

Tributes flow for Aquarian balladeer

Vale Paul Joseph Neilson – 13/3/1949 – 27/10/2015

Welcome home, brother Paul

by Stewart James

We are gathered here today to pay our last respects to our brother, Paul Joseph. Today we celebrate his life in his death. I wish to offer our collective condolences to his family; Paula, Scott Willow, Camille, Alison and their families, on behalf of all the volunteers, members and the committee of Nimbin, Casino and Lismore Environment Centres.

Paul was a mentor of mine who I will miss greatly. He encouraged me to think big and do my best, by inspiring me to challenge my long held views. He introduced me to the concept of universal love and its power against all the challenges we face head-on these days. For example, preparing for Bentley – picture this – You get a whole bunch of people coming together, we are all very different, with different backgrounds and experiences, everyone has a different take, some of us are a little more damaged than others. Wow, what a melting pot!

There are bound to be some sparks and some disagreements along the way. I sure had my share over the past four years, some of which I shared personally with Paul. Quite often I was expecting from him an answer. Instead, he gave me the greatest gift of all - listening, hearing and understanding and acknowledging what I was saying. He understood what was going on, because he had been there and done that many times, over many years. He showed honesty, genuine empathy and understanding in our conversations. Our relationship was not all plain sailing, but when an issue came up we both had the sense to know when to hold it, when to fold it and when to run. This is a true brother's love.

Good morning everyone, my name is Stewart James and I am the Nimbin Environment Centre President.

Gosh, it's hard to imagine Paul is not with us anymore. He was always so present in our lives. I visited him about 14 days ago and I noticed he was struggling with his health and in particular his strength. He still had his mind though, and even verbally composed a neat letter of resignation as the public officer of Nimbin Environment Centre.

One thing that Paul instilled in me was that there is a lot of work to be done



Photo: Cloudcatcher Media

and that time and energy need to be conserved for the real fight. We need to get on with the job, he would say!

Paul was a big ideas man; he thought in terms of the whole story, the big picture and about joining the dots, so that the community could engage in love and life, for and in the natural environment. I remember him speaking about process as opposed to the end result. Of the journey, as opposed to the final destination. I think it's fair to say, his journey in life was one of love, inclusion, community, music, and a vibrant natural environment. He loved his trees!

We have lost an elder of the rainbow tribe today. I invite you all to take a breath – hold that breath.

That air you just breathed in was the air that came from trees up Terania way – The Big Scrub! What does this mean to you? For me, it means we have the last stand of intact Big Scrub Rainforest preserved in the form of a National Park – preserved for eternity. That it's still here is only possible because of the combined vision, cooperation, creativity and courage of a group of young idealistic individuals back in the 70's who had the courage of their convictions. These people had a conscience and they expressed this via action. I take my hat off to these people and their efforts.

Paul was a big part of setting the temperament, or attitude, or vibe, of this place we now call the Rainbow Region. It was his input, along with that of many others – it must be said, that led to the Aquarius Festival in Nimbin in 1973. This brought to our region many idealistic and hopeful people



Photo: Brian Alexander



Photo: Darmin

who were able to inject some fun, many talents, creativity, passion, love, and new ideas for a new beginning and a new way of doing things.

Fortunately, the inspiration and spirit of the Aquarius Festival has stayed with us for more than 40 years. More and more people are jumping on board and embracing this new way, which is to reject conflict, and instead struggle to achieve cooperation. The new way is becoming the norm. We are all part of the second wave now, we have farmers joining with hippies and people who choose alternative lifestyles in our region. These new bonds of trust and love between these people demonstrate that we are so connected and so united now, and it's vital that we all reflect on the past and this precious knowledge around community, love, and our environment. Moreover, we all have a duty to pass this precious knowledge and spirit on. There is no future without a past. We must never lose the essence of Paul's insight and vision.

I invite everyone to listen, enjoy, and sing along, if you wish, to a piece of music Paul had playing last year when I went to visit him. 'Bury me in love' by Jimmy Little and Kylie Minogue.

Peej 'n' Me

by Brendon Hanley (Mookx)

I'm sitting here on 27th October, a day before the *GoodTimes* deadline, wondering what to write about, when Meg calls and tells me she saw on Facebook that Paul Joseph died this morning at 7am, which incidentally, is the time of my birth.

I am stunned... partly terrified... literally dumbstruck for several minutes. Something inevitable but almost impossible to cop. Paul and I had past-life connections. We were brothers. Like brothers we played, schemed, laughed, sang, created, fought... misunderstood... worked it out... and got on with the job. We never agreed with each other's *modus operandi*, but never tried to change one another either. We were chalk and cheese... which is a winning combination when you're being creative.

We met in the Sunflower Cafe in Mullumbimby in 1976. He sang Fantuzzi's "Mother" song. Julie and I, fresh from decades of working the Melbourne music scene sat there amazed at the voice and style of this local hippie singing there in a Mullum coffee den. And what a song!

How were we to know that this bloke had been into music and theatre for yonks, that he starred in "Superstar" and that he had taken a leading "songman" role on at the 1973 Nimbin Aquarius Festival? He had employed a chorus line from an "Incredible String Band" song: "May the long time sun shine on you, all love surround you, and the pure light within you guide your way home."

This song has subsequently become the anthem, the heart-song of anything vaguely Aquarian that has taken place ever since. It is part of our history. He had also toured with the "White Company" who appeared often on the ABC's "GTK" magazine shows. He founded and helped set up Australia's first Multiple Occupancy Community, Tuntable Falls ... very much alive and well to this day. He was out there! A true pioneer!

Back to Mullum. I had a professional Sony cassette deck, a great stereo mike, and Peej (I always called him Peej, short for P. J.) had a house we could record in. We did the first-ever, totally shit-hot version of his flagship song 'Let's Go Down to the Forest' and IMHO, it's still the best version to date. We also did the soundtrack for his first little 'Save the Forest' clip, 'Teddy Bears' Picnic' and all!

I did a lot of recording with him, and of him, over the years. He did session work on some of my songs, notably "Leave It in the Ground" which he took such a shine to, I gave him a verse of his own. We made little movies together. One of them won a National ABC Award. We wrote songs, plays, puppet shows... including building two amazing puppet theatres... over 30 years apart. (Paula had a lot to do with the second one.) He was a big kid underneath it all... well one fish was. The other fish was a different kettle of fish!

He was a Pisces with Neptune in the first house. That combination is said to be so psychic that solid reality is just a reflection on the water. Sometimes troubled water at that. The Pisces "martyr" could dive into deep depression... quite the opposite of the ebullient clown on-stage... dressed as the Queen, or Dr. Love (of Medicine Show fame)... or... the Fool.

He had the Fool thing down to a tee... it was a part of him! It's kind of a theatrical innocence that is easily taken advantage of... by people or circumstance. It's a child-like inquisitive mind-set. It's all about misunderstanding. In one pantomime we did together, "The Tree Family Circus", his fool



Paul Joseph and Mookx, early '80s

character addressed the kids in the audience like so: "I wanted to buy something... so I went to the bank to get some money... because banks have all the money. They said I needed to get interest... and I told them I already was interested... very interested indeed!"

Working with him was mostly fun, creative as hell and invariably accompanied by Herb Superb and hi-tech equipment. My favourite memory however is something I have mentioned before but will repeat as part of this elegy for my friend.

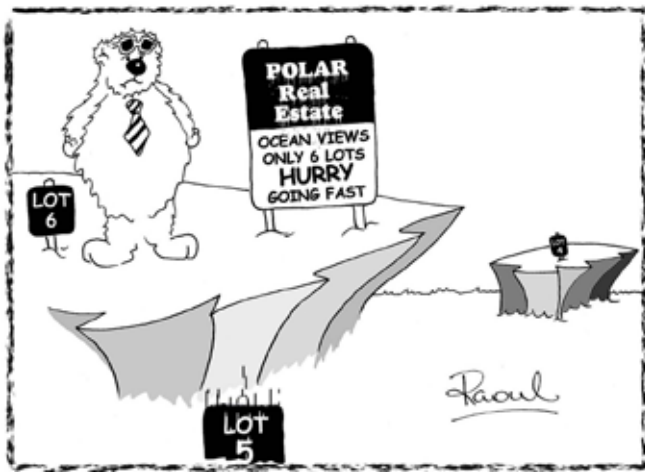
It was at the Terania Blockade in 1979. The camp was buzzing with morning sounds, music, birds greeting the day. Six of us, two abreast, singing and playing our instruments, headed off up to the bulldozer, where all the action was happening. We were going to relieve Neil Pike, Peter Pix and the Star-Ring crew who had been playing music and holding the fort up at (and on) the bulldozer since the crack of dawn. It was all part of our attempt to stop them advancing and doing more damage.

The Rainforest track was narrow, a mossy creek, a little log bridge... fairyland really. Peej and I were in front, Sarah Mitchell and Mark Eliot next and I can't remember the other two. Love to know. We were singing Paul's 'Forest' song and we came to a bend just as Paul bellowed at full throat "They're taking more than they need!" Around the bend and heading downhill towards us about 20 or 30 metres away were six armed cops in single file. Peej and I shared an anxious glance and I intuitively went into a fast bluegrass lick on my 5-string banjo. The lead cop took off his cap and slapped his thigh with it, shouted "Yee Hah!" and jumped, heel-kicking-hillbilly-style, off the track. The other cops followed suit. Peej and I grinned and we all marched straight through singing our heads off. To me, this moment was always a sign of the turning point in the Terania battle. Music and love would prevail!

With Peej, the political bent and stubbornness of the Ox (in Chinese Astrology) was combined with Western, Mars in the first house as well. This could sometimes bring out an opinionated and even belligerent, combative tendency... and the fury of an angry Buffalo! Look out! I know! Fortunately this was mostly offset by the magic of a super-creative Pisces Sun and a MASSIVE HEART Moon in Leo... which could out-rival the Sun itself... especially on stage! His Aquarius ascendant explains a lot about the man and his mission. He liked a toke, a rave and a song more than anything.

Bless his beloved Paula. May the Angels keep her well, safe, happy and clear in times ahead. P. and P. were a wonderful couple together. I always felt blessed on some level whenever I spent time with them... basking in the ease and appropriateness of their loving relationship. Bless you Paula! Bless you Peej... you've left me here to pee in the night alone! (Just getting him back for the 15-minute 'Prostate' comedy shtick he slew us with at my Benefit just over a year ago!)

Vale Peej! "May the long time sun shine on you, all love surround you, and the pure light within you guide your way home."



Letter of appreciation

After 34 years of living in Nimbin we are now selling our property "Black Sheep Farm".

Starting on a cow paddock with only three trees on our 30 acres, living in a tent for 1 1/2 years with kero lamps, we started our vegie garden first.

We had the opportunity to learn about building and lots of other things, constantly developing skills to pursue our dream.

Almost unbelievably 34 years have passed and looking back we have fulfilled most of our ambitions.

From the start we made Pottery and the Essential Oils business followed soon after.

We were able to tap into the need for sustainable holiday accommodation, with the house we built first, and everything just moved on from there.

Our biggest challenge was to complete the large Learning Centre, its frame put together with no nails.

All along our journey we were supported by many of the Nimbin Community, by buying our products, attending our many craft workshops or renting the holiday accommodation for relatives or friends.

We got to know many of you and it has been an absolute privilege to have been able to live in this diverse Community.

Sadly, due to some health issues, the time has come to let go of what we have built and look for something smaller and hopefully as beautiful as what we have.

Our craft workshops including Pottery and Essential Oils will continue on, from wherever we will be, just in a smaller way.

A big thank you to all that have touched our lives and the wider Nimbin Community.

Blessings, Mac, Suzanne, Keera and Ruby

Poor Dave's Odyssey

I cannot imagine why you would even give Dave's odyssey space in the NGT.

What a sad, sad story.

Doesn't do much for helping the cause of those who want the weed decriminalised.

David Ashton,
Byron Bay

Let go and jump

In the 1999 film *American Beauty*, the character of Ricky Fitts says, 'Never underestimate the power of denial'.

Denial is used by the ego to protect itself.

When confronted by an inconvenient truth, the ego often shields itself by disowning whatever threatens its comfort zone. Consequently, many people cling to whatever makes them feel safe.

Forget gravity and compound interest – the most powerful force on earth is the human ego.

For this reason, taming the ego is the aim of numerous spiritual traditions. Rather than allowing our emotional insecurities to dominate us, achieving a genuine sense of security is more doable with our ego in check.

One of the ways of achieving this is through surrender. Surrender offers acceptance in place of resistance. By yielding to the moment, or giving ourselves over to challenge, ironically we stand to gain something. Rather than resisting the tide of events, we allow them to flow through us. We surrender up our impulse to guard or protect in exchange for the opportunity to listen and learn.

In preference to denying our fears, we face towards them with arms wide open. Instead of clinging to the safety rail, we let go and jump!

RJ Poole
Lismore

Notices

Annual General Meetings

• Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc. AGM – Tuesday 17th November, 5pm in the Community School Room, 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin.

• Nimbin HEMP Inc and the Nimbin MOB (MardiGrass Organising Body) AGMs – Friday 27th November, 5pm at the HEMP Embassy

• Help End Marijuana Prohibition (HEMP) Party AGM – Saturday 28th November at 6pm in Nimbin Town Hall (following Medication Workshop #6 in the Hall that day.)

Medican Workshop

Nimbin Town Hall Saturday 28th November, 11am – 4.20pm A talk by Dr Andrew Katelaris (Dr Pot) plus medical cannabis users and carers speak out about their experience and how prohibition affects them, including Michelle Whitelaw, Paul Lawrence and Vanessa Borham. If you would like to talk, please contact the Embassy or just come along.

ActionArts Doll-Making Workshop

Saturday 7th November 10am – 4pm. Nimbin Community Centre Grounds, Stage Area (Dance Studio if wet weather) Cost: \$10. Working creatively with our hands can be gently therapeutic and deeply satisfying, especially when making something personal and with intention. Bring a t-shirt, cloth and trinkets you would like to use to make your doll, A rug/ cushion to sit on and a plate of food to share. Contact Spiral on 6629-3494 or email: earthspiral64@yahoo.com.au

Nimbin Flix Movie Night

Saturday, 21st November at Birth & Beyond. Doors open 7pm, movie starts 7.30pm. Members free, casual fee \$10. Memberships are now reduced to half-price and last until May 2016, so now only \$25. Anyone interested in helping us is more than welcome. We could do with an extra projectionist if anyone is interested in learning the technology and is available a few Saturday nights each year!

Blue Knob Choir

Thursdays 4.30-6pm at Blue Knob Gallery, 719 Blue Knob Road, Lillian Rock. Free of charge! Looking for new members, all skill levels welcome.

Another diseased koala

Over the last 4 years I have been reporting koala sightings at Black Rocks (Pottsville) to Council and the NSW Bionet Wildlife Atlas after becoming aware of the level of threat to the survival of koalas on the Tweed Coast.

Recently I photographed five koala sightings in five days adjacent to the Black Rocks sports field, four being on the edge of the access road.

One of these koalas (sighted 20 metres inside the open koala protection gates) had symptoms of the stress-related disease Chlamydia. I have been visiting the sports field site regularly in the hope that this koala will have moved to a location where the Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers are able to secure its capture and treatment.

It is well-documented that persistent general disturbance exposes koalas to stress which culminates in this fatal disease. Over the last 1 1/2 years three Black Rocks koalas have been euthanased due to this disease, two remain uncaptured and untreated and another eight koala sightings have displayed symptoms of this disease. Considering that koala expert Dr Steve Phillips recently stated that there are probably only 10-15 koalas remaining in the Pottsville Wetlands/Black Rocks area, we cannot afford to lose any more koalas.

In the course of my daily surveys of the sports field site, I have been alarmed at the ongoing koala-impactive activities through the middle of a koala breeding area during koala breeding season. During the last five days I have witnessed four dogs having been transported through the open koala protection gates and roaming free on the sports field, ignoring four 'no dog' signs.

Surely our fragile koala population deserves better than this, especially during breeding season. At the very least, the koala protection gates should be locked at all times except during authorised access, as recommended by Council's Koala Advisory Committee.

Dave Norris, President
Threatened Species
Conservation Society Inc

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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NEXT DEADLINE:

Wednesday 25th November

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

\$25m Metgasco buyback

It is wonderful news that it looks imminent that Metgasco shareholders will accept a \$25 million buyback of their controversial coal seam gas licences in the Northern Rivers.

This offer and the recommendation by Metgasco Board to shareholders to accept the offer is a historic victory of the people of the Northern Rivers, who stood together determined to rid this toxic industry from our community.

The Greens celebrate, and are proud to have been a part of making the Northern Rivers gasfield free, and urge shareholders to accept the generous offer from the government as Metgasco's management has clearly failed to gain a social licence to drill for coal seam gas in the Northern Rivers.

It's now clear that both Metgasco and the NSW Government wanted gas extraction to occur in the Northern Rivers, and have now been forced, by the sheer will of the people, to this position.

It's also clear how important it is for people to stand up and be heard if they don't want coal seam gas in their region.

Greens NSW mining spokesperson, Jeremy Buckingham MLC said, "If the government had been truly listening to the



Green Scene

by Dawn Walker, Federal Greens candidate for Richmond

community, rather than trying to implement quick political fixes, it may have acted in a way to stop coal seam gas without having to pay out so much taxpayer money."

The Greens have moved numerous bills and amendments that would have banned coal seam gas, not only in the Northern Rivers, but state-wide.

"\$25 million is a large sum, and I join many in the community in questioning whether Metgasco's failures should be compensated by taxpayers. But in the end, \$25 million is not a lot compared to protecting the land, water, communities and other industries of the Northern Rivers and to give people long-term certainty," he said.

Amalgamation watch

In the lead up to the much anticipated release of the Fit For the Future report (FFF), I attended the NSW Local Government Conference in Sydney where amalgamation talk dominated. A repeated theme being that 'sector reform' could not be successful without 'financial reform'.

The Premier and Minister for Local Government respectively gave determined and belligerent speeches that signalled a clear intention to proceed. However, they failed to explain how forcing amalgamations without fixing cost shifting, rate pegging and absurdly skewed federal funding formulas, would strengthen councils.

Some of the more passionate pleas for a coherent approach came from academics who presented information that challenged the idea that 'scale and capacity' were the key issues. Australia already has relatively large councils. In America, the average is 7,000 residents, in Europe it is 12,000 and in Australia it is 40,000. The most 'efficient' in the world are said to be the small scale 'Lakewood' councils in the USA. Sydney's largest metropolitan council, Blacktown also runs a 'chronic' deficit.

Fit For future – Northern Rivers

The mis-match between the problem and the proposed solution was highlighted a few days later with the focus on our region when the FFF



Byron Views

by Cr Basil Cameron

report was released. Clarence, as the product of amalgamations in the recent past, did not make the pass mark. Kyogle Shire's markdown was not unexpected, yet there remains a huge question about the future health of an amalgamation partner having to take on the significant infrastructure demands of the 'wooden bridge' problem.

On the face of it, Tweed Shire's markdown seems puzzling given its high growth rate, but reports are that revised 'asset valuations' to be provided would get the Shire over the line. This too may be a double-edged sword.

Collectively, local government assets are worth roughly seven times more than the assets of the federal government. Looks great on the balance sheet to have roads and other assets sitting on the books at value, but it also creates a massive depreciation charge against revenue

that has no hope of being funded by councils under the current system, amalgamated or not.

Post CSG economy

Byron's new Sustainable Economic Development committee is up and running with a brief to map a strategy that nurtures our clean food, creative and tourism industries for a post CSG future.

An important turning point in recent times has been the active promotion of a Byron identity that actually reflects our community and its aspirations, notably by way of the 'don't spoil us, we'll spoil you' campaign. Developed in part to challenge negative 'party town' promotion, it also clearly states our region's determination to build an economy based on unspoilt landscapes that support sustainable industries and build resilience.

For the best results, these need to be regional efforts as much as local, especially when considering how to boost local employment. One of the key drivers of effective labour markets is access to transport and the extension of Gold Coast urbanisation well and truly into New South Wales adds urgency to the need for a proper land transport strategy. This needs to be considered now as part of local and regional economic development to ensure the health of our landscape, industry and community.

basil.cameron@cr.byron.nsw.gov.au



by Cr Jenny Dowell

From the mayor's desk

local model keeps our dollars here and is a partnership demonstrating community support for solar energy.

Metgasco

The past month has seen a renewed effort by gas company Metgasco to recommence exploration in our area later this month, despite the overwhelming evidence that they are not wanted. While Council is yet to receive formal written notification of seismic test plans for Rock Valley Road, we have seen half page advertisements in the Northern Star and Council has received several email and phone messages on Metgasco's intentions.

We also heard the news of the State Government buyback of Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) 445 previously held by Dart Energy and others. This very large PEL was inactive and while its buyback is very welcome, residents and Council remain more concerned with the PELs that Metgasco holds, including PEL 16 that covers Rock Valley and Bentley.

I sincerely hope that the State Government continues to finalise the buyback of all Northern Rivers PELs as was promised by our State Members of Parliament prior to the March election. Unfortunately, Mining and Petroleum (onshore) legislation to allow gas companies to more easily enter lands has recently been enacted by the State Government. While there may be some ability to refuse access under the Roads Act, it would appear that the only sure way to stop Metgasco and other companies from exploration and extraction is for the buyback of licences. My hope is that Metgasco does not commence exploration activity before the buy-back as such activity may result in

risks to lives and property. It is inevitable that the community will mobilise peacefully but defiantly if Metgasco starts seismic testing here.

Fit for the future

Readers will be aware that the move towards amalgamation of Councils has gathered pace in recent times. Lismore City Council is among the third of NSW Councils that has been assessed as Fit For the Future (FFF). While we are pleased that our long term financial plan has received independent validation, we still face the real possibility of a merger with Kyogle Council. Kyogle is not FFF and needs to consider merging with either Lismore or Richmond Valley Council.

As I write this piece, Kyogle is considering its preferred position and both Richmond Valley and Lismore are preparing their business cases to assess the true cost of merging.

Until 18 November, there is \$10 million on the table for a voluntary merger. After that date, forced amalgamations are likely, but without financial assistance. The short time frame is certainly focusing our minds.

Environmental (E) Zones

After more than two years of waiting, the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) has released its Northern Councils E Zone Review Final Recommendations on 22 October. While the DPE hasn't issued its direction to Councils, we are finally moving towards resolution of the confusion over environmental zones that guide development. Council staff have identified further questions from the recommendations and some

landowners are also concerned about the details so we are urging the DPE to hold some information sessions to explain the recommendations and respond to questions.

North Lismore plateau

On the good news front, environmental zones have been restored to the planning proposal for North Lismore Plateau following their earlier removal by the DPE. The original proposal with E zones, that is the plan preferred by the proponents, the Aboriginal stakeholders' reference group and Council, is now on exhibition for comment until 23 November.

Lismore prospectus

October was a busy month for Council. We also launched the Lismore Prospectus that sets out public and private investment opportunities in our city. The document is available on the Council website: www.lismore.nsw.gov.au and includes testimonials from many local leaders in industry, business, health, education, arts and sport. Check it out and spread the word.

Build your future

At the end of October Council also launched Build Your Future, our home building and ownership incentive plan. Thanks to the Federal Government's Building Better Regional Cities, Council has upgraded three intersections that will reduce land costs for associated new estates and we can offer \$20,000 rebate to eligible purchasers of 200 lots. Eligibility is based on annual incomes of less than \$88,000 for singles to \$135,000 for a couple with three



children. I'm sure you'll agree that the cut offs are very generous.

Sibley Street

Back in August, Council presented 7 Sibley Street with funding towards a shipping container to go on site to allow serious works to commence. I'm delighted to see photos of the arrival of the container and look forward to seeing further progress.

Cabaret

The School of Arts was packed last month for the final Blue Moon Cabaret for the year. Congratulations to David Hallett and all the team that put on these fabulous nights three times each year. The move to October meant that the evening was much more comfortable for everyone.

Nimbin Advisory Group

The final meeting of the Nimbin Advisory Group for 2016 will be held on 5 November at 6pm. We will miss Lizette Twisleton who has left Council to take up a position at the Men and Family Centre, so we welcome Casie Hughes as our new servicing officer.

In sorrow

I was very sad to hear that Songman of the Aquarius Festival Paul Joseph has departed this life. We will miss him greatly but his songs and twinkly eyes will stay in our hearts and memories for ever. May the pure light within you guide your way home, Paul.

Simon says..

Paul Joseph (aka Dr Love) died at 7am on Tuesday 27th October. Though Paul had been struggling with cancer for nearly a year, I was shocked by the news. My thoughts and prayers are with Paula and the rest of his family. Nimbin particularly will miss him greatly.

I knew Paul from the Nimbin Aquarius Festival over 40 years ago and was involved with him in many ideas and projects around the Bush Factory in the late 70s.

Paul made an extraordinary contribution to the community. He was one of the organisers of the Aquarius Festival. He was also the song man at the festival and at the Terania Rainforest protest. Who could forget his songs from Terania? These songs will inspire and lead people for as long as there are forests to protect. Paul was deeply involved in politics in the sense of always wanting the best outcome for people and the planet.

Paul's contribution was always guided by his strong vision and commitment to a better world, a world where we all lived more gently on the planet, ecologically, collaboratively and with open hearts and minds.

The Lock the Gate crew and

by Cr Simon Clough,
Lismore City Council

the whole social movement against inappropriate mining was shocked and saddened by the suicide of George Bender last week. George, who was 68, was a fifth generation farmer from Hopeland near Chinchilla.

George had been fighting off the gas companies for 10 years. AGL wanted to put 18 wells on his land and were threatening to take him to the land court where he would surely lose. He was also dealing with 2 bores that had run dry because of draw down caused by gas mining.

On top of all this, George's land was within the thousands of hectares that had been affected by Linc Energy's disastrous and probably criminal underground coal gasification project. George and fellow farmers were prevented by the government from digging more than a metre into the ground because of the risk of poisonous, explosive gases leaking from the ignited underground coal beds.

Meanwhile, Metgasco was showing renewed energy and interest in seismic testing on Bungabee Road (near the proposed Bentley well site)



With Dean Draper and Ian Gaillard
Photo: David Lowe

and along 16 kms of Rock Valley Road.

In response to this situation, Gasfield Free Northern Rivers organised a meeting supposedly of local residents at Rock Valley hall. Well over 300 people turned up! It was an incredibly positive and powerful meeting.

I put an urgency motion to the last Council meeting that Council reaffirm part of its resolution of 13th December 2011 to:

1. Refuse access to Metgasco and any other companies for any coal seam gas operations, seismic testing, drilling and associated activities on Council owned and operated land.
2. Impose a moratorium on all coal seam gas on Council owned and operated land. And
3. Take whatever legal action necessary (in consultation with Councillors) to prevent

Metgasco and any other exploration company from carrying out seismic testing on any of its roads that qualify as an improvement under s72 of the Petroleum (Onshore) Act 1991 (NSW), and under s138 of the Roads Act 1993 (NSW).

4. Immediately contact the Premier, the Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy, and our local member Mr Thomas George requesting that the government intervene to prevent seismic testing and to protect our region from unconventional gas mining. For, as the Premier said, there is no social licence for unconventional gas in the Northern Rivers. The motion was opposed by Councillors Meineke and Marks, but supported by the other five Councillors.

Contact me at simonclough@internode.on.net or 0428-886-217

\$100,000 university degrees

by Justine Elliot,
MP for Richmond

Recently I spoke in the Parliament about Malcolm Turnbull's Liberal National government's plan for \$100,000 university degrees.

The accessing of education, particularly higher education, is so vitally important. The Labor party is committed to making sure that our younger Australians can access universities and can access them without having \$100,000 degrees. The fact is that, regardless of who leads the Liberal-National government, the savage attacks on our young people just keep coming. They just do not stop. Under Prime Minister Turnbull, we have a Prime Minister who is out of touch. He is particularly out of touch when it comes to regional and rural Australia. This is especially true when it comes to looking at our younger people in regional areas being able to access university education. This government is still committed to \$100,000 university degrees. In country areas, in regional and rural Australia, we blame the National Party for this. We blame the National Party members for these unfair increases and the fact that there will be \$100,000 university degrees.

This goes right to the heart of this cruel government's cuts and how that impacts on training opportunities and subsequent future employment opportunities for our young people. Compounding this situation is the fact that this government has no new ideas at all for education or training for our young people. One of the most ruthless attacks is the deregulation of university fees, the proposed 20 per cent cut in funding, and, of course, we will end up with \$100,000 degrees.

At the moment, the government has conveniently put their plans on hold for 12 months. That is all they have

done. They are absolutely committed to deregulation, but the fact is that this plan should be scrapped—not delayed but totally scrapped, totally forgotten, totally dumped. That is exactly what should happen with it. This legislation has been rejected twice by the Senate and the reality is that its implementation in 2016 is virtually impossible. So the government has done no more than admit the obvious, but they have to end all the uncertainty. For once and for all, drop these unfair plans. The fact is we know how committed those on the other side are to these plans. We have heard speakers today talk about how good it is. They are absolutely committed to pursuing it. We also know that the Prime Minister is committed to it. He is on the record supporting the changes. On 2GB on 5 June 2014, he said:

'I support unreservedly and wholeheartedly every element in the Budget. Every single one.'

'I support every element ...'

'I support the reforms to higher education.'

And he still supports that.

It should be noted that, since they recently announced the one-year delay, we have had a lot of members supporting it. Indeed, today we have heard so much support for it as well. Families from rural and regional areas such as mine, in the electorate of Richmond on the North Coast of New South Wales, know that these really harsh cuts mean that kids from the country will not be able to get to university. It is as simple as that. They will not be able to afford it. It will compound so many costs associated with being able to access university and many families tell me that Uni is off the radar for their kids.

I would like to talk about the wonderful university in my electorate, Southern Cross University. Over the four-year period, until 2019, real cuts in funding

for Southern Cross University will be more than \$64 million. Southern Cross University services the North Coast of New South Wales and also has a Gold Coast campus on the border. It is outstanding. But the cuts over the four-year period of more than \$64 million mean that fees will increase and all the kids who access our great regional universities will no longer be able to. It is a shameful disgrace that the National Party are pursuing this.

Also, they are pursuing it at a time of record youth unemployment. In areas like ours on the North Coast of New South Wales, we have incredibly high youth unemployment and the kids need to be able to access training or educational services such as higher education. We have seen so many cuts in youth training programs and also cuts to TAFE, so, no matter which way young people look, this government is cutting funding and denying access. Labor is absolutely committed to making sure that our young people can access university. We released our plan which will provide security and certainty to students by increasing the number of students completing their study by 20,000 graduates a year from 2020. We know how important it is to do that. We are investing \$31 million to boost the quality of teaching and resources in our universities.

But the fact is today that this plan the Liberals and Nationals have for their \$100,000 degrees must be dumped. The community wants it. They have spoken loud and clear about it. I condemn this government, and particularly condemn the National Party, for their ongoing cuts to rural and regional Australia. It shows yet again that the Nationals just cannot be trusted. They are so out of touch. In this case they cannot be trusted with our young people's future educational needs.

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In your neighbourhood...

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre News

www.nnic.org.au



The main event for November is the Sustainable Nimbin Community Plan community workshop on 22nd November. Make sure you come along to add your thoughts and aspirations to the Plan.

Sustainable Nimbin Community Planning (SNCP) Workshop

Town Hall Sunday 22nd November
 The SNCP was developed in 2009 and belongs to the Nimbin Community. A lot has happened since we last all came together in 2011 and there are more changes on the horizon including several proposed developments (e.g. The Cubes, Rainbow Café, former Museum site). So it's time to get back together to revise and update our goals to keep our community headed in the direction we want it to.

It is important for the diversity of the community to be represented in the plan, so please come along... **all welcome!**

The SNCP has already led to many outcomes for Nimbin, e.g. the Nimbin Solar Farm; Food Security outcomes - Farmers Markets, Food Equipment Library, Grain Mill, Food Coop; 7 Sibley St Project; Sustainability Alley; Biogas - funds attracted for feasibility research into a biogas triggen plant at Nimbin Valley Dairy and more.

NNIC regularly refers to the SNCP as evidence of the goals of the Nimbin community, when planning projects and when making submissions to all levels of government, in relation to e.g. Nimbin Waste Transfer Station; CSG; NBN roll out; Federal Government's Renewable Energy Target and the Energy White Paper; Reserve Roads divestment; Imagine Lismore planning process; Lismore LEP and Growth Management Strategy (especially re sustainable housing and the MOs); Proposed developments in Nimbin - eg the Cubes.

We are currently collecting information from the community about what has been achieved to date. We know a fair bit but we don't know it all...to add what you know, go to our website for the feedback documents.

Community Solar Farm outcomes

From July 2014 to June 2015, the Solar Farm exceeded its annual generation



target of 61,000kWh this year generating 63,730.51kW which is a carbon emissions saving of 57.36T CO₂-e.

7 Sibley Street progress

The shipping container is now on site (pictured arriving). Many thanks to Guy, Steve, Bill and Vic for making it happen. And to Lismore City Council (and Nat) for the money!

Sibley Street raffle

Tix \$2 or 3 for \$5 - available at NNIC. Great prizes include: Sundaya T-lite 2 light solar pack (thanks to Rainbow Power Co), Energy Efficiency pack and a large Richmond Birdwing Butterfly plant. Proceeds to Stage One Sibley St project.

Enova Community Energy - It's not too late!

Having reached over \$1million in just a few weeks, the Enova share offer has been extended to the 27th November. If you missed the initial close date, it is still not too late to get on board to support our own community based energy retailer. NNIC is proud to be a supporter of this great initiative.

Northern Rivers Biohubs Project - Nimbin consultations

Thanks to all the Nimbinites who attended the Nimbin workshop. A report will be provided as soon as all the workshops have been completed and the results of the workshops and

the large survey have been collated and analysed. Stay tuned for more info soon. Meantime...if you missed out you can find a basic fact sheet which we put together as a conversation starter, on our website: www.nnic.org.au

The Annual Town Hall Community Xmas Party

Will be held on Friday 19th December. There will be plenty of festive Xmas fare to be eaten and gifts from Santa for the kids (aged under 12 years). Brought to you by the Nimbin Soup Kitchen.

Nimbin Women's Dinner

The committee has commenced organising the event for March 2016. If you would like to help organise or perform at the gig, contact Teena Kavasilas at NNIC.

NNIC AGM

Wednesday 18th November at 5.30pm at NNIC. All members welcome.

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre (NNIC) is run by locals for locals and our job is to support people in need and the community in general to achieve their aspirations. Everyone is welcome at NNIC. If we can't help we probably know who can. You can also find lots of useful local and other info on our website.

www.facebook.com/pages/Nimbin-Neighbourhood-and-Information-Centre

Nimbin Hospital Information

Immunisation clinic

For 0-5 year olds, held the second Tuesday of every month. Next clinic: Tuesday 10th November. For appointments: 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health)

Early childhood nurse

Every Tuesday. For appointments, phone 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health Centre).

Women's Health Nurse Services

Third Thursday of the month. Next clinic, 19th November. Confidential Pap smears, breast checks, contraceptive advice, post natal checks, general health information. For appointments phone 6688-1401.

Nimbin community nurses

Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm, for assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy. Provision of Palliative Care in the home and co-ordinated Aged Care Packages.

Free health checks

In front of the Neighbourhood Centre, every second Friday, 11.30am

1.30pm, run by a Nurse Practitioner and a Registered Nurse. Cardiac, Diabetic and Stroke risk assessments, weight, blood pressure, oxygen sats, BSL, Cholesterol levels. Referrals to appropriate Health Professional, if required.

Free respiratory clinic

With Specialist Respiratory Nurse and a nurse Practitioner. Second Thursday of the month. Next clinic: 12th November. For appointment phone 6688-1401.

Free diabetic clinic

Every third Thursday of the month. Next clinic: 19th November. For appointment, phone Leanne Boothe 6630-0488.

Cannabis clinic

Confidential counselling, every Monday. Phone 1300-664-098.

Drug and alcohol counsellor/psychologist

Every Thursday, Phone 6620-7634 or mobile 0428-109-474.



Nimbin NSP

Open Mondays to Thursdays, 9-30am - 12pm. Arrangements can be made to see a Community Health Nurse through NSP.

Health Advice Line

Phone 1800-022-222 if you have a health issue. It's a 24-hour, 7 days a week free service. A Registered Nurse will speak to you and assess whether or not you need to go to the Emergency Dept. at your local MPS.

Read more information about this service at: www.healthdirect.org.au

Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary

Meetings are held on the second Friday of each month in the hospital conference room at 10am. Next meeting: 13th November.



Your Emergency Department

by Noelle Lynden-Way,
BUNK Quality & Safety Committee

Emergency Departments (ED) at Kyogle, Nimbin and Urbenville hospitals, and indeed all hospitals, are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

However, hospital administration is only open during working hours and after hours arrangements are made with local GP's and/or Nurse Practitioners to be on call for the Emergency Departments.

There are always staff on duty inside – First Line Emergency Care (FLEC) trained Registered Nurses and Endorsed Enrolled Nurses (EEN's) work morning, afternoon and night duty shifts on rotating rosters at each hospital.

If you arrive at Nimbin or Urbenville Hospital after hours (6pm Nimbin, 5pm Urbenville) Monday to Friday or on the weekend and the door is locked, pick up the phone and the intercom buzzer will go through to the RN on duty to let them know you are outside.

You will be admitted to the waiting room where you will be seen in person by a nurse. If there are no beds available, you may be triaged, which is being asked a number of questions to assess how urgently you are to be treated. This may require patience and for you to be aware that the Emergency Department staff are treating others and need to prioritise care.

Slightly different arrangements apply at Kyogle. During the day from 8am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday, people arriving to be treated in ED go straight to the administration desk at the front of the hospital and are registered there. Administration staff phone through to ED to let them know a patient has arrived.

After hours and on the weekend in Kyogle,



L-R: Willa Maguire RN, Dr. Vinay Pothumuthu and Jill Blackburn RN with the paediatric resuscitation trolley in the Emergency Department at Kyogle MPS. Money for this trolley was donated by Queenwood School for Girls in Sydney. The trolley has a colour-coded Broselow paediatric emergency chart, which is used to assess the condition of young children.

there is a side entrance to the left of the main door. Press the intercom buzzer to be let into the waiting room. Always use the phone on the wall in the waiting room to alert staff you are there.

There are no maternity services at Urbenville, Nimbin or Kyogle MPS. Lismore Base Hospital has the closest maternity department.

Emergency Departments are generally very busy places – Kyogle Hospital ED had 7400, Nimbin 4600 and Urbenville 900 attendances last year.



Clown's birthday takes the cake

October birthday celebration for Katie Cawcutt (standing, centre) at Nimbin Aged Care & Respite Services at Bottlebrush Studio. Usually Katie is the clown, but on her special day she was the princess surrounded by clowns! Thanks to all who helped make the occasion.

November activities at NACRS

For all elders, for people with a disability and all carers in our local communities.

November Bus Outing:

Tuesday 10th Nov, relax and enjoy morning tea at Blue Kitchen (Lismore), visit Lismore Organic Market, scenic drive to Byron, lunch Sun Bistro, phone to book.

Nimbin Social Groups:

Every Tuesday and Wednesday, 9.30am-1pm at Bottlebrush Studio, Nimbin, with morning tea and light lunch.

The Channon Social Group:

Thursday 19th Nov and every third Thursday,

11.30am-2pm, variety of locations, phone for info.

Koonorigan Social Group:

Monday 23rd Nov and every fourth Monday, 11.30am-3pm, Bring a Plate Lunch at Koonorigan Hall

Craft Group every first Monday at Bottlebrush Studio

Home visits for all carers and your cared-for person

Drop-In at Bottlebrush Studio, Nimbin, Monday-Friday 10am-

2pm, for a cuppa, a chat, free internet, computer, a quiet sit down.

Phone 6689-1709 for more info or look for us on Facebook



You are warmly invited to the upcoming

Sustainable Nimbin Community Plan WORKSHOP



A lot has happened in the last 4 years and it is time we all got together again to review our plans for the future of Nimbin.

There will be discussion around the 9 key focus areas and goals:

- * Social & Political
- * Housing
- * Jobs & Skills
- * Food
- * Environment & Biodiversity
- * Energy
- * Health & Wellbeing
- * Transport
- * Arts & Culture

We need all of your input and hope to see you there.

A YUMMY LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED!

Sunday 22 November
10am to 4pm TOWN HALL

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AT NIMBIN BOWLING CLUB



Terra is proud to be celebrating our six-month anniversary this month, providing fine food and local entertainment to enhance your dining experience. We wish to thank all our loyal patrons.



ENTERTAINMENT

Every Thursday, 6-9pm
Joey and friends

Friday 6th Nov, 6-9pm
Sara McCafferty

Saturday 7th Nov, 6-9pm
Bob Oort

Friday 13th Nov, 6-9pm
Flem's Black Friday Karaoke

Saturday 14th Nov, 7.30pm
Nimbin Goes Queer Cabaret
(Ticket-holders only)

Wednesday 18th Nov, 7-11pm
Open Mic Night

Friday 20th Nov, 6-9pm
Smiles & Ink

Saturday 21st Nov, 6-9pm
Lady Writer

Friday 27th Nov, 6-9pm
Michael Fairley & friends

Saturday 28th Nov, 6-9pm
Will Massey

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