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## Mayor cuts ribbon for Tribal Magic's resurrection

On Thursday 26th February, the Mayor, Councillor Jenny Dowell, cut the ribbon to officially open the new, larger Tribal Magic, Alternative Department Store at 74 Cullen Street, Nimbin.

Peter Laurence (pictured), Tribal Magic business owner, Nimbin fire victim and local philanthropist, thanked the Mayor and the members of his team, many of whom worked voluntarily, for their contributions in helping make his vision a reality. Special thanks was extended to Matt and Sue Cook of Charters Hardware for their support.

The original Tribal Magic store was destroyed by the Nimbin fire on 12th August while Peter was on a product-sourcing trip in Thailand. Despite the great loss and with much support, within



six weeks the store re-opened in the old paint section of Charter's Hardware, as the Cooks started the consolidation of their business.

Six months after the fire, the new store was ready, and the Mayor was delighted to be able to officially open the new Tribal Magic.

"People had said that good things would come out of the

fire. Circumstances that are bad offer opportunities for people to create something good, which is what we have here today," said Councillor Dowell.

Councillor Dowell also acknowledged Peter's deep commitment to social justice not just here, but also in Laos.

With Chantico's locally-made Davidson Plum cordial,

Councillor Dowell raised a toast, not only to Peter and Tribal Magic, but also to the continued revival, renewal and great things that happen in Nimbin.

The event was catered for by Pot a Gold Café, the new business of Jodee Tichborne, whose original business, the Rainbow Café was also destroyed in the August fire.

"The Alternative Department Store" includes the product range renowned of Tribal Magic – a range of local art, craft and produce, clothing, jewellery, souvenirs and smoking paraphernalia, but adds camping, esoteric, and environmentally aware products to the mix. The store also offers a two-screen internet Kiosk.

"Let's put Nimbin back on the map again," said Peter.

## Design workshop on future of Nimbin fire sites

Lismore City Council has hosted a design charrette with landowners of the former Nimbin Museum and Rainbow Café to discuss an integrated design for the heart of the village.

The two properties were destroyed by fire in August last year and the design charrette provided an opportunity to discuss possibilities for the entire site, incorporating the two premises that were burnt down and the Council-owned blister that fronts Cullen Street.

The charrette was attended by the new owner of the Nimbin Museum site, Melbourne doctor and restaurateur Dr Simon Rose, owners of the former Rainbow Café site, Tuntable Falls community, and a range of Council planning staff.

Dr Simon Rose said the design charrette was a resounding success and everyone left feeling motivated and positive.

"I feel like the original vision when I bought the land was vindicated. I had a



sensitivity for the land and the community, and what this site represents to them, and I feel Council has a similar vision and is really amenable to getting this development happening," Dr Rose said.

"Dealing with bureaucracies tends to leave one cynical and frustrated, but I left feeling positive and hopeful. We're all on the same page."

Council's Executive Director Brent McAlister said Council engaged experienced Urban Designer and Landscape Architect David Tooby to lead the design charrette.

"Council has a proud record of hosting workshops where we bring different parties together to agree upon integrated design for residential land releases, the health precinct around the hospital and improvements to the CBD/riverbank. This is an extension of that and it was a good opportunity to sit down and look at the myriad possibilities for a site that is well-loved and undoubtedly considered the heart of Nimbin," Brent said.

"We currently have a strong mandate to further partnering initiatives and this is a great example of that. The Nimbin

fire was a shocking tragedy, but there is now an opportunity to create something special for the village. We did not hold the workshop to dictate anything – this was a round-table discussion where all ideas and possibilities were brought to the table."

The objectives of the workshop were to facilitate:

- An understanding of landowner intentions and potential timeframes along with basic Council requirements around zoning, heritage, fire safety etc.
- An integrated design for the affected area.
- Discussion around key crime prevention design considerations.
- An understanding of Council requirements in order to reduce delays in the development application process.
- Discussion about relevant economic development and tourism potential, as well as a post-fire marketing campaign to enhance visitor numbers in the village.

## Rainbow Rising

by Megan James

After the fire last August burnt down the Rainbow Cafe, Tuntable Co-op formed a group to organise the clean-up of the site and to develop plans for its future. At our monthly tribal meeting in September, the community voted overwhelmingly in favour of rebuilding the cafe. We also held a community forum with our members in November where we collectively decided on a number of core design features, assisted by one of our previously non-resident shareholders, Sarah Gunn, who is also an architect.

We are now onto the stage of negotiating with our new neighbours, Dr Simon Rose and David Piesse about the best way to preserve and improve Rainbow Lane in its existing position. Some of us attended a design workshop organised by Brent MacAlister of Lismore Council in early February in order to facilitate this process – and to expedite the information stream from Council

regarding all the regulations required for a Development Application for the site.

Improved communication between all parties and a roughed-out joint plan was an excellent outcome of this workshop. We are now continuing to develop plans for the site with a focus on Rainbow Lane in conjunction with Simon and David and their architect, Mark Floate.

Our vision is to build a community-friendly cafe, which has many of the features of the old cafe while utilising its potential even further. By designing to maximise natural light and sun, the stunning view to the Rocks and around, and by making the space easier to work in and more pleasant to be in, we hope to provide a meeting place and a cafe which will serve the community for many decades to come. The enclosed garden at the back of the Rainbow has always been a sanctuary for families with children and we intend to preserve this aspect of the old Rainbow, while making a fence that can be opened out to expand the proposed green plaza that Simon and David envisage for performance, markets

and other community events. Provision for a Juice Bar fronting Rainbow Lane will be part of the design also.

An all-weather performance space, such an integral part of the old Rainbow many years ago, is to be included in the design, as well as roof alignment to facilitate the installation of a solar power system. Our funds are limited but we hope to ultimately also provide some rentable space for local professionals, artists or craftspeople to complement the many small retail spaces which Simon and David are proposing to develop.

Council have been very keen to help, and it is great to feel supported by them in our endeavours to keep the heart of Nimbin beating strongly. Council also proposes to facilitate a Public Meeting in the near future with the wider community and the owners of both sites. We at Tuntable will be working to keep the Nimbin community informed through the *GoodTimes* every month and to have a beautiful new Rainbow shining in the centre of the town before too long!

# International Women's Day in Nimbin

by Sophia Hoeben

The focus of this year's International Women's Day will again fall on the violence being committed everyday against women world-wide.

Millions of women in every nation on Earth continue to be abused and degraded at the hands of men through rape and physical assault. The problem is so extreme that recently even the mostly male-owned mainstream media realised the severity of the problem and began reporting on the worst cases. Mind you, the worst may never be known, however the appalling statistics certainly indicate misogyny is far from dead and on the rise in most nations.

There is some good news. A Royal Commission into the epidemic proportion of violence against women began in Victoria on February 23. This enquiry into support and justice for women is



responding to the alarming statistic of one in three women nationally having suffered rape and assault, mostly by former or current partners.

In Australia, they're still calling assault on women attacked in their own homes 'domestic violence', when under common law the actual crime itself is called 'assault'. This variance in terms is just another indication of the type of discrimination and bigotry women face, even under law. When is assault not assault? Is the term 'domestic' in front of violence meant as a diminutive

of real violence somehow? Surely, you would think by now, what with the past 50 years of input from the feminist movement and the general raising of world consciousness, that respect for women would have been restored, or at least raised to the minimum level of women being safe in their homes! It seems not, and the fight goes on, as many brave women feel impelled to keep on speaking out and making their voices heard.

We women are the grandmothers, mothers, daughters, sisters and aunties.

We are the givers of human life, the carers, nurturers, lovers and artists. We have strong ties with Mother Earth through our birth-giving ability and our ways are not the ways of men, of male wars and religions and unsustainable greed. Our ways were squashed throughout the 500-year war on women they called the Inquisition.

Back then, they burnt nine million of us throughout Europe. They forbade us the use and practice of herbs, called us evil hags and witches for treating and healing the sick. Owning a black cat or having a crooked shingle on the roof could spell your death on the stake. We may be glad those days are gone, but universal misogyny lingers and we must be vigilant and brave, brave enough to challenge it wherever and whenever we encounter it.

We march in Cullen Street on Saturday 7th March. See you there!

## Nimbin women speak out on ice

by Granny Breath Weaver

"We've had enough." This expression has been used too many times now and nothing has changed, except for worse. What have we had enough of?

The list is long, both frightening and challenging for our community. Abuse is the word that covers many aspects of our lives and lives of the generations that went before us. Abuse has been, is being,

passed on through families, institutions, war, genocide...

Abuse leads to abuse of the self through self-medication. There is no blame; only healing and speaking out can begin to create changes in ourselves and in our families and our community. Changes for the better of humanity.

Ice – the drug – is the latest horror for communities all around Australia, ready to break in families and institutions..

Who created this drug and why? Silence can only be kept when no-one

dares to challenge authorities who prefer to sedate us rather than heal. Yes, we have had enough.

Nimbin women are conducting a speak-out on the ice epidemic on Friday 13th March, 11am-4pm at Nimbin Town Hall. There will be speakers, workshops and resolutions made for changes. Further healing circles will follow around the Sacred Fire.

All of our community is welcome to attend and have their say, please bring food to share.

## First Nations sit-in

by Benny Zable

Following the G20 Aboriginal Tent Embassy protests, a Freedom Summit was held in Alice Springs/Uluru to draw up demands for Aboriginal Sovereignty.

The action came to Canberra, where the National Freedom Movement had called for a sit-in, to bring attention to a set of principles that determines Aboriginal Sovereignty.

According to the Sovereign Union Facebook site, "Self Determination Sovereignty gives people substantive power in their own affairs, encourage and support them in taking responsibility for themselves, offer them assistance as they design tools for the exercise of that power, and the chances are good that they will do remarkable things."

On 27th January, the Freedom Movement marched to federal parliament, defiantly walking past the police who tried to stop them. The Freedom Movement protesters gave notice that a sit-in will begin until their

demands are taken seriously by the powers within parliament.

On 8th February, we at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy marched up to begin the sit-in proper to be met by a wall of police who actually shepherded us into the media circus reporting on the Tony Abbott leadership spill. It turned out to be a great backdrop for the world to see the Aboriginal Sovereignty, human rights abuse, deaths in custody and stolen children protest.

On 13th February, Aboriginal grandmothers protested to Australian politicians about the increasing removal of Aboriginal children from their families to be placed in homes or with foster families, many of them non-Indigenous. In 2008, then [Labor] prime minister, Kevin Rudd, apologised on behalf of the federal government for the decades-long systematic removal of Aboriginal children from their families. The grandmothers issued a communique, which reads in part: "Today we march in protest against the unprecedented



theft of Aboriginal children from their families by so-called "child protection" agencies across Australia.

A small young crew stayed on to continue the sit-in, led by none other than the son of Gary Foley, Roxly, when Michael Jack and I packed up and came back up north.

The Rainbow Chai Tent and friends from the North Coast came down to support the protests, by setting up the kitchen and meeting spaces. This was extremely costly. We're asking for any donations to help with Michael's cost recovery and support in general to be sent to Michael Jack at the Commonwealth Bank, BSB 062-580, Acc 10278477. Thank you.

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Authorised by Aniko Papp, 155 Keen St, Lismore



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# Vote wisely, gasfields still threaten region

by Aidan Ricketts

We are now hurtling towards the state election, here's what the parties are offering on the issues of gas and coal.

The best that the Liberal and National parties have come up with is the Gas Plan, which is really a Gasfields plan. Premier Mike Baird is on record as saying "Absolutely we want CSG". The true colours of the LNP as the political wing of the mining industry are plain to see.

The state government has approved a massive new coal mine over some of the state's richest agricultural land on the Liverpool Plains, confirming their betrayal of regional farming communities. At Maules Creek they are overseeing the destruction of ecologically vital remnant forests by coal mining and there are plans for yet more mines in the Hunter. Mike Baird, an old friend of the mining industry has also promised draconian anti-protest laws if re-elected, to further subvert our democracy to the will of foreign mining companies.

Closer to home, we have seen the state government renew the massive gas exploration licence (PEL445) during the very same week that our four Northern Rivers National Party MP's launched their so-called gas plan. PEL 445 threatens invasive gas mining in Northern Rivers communities ranging from Woodburn to Lismore, including Clunes, Nimbin, The Channon and Kyogle; north to the QLD border and west past Urbenville and Mallanganee. That's pretty much the whole of the Lismore electorate, currently held by incumbent MP Thomas "Gasfields" George. What is not in the renewed PEL445 is mostly in Metgasco's infamous PEL 16, 13 and 426 covering Casino, Bentley, Doubtful Creek and vast tracts of the Clarence region.

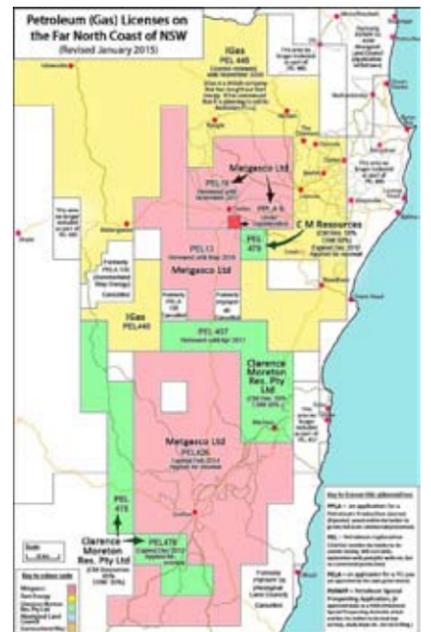
So if we wake up after March 28 with an LNP government and with the gang of four National Party MPs returned in this region, we will be staring down another four years of gas mining under martial law and more coal mines over farms and forests.

What does Labor offer? Well in the Northern Rivers they are offering a commitment to a Gasfield Free region. Labor and the Greens actually proposed legislation to achieve it in the Upper House last year but it was voted down by the LNP with the support of the Christian Democrats. But further afield, Labor's gas policy in the rest of the state remains a lot less clear. They haven't come out in opposition to the giant coal mine in the Liverpool Plains and have a very questionable history on coal. Still for the Northern Rivers at least they offer a solid policy against gasfields here, plus a commendable plan for a great koala park.

I'm not a member of any political party but credit has to go to the Greens for having provided the most long standing and consistent policy and action against gasfields of any of the parliamentary parties. The Greens proposed a moratorium on the gas industry as far back as 2012 and have clear policies for a Gasfield Free Northern Rivers, and the rest of the state as well as strong opposition to new coal mines. They are the only party that completely rejects corporate and mining industry donations.

That's how the parties line up as I see it, I won't tell you who to vote for, but I will tell you that to make your vote count it is essential that you number every square and put LAST the candidate you trust least on gas policy.

In the seats of Ballina and Lismore the Greens outpolled Labor last election and were the two party preferred challengers



up against the National Party. If the National Party are pushed to preferences in Northern Rivers seats then Labor and Green preferences will come into play. Any exhausted votes (failure to number every square) will work to the National Party's advantage, but if Labor voters and Green voters and voters for other minor candidates number every square there will be a real contest on.

Regardless of who wins, it is good for democracy for seats to change hands. If they change hands from National to Labor it will certainly raise a few eyebrows, if a National Party seat or two were to fall to the Greens it would make national news and would be widely interpreted as a very strong vote against the unconventional gas industry.

The chances of shifting the incumbent members remains low but the recent result in QLD shows that anything is possible. Just like in QLD, real change depends on people numbering every square.

## For whom the Bell Miners toll

by Dailan Pugh,  
North East Forest Alliance

The pleasant tinkling of bellbirds that I remember from my childhood has turned into a cacophony, portending a nightmare of rampant lantana and the gaunt skeletons of dead and dying eucalypts. Logging dieback is spreading through our native forests, particularly around the Border Ranges.

Bellbirds are more correctly known as Bell Miners. They are moving out of the gullies as logging opens up the forest allowing lantana and vines to smother the smashed and burnt native understorey, creating habitat they thrive in. They co-operate in aggressively attacking and mobbing both potential competitors and nest predators to drive them from their colonies.

Under the protection of Bell Miners, populations of tiny sap-sucking insects called psyllids proliferate, draining the life out of eucalypt trees. The sickening trees are vulnerable to borers and fungal infections, they become too sick to grow, flower and set seed. Often they die, though they can survive in their feeble state for decades.

Logging dieback is a major threat to the survival of vast tracts of NSW forests. There are over a hundred thousand hectares of NSW coastal forests affected by logging dieback from Queensland to Victoria, and it is rapidly expanding as logging spreads lantana and climate change gathers pace. Two and a half million hectares of NSW forests have been identified as



susceptible to this dieback.

Of the approximately 100,000 hectares of apparently susceptible forest types in the Border Ranges region, 20,000 hectares were mapped as affected by dieback in 2004. Though large areas were missed and the problem has since deteriorated, meaning there are now probably over 30,000 hectares affected. Dieback is particularly prevalent in the ranges around Woodenbong, Urbenville, Old Bonalbo, Grevillea, and Afterlee.

Diverse rainforest and grassy understoreys have been taken over by the introduced lantana, thousands of trees have been killed, and multitudes of native animals have been displaced due to habitat degradation and mobbing by Bell Miners. This is ecosystem collapse. That it is happening on public land in one of Australia's biodiversity hotspots, in forests of World Heritage value, is a disgrace to us all.

The Forestry Corporation has been aware of the logging associated dieback problem for over 70 years. The North East Forest Alliance has been trying to get them to do something about it for over 22 years. Both lantana invasion and eucalypt dieback associated with over-

abundant psyllids have been recognised as Key Threatening Processes by the NSW Scientific Committee.

The Forestry Corporation decided the solution lay in maximising bulldozer disturbance and hot burns, so they trialled this in Donaldson State Forest in 2005 and at Mount Lindesay in 2007. These were predictably total failures with lantana, Bell Miners and dieback all getting worse.

Undaunted, the NSW Forestry Corporation has continued to hit affected forests hard, increasing the logging intensity and understorey disturbance, leaving expanding swathes of dying forest in their wake. They know what they are doing – this is intentional. Due to their desperation to meet gross over-commitments of sawlogs to private companies, and fear of being stopped from logging affected forests, they are liquidating the resource while they can and leaving their mess for others to deal with.

Trials have shown that the health and vitality of affected forests can be restored by simply keeping the bulldozers out and carefully removing the lantana.

The State electorate of Lismore is one of the worst affected by logging dieback in NSW. With a third of the 100,000 hectares of susceptible forests already sick and dying, it is well past time to stop spreading the problem and begin the rehabilitation.

Stand up for your native forests by speaking up and voting for someone who will do something about dieback of our public forests.

# RFS offers help with hazard reduction

by Marcus Mantschaff,  
Secretary/ Field Officer,  
Nimbin Rural Fire Brigade

On 2nd February, Northern Rivers RFS Team revoked the Bush Fire Danger Period for Lismore, Richmond Valley and Kyogle Council areas.

It is important to remember during this time that residents and property managers continue to provide their neighbours 24 hours notice before lighting, that any planned fire is undertaken in a controlled manner and the published daily fire danger rating is observed. Search "pile burning" or "hazard reduction" at: [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au) or contact your local Fire Control Centre to stay informed.

Recent years have seen a trend for the Northern NSW bush fire danger period to begin earlier than Spring. Nimbin Rural Fire Brigade is mindful that land managers may also feel unnecessary pressure to burn piles and paddocks late into winter, partly to avoid the free fire-permit system. Unfortunately August is also a busy time for local brigades responding to private, out-of-control hazard reductions. In an attempt to address this, Nimbin permit officers are requesting land managers and residents who may want assistance with their future burns to contact their brigade now.



Nimbin RFB conducting a controlled burn at Thorburn Street in 2013 after a request for assistance.

Nimbin's environment and local climate offer a narrow window to execute hazard reduction burns between the bushfire danger periods. Also, as a volunteer service, Nimbin Rural Fire Brigade needs time to help prepare a burn plan and best resource our members to meet requests for assistance.

Once the fire danger period begins, the brigade's primary focus shifts into an emergency response role. Some hazard reduction programs may need assessing for Hazard Reduction Certificate (HRC) requirements

and other environmental approvals. The Northern Rivers zone office has authorised staff to help in this area, and can be contacted Monday to Friday on 6663-0000.

So if you're reading this and can identify (are concerned about) areas with high fuel loads, or perhaps you plan to undertake a hazard reduction burn that you'd like NSW Rural Fire Service assistance with, please contact your local RFS brigade. The Nimbin brigade captain, Brad Soward can be contacted on 02 6689-1221.

## Using fire as a land management tool

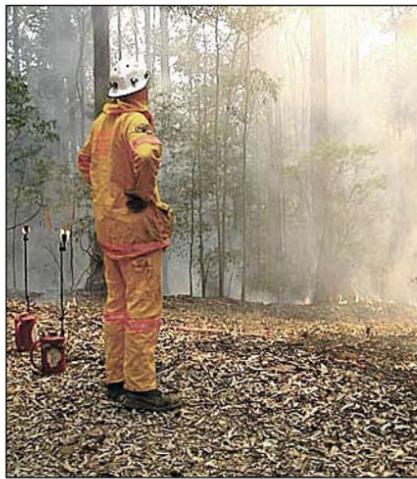
Over many thousands of years, the Australian bush has evolved ways to live successfully with fire and to use it for reproductive advantage, and fire ecology is now an important area of scientific study.

The Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium (NRFABCON) has recently received funding from the Office of Environment and Heritage to work with researchers, ecologists and indigenous partners on scoping a project to investigate linkages between historical cultural burning practices of grassy pathways/islands and the ecological requirements of grassy island specialist threatened species.

Tara Patel from the NRFABCON said, "This project will involve research into the use of fire and will have significant cultural as well as positive biodiversity outcomes for endangered species such as the Eastern Bristlebird and Hastings River Mouse."

While many of the region's species and vegetation communities have developed ways of coping, adapting and thriving with fire, the inappropriate use or occurrence of fire has been identified as a major threat to the biodiversity of the region.

Inappropriate fire can be too frequent, too hot or not frequent enough, and in the Northern Rivers inappropriate fire has been identified as contributing to the loss of some habitats and its



associated species.

Tara said, "Well planned and managed ecological burns may also be useful to address weed infestation and promote the regeneration of native vegetation and improve the habitat for native animals including some threatened species."

The NRFABCON is a network of land managers and other community, indigenous and industry stakeholders delivering a co-ordinated, landscape-scale approach to appropriate fire management for the maintenance and improvement of biodiversity outcomes across the region. It was established as a key action of the *Northern Rivers Regional Biodiversity Management Plan* in regard to addressing the landscape



scale threat of inappropriate fire regimes on the regions biodiversity.

The NRFABCON covers seven local government areas in northern NSW, encompassing an area of approximately 21,000km<sup>2</sup>, from the Queensland Border to just south of Woolli and inland to the Tablelands.

The first workshop in the Grassy Pathways Project was held last month at Cougal, with 20 attendees from a wide range of organisations collaborating on the project. There will be a second workshop in May to develop the project further. If anyone is interested in partnering this project, or wants more information about ecological fire management, contact the NRFABCON: [www.nrfabcon.org.au](http://www.nrfabcon.org.au)

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- ✓ No West Byron mega development
- ✓ Protect our biodiversity & Aboriginal sacred sites from highway upgrade
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Jeff  
**Johnson**

Your Community Voice

Authorised by Jeff Johnson 5/216 River St Ballina NSW 2478

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# Letters

## Inspired reading

I so much enjoyed February's edition of NGT that I felt I must write.

Your articles and people stories ticked every box. The NGT has now become my favourite newspaper.

I particularly enjoyed the letters page, and smiled at our differences. (Best to smile instead of getting angry!)

Many thanks to Rob Harle and Michael Frey for promoting thought on yet another very important issue, EMR, somewhat similar to CSG.

Yes, we all have a responsibility to listen, and respond with our own appropriate research. Now, too old to tango, my appreciation goes to all those who take collective action in their beliefs, for the betterment of all humanity.

Thank you to all the good people of Nimbin who can be an inspiration to many. May you all have Good Times.

June Crawford  
Koonorigan

## Pot performance

Regarding the Hemp Headlines (NGT Feb), surprise surprise – an anonymous source says athletes may perform better with some marijuana on board. Really?

A major health study says one marijuana ciggy a day over 20 years has virtually no adverse change on health. Really?

That's 7300 ciggies in total, but how many dope smokers have just one per day? How many bong and other ciggies might that be over 20 years? If it was a conservative figure of a total 20 ciggies per day for 20 years that would be... oops, my calculator just ran out of space to display the result. But try something around 140,000 plus. Still no problem?

And now addiction is not due to drugs, it's caused by loneliness. Really?

Sorry if I'm a bit sceptical.

David Ashton  
Mullumbimby

## Chamber chaos

It's interesting that the only criticism of the *GoodTimes*' article 'Chamber of Chaos' (Jan 15) has come from an outsider (Letters, Feb 15).

With a few notable exceptions, anyone who was at the second Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce would recognise the meeting as one of the most divisive and undoubtedly chaotic community meetings in recent memory.

The Chamber had an opportunity to positively embrace new energy from at least six local businesses. Instead the AGM was conducted in such a manner

that these people were totally alienated and left angry and in disbelief.

Diana Roberts  
Nimbin Apothecary and long time Chamber member

## Chamber of horrors

I understand John Murray's spirited defence of the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce; he's simply doing his job as the regional manager of the parent group.

But while the iron is hot, maybe he would like to explain to the local community the thinking behind the Murwillumbah Business Chamber's latest proposals to reinvigorate our local shopping strip and main street.

Like many small regional towns across Australia, Murwillumbah's retail landscape is under immense pressure from outside influences, eg, on-line shopping, large nearby major shopping centres, shop closures due to exorbitant rents, changing demographics and tastes, stale, unimaginative and expensive shopping options, etc.

So for the second year running, the local business group has come up with the same grand plan to get the town humming again. Their plan is to have the place buzzing with shoppers willing to splash their money up and down the street. Sounds promising I know, but wait a second, they are proposing to... remove workers' penalty rates of pay. That's it folks. This is all they have.

The Murwillumbah Business Chamber is advocating the removal of workers' penalty rates, so the business owners can reduce their wages bill and extend their opening times including all weekends, public holidays, etc.

So who wins here? Well, it's not the young uni student who works part time to help them survive whilst studying. And it's not the single parent juggling work and raising the family to make ends meet. It's not the people the Abbott Government has stripped hard-won welfare entitlements off, forcing them to take work no matter how inappropriate it is to their family situation.

That's right, the winners are the business owners. They can then line their pockets with even more profits.

Surely among their membership they have people with more nous and business acumen that could come up with something better than this.

This town is a gateway to Nimbin, Mt Warning and other tremendous attractions including the local Art Gallery that rivals any regional gallery in Australia.

## About us

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

**NEXT DEADLINE:**  
Wednesday 25th March

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

Less than two hours to our north there are two million people just itching to get out of the city a few times a year looking for places to do day trips. Is it too hard for these business minds to seek grants or put their hands in their own deep pockets to fund some advertising campaigns to attract tourists to the area?

Or is it just easier to toe the Abbott line, bash the weaker in the community and gouge the profits on the way through?

I am advocating that locals boycott businesses that want to strip workers' conditions and pay for their own greedy means, I know I will be.

Over to to you Mr Murray.  
Paul Taylor  
Murwillumbah

## ANZAC spirit

2015 marks the 100th anniversary of Anzac Day.

The Federal Government has set aside \$140 million dollars to fund events commemorating the landings at Gallipoli.

Everything from museums and monuments, to a naval re-enactment in Albany WA is planned. Children of all ages will be encouraged to partake in public events and displays, while for slightly older children, defence force recruitment videos will feature prominently.

The government plans to bolster and reaffirm the spirit of Anzac!

As a former member of the Regular Australian Army, I feel something of the emotion that attaches to this tradition. Like many, I was encouraged from childhood to view Anzac Day as an integral part of my cultural identity. Part of 'being Australian' included a solemn sense of pride in our country's wartime experience.

Since serving in the military however, my attitude has changed.

I now believe that inspiring a country to view as part of its identity, a military tradition of 'going to war' can be immensely useful to government. Having a willing army of volunteers to help ingratiate Australia to our rich and powerful allies is clearly a benefit to some – though not to all!

A nation conditioned to value the sacrifice of family and loved ones in such a way

as to want to mimic their example, is the basis of any militarised state. By exploiting the trauma that Anzac Day was originally intended to address, our government has accustomed us to travelling vast distances to kill people who pose no threat.

My hope is that 2015 will mark a different struggle for Australia's cultural identity. Not another foreign war, but a peaceful tussle of liberation. An emancipation from the desire to travel for a fight. We should still remember our fallen, though with a desire to learn more peaceful ways to live.

Indeed, if Australia's fallen could talk to us from the grave, I believe they would speak not of bravery and daring, but of the love they left behind. They would talk not of war, but of peace.

R J Poole  
Lismore

## Jeff changes colours

I'm sure that quite a few passionate Greens members and supporters will be a bit dismayed at my decision to stand as an independent at the state election, I can assure you that it was not a decision that was made lightly.

While the Greens are not like other political parties in terms of structure and policy development, my experience was that there is a growing focus on the inner workings of the party and the politics that go with that.

Standing as an independent and focusing my energies on the issues that I'm passionate about, I will be better placed to serve the people and represent the issues that matter to the Ballina electorate.

Another point of difference is the issue of fluoride. The Ballina Shire is about to have its water fluoridated without any public consultation or poll. I am passionately against this decision and how it was introduced. The NSW Greens are split on this issue and therefore don't have a policy on it. They will never actively campaign to remove fluoride and their MP's are not allowed a conscious vote on important local issues such as this.

Furthermore, it can often be a disadvantage being an active member of a political

party when campaigning and organising community campaigns. The save Ballina's koalas campaign and the gasfield free movement are two classic examples of community driven campaigns. The aims of the movements are to provide a groundswell of community support that crosses the political divide to achieve change.

I've also often found on council that other councillors from different political parties tend to look for reasons not to support an issue or position due to party politics, rather than what are the benefits for the electorate. As an independent the issues and policies that are important to the community will be centre stage and community engagement won't be seen through the prism of partisan party politics.

Cr Jeff Johnson  
Lennox Head

### EMR reply

Michael Frey (NGT Feb 2015) is offended that I claim, due to the laws of nature, that mobile phone RF can't cause cancer despite the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) deciding, in Monograph 102, that it's a "possible carcinogen". Michael invalidly appeals to an obscure authority who hadn't read the Monograph but who declared: "If IARC says it so clearly, then there must be sufficient scientific reason for it, or IARC would not put its reputation behind such claim."

I am impressed with the quality of IARC's working group on RF. They exhausted all conceivable mechanisms by which RF might cause cancer and found none remotely possible. They waded through a mass of studies looking for statistical links between RF and cancer, making detailed evaluations. There were an inexplicable number of studies with odds ratios less than 1, meaning mobile phone users were less likely to get cancer, which of course can't be the case either. But there was one study from Sweden, which, when the cohort was whittled down to 30, came up with an odds ratio of 2 for heavier mobile users with glioma, and this appears to have swung the majority of the working group to put RF in the "possible carcinogen" group. They clearly struggled with the decision and as the Monograph says, "There was, however, a minority opinion that current evidence in humans was inadequate, therefore permitting no conclusion about a causal association. The minority also pointed to the fact that no increase in rates of glioma or acoustic neuroma was seen in a nation-wide Danish cohort study, and that up to



Even though he had won the prestigious, 'International Inventors Award' with 'THE WORLDS MOST EFFICIENT CAN OPENER', Eric just could not compete.

now, reported time trends in incidence rates of glioma have not shown a trend parallel to time trends in mobile-phone use." A cohort of only 30 is at risk of a chance result. I urge people to evaluate the Monograph for themselves.

In answer to Michael's query about my authority and qualifications, I've not claimed authority. For qualifications you need no more than high school physics, but I have an MSc in solid state physics (Melb Uni 1967), which includes the study of photons interacting with matter (nuclei, atoms, crystals etc). As a research physicist to do with photons, I've fine tuned gamma ray frequency to 1 part in 100 billion (Mossbauer effect), taken x-ray diffraction patterns, measured the velocity of electrons ejected from a surface by photons, turned invisible infra-red photons to green visible photons (frequency doubling) and used RF photons in the study of nuclear magnetic resonance, paramagnetic resonance and in an attempt to predict earthquakes. So with all these photons behaving as quantum mechanics predicts, almost from one end of the EMR spectrum to the other, I'm confident I know what the RF end of the spectrum is capable of, which is a long, long way short of breaking chemical bonds and causing cancer. That's simply experience, not arrogance.

How can Michael, a self declared non-scientist, claim "The fact is there is scientific evidence, research, and published papers showing that EMR is harmful to humans and other living things"? Arrogance? For actual science, I recommend the physiological effects section of the IARC Monograph.

If Nimbin can get fibre optic broadband, then good, but people will still have mobile phones. My experience tells me that the RF is harmless, so scaring people out of their

wits is unethical. What though is the agenda of the scaremongers?

Alan Roberts  
Bentley

### EMR and OREAD

We have just had confirmation at the OREAD Project that NBN intends to roll out 'Scenario Two,' this being the more than doubling of Ericsson-built NBN towers throughout rural Australia. With the Caldera region's rugged topography and wet climate, transmission will be ineffective, and we will be a prime target for many more EMR-emitting menaces. Further, NBN Co has admitted that a full 40% of these tower sites will be used for co-location scenarios. Other servers can 'piggyback' on NBN tower sites without further planning scrutiny. Nowhere will be free from this blanket of EMR fog!

It is about time that our councils and apathetic 'environment' groups woke up to the fact that they, through endorsement or lack of understanding of the dangers of EMR, have put up their hands for our region suffering 20 years of inferior internet while endangering the health of our environment. Professor Robert Pope said to me of our EMR issue: "The world is on a death kick." Lismore Shire is certainly doing its bit. Is mayor Jenny Dowell's parting legacy seeing a microwave tower frying the Nimbin preschool at less than 200m? Not to mention the suppressive mutagenic industrial waste by-product she endorses secreting into the town's water. In the USA, some water boards secretly keep a 'hotline' to hospitals where sudden strange undiagnosed outbreaks of illness are invariably traced to the automatic fluoride dumping mechanism malfunctioning and overdosing.

Mountain hippies and 'flood plain people' alike have congregated at Bentley for two

years, this being the equivalent of going to church, dressing up and being seen, and blinding themselves to the invisible more insidious evils creeping in. But, maybe amid the fanfare of this mass oversight hides a deadly truth. Is our real unconscious imperative to sterilise a dangerously overpopulated planet with these chemicals and addictive technologies? But this is a sign of the times, smoking is out and EMR... is in!

Ammun Luca  
OREAD Project  
Barkers Vale

### Bummer article

Brendan Hanley (Mookxamitosis, NGT Feb) makes a number of erroneous linguistic assertions which need informed clarification.

He seems to have a particular aversion to what he imagines to be Americanisms: 'butt', 'pussy' and 'ass'. 'Butt', in the sense of the human posterior, was first attested in the mid-fifteenth century, in England. 'Pussy' was first used as a term of endearment for a girl or a woman in the 1580s, in England. Its meaning, since that time, has undergone a process called pejoration and is now a common slang term for the vulva.

Further, Mr Hanley seems particularly aggrieved that anyone should say 'ass' rather than 'arse'. In old English there were two alternative spellings, 'ærs' and 'ears', both of which evolved into early modern English 'arse'. Ironically, both these precursor forms were pronounced like 'ass' except with a pre-consonantal 'r'.

In anglophone North America there was a tendency to level the 'ar-' when followed by a voiceless lingual like 's'. This can be seen in a number of other similar forms: burst/bust, curse/cuss, and horse/hoss, the second element in each doublet being recognisably American.

As for 'bum' and 'fanny' being "better words" than 'anus' and 'vagina', it might

## Notices

### Car accident info wanted

On Wednesday, 3rd December 2014 at approximately 4.20pm, a red Hyundai Getz was travelling in a southerly direction along Blue Knob Road, Blue Knob. At that time an unidentified white flat-tray truck was travelling towards the red Hyundai Getz on the wrong side of Blue Knob Road, causing the driver of the red Hyundai Getz to swerve off the road to avoid colliding with the white flat-tray truck. The red Hyundai Getz then collided with a tree. Would anyone who has any information about the accident, the identity of the driver of the white flat-tray truck or its registration number, please contact Paul Henderson at Shanahan Tudhope Lawyers on (02) 9262-2888 or by email: paulhenderson@stlaw.com.au

### Fermentation Festival

Blue Knob Farmers Market is hosting a Fermentation Festival about all things fermented, on Saturday 7th March, from 9.30am. 12 speakers will discuss the health benefits, and cover: bread making, nut cheeses, Japanese pickles, olives, cheese making, beer, vegetable pickles, dosa, temphe, kombucha, and sauerkraut. This is a free event. For more info, phone 0434-892-466.

### Fukushima memorial prayer

Wednesday 11th March 4.30pm at Imagine mandala in Allsopp Park. Fukushima Memorial Prayer for Healing for the people of Japan who are suffering from the effects of the earthquake and tsunami and the radiation effects afterwards. Please bring incense, a plate and a healing heart. For more details contact Andre, 6689-1727.

### Trivia Night – Bentley Gatekeepers

Saturday 14th March, 7pm at Lismore Workers Club. Join them for an evening of fun to raise funds in support of the pre-election campaign for a Gasfield Free Northern Rivers. Organise a table of 6-10 friends or just come and join a group. Raffles & Lucky Door Prize. RSVP: rhjoseph@optusnet.com.au

### Annual General Meetings

• Tunnable Early Childcare Centre AGM will be held on Wednesday 18th March at 9am at the school.

• All members of the Nimbin Preschool and Childcare Association Inc and invited to attend the AGM, on Thursday 26th March at 3.15pm at Nimbin Preschool.

### Nimbin Flix

Saturday 28th March at Birth and Beyond. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. New sound too!

### Zazen meditation

Sessions held on Mondays, 6.30-7.30pm at Birth & Beyond, Nimbin. Enquiries, phone Peter on 0427-855-077.

### Sound bath sessions

Thursdays 5.30-6.30pm upstairs at Nurture, 115 Keen Street, Lismore. Come and unwind with a relaxing Sound Bath, all you have to do is relax and let the sounds of chimes, bells, singing bowls and rainstick wash over you, taking you on your own journey, leaving you regenerated and balanced. Group sessions \$10.

### Al-Anon

Al-Anon Family Groups meet in Lismore at 6.30pm on Tuesdays, at the Quakers Hut, Cnr Wyrallah Road and Dibbs Street and in Ballina at 6pm at West End Lions Club Hall, river end of Brunswick Street. If you are concerned about somebody else's drinking, Al-Anon can help. Go to: [www.al-anon.alateen.org/australia](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/australia) or phone 1300-252-666.

### 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.

### 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.

Letters continue over page...



## 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.

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surprise Mr Hanley to learn that far from being dry technical terms for the pink bits, 'anus' and 'vagina' were both colourful and "common, non-scientific" metaphors, even in Latin. 'Anus' simply means 'ring', and 'vagina' a 'sheath' or 'scabbard' (among other things).

Mr Hanley reserves scorn, as well, for 'Halloween', a

venerable European tradition, in his litany of complaint about the pernicious entry into decent Australian English of the dreaded Americanism. It is difficult not to assume a level of xenophobia in this sort of amateur linguistic glossing. To quote Mr Hanley..."words fail me"!

Stez Stezic  
Nimbin

### Americanisms

Although I don't generally speak up against others' opinions, I feel that I must respond to Mookx's February column. Really, it's a bit unfair and self-righteous in tone.

Having lived in the US for a number of years, I can explain the bathroom/toilet issue that gives Mookx the shits. In America the bath and the toilet are in the same room. Often there is a commode s(h)itting right alongside the bathtub! Distasteful, yes, but it demonstrates that when

an American asks, "Where is the bathroom?" he/she is simply using the more discreet description of a room that contains more than one receptacle. As Mookx states, "Bathrooms are places where you immerse your body in water for cleansing or relaxation purposes." Yes, that's true – in both Australia and America. It's just that in America, you also shit there. Don't rage at Americans just because they use a regionally appropriate phrase that doesn't suit your region.

If it is offensive to you, don't use it. And don't blame it all on Americans – it's world-wide. The world is now a very small place, and all cultures have adopted terms and phrases that are not 'theirs'.

While I'm at it – I never heard an American refer to shit (noun or verb) as 'shoot'. The word 'shoot', when not being used to describe the firing of a weapon, was only

used as a substitute for the exclamation 'SHIT!' as in the common cuss-word. An adult who dropped a hammer on their toe while in the presence of children would say 'SHOOT!' rather than burn tender ears.

And what's Mookx's problem with the terms for pink bits? In America, 'fanny' means the same as 'bum' does here in Australia. Therefore, it's quite acceptable for an American dad to give his 12-year-old daughter a playful slap on the fanny. Definitely NOT acceptable here! It's simply a matter of regional and cultural differences in terms. All countries have their own strange and foreign (to us) labels for these body parts – does the equivalent in Sudan or Guatemala also evoke this sort of ire in Mookx?

Ahhh – and now we reach the REAL problem... Mookx's rave is all about anti-Americanism.

Well, Mr. Hanley, modern-day white Australia is primarily British. Most of our terms and phrases come from England – we are by no means original. We have adopted British customs and sayings (think 'tea time', 'loo' and 'dunny' for starters) and now call them Australian. Most of our place names are copies of British names (think Newcastle, Bathurst, the Grampians etc). Come to think of it, the United States was originally a British colony, so we share the same 'mother land' as Americans. At least America had the sense to cut its ties with the British empire and become truly independent.

Whether we like it or not, we, as white people, are the intruders in this land. Our predecessors forced the local residents to either convert to their ways or be killed.

Indigenous people were slaughtered by the thousands,

and their land forcibly taken. The children were stolen (then and now), and put into institutions where they were forbidden to speak their own language or practice their own customs and rituals. This was/is the greatest WAR that Australians sweep under the rug. In overseas war, Australia is only too eager to trot along at America's heels. How in the world can Mookx claim that present-day 'Australians' are any better than Americans? We are just as savage and cruel and warmongering as Americans.

Perhaps Mr. Hanley should stop blaming everything on America and have a good look in the (collective Australian) mirror. And while he's at it, take off that American-style baseball cap he's wearing!

H Baskett  
Nimbin

Letters also received from Paul Brecht and Rosemary Joseph.

## Hot election topic – coal seam gas – trick or treat?

### It's CSG by George

To the 87 per cent of Lismore electors who voted NO to unconventional gasfields in the LCC sponsored referendum: if you do not want to live in a gasfield, use your vote at the March State election to remove the present incumbent, Thomas George, from parliament.

Mr. George is on the parliamentary record voicing his strong support for gasfield industrialisation of our region.

"I want to place on the record... Metgasco is doing a wonderful job, and I congratulate Metgasco on what it is doing in the Northern Rivers. The eyes of Australia are on what is happening in the Northern Rivers area with Metgasco's operations, and I call on the Government to look at what the organisation is doing and provide support rather than impediments." (Hansard, 10/3/2010).

Simon Chance  
Richmond Hill

### Vote against CSG

The NSW State Election is fast approaching – on March 28 the people of NSW will vote for a Government to run NSW for another four years.

I find it alarming that the main issue that has consumed the energy of the majority of residents of the Northern Rivers for the last four years, is still unresolved. The threat of industrialised gasfields is as real today as it was in 2011 when the current Government came to power.

In September last year, NSW Chief Scientist, Professor Mary O'Kane, released her independent report on Coal Seam Gas activities. This report identified numerous serious threats to both human and environmental health including our precious water resources. She wrote in her summary "It is inevitable that the CSG industry will have some unintended consequences, including as the result of accidents,

human error and natural disasters..."

And yet, in spite of all the damning evidence put forward by the Chief Scientist, the current Premier, Mike Baird, is on record as saying "Do we want coal seam gas? Absolutely we do."

On 13th November 2014, our four Northern Rivers National Party MPs declared, "We are enacting legislation to revoke all of the State's Petroleum Exploration Licence Applications, which cover 43 per cent of the state..." Yet, on the 12th November, the day before this announcement, the Government renewed Dart Energy's PEL 445 for a further six years, until 13th November 2020. Perhaps people don't realise just how huge the area is covered by this PEL – it includes Lismore, Clunes, Bexhill, The Channon, Dunoon, Coraki, Woodburn, Mallanganee, Kyogle, Urbenville and Nimbin!

These same National MPs went on to say that the NSW Government's new Gas Policy and Plan provides "a framework for a Gasfield Free Northern Rivers". I can't see how renewing a licence over such an extensive area for a further six years ensures a Gasfield Free Northern Rivers!

On March 28, it is vital that we number every box on the ballot paper. We should determine our own preferences and our future. If you don't want to live in a gasfield, then you know what party you need to number last on the ballot paper.

Nicky Lumb  
Lismore

### Nats gas plan

Why is this coalition Government (made up of National Party and Liberal Party MPs) promoting the gas industry instead of respecting the concerns of the people and the warnings of the NSW Chief Scientist?

The Government must be

aware of the level of opposition... or has the State Member for Lismore played down the level of community concern? Perhaps suggesting that we are misinformed and just need to be educated in order to understand what a great opportunity this is to industrialise our region and provide jobs?

This could explain the Coalition's misleading advertising campaign for the Gas Plan.

I'd like to comment on a couple of misleading statements from these adverts, headed 'Protecting Future Generations'

1. Quote: "Protecting the environment, farmers, communities and the State's gas supply and energy security is vital today and for the future generations."

Protecting the environment, farmers and communities are indeed vital factors for our survival in the literal sense, and as a society and economically. This should certainly be the priority but does the Gas Plan achieve that and why link it to gas supply!

Gas supply and energy security are economic concerns and should not be given the same priority as the protection of our water and air, health and livelihoods. These are requirements for our very survival and that of future generations.

More and more businesses are converting to efficient, alternative energy sources now available and which they are finding more economically viable and a sound plan for protecting our future. These are the technologies that the Government should be investigating and promoting.

The growing global awareness by industry, financial institutions, overseas governments and the UN that we cannot persist in fouling our own nest, nor is it wise economics, should be warning

the Government that the time for unconventional gas is long gone. The industry has missed the boat. Encouraging this industry is certainly not "Protecting Future Generations!"

2. Quote: "NSW imports more than 95 per cent of its gas supply... leaving us vulnerable to impacts of supply of gas and price shocks." Misleading scare tactics! Gas prices are set at market price and no cheaper for being mined in NSW. Also, the gas industry's lies have finally been exposed. There is no shortage of gas supply. In fact there are reserves of gas, and supply exceeds demand.

The whole Gas Plan was based on the Government's acceptance of the gas industry's lies that NSW was faced with a desperate shortage of gas which would damage our economy, ruin businesses and leave households unable to cook.

Now that this has been exposed as a myth, all that remains of any value in the Gas Plan is the Chief Scientist's report which warns of the serious risks from fracking and unconventional gas mining to water supply, quality and quantity, contamination of air from inevitable leaks, health concerns for humans, wildlife and stock, impacts on food production etc.

Unfortunately her recommendations have been rendered toothless because not all of her recommendations have been incorporated into this Gas Plan.

The people want a gasfield ban not a gas plan.

We all keep asking and are still waiting for the Government's assurance that the Northern Rivers will remain gasfield free. So far we have received no word from them so... with the election this month, what option is there but to number every box and put the National candidates last.

Peter and Meg Nielsen  
Bentley

### CSG and psychopathology

The Lib/Lab duopoly, the establishment, has certain set ways of breaking down opposition to what it has decided it is going to do.

With CSG mining, the latest is to trot out "strict conditions" for licence approvals. However, if you drill holes down into the earth and then pour known toxic chemicals down these holes, it does not take a scientist to tell us that underground waters will be contaminated. CSG mining is state-sponsored vandalism.

The underground aquifer of Australia, the largest underground supply of water in the driest occupied continent in the world, is threatened by psychopathology; the inability of some humans to experience empathy. Psychopaths are immersed wholly in the survival of themselves. They cannot conceive that their survival and the survival of everything, is predicated on humans using their unique ability to be able to consider the long-term.

Psychopaths are therefore particularly short of humanness. They are presently influencing parliaments. That does not mean they should be reviled. They are sick and require treatment.

One could imagine a scene 30 years from now, similar to the belated acceptance of the toxicity of asbestos, where a hospital discovers the illness of patients has been traced back to poisonings in their systems from swimming in rivers, and the poisons were consistent with those used in fracking 30 years ago.

Paracelsus told us in the 14th century that poisons combined are more toxic than the sum of their parts. The ancient scientists appear more relevant than modern ones who are wheeled out to reassure us, without producing the science of the impossibility of poisoning the water because it probably doesn't exist.

Geoff Dawe  
Byrrell Creek

# -WARNING-

**The NSW Liberal and Nationals parties** plan to **sell off state owned electricity assets** including Transgrid and half of the distribution businesses Ausgrid and Endeavour Energy **to the private sector**

**‘Households are set to pay more under privatisation’**

Source: The McKell Institute; Nothing to gain, plenty to lose: Why the government, households and businesses could end up paying a high price for electricity privatisation. Issued Dec 2014

Authorised by Justine Elliot 107 Minjungbal Drive Tweed Heads South



## YOU CAN'T AFFORD THIS