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Australia's pot culture explored in doco

by Digby Hildreth

As Australia's "cannabis capital", Nimbin is one of the stars of the documentary *Marijuana Australiana*, which features the MardiGrass, growers, bush pharmacists, medicinal breeders and their patients and talking heads on both sides of the debate.

It has its world premiere at the Byron Bay Film Festival on Friday 21st October at 7.30pm at Byron Community Centre.

Cannabis is a subject that polarises people and provokes extreme claims from both sides of the debate: there's the "cannabis cures cancer" crew on one side, and the reefer madness mob on the other.

But the more the prohibitionists shriek, the more their voices are lost in the blue haze rising off the two million or so Australians who like to spark up on a regular basis.

Indeed, as one observer in Richard Baron's documentary *Marijuana Australiana* notes, the warnings to the youth of his era – the 60s – about this "evil sex drug" had the teens piling into their cars and heading off to find some in the wild plantations of the Hunter Valley, which they soon deforested.

But the consequences of the prohibitionist stance – formalised and funded as part of the war on drugs – are no laughing matter.

The antis are given their fair share of screen time. It's just that the interviews with the heads, home pharmacists and horticulturalists are more eye-opening and entertaining than those with the director of the National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre Institute, Prof Jan Copeland, and others opposed to legalisation, including senior police.

And, increasingly, there is an irresistible call for legalisation coming from the parents of epileptic children whose 30-a-day seizures have been stopped by doses of medical cannabis, cancer sufferers whose lives are made bearable, and PTSD-stricken veterans who say it is saving them from alcoholism and suicide.

Baron's purpose with the film was "to demystify cannabis as a medicine and some of the issues around recreational use ... to make it clear that it's an organic herbal medicine and have viewers make that leap in their minds: 'It's just a plant'."

But, *Marijuana Australiana* isn't a pro-pot polemic or a piece of dreary agit-prop. Its purpose may be serious but it is deftly handled, and there's plenty of fun, courtesy of the anarchic energy of Nimbin MardiGrass and its dancing Ganja Fairies – and the wry soundtrack of songs which serenade the Faeries and other peculiarities of the weed world. The title song, 'Nimbin Girls' and 'Goin' Hydro' are all examples of the finest, funniest Aussie vernacular.

The growers, the dedicated, determinedly larrikin producers like bush doctor Tony Bower, are the memorable voices here: they adore their plants, take pride in their product and, tellingly, are benevolent, barely making a living.

They are true believers, maverick scientists whose product is "made with love and motivated by compassion," as Baron notes.

Their care and connoisseurship are astonishing – and so is their courage. Most have seen the inside of a prison and have no wish to return: but they carry on, quietly defiant.

Baron is full of admiration: "One



Stills from the new film 'Marijuana Australiana'



breeder was focussed on aromas and tastes and was breeding out effects like dry mouth. It's to that granular level.

"There are illicit breeders who have even been instrumental in breeding cannabidiol (CBD) back into cannabis, to offset the psychotropic effects of THC and offer other health benefits," he says.

"It's not a Big Pharma innovation. None of this is addressed in the current debate, which is obsessed with how to sanitise it, and put it in the same system as the synthetic stuff."

People around Nimbin are experts in cannabis, the keepers of the knowledge, notes Nimbin identity Michael

Balderstone, but "no one has come here to ask us about it".

Baron's background is in audio production, then sound design for film. He cut his teeth as a filmmaker with Lafranchi's Memorial Discotheque in his last semester at Sydney's University of Technology.

He's embarrassed by the fledgling work now and just wants to get his new "rambunctious" creation in front of as many eyeballs as possible.

"I've been intimately involved with this story. A bit too closely perhaps... It's extremely personal to me. It's my baby and it's time to deliver it to the world."



The Byron Bay Film Festival includes other explorations of alternative pharmacology, most notably *Going Furthur* – the destination of the bus that took Ken Kesey and his LSD inspired Merry Pranksters across America in the 60s, spreading the word about altered states and alarming the uptight citizenry.

Fifty years on from those first trips, Kesey's son Zane took the Furthur bus – and his father's legacy – back on the road, for its longest running tour in history.

Recruiting new pranksters along the way, the Furthur crew travelled more than 15,000 miles in 75 days, visiting music festivals, tribal gatherings and national landmarks to re-establish The Bus as a symbol of radical self-expression and cultural revolution.

Through archive footage and more than 400 hours of film, we explore the roots of the early 60s culture and how the mission of those first few freaky idealists influenced a new generation.

Going Furthur and *Going Furthur with Burning Man* screen at the Brunswick Heads Picture House on Sunday, 16th October at 7pm and at the Byron Bay Community Centre on Wednesday, 19th October at 7.30pm.

Director/producer Lindsay Kent will be in attendance.

Truth the key to cannabis law reform

Drugwar Diary
by Michael Balderstone

I'm not talking about God anymore, people think you're nuts. And Love means Hollywood to most people, so Truth is what we can all agree on, surely!

Anxiety and depression are rampant, it seems. Like half the population, we are told. Was it always so and people just gritted their teeth and kept working? And now we've set the bar so high any pain or suffering is unacceptable, diagnosed and treated? Pain is there to make us think, surely. Taking a pill to dull it may mean you never resolve the issue. The body sends pain signals to tell you something's wrong, no?

Weed definitely changes your mind and dulls the pain. But the detachment it gives, like getting your head above water for a breath when you are struggling in the deep, helps people to think things through.

How much of today's anxiety is a result of the pressures in this insane materialistic society where we are supposed to pair off as couples and compete with each other to see who can collect the most stuff? The real life monopoly game.

I've been depressed heaps. For weeks at a time. For years on end when my children disappeared. In the end it's about war, I decided. Do you believe in war as a solution,

or not? And doesn't force create resistance just by its very being anyway?

No question about it, there is a drug war raging all around us, even if you personally don't realise it. And it's expanding and exploding all over the planet these days. 700,000 ice addicts have surrendered for rehab in the Phillipines after the Prez ordered the police to start killing dealers willy nilly. In Oz we're taking refugees now from Central America fleeing the drug cartels.

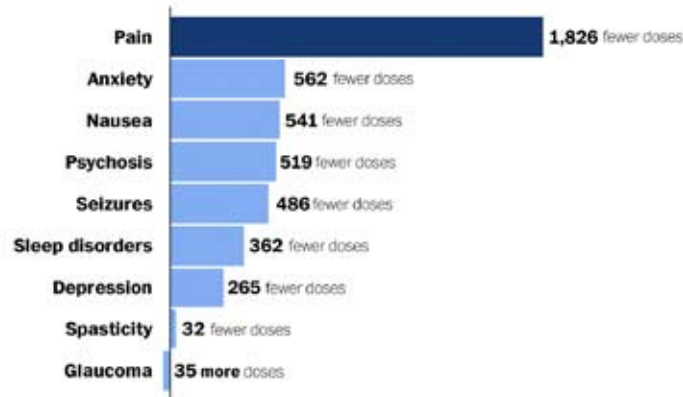
Of course drug use is really a health issue, people just trying to enjoy their day, dulling pain and pushing aside troublesome thoughts. How can it still be a crime in these educated times? Money, power and money seems to be the answer.

Big Pharma's entire wealth is built on controlling what medicines people are allowed to use. It's the nature of this monopoly game to want just that, a monopoly. That's how you maximise profit. And that's why all the traditional favorite plants that relieved pain are now illegal, and billions are spent every month fighting to keep their use suppressed.

Trying to get pain-free is often stronger than the game. Some people in pain sell everything they collected and worked their life for, trying to buy their way to pain-free. People in pain are vulnerable. It's easy to empty their

Fewer pills prescribed in medical pot states

Difference between annual drug doses prescribed per physician in medical marijuana states, and in states without medical marijuana laws, by drug category



WAPO.ST/WONKBLOG

Source: Bradford and Bradford, Health Affairs, July 2016

pockets with promises of relief. No wonder doctors are demi-gods. Meanwhile, nature has all these amazing plants which do the trick so efficiently. Stuff you can grow in your backyard. Stuff our ancestors knew about.

The good news is that it's coming back. Truth can't help itself from coming to the surface and the more we learn about the plant world and how destructive greed is, and force, the sooner we'll be enjoying life more. And then it'll make sense, if it isn't now!

Legalising cannabis is starting to scare the pants off Big Pharma in America. A father and daughter research team has done the numbers on the 17 states with a medical marijuana law in place by

2013. The average doctor in these states prescribed 265 fewer doses of antidepressants each year, 486 fewer doses of seizure medication, 541 fewer anti-nausea doses and 562 fewer doses of anti-anxiety medication. The typical physician in a medical marijuana state prescribed 1,826 fewer doses of painkillers in a given year.

Abuse of powerful prescription painkillers called opioids costs the U.S. economy \$78.5 billion a year, according to a new government study. More than 40 Americans die each day from overdoses involving prescription opioids. Families and communities continue to be devastated by the epidemic and the rising cost is also a tremendous burden for the health care system.

About half the planets legal opium to make these meds is grown in Australia, mostly Tasmania. The Taliban probably grows more illegally to fund their war against our soldiers in their country.

As these overdose death numbers, now 40 a day, climbed steadily during the past decade, a loose network of pharmaceutical companies and allied groups, members of the little-known Pain Care Forum dwarfed even the powerful gun lobby in political spending trying to manipulate legislation. They are at the forefront of opposition to marijuana law reform, and their members contributed to more than 8,500 candidates across America, according to an analysis by the Associated Press and the Center for Public Integrity. Some of those public officials supported or killed key opioid legislation.

Encouraging truth to the surface, Nimbins HEMP Embassy will be holding another Medication Workshop in the village hall on Saturday 22nd October from 11am. It's a gathering of medical cannabis users and healers, and speakers include Dr Pot, Andrew Katelaris, Tony Bower, Andrew Kavasilas, Ellen Jones, Frances Hood, Heather McDonald, Chris Harris, Radic AI and local solicitor Steve Bolt with legal advice. Everyone is welcome, donations appreciated and healthy delicious hemp seed food available.

The outback has been subdivided

Ironically yours
by Dionne May

Over two thousand kilometres have sped under my feet since we packed the ute last Wednesday and headed west to Uluru. Heavy winter rains and the last spring downfall has momentarily quenched the dry outback and a palette of magenta, gold, red, white and yellow delicate desert wild flowers and green and grey desert shrubs, paints a mighty landscape. Mind, heart and soul feels at once peaceful and free... the ecstasy of the outback and the balm to soothe a weary spirit.

We crossed from Walgett to Bourke, up to Cunnamulla (Fella) and Thargaminda where the road was blocked by flood waters despite a clear blue sky. A council truck was standing by to load us on and take us across the river... free of charge! At Innaminka we began the Strezeleki trek, which was mostly deserted due to the recent rains, and began an easy, dust-free ride across the colour-strewn Strezeleki Desert.

The first night bush camp on red red soil under that enormous Australian outback sky, full of quiet,



Santos operations in the Cooper Basin
Photo courtesy: drillingcontractor.org

surrounded by infinite space. We are hundreds of kilometres from anyone... except Santos.

Hidden out here, way off the beaten track, their drilling stations litter the skyline. An ominous quiet replaces serenity when you see new roads leading off the main road at about five kilometre intervals in both directions for hundreds of kilometres. The desert has been effectively "subdivided" with new street signs, all clearly marked "no access to the public".

That's us Australia! The outback has been fenced in. The huge empty trucks start to pass us the next day. Thundering past, red clouds of dust seen 20 kms in the distance, no nod, no wave... these guys are the human face of drilling Australia gone mad.

Money fuels their engines, pockets and egos... what chance has Mother Nature got, controlled by such

mania and destruction?

At Lyndhurst, population twelve, we headed north again on the famous Oodnadattata trek. Feeling adventurous, we cut west from Williams Creek to pass behind the mighty Flinders Ranges in the distance on to the opal mining town of Coober Pedy. A lunar landscape of dream-drenched mounds left from thousands of opal fossickers, past and present.

Homes are underground to escape the most ferocious summer heat and are catacombed across the region. Huge rock drillers and hoppers dot the horizon. As we slept in Riba's underground rooms, the chilly desert night winds blew high above our burrow of twenty-seven degrees.

Already the families, old couple and characters we have met here have inspired and reawaken my spirit. The dry air

creating a clarity of mind, a readiness to open to new experiences and challenges.

Sitting here now in Alice Springs, the unseasonal rains continue as I turn my mind to my journey.

Here in Alice my grandfather made his name and stamped his character indelibly on this world. Les May, a tall gentle giant of a man, remembered for his tall stetson hat and enormous hands that grew old and worn building the dingo proof fence across some of the most remote areas of Australia.

Immortalised in 'The Ballad of Les May', I've come in search of his memory. Heavittree Gully Pub was the old guy's drinking hole and on the wall is his photo and the old stetson hat in a glass display case. The barman serves Ant and I a VB each - Les's drink of choice - and a couple of old timers begin to reminisce.

I'm sitting in the shadow of his memories. Australian legend, long gone but never forgotten... I hope we can save Australia from drilling so we have a chance and an environment to continue creating legends like my grandfather.

HEMP HEADLINES

Marijuana effects on driving performance almost zero, reveals study [We are Anonymous]

According to the DEA, marijuana has high abuse potential; no medical use; severe safety concerns; and that there is no available scientific research to prove otherwise. In this article, we are looking at the so-called severe safety concerns the DEA has associated with marijuana. Police officials in charge of road traffic regulation in the United States, have been made to believe that drivers who use marijuana, drive dangerously. They assume out of ignorance that since marijuana is psychoactive, it severely impairs the performance of users while driving under its influence. Many of the country's marijuana users have suffered from harassments and brutalities from the police, simply because they had taken marijuana while operating a vehicle. However, there is a new study proving that marijuana has almost no impairment on the performance of users who drive under its influence. The study was conducted by researchers at the University of Iowa's National Advanced Driving Simulator. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Institute of Drug Abuse, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy sponsored the study.

Man 'tried to dump 100kg of cannabis' at recycling centre, court hears [ABC]

A Sydney man charged after allegedly trying to dump 100 kilograms of cannabis stalks and leaves at a Canberra recycling centre last month has been refused bail in the ACT Magistrates Court. Dac Ho, 55, was caught by police after a tip-off from the public, and was initially charged with possession of a prohibited substance. Today his lawyer has indicated he would plead not guilty to all charges, including three new charges of being involved in trafficking and cultivating cannabis as well as trying to destroy evidence. Police said they were investigating around 20 large bags of cannabis that were left at the Mitchell centre in August, when Ho returned with a second load.

'Cannabis tasting expert' is a job title at this company [indy100]

Many fine diners will be familiar with the concept of a wine sommelier, who is there to help your tastebuds get the most out of a meal with some expertly selected wine. Now, the role of sommelier has infiltrated new realms of the dining experience: cannabis. Yes, that's right, people are about to get snooty with their 'essences' and 'undertones' about weed. A cannabis tour and event company based in Colorado, United States, is offering a three-course meal with wine, food and cannabis.

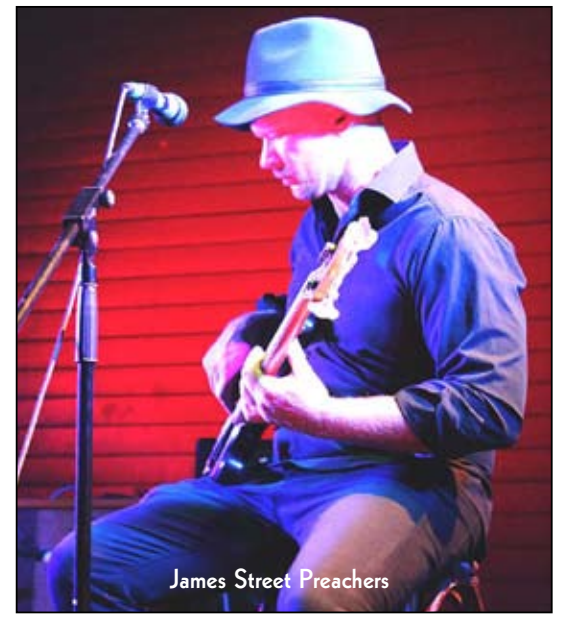
For more Hemp Headlines, go to: hempembassy.net



Mitch Power



Ben Wilson



James Street Preachers

Nimbin Roots Festival 2016

by Melissa Williamson + photos

The first Nimbin Roots Festival (in this incarnation of: Americana, Blues, Alt Country, Australiana and Traditional music), was held over the weekend of 17th and 18th September. And what a fantastic, highly enjoyable weekend of music it was.

Held over four venues within Nimbin, the vibrant but cruisey vibes were spread throughout the village. The Phoenix Rising Cafe, Nimbin Bush Theatre, School of Arts, and Nimbin Bowlo providing both inside and outside venues for the relaxed, appreciative crowds. A diverse (age and range) crowd attended from all over Australia – all there for one reason, to enjoy some great music.

Even though a number of the 50+ acts were unknown names to many, by the end of the weekend all agreed that all the music was of a really high calibre. You weren't going to be disappointed whoever

you stumbled across (always part of festival enjoyment – discovering some new talent that hasn't crossed your radar before). The artists (solo, duos, bands) also appeared to enjoy the festival as much as the punters.

Particular highlights (of those I saw) included local area acts: Sarah Stando and Jolanda Moyle from Nimbin; Lismore's Ben Wilson and Band, Jimmy Willing and Jim-Bob, and Reilly Fitzalan; Murwillumbah's Jimmy Dowling; Mullum's Walrus and The Carpenter; Byron's Dinkum Bohos; and Wil Massey from Repentance Creek. Other acts from further afield that impressed, and to keep your ears open for, were: Melbourne's Abbie Cardwell; NSW South Coast's Paul Greene; Canberra's Den Hanrahan; Melbourne's Mitch Power; NSW mid-North coasters Galleri; Brisbane's Sian Evans; and Sydney's Swamp Fat Jangles (this quirky, energetic band perhaps my top pick).

The summation of the festival was the inaugural ARMA (Australian Roots Music Awards) gala concert held at the Bush Theatre. The winners being Jeff Gibson for both Best Song and Best Album; and Alison Forbes for Best EP.

A big thank you must go out to the Nimbin businesses and local workers who provided (most with little preparatory communication about what to expect) food and other services so well for the large number of festival visitors over the weekend. This lack of communication with the Nimbin community in general was perhaps a bit of a sticking point that ruffled a few feathers locally. Probably a good idea for the village that's hosting an event to feel informed and included, so that all feel like it's 'their' festival, and not just the Nimbin name that's being used.

This was the first year of the event though, and there's always wrinkles to iron out, things that can be done better next time around... and I'm



Paddy Mchugh



Abbie Cardwell

sure the organisers will ensure that next year's festival is a more Nimbin-informed and inclusive event, so that locals and visitors alike can enjoy what is sure to be another excellent weekend of music, that I for one will be very much looking forward to. And at the end of the day, that is after all what it's all about... music – the playing of, the sharing of, the enjoyment of.

See you next year, mark it in your festival diary now. Next year's Nimbin Roots Festival will include an additional day and be held on 15th, 16th and 17th September 2017. Very early bird tickets are available now (special price 'til 31st October), and artist applications will be open at the end of October. For more information and bookings go to: www.nrfest.com



Sarah & Jolanda



Dinkum Bohos



Jim-Bob: Jimmy Willing & Bob Ramsey



The Moon Hounds

From the organiser: "The music, weather, businesses and the locals all turned it on for the roots festival. This enabled the event to attract a really nice crowd of visitors and together it all mashed together to create a really good festival and overall good feeling in the town. We're really grateful for this result to everyone that was involved. That's what we were hoping for most of all. I believe the people that visited, took away something that will remind them to come back and I hope the locals are left with and reminded of a good spirit and are inspired to keep it alive." – Lou Bradley



Gareth with Sian Evans



Swamp Fat Jangles

Bentley film premiere for Byron fest

by Digby Hildreth

Among the many inspiring environmental films showing at Byron Bay Film Festival this month, *The Bentley Effect* has perhaps the most relevance to the Northern Rivers community – the seedbed of the social movement that blossomed over a few years to halt the incursion of CSG exploration into the region.

But the film has significance nationally and internationally: wherever unconventional gas mining is threatening to set up shop.

Made by Alstonville father Brendan Shoebridge, *The Bentley Effect* will have its world premiere in Byron Bay, where it will have a profound resonance for the many thousands of ordinary men and women who went to great – and creative – lengths to stand up to the corporate-driven and government-backed invasion.

The film is primarily a celebration of that high-spirited – and victorious – demonstration of people power. It is a testimony to their courage and creativity, and to what it cost in blood, sweat and tears.

It is full of suspense and drama, as the overwhelming force used by police at Glenugie and Doubtful Creek makes it seem as if resistance is futile and the country will be vandalised by the mining interests that are wilfully deaf to the community's wishes.

The film features talking heads: sensible, well-informed down-to-earth individuals outraged by the steamrolling of their democratic rights; and some experts, notably one highly qualified scientist at a huge public meeting skewering abject Metgasco apologists on their ignorance and weaselly defence of lethal fracking chemicals.

But its focus is mainly on the protest actions taken – when uncomfortable, cold and often frightened people put themselves on the front line, showing that non-violent, civil disobedience has an authority far beyond the mob-handed, boots on the ground enforcement of unjust regulations – “mining by martial law”, as Shoebridge calls it.

It's emotionally charged: joyful at times (the Knitting Nannas, resolute citizens singing Christmas carols) and gutting at others, as vulnerable people are dragged away and men weep at seeing country despoiled.

After Glenugie and Doubtful Creek, when Sydney's riot squad police got the drill-rig juggernauts through, the stakes were elevated at Bentley. This was the last line of defence.

As it happened, there was no showdown: Metgasco's licences were suspended, and later bought back by the state government. It was the point when the seemingly unbeatable forces were



The Classic Greet the Dawn



DC, Drew Hutton and Uncle Kevin 'Yilla'



The final Greet the Dawn
Photos: RJ Poole

turned around by a greater moral and social power.

“The beauty of the story is that a real threat was combatted by real people in our own backyard,” says Shoebridge. “An amazing precedent was set there. They were true heroes.”

But the film comes with a warning: the Baird government has criminalised protest – aimed specifically to intimidate citizens such as these with threats of imprisonment.

We need to be reminded of this, Shoebridge says, “in case anyone has any doubt about the direction the country is going in”.

The Bentley blockade was a victory,

and Shoebridge wanted to leave the audience inspired, uplifted. But the struggle continues: “Things are still so serious, I didn't want anyone to become complacent.”

His film will help to maintain the rage.

The Bentley Effect is the Festival's official closing night selection at Byron Community Centre on Saturday 22nd October. Red carpet arrival from 6.45pm for a 7.30pm start. The film's official launch will be at Lismore's Star Court Theatre on Saturday 29th October at 7pm, and there will also be a screening at the Nimbin Bush Theatre on Friday 4th November at 7.30pm.

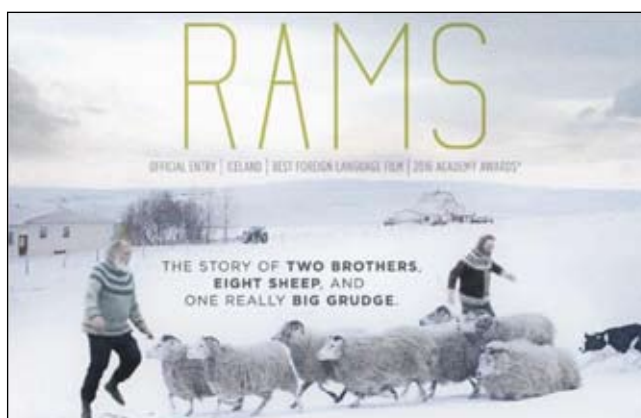
Offbeat comedy at Nimbin Flix

The next Nimbin Flix movie night is on Saturday 8th October.

The movie this month is *Rams*, the story of two brothers in Iceland who farm sheep, and hold a grudge so deep that they only communicate through their farm dog, who delivers messages only when absolutely necessary. It is an offbeat comedy that is surprisingly touching. This movie is subtitled.

Rams will be screened at Birth and Beyond, Nimbin. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. Please be aware that the time is an hour later due to daylight saving!

Food and drink will be available for purchase on the night. Entry \$10, or annual subscriptions \$50.



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A State of Indignation

NORPA Big Think event featuring Mark Dapin, Charles Firth and Zachary Jane

Tuesday 11th October, 7pm at Lismore City Hall. Tickets: \$30.

Bookings: www.norpa.org.au or phone 1300-066-772.



NORPA's Big Think features Firth and Dapin

In 1964, Donald Horne called Australia the lucky country and described it as run mainly by second-rate people who share its luck. Fifty years on, has much changed? Are we still the lucky country? Evidence would suggest we're far from a clever country.

Join NORPA's Big Think on Tuesday 11th October at 7pm for a wide ranging conversation on politics, both local and global, on terror, both real and imagined, cultural diversity and tolerance, but not in my backyard, and the importance of dangerous ideas.

Wrestling with the truth will be Charles Firth, satirist and co-founder of *The Chaser* and Mark Dapin, former editor of *Ralph* magazine, journalist, columnist and author. Wrangling the wrestlers will be Zachary Jane, writer, educator and fearless lion tamer. Expect hilarity, outrage and a complete

lack of political correctness. Truths will be mangled, myths destroyed and outrageous claims unleashed.

From Trump to Turnbull, sport to religion, hipsters to hamsters, animal rights to plebiscites, LGBT to BLT: no topic is taboo. Charles Firth is well known to television audiences through his appearances on *The Chaser's War on Everything* and is executive producer on ABC's *The Roast*. Immediately after his NORPA appearance, he flies to the USA to cover the American election circus for *The Chaser*. Mark Dapin is the larrikin of Australian literature and has written for every major daily newspaper and is currently a PhD candidate at the Australian Defence Force Academy.

"Malcolm Turnbull claimed that there has never been a more exciting time to be an Australian. We all have differing opinions on that statement,

but one thing is true: there has seldom been a more terrifying, bewildering or frustrating time to live, not just in Australia, but as a global citizen," said NORPA's Big Think program curator Jeni Caffin.

"Dysfunction, destruction and the erosion of freedoms appear to be the order of the day across the planet and the lunacy of those at the top leaves many of us unable to understand how on earth we got into this state. Let's take this chance to nut out some of the nuttiness in a free-flowing, riotous conversation which will answer questions you might not even have known you wanted to ask!"

Life's biggest challenges, and some of its silliest ones, will be ruthlessly dissected. Prepare to be offended, flabbergasted and thoroughly entertained.

You have been warned.

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Hilarious action and moving drama

What does it take to make a 'family', especially a 'father'? And what does a child really need to feel part of a family?

Two very different films at the Nimbin Bush Theatre this October explore these critical philosophical questions of the heart, both in very different ways:

(1) From the perspective of a 13-year old boy taken into care by Child Services and then placed with foster parents; and (2) from the viewpoint of a father who learns that his 6-year old son is not of his own blood/genes, and instead his 'real' son has been raised elsewhere with another family, another father – what to do?

year, including an Audience Award.

The film's story (based on the book *Wild Pork and Watercress* by Barry Crump) centres around a defiant city kid, Ricky Baker (Julian Dennison). Perceived by authorities to be a 'bad egg', Ricky has been sent by social workers to live in the countryside with foster parents Aunt Belle and Uncle Hec. After Belle's sudden death, these same authorities arrive to retrieve Ricky from foster care with the intention of placing him in new care in the city, but they find the country house empty. Assuming that the 'mentally unstable' Uncle Hec (Sam Neill) has abducted the child, a hilarious national manhunt ensues for Hec and the boy, who see themselves as the self-appointed 'wilderpeople'. And, of course, it turns out that Ricky has fled voluntarily with Hec and a bond wrought through care and circumstance is established for the boy.

This film is guaranteed to leave you grinning from ear to ear, with action-packed chase



scenes amidst a backdrop of beautiful NZ scenery, and a cheerful taste of quirky kiwi-speak. Rhys Darby (*Flight of the Concord*) also stars in the film (as 'Psycho Sam') and both Neill and young Dennison have been praised widely for the strength of their acting performances.

Friday 28th October, 7.30pm
Like Father, Like Son
(2014, dir. Hirokazu Koreeda; rated PG; \$10)

And from laugh-out-loud to deep heartwarming tears... Japanese director Hirokazu Koreeda's (*I Wish, Nobody Knows*) has created a film that takes a serious look at what constitutes a 'family' and good parenting, this time primarily from the perspective of a father, Ryota (Masaharu Fukuyama), in *Like Father, Like Son*.

Successful city businessman Ryota and his wife, Midori, learn unexpectedly from a hospital (where their now 6-year old son was born) that a mistake was made at birth and the parents were accidentally given the wrong child to bring home. Instead, their 'real' son has spent the last six years

being raised by a much poorer family in a rural town.

Ryota and Midori are faced with a tormenting and painful decision: whether to choose blood over experience, nature over nurture. For Ryota, this heartbreaking choice calls into question what it means to be a 'father' as some rocky attempts at resolving the dilemma take place between the two families.

This sensitively-written, thought-provoking and deeply moving film has won several awards worldwide, including the Jury Prize at Cannes; summarised by *Telegraph* writer Robbie Collin as "a tender poem about the ebb and flow of paternal love". In Japanese with English subtitles.

Tickets to both movies are available either online, at the door or from Phoenix Rising Café next door, which will be open from 5.30pm for dinner with a special menu for each evening. More info and tickets available online at: www.nimbinbushtheatre.com/events or call Venue Manager, David Hyett on (02) 6689-0095 or 0418-824-598.

Friday 14th October, 7.30pm
Hunt for the Wilderpeople
(2016, dir. Taika Waititi; rated PG; \$10)

Talented and quirky New Zealand writer/actor/director Taika Waititi (*Boy, What We Do In The Shadows*) brings us the fresh action-comedy-drama *Hunt For The Wilderpeople*, which won several awards at Sundance earlier this



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A magical Halloween at the Bush Theatre

The Nimbin Bush Theatre has created an annual institution with its Halloween celebrations which delight children and adults alike, and have been packed with excited children every year. This year it is back, with even more magic and surprises in store.

On Monday 31st October from 4pm to 7pm, the Nimbin Bush Theatre is holding its annual Halloween Party – a celebration of nature, magic, the little people and the coming of spring.

This is not an American-style Halloween, but more of a medieval magical faire to celebrate magic in the renewal of nature and the change of seasons. The theatre's gardens are bursting with flowers, Mulgum Creek is sparkling and full of turtles, winter is gone, spring is here and it is time to celebrate.

Come dressed in your most splendid and magical Halloween costume. It may



Who can creep into his lair and snatch a piece of gold from his treasure chest? Only the most stealthy will succeed, but most will be chased from his lair.

be a faerie, a pirate, a troll or anything you like, and join the costume parade to win fantastic prizes.

There will be lots of games to play and activities to do, including 'Pin the tail

on the Werewolf', apple bobbing, wand-making, face-painting, faerie-house building, storytelling and the hit of last years event: Dr Frankenstein's live experiments in the

Operating Theatre followed by the Monster Mash kids disco in the auditorium from 6pm-7pm.

There is also an opportunity to meet with the beautiful Queen of the Faeries and receive a nature spell to plant in your garden and watch grow. Only a few children are brave enough to steal treasure from the sleeping Troll, who sleeps with one eye open and has an inclination to be grumpy with sneak-thief children.

There will be lots of yummy and healthy kids' finger food and treats available in the Phoenix Rising Cafe, along with excellent coffee, meals and cakes for the mums and dads.

Be there early, as there is a limited capacity and last year it was packed. Gates open at 4pm. \$5 entry for kids and adults.

Any enquiries, contact David Hyett at the Nimbin Bush Theatre (02) 6689-0095.

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Sunday Gig Guide

October 1pm start

9th Dinkum Bohos

Coming from a freewheeling bohemian tradition, they presenting a melting pot of music for runaway romantics

16th Loa

This lady, her music, and the delivery of voice for the tales she offers will take your breath away.

23rd Palm Wine Ambassadors

The Palm Wine Ambassadors: superlative music to chill to or even better, dance to

30th Mandy Hawkes

"I write songs that I like to sing about people, stories and ideas that get stuck in my head..."

November 6th Method

Swampy, acoustic guitar and drum kit-driven rock and roots music with a heartland tinge

BLUE MOON RISING



The Nimbin School of Arts final Blue Moon Cabaret for 2016 will feature another big variety show of top performers.

Included in the bill are the Tullara Connors Trio (pictured), Andrea Soler and Tim Tonkin, Sarah Stando, Pandora's Karavan, Mrs Hippie and the Lovehandles; along with dance ensembles Sassy Salsa and Arte Gitana; stand-up comedians Mandy Nolan and S. Sorrensen; cabaret artists Dandyman, 'Life Drawing', Emma

McGovern and polecat Christine Nicole; plus poets Mike Russo, Christine Strelan and host David Hallett.

The show will be fully catered by the wondrous Radical Faeries (no BYO).

Table reservations and bookings are essential at Perceptio, phone 6689-1766.

The Blue Moon Cabaret, which is a major fundraiser for the School of Arts, is on Saturday 29th October at Nimbin Hall. Doors open at 6.30pm.

Wil Massey @ Bowlo

Wil Massey is a former NSW south-coaster, now Repentance Creek resident. A singer/songwriter who has performed in various (solo, duo, band) formations for over 20 years, Wil brings a unique element to his original roots/rock music (with a twist of pop, punk, folk, soul, and even a Spanish lilt or two).

Garnering increasing attention as he builds his Northern Rivers profile, and fresh from the Nimbin Roots Festival, he will be playing a (fortnightly) residency in October at the new restaurant On The Green @ Nimbin Bowlo: Friday Oct 14th and Saturday Oct 29th. All gigs 6-9pm. www.facebook.com/WilMasseyBand



The Channon open mic

by Ray Flanagan (Rayzor)

As I set up for the September Open Mic, I wondered what the weather was planning to serve up for the afternoon.

I had barely finished pegging down the performer's gazebos when a rain shower hit. This was closely followed by a couple of strong wind gusts that threatened to launch the canopies skyward. By 2pm the sky had cleared and the wind subsided, making for a pleasant afternoon.

Open Mic regular, Toby, opened the proceedings, followed by Canadian-born Tom, who recently became a local of The Channon. Tom's mixture of covers and self-penned songs

are always well received. Another regular, Glen, played a few blues instrumentals backed by Steve playing lead guitar and myself on drums.

A new collaboration between Kev, Steve and Doug produced some rocky numbers, and I enjoyed drumming with them.

A big thanks to Joy Spink who has designed and hand-painted a striking new logo for the Open Mic on one gazebo wall.

We'd love you to join us at The Channon Butterfactory Tavern for the next Open Mic on Sunday 23rd October, now at 3pm (for daylight saving) not 1pm as I said in last month's NGT.

The Tavern restaurant is open on



Toby and new logo

the Sunday for lunch from 12 to 2.30pm and for dinner from 6 to 8pm, and snacks are available in between.

For more details, give me a ring on 6688-6100.

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53 Cullen Street, Nimbin. Ph: 6689-1246



October Gigs

Friday 7th	7pm	Khanage
Saturday 8th	7pm	Elliot Band
Sunday 9th	5pm	The Ruines
Thursday 13th	7pm	Ben Purnell
Friday 14th	7pm	Drift
Saturday 15th	7pm	Dunhill Blues, AntiBodies
Sunday 16th	5pm	Surf Report
Thursday 20th	7pm	Brommers
Friday 21st	7pm	Q
Saturday 22nd	7pm	Eastwood
Sunday 23rd	5pm	TBA
Thursday 27th	7pm	Jessie Morris
Friday 28th	7pm	Dirty River Duo
Saturday 29th	7pm	Daneel and Feel
Sunday 30th	5pm	Joe O'Keefe

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An art auction with a difference will be held in Nimbin Town Hall on Saturday 15th October to raise funds for the 7 Sibley Street sustainability project, an exciting community project.

The hall will be open for viewing from 10am, auction starts at 11.30am.

As well as works donated by local artists and craftspeople, there will be pre-loved artworks from the collections of individuals in the community.

The wide range of works will appeal

to all tastes and budgets; many have no reserve price, and the rest a modest reserve, so there are bargains to be had. Works include painting, drawing, printmaking, etched glass, digital art and assemblage, and many impressive works by indigenous artists.

Also on offer are some reproductions, and a large collection of posters including movie, art and historic political posters. Two handmade rugs would brighten up any home, and a

large painting by a Balinese artist could transform your room into a tropical paradise.

There's a large hand-painted door that's a 1980's classic hippy item, and even a vintage mannequin up for grabs!

If you'd like to donate a work, it needs to be in by Tuesday 11th October. Contact Mandie Hale on 6689-1145 or email: halegarden@yahoo.com.au

You can check out the sustainability project at: www.sevenonsibley.com

Over 50s strut their stuff at the Roxy

An array of artworks by people participating in the Lismore Over 50s Learning Centre workshops has come together in an exhibition at the Roxy Gallery, Kyogle until 5th November.

This exhibition is a culmination of works produced in a series of workshops by members of the Over 50s who have been learning skills in areas of painting, drawing, watercolour and mosaics.

For some of the members, it is their first opportunity to exhibit their artworks in a gallery environment, while others have had previous experience in showcasing their creative talents.

Most of the work on exhibition will be for sale, which makes for an

exciting time for new exhibitors, as it will provide feedback for what they are doing, and also an incentive to keep pursuing their interest in being creative.

Established in 1982, the Lismore Over 50s Learning Centre Inc is a not-for-profit organisation with a strong focus on providing a learning experience for all. It offers term workshops in areas ranging from the creative workshops which also include scratchboard and pastel, to personal wellbeing workshops, including awareness through movement, and gentle exercise in a heated pool.

Information on forthcoming Term 4 courses can be obtained by emailing: lismoreover50s@hotmail.com



Hearth & Home - The art of the domestic

With the season turning and thoughts of spring, the Blue Knob Gallery is celebrating the hearth and home, and the domestic. Some of the artists who have contributed work have taken domestic paraphernalia out of the cupboards, drawers and washing baskets to hang them in space and shed a new light on these unassuming, practical items – notably Pauline Ahern's 'Pegged out' and Lynda Clark's 'Kitchenalia'.

Hearth & Home has also been interpreted by artists as those places where we find rest and comfort, or the territory/landscape in which we humans, animals and insects call 'home'.

In two pieces of work by Yvonne Preston, we see a wonderful depiction of ants going about their business in the territory they know so intimately.

There is a wide range of work with sculpture, tapestry weaving, embroidery, carving, photography and paintings on show until 12th November.

First pots off the block

The Blue Knob Ceramic Studio officially opened on 19th February this year, and classes started on 10th March. This inaugural exhibition is being held in conjunction with the 'Hearth & Home' exhibition. 'First Pots off the Block' is a



Home at Last by Linda Whitefeather

selection of works created by the students who have been making use of the wonderful Blue Knob Ceramic Studio space.

The students range from 9 to 90 years old, and come from a diverse background in ceramic practice. All aspects of the studio have been embraced, from hand-building to wheel-thrown work, glazing, and the spirit of a shared environment to work in.

This exhibition showcases some of the work completed, as well as tiles from the first Mosaic Tile-Making workshop, held in August.

Artists & Friends lunch

The next Artists & Friends lunch will be held on Thursday 27th October at 12.30pm, with a main meal including dessert for \$19 (vegetarian) or \$24 (non-

vegetarian). Please contact the Gallery on 6689-7449 if you are planning to attend.

Business opportunity

The initial vision of Blue Knob Hall was to develop a community gallery and cafe. The concept was to provide a gallery space for artists to exhibit and sell their artwork, and provide a place for patrons to stop and relax, enjoy (and hopefully purchase) the art and partake of refreshments in the cafe. We wanted to provide a total experience for anyone who took the time to come out here to enjoy.

The cafe has ebbed and flowed over the years since we opened in 2001. Realistically, as a small community gallery situated away from any other businesses, we need to ensure that anyone who may be interested in running

the community cafe, is well aware of the dynamics, the possibilities and the opportunities that arise. This could also include off-site catering, functions, value-adding products etc.

The most important thing to remember is that the gallery and the cafe maintain a symbiotic relationship. We are here for the community, its artists and our visitors. We need to work together to provide a unique experience for anyone who comes to visit.

The kitchen includes the majority of equipment and appliances required. Some minor items may be needed.

Requirements: Current Food Safety Supervisor Certificate is an absolute requirement by Council.

Proposals: Please include the following in your proposal to the Management Committee, Blue Knob Hall Gallery. To be submitted by 17th October. We would hope to notify a decision by 7th November.

- Outline of your plans/ideas for the Cafe, use of the kitchen, etc
 - Any references or information regarding your experience
 - The type of menu that you may be offering
- More information is available by contacting BKHG Management Committee, phone 6689-7449 or email: bkhgall@apt.net.au

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Beyond the Rainbow

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Artist of the month – Amanda Bragg



'Age of Aquarius' by Amanda Bragg

by Peter Warne

Amanda Bragg paints in a two-dimensional naive style; one could call it contemporary folk art. Amanda's intention is to create a unique visual memoir on the interaction between people and place, telling stories of the natural beauty of the Northern Rivers coast and hinterland, and the people who live in this amazing environment.

To quote Amanda, "It's the patterns and lines of waves rolling in. The sweeping beaches of ochre, crisp aqua blue seas and vermilion hues blending into a cerulean sky. The cool colourful people hanging out together and the surf riders carving through the waves. The rolling hills and huge skies. The feeling of being on holiday, an escape from our increasingly material world. This is what I love, and chronicle via my art for all to see."

Her first love was drawing, and she had artwork first published as a comic strip for a Brisbane Newspaper at age 13, which led to a full-page article in *People Magazine* and a segment on the children's television program, *Wombat*.

Amanda started to paint in her mid-teens whilst working at a major Gold Coast Gallery. After a successful solo exhibition in Brisbane in 1996, Amanda completed numerous commissions for both Australia

and overseas clients, including 10 paintings commissioned by the one company in Japan. Awards include winning the Nifsan Gold Coast Signature Art Prize for 'Water Babies' in 2002, with her work included in the Gold Coast City Council Art Collection

In the following year she was one of the few Australian artists selected for the Biennale Internazionale Del'Art Contemporanea, organised by the World Bank and UNESCO in collaboration with the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Florence, Italy.

Artists were selected in the Biennale by an international committee of critics on the basis of Creativity and professionalism. It is the world's most comprehensive exhibition of contemporary art, representing 891 Artists from 72 countries.

Amanda has written and illustrated several children's picture books, and also designed and illustrated the Sony Play Station game *California Surfing*, which was distributed throughout Europe.

Amanda has had numerous group and solo shows since then, and her art continues to enthrall a worldwide audience. Nimbin community Gallery is proud to have an artist of this calibre exhibit at the Gallery.

Amanda's works will be on display until the end of October. We look forward to seeing you at this wonderful showing.

From farmpunk to plinth, vollies take shape

The Serpentine Community Gallery is pleased to present a feast for both the eyes and the imagination during October.

On view in the Serpentine's Gallery 2 until 31st October is a solo show by local sculptor Franko Girardi entitled 'From Farmpunk to Plinth.'

When asked about his work, Franko explained, "My art is storytelling with rust! Sheep shears make up about eighty percent of my work, it's my trademark. I cable tie or wire my works together so it's forever changing, it keeps my growing fan base curious. I see my art as window dressing, and my subject matter as life, love, ying yang, dark and light."

'Vollies' – a gift to our volunteers for their work and commitment to this community gallery – will provide a wonderfully varied selection of artworks to explore in Gallery 1, on view until 12th October.

From 14th to 28th October, Lismore-

based graphic designer and illustrator Dougal Binns' solo exhibition 'Take Shape' will grace the walls of Gallery 1.

Dougal said, "My artworks start on the computer. I draw shapes in my illustration software, and move them around, change the colours until I land on something that pleases me. Then I reproduce them on canvas or board. I try to match the colours from the computer-generated art with real paint. I mask the positive and negative shapes to keep the paintings flat. What happens in between the masked boundaries can be interesting, and that's what I like. To see how accurately I can recreate them, but also to see how the inherent imperfection of attempting to do that manifests into a unique result."

Everyone is welcome to attend the combined opening night celebration for Franko Girardi's 'Farmpunk to Plinth' and Dougal Binns' 'Take Shape' on Friday 14th October from 6pm.



'Wojoox' by Dougal Binns

Serpentine Gallery is located at 17 Bridge Street North Lismore. For more information contact the gallery on (02) 6621-6845 or visit: www.serpentinearts.org



'Sunburst' by Franko Girardi

Nature sculpture doco at Bruns

A documentary about the inaugural Brunswick Nature Sculpture Walk 2015 will be screening at the Brunswick Picture House, 2pm on Sunday 9th October 2016, where there will also be a small sculptures exhibition. The event is being held as a celebration of the huge success of last year's exhibition and in recognition of the support of the local community and businesses. Entry is by donation.

The 30 minute documentary was made by award winning Sydney filmmaker Rachel Lane and features interviews with twelve of the participating artists talking about their work and participation in the inaugural Sculpture Walk.

"It's been 12 months since the first exhibition," explained the Brunswick Nature Sculpture Walk director Samantha Moss "and we want to acknowledge the fabulous support we received from the local community and how much they helped to make the event a resounding success. We propose to roll out the next sculpture walk in 2018 and would like to take this opportunity to tell the community

about our plans for the next one."

The inaugural Brunswick Nature Sculpture walk was held in the beautiful riverside parklands of Brunswick Heads October 1st – 5th 2015. 46 sculptures from recognised local and interstate artists were on display, presenting works reflecting the natural environment. More than 10,000 visitors came to Brunswick to view the sculptures and it generated around \$2 million in revenue for local businesses.

The Brunswick Nature Sculpture Walk has made a lasting impression on Brunswick Heads with the permanent installation of the environmental sculpture 'Simpson's Sofa' by Joanne Mott. Acquired through sponsorship funds and generous donations, the sculpture is made of turf and is based on the shape of Simpson's creek. It has proven very popular with visitors and locals regularly visiting the sculpture and picnicking around it.

They will be soon acquiring another permanent sculpture. 'Oh My Cod' by local artist, David Walsh one of the favourites in the 2015 people's choice award and was



runner up for the inaugural Brunswick Nature Sculpture Walk prize which was judged by representatives from the Tweed Regional Gallery and Southern Cross University.

"We believe this sculpture will create more opportunities for continuing the dialogue about environment, place and sculpture," Ms Moss said.

The Brunswick Nature Sculpture walk invites families and local business representatives to come along on Sunday 9th of October to the Brunswick Picture House to see the documentary film and enjoy the small sculpture exhibition. For more info, visit: www.brunswicknaturesculpturewalk.com



'Simpson's Sofa' by Joanne Mott



'Oh My Cod' by David Walsh