their knowledge and their foundation of hieroglyphics and their philosophy but formulated the basis of all knowledge in the beginning, now and to come", he wrote.



As bold as Slater's declaration was, the elders and custodians are insisting that is exactly the case.

Opinions aside, there are facts and historical irregularities that are, as Slater rightly observes, "of worldwide interest."

Occasionally, Slater erred, and one of his misunderstandings is his claim that this place is "the Stonehenge of Australia".

The circles of standing stones at Stonehenge chart solstices and important astronomical events, the complex in Australia contains the "basis of all knowledge," astronomical markers, our First Language, solstices, religious tabernacles and humanity's past history-beginning all the way back to Creation and spanning forward to future prophecies.

New rules and penalties snare unwary motorists

Motorists are likely to be unwittingly committing driving offences every day.

Many motorists have been getting fined for breaking road rules they weren't even aware existed. Don't get caught out!

- Stop alongside a kerb with a yellow line and you could be fined more than \$300, and lose points. A National Road Rule allowing yellow lines to replace No Stopping signs was adopted in NSW last year. (NB: There is such a line along part of the river side of the road at Tumbulgum.)
- It is illegal to leave your car unlocked, leave the key in the ignition, or leave the windows open or wound down more than five centimetres if you're more than three metres away from your vehicle. Each of those offences comes with a \$99 ticket.

Police can record offences while driving past, and issue infringement notices through the post, as a Nimbin truck-driver recently discovered.

Wouldn't it be a great idea if we were informed of recently introduced new rules when they send out our Rego renewals... or would that be too logical a thing for the Sydney boffins to think of?

Some drivers may even willingly commit what they judge to be minor driving offences, perhaps not realising the consequences. Joshua Dowling, Associate Editor of Drive.com.au, has compiled this list:

- Hang an arm outside a running vehicle and the "limb protrude" fine is \$298

and three demerit points – a quarter of your licence. The same applies to resting your elbow on the window ledge.

- Tooting the horn to say farewell to a friend is "illegal use of a warning device": \$298.
- You cannot drive with an animal on your lap. The fine is \$397 and three demerit points; \$496 and four points in a school zone. Same for carrying an animal on a motorbike between the rider and the handlebars.
- It is against the law for the driver to drink alcohol in the car, even if they're under the limit: \$298 and three points.
- Carrying more occupants than a car was designed to carry, and carrying passengers in "a part of a vehicle not designed for carrying passengers" – the back of a wagon, van, ute or hatchback – is a \$298 ticket and three demerit points.
- Obscuring a car's number plate, for example by a tow-ball, is a \$397 ticket.
- It's a \$99 ticket to use a foglight "unless in fog or other hazardous weather reducing visibility".
- Failing to dip your high beam is a \$99 fine and one demerit point. Driving at night with your headlights off attracts the same penalty.
- Not indicating left when leaving a roundabout: \$165 and two demerit points. This was introduced on 1st November, 2012.
- Talking or texting on a hand-held mobile phone, including holding it

away from your face on loudspeaker, even pressing a button to answer the phone or check a text, or using it as a navigation device, even while stationary in traffic, is a \$298 ticket and three demerit points. Get caught in a school zone and the fine is \$397 and four demerit points.

- Riding a bicycle "furiously or recklessly" is a \$66 fine. Run a red light on a pushie, and it's also a \$66 ticket.
- Leading an animal while riding a bicycle – or driving a vehicle – is illegal. It's a \$66 fine.
- If you're riding a horse alongside a road in NSW or Victoria, you are subject to the road rules. That means you must be below the 0.05 blood-alcohol limit.
- Driving barefoot is NOT an offence in NSW. In fact, some road safety experts advocate it, especially if the option is thongs or high heels.

There doesn't seem to be much of an attempt to publicise offences under the *Motor Traffic Act* as amended (most recently in June this year), as they are determined from time to time by the minister. Brochures from the RMS give limited information, as does their website. Yet ignorance of the law is no defence.

The introduction of the mandatory cargo net regulation for utes is a recent example – word only went around after tradies started getting fined. Surely a proactive state-wide publicity strategy would be in order?

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AND
Saturday 7th December 2013
At: Nimbin Town Hall
At: 1pm-3.30pm

Note: the second workshop is a **repeat** of the first. We are doing the workshop twice to enable as many folks to participate as possible.

Please come along and add your valuable input.



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Letters

Activist retires

A big shout out to Phil Mitten who, for well over a decade now, has made an enormous contribution to the survival and functioning of the Nimbin Environment Centre through his tireless commitment in keeping the shop and office open.

Also for 30-plus years of dedication in protecting the environment of Nimbin and surrounds in direct action, whilst at the same time being a father to a family of five, and creating a native woodland where once there was a bald, windswept hill at his home.

To our way of thinking, Phil is a "fair dinkum" human being. Good on you Phil, enjoy your retirement from the shop, and dance on in the revolution.

'Be glad, be glad, for the song has no ending.'

Deborah and Mick Stacey
Mullumbimby

Interstate amazement

This octogenarian would like to thank the people who made my recent stay in Nimbin so pleasant. Among others, thanks to Sue and Tim (and their two gorgeous cats) for cool shelter on a stinking hot day, Chris for a badly needed lift up the hill, Darren and Stuart at Grey Gum Lodge for much thoughtfulness, The helpful and friendly lady at Vinnies (what an op shop). Nimbin people are absolutely amazing. Thank you all.

Isobel Seddon
West Footscray, VIC

Debt of gratitude

For most of my adult life I have actively avoided debt, with mixed success. Some say it's an almost pathological self-reliance, others that it's evidence of strength and responsibility. Either way, I have tended to rely on myself to get by.

Lately, however, I've become aware of a kind of debt at play in my life. This one is a debt of gratitude – thus far unexpressed.

The last couple of years have been particularly challenging for me and my little family. Maia's ongoing health struggles, and Michael's death last year have profoundly impacted on each of us, and made my job of mothering these three so much more complex and challenging.

Through these challenges, I have been made aware of a tremendous community of loving and generous individuals (and organisations) who genuinely hold us in their hearts. There were days when I came home and found firewood cut for me and kindling in a box by the front door. Many, many times my family enjoyed wholesome and

About us

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NGT is auspiced by Nimbin Community School Co-op Ltd., 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin

NEXT DEADLINE:
Wednesday 27th November

Email: nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

Senate preferences

It's great to see you're printing the analysis of Aiden Ricketts (NGT, October). I'm particularly pleased to see Aiden's most recent work thoroughly addresses the issue that caused so much angst during the recent federal election: senate preference deals.

I think his critique can be condensed into two words. Integrity and transparency. As an elector all I ask is that you are who you say you are, and that we can clearly see that what you do indicates that you are who you say you are.

These two essential notions should be written in great big letters and posted in every electoral office in the country – left or right.

Elections aren't tricks we turn on anyone! I have a right to vote for people who represent my beliefs, whether I drag my knuckles to the speedway every second Sunday or demand my chardy be served at exactly 5 degrees C.

The deception inherent in the Senate preference swaps was an ignominious descent into deception driven by delusions of grandeur, and we and our country will suffer for it for much longer than just the next three years, as the new right wing senate will force through increases in mining of non-renewables, retard the growth in renewables and roll back protections in National parks.

So repeat after me... integrity and transparency. And just keep repeating over and over until it's imprinted.

Laurie Axtens
South Lismore

HEMP retorts

That the HEMP Party gained 0.71% of the Senate vote nationally, placing it 10th out of the 50 parties contesting, was a creditable result but, as your correspondents Ricketts and Jiggins (NGT, October) accuse, to say that HEMP's preferences brought about a right wing majority into the Senate is completely wrong.

In South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland, HEMP's preferences ended up with the Greens. In Tasmania, with the Greens already elected, Hemp preferences helped to almost elect the Sex

Party instead of a Liberal. In Victoria, again with the Greens already elected, HEMP's preferencing of the Motoring Enthusiasts stopped a fourth Liberal from being elected. In New South Wales, Hemp preferences, along with Sex, Wikileaks, Animal Justice, Drug Law Reform and Stable Population, did help to elect the libertarian Liberal Democrats Party who, unlike the Greens, have a policy to legalise cannabis.

NSW Green supporters, rather than blaming HEMP as an excuse for their failure, should question why their negotiators couldn't secure any of the six preference deals they needed to make up for their 3% drop in primary vote. In the case of HEMP, Sex and Drug Law Reform, the Green's prohibitionist drug policy was the reason. The Greens also need to explain what they promised the Palmer United Party for their preference swaps in five states.

Jiggins' accusations are even wider of the mark. He got only one thing correct – HEMP's preference strategy was to 'farm' preferences for our Queensland candidate Jim Moylan. Moylan was the last candidate excluded, so winning in Qld was no delusion. Only one more preference deal was all that was needed. By noting a few coincidental similarities between the Shooters and Fishers and HEMP's preference lists, Jiggins extrapolates some sort of master/servant relationship between the two parties. There is one problem with that theory – HEMP and the Shooters did not swap preferences between themselves.

There is, however, a party who HEMP did swap preferences with, who also preferreded all of the small parties mentioned by Jiggins. That party's preference list was so similar to HEMP's that in the three states where it ran they helped elect the same three candidates. That party was Drug Law Reform who parachuted the Queensland Jiggins into South Australia as their candidate. Drug Law Reform preferences, along with HEMP's, went to the Greens in SA, to the Motoring Enthusiasts in Vic and to the Liberal Democrats in NSW. Presumably Jiggins will now have to resign from his latest party because they also 'foiled the cause of drug law reform in Australia, while delivering a right wing, anti-Green coalition significant influence in the Senate.'

Graham Askey
Registered Officer, HEMP Party

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Notices

For Sale – washing machine

Fisher & Paykel top loader, large (6.5kg?) 2-years old, good condition, \$250 ono. Pick up from Cedar Point. Phone Anne on 0427-586-560 or 6633-5157.

For Sale – motor home

2003 Mercedes Sprinter, 2.7 l turbo diesel, 4-seat, solar equipped, fridge, TV, microwave oven, sink, awning; new tyres, ball-joints, shocks, 12 months rego, \$24,000. Phone Peter on 0487-259-582.

Rental Vacancy at the Nimbin Community Centre

Large room (45.85m²) in Acacia House available from December. Light and airy with large windows, wooden floorboards and a beautiful paint job. Previously used for workshops, art studio and the CTC. Rent: \$398.06 per month for non-profit purposes, but may be higher for commercial rentals. Bonds: 1 month rent + electricity bond + key deposit. Two rental references required. Send a written Expression of Interest to the Nimbin Community Centre Management Committee at 81 Cullen Street Nimbin, or email: ncci@nimbincommunity.org.au For further information, please contact Nina Boddenberg during office hours (Tuesdays/Wednesdays) on 6689-0000.

Treasurer required

The NH&W Management Committee auspice Nimbin Aged Care & Respite Services and facilitate the NH&W Interagency Forum. We need a new volunteer Treasurer, supported by the NACRS bookkeeper, to assist the NH&W Management Committee from late November. This is a great opportunity to contribute to an essential and caring Nimbin service within a supportive team. If you have relevant financial experience and can attend short monthly meetings please contact Rose Cubis, NACRS Coordinator, on 6689-1430, email: rose@nacrs.com.au

Embroiderers' Guild

Meets 9.30am - 2.30pm every 1st and 3rd Wednesday and every 3rd Saturday of each month in the function room at the Red Dove centre, Keen Street, Lismore. All embroiderers, from all towns and districts in the Northern Rivers, are invited to come along. Phone 0423-337-872 or simply turn up.

Nimbin Mystical Fair

Next fair will be held 13-14-15th December. Anyone interested in stalls or any info about the event, please phone Jazmin on 0427-822-128. "Altruistic, magical, loving."

Annual General Meetings

• Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc. AGM

Wednesday 13th November, 6pm in Comskool Room, 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin.

• Nimbin Community Centre Inc. AGM

Thursday 14th November, 6pm in the Birth & Beyond room, 54 Cullen Street Nimbin. New members welcome.

• Tuntable Landcare Group AGM

Thursday 14th November, 5.30pm at Eternity Springs Art Farm, 483 Tuntable Creek Road, Tuntable Creek. Phone 6688-6385.

• Nimbin Aquarius Landcare Group AGM

Friday 15th November, 1pm at Nimbin Community Centre. New members welcome.

• Nimbin Chamber of Commerce AGM

Monday 18th November 2013, 6pm at Nimbin Hotel.

• Nimbin Health and Welfare AGM

Thursday 21st November, 5pm at Bottlebrush Studio in Nimbin Community Centre.

Letters to the editor

NGT welcomes letters by email or post by deadline, usually the last Wednesday of the month. Letters longer than 300 words may be cut. Letters already published elsewhere will usually not be considered. Include full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

Remembrance Day service and ceremony

Everyone is invited to attend this year's Remembrance Day service at the Nimbin District Memorial (NDM) on Monday 11th November 2013 at 10.45am.

A plaque laying ceremony will be held prior to the service, where plaques with the names of past ex-service personnel and their service to their country will be added to the Seat of Remembrance.

This is but a small gesture in remembrance of their sacrifice and service to their country and community. In this fast-paced post-modern world, it is easy to lose sight of the history, the arduous conflict, the sacrifice and the loss, that forged our Australia of today.

Please bring flowers for the monument.

The women who made 'herstory' at Pine Gap

A group of Nimbin women, inspired by the late Lorraine Maffey-Williams, who was an indigenous peace activist, travelled together in a bus, carrying beautifully crafted flags and banners, to join the protest at Pine Gap in 1983.

After the Om for World Peace at 11am on 11th November, in Allsop Park, Women for Survival who went to the protest will gather for a re-union in the Rainbow Cafe to share lunch and stories and to re-connect. Family and friends are welcome.

"The Pine Gap Women's Peace Camp in 1983 was an important initiative by Women for Survival to make Australians' opposition to the spy base — the joint US and Australian facility — known the world over.

Inspired by the actions of the Greenham Common women in Britain, about 800 women and their supporters (and, in some cases, children) made "herstory" when they converged at this remote site, west of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory.

Australia's Cold War defence policy, closely aligned to the US, prompted a groundswell of opposition to war, and in particular the use of nuclear weapons.

It brought tens of thousands into the streets on Palm Sunday peace marches across the nation later in that decade.

The convergence on Pine Gap, the first on such a scale (there had been a protest at the spy base Nurrangar, in South Australia, in the 1970s), was spearheaded by anti-nuclear and anti-war women activists."

– Pip Hinman, 2009.

Gallery gifts life membership

Members of the Nimbin Artists Gallery have decided to make founder, organiser and relentless worker Margaret McLaren a lifetime member of the Gallery.

It was Margaret's vision that has created this symbolic icon of Nimbin, which people have come to know as a repository of fine works, vibrant artists and for nurturing the talents of many, and which has become a landmark in the region, nationally and beyond.

Margaret's efforts over the years have been consistent with her vision of where the gallery should be heading. Her frugality and mighty savings have put the Gallery in a very good financial position for many years to come.

Secretary of Nimbin Artists Gallery, Gigi Warne said the Life Membership is a small token of appreciation for all Margaret's years at the helm of this institution.



"We hope that her contribution will remain an inspiration and that, as members come and go, they will be able to follow in her footsteps with the same spirit, flair, ability, discernment and creativity," she said.

"Margaret's spirit and example have been formative for many of us, and we hope we can continue her work, bringing new ideas and talents to pursue the aims and objectives of the Gallery for all artists in Nimbin."

Great pyramid or pie in the sky?

by Jimi Wollumbin

"You are going to be approached," came the cryptic warning to my wife. "Whatever you decide, please do your research first."

This was my introduction to the Women's Wisdom Circle (WWC) that is quickly spreading through our community.

A secret women's group with a \$5000 entrance fee "gift" and classic pyramid structure? Personally, I didn't feel I needed to do any research to form an opinion about this from the outset, but that says more about me than the issue at hand.

I soon discovered that a great many of my closest and most beloved female friends were already involved in this group, which mostly baffled and confused me. The structure speaks for itself – it channels the wealth of the group into the hands of a lucky few without adding any real economic value at all.

For one woman to receive \$40K only requires seven other women, but for each of them to get \$40K requires 56 women to pool \$280K, and \$2 million from 392 local women for the third generation.

A pyramidal structure that funnels the wealth and resources of the global



community into the hands of a fortunate few is the global norm.

The involvement of many women I admire and respect has helped me to move into what I now feel to be a more balanced view.

The WWC appears to have drawn together a significant number of motivated and inspired women around a shared vision, created a working communications model for meetings and support groups, and pooled substantial amounts of money – all in a very short space of time.

In general, community initiatives struggle to achieve any single one of these key features over much longer periods of time, let alone all three.

The possibility that I now perceive is that this could be extended to non-local women

in rural and indigenous communities, or women in disadvantaged communities abroad.

The crucial changes necessary to adopt such a structure are that membership is open, regardless of whether members can afford a \$5000 entry-gift, and that economic benefits are distributed proportionally to each member's level of participation in the cooperative.

Grafted onto this of course, can be aspects of the social venture model, whereby scholarships, grants, interest-free loans and training resources are invested into women in need with the goal of ultimately increasing the gross social capital of the whole community.

From a financial perspective, the project would no longer simply be concentrating the groups wealth pool into the hands of the well connected 10%, but actually generating real economic value that matched the real social capital generated thus-far.

In order to do this however, those women currently in line for the next round of payouts would need to be convinced to reinvest their \$40K return into the new structure (some women have already re-invested their \$40K payout into the existing structure).

Advertorial

Telstra Networking for Nimbin's Future

Telstra would like to update the Nimbin community that we have completed investigations into the most appropriate location for a new mobile phone base station in the area. Telstra proposes to lodge a Development Application with Lismore Council during November for a site near the Water Reservoir on High Street. Through Lismore Council's Development Assessment Process, the local community will be able to comment on the proposal. Providing customers with a reliable mobile network is important, and Telstra is continuing to work towards providing the required additional capacity in the mobile network in the Nimbin area. Further details of Telstra's Development Application will be available on Lismore Council's website following lodgement.

For any enquiries during the interim, please contact Telstra representatives Aurecon on 02 9465 5718 or email northcoastnswtcw@team.telstra.com or Post to: PO Box 1123 Lismore NSW 2480.

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