

The colour supplement: understanding self-image

Clerk: So, you're interested in one of our adventure holidays, are you?

Customer: Yes. I saw your advert in the colour supplement.

Clerk: The what?

Customer: The colour supplement.

Clerk: The colour supplement?

Customer: Yes, I'm sorry, I can't say the letter 'B'

Clerk: 'C'?

Customer: Yes, that's right. It's all due to a trauma I suffered when I was a schoolboy. I was attacked by a bat.

Clerk: A cat?

Customer: No a bat.

Clerk: Can you say the letter 'K'?

Customer: Oh yes. Khaki, kind, kettle, Kipling, kipper, Kuwait, Keble Bollege Oxford.

Clerk: Why don't you say the letter 'K' instead of the letter 'C'?

Customer: What? You mean spell colour with a 'K'?

Clerk: Yes. (long pause)

Customer: Colour. (surprisingly) Oh, thank you! I never thought of that.

— from Monty Python: 'Travel Agent'

by Brent Shaub, Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner

"We all act in accordance with our self-image," starts Moshe Feldenkrais' most famous book, *Awareness Through Movement*.

The root of self-image is proprioception: knowing where you are in space. From here, a neural map was forged from thousands of kinesthetic trials of how much effort movements take. We spend years learning to roll over, sit up, crawl and walk.

Consider the number of items grasped, dropped, picked up, placed in the mouth, squeezed, touched to something else – you get the picture. These activities form our somatic understanding of the physical world.

At any age, it's clearly important to know one's abilities and limits when selecting the endless choices of life. Sensory perception and muscle-memory determine: can, possibly, cannot or don't know.

If one cannot, it's prudent to



find an alternative where one safely can. But what if only the belief of being unable is that which prevents, especially after an injury in which there was value in refraining? How does a person call forth these mental-only limits in a way that they can be examined without risking damage to the body?

Feldenkrais classes cultivate connections between intention and action; they start in the range of capability and explore. Each class's on-ramp prepares the neural capillaries of the mind/body. From

the resulting stable, robust base of support, new kinesthetic skills can germinate.

Improving your self-use impacts your quality of life. Once-dismissed activities can be reclaimed; new ones embraced.

An example, please lie on your back. Bend your knee and have your right foot flat on the floor. Raise your right arm forward to ceiling. Press into the floor with your foot a few times and raise the right side of your hip and base of spine, then cease pressing. Do this a few times. Press with the

right foot then reach in a natural arc to the left with the right hand. Bring awareness to the front of your right shoulder, what does it do? Next time you press with the foot, reach with your hand from the front of your shoulder. Let the whole right shoulder move consciously.

Pause. Press again with the right foot and think of your right shoulder blade and back of the ribs as your hand reaches to the left. Allow the movement to be shaped by your sense of ease. Is the arc the same? Are there any differences in how your neck and head move?

Group classes (\$15) and individual sessions (\$75) available with Brent at *Embody Wisdom Today*, 4/104 Stuart Street, Mullumbimby.

Celebrating our one-year anniversary this January. Testimonials, class schedule and recordings at: <http://EmbodyWisdom.Today> Phone 0404-429-271, email: Brent@EmbodyWisdom.Today

Natural law



We are all self-governing.
Let us call upon our ancestors and teachers – past and present,
to guide us in the way of the Heart.
You are all my relations.
All is One

by Helene Collard

Today, we earthlings begin a fresh cycle around the sun. Twelve days ago we began a new 'galactic spin' in the Mayan 'Tzolkin' (or galactic) calendar. The Tzolkin calendar harmonises with galactic energies and cycles. The Tzolkin calendar is 260 days long. This 9-month sacred cycle can be understood as a spiritual gestation time for growth and unfolding.

Therefore, in a nutshell, we are in a new beginning. Take time to reflect on where your life-journey has taken you in the last 9-months. What challenges were you confronted with? What has changed? What was wonderful? What unfolded? And most importantly, what have you learnt? Where are you now?

New beginnings offer opportunity, optimism and 'fresh starts'. At this time, it is crucial that you honour your inner wisdom and dutifully apply it to your daily life. During each day, check-in with yourself often and see if you are happy with what's taking place. This includes interactions with self and others, food and drink you're consuming, activities you're doing/not doing, reading and visual material you're engaging with, shopping habits, how you spend your spare time etc.

Some people find at the end of each day they had quantity, but not so much quality. This is about intentional consciousness into who we are and what it is we really desire, and then, making that happen.

The main obstacle into our consciousness is our busyness. The modern, technological, capitalist, international society we have created, seems to be the very thing that diverts us away from deeper knowing within ourselves. Therefore, we must actively work to promote and maintain our own inner-connections.

Meditation, solitude, bushwalking, retreats, yoga, prayer, therapeutic arts (story, dance, art), time in nature alone, cycling, gardening, and others are all ways that promote that inner-connection. In January, commit to a regular practice that will raise your consciousness.

When we hear the word 'spirituality', many of us feel lost, displaced or simply unmet. Fundamentally, we are all spiritual beings having a physical, emotional and mental experience on earth. In order for us to feel complete, we must reclaim and nourish the spiritual aspect of ourselves. Spirituality involves a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves and often involves the search for meaning in life. In particular, a sense that we each have a Divine path, on which we can realise the fullest essence of our being. That is why we are here.

Are you ready to embrace yourself as a spiritual being? Find what connects you to 'that something bigger' and begin to feed and nourish your spiritual body now. Visit a place of worship, watch the sunrise/sunset in silence, stargaze, bushwalk, moongaze, meditate, read spiritual material, converse with like-minded people, and the list goes on.

Make spirituality a part of your life, feel yourself grow and watch how life changes for the better.

Helene Collard has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing and is a Reiki Master Teacher. email: hmcollard@gmail.com or phone 0405-656-797.

Laptops – a boon for therapists

Happy New Year and welcome to 2016 – a nine in numerology, which carries the vibration of leadership and clear thinking, physically, emotionally and spiritually. So polish and grease those skateboards or give your personal pegasus a groom, because hopefully, this coming year offers a ride filled with miraculous change.

Sadly we don't all believe in miracles. Otherwise that hundredth monkey would already be sitting on our shoulder pointing the magic banana of love and goodwill at all and sundry.

All the same, computers and mobile phones are a tad miraculous, if you only view the good bits. I resisted them for years. No dude was gonna press my back against the wall and force me to use something that would cost me extra dosh and hours of confusion.

Now I'm as sucked in as everyone else. (Humans are potentially very easy to brainwash – you just keep telling them the same thing until it seeps into their psyche and they can't imagine life without it.)

Thankfully I live in a place that harbours those who are difficult to brainwash, because here, we all suffer from large amounts of creative arrogance and curiosity. But computers have become part of our lives due to our desire to keep feeding the beasts that make us different.

It's all a bit of a double bind really. We're damned if we do and damned if we don't. All the same I feel it is my duty as a bossy woman, who does not wish to spend my latter years amongst myopic Quasimodos, to give some advice on the correct use of laptop computers.

Why? Because when it comes to the health of your muscles, bones, tendons and ligaments, if you use laptop computers without respect for their pitfalls, they can cause you long-term pain and discomfort and finally – undesirable physical dysfunction.

I remember an osteopath who once was my teacher. A recalcitrant, but wise old bugger, who said, "I love laptops. My business has increased threefold since they came on the market."

This is because hunching over a laptop balanced on one's knees whilst sitting in a chair or sofa, or lying on a bed with shoulders forward and neck dropped forward in order to see the screen reduces the blood flow to those important areas we need



by Tonia Haynes
Dip Bowen Therapy, Cert Remedial Massage, Advanced Pranac Healer

in order to function properly. Neck, arms, shoulders, back and legs.

Even though it appears one is more relaxed due to sitting, holding one's body steady for long periods of time causes physical fatigue.

Wrists are also in danger of contracting RSI (repetitive strain injury) from resting them on the edge of the laptop for long periods of time, due to interference with the nerves and tendons that make the hands move.

Chiropractors and physios are now reporting seeing people as young as thirty who already have a dowager's hump or lump on the back of their lower neck and upper back from hunching forward over their laptop.

So what to do? Them that knows advise:

- Have your monitor at eye level or slightly lower;
- Use an extra keyboard at a level which allows the forearms to be parallel to the floor;
- Make sure your feet are flat on the floor, or use a foot stool;
- Use the whole arm and not just the wrist when moving the mouse;
- Take frequent short breaks. Stand and stretch often;
- Always have the main source of light behind you;
- Frequently look away from the screen and focus on faraway objects.

Of course all this is going to require some thought, and moving of furniture, but it's worth it.

Unfortunately, I have little advice for the high flyers who are attempting to catch a deadline while in an airport or on a plane. Saving 10% of their income for future, badly needed bodywork may be an option.

I do have an exercise to share that may assist in stopping the dowager's hump and computer-related headaches. Plus, it feels good.

- Stand straight, feet about 30cm apart;
- Bend knees slightly so back is straight;
- Hold head so chin is parallel with floor;
- Interlace fingers of both hands together;
- Place interlaced hands, palms forward on the back of the head (not the neck) with elbows at right angles;
- On the expelled breath and holding chin level, push the back of your head into the palms of your interlaced hands. (Do not lift your chin) Hold for the count of twelve and release. Do this three times, as often as you want. Love light and laughter.

Tonia is in clinic in Nimbin on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Using a mixture of remedial massage, reactive muscle elimination, spinal realignment, bower therapy, some kinesiology and pranac healing, she can assist you to feel better, physically and emotionally.

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The relevance of time

by Brigid Beckett

As another year comes to a close it is naturally a time to consider the passing of time and its relevance to our lives.

Chinese medicine and philosophy describe many cycles that occur throughout our lives, including the 12 year astrological cycle, seven or eight year cycles of growth and change experienced by human individuals, annual seasonal cycles or daily cycles.

The shortest is the daily cycle, energies of the organs and meridians change over the 24-hour cycle. The energy of each organ will predominant at a certain time of day. For example the stomach time is 7-9am, small intestine 1-3pm, kidney 5-7pm, liver 1-3pm, lung 3-5am.

There is often a correlation between an imbalance or weakness in an organ to symptoms at the particular time. A stomach weakness may show tiredness from 7-9am and no appetite for breakfast. Tiredness from 5-7pm is common, indicating a kidney deficiency. Difficulty sleeping from 1-3am is also common, indicating a liver pathology.

As well as daily cycles there are seven or eight year growth cycles, seven years for females and eight years for males, which are times where changes tend to occur in our bodies. Growth and aging is primarily due to kidney energy. The kidney *jing* is

the energy that we are born with. Congenital conditions or weakness from a young age, especially prior to seven years, is due to low kidney *jing* inherited from parents.

As there are major changes in the body every seven or eight years, these times are good times to change the health for the better. Weak *jing* can be compensated for by looking after the body at these watershed times, conversely strong individuals can become worse off by not doing so. A marked physical change is seen around 7 to 8 years when permanent teeth appear and the individual moves on from the infant stage to become more independent. Again at puberty, then in the 20's as the body enters its peak at 28.

Looking after kidney energy at these times in particular bodes well for later life. It is important to get enough rest and good nutrition while growing. Society's expectation for over-achieving children and teenagers is detrimental in terms of protecting and strengthening kidney energy. Pregnancy and post childbirth are also times when the body changes and previous patterns changed or reset. In China, ensuring rest and good nutrition the month after childbirth is a priority.

During the 30's onward, kidney energy falls with the result that other yin and



yang organs also weaken, giving visible signs of ageing. Ageing is not equivalent to bad health. Provided appropriate levels of kidney energy are maintained and other imbalances addressed, good health can be maintained throughout life's stages.

While ageing is not a happy thought for many of us, Chinese philosophy sees it as stages of a life process, very much connected to the wider cosmos and the larger life cycles.

A common reference is the annual plant life-cycle. The stages of seed, seedling, expanding growth of leaves, then flowering, seeding and dormancy are symbolic of changing energy, both throughout the year and individual lifetimes.

During this month, after summer solstice, the heart is the influential organ. It is a time of flux between expanding and contracting energy. Energy is beginning to return from the earth back to heaven, from outside to inside, from solar expansion to lunar containment. The influence of Taoism and Confucianism shows in the acknowledgement of the universal source from where the ancestors come. Small cycles follow large cycles, earth follows heaven, children follow parents.

The energy of ageing is different, but not inferior to the energy of youth, each being an essential part of the universal cycles.

Brigid Beckett is a qualified acupuncturist working at Lismore and Nimbin Community acupuncture. Contact her on 0431-702-560.

Falling through clouds



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
M. Couns., PhD

It's between Christmas and New Year and I'm caught up in the bardo space of neither this nor that, which many of us feel at this time of the year. Most businesses are shut, the streets are quiet in the most part, and the place has a dreamlike quality. Topics rise up in my mind: guilt, shame, community, the hidden curriculum, and so on. A recurring image is of clouds and a sense of falling through them.

Clouds are very beautiful. I gaze at them from my back veranda, watching them form and dissolve. I saw a dragon once. There he was, this red glowing dragon seen through clearly defined luminous clouds. He raced across the sky, and was gone.

In computer speak, the 'cloud' is a public wi-fi provider that allows for the sharing of data and information for the benefit of streamlining resources and creating community coherence.

Without public wi-fi, the internet connects us anyway, to whatever degree we seek it. Within the internet are deeper, darker murky depths where few choose to wander.

In meteorological terms, the cloud is a visible mass of liquid or frozen droplets of water and various chemicals that gathers together to form types

of communities of droplets. Some droplet communities are very dense and some less so. Some dance across the sky in wisps, some congregate in a thunder of intensity.

Issues can be cloudy and not transparent. Moods can be cloudy, where suspicion and worry lurk. There are clouds before a storm, and hunters of storms observe the clouds, and birds ride them. I watch them: the clouds of meteorology, moods, and thoughts, and so I use them in meditation practice and with my clients in hypnotherapy sessions. I might suggest that the person observe their thoughts and feelings, distancing themselves a bit, and noticing how they take shape and form and disappear, and take shape again, to dissolve soon after.

Community has cloud-like characteristics. Community is a social unit of any size that is connected by flexible relations, with rules, said and hidden, that work towards keeping the unit going. We learn the rules by a variety of methods. Some are directly taught in schools, clubs, families, and through information and entertainment technologies. Some are learned via the hidden curriculum of life, where a transgression is punished by exclusion from the group and our own experiences of shame and guilt.

The phrase, "hidden curriculum" comes from sociological studies of school life where the rules of engagement are articulated behaviourally through inclusion and exclusion of members. The hidden curriculum isn't a side effect of

an education, that is, lessons learned but not intended; it is fully intended, albeit unconscious. Issues of gender, race, privilege, and so on are taught through a cloud of unknowing, and until recently, hardly ever examined. The cloud of community is still quite obscure and it is in this cloud that horrific things are metered out to others. Bullying, exclusion, threats and demands are made against those whose status within the group is weak, or are sufficiently different to not quite fit in.

Feelings of guilt and shame are barometers of where a person fits within a group. Guilt is the feeling of having failed in some obligation and shame is the painful sense of distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behaviour. Both are generally seen as experienced by individuals. I disagree. Guilt and shame arise interrelationally. They are issues because we live in community.

Much goes by at a sort of ethereal level. Things are vaguely felt, except when things are said that are said against the code that inheres the group, and then the pain of exclusion is very palpable.

We are expected to act from a sense of having a conscience of right and wrong, but such things are relational to situations and we are thus endlessly negotiable. For example, openness and truthfulness are admired in certain circumstances, while not in others. We are taught to speak up about wrongdoings of others, yet when we actually

blow the whistle, we are condemned, and have to hide from powers that be, because we've broken the code of silence. A lot of what we say we should do occupies a very indeterminate space, but when we break something felt to be critical to the group, we are left knowing we've transgressed the code, feeling it in our gut.

I get myself into dodgy places in my social (non-professional) sphere occasionally. It appears I never learned certain codes as far as female friendships are concerned. I think this is because I was sick at home during those critical hidden curriculum classes among clouds of girls at primary school. I say things bluntly as I see them, which doesn't go down well. It's times like this that it feels as though I've fallen through the cloud: dropped. Knowing how it feels I can fully appreciate the pain others feel in this regard. To be shamed is to be shunned and to feel guilt is like falling upon a guilt-edged sword. It hurts. It's no wonder most of us will go to great lengths to avoid the pain.

There is some use in the falling between cloud and earth. It brings greater clarity to what matters, which communities one wants to be part of, and a sense of other possible choices. We do not have to be members of tight inflexible communities. We can loosen them up, make more inclusive of divergent thoughts and ideas and practices. This kind of cloud feels to me to be buoyant, and something I'd like to be part of.

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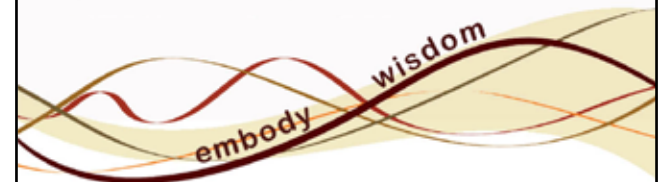


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by Stewart James, president

I'm sure you've all heard the wonderful news that Mergasco shareholders recently accepted the government's \$25M buyback offer. Welcome to our gas-field free future from the Clarence to the Tweed and heartiest congratulations! Of course the struggle against the gas has not been won everywhere and we need to throw our active support behind less fortunate communities in the Pilliga, Gloucester and elsewhere.

But allow me a moment of reflection. Four years ago, I was a bit of a hermit on my farm. That was the pre-gas days, and I couldn't possibly have imagined then what has become the reality now. I'm socially active; constantly out and about; elected NEC president two years in a row (thanks supporters); fairly well known and very well connected with a fabulous and inspiring community of friends, activists and protectors that I didn't know existed back then.

Isn't it ironic that out of so much adversity, disillusionment and stress has grown something so powerful and positive. I've been blessed to learn – we have all been blessed to learn – so much from ourselves and from each other; from our successes and in particular from our mistakes. As you may know, I'm fond of saying that I've learnt so much from my mistakes I intend on making a few more!

Some of the key things I've learnt are the importance of the following principles in engaging with people: consultation, inclusiveness, transparency, honesty, respect, trust, a grass-roots bottom-up approach. They stand in stark contrast to the behaviours modelled by the government and the gas companies: unilateral action, top-down authoritarianism, hubris and arrogance, deception and betrayal.

Community relationships take a lot of work to build and maintain – they don't happen easily or by accident.

We've all worked hard and sacrificed a lot of time, blood, sweat and tears in this effort, but that shouldn't – and doesn't – mean we are beyond criticism.

The campaign at Bentley made me realise, with a shock, that politicians have fundamentally betrayed us. Call



Celebrations at Keerrong
Photo: Heather Dunn



Climate angels in Byron
Photo: Keith Bale

me naïve, but I have a very deep and painful sense of injury about that – I really expected better; I believed that governments were there to protect and serve the people, not big business.

One consequence of the failure of government is that we've all had to step up and become leaders in our own ways. It's very important that we model our values; set an example by our actions. The future depends on all of us doing much better than leaders have done in the past and present. We need a new way, and no-one is going to invent it if we don't.

Our win against the gas, fabulous as it is, cannot be the end of our efforts to protect our precious environment. Climate change remains a huge challenge and the Paris Agreement marks the beginning of more really hard work to prevent catastrophic warming. Locally we need to be

vigilant on many fronts, not least with our wonderful forests. The Forestry Corporation has been caught out breaking forestry laws locally and, along with the shamefully ineffectual Environmental Protection Authority, has a lot of serious questions to answer, as I'll explore in a future article.

You can support the environment and our centres by becoming a member or renewing your membership. Membership costs \$10 and entitles you to attendance at monthly meetings, email updates on campaigns and voting privileges. Current memberships fall due on 1st January and can be paid at the centres any time after that. We'd also appreciate your patronage at the shops in our centres where you can buy a range of excellent, sustainable and locally produced foodstuffs, toiletries and other products. We hope to see you in our centres soon.

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by Richard Burer

Lemon Myrtle is a well known cultivated plant in the area. A native tree of south east Queensland, Lemon Myrtle gained popularity in the Northern Rivers in the early 90's as a bush food flavour, which was helped along and pioneered by Nimbin local Peter Hardwick. Lemon Myrtle went on to feature in many a restaurant, and in more recent times shared the culinary stage with Jamie Oliver!

In the area I've found Lemon Myrtle to be a hardy tree which grows to around 5m. An excellent specimen tree, an edge plant or even part of the understory in a windbreak, it's a very useful plant. Whilst it's hardy, it's also slow growing and it will respond to hedging and harvesting for dry spice and essential oil.

Backhousia citriodora is well known for its anti-microbial properties, with a long history of cultural connection in medicine and food flavouring with Aboriginal people. Lemon Myrtle oil is grown and produced locally in Nimbin and it makes its way into local skin care products such as soaps and gardener's balm.

To check out a large plantation, take a drive up the Channon-Dunoon Road where you will see a paddock growing healthily by the road.

Plant of the month

Lemon Myrtle *Backhousia citriodora*



Take care choosing plants

Newcomers continue to arrive in the Northern Rivers from other parts of Australia and overseas.

The population rose by 8.2% in the 10 years up to 2014. We can expect more as people continue to flee the cities seeking a peaceful rural lifestyle. While some are well prepared, not everyone has an in-depth knowledge of the range of plant species they will encounter and the work involved in managing acreage.

A rural lifestyle on acreage is not always peaceful. Mowers, tractors, brush-cutters and chainsaws are part and parcel of daily living in the bush. Dealing with weeds and other vegetation is a given. The Northern Rivers hosts a huge number of introduced species which grow readily and reproduce rapidly in the warm wet climate.

Weeds are a huge threat to biodiversity, cause economic loss and social inconvenience. Knowledge of different plants, an understanding of their attributes and how each one behaves is a good start towards managing the vegetation on your property.

Weeds are categorised according to the impact they

have or could potentially have. Two lists cover 60 particularly important species. WONS – Weeds of National Significance are already widespread and have a huge impact on agriculture or natural environments. 32 species make this list. WONS species present in the Nimbin Valley include lantana, maderia vine, cats claw creeper, fireweed and salvinia among others.

The water weed, *Salvinia*, *Salvinia molesta*, can cause big problems in dams and waterways. This aquatic fern grows very quickly. It prefers still or slow moving water and can double in size in three days when conditions are ideal. Thick mats are formed as it grows, grows and grows. This rampantly growing biomass can interfere with irrigation pipes and boating activities and cause other problems in the pond or dam.

The leaves under the water, excluded from the light, die, rot and fall to the bottom. Other water plants also die without the light. Decomposition of organic matter leads to de-oxygenation of the water which causes death of fish and other aquatic species.

Though useful, perhaps, for



Weed Words with Triny Roe

water treatment or to harvest for mulch, salvinia can be carried to new sites by water fowl thus infesting vulnerable wetlands, recreation zones or causing nuisance for other land holders.

The other list, the Alert List for Environmental Weeds, contains 28 introduced species. These were chosen because, while they have not yet spread throughout the whole country, they have the potential to seriously adversely affect biodiversity and there is chance to reduce their distribution or even eradicate them.

Species on this list which

are found in pockets in and around Lismore and Nimbin include Rosewood, *Tipuana tipi* and the Chinese or Golden Rain Tree, *Koelreuteria elegans*. The golden rain tree is ubiquitous and problematic in the village of Nimbin. Seedlings come up in awkward places. It has also been planted along the road in other Northern Rivers villages.

Take care choosing plants. Some environmental weeds, such as polkadot plant, *Hypoestes phyllostachya*, can be purchased from nurseries and market stalls. In a pot in the house it wouldn't be a problem. Released into the garden it could spread to nearby bushland. Just because you can buy it in a nursery or at a market stall, doesn't mean it's not an environmental weed. Do your research.

Far North Coast Weeds is the Local Control Authority in the Northern Rivers. FNCW covers Tweed, Kyogle, Ballina, Byron, Richmond Valley as well as Lismore shire.

There are some useful documents on their website: <http://fncw.nsw.gov.au> Good to check out, especially if you are looking to buy land.

Happy looking after land.

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Urban biodiversity conservation

by Geoff Dawe

Biodiversity conservation in Australia potentially has most long-term application in urban areas, for that is where most of the people are.

Primary action for biodiversity conservation involves becoming vegetarian or vegan for a large majority of environmental degradation in Australia is caused by "animal industries" and diet-science has determined humans can live healthily on a vegan diet.

The second means of carrying out biodiversity conservation involves the back yard, the front yard and even the Council owned nature strip. It is the gardening of the land immediately surrounding where one lives. The aim of these gardeners is to get as large a mass of varied human food in through the back door by intensively gardening comparatively small plots of land.

In doing this, four major effects occur that help carry Australians to sustainability: the food is healthier; Australians learn about intensive food growing; because there is less demand for conventionally grown food, more broadacre land can potentially return to habitat; and, food price signals are sent to politicians that Australian culture is reducing dependence on a broadacre farming culture. Because the people lead the leaders follow.

The third means of biodiversity conservation, is that these urban experts in intensive, polycultural gardening eventually decentralise to rural areas and settle on family, gardening farms. Here there is chance for direct engagement with the bush to select in favour of natives.

This allows for a more balanced mix



Potting up area



of natives and exotics rather than an attempt to exterminate the exotics. Humans have not enough information to determine whether exotics are a degrading or healing influence in a savagely land cleared Australia. Rather, it means that in any situation providing human-perceived benefit to the whole, all other things being equal, native species are chosen to maximise benefit to the existing host ecosystem. When in Rome, do as the Romans do.

Nevertheless, the Romans were well aware of the benefits of the multiculturalism that came from people and commodities from other countries. Similarly, the existence of exotic oranges, bananas and the merino sheep in Australia is not a step back from biodiversity. Each of these species has added to it.

The land degradation associated with them was not a fault of the species in Australia per se (in themselves), but of human cultural associations with the species. That is, humans are excessively economically attached to farming the species in greater numbers than is ideal for diverse species or polycultural land-use.

Dependence on monocultural food sources as though this has nothing to

do with biodiversity conservation, is reflected in urban planning reducing the size of building blocks. The old ¼-acre block development size supplied plentiful land to learn about gardening, and had potential to supply most of the food requirements for house inhabitants.

Nevertheless, Professor of Urban and Rural Planning, Jon Kellett, in a study concerning the Australian dream of owning a quarter acre block, suggests that the realities of climate change and other factors may reduce the size of a suburban house block in the future. Despite the incoming information of the unsustainability of industrialised agriculture, the "other factors" that Jon speaks of apparently do not consider there may not in the future be an industrially dependent agriculture.

Ultimately the land is for any culture, the base of its economy. When the land is healthy in that soil organic matter levels are gradually increasing, humans have potential for a healthy economy. The skills required by humans to increase soil organic matter, while provisioning themselves polyculturally with food are currently potentially found mostly in urban areas in Australia. Where the people are, is the centre of energy for biodiversity conservation.

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The dancers of the sun

We are near the corner of the gully below my house and my knees start to shake. I am sweating, guilty of murderous intent.

No. I am reflective, reverent, resigned, as if I am the one on my way to slaughter. My butcher reaches out to steady me. "It's alright," he says. "It's perfectly normal. You would not be human if you didn't have a shot of adrenalin before something like this."

It's Christmas and in this very River-Cottage like moment, just without the cameras rolling, we are about to procure a leg of lamb for the kitchen table.

I was a vegetarian for thirteen years and the choice was an effortless, instinctive one. I was more personally repelled by meat itself than conscious of the ethics surrounding industrialised meat production. Now, I have consciously decided to raise and eat my own meat, integrating my small flock of sheep into my home permaculture system to eat weeds and produce manure. The transition back to meat-eating came after a life-saving experience. Pregnant and malarial, desperate and anaemic, I was fed village-



Permaculture Principles
with Anastasia Guise

grown dawn-killed beef from the Dili market, and simply never went back. I say simply, but the transition has been a gradual one. Mostly, I blame bacon. They say marijuana is a gateway drug, but I believe bacon is a gateway meat: it leads to other meats.

It has been a journey fraught with its share of ethical dilemmas. I spent the night before the kill tossing in my bed, agonising over the next day's scheduled events. On one hand, I know all of our ancestors depended on meats to some extent for their survival, some exclusively so. If

it were not for the relationship between hunter-gatherers and game, none of us would be alive here on the planet today. This relationship between humans and animals is further complicated by the history of domestication of animals and the more sedentary lifestyle brought about by the development of agriculture, which many social anthropologists argue brought about the first diseases of urbanisation, a shortening of human stature and the first instances of "pollution," such as the concentration of manures.

On the other hand, committing to vegetarianism, or veganism as a way out of, or in a direct affront to, Big Meat, is a powerful and liberating argument. Modern animal husbandry is unquestionably environmentally destructive, a big shop-of-horrors blood-sport thinly veiled by razor-wire fences and propped up by fuel and water subsidies. That inefficient, unhappy, soy and hormone-fed meat from the supermarket is unethical and unhealthy in so many ways. Additionally, the argument goes, our modern day marketplace means that all of us can realistically meet our nutritional needs without a



Happy, organically raised sheep

single piece of meat touching our forks.

Or can we? The earth's grasslands and forests thrive out of a relationship with the sun, powered by photosynthesis. Vegetative growth is in turn limited by herbivores, which without predation would – as in times past – dominate the terrestrial landscapes of the planet. In a sense we are all dancers of the sun, all of us taking our turn in the circle of life; sun, grass, herbivore and human. Perhaps it's easy to dance when you are at the top of the food chain.

But right now I don't feel like dancing at all. As we make our way up to the house, the lamb rests his

head on my lap, gently closing his eyes, and I am floored.

Once the deed is done, and the lambs are hanging, my hand grows steadier. I am able to skin and dress the meat, remove the stomach contents and quarter the carcasses. I save and scrape and salt the skins for winter rugs. If I were brown skinned or Inuit, the vegans would sit around the camp fire in romantic adulation of my uninterrupted cultural practices. But I'm not. I'm just a white girl who pays today for the death of living things, unwilling to outsource the raising and killing of my meat, willing to embrace this or nothing at all.

www.communitypermaculture.com.au

Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass

Welcome to 2016 and our 10th year of Koala Kolumns. Believe it or not, the first Kolumn was published in December 2006 and from that time we've missed only once, last month, due to an email hiccup.

Not wanting to mozz the nation's favourite animal, I suspect 2016 will be a particularly challenging year for koalas; well, for environmental conservation generally in NSW. Nature stands to be the biggest loser when the Native Vegetation Act, the Threatened Species Conservation Act, the biodiversity-related parts of the National Parks and Wildlife Act and the seven part test in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act are replaced by the much weaker "integrated" Biodiversity Conservation Act, intended by the Baird government.

Sweeping "reforms" to NSW's biodiversity law, policy and practice have been on the table for a couple of years now. During 2014 the then Minister for the Environment, Rob Stokes appointed a panel which duly prepared an issues paper to which the public was invited to respond, followed by a final report in December 2014. On the eve of the NSW election in March 2015 Premier Baird confirmed his government's acceptance of all 43 of its recommendations.

The "reforms" can be summarised thus:

- a move away from site-specific to a regional or State-scale focus for biodiversity conservation;
- a new approach to managing biodiversity in agricultural land-use predicated on the repeal of the Native Vegetation Act;
- a broader and deeper application of biodiversity off-setting; and
- introduction of a simplified, risk-based licensing system for assessing biodiversity and other environmental impacts of land management activities and land use change.

Equally worrying is that the new Act is expected to enable NSW to obtain



Nurturing a koala back to health can take a long time. Kim was a 1.8kg back-young when brought into care 9 months ago (her diseased mother was euthanased). Now Kim is in pre-release, almost ready to resume her life in the wild

accreditation of its assessment and approval processes under Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act bilateral agreements or strategic assessments.

The Bill is expected to be introduced into Parliament during the first half of 2016; around the same time that the Saving our Species Koala Conservation Project, which we now know is to replace the 2008 Recovery Plan for the Koala, will be on public exhibition.

You can see where this is headed. On the one hand the government is establishing a significant fund (an as yet unspecified share of \$100 million) to shore up koala survival and on the other is allowing the single biggest



Happy New Year from some of the FOK mob

threat to koala survival – the broad-scale clearing of native vegetation – by repeal of the Native Vegetation Act. Where is the sense?

But that's not all by a long shot. The Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals (IFOAs) that regulate public logging in NSW are also due for exhibition in early 2016. The IFOA "remake" too moves away from on-ground, site-specific surveys to relying on habitat models utilising plant community types and presence of food trees to predict koala occurrence. As with biodiversity legislation the over-arching objective is to "streamline", i.e. to make things easier for the proponent whether a developer, a farmer or a logger, by doing away with current safeguards such as the site-scale "improve or maintain" standard or pre-logging koala survey.

Then there's to be a review of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 44 – Koala Habitat Protection (SEPP 44). No details as yet but with Rob Stokes now heading up Planning, further weakening of the SEPP's already flawed protections are expected.

No wonder we accuse the NSW government of posing the greatest threat to the State's remaining koalas. As we well know, mining and road construction infrastructure approvals alone impose devastating impacts on koalas and their habitat. Friends of the Koala can't even attract State support for extending our regional Koala Care Centre. Grants awarded under the 2015 Community Building Partnership program were announced just before the New Year. We congratulate the Lismore electorate's 24 successful applicants, regretting we weren't one of them.

And where is the national recovery plan for the koala which was to replace the 2009-2014 National Koala Conservation and Management Strategy 12 months ago? The Agreed Statement communique issued from the July meeting of Commonwealth, state and territory Environment Ministers proclaimed it to be a priority action to be led by the Commonwealth. I suppose the "streamlined" (read downsized) public service could be part of the delay. We're not holding our breath.

Without a determined push from the community koalas in our region and throughout NSW will face a tough year – all the more reason to encourage individuals to commit to local koala protection activities. Harnessing and maximising good-will is the challenge and joining Friends of the Koala is one way to achieve that.

If you've got visitors over the holidays and looking for things to share with them, why not visit the Koala Care Centre in Lismore, where they can learn about our work and the fragile state of NSW's koalas? We welcome visitors at 10am and 2pm from Monday to Friday and at 10am on Saturdays. Please remember to book beforehand.

Until next time, happy koala spotting.

To report a koala in trouble, or a sighting (live or dead), please ring Friends of the Koala's 24/7 Rescue Hotline: (02) 6622-1233. For information about koalas, their food trees and how you can assist koala conservation visit: www.friendsofthekoala.org or email: info@friendsofthekoala.org or phone 6622-1233. To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat ring the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 13-15-55.

The Beatles and me

by Maxx Maxted

It is the most exhilarating feeling to be witness to mass self-hypnosis. I was on stage before The Beatles concert at the Cheltenham Odeon where I worked, and the energy of the crowd could even be felt through the heavy fire curtain. I had to remain above it all, otherwise I might have been swept up myself, but I was 21 and loved the Beatles. I had at the very least to find time to score John's autograph.

The compere had the unenviable job of first introducing the back up band, The Koobas, a Country/Rock/Blues band who had a modern feel, not a 'next best thing' sound, but very professional. They wore suits made from upholstery tapestry and white frill-necked shirts with frill cuffs. I thought they looked cool. Their music was politely listened to but the fans were there to see The Beatles, so they didn't get a fair go.

I went to check on the off-duty firemen and ambulance officers and check in with the office. My boss had gone to ground. The old timers had scuttled before the youth which is why 'The Revolution' we had all talked about would have been easy at the time, only nobody realised it. Society was beginning to indulge in the availability of fame. The age of 'Me' had begun and sod 'the big picture'.

At the appropriate time I went down to the dressing room to announce "Fifteen minutes please", to whoever opened the door, as I had seen them do on the movies. I didn't actually have any training

in this, it was off the top of my head but I thought it might be a good chance to get their autographs in my book.

I had of course graduated from the tatty pocket book with different coloured pages to my large bank book which I hoped looked more adult and perhaps more 'official'. The Short History of the English-Speaking Maxx was becoming an essential part of impressing interesting girls.

I knocked, John opened the door. I said the "fifteen minute" thing and then, as I was already in the room and cosy, asked him for his autograph. I hadn't thought past him but I supposed there might be a chance of getting them all.

"You what?" he asked. "Your autograph please." There's me in my monkey suit, bow tie and patent leather shoes, like a cross between a penguin and a junior James Bond impersonator. He looked me up and down. "Fuck off!" he told me. I did.

Fifteen minutes later I was standing at the back of the stage as they came up from the 'dungeons'. I was standing behind Ringo's floor tom which had the song list taped to the top, just like any other pub drummer. I felt sympathy for him then. I could relate to that. Just before the curtain went up John turned to him and asked, "Got yer two fooking left feet ready Richie?" using Ringo Starr's real name.

I could see that the glamour of fame was wearing thin already and they hadn't even hit America or Australia yet. I wondered how long the 'five minute wonder' might last.



The curtain rose, the tide of starling overdrive rushed in and became a tsunami that washed me off the stage in the pulsating crashing waves of screaming fans, their two fifty watt Vox amps providing fold-back. Ringo double-flammed the start and they were off. The screams overwhelmed the band sound. They could not possibly have enjoyed the experience. No wonder they stopped playing in public as soon as they could.

The second they had left the stage after the concert, they were out the back door into a closed car and speeding away to their hotel in another city.

The Beatles changed the face of popular music in a variety of ways. The recording techniques alone which they pioneered set the new standard under the guidance of George Martin who took over Parlophone Records, previously known for comedy records, and brought it kicking into the middle of the twentieth century.

The recordings done at Abbey Road Studios opened up the industry to the development of popular music. It became impossible to reproduce records on stage without expensive equipment, and Stadia became the norm for containing massive crowds. These developed into the multi-media spectacles we have now come to expect.

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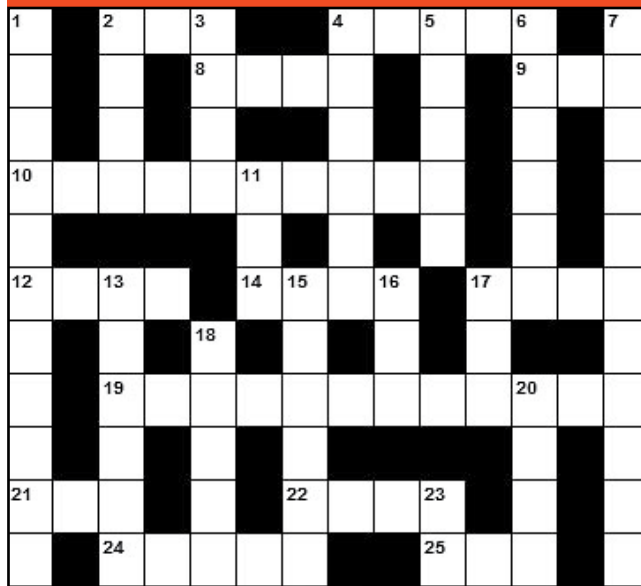
1. Name the Roman emperor who is generally credited with establishing Christianity as the official religion of the empire.
2. According to the Guinness World Records, what is the world's fastest production car (top speed)?
3. How many full octaves are spanned on a standard 88-key piano?
4. What is the name of Quentin Tarantino's new motion picture?
5. In which novel is Winston Smith the hapless protagonist?
6. By what name do we better know the painting *Arrangement in Grey and Black No.1*?
7. Shagreen is a type of leather usually made from what?
8. According to the Global Language Monitor how many words are there in the English vocabulary?
9. What colour is the Sun?
10. Who was the first person to fly solo around the world?

- Answers**
1. Constantine the Great. Christianism ended the totalitarianism, it seems to have been adopted as something of an instruction manual. persecution etc. Oh... wait a minute.
 2. Bugatti Veyron Super Sport. Clocks at 431km/h or 267 mph. The Blue Knob Road chagrin of the sharks. 8. 1,025,109.8. I can't find out where the 8 comes from. Anyone know?
 3. A standard piano spans seven full octaves. Elton John is thought to use 1/4 of one octave.
 4. The Hatful Eight. A bunch of bounty hunters trapped in a remote cabin by a blizzard. What could Remember him?
 5. George Orwell's 1984. Written as a critique of totalitarianism, it seems to have been adopted as something of an instruction manual. persecution etc. Oh... wait a minute.
 6. Whistler's Mother. It rolls off the tongue a bit more easily.
 7. It's usually made from shark skin. Much to the chagrin of the sharks. 8. 1,025,109.8. I can't find out where the 8 comes from. Anyone know?
 9. It's actually white.
 10. Who was the first person to fly solo around the world?

Nimbin Crossword

2016-1

by Sunic



Across

2. (and 21 across, 25 across) Cuban mambo-style dance (3,3,3)
4. Succulents
8. (and 9 across, 24 across) First accommodation in town, from Lismore (4,3,5)
9. See 8 across.
10. Melodic passage (for example in a rock song) often featuring too much high E (6,4)
12. Spheres
14. Wizard
17. Liquid asset
19. For example, 10 across? Acting as the means
21. See 2 across.
22. Whale chasing fanatic
24. See 8 across.
25. See 2 across.

Down

1. Value? (4,3,4)

2. Colombian city, headquarters of the Medellin cartel's main rival
3. Indian city, site of the Taj Mahal
4. Man/machine
5. Box drum
6. American lizard
7. Owner or farmer on a modest piece of land
11. Cane alcohol
13. Deepest lake (holds 20% of the world's fresh water)
15. Arteries (the main one in humans)
16. Tree, ravaged middle of last century by beetle-born disease
17. Scam
18. Requested
20. Saltwater mackerel species
23. Dates earlier than 1 AD

Solution: Page 29

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Tomatoes: A humble love story

by Terrence Read

The noble tomato. Is it a fruit? Is it a vegetable? Does it really matter?

Tomatoes are delicious, as a fruit or a vegetable, raw, fried, baked, stewed, simmered or roasted. As a native species to North America, tomatoes have only been under European supervision for the past five hundred years or so.

As a North American, I can honestly state that I love tomatoes. The endless streams of those red ripe gems in the summertime in Canada is reminiscent of the sudden influx of bananas and mangoes here in Nimbin.

That being said, we Canadians have several recipes to preserve tomatoes, one of which is Sweet and Sour Tomatoes, a staple in most French Canadian pantries. The preservatives used are simple: sugar, vinegar and salt. The flavourings are rurally inspired, but can be tweaked to your liking.

An honest portrayal of an authentic Sweet and Sour Tomato is as follows:

Sweet and Sour Tomatoes Ingredients

- 1 kg tomatoes (Very ripe and ready to burst. Use green tomatoes to make Sweet and Sour Green Tomatoes)
- 350g brown sugar (substitutes include: caster sugar, honey, agave syrup, raw sugar)
- 2 tbsp "Black Strap" molasses (substitutes include: treacle syrup/golden syrup)
- 350g malt vinegar (substitutes include: white vinegar, brown vinegar, apple cider vinegar)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp yellow mustard seed,



- crushed
- 1 tsp coriander seed, crushed
- ½ tsp celery seed
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- ½ tsp ground mace (nutmeg also works very well)
- 1 tbsps salt
- 1 splash of brandy or Canadian whisky

Method

Combine all the ingredients in a non-reactive bowl or pot. Let the mixture soak for several hours before cooking if you can. Overnight in the fridge is best.

Once marinated, slowly heat the mixture to the boiling point. The sugar should be completely dissolved once boiling. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15-20 minutes, longer if you desire a deeper tomato flavour, shorter if you desire a sharper "pickle" flavour.

Once the mix is cool, transfer to sterilised jars that are ready to be sealed and pasteurised. Otherwise, transfer to freezer-safe containers and store in the freezer, or in the fridge for up to one week.

Use on grilled meats and fish, pies, quiches, hamburgers, pastries, and baked vegetables. Delicious hot or cold, day or night, Sweet and Sour Tomatoes, gotta love them.

THE IMBIBERS ARK

L'absinthe

La Fée Verte (The Green Faerie)

A testament according to Culpeper

Myth and reality on matters of fun, pleasure and a beautiful indulgence. "Doing the Faerie at Five". In defence of a 'pastic' or so with real comrades, allowing the gracious lady to encourage in us the whetting of the mind.

The unremarkable world of authority seldom gets it right, and on the matter of what we want and what we need and in the case of "The Faerie", they fucked up in grand way. The 'Nanny-state' stirred up by the thoroughly boring, bourgeois 'dries' of the prohibition mob, had the good faerie's wonderful wings clipped. They, together with a few fifth columnist demi-mode rats of the 'No-fun' tribe had her declared a mongrel whore, responsible in general societal degeneration of the French and their country cousins over the waves in good-old, god-pure, Yankee-land. They had the gracious lady banned universally with a few notable exceptions, namely the Czechs. They went for the dear lady world-wide, leaving her welfare to the idiocy of the less than bright do-good-gov-techo-cops of the impurist sort and thought.

Science is always capable of blow-back when dolts are found to have been holding the reins. The Faerie is re-launched and soaring over a world that badly needs a whole lot more fun and more so in the light of the current 'food-porn' and 'bomb-every-soul' epidemic!

Time to put the little lady over the sugar and ice and get down to a whole lot more politics in the pub at five. Peace needs a bit of lubrication, as does the fabric of our political debate. Corporation beer is piss weak and little comes of its quaffing. Absinthe fuelled many manifestations and changes during the 19th century, and can do it again.

It's in the method of imbibing that fun is ignited. The Faerie needs attention. She has style and is some demanding gal. Booze boffins have been dallying with her make-up for a couple of centuries, all

the while taking wise council from the herbal fraternity. Doing the Faerie is a ritual thing: special lump sugars, spoons of ornate design, serving paraphernalia, water purity and an Art Nouveau attention to design and consciousness all contributes to an end of work-day frolic. Anyway she's back and giving a lift to the habitués of the glass.

Now science, extra-handed with new tools, have found out she really is a genius. Optimistic cannabis-heads read the wrong science and got her in trouble again when they thought they smelt another 'high-cousin' – it turned out not to be the case. Meschler and Howlett determined that the active herbal ingredient was NOT active in the cannabinoid receptor and that in being a GABA moderator, it was an active agent together with ethanol (booze) that appears to be a stimulator and clarifier of thought. The 'bans' had been previously based on the values of Thujone, accumulated in the distillation process. The fact is they couldn't measure the concentrations!

New analysis of remnant historical samples proves indisputably that the wowsers got it wrong. The negative effects of wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*) and its ketone, Thujone, have been overstated. In fact being an agonist of GABA receptors, increasing the amount of GABA, can have relaxing, anti-anxiety and anti-convulsive qualities.

Most of the societal boozing issues were in fact due to the amount of alcohol that was being imbibed. Absinthe is usually delivered in a high alcohol solution, above 65%, due to the desire on the part of the chemists to preserve the green chlorophyll of the wormwood and other botanicals. When diluted properly, 8:1 with water and ice, it has about the strength of table wine.

Medicine and activists, two in particular, Managuan and Emory (1860?) were worried that Absinthe appeared to be an epilepsy instigator. It is, but not in normal booze concentrations. However, they managed to lobby for a ban, even suggesting that Absinthism was hereditary!



Mangan was a stickler for the notion that humanity (and the French in particular) was "going to the dogs". A very WASP position in a predominately Catholic France! The bans swept world-wide and the fennel-infused Pernod 45 grabbed the 'Pastic' market, to the mob that didn't do 'Bolly' and 'vin de table', that is. In Greece and the Balkans, Ouzo did the trick, for the tribes that boozed! The rest got on with Retsina and/or Hash.

The Faerie has shaken prohibition generally world-wide and re-flashed her charms to those who refuse to be gormless, again with the notable exception of our godly hominoids (?) that occupy the Excited States. The Bosch likewise, still ban it. Seems it's illegal to sell it in its useful booze form, though it appears it's not a criminal offence to have its prime ingredient in your possession.

Some would take issue with this position. The kill-joys may need to be put in their place with a good dose of Wowsers-tax! All in slight immoderation being the catch-cry of the gay at heart. Help redress the green lady's lacy wings and do yourself a favour, pour the herby green hooch and take the plunge into sanity! Culpeper is playing in his cauldrons and has done his bit towards the Faerie's revival. He's just banged up a Calderan recipe.

"Anti-alcoholics are the unfortunates enslaved to water, stuff lots of nasties in and have imposed mean tasks on it, like cleaning and being abused by wowsers. Absinthe corrects these imposed disorderly way of water and frees it from the miserable attention of non-drinkers." – Culpeper 1/2016

The beakers await! Want to join me in the fun? Tell me if you'd like to be part of a Green Faerie Apothecary and The Calderan Ginnery!

botanist@australiainmail.com

Café Blue Knob's mission

Although the café at Blue Knob is a business, it's more of a community hub and place for connections, rather than a high traffic café where heaps of volumes of food go anonymously out.

So what is the mission of this little beautiful vintage style café tucked under Blue Knob Mountain?

For owner Joline, and staff it is important that visitors and regulars feel at home and know that the food they receive is delicious, healthy and compatible with what their body actually needs.

"We are always flexible and open to your needs; a place where you really know what you get. So if you want your organic eggs fried in coconut oil, well, we do that for you.

"If you want gluten free buckwheat pancakes rather than white flour waffles, well, that we will do too, because your health and satisfaction, and the value of

not making any compromises on your health and lifestyle – while eating out – is just as important to us as it is to you," chef Joline explains.

"Our path is to actually make that difference everyone is talking about: to be extraordinary in taste, quality and provide true health benefits. It is my personal triumph if customers and their bodies are truly happy with their meal and therefore come back and bring their friends and family. I wouldn't want it any other way!"

So gluten free, paleo, vegan and vegetarian dishes are celebrated and freshly cooked for any dietary needs and desires.

This month's Communicake free talk is 'Living well and managing Diabetes type 1'. See Lucas' article at right.

As well as continuing the popular Communicake free talks, other ideas for this year include continental cooking

classes, raw food vegan lunch extravaganzas, cooking opportunities for children in the holidays, and exclusive women's nights

Schedule for January

- Holiday break until 14th January, except for Saturday 9th January.
- Sunday 24th January 12.30pm, Communicake free talk 'Living well with and managing Diabetes type1' with Lucas Verheist, MRACI – free.
- Sunday 31st January 12.30pm 'Rawlicious: Raw & Vegan Extravaganza' Café Blue Knob Raw Food Lunch Safari (bookings required) – \$45 per head, limited seats.

The Café is open for group bookings and functions in and outside business hours, as well as for evenings. It caters from 8 to 50 people and offers vegan, vegetarian, meat, paleo, raw or gluten-free choices

on request. Please enquire about the catering options for your engagement, wedding, birthday, anniversary or other beautiful celebrations.

Phone for bookings on (02) 6689-7449 or 0416-616-804.

Café Blue Knob Recipe

Vegan Leek Onion Mustard Dip/Sauce

Ingredients

- 3-4 leeks stems, thinly sliced and washed
- 2 onions, diced or sliced
- 2-3 tbsps coconut oil
- ½ c up water readied if desired
- 1 heaped tbsps organic vegetable broth powder (vegan)
- Salt/white pepper to taste
- 1-2 tbsps mild mustard (German mustard, or Dijon)
- 1-2 tbsps extra virgin olive oil
- crusty bread to serve

Method

Heat coconut oil on medium heat in large pan, then add



Blood Orange Cheesecake High Tea

leek, stir occasionally for 5 minutes to soften.

Mix in onions and stir for another 15-20 minutes. One can add a little water to help soften the vegetables if all coconut oil is already absorbed (or add more oil; the food will heat up more though and lose nutrition, but caramelise more easily.)

Once it is all soft and translucent and to the degree of a caramelisation you like, add the vegetable broth powder, pepper and salt to your taste and stir

Transfer all vegetables to a good blender (or use stick

blender) and blend with the mustard and some drizzle of olive oil (add more water if it's getting too thick), then let it cool down before pouring it into a well-sealing container.

Eat right away, still warm with served crusty sourdough bread, corn chips or vegetable sticks (cold is fine too, of course).

This dip lasts for five-six days in the fridge and freezes well for later occasions.

For any questions or more info, phone Joline on 0416-616-804 or (02) 6689-7449.

Birth and Beyond

by Kirrah Holborn

Opening to Birth

Pregnancy usually lasts around 9-10 months, and in that time much can be done to physically prepare for the opening needed for birth. Our modern lifestyles often mean we are doing a lot of sitting down (driving cars, sitting at a computer, watching TV etc) and this can cause tight muscles and ligaments and can lead to the baby settling into a less than ideal position in the womb.

With a little planning and an understanding of the way our bodies work, we can do a lot to help our bodies open and soften, enabling labour to be shorter and easier!

Our bodies are designed for birth

Humans have been giving birth for thousands of years. Our bodies have an innate wisdom. We don't have to think about growing a baby's heart, lungs and limbs, and yet it happens. As the pregnancy progresses, women's bodies naturally prepare for birth by softening the hips and loosening ligaments.

Sometimes, our bodies are tight on one side and too loose on the other. Gail Tully from Spinning Babies is passionate about teaching parents how to bring balance to your body to help birth progress more smoothly. You can learn about daily exercises that can help tight muscles to lengthen and soften and ultimately make more space for the baby to rotate and move through your

pelvis. There is a wealth of knowledge on the website: www.spinningbabies.com about the anatomy of your pelvis, baby's positioning and how to bring more balance to your body in preparation for birth.

Did you know babies need to rotate to fit through the pelvis?

When I teach antenatal classes, many parents-to-be are surprised to learn that babies have quite the journey to make from womb to world. The mother needs to dilate her cervix, and the baby has to navigate her womb and rotate head, shoulders and body through some bony landmarks in her pelvis.

The most ideal position for the baby to be in is head down with their back towards the mother's left side or front. This position helps the baby to settle into the pelvis and means there is less rotation needed to fit through. It's helpful if the baby has his/her chin tucked as this makes the head seem smaller and it makes it easier to rotate and descend.

What kind of activities are good to help fetal positioning?

Being aware of your posture is helpful at any time in your pregnancy but becomes more crucial as baby gets bigger. Gail Tully says her 'observations show that by 31 weeks, most first-time babies are in position'.

The best idea is to stay active in your pregnancy and include daily walks, yoga, squatting and getting professional bodywork (chiropractics, osteopathy,



Gail Tully and Kirrah Holborn

craniosacral therapy and massage) into your self care. Also, make yourself comfortable when you sleep by using pillows to support your knee and ankle and help your hips to stay balanced.

Also, it's good if partners/friends can learn some massage skills to help release tension in your hips and buttocks. I absolutely love the 'daily essentials' downloadable yoga sequence from the Spinning Babies website. It has great suggestions for bringing balance to your body and mind during pregnancy.

Kirrah Holborn provides pregnancy, birth and postpartum support in the Northern Rivers. She facilitates Birthing From Within antenatal classes, gives nurturing pregnancy massages and provides placenta encapsulation services. For the chance to win a pregnancy massage, text your name and email to 0429-308-851 or visit: www.traditionalwisdom.com.au

Diet and diabetes

by Lucas Verhelst

If you have diabetes or are concerned about developing it, this article could change the course of your life.

I was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes in 1988. At that time, I became a member of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute, where I focussed my skills on diabetes management. Conventional wisdom said diabetes is a progressive disease with no cure, that leads to blindness, kidney disease and amputations. I investigated what my colleagues were doing in other countries with alternative therapies.

I found I was not alone. Close to 1 million Australians have been diagnosed with diabetes. In 2013 Type 2 diabetes claimed 1,964 lives and juvenile 323. Complications include, but are not limited to: cardiovascular, eye and kidney disease, nerve damage, mobility problems, foot, oral and pregnancy complications, amputations and death. There is also the depression and anxiety of dealing with a progressive disease constantly reminding you of its presence with excessive thirst, urination and itchy skin.

Here is what is supposed to happen:

Food is broken down into glucose for our cells to use for fuel. Insulin, a hormone made in the pancreas,

moves the glucose into the cells for use. People with type 2 diabetes, the most common type, generally have enough insulin but their cells become resistant to it, leaving too much glucose in the bloodstream. High blood glucose causes ketosis, which can lead to diabetic coma and eventually death. Without insulin the only option the body has for removing glucose is to store it as fatty tissue, resulting in obesity. By maintaining a strict diet and exercise, type 2 diabetics can maintain some control over their disease.

Juvenile diabetics (Type 1) produce little or no insulin, which needs to be injected. The cause remains elusive but several studies have implicated cow's milk consumption during pregnancy as a suspect. Juvenile diabetics need to inject their insulin and getting the balance between dosage, activity and food is difficult -mistakes can prove fatal. They inject around four times a day and test their sugars twice that to make sure the balance is correct.

With little room for error, diabetic diets call for portion control, carbohydrate limits, and for those overweight, calorie restrictions. In 2006 Dr Neal Barnard MD tried a new approach, what if it wasn't the carbohydrates but dietary fats causing the problem? Amounts of



vegetables, grains, fruits, and legumes were unlimited but all fats and oils were removed. A fat-free diet group was compared to a control group that followed the more traditional approach of calorie and portion control. After 22 weeks the study found the fat-free group had improved their hemoglobin A1C, were able to reduce their diabetes medication and had lost more weight than the control group. The fat-free group also had decreases in cholesterol levels compared with the control group.

For the last 20 years I have closely monitored and maintained my health according to the accepted advice of the Australian Diabetes Association. But even with a restricted calorie diet and walking 10km a day I gained 40kg. By going fat-free I finally lost weight and gained muscle, stamina and hope. Before going fat-free I would drink a litre of sweetened sports drink for my exercise routine, allowing 100 sit-ups, 40 push-ups and fly-lift 20kg. After going fat-free there was no need for anything more than a balanced breakfast to do 500

sit-ups, 150 push-ups and 30kg fly-lifts.

The meal plan removes meat and dairy leaving 4 food groups to include for each meal, fruit, legumes, vegetables and wholegrains. Legumes such as beans, peas, lentils, tofu and tempeh provide you with the protein you need. Dark green leafy vegetables contain all the essential nutrients you need in a readily digestible form. Wholegrains such as corn, millet, barley, buckwheat and brown rice are included. Blending a handful of baby spinach, muesli, mango and soymilk is one of the easiest ways to get all four groups into a delicious, easy breakfast.

Be aware that a change in diet can produce big results, more energy and greater mobility, but there is a risk that low blood sugar can occur.

See your health care provider before making any changes to your diet. If you want to find out more I will be giving a free talk 'Communicake - How to manage to be a diabetic' at the Café Blue Knob on Sunday 24th January at 12.30pm.

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