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### EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST SOUGHT

The Nimbin Museum site will be redeveloped in 2015.

Currently the use, design and style of this important site are being discussed, and we are seeking interest from anyone who may be looking to lease an area, small or large.

#### PLEASE CONTACT:

Simon 0418-311-595

email: [SimonxxxRose@gmail.com](mailto:SimonxxxRose@gmail.com) or

David 0413-610-222

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# Museum site gets new energy

The vacant block that once housed the Nimbin Museum and two popular retail shops has been bought by a Melbourne doctor and a local restaurateur, who are now seeking expressions of interest from locals for the redevelopment of the site.

Dr Simon Rose is a drug and alcohol specialist who set up Victoria's first heroin clinic and has a hobby farm in Mullumbimby. He organised the World Stoned Chess Championships at MardiGrass (and has won the title), and told the *Byron Echo*, "I may be a doctor but I'm also a major hippie, and I want to do the right thing by Nimbin."

His business partner, David Piesse, has a background of running restaurants in Melbourne, but now runs the Byron Bowl's restaurant, and was instrumental in setting up the Mullumbimby Farmers Market.

Simon Rose said, "We are wanting to



do something that works for the community, and the owners of the adjacent land... we're going to talk with the Tuntable Falls community about a joint vision."

The new owners' proposal so far is to replace the streetfront shops and possibly add a couple down the laneway, with an entertainment area and garden at the rear of the shops, a communal market

space, in co-operation with Tuntable Falls community, and at a later stage, backpacker accommodation.

"We're very comfortable with doing it slowly," Dr Rose told the *Byron Echo*.

The partners have now advertised for expressions of interest from anyone who may be looking to lease an area small or large, with a view to developing an overall plan by the end of February.

## Remembering Lennon's quest for peace

On 8th December, it was 34 years since John Lennon was assassinated by Mark Chapman at the entrance of the Dakota Hotel.

The date was commemorated in Nimbin by the unveiling of a painted-to-scale reproduction of the famous IMAGINE mosaic at the Strawberry Fields memorial garden in Central Park.

The painted replica is the work of Nimbin-based artist Benny Zable, who started working on the project when he traced the original in New York three years ago.

"This IMAGINE is an exact reproduction from the original, and probably has not been reproduced anywhere else in the world," Benny told the *EchoNetDaily*.

"I think this is a significant achievement, not only for me to pull off, also for Nimbin and the world at large."

The original black-and-white IMAGINE mosaic, based on a Greco-Roman mosaic sunburst (Helios) design, was created by a team of Italian craftsmen and given as a gift from the city of Naples for the John Lennon memorial.

Benny Zable tried to get official permission to create the artwork, with supporting letters from Lismore Mayor Jenny Dowell, and Nimbin Chamber of Commerce president Peter Wise, but was told by John Lennon's widow Yoko Ono, through



Photos: Tree Fairy courtesy echonetdaily



her lawyer, that no permission would be given, as it was site specific to Strawberry Fields.

Zable told *EchoNetDaily* that he decided to go ahead with the project anyway, as he felt that the message contained in the piece should be spread worldwide.

"Art should inspire change - it would greatly benefit the world if it was recreated in

city centres all over the world, especially the trouble spots," he said.

"We have war memorials everywhere to remind people about war and peace, but what's special here is the word 'Imagine'. There is 'Lest We Forget' what war does, but 'Imagine' what a better world we can have!"

"The mural has been an

important part of the peace movement in New York City. It will have its natural development here as well," he said.

In dedicating Benny Zable's memorial in Allsopp Park to Nimbin, Uncle Lewis performed a smoking ceremony and explained in his language that the site of the painting is a traditional gathering place of his people.

Candles were lit by folks present, radiating out from the IMAGINE, in the form of a peace sign. The hushed crowd sang John Lennon's 'Imagine' and Beatles songs.

Another full-scale IMAGINE outline pattern can be found at the Nimbin Bush Theatre's Phoenix Rising Cafe. Dave Hyatt is managing a community nailing project for anyone who wants to add their bit to that site.

## Shane's your new man for trailers



Nimbin Trailer Hire is under new management, but offering the same great service.

Shane Douglas (pictured) often helped former owner Damian Devlin with the business, running it for him while he was away, and putting his mechanical background to good use maintaining the trailers.

Shane said, "Damian tried to sell the business to me for a couple of years, and I finally relented. It's a good business, and provides a much-needed service for Nimbin."

Available for hire are: a car trailer; 7x5 with crate; 8x5 twin axle with crate; 12x6 flat-top with removable crate; 8x6 tilt trailer with winch; 9x6 enclosed furniture trailer; and a motorbike trailer that carries three bikes.

Shane is operating the business from his property at 1215 Tuntable Creek Road, not far from The Channon turnoff, but can drop off in Nimbin by arrangement.

Contact him seven days a week, on 0458-491-428.

# Tourists talk up our town

by Andy Gough and Sue Stock



Esmæ from Gilgandra



Eddie and Brian from Belfast



Leon from Dubbo



Maike from Germany getting some insights into Nimbin and 2015 from clairvoyant Kim. Maike has been in Australia for a week and discovered Byron Bay and Nimbin via the Internet, and says she loves the landscapes and the people.



These lads are from Israel and Holland, and were offered some cannabis by a passing motorist about 30 seconds after alighting from the bus from Byron. "Is that what he was on about?" they asked. Yeah, sure guys, you're not fooling anyone here.



Clarissa and Francesco from Italy arrived yesterday and expected Nimbin to be bigger. They said they heard about Nimbin through word of mouth and associated the place with "hippies, marijuana and parties," but were a little disappointed at an apparent lack of nightlife.



Danielle and Heather from Canada. This is Heather's third trip to Nimbin and she brought her friend along this time. The girls are in Nimbin just for the day, Danielle describing it as "pretty sweet" and saying she is looking forward to visiting some waterfalls.



Greg and Amanda from Hampton Park in Victoria think the culture in Nimbin is "intense" and full of "vibrant people". Greg has an aunty in Lismore and it's his first visit to Nimbin. He says they love it here and will encourage all their friends to visit.



Sarina, Vera and Anna from Germany have been in Nimbin for one day. They described Nimbin as "cute", "lovely" and "nice". Vera bought a necklace and they are camping nearby before heading to Byron Bay. Nice shades there, ladies.

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# Chamber of chaos

by Bob Dooley

Governance issues have emerged as a major problem for Nimbin Chamber of Commerce at its second 2014 AGM in December.

The first Annual General Meeting was declared invalid, including the ballot for executive positions that replaced long-standing president Peter Wise, because it had not been conducted properly.

At issue were the procedures to accept new members, and nomination requirements for executive positions.

Legal representatives and the NSW Business Chamber's John Murray provided advice on constitutional issues to the rescheduled meeting, citing requirements that had never been followed before, to the amazement of many long-standing members.

When John Murray was appointed as returning officer for the ballot, he ruled that no nominations would be taken from the floor, as in previous years, but had to be received by the Secretary in writing, seven days before the meeting.

He then read the names

of the seven members of the previous executive committee, whose nominations had been received, declared them elected and closed the meeting, amidst an indignant uproar.

One executive member resigned his position on the spot, in protest against the apparent lack of transparency.

The Chamber is now planning to put its 1982 constitution on its website, so that all members can become aware of the procedural requirements contained in it, including the mechanisms for constitutional change.



Chamber President Peter Wise lights a candle for peace in Allsopp Park. Photo: Tree Fairy

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# Friends of Nimbin Pool prepare for Olympics

by Sue Edmonds

The Friends of the Pool (pictured) gathered recently for a tasty pancake breakfast and planning time for the forthcoming Olympics.

The Olympics will happen with the usual challenging events: longest distance underwater, save the babies, synchronised swimming, marathon floating, and more.

The current world record for marathon floating is 19 minutes, though last year the viewing public got restless after 15 minutes because there isn't much action in floating, though huge concentration is required by the competitors (The Floaters).

The poolside fashion parade is always of particular interest with those who can flaunt their muu muus and Hawaiian shirts.

A sausage sizzle/tea/coffee/cordial keeps the hungers at bay.



The Olympics are on Monday 26th January at 10am. Come along and support our fabulous pool with a little donation of \$5.

## Budget submission

John is doing a fantastic job cleaning the crumbles that come away from the

patching job carried out on the surface during the off-season. It probably would have held better if it had been painted, which was the original intention.

We wait with baited breath to hear if the submission has been prepared for the resurfacing and new toilet block, as promised by Scott Turner from Lismore City Council.

# Local screenwriters are winners

There was an atmosphere of excitement at Screenworks' end-of-year event in Bangalow on Wednesday night, as three talented writers from the Northern Rivers region were announced as the winners of an opportunity to escalate their screenwriting careers.

The three winners – Byron resident Jonathan Gilbert, Bangalow resident Brett Stephens and Nimbin resident Triny Roe – all recently submitted examples of their scriptwriting as part of their application to the Screenworks' Inside the Writers Room Program

The announcement followed a two-step assessment process conducted by a panel of local professional writers. Each of the winners will receive an all-expenses paid trip to Sydney to work with writers from some of Australia's leading production companies as they work and develop story into a television script.

Jonathan Gilbert will sit in with the writers plotting a new TV series at Matchbox Pictures (*Old School*, *Nowhere Boys*, *The Slap*). Brett Stephens will join with Playmaker Media (*The Code*, *House Husbands*, *Love Child*), plotting the next series for one of their popular TV series. Triny Roe will go with Channel 7's *Home and Away* writing team where they will be plotting and



(L-R): Lisa O'Meara, Brett Stephens, Triny Roe, Jonathan Gilbert, Paul Davies, Belinda Chayko and Ken Crouch

editing an upcoming episode.

"There was stiff competition for all three of the opportunities," explained Screenworks general manager, Ken Crouch. "To help with the assessment process, we were very fortunate to have local professional writers, Belinda Chayko and Paul Davies, as well as SAE Byron lecturer, Russell Burton to help assess the applicants."

"This is a pilot program for

Screenworks and is being generously supported by Screen NSW" continued Mr Crouch, "depending on the outcomes of the project this year, we hope that we may be able to continue the program and offer similar opportunities in the future".

Information about Screenworks' Inside the Writers Room program can be found at: [www.screenworks.com.au/event/inside-writers-room/](http://www.screenworks.com.au/event/inside-writers-room/)

# Nimbin health services cut over holiday break

by Adam Guise  
Greens candidate for Lismore

The Nimbin community and health workers have reacted with disappointment to the news that there will be cuts to nursing staff at the Nimbin Multi Purpose Service (MPS) over the summer break. The GP covering the MPS will also be on leave with a replacement yet to be found.

I attended a community rally in Nimbin in December calling for the reinstatement of the nursing hours and adequate funding of North Coast health service. Cutting the equivalent of one nurse's work hours every weekday over the holiday season is a threat to patient safety and overwhelms existing staff.

It's unacceptable that a holiday destination as busy as Nimbin should have its health staff cut over a period they are needed most. With no ambulance based in Nimbin and no doctor rostered over the holiday period, this is a crisis in the making for already overstretched emergency services.

Management should not be doing the government's bidding by making ruthless staffing cuts, but should instead be demanding adequate funding for an essential health service.

It's ludicrous that the government spends millions of dollars on police for drug raids in Nimbin, yet refuses to protect the health of residents by adequately funding health services. I call on Northern NSW Local Health District and the NSW government to step in and reinstate funding for the lost nurse hours and ensure that there is a doctor on duty over the break.



Above: Organiser Tony Jones speaks at the rally in the park.  
Below: Greens candidate Adam Guise addresses the demonstration outside the hospital.  
Bottom: Vanessa and Christina were among the scores of locals at the protest.



## Can't help myself, bad Abbott

by Sophia Hoeben

In another mean stroke, the Abbott government is going to cut funding to Community Housing, which will no doubt lead to more homeless people out on the streets.

In Nimbin, the hospital has been forced to cut the number of nursing staff, no doubt negatively affecting the amount of care given to palliative care and other patients. Old people, young people, the sick and the poor, are all targets for misery and suffering due to one mean little man's dream of bringing about a surplus in the budget! A budget set to bring about degradation in our schools, hospitals, welfare and environment sectors.

Whenever a government, ruler, King, Queen or dictator brings havoc and despair upon the people, a revolution is sure to follow. This has been shown throughout history to be the case. The government has enough money to squander on spurious projects such as the medical marijuana hemp trial, apparently worth nine million dollars, when the tests and trials have all been done by us hippies for decades now. The verdict has long been out and is conclusive, just ask Tony Bower.

On the environmental front, building more multi-lane highways is giving wildlife little chance of survival. Now even the cute little potoroo is in danger of extinction, along with most other wildlife in Australia. Sure, we still need our cars and yes, it's not our fault that there are so few electric vehicles manufactured, even if we could afford them. No! This is the age of super highways to hell and mass insanity!

Meanwhile, down at the creek... Australia used up a staggering 20 billion litres of water this year, the highest usage per capita in our history. The mining companies suck up mega litres in their endeavour to rape the Earth and leave us all parched in the near future.

There seems no end of issues to be depressed about these days. Where is it all going? Is there no hope but what we can raise as an alternative? In Nimbin, we have sought an alternative to just about everything that was produced by the greed and destructive nature of mankind. We must continue in our collective quest to raise consciousness and communicate with each other to find solutions to the real problems we may be facing in our personal lives soon.



### Politics of Nimbin town

*Politics of Nimbin town  
So many flags to fly  
The fascists want to cut them down  
So many flying high*

*Peace is in the forest  
In the wind and in the trees  
Even moo cows do not protest  
The theft of butter, milk and cheese*

*Peace and love and happiness  
Such a simple plan  
But where then do the warriors  
Find a place to make a stand?*

*The problem with a nation-state  
Is the need for many rules,  
Laws and regulations  
To guide the silly fools*

*The ancient fight for territory  
Protecting patch and turf  
The notions of equality  
Fall down on planet Earth*

*And thus we turn to drinking  
Finding solace in the bong  
Staring down the needle's eye  
Blaming others for all wrongs*

*But if Gaia be eternal  
Then all her wounds will heal  
In this life or the next  
In a world not scared to feel*

– Brent Gordon Rogers,  
Ravenshoe

Self-sufficiency and a strong local community is still the only option we have to withstand what is to come. May the new year bring about the end of this rotten Abbott government.

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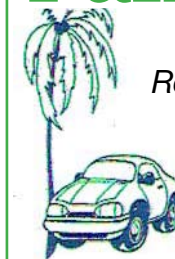
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# Letters

## Access denied

I am wheelchair user and I went to use the accessible toilet at the Nimbin Hotel on Saturday only to find that it was being used to store all the cleaning buckets and had had laundry tubs installed since my last visit six months ago.

After navigating my way through the cleaning paraphernalia and searching around for the light switch to no avail, I desperately needed to pee and did so by the ambient light of my phone. I had wheeled to the pub because I knew it had an accessible toilet, even though this meant going up and down the hill of the main street.

Upon exiting I spoke to the bar staff and was told that they had removed the light switch so that the things they were storing in there were safe. I responded with "but it's a toilet not a store room," they then informed me that I was required to ask them to turn the light on for the toilet from behind the bar.

I wished I'd said, "so I assume that you're using the same 'ask if you need to pee and if we have time we'll remove some of our stuff from the toilet and turn on a light for you' approach to the other toilets in the building!" Which I am sure they are not. Come on, it's a pub. People need to piss.

Accessible toilets are hard to find, so when one becomes inaccessible through being used to store stuff, it is really frustrating. To quote the late Stella Young, "the ability to go to the toilet without asking someone else is a privilege. It's a privilege wheelchair users enjoy only when there's proper, independent access. It's a privilege we lose when venues use their accessible toilets to store things. The privilege of just going somewhere else is one that we don't enjoy, because there simply aren't that many options." (Stella Young, *The Drum*, 2014).

Jacki Brown  
Melbourne

## NimCoC

We would like to express our disappointment and disgust at the performance of some executive members of the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce.

This organisation is supposed to be the official face of our business community, and yet they have conducted themselves in the most unprofessional way possible. They have made a complete farce of the democratic process, and their credibility as a properly run Chamber is now forever tarnished.

That the executive board has been able to vote

themselves in without informing members that the voting process had now been changed is nothing short of corruption.

We will be watching and waiting with anticipation to see how the Chamber will manage the \$50,000 grant from local and state funding to help Nimbin rebuild its tourist trade after the fire, with a positive advertising/marketing and promotion campaign this year.

We will be attending all the meetings so we can observe how this Chamber is supporting the business community as we travel through 2015. We will be looking forward to seeing the projects that were delayed in 2014 because of the fire, being completed. We look forward to having our concerns as a business community raised at the meetings, so that the Chamber will be able to address them and work towards solutions.

We will also be looking forward to the elections at the next AGM.

Wanita Ellis  
Zee Book Exchange

## CSG license renewal

Dart Energy, which lays claim to the expired Petroleum Exploration License (PEL 445), has apparently 'negotiated' its renewal so that it can begin preparations to establish a gas field in the Northern Rivers. Our local National Party MPs are talking up the 'strict new conditions and regulations' that will form part of the new agreement. To me that's code for giving the go ahead for the gas wells, pipelines, compressor stations and millions of litres of 'produced' water that would be pumped out of the underground coal seam. The average productive life of a CSG well is about 5 years. As has shown to be the case, the contaminated land, leaking gas wells and rusting infrastructure will be leftover as a constant reminder of how our State Government ignored the people's concerns. The contamination and depressurised aquifers will never be the same again. That scenario will happen if the government allows the mining companies to get a foothold in our region.

Our local National Party MP's should be standing with the community and declaring our region Gasfield Free, not promoting these foreign-owned mining companies' 'financial and technical capacity and good environmental management'. It's little comfort that the area (most of the Ballina Shire) where Dart hasn't found profitable gas reserves will be excluded from its new license. Our aquifers, creeks,



communities, roads, etc don't stop at electoral boundaries.

The costs associated with the current court action (NSW Government v Metgasco) are growing with large compensation payments a possibility. Surely now is not the time to be crowing about 'strict conditions' and new license approvals.

There is growing evidence that CSG mining results in irreversible ground water contamination, falling rural property prices and adverse human health impacts in areas where this industry has been allowed to prosper.

The headline 'Ballina electorate CSG free' is a cheap political stunt that shows the Nationals are more concerned about being re-elected at the forthcoming State election than they are about the long-term impacts of this industry. Our future should focus on sustainable agriculture, manufacturing, the service industries, renewable energy and tourism. CSG mining puts rural industries and the future aspirations of our region at risk. A vote for the Nationals in March is a vote for CSG mining in the Northern Rivers.

Cr Jeff Johnson  
Ballina Shire Councillor

## Jury still out on EHS

Thanks to Dr Boustany (NGT, Dec 2014) for writing on EHS (electro-hypersensitivity) as you've had a past writer or two declare it to be a psychological condition, which feels condescending coming from someone who doesn't have it or has not experienced it in their family as I have.

The placement of an NBN and mobile phone tower in Nimbin next to a school is one of today's more daft decisions – and will be looked back on as a serious health mistake by 2020.

Looking at the proposition that lab tests show it's not a genuine illness, how do scientists verify EHS? Most perform what is called a 'provocation test'. The provocation test is performed using a radio transmitting device operating at a specific frequency, i.e. 914 MHz to simulate a mobile phone.

Limitations of the test include:

1. The provocation test is not a biologically based test; instead it requires the subject to respond with how they feel which of course, is very subjective;
2. Equipment is set to a specific frequency of operation that the subject may not actually be sensitive to;
3. Testers claim that the device simulates a mobile phone, but this is debatable as it is not communicating to one or more cell towers;
4. The test procedure is often poorly defined due in part to those conducting the test not fully understanding the EHS condition; and
5. For those suffering EHS, the provocation test creates unnecessary anxiety, which in itself can lead to the onset of similar symptoms that can interfere with the test results.

To quote Steve Weller, BSc – "I have been EHS and I suggest that anyone who has doubts about EHS being a physiological condition consider reading my personal EHS case study, available on the internet. Claims of no evidence of harm appear to be based on faulty research. Biological effects from RF exposure with the potential for serious health consequences are well known and documented."

(<http://electroplague.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/steve-weller-a-personal-ehs-case-study-public-2014-april-11.pdf>).

Richard Giles  
Conondale (QLD)

## Anxiety epidemic

Misinformation is a nett cost to society. Witting or unwitting cheats and liars may temporarily gain advantage at a cost to the remainder of society. So there is a survival advantage to act on correct information and ignoring incorrect information. However there are pitfalls. One pitfall is that even a good solid evidence based understanding can be white anted by continuous repetition of misinformation, unknowingly affecting one's subconscious, causing cognitive dissonance and anxiety. People have a responsibility to verify information that they promulgate.

Dr Jacqueline Boustany's

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**NEXT DEADLINE:**  
**Wednesday 28th January**

**Email** [nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com](mailto:nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com) or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

letter on EMR (NGT Dec 2014) exemplifies a number of these pitfalls. First, the proposed phone tower near the Nimbin preschool is harmless for reasons of physics and biology I've previously enunciated. But Jacqueline appeals to emotion about her daughter's thin young skull (NB, even solid bone ear to ear does not attenuate mobile phone frequencies much – muscles in your brain would be much better protection), an emotion that could understandably strike unjustifiable fear, a sense of irresponsibility, and anxiety between mother and child, but only if the parent believes the EMR misinformation.

Next, Jacqueline lists a number of maladies suffered by her patients, none of which maladies have ever passed a double blind test linking them to EMR; yet she still implies EMR is the cause. If patients are lead to believe that EMR can cause these maladies then the Nocebo effect (NGT Oct 2014) guarantees that the sight of a phone tower etc will produce the malady.

What could be simpler than doing a test on metal plated fractures and EMR? The most likely place to see an effect would be those magnetometers in libraries and such like, yet I've not noticed people yelping as they pass through. People I know with metal plates and mobile phones aren't bothered. But the plethora of anecdotes isn't data so let's do the double blind tests to see if the effect is real or imaginary.

Next Jacqueline demonstrates why appealing to authority is an invalid form of argument. She cites the WHO, presumably its

impossible declaration of mobile phone EMR being a "class B carcinogen like coffee" (although she seems to have broadened it to stuff WHO didn't say "EMF sensitivity and subsequent illness,") of which the carcinogen proposition appears to be based on dodgy "research" from the Vienna school of medicine. If the WHO is correct then the laws of nature are wrong and the universe doesn't exist.

I'm intrigued by Jacqueline's novel concept of echolocation in bees! I've not yet seen one paper on the effect of mobile phone towers on birds and bees that passes the joke test. They're procrustean, some appear contrived and don't even attempt to analyse possible confounding issues.

Whilst the phone towers and phones are harmless, creating anxiety and disease from misinformation about them is harmful. "First do no harm" is more than just for medicos.

PS. I thank Jordan Purdy for his letter (NGT Dec 2014) pointing out the human cost of being on the receiving end of the chemtrail conspiracy.

Alan Roberts  
 Bentley

### CONtrail comeback

In response to Jordan Purdy (NGT Dec 2014), the excuse that it is water condensation does not cut it for me. This is not a tangible excuse for what I have experienced of late.

I am baffled when there are two planes in the sky at the same time, at the same altitude and conditions. One can be making contrails, which evaporates swiftly and the other plane is making something that lingers longer and can even cast a shadow. The same plane in one minute can switch from condensation, then off, then to something more sinister looking. I have witnessed this phenomenon and so many lined skies, on different occasions. Prior to the G20 in Brisbane, we copped a huge spray and then suffered consecutive over 40-degree weather, in spring, straight after the spraying. Coincidence?

You state I am an "ill-informed journalist"; this is an assumption. I am

not a journalist, simply a concerned individual, expressing my experiences with my community to discover if anyone else has noticed what I am seeing. If they had not, I would be concerned about my sanity.

Many people are seeing the same abundance of enigmatic 'clouds' trailing out of planes; they too share my curiosity to what this unusual phenomena is. They, like myself, have researched the subject from every angle, to satisfy their paranoia, finding credible research sourced from non-biased empirical evidence, and all came to the same conclusions.

My research comes primarily from observation, and Google Scholar. I propose you go to Scholar and type in 'geo-engineering', 'solar radiation management', 'project cloverleaf', or 'Asilomar Conference' you will be alarmed to find multitudes of cited, referenced articles by scientists and academics about this subject.

My research is from observation, photographic documentation, and communication with the greater community sharing the same information, not Wikipedia, as this is not a credible source of information.

Elowishus Mirkatroid  
 Nimbin

### The power of denial

The Information Age has delivered many benefits. It's provided access to previously unimaginable amounts of information.

It's given anyone with an internet connection a useful reference to almost any subject.

Yet the information boom has a down side.

Having a wealth of information at their fingertips has encouraged some to imagine that everything they Google is completely accurate. Unfortunately, the increase in information has been accompanied by a disproportionate increase in misinformation. Sites and blogs written by people with no formal training or experience in the subjects they discuss, have spawned a sub-culture of armchair experts.

This sub-culture believes they know as much, or more than anyone else because the internet provides this knowledge. Believing they know 'the' truth appears to provide many with a sense of empowerment that helps balance a deep mistrust of authority – including the science community. Consequently, opinions and images are circulated with no regard for their

origin or veracity, to create a virtual world within a world.

We all need emotional security and a sense of empowerment. Yet imagining the web provides a substitute for a lived experience, or a life-long career in science would be a mistake. Our need to feel empowered should never blind us to this, or cause us to deny the collective understanding science offers.

As much as we want to believe in ourselves and our ability to achieve anything, true wisdom is about owning what we can and cannot learn through a phone line.

R J Poole  
 Lismore

### Win for men and koalas

It's good news for Men's Shed members and koala carers/lovers alike. Council is investigating a win/win location for the Pottsville and District Men's Shed at the Barry Sheppard sports field (Hastings Point), which is centrally located within the PDMS membership catchment between Kingscliff and Pottsville.

What the Barry Sheppard sports field can offer is in keeping with the primary objective of the Australian Men's Shed Association, which is to encourage social inclusion in order to address stress and social isolation often endured by our male senior citizens. The AFL Club (who have stated they would welcome the Men's Shed), the Pony Club and the Men's Shed could happily co-exist and support each other. There is plenty of room for expansion, ample car parking options, less vandalism risk and shared surveillance costs.

Koala specialist Dr Steve Phillips, who directed the Tweed Coast Koala Habitat Study 2011 which is the document Council has referred to in developing its plan to avoid koala extinction on the Coast, has stated that the Black Rocks sports field is not suitable for a Men's Shed due to environmental constraints. Barry Sheppard has far less environmental constraints than Black Rocks.

There is no long-term security at the Black Rocks sports field as Council has ruled that at Black Rocks a five-year limited use licence should be considered and that the shed be relocatable as a result of concerns over the site's isolated location, risk of vandalism and theft, and impacts on threatened species adjacent to the site. What is the point of going to all the expense and trouble of lodging a development application and building a temporary structure only to have to

## Notices

### Lay it on the line

Please support the Northern Rivers Railway Action Group's campaign to help save our tracks in 2015. Take a photo of yourself and friends lying on the disused railway line and post it on facebook. (Lay on a blanket or sarong if you are concerned about comfort or any possible contamination.) See: [www.facebook.com/nrrag](http://www.facebook.com/nrrag) for more details.

### Rollerskaters wanted

Nimbin Junior Rollers are seeking local roller skaters, both young and old, offering training to kids in the principal skills of flat-track quad skating. Nimbin Junior Rollers are a freshly conceived association, and hope to see what depth of interest there is within the community. Contact: [njr@mail.com](mailto:njr@mail.com) for more information.

### Circus Express

Skills and fun for ages 2-102. Classes available at Barkers Vale on Tuesdays and Thursdays and Kyogle on Mondays and Thursdays. Contact Genevieve on 6689-7531.

### Open Learning

The Nimbin Open Learning Centre will begin term one on 4th February. Enrolments will take place the week before, on the 28th and 29th January, 10am to 3pm, at the Community School classroom. If you have enquiries about our classes or would like to offer to teach a class, leave a message on 6689-1477.

### Uke classes

Beginners and Advanced Ukulele Classes in Nimbin 2015 at the Open Learning Centre with Meg and Mookx. We have classes for you, from absolute beginners to advanced students! Enrolment on Wed 29th and Thurs 30th January for an 8-week course (\$55 for the term, or \$10 per class) at the Comskool room in the Community Centre – phone 6689-1477 for more details. These classes are accessible, very affordable and open to people of all ages.

### Astrology workshop

"The Chinese Year of the Goat and the Astrology of 2015" with Maggie Kerr. Maggie will present the astrology of 2015 exploring the current planetary cycles with reference to the Chinese Year of the Goat and the Mayan Calendar. 19th February, 9.30am – 4pm at Lillifield Community Centre, 4505 Kyogle Rd. Costs \$80, bring your own lunch, morning tea provided. Contact Tina 0457-903-957 or 6689-7413; email: [starloom@hotmail.com](mailto:starloom@hotmail.com)

### MardiGrass 2015

The MardiGrass Organising Body will commence Friday 4.20 meetings at the Embassy on 9th January and every week until May. All are welcome to come and help organise the annual cannabis law reform rally and gathering.

### Embroiderers' group

Meetings are 9.30am-2.30pm every 1st and 3rd Wednesday and every 3rd Saturday of each month in the function room at the rear of the Red Dove Centre, Keen Street, Lismore. Contact 0423-337-872.

### Al-Anon family groups

Are you concerned about somebody else's drinking? Al-Anon meetings are held at Ballina, Lismore, Murwillumbah and Grafton. For more details, go to: [www.al-anon.alateen.org/australia](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/australia) or phone 1300-252-666.

### Free listings

Keep it brief and to the point and if we think it's of interest to our readers, we'll run your community notice for free. Email us by deadline (see box on opposite page).

dismantle, relocate and reconstruct it?

The Barry Sheppard sports field is on Crown Land under trust management by the Tweed Shire Council, which means that the Men's Shed could set up there with minimal delay. It is a similar distance north of Pottsville as is Black Rocks sports field

to the south of Pottsville.

There is already a well-established Men's Shed operating at the Pottsville Beach Neighbourhood Centre. Why have two Men's Sheds in Pottsville when there is another site nearby which ticks all the boxes?

Lyn Dickinson  
 Pottsville

## Letters to the editor

NGT welcomes letters by email or post by deadline. 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.