

Awesome Autumn Arts



by Peter Ptschelinzew

The Galley's Autumn Arts Extravaganza has been and gone for another year. We barely have time to think about it with the cleanup, re-hang and, as I write, MardiGrass now upon us.

The Extravaganza was formally and eloquently opened by David Corazza from The Channon Gallery, another source of fine art in the Northern Rivers (if you haven't visited that gallery, do yourself a favour...), and we thank him for his time. Trio Continentale were fabulous as always, wine was enjoyed, art was discussed and favoured works snapped up!

The Extravaganza was again well supported by locals and

travellers alike with some 8,000 people going through the doors during the three weeks and artists' work travelling to all parts of the country, with some 40 works sold during the two weeks. Artists from beyond our green and slightly damp valley added to our local talent, resulting in another high quality exhibition across all mediums.

A big thanks go to the contributing artists and especially to all who donated some time to help load/unload the truck, set up the partitions, pin calico (a yuk and sometimes painful job), hang works, clean-up, man desks during the exhibition or do any of the other tasks that had to be done. Events like ours don't happen without Nimbin's community-minded people.

But we don't stand still and bask in previous glories at the Nimbin Artists Gallery. We've re-hung, so come and see the new work brought in by our artists. And some art from the Extravaganza has found its way into the gallery, so you may have a second chance for that piece that caught your eye but you hesitated to buy (how often has that happened!).

And don't be afraid to ask about work that you liked but didn't grab when you had the chance, it may still be available. We united one happy artist and art lover just days after the close of the Extravaganza.

See you in the gallery.



Donna Sharam



Pauline Ahern



Lae Oldmeadow



Glass vase by Arnie Gautsch



'Lady Peacock' by Alana Grant



'Intimates' by Nicole Raward



Gilbert Laurie

Nimbin School of Arts President's Report 2014

by David Hallett

Significant fund raising in recent years has proved crucial in undertaking major electrical work at the School of Arts during the past year. Electrician Patrick Hall has upgraded the electrical switch room as well as doing extensive work on rewiring and replacing outdated equipment. Pat has also installed ceiling inputs for the lighting of annual art exhibitions. Generous private donations totalling \$4,500 assisted this project, together with the completion of the storage facility for hall seating and tables. The NSA greatly appreciates these donations.

Now in its 110th year, the Nimbin School of Arts has had another big year of major visual and performance arts events. The Nimbin Artists Gallery produced an outstanding Autumn Arts Extravaganza in April 2013 and the annual Spring Arts Exhibition in September attracted over 4,500 visitors and locals. The three Blue Moon Cabarets produced by the NSA have featured some wonderful performance programmes, and these popular sellout shows

also continue to be essential fund-raising events for the relentless rising expenditure in insurance, power, water and rates, maintenance and major repairs.

The NSA continues to sponsor the Nimbin Performance Poetry World Cup, Weave and Mend Festival and Nimbin Youth Film Competition, together with support for the Sevenon-Sibley project and also Benny Zable's Allsop Park 'Imagine' mural. As well as providing discounted hire arrangements to several community groups the hall serves as a venue for a variety of functions, including public meetings, Lifeline sales, concerts, fundraisers and celebrations, while the hall and studios continue to provide facilities for various tuition services. The NSA also enjoys an ongoing association with its two principal lessees the Nimbin Artists Gallery and Perceptio.

The Nimbin School of Arts is maintained and managed by a small voluntary team, most of whom have been with the grand old hall for many years. The Nimbin community is most fortunate to have had such a dedicated group which has both fostered the arts and managed this major community-owned facility in the heart of the village.

Nosin' Around with PAC

Diamonds in the mist. I have always loved the crisp cool mornings for nosin' about in, where the mists are thick and the dew is heavy on the ground. You can smell the mist in your nostrils. The cobwebs are dropping with the weight of the dew drops and the sun is glinting off every bead of water. It's priceless.





by Philippe Dupuy, President

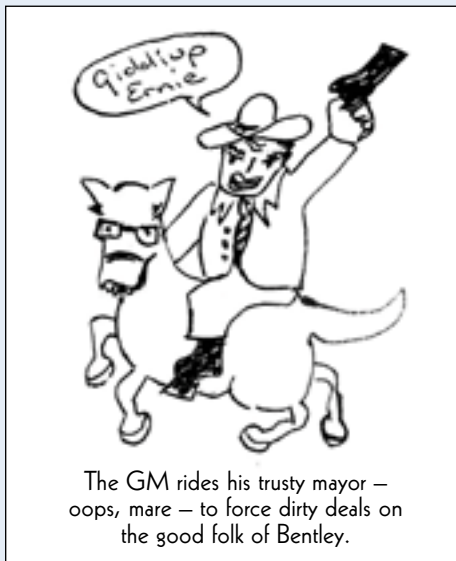
At Nimbin Environment Centre, as at Casino Environment Centre, there is strong support for the battle for a Gas Free Northern Rivers that is taking place at the Disputed Plains of Bentley. Here the community has thrown everything it possibly can at the establishment, Metgasco and the shady Rum Corps of NSW.

For many of the Simmos and their Buddies it is a battle of nerves. For weeks on end now they have been expecting a police onslaught. There have been drive-bys, visits and lots of rumours, but nothing concrete as yet. They spend time around the different gates ready to lock on at the first hint of a threat. These guys and gals are dedicated and ready to do what's needed. Despite all this, spirits remain high, clearly defiant!

And high indeed it is! Monday before last we had about three thousands protectors at gate 'A'. This morning with the rain pummelling down on our flimsy tents at 4am, people were readying for the regular dawn service at gate 'A'. It is dark and the hundreds of people are huddling around the fire, comfortable in each others' space with umbrellas overlapping. They are mostly silent waiting for the magic of dawn to reveal familiar, gentle but anxious faces. A chorus of songs start from nowhere, an impromptu choir made of melodious feminine voices backed by the deeper sound of their male counterparts. We are all blessed, we have put aside comfort, fear and 'le travail' to protect the sacredness of water, our life source!

Meanwhile the police tactic of making us wait is back-firing. The fact is, the longer we wait, the weaker Metgasco gets and the more nervous the shabby government gets as they anxiously watch our numbers grow exponentially into thousands.

The pathetic attempt by Mare (mayor) Ernie ridden by GM Walker to break up the camp is proving just that: a lamentable, pitiable attack on Richmond Valley constituents to force them to desist – so much for the Council's neutral stance. It is interesting to note that this same council is taking steps to remove bats (including some threatened species such as the Grey Headed Flying Fox) from the Richmond River banks



The GM rides his trusty mayor – oops, mare – to force dirty deals on the good folk of Bentley.

after receiving just two complaints, both of which were anonymous, yet over 70% of Casino residents have been objecting to gas exploration in the Richmond Valley Shire for years and the Council's only reaction is to *do nothing*.

Well, fancy that! The Council Charter clearly declares in their vision statement 'The development of community and natural attributes of the area to enable a pleasant and sustainable lifestyle'. So one would think any plan to turn the shire into a noxious gasfield is not on the agenda, and one would think should be ferociously resisted.

As for the cretins who refer to themselves as the government, they are being clearly exposed. A job well done by ICAC, who have already caught a few shady characters, some with a taste for good wine. There will be more to come - that is undeniable, for they all have their snout in the trough of Big Business.

Enough is enough! It's time for all levels of government to start doing the job we pay them for – protecting the livelihoods and values of their constituents. How dare a state government send a police force out to decimate the very people they are meant to protect? What has it come to when police are being sent to commit acts of violence against ordinary citizens for trying to protect the resources that governments should be protecting for them? This is a fight we have to win and win we will! Power to the people!



Save Ballina's Koalas campaigners gather to attend Ballina Council's April meeting

by Lorraine Vass

The Save Ballina's Koalas campaign is now entering its fourth month. The campaign's aim is to change the preferred route for Section 10 (from the Richmond River to Wardell) of the Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway Upgrade project so that it does not pass through the important koala population area as defined in Ballina's Koala Habitat and Population Assessment study.

You'll remember reading about it in the March Kolumn. There's no doubt that we're making an impact, but whether it will be sufficient to achieve a change to the route at this very late stage is problematic. The formal process for community "consultation" finished with the exhibition of the Preferred Infrastructure Report in November 2013. The responses to the report are presently being collated by Planning NSW for preparation of the Assessment Report which will provide the basis for the Planning Minister's determination. At the same time NSW Roads, which is responsible for route selection, is undertaking further detailed surveys of the Ballina koala population.

We're very heartened that a couple of ministers in their correspondence are now making reference to 'the concerns being expressed by the community'. The Environment Protection Authority, which has an advisory role in the project's assessment and approval, acknowledges that the Habitat Study has contributed to a better understanding of the koala population. It's liaising with NSW Roads to develop enhanced connectivity options.

Ballina Council's decision to up the ante and call for a reconsideration of routes at its April meeting was a real breakthrough. What particularly impressed me during consideration of the motion before Council was the conviction with which so many Councillors spoke on the importance of Ballina's koalas, particularly in the Shire's south.

We're also encouraged by the interest being taken by members of the Legislative Council from across the political spectrum. Mehreen Faruqi, Catherine Cusack, Walt Secord, Luke Foley and Jan Barham are all actively supporting a change to the route. They've acquainted themselves with the facts and the concerns and they've all visited the locality of the proposed route. Federal Member for Richmond, Justine Elliot has also visited.

The entire Woolgoolga to Ballina project has been declared a controlled action for the purposes of the Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Thus the Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt will also need to approve the project. His particular interest will be the koalas. We have invited him to visit as well.

The Pacific Highway has been a thorn in the side of koala conservation for years. It's a tragedy that much of its route traverses koala habitat. Over the years there have been a number of bitter battles waged to protect local populations, as well as other threatened species, by arguing for route options

Koala Kolumn



which avoid environmental hotspots. The route selection and development processes are supposed to balance environmental, social and economic impacts and benefits. However the environment, including the koalas, invariably lose. The Highway is a major barrier for maintaining genetic connectivity and it's a potential death-trap for any unfortunate koala that gets on to it. Mitigating measures, such as floppy-top fencing, underpasses, overpasses, etc. are often quite inadequate for keeping koalas away from the traffic. Mortality is the usual outcome when this occurs.

But the upgrade isn't the only challenge facing the Region's koalas right now. The West Byron Urban Release Area proposal, should it be approved, will undoubtedly displace the koalas presently using the site for occupation and dispersal, more than likely leading to the demise of Byron's koalas to the south of Ewingsdale Road.

At this point, the 108-hectare site west from Byron Bay is up for re-zoning. However the State Government, not Byron Council, is considering the application. The developers, a consortium of local landholders, are expecting their proposal to be gazetted as a State Significant Site which would enable development of a new suburb with a population similar in numbers to that of Mullumbimby, together with a shopping centre and industrial area. Even though Byron Council is about to approve a Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management, the West Byron proposal does not include any of the necessary analysis to enable assessment under the Plan.

If the re-zoning proposal is approved in its present form, the environmental cost will include destruction of approximately a third of the site's primary habitat, intensive development in 70% of koala buffer zones and in the important linking corridor that passes through the east of the site. Little wonder that we fear the worst for the Region's coastal koalas.

Until next time, happy koala spotting.

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

Follow both Friends of the Koala and Save Ballina's Koalas on Facebook. To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat ring the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 13-15-55.

Plant of the month

Indian Hemp *Cannabis spp*

by Richard Burer

Plant of the month takes a little diversion this May as we explore this local weed species *Cannabis sativa* and *Cannabis indica*.

Indian Hemp or marijuana is an annual herb that grows to 1 to 3m high, occasionally taller, with slender, tough angular stems. Leaves are palmately-lobed into 7-11 pointed leaflets with serrated margins.

Indian Hemp is a hearty weed, which grows well under extreme environmental conditions. It is probably a native of Central Asia and is naturalised in parts of Australia, particularly the Northern Rivers of NSW, where it has particular popularity amongst the local population.

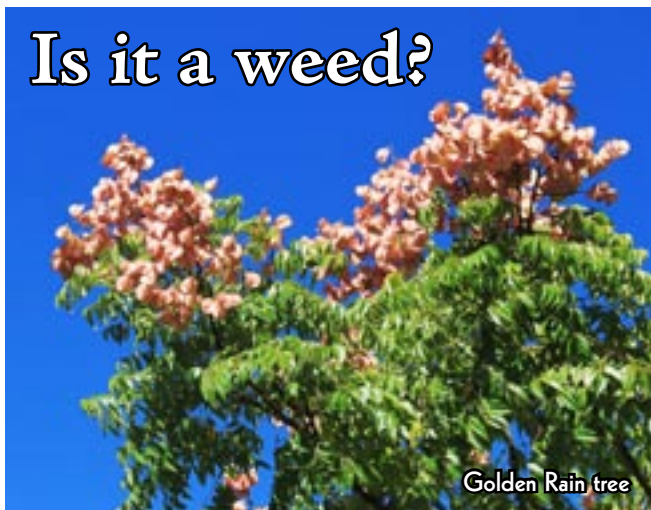
Some years ago whilst working on the banks of the Richmond River in Casino, I was surprised by the germination of hundreds of Indian Hemp plants, this rich alluvial soil perhaps giving hints at the ideal soil medium requirements of this herb. Of course there are many stories of the riverbanks of the east coast of Australia harbouring this weed over the

years, hence the term "naturalised".

Cultivation of *Cannabis* is prohibited by law in NSW and other parts of Australia, as it has a reputation as a notorious "drug plant". However it is one of the oldest known fibre, food and medicine plants in cultivation.



Is it a weed?



Golden Rain tree

by Triny Roe

A question often asked about various garden plants. Indeed, many beloved and beautiful ornamental species, and even economic ones, with their origins abroad, have a reputation for transcending the fence and popping up and establishing in locations of their own choosing. This can include roadside, creek and riverside, bush, beach, farm or your neighbours' properties. Initially introduced to Australia by humans (not sent by the Goddess) they are distributed further afield by human, animal, bird, wind and water. Some of these plants can transform landscapes.

All living things reproduce to replace those of their kind

which will indubitably die at some point. This includes plants. It is natural part of the great circle of life and ensures the perpetuation of a species, or in some cases, domination by it.

Some plants, which aggressively compete with others, soon become the pre-eminent species. Tactics include producing large quantities of long-lived viable seed which are easily spread, fast germination, rapid growth rate as well as production of allopathic compounds to prevent germination of other plants.

Woody weeds are often deep-rooted, grow several or more metres high and sucker readily. More difficult to manage because of their size and hardiness, they can have a huge impact.

Curry leaf tree, *Murraya koenigii*; coffee, *Coffea arabica* or even mulberry tree, *Morus alba*, might be OK in an orchard or permaculture situation – mulberries are delicious, coffee is a popular beverage and everyone loves a good curry. But these, and many other popular backyard and hobby farm species, are considered environmental weeds and are therefore inappropriate growing on a creek bank or in the bush. Seed will be readily dispersed further afield if not harvested and utilised. It can take a number of years before an environmental weed becomes a problem in a particular region, but it can start with just one plant.

Look at the story of Giant Devil's Fig, *Solanum chrysotrichum*. A local source claims it was first introduced to a property on Rose Road, Tuntab Creek, back in the 80s, as fungus resistant rootstock for eggplants. When the grower returned to Italy the GDF, no longer managed and maintained as rootstock, set seed and started to spread through the Tuntab Valley. It gained purchase in steep, hard to access gullies and remote corners of larger properties. Out of sight, mind and reach, or simply ignored, the numbers slowly built. In some spots around Nimbin, it now

dominates the vegetation with serious implications for biodiversity. This aggressive invader is now found 'naturalised' over 200km to the north and south of its original introduction point.

Golden Rain tree, *Koelreuteria elegans*, is poised to become another serious weed. Over a number of years one tree begets a grove.

Smaller plants such as grasses can also cause big problems. It's horses for courses. Setaria grass – *Setaria sphacelata*, originally from Africa, is widely planted for cattle pastures. It is high yielding and grows in dense clumps to 2 metres high. However, in horse paddocks the high oxalates in this grass can cause calcium deficiencies in horses and donkeys. This condition, known as Bighead, can affect the facial bones.

Setaria grass is widely naturalised in tropical and sub-tropical Australia. A favourite food of the Red-browed Finch, it also has weed status. Common on roadsides, creek and riverbanks, grasslands, parks, paddocks and open forest, setaria competes with native grasses and other ground covers.

Specific plants in different situations require considered management strategies. Know your plants and how best to deal with them.

More than weeds: A holistic approach to landcare

by Geoff Dawe

There is an apparent view that there is a non-chemical emphasis that the bush should be let go to weeds.

There is a partial truth in this, for humans have no scientific evidence that the bush does not regenerate itself despite humankind's degradation of it. Left to itself, the scale of time for eventual regeneration of the bush to a situation approximating native diversity before European settlement, is unknown.

The unknown is potentially fearful. Because of this, humans can be seen to have reverted to the superstitious belief that nature is imperfect or inadequate in that exotic plants are not believed to be primarily engaged in Earth healing.

Of the empirical evidence that the land in this area currently has the ability to regenerate itself, there are examples on flat land where Camphor Laurels harbour many regenerating rainforest plants, presumably because litter loss downslope does not occur and the ensuing improvement in soil moisture facilitates rainforest germination. Here, the older, sun-loving, relatively small-tree Camphor Laurel can be expected to be out-competed by shade-tolerant rainforest trees. The same can be said of Coral tree, Banna grass and Lantana sites.

There is a prima facie case (where it needs to be disproved) that weeds act to improve soil in the long term, for soil to be eventually acceptable to rainforest seed germination and the comparative rapid growth required to get seedlings above the weeds. Before the existence of the weeds, and for a long time in the life of the weeds, because of the effects of land clearing, the soil is not sufficient for this.

Vines are a different matter. They

are basically an edge plant, now creating much distress because of large distances of edge with fragmented bush. However, because vines generally inhabit forest edges, they lend themselves to ready access by adjoining land use activities such as gardening. The fact that gardening does not now occur is not a problem of the vines but of a land settlement-disorganised humanity that is in denial of the limitations of industrialised farming.

Paul Roberts and Julian Cribb in their books published in the new millennium respectively titled *The End of Food* and *The Coming Famine* both imply that industrial farming cannot supply long term food security. An alternative is a labour-intensive gardening culture, based in food forests, that apart from supplying long-term food security, gets at the root cause of the bush being degraded: it was mostly cleared for human food.

The thinking that chemical-free bush regeneration at another level, aims to just let weeds go is not completely true. Lantana, Camphors, Banna grass, Madeira and Coral trees etc. lend themselves to gardening use as cut material (Madeira as liquid manure), with comparatively huge amounts of organic matter for soil compared with straw or even nitrogen-fixing vines. It is a movement away from a nihilist approach to weeds. Bush regeneration is currently involved in attempts to extinguish the arguably increased biomass of rampant exotics.

Increased biomass translates in the long term to increased soil organic carbon. To take on this point of view, one would have accepted that a sustainable gardening culture and bush regeneration are one. Aldo Leopold, widely regarded as the father of wildlife ecology, as early as 1948 said:



Banna grass

"As for diversity, what remains of our native fauna and flora remains only because agriculture has not got around to destroying it... Diversity ... means a food chain aimed to harmonize the wild and the tame in the joint interest of stability, productivity and beauty."

The merging of care of the bush and agriculture, accepts that the real work of the rural dweller does not primarily involve a direct kill of weeds, or primarily looking out for other species livings, but in looking out for human livings that cannot be sustained with industrialisation.

It is in humans sustainably feeding themselves that other species are automatically sustained, for it is the reversal of the major cause of the desecration of the bush.



Coral tree

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- morning tea & lunch
- home butchering workshop
- farm tour
- cheesemaking workshop
- on the ground examples
- honey tasting
- and more

9am to 4 pm
Billen Cliffs Village
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www.communitypermaculture.com.au

Images: pigs, home butchering, bees, dairy & beef cows, aquaponics

Beekeeping news

by James Creagh



Inspecting a top bar hive
Photo: Marie Cameron

As the growing season starts to slow down, it has been a good run for the bees in the area: very good honey harvests, not much swarming, very little if any small hive beetle and no hive losses.

Other areas in Australia have seen a reduction in honey of 50-90%. This follows Australia's hottest year on record. Parts of NSW and Victoria have had such extreme weather with high temperatures that "caused stress and erratic behaviour in local bee populations and in extreme cases have caused beeswax in honeycombs to melt inside the hive. The bees are then forced to remain inside and collectively fan their wings in an attempt to keep the hive cool, leaving them with no time to collect nectar."

— news.com.au

This article says that there may be a honey shortage and consumers should be aware that some supermarket honey may say "Made in Australia from local and imported ingredients" which could contain up to 49% imported honey. Australia imports honey from China that has been known to contain antibiotics and sugar. Most of the imported honey ends up in processed foods like Australian-made muesli bars.

It seems hard to imagine that it will be winter in a few weeks, given the recent high daytime temperatures that have provided many flowers for the bees. Recently the Lemon Scented Gum – *Corymbia citriodora* was a-buzz with flowers and bees for a few weeks. This summer's honey collected from the Apple Gum has been plentiful and having a delightful flavor of almond.

If conditions continue, we should be able to harvest again before the winter begins. As part of natural beekeeping, one of the important practices is to leave at least four full frames of honey going into the winter so as not to have to feed the bees sugar to keep them going if they run out of food.

Joint meeting

Our last meeting was held at Tutti Fruitti Farm Lillian Rock with three groups – Nimbin Natural

Beekeepers, Mullum Natural Beekeepers and Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeepers Association. It was a great event, with about 60 people attending. There was a demo on assembling frames and a talk and viewing of a top bar hive.

Prize-winner

The winner of the Nimbin Natural beekeepers colouring-in competition, Simone from Tuntable, has collected her prize – a visit to Tutti Fruitti Farm to learn how to harvest and extract honey.

Simone, in a bee suit, removed and brushed the bees off the frames and then the frames had their cappings removed and spun to remove the honey. It went well, and no-one got stung.

Healing horses with honey

I have recently been supplying honey to Sally, a local horse owner whose horse has been troubled with canker sores. Canker in horses has been described as a degenerative dermatitis and is not easy to treat but with the help of honey it has been reduced and continues to improve.

The topical use of raw honey has a long history. In fact, it is considered one of the oldest known wound dressings. Honey was used by the ancient Greek physician Dioscorides in 50 A.D. for sunburn and infected wounds. Honey's healing properties are mentioned in the Bible, Koran, and Torah. It is known for its antiseptic, antibiotic, antifungal and antibacterial properties.

Next meeting

The Nimbin Natural beekeepers will next meet the 4th May at 10am at Mountain Top. The meetings are open to all beekeepers, beginners as well as experienced. The meetings are an opportunity to learn about bees and share knowledge and experiences about keeping bees.

Weather permitting we will open a hive. For more info contact James on 6689-7575 or 0434-892-466, email: nimbinnaturalbeekeepers@yahoo.com.au

Voices and music on the Wind

While tree-planting in the tropics, I once heard voices and music carried on the trade winds. A long way from any other human settlement, the experience was spooky at first. When it recurred, with no real explanation for these other-dimensional sounds, I came to see those voices as an interaction not through space but through time. They were the voices and sounds of the past, and, as I planted trees, I imagined them as the joyous voices and sounds of the future, too.

Throughout history, groups of peoples have defined themselves – or been defined by others – by their relationship to land. Nomads and conquerors, pagans and conservationists, first peoples, nationalists, capitalists – we all hold unique and motivating perspectives on land. And the way a society treats its environment lies at the very core of its survival.

When two different perspectives on land collide, conflict ensues. Just 12 km from Lismore, in the aptly named Disputed Plains, this very tension is writ large. Here, a braggart mining company and an arrogant landholder capitalise on the deep flaw of the private property system. The details of the proposed project – the names of the chemicals they plan to inject way too close to underground aquifers, the relationships between company board members and our politicians – are familiar to us now.

But this proposal is yet another product of a perspective of land which must be overthrown – that land is a collection of resources to be extracted by whatever means and at whatever cost.

Let's look at the landscape as a permaculturalist might. Here, every planetary element is not a resource, to be possessed and sold to an economy wholly the figment of some human's imagination, but essential to environmental integrity, which forms



"Los Palos" – The Plains, East Timor, where the breezes carried voices and music



Permaculture Principles
with Anastasia Guise

the only source of true currency. There are no matters of degree when it comes to clean air, water, or soil. They cannot be half clean, just the way you cannot trade in bank notes that are cut in half.

To continue: this perspective on landscape knows that there is and can be no separation between human and planetary health. In this landscape, everything is connected to everything else; every change made to every element within the system has an effect on every other element within the system.

On the Bentley plains, my eyes track the pathways of breezes and storms, the colour and consistency of the soil, the diversity and composition of plant life. Where begins a trickle in the paddock becomes a stream at Back Creek, becomes a river through our city, and

flows out into the oceans of our world. As I look across the hills and plains, lines, contours, all kinds of shapes and projections emerge shimmering as if from just beneath the surface. People too populate my permaculture landscapes, because I know people are here and are not going away, and permaculture is a design system which seeks to resolve the problems between people and land. I might have my toolkit with me, packed with state-of-the-art equipment, but on my sleeve I have pinned my heart.

Here, at Bentley, the breezes are full of voices and music. The voices in chorus refuse to accept a view of land as a quarry or a dump. Even those born into societies who have treated the planet despicably, who have had their relationship to land defined for them by their parent culture, are finding themselves at odds with their world, and demanding change. The planet's voice is irrepressible.

Here, the deep waters murmur: The time is now! For the seven generations before, and the seven to come, don't give up! Hold this ground.

Fibre and Fabric Festival at Blue Knob

by Jim Arachne

On Saturday 31st May, the Blue Knob Farmer's Market will be holding its first 'Fibre and Fabric Festival'.

There will be a series of fibre and fabric stalls, short talks and demonstrations, workshops and longer presentations. There's a focus on hands-on and up close with fleeces, fabrics and many handmade and dyed items for sale.

As with all Market events, there's also lots of opportunities for networking and connecting with other people who are working or interested in this whole area.

There's no fabric without people to produce fibre so we'll be hearing from and

seeing wool and alpaca farmers, hemp fibre growers as well as people procuring fibres from flax and other plant crops – and possibly some smaller scale examples of silk production from silkworms and what is possibly the world's softest fibres from angora rabbits.

Once the fibre is produced the next step is cloth production. A range of skills will be demonstrated; backstrap weaving, felting (as well as needle felting), spinning, basket weaving, natural dyeing, displays of different types of traditional needlework and even good old crochet and knitting!

The day will be followed up by a series of hands-on workshops at the Market

during June.

The Fibre and Fabric event will be preceded by the Blue Knob Gallery's Fibre Show – a glowing presentation of garments, fabrics and clothing as art. The exhibition's gala opening night is Friday 30th May. For more details see the Gallery's site at: blueknobgallery.com

For an updated program of the Market's Fibre and Fabric Festival, please check our Facebook site: *Blue Knob Farmers Market*.

Saturday 10th May: Nimbin Seed Exchange at the Market

Nimbin Seed Exchange will have their first stall at the market. This is the start of an ambitious project – to create a not-for-profit, community-based system to produce bulk, local, non-hybrid food seeds for the local community. We really want to reduce dependency on commercially produced seeds, especially overseas sources.

However, we're starting off simple, with local seed for sale. We'd really like to talk with you if you can grow seed for this project, process seeds for storage, staff our market stall occasionally or, if you'd like to learn how



Spinning in Brittany, France

to grow and save seed, by participating in seed-saving training.

Saturday 24th May, 10am: Herbs for Winter – Fiona Maunder

Get ready for winter colds and sniffles with a range of medicinal and culinary herbs. We'll examine how to use and prepare these using a variety of traditional methods.

Fiona, who runs a regular stall at the Market, has 20 years experience as a Herbalist and is especially interested in handcrafting herbal medicines and in skin care using herbs.

Blue Knob Farmers Market runs every Saturday, rain, hail or shine, 8.30am to noon, on Blue Knob Road near the corner of Lillian Rock Road, 8km from Nimbin in the grounds of the Blue Knob Gallery.



Backstrap weaving in Burtibang, Nepal

How to measure wind

by Jeremy, Tokie and Luano at Nimbin Preschool

Tokie: The wind started from the very first day. We weren't here when it started.

Jeremy: We don't know on which day. We don't know the name of the day. When it's not windy here it's windy in another country on the other side of the world.

Luano: Wait! I hear the wind! It is louder and faster, then you hear the leaves moving so that means it is moving fast. We can see the leaves moving. We see how fast it is going. And so began an extended investigation into how to measure the wind. This began in early term one, and now Jeremy, Tokie and

Luano have constructed their own scale for wind measurement particular to Nimbin. This is their scale.

Wind Scale and Features

- 1 **Noee** – When there is no wind.
- 2 **Leafing** – When the wind blows the leaves.
- 3 **Papus** – A wind that blows paper off a table.
- 4 **Branchy** – A wind that blows the branches. It is not very strong. It just blows the branches a bit.
- 5 **Branch Break** – It blows the branches off. It breaks the branches off the tree.
- 6 **Whistley Wind** – A wind that whistles. A heavy breeze. It goes Whoo, Whoo! When the wind is
- 7 **A Tree Wobbly Wind** – The poles of the electric lines will make a noise and wobble a bit.
- 8 **Snap Wind** – Little trees snap in half.
- 9 **Big Snap Wind** – This wind snaps big trees in half.
- 10 **Tornado Wind** – It is so strong that the highest trees can root out of the ground.
- 11 **Wea-Wea-Wea Wind** – Trees begin to fall onto cars.
- 12 **House Break Wind** – A knocking over house wind.
- 13 **A Tornado** – All of these



things happen at the same time. It is one strong wind spinning and twirling. If you get picked up you may fall down.

14 A Stein Wind – It sucks all the stuff up into the clouds. It knocks over time clocks in the air like Big Ben. Things that are the highest towers fall down all through the city.

Jeremy, Tokie and Luano know that their wind scale will help you to measure the wind.

Book Worms at the Early Learning Centre



April was a busy month for us and it started with our book week. The children brought their favourite books from home and re-told the stories by looking at the pictures. It

was great to see them share their beloved books with their peers and this instigated many pretend play situations. We had parents spend the mornings with us so they could read to us for story time and the children loved having them here.

We went on two excursions: one to the Mobile Library which is always exciting to go to and also to the "Zee Book Exchange" in the community centre. We go there on a regular basis and Wanita and Bruce are always welcoming to us and read lots of stories to our children. It's great to have them right next door and we appreciate their support.

If you would like to come to one of our free playgroup sessions, don't hesitate to drop in on a Wednesday between 10 – 11.30am for our Activity Mornings. We're located behind the Community Centre at 81 Cullen Street, or you can email us at: nimbin.director@nrcc.org.au or phone us on 6689-0142.

May Day

by Michelle McDonald

The children of Tuntable Falls Community School have been busy in the kitchen garden so far this year, and it is looking beautiful coming in to these autumn months. The dill, parsley and coriander are young and vibrant with their different shades of green; garlic shoots have poked their heads through the soil; and snow peas are beginning to climb towards the sky. What better place in which to be and to learn?

We think it is something to celebrate. Hooray for our healthy soils and our fresh water! Hooray for our



garden full of flowers and growing vegies! Hooray for our industrious worms and sweet compost!

On 1st May – Mayday – we spent our whole school day in the garden. There was dancing around the maypole

and decorating the outdoor classroom, with a harvest lunch and storytelling. Of course, there is always a little work to be done, so we planted seedlings that we have raised from seed.

We have three different

colours of broccoli (purple, green and lime), red cabbage, white and green cauliflowers and rainbow chard. We are in for a colorful winter.

Although still a busy time of year in the garden, at least the mornings are cooler and the sun not as strong during the day. So, whilst mulching, planting and weeding, we can all enjoy the feeling of the sun on our backs.

In May, we can plant beetroot, broccoli (as seedlings), carrot, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, salad greens, radish, potato, silverbeet, peas (by early May at latest), bulbs, calendula, cornflower, marigold, snapdragon, sweet peas and pansies.

How do you celebrate your garden?

Nimbin Central School Celebration Day

by Cath Marshall

A highly successful and enjoyable day to celebrate the end of Term 1 was held at Nimbin Central School on 1st April.

The main activity of the day was a climbing wall, which had a range of climbs varying in difficulty, presenting achievable challenges for the whole school community.

Everyone from Kindergarten students to Year 12 (and many of the teachers) attempted and achieved a vertical climb, assisted and cheered on by their peers.

This was followed by a whole school BBQ lunch, with healthy and delicious salads prepared by Food Tech students, using fresh produce from the Agriculture plot.

All enjoyed the day – while it provided

opportunities to develop resilience and peer relationships, it was also fun!

Congratulations to all the students of Nimbin Central School on such a great conclusion to Term 1.



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What's On in May?

- **Saturday 17th** – Trivia Night, 6.30pm
- **Sunday 25th** – Club Visit: Woodburn/Coraki
- **Fridays** – Raffles, \$15 Buffet, Music with Jazz Duo
- **Rock'n'Roll Bowls** – Every Sunday, 9.30am
- **Open Mike** – Wednesdays: 14th and 28th
- **Courtesy Bus** – Book at the Bar
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