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New rural hospital management structure

Nimbin, Kyogle and Urbenville hospitals have been re-badged as Multi Purpose Service facilities by NSW Health, which has combined them under a single management structure.

The Multi Purpose Service (MPS) name means that each hospital has an Emergency Department, Rural Hospital, Aged Care (Nursing Home) and Community Health in the one building.

The MPS model uses a funds pooling approach to the state and federal government allocations available to rural and remote communities, and will mark a change from the traditional hospital structure and nursing care models.

The aim is to develop services that are more focussed on patients (now called "clients") and provide better integration of services. Increasingly, this includes the services of local General Practitioners.

There are sixty MPS's established in NSW at present, with a further four sites planned.

Bonalbo residents are involved in a community consultation process, and at this stage their local facility remains as a smaller hospital.



Julie Cadet, Nancy Martin, Nicole Ellevsen, Linda Hanna

Nancy Martin has the overall role of Executive Officer/ Director of Nursing for the three local MPS sites, working closely with Nimbin's Nurse Manager Linda Hanna, Kyogle's Nurse Manager Julie Cadet and Urbenville's Acting Nurse Manager, Nicole Ellevsen.

Glad to be Grey

Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Services is proud to announce 'Celebrating Seniors in our Community', the Seniors Week event for 2014.

A gala day is planned for Tuesday 18th March from 11am - 3pm at Bottlebrush Studio and surrounding area at the Nimbin Community Centre.

The event schedule includes:

- Professor Colleen Cartwright from Southern Cross University discussing

Aged Care Directives

- Nimbin Central School choirs, local musicians, storytelling, circus acts, Zumba demonstration

- Community Nurse Health checks, information stalls from Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre and Community Legal Centre etc.

- Jumble sale table - quality goods at small prices

- Free refreshments and lunch



• Photo exhibition: 'Celebrating Seniors'

This event is open to all, to celebrate older citizens and recognise their value to the whole community.

Donations to the jumble sale are appreciated and volunteers would be very welcome.

Please contribute to the 'Celebrating Seniors' photo exhibition - email photos or drop in hard copies to be scanned - by sharing a meaningful image in celebration of seniors everywhere. For details or donations call Rose on 6689-1709

In your neighbourhood...

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre news



www.nnic.org.au

7 Sibley Street

• Fundraising

About \$5000 was raised in February. A bit less than \$20,000 to go! Great effort Nimbin! Come out and support our last few fundraising events, so we can get this loan paid off and have a great time while you are doing it! The next gig is Beats, Rock 'N Bowl at the Nimbin Bowlo on 8th March. Have a bowl while being entertained by local DJs and The Antibodies. Entry by donation. The more you donate, the more we raise and the quicker we pay this loan off.

• Master Concept Plan community consultations

The Report on the Outcomes from the two community consultations held in November and December 2013 are now available on the project website: www.sevenonsibley.com

• Working bee

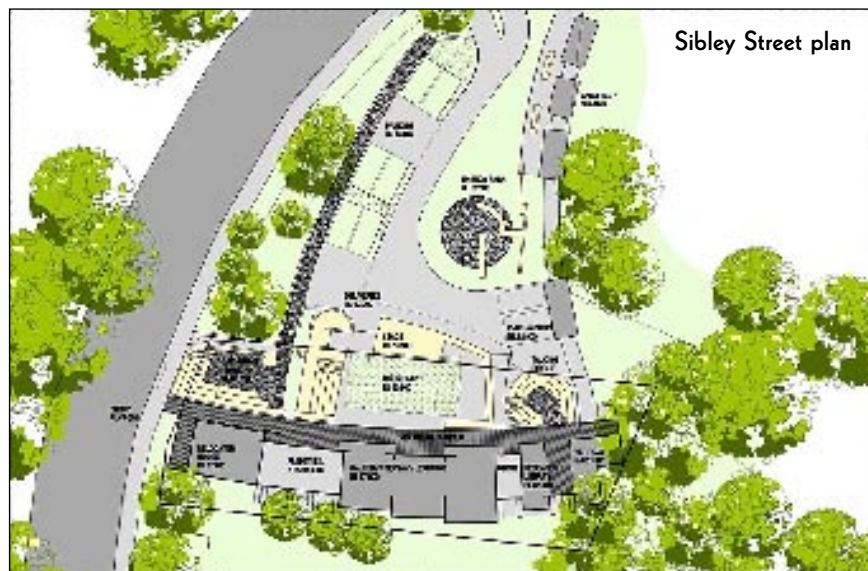
Now that we have almost paid off the loan to purchase the site it is time to start getting busy on the site. The first step is to do a big clean up. We are aiming for a date in April. If you would be willing to help out for a day, or if you have a trailer or a ute and would be willing to take a load to the Lismore tip once we are done, please contact Nat at NNIC: admin@nnic.org.au We will put on a BBQ and make it a bit of a social event while we are at it.

• Nimbin Waste survey

Nimbin folks who are in the Lismore LGA will be receiving copies of a survey in relation to Nimbin waste issues very soon. Please take the time to do the survey as it will provide valuable info to Council. If you are a Nimbin local but live outside of the Lismore LGA, then you are still invited to do the survey.

• Colour copying prices go down

Here at NNIC we have decided to reduce the costs of colour copying.



Sibley Street plan

Yep, you heard right - prices are going down! A4 colour = \$1.20. A3 = \$2.00. Bulk rates available. Yes you will pay less in Lismore at eg OfficeWorks... but any profit from our copiers goes back into community projects and supporting the costs of keeping the doors open at NNIC... plus we provide assistance if you need it, and you don't have to cop the fuel costs of driving into Lismore.

• Are you a local health practitioner?

Are you listed on our website? If not and you would like to be, simply complete the form (avail on the website - see Health) and send back to us and we can add you on. This will assist local people to find you.

• NNIC website

Our website aims to serve the community. You can find local transport timetables, latest news, community events, directory of local health practitioners, stuff for young people including updates on happenings at the Sk8 park and heaps more. The site is updated on a weekly basis and

is always worth a visit. If you think something should be on there but is not, or for any other feedback, email us at NNIC: admin@nnic.org.au

• Are you struggling with unpaid fines?

You may be eligible to apply for a Work Development Order which enables you to pay your fines down by doing volunteer work at NNIC. Make an appointment with one of our Community Workers to find out if you are eligible.

• This month's Mental Health Tip

Take a moment to notice each of your senses each day. Simply 'be' in the moment - feel the sun and wind on your face and notice the air you are breathing. It's easy to be caught up thinking about the past or planning for the future instead of experiencing the present. Practising mindfulness, by focusing your attention on being in the moment, is a good way to do this. Making a conscious effort to be aware of your inner and outer world is important for your mental health. (Courtesy: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)

Hemp, beer cans, dirt and you

by Duuvy Jester

Last Mardigrass we were asked to build an Earthship-inspired seat behind the hemp embassy. It was to be done during the festival so people could see hemp being used in a different building application. It was a whole lot of fun! Slamming, stuffing, shovelling, sweating, sniffing, slapping, smiling and salivating. An impressive display of co-creation.

From there, we have been asked to retrofit the rest. The idea was for volunteers to have an oasis of sorts where they can retreat comfortably



during the festival. It has now evolved into a proposed site for workshops, seminars, meetings and event space.

The sky is the limit, really. How can you get involved do I hear you ask? Well... Beer cans are the primary

building material. So, if you know anyone who has an affectionate relationship with four-X cans, send them our way! You can bring all un-crimped aluminium cans to the back of the hemp embassy. Drop them off tied up in garbage bags, please.

We will be holding workshops fortnightly. You will have the opportunity to learn skills such as superadobe, mortar mixing, cob oven and can wall building. Part of the money raised from the workshops will go to the seven Sibley street project.

For information on price or any other queries you may have, email us: info@terraeden.org

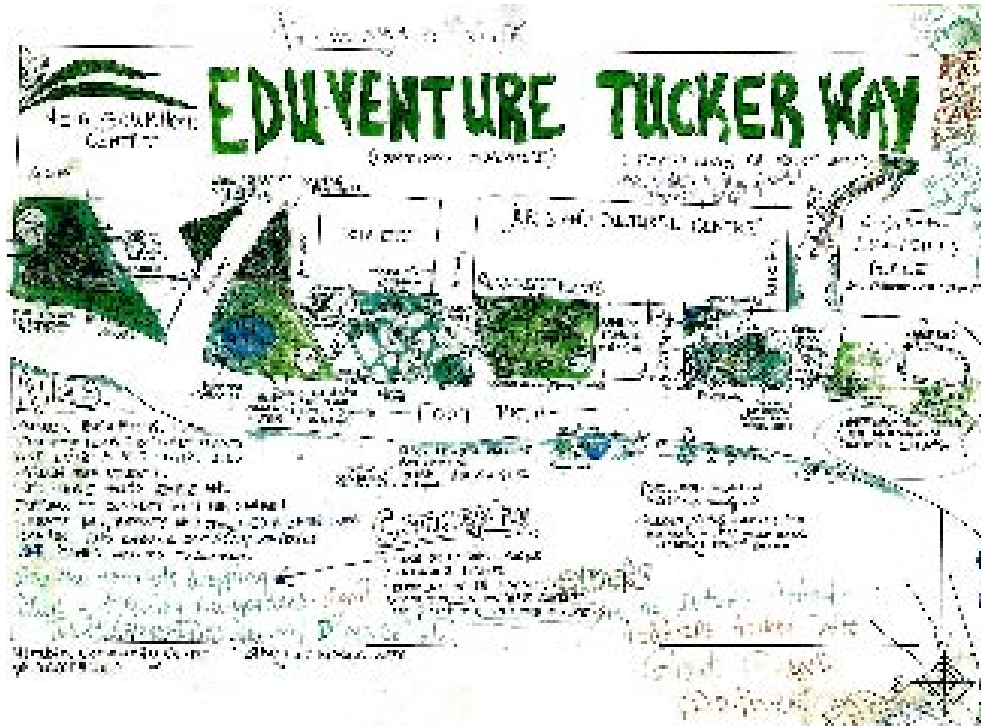
Dig over to dig in

by Gudren Buhler

A bush tucker garden is being developed next to the Aboriginal Culture Centre, below Nim-FM radio and opposite the skate park in Sibley Street.

The aims of the project are to provide bush foods, educate people on what plants are edible and their uses, green the street, encourage young people and jarjums to connect with the garden, create art, beauty and joy, edible food and love, connect and engage a diversity of people and plants, working together.

There are plans to include aniseed myrtle, lemon myrtle, finger limes, brush cherry, tamarind, mint bush, native sasparrilla, native mulberry, native



tuneric, smooth leaf Davidson plum in the garden.

If you have any of these plants and would like to donate or sell them, or if you would like to help with

the project, workdays are held every Friday 11am - 2pm.

Delicious roo burgers are available most Sundays in Allsopp Park to help raise money for this venture.



Relief for skin conditions

Psoriasis, which affects about four percent of Australians, is the cause of great distress and discomfort to many, resulting in hospitalisation for some.

For sufferers of the skin condition Psoriasis, life is full of suffering, depression, frustration and a loss of confidence.

Psoriasis has a hereditary predisposition, which when triggered, causes the immune system to produce an excessive number of skin cells. It is commonly termed, an auto-immune skin disorder.

The Good Skin Care clinic is a Complementary Medicine franchise with practices on the Gold Coast and Northern Rivers Regions. This small group of highly trained professionals use a highly effective and safe approach which increases to excellent the prognosis for Psoriasis and other skin disease sufferers.

The clinic uses the the latest breakthroughs in Complementary Medicine, spearheaded by Dr Michael Tirant, a medical researcher who holds a Doctorate from Monash University

and has spent over 25 years looking at what causes skin conditions to flare up. The breakthroughs allow the Good Skin Care clinic to be able to address the triggers for serious skin disease, no longer only treating the symptoms, according to Dr Michael Tirant.

The efficacy of Dr Tirant's treatment protocols has been confirmed by a number of European clinical trials, including a recent trial undertaken by Prof. Harald Maier, from the Department of Dermatology, University of Vienna Medical School. The results show 89% of psoriasis patients treated achieved a significant improvement after 8 weeks of treatment.

Other skin conditions that are also successfully treated at the Good Skin Care Clinic by the "Psoriasis & Skin Clinic," include Eczema, Acne, Psoriatic Arthritis, Rosacea, Dermatitis, Ichthyosis and Nail / Fungal Infections.

Good Skin Care Clinic for the Gold Coast and the Northern Rivers phone: 1300-956-566.

Skin Disease: Now Let's Make It Clear

While the rest of the world is still searching for the answer to serious diseases like psoriasis and many others, goodskincare by Psoriasis & Skin Clinic has been completely changing the lives of those who have been given no hope.

“ These photos are of my 8 year old daughter. She has had psoriasis for 4 years and it has been worsening to the stage that you see in these photos... She is now able to go swimming without getting sneered at by other children OR their parents, and there are no more nasty comments at school. She is much happier in herself and much more confident. Thank you so much to Barry Donnelly and the team at Psoriasis and Skin Clinic. regards Karina ”



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goodskincare
by Psoriasis & Skin Clinic

NORTHERN RIVERS & THE GOLD COAST

Justine's Richmond



by Justine Elliot MP, Member for Richmond

I was recently invited to inspect a fantastic local business – Hemp Foods Australia, located in Bangalow. The company's CEO Paul Benhaim briefed me on the latest developments in the industry.

Hemp Foods Australia is the largest Hemp food wholesaler, retailer, manufacturer and exporter in the Southern Hemisphere. The company currently employs seven full time employees and 30 contractors.

Hemp is cultivated worldwide, including in Australia and New Zealand, and is currently used in Australia as a source of material production and building products.

Hemp is a legal food in most countries, including Europe, Canada and the United States. It is used in a range of foods including health bars, salad oils, non-dairy milk, non-dairy cheeses, and as an additive to baked goods. Australian food laws are currently under review to allow hemp, which has no psychoactive properties, to be used as food ingredients like flour, oil and protein powder.

I was advised there are many agricultural benefits to hemp cultivation, especially as the hemp crop matures three times per year which could provide very real economic benefits for our local farmers.

Nationals must guarantee that they have not provided to gas giants the personal information of 12,000 people who fought CSG

Recently the NSW Shadow Minister for the North Coast, Walt Secord, and I issued a joint statement about the need to protect the personal information of the more than 12,000 people who signed the CSG petitions last year.

We called on the NSW North Coast National Party MPs Thomas George, Don Page, Geoff Provost, and Chris Gulapris to provide public guarantees that they had not provided the names and addresses of opponents of Coal Seam Gas mining to any CSG mining companies.

We issued the joint demand after it was revealed that Thomas George had circulated an email that contained a copy of a signed petition. The presented petition identified the home addresses of North Coast residents who had signed a Tweed-Byron policing petition.

Due to these actions, we were very concerned about the anti-CSG petition signed by more than 12,000 North Coast people lodged in the NSW Parliament last October.

Working together with many individuals and community groups, we collected the signatures expressing our opposition to CSG on the North Coast.

Now, the Nationals must guarantee that they have protected the privacy of the 12,000 people. The last thing the community wants is to see the National Party pass on individuals' personal details to the gas companies.

The pro-CSG National Party are hand-in-glove with the CSG mining companies, so they must provide a public guarantee that the personal details of CSG opponents have not been passed on to the gas giants by Nationals MPs.

Justine Elliot MP, Member for Richmond
107 Minjunbal Drive, Tweed Heads South
Phone 1300-720-675



by Aidan Ricketts

As the Lismore mayor Jenny Dowell was heard to say at the launch of the gasfield free communities movement, "This (gasfield development) is the greatest threat our region has faced since WW2".

So true, we are facing an invasion of the entire region, and the price of failure would be permanent, irreparable damage to our rural lifestyle, sustainable clean and green branding of our agricultural and tourism industries, and likely pollution and de-pressurising of the region's aquifers. Actually the list of impacts goes on but you get the picture.

We know that over 85% of the region oppose the gas invasion. Sadly, due to a combination of a parliament captured by the mining industry, and a speculative gas company (Metgasco) forced to play its last card to avoid corporate oblivion, the invasion is coming to a locality near you.

Make no mistake this is a regional emergency. This is not just about Bentley, this is about preventing the industry from getting a foothold that would lead to expansion into every local



Gas invasion an emergency for whole region

government area in the region. It's not enough to say you would fight the gas industry if it came to your valley or town. Bentley is the front line for local communities from the Tweed to the Clarence, and from Byron to the Tablelands. By the time the rigs are rolling into your valley with their taxpayer funded police guard of honour (mining under martial law no less), it's a bit late to start taking action.

Like any invasion it must be fought exactly where it attempts its initial beachhead, if you wait for it reach you, then it will be your community that bears the brunt. This time the front line is Bentley. It may well be stopped at Bentley or it may take longer for the industry and the state government to realise the futility of imposing a business model based on force.

This is a serious regional emergency and one that transcends traditional political lines. The region is united in its opposition to the gas invasion but this resolve needs to be translated into a regional emergency response capacity. To this end it is vital that all people begin making plans with their employers, their families and neighbours so you can offer emergency volunteer support

when the invasion commences in earnest. This is no different to leaving work for several days to fight a wild fire.

Like the rural fire brigade, the Gasfield Free Community movement is the volunteer force needed to protect the region. We all need to start putting arrangements in place for unpaid volunteer emergency leave from work, for arrangements for childcare and for the care of stock and gardens to enable each other to respond. It is our democratic, legal and constitutional right to take part in peaceful public protests.

Over the coming months people should approach their employers, trade unions and business associates to arrange for unpaid volunteer emergency leave in order to meet the threat of invasive gasfields head on. The state government thinks it can use force to run over the clear will of the people of the Northern Rivers, it is important to call their bluff with our show of strong non-violent resistance.

Of course for a variety of reasons, because we are human, because unlike corporations we care for the sick and elderly and the very young, because we have important jobs in schools and

hospitals and businesses and on farms, not everyone will be able to attend emergency response events. For those who can't get leave there are other ways to support, letting the world know that you would be there if you could, donating money and continuing to exert political pressure through all available forums continues to be important.

For those who can make themselves available an emergency volunteer network phone number has been established. To self register to receive alerts as part of the regional emergency volunteer network you can send a text (don't call please, it's text only) to 0447 399535 simply requesting to be placed on the text alert list. This is a simple practical step that will help build our regional alert capacity. You may in addition and as a back up also set up your own local dispersed regional text and phone tree networks just in case this number is interfered with at a crucial point in time.

Real democracy is what communities do together when our politicians have failed us. Non violent community action will win this fight, by fighting each new incursion as a whole regional community we are certain of eventual victory in our efforts to protect our region.

GREEN SCENE

by Dr Mehreen Faruqi, MP

As transport and environment spokesperson for the Greens NSW, my recent visit to Lismore and Ballina focused on community concerns around public transport and biodiversity.

Casino to Murwillumbah rail line must be reinstated

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the closure of the Casino-Murwillumbah rail line. In 2004, the community of northern NSW watched on in outrage as the former Labor government closed the line for no good reason.

Since that time, an active residents' campaign has kept the pressure on the state government to reintroduce services on the line. In 2006, then-Deputy Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell promised that a NSW Coalition government would immediately move to reopen this vital piece of public transport infrastructure.

Instead, when the Coalition was eventually



split and joined en route. It's no secret that the O'Farrell government would prefer to build wasteful urban motorways than active and integrated rail projects throughout the state. Overestimating the cost of bringing existing infrastructure back into service is a convenient way of justifying expenditure on projects such as the WestConnex toll road in Sydney, which is wasteful and polluting, and will not solve traffic congestion problems.

Community surveys carried out since 2004 have consistently found that locals would use a reinstated Casino-Murwillumbah line. Moreover, population growth and tourism opportunities in northern NSW beg the question of why there is no rail line servicing this part of our state. The Greens will continue to pressure the government to get on board and reintroduce this critical public transport service.

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North Coast Koalas: Too Precious to Lose

In February this year, I joined environment groups, local councillors, ecologists and lawyers at a community forum in Ballina to hear

community concerns about destruction of koala habitat and to speak about alternatives to the Liberal Government's preferred route to upgrade the Pacific Highway between Woodburn and Ballina.

The route chosen by the Government diverts significantly from the existing Pacific Highway, deep into the Blackwall Range and right through the home of a nationally significant koala population. These koalas have been identified by a Ballina Council study as a "major source population" for the Northern Rivers. The Roads Minister, Duncan Gay, claims that the option will have "a smaller overall impact on the local community and the environment". Ecologists have said that building this bypass will be a key threatening process for the koalas.

Even the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared for NSW Roads and Maritime Services recognises that the preferred option impacts on high value habitat for koalas and other threatened species. This EIS also lists another option which has the least impact on native vegetation and threatened ecological communities including koalas.

NSW has lost around a third of its koalas since 1990. The Ballina koala populations are some of the only growing populations on the East Coast. We have no option but to protect them. The fact that the Government is willing to sacrifice one of the last viable koala colonies in the Northern Rivers in order to save some money and access shale to use as fill for the road demonstrates just how little the environment matters in Premier Barry O'Farrell's NSW.

But the community is fighting back. The hundred people who attended the forum are forcing the government and the opposition to take notice. Many others have signed on to the Greens petition to save our Koalas. With sustained community pressure, we can hopefully convince the government to choose an alternative route that delivers an upgraded and safer Pacific Highway while conserving our precious biodiversity.

Dr Mehreen Faruqi is Greens MP in the Upper House of NSW parliament. She is also a Civil and Environmental Engineer and a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Environmental Studies at the University of NSW.

From the mayor's desk



by Cr Jenny Dowell

March 2014

As a gentle start to the year, the February Council meeting was one of the shortest we've experienced. The meeting that began at 6pm, closed at 8.15pm.

Fluoride

There was a variety of matters on the agenda but most were carried with little or no debate. A Notice of Motion that had been lodged to request Rous Water to undertake community consultation on fluoridation was withdrawn by the mover after the Health Department advised Council that the addition of fluoride into the water supplied by Rous Water had been gazetted four days prior to the meeting. The Health Department has directed Rous Water to add fluoride to a level of 1ppm by June 2015. As readers may know, the Nimbin water supply is provided by Lismore City Council and will not be fluoridated under this directive.

Tenders

The most debated report on the business paper related to the awarding of tenders for vegetation management, kerb and guttering extrusion and the supply of sand, soil, metal dust, pool chemicals, concrete and traffic management services.

Councillors declined to accept any of the six recommended tenders because there appeared to be a small number of tenders in some categories leading Councillors to believe that the advertising was not as extensive as it could have been. The tenders will be readvertised.

NBN Co.

At the February meeting, Council also agreed to enter into leases with NBN Co for use of Council land at Blakebrook and Jiggi for NBN towers. Further locations are yet to be selected or approved.

Materials Recovery Facility

Council had decided that we wanted the operations of our new Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) to be a social enterprise employing people with disability.

After an expression of interest process, Council invited three disability employers to submit tenders. As a result, Council has awarded the tender to House with No Steps. The contract will employ 6 workers and two supervisors on the soon-to-be completed MRF.

North Lismore Plateau

Friday February 21 was a momentous day for our Council area. The NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure approved the rezoning of North Lismore Plateau opening the way for approximately 1550 new dwellings close to our CBD. The developers of the land will fund a cycleway from the Plateau to the CBD and have worked well with local Elders and custodians to ensure that the important Aboriginal heritage is identified

and protected. It is expected that the first DA for 450 house sites will be lodged this month. This will effectively be a new suburb for Lismore and will supply the housing needs for a wide variety of incomes and household size.

Nimbin Advisory Group

The first meeting of the Nimbin Advisory Group (NAG) was well attended by members and observers. We discussed a wide range of issues. Minutes are available on Council's noticeboard in Nimbin. Two of the issues, the use of Paper Roads for recreational use and the planned Waste Survey are also engaging Council staff and Councillors as we balance competing interests and financial implications.

I particularly thank members of the NAG who are working diligently to formulate an appropriate waste survey for the village and surrounds. Council is committed to waste minimisation, resource recovery and meeting residents' and business needs not just now but in the longer term.

Budget

Since Council undertook the *Imagine Lismore* process in 2012-13, we have been working across the organization to find savings to provide additional funds for road renewal and repair. Part of the review involves analysis of work practices to find efficiencies and this has been demonstrated in the water department through the use of permanent staff and overtime to a greater extent than employing contact or casual labour. Council is also examining all discretionary expenditure to determine where other savings can be found.

\$356 review

In previous Mayoral pages, I



Screenworks has been building the screen industry in the Northern Rivers for around 14 years. Pictured at Screenworks Regional Screen Enterprise Program launch at Bangalow in February are Lismore Mayor Jenny Dowell, Screenworks Chairperson and producer Lois Randall, writer producer Deb Cox, Screenworks General Manager Jill Moonie and Byron Shire Mayor Simon Richardson.

had indicated that Council is reviewing the grants we provide under section 356 of the Local Government Act. Currently we provide over \$300,000 in community grants some of which have been automatic for many years. The policy and processes that underpin these grants are being overhauled and while the new policy guidelines will not come into effect until 2015-16, there are likely to be some modest cuts this coming financial year.

The committee reviewing s356 are adamant that funding to our 30 rural halls should not be reduced. The \$1000 per hall helps with electricity or insurance costs and may well be increased slightly in recognition of the important role the halls play in rural communities.

Jamie Oliver Ministry of Food

You may have noticed through social media or newspapers that

Council is supporting a push to bring Jamie Oliver's Ministry of Food Pop Up Kitchen to Lismore for 12 months. No doubt the competition will be tough but we are pulling together letters of support for the application that closes in early March.

The aim of the Pop up Kitchen is to engage the community in preparing meals using fresh local foods from scratch. We are supporting our case but describing our ability to grow and produce a wide range of foods yet many in our community have health issues related to poor nutrition. I'll let you know how we go.

Council on-line

Go to: www.lismore.nsw.gov.au 'Subscribe to Local Matters' link to subscribe to Job Alerts, Media Releases, Local Matters news, Business Paper notification, Events News and Building and Development News.



Simon says...

by Cr Simon Clough, Deputy Mayor, Lismore City Council

Water seems to be the main issue on my agenda at the moment. I attended John Fenton's recent talk which strongly featured the impacts of unconventional gas drilling and fracking on water supply. John is

a genuine cowboy from Wyoming whose life and that of his family and his community has all but been destroyed by gas drilling. His presentation was very disturbing and all the more so because of John's obvious integrity. But more of that issue later.

Along with Councillor Vanessa Ekins, I am on the board of Rous Water which recently put its draft Future Water Supply Strategy on public exhibition. Rous is responsible for the water supply in this area. The challenges Rous faces include:

- Water use is expected to increase from 11,000 megalitres per year in 2013 to nearly 16,000 megalitres per year around 2060, as our regional population grows.

- The regional water supply is predicted to decline by around 34 per cent over the next 50 years due to changes in climate and rainfall.
- Rous Water's existing supplies will meet predicted demand until around 2024, after which demand for water will exceed reliable supply.
- Based on these projections, Rous Water has about 10 years to act to ensure regional water security is maintained.

After 4 years of consulting with a variety of experts and the Project Reference Group Rous is proposing the following actions:

- Key action 1: Water efficiency – Implement water efficiency programs to ensure existing water sources are used responsibly

- and efficiently.
- Key action 2: Groundwater – Undertake detailed investigation to assess the suitability of increased use of groundwater as a new water source.
- Key action 3: Water re-use – Undertake detailed investigation and consultation to assess the suitability of water re-use as an additional new water source.

No doubt many people are wondering about the fate of the Dunoon Dam. The proposed Dunoon Dam is technically viable. However there are significant issues because of Aboriginal burial sites and ecological constraints.

The proposed dam is also more than twice as expensive as the preferred enhanced water use efficiency scheme

and the groundwater options.

Rous Water is not proposing to further progress the Dunoon Dam proposal. However, Rous will maintain the Dunoon Dam proposal as a potential future water supply option until groundwater and water re-use supply options have been fully investigated and are better understood.

Groundwater sources within the coastal sands aquifer underlying the coastal plain, and fractured basalt aquifers in the coastal range (Ballina and Emigrant Creek dam) and hinterland areas (near Dunoon) are identified as best meeting Rous Water's needs.

Linking back to John Fenton, I'm deeply concerned that if Metgasco and other unconventional gas drillers

are able to go ahead with their drilling that the option of the community being able to sustainably harvest groundwater will be lost.

There are numerous accounts of farmers and communities losing their groundwater because of unconventional gas drilling, not to mention those groundwater sources that have been permanently polluted by fracking.

So let's ensure that Metgasco and other drillers don't get the opportunity to do any more drilling in the Northern Rivers. There is no way that corporations should be able to profit from destroying our groundwater when it should be reserved for the future benefit of the whole community.

Wishing you all well for the month of March.

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Why do we doubt good science?

Merchants of Doubt by Naomi Oeskes and Erik M. Conway, Bloomsbury Press, NY, 2010

Reviewed by Richard Swinton

The fact of human-exacerbated global warming was accepted by science decades ago, with the only uncertainties being how much and how long.

But in the public and political mind, global warming has become a highly contentious issue. Why?

Science historians Naomi Oeskes and Erik M Conway spent five years researching over 1600 documents to piece together this history.

They showed how a small group of well-connected, media-savvy scientists with a background in government

military cold war research set out to cast doubt on any science that threatened their free market.

These scientists saw environmentalists as "Communists of a different colour", determined to bring in more Government regulations and other limits to individual liberty.

They became the hired guns for the tobacco industry, professional sceptics on the impact of CFCs on the ozone hole, and lately decrying the science of global warming.

They set up foundations to further their activities with millions in funding coming from Phillip Morris, the tobacco giant, and other self interested corporations.

They sponsored other scientists and selectively used out of context parts of their

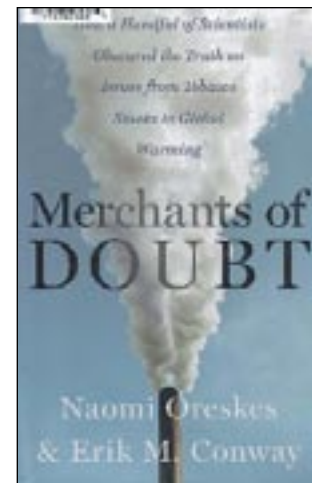
research to support their arguments.

Science is not a value judgment. It is validated by a peer review processes. Nothing is published in reputable journals until the review process is satisfied.

The deniers place their comments in the public arena, not the science journals; and they are never peer reviewed. Also none of this group has expertise in the areas they tackle.

They are retired nuclear and missile physicists with no expertise in oncology, health, atmospheric, or climate.

The authors suggest that we should place more trust in the scientific research peer review process and be much more sceptical of deniers, checking their expertise and motives before listening to their comments.



If two oncologists told you that you have a cancer which need immediate treatment, would you listen to a plumber telling you to wait and use his homemade potion?

I recommend this book to anyone interested in the story behind global warming.

A poetic flight to Nimbin

by Jaydeep Sarangi

Poets are soul makers. Composing poetry and reading it for oneself and others ennobles hearts.

It's an engagement with a purpose. Penning a poem for an Indian is like engaging in any other regional language in the subcontinent where culture and language are a mosaic of variegated experiences.

For Indians, 300 years of English education has made English an Indian tongue with subtle supra-segmental variations.

Language has become more like bearing a culture and tradition. English poetry in Indian has moved away from the age-old stigma "Indian in imagery and English only in words".

It appears true that when poetry speaks of the elementary and profound concerns of man and this act of living, loving, becoming and dying, it becomes like a pool that gives back our image on the threshold of an experience.

We believe that Indian English writers should write in their own brand of English, redolent of Indian culture.

English literature in India exists parallel to "bhasha" literature.

Recent literary ties between India and Australia are a fascinating discourse.

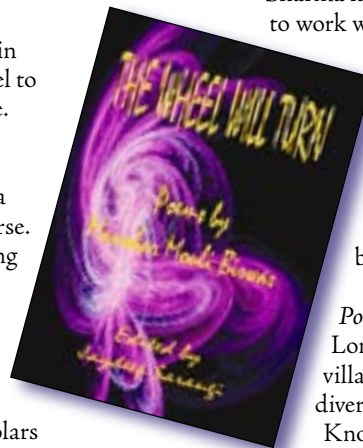
There is a growing interest to take research projects on contemporary Australian authors, with whom Indian scholars can chat and exchange emails.

Some Nimbin poets, such as Tamaso Lonsdale, Rob Harle and Nathalie Buckland, are engaged with literary connections between India and Australia.

The result is simply amazing.

They have been anthologised in India and won many hearts. *Poetic Connections* and *Building Bridges* strengthened the blossoming literary ties between the nations.

Beyond the Rainbow has already featured Sunil Sharma, Jaydeep Sarangi, Ratan Bhattacharya, Aju Mukhopadhyaya and Angana Dutta. An interview with



Tamaso Lonsdale, Rob Harle, Nathalie Buckland, Jaydeep Sarangi and Sunil Sharma have already ushered fresh areas to work with.

Rob Harle has designed the cover jackets for a few books by Indian poets.

The implication is more than personal. *The Wheel Will Turn: Poems by Manohar Mouli Biswas* is an interesting book for social change.

The editor's introduction to *Poetic Connections* by Tamaso Lonsdale notes, "Our little village of Nimbin has incredible diversity..."

Knowing about Nimbin is visiting a cultural collage in a museum. It is an inviting discourse which even may lead to Indian friends going there and inhaling the exotic charm of friendship and literary culture.

Nimbin has already become a dream place where noble souls reside; working with them is like bathing in the river Ganges.

There is an irresistible desire to go there and meet my associates like night's journey for morrow and "moth for the star". I burn in desire!

Jaydeep Sarangi is a bilingual writer/academic from Kolkata, India.



The Ganja Faeries and crew at Sydney's Mardi Gras this year

Green garbos for MardiGrass

Recycling rubbish is an important part of all large festivals these days, and at this year at MardiGrass all rubbish will be separated.

Cans, plastic and glass bottles, landfill plastic and all organic matter will be recycled or properly disposed of. Information signs will be erected at bin stations to explain the process to

punters.

Cans and glass bottles will be reused in building projects in Nimbin. The plastic bottles will be recycled in Lismore and non-recyclable plastic will go to landfill in Lismore. Organic rubbish will be composted at Levity Gardens in Jarlanbah.

This year, organisers are asking all MardiGrass

stallholders and Nimbin café owners to use compostable food and drink packaging to minimise landfill. Information on green packaging has been given to food providers.

Locals are invited to be involved in the Mardi Garbos, the latest addition to the volunteer crew, which includes Polite and Jungle

Patrol.

You will be required to work a four-hour shift on Saturday and Sunday, collecting bins and sorting rubbish. Bonuses include a free T-shirt, free entry to all events and the chance to do something really worthwhile for Nimbin.

For more details, phone Caroline on 0438-390-441.

Advertise in the MG program

50,000 copies of the MardiGrass program will be printed for 2014. We distribute the program all year from the Nimbin HEMP Embassy.

You can place your advertisement for \$250 at 82mm wide, 55 mm high. Larger sizes are available at the same width. Or contact us for your requirements: head@hempembassy.net The deadline is Saturday 12th April.

Ads will be automatically included on MardiGrass website program for 2014 as soon as we receive them. We reserve the right to reject ads deemed not in keeping with the aims and objectives of the MOB. (MardiGrass Organising Body)

2014 MardiGrass program picks

by Michael Balderstone

Dr Bob Melamede from Cannabis Science in Colorado is the guest I am most keen to hear from. Every day now, there is news coming from his State telling us how profitable for everyone in every way legalised weed is. Now they are looking at letting out of jail people there for cannabis only offences. The change is dramatic and fast, and has all sorts of speculation fired up on our future here in Australia.

The MardiGrass 2014 Forums will have another line-up of expert heads this year, and there will be do it yourself workshops on tincture, oil and hash-making, as well as an assurance I personally have that the Cookie Queen will be leaving her sadhu flock in India and flying back just to give her legendary classes. Along with medical cannabis patients and activists, Dr Bob will discuss the latest advances in treating cancer and other serious illness with cannabis.

Confirmed music includes Cornerstone Roots from New Zealand, Bullhorn, Felicity Lawless, CC The Cat, Dubarray, Aunty Hu-Hu and The Big Lazy, Floating Bridges, Elevene, Mecha-Mecha, Honey-Thief, Neil Pike and the Pagan Love Cult, KryptamistiK, Kaliba and Quorum Consensus.

You can buy tickets now at: www.nimbinmardigrass.com \$100 gets you into everything, plus three nights camping at the Showgrounds. But it's not any old Showgrounds camping. It's a beautiful country campground with genuine country folk hospitality that includes hot showers, firewood and fireplaces, a home-cooked cafe and, no doubt, music. If you are coming to Nimbin for MardiGrass, it's the way to go.

HEMP HEADLINES

False message in a bottle: the hypocrisy of sport sponsorship [Sydney Morning Herald]

According to Channel Seven's David Koch, Corby's nine years of imprisonment isn't punishment enough. Koch said: "I reckon we should have nothing to do with her as a network. Totally disagree with paying a convicted drug smuggler \$2 million." This kind of hysteria appears farcical in the light of say, Victoria Bitter's alcohol sponsorship of the national cricket team. When a drug is socially acceptable, it's apparently completely conscionable to promote it via the medium of professional sport. Tobacco sponsorship of sport is now banned. But cigarette companies have been replaced by fast food empires and alcohol brands emblazoned across the chests of our sporting stars and broadcast into living rooms the world over. The irony has become so glaring it's difficult to make eye contact with it.

Biggest overhaul in USA Federal drug sentencing in decades [Drug Policy Alliance]

In February the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee passed bipartisan sentencing reform legislation that reduces the federal prison population, decreases racial disparities, saves taxpayer money, and reunites nonviolent drug law offenders with their families sooner. The legislation is opposed by some U.S. prosecutors who continue to defend a harsh, racially unjust system that has led to a greater percentage of black men being locked up in the U.S. than in South Africa at the height of Apartheid.

Colorado Governor set to release those convicted on marijuana related charges, expunge records [National Report]

Colorado's governor Hickenlooper has proposed a bill that would have a major

impact on the criminal justice system. Under the new bill, convicts currently serving time on marijuana related charges will be released and the crime expunged from their records.

Colorado expects to reap tax bonanza from legal marijuana sales [NY Times]

For Colorado's new flock of recreational marijuana growers and sellers, Thursday 20 February was Tax Day — their first deadline to hand over the taxes they had collected during their inaugural month of sales. And as store owners stuffed cash into lockboxes and made the nervous trek to government offices, new budget numbers predicted that those marijuana taxes could add more than \$100 million a year to state coffers, far more than earlier estimates. The figures offered one of the first glimpses into how the bustling market for recreational marijuana was beginning to reshape government bottom lines — an important question as marijuana advocates push to expand legalization beyond Colorado and Washington State into states including Arizona, Alaska and Oregon.

The drug war's profit motive [Washington Post]

It may at first seem odd that police groups would so vigorously oppose medical pot. These aren't medical organizations. They have no clear stake in the debate over the drug's potential therapeutic benefits. The police groups say they're concerned about public safety, but we've been living with medical pot in the USA for nearly 20 years now, and there's no empirical data to support the contention that legal medical marijuana brings an increase in crime. If you're a fan of public choice theory, you might argue that narcotics cops may oppose any move toward legalization because a decrease in the demand for and



The USA's 2014 NFL season will forever be tied to marijuana and its legalisation, with marijuana-friendly Denver and cannabis-savvy Seattle in the grand final. And just to up the ante, the Marijuana Policy Project (MPP) has put up five pro-pot billboards (above) around the New Jersey stadium where the game will be played. Source: Seattle Pi (Photo by Mason Tvert / MPP)

supply of illegal pot might mean a decrease in need for narcotics cops to police it. And of course there will always be a supply of and trade in other illicit drugs to keep them busy. So why such strident opposition? It's about revenue. Police agencies have a strong financial incentive to keep the drug war churning.

Uruguay's president nominated for Nobel Peace Prize for legalizing marijuana [RT]

The president of Uruguay has been nominated for this year's Nobel Peace Prize. According to his advocates, José "Pepe" Mujica's much talked-about marijuana legalization is in fact "a tool for peace and understanding." For the second year in a row, the Drugs Peace Institute, which has supported Mujica's marijuana legalization drive since 2012, insisting that the consumption of marijuana should be protected as a human right.

STREET SHUFFLE

Journal of the North Coast's longest serving covert

by Undacuva

I knew the Boss would be frantically trying to contact me when I heard the choppers flying around. I'm supposed to be helping them, but having a lot of trouble dobbing in my mates. Not to mention Pipe threw my phone into the swimming hole. My latest amazing technology can find you anywhere phone I'd foolishly been bragging about to him. Big mistake.

So I trekked down from the mountains just so the paycheck would keep arriving and found the Station in total disarray. Weed piled high from the raids and all too immature to be useful, except for tincture, and oil. Pipe had been joking about stealing it, truck and all, because he heard they had it stashed in Uki waiting for the end of week, media show-off bonfire, where they all stand in the smoke

and have a big laugh. "What a waste" was all I could think, and it was made worse by the idiots thinking it will push the price up on the street.

"You're working for the hydro factories you realise? Hydro is the only weed available on the street now, thanks to you crop raiders who feel so pleased with yourselves, and its always available you realise. Unlimited supply of inferior bad medicine that you wouldn't even give to your epileptic kids." That's my new line to try and make them feel shit about themselves and their work. They ignored it as usual and headed to the pub. Nothing changes, or does it. The Boss is changing. He's reading about American weed culture with a kind of morbid fascination.

"Listen to this from the Washington Post," he says soon after I walk into his office where he's glued to the computer



screen. "In the medication area of the nation's biggest marijuana exposition, scantily clad young women hand out marshmallows they've dipped into a rushing fountain of pot-laced chocolate."

He looked up to make sure I was listening. His face had some sort of frantic hunted look that made me gasp a little. "A few steps away, Anthony Ramirez offers free hits from a bong filled with the waxy marijuana extract that his family started producing when a friend's mother needed relief from the pain of lupus. Across a vast outdoor plaza lined with hundreds of

booths, this month's Cannabis Cup gathering in Southern California has attracted more than 10,000 visitors at \$40 a ticket. By mid-afternoon, some of them are sprawled on overstuffed couches that merchants have thoughtfully provided. Others move from booth to booth, sampling wares from businesses that have risen from the underground economy to create a burgeoning industry of hazy legality."

He read on, getting redder and redder. "Vendors hawk brightly colored candies, chocolate bars, slickly designed jars of gourmet peanut butter — all infused with weed. Smokers sample e-cigarettes, vaporizers and the latest in bongs and glassware. Agricultural firms display industrial-sized machinery for harvesting plants, electronics firms offer a dazzling array of grow lights, and everywhere, growers lovingly explain the virtues of dozens of plant strains such as Gorilla Glue, Silver Haze and Crystal Coma. All in a state where marijuana is not yet quite legal, and all without a single police officer to be seen."

Then he looked up eyes wide

in horror and I nearly burst into laughter. "Boss," I struggled to suppress giggles and make a joke out of it, "it sounds like what Nimbin would become if we closed the station there and withdrew the troops."

"No way," he snapped back. "We go full tilt at them now. This is the last stand Bethany, or whoever you are. We throw everything we can at them, just as it says in the book. Especially the hippies. I'm not having any chocolate-clad naked marshmallow strawberry girls smoking weed on my shift."

HipiLeaks: Sydney, Feb 2014. TOP SECRET. The loss of the estimated 2800 cannabis plants and the hired Pantech from the Uki helicopter raids is a complete and utter embarrassment. Fortunately we were able to hide the theft at the official burning but every effort must be maintained to find the thieves.

I'll never know if Pipe and his tribe stole the massive stash the choppers were holding at Uki waiting to burn for the TV cameras, but it certainly looked like last year's footage that I saw on the news!

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