

A TASTE OF ART

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gallery

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Blue Knob Cafe

**Gallery & Cafe hours:**  
Thurs 10am - 4pm, Fri 10am - 2pm  
Sat 8:30am - 2pm, Sun 10am - 4pm  
**Ceramic Studio:** Thurs - Sat 10am - 3pm  
Ph: 0266897449 www.blueknobgallery.com

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- Fostering cultural experiences for community and visitors to the area.

Email: [roxygallery@kyogle.nsw.gov.au](mailto:roxygallery@kyogle.nsw.gov.au) Web: [www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au)

# Judi Lane



by Karen Welsh

The unique and original blending of new and old art techniques makes Lindendale resident Judi Lane a 'must see' at the Nimbin Artist's Gallery.

Judi first exhibited a number of landscapes in Nimbin at the Autumn Arts Extravaganza in April. A sell-out of her works ensued.

So intriguing are her style and her technique, that we have asked her back again with her new range of subject material.

The same techniques have been used and were seemingly 'unworkable' to

her new subject matter – the coral reef and its life forms. How wrong this assumption was.

We are unable to come up with a genre for her works, as they are unique, and have been intriguing locals and visitors alike.

Judi was originally inspired by her mother's career, as an artist and teacher of Russian Zhostova decorative art, and the Russian masters.

This helped create Judi's passion for decorative painting that started in her early teens. Later, family commitments came along and put her art career on hold.



Judi recommenced studies in 2012 with a Bachelor of Visual Arts and Education Secondary, and renewed her passion for painting.

During her studies of Visual Arts, Judi continued to investigate many different media and has combined them with her earlier skills and knowledge of Russian folk art.

It is an intriguing genre that has produced a range of different styles but with the same undercurrent of techniques.

Judi's attraction to patterning, gold leaf and pearl inlay has become the main focus throughout her designs that continues to draw your eye to these truly beautiful artworks.



# Blue Knob Threads

by Marie Cameron

The current exhibition at Blue Knob Hall Gallery is the annual Fibre Show.

This year has been exceptional in the quality and diversity of the work by the fibre artists and artisans. With stunning work by Granny Breath Weaver and the resurgence of macramé as an art form in itself, the pieces in this show have passed expectation once again.

A cubby of woven vines and branches by Linnie Lambrechtsen has taken centre floor and tapped into many of our childhood fantasies of huts and hideaways. It has had a life of its own with children and adults alike finding themselves sitting in the middle of this wonderful piece of weaving and sculptural work.

Polly Stirling's beautiful felted tunic, which was part of the 1994 fashion parade 'Wrapt in Nimbin', inspired Paul Tait and Jeni Kendell to re-edit and re-master the film of that fashion show which also features as part of the exhibition. The oohs and aahs from the viewers as they watch and recognise the faces of the women, men, musicians and designers, bring back memories and joy. Copies are available for sale in the Gallery.

We are certainly woven together by

the threads of life, from past to present, from the woven to the felted, knotted, knitted, stitched or carved- this exhibition is well worth a look. It runs until Saturday 29th July.

### Gift portrait

Marie Cameron has generously donated her beautiful and gentle portrait of Robin Moore to the Gallery. The photograph was part of Marie's solo show 'Stories Alive – Faces of Blue Knob' and with much appreciation from the committee and members we look forward to seeing it hung in the Gallery.

### Artists & Friends Lunch

The next Artists and Friends Lunch will be held on Thursday 27th July at 12.30pm with a set menu, \$20 per person for main and dessert. Please phone 6689-7449 or email: [bkhgallery@harbourisp.net.au](mailto:bkhgallery@harbourisp.net.au) for more information.

### Blue Knob Cafe

The committee, members and the regular Blue Knob Cafe patrons, were sad to hear that Rebekah and Simon will not be continuing with the cafe after June.

They have been a wonderful addition to the whole community that is Blue Knob Hall Gallery, Cafe, Ceramic Studio and Blue Knob Farmers, Fibre, Fermenters



Market, and we will miss them but wish them all the best for their future.

Rebekah and Simon would like to thank this unique local community for their awesome support over this period. It has been a pleasure working with the Blue Knob Hall Committee and the Blue Knob Farmers, Fibre, Fermenters Market and they are very happy to know that the Cafe will be left in good hands under the management of Paul Scott and the Gallery volunteers until the end of the year.

We're looking forward to serving the public, visitors and our regulars with good food and continue the great atmosphere here at this ever-changing but always supported community space.

### Blue Knob Ceramic Studio

It is now a little over a year since the Ceramic Studio hit the deck running – and it hasn't stopped! It has been a rewarding and creative experience for everyone involved.

As there has been an overwhelming interest from individuals wanting to use the limited space, we will be running the Studio on an eight week term basis from the beginning of August.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact Heather at the Gallery on 6689-7449 or email: [bkhgallery@harbourisp.net.au](mailto:bkhgallery@harbourisp.net.au)



# KYOGLÉ'S ROXY GALLERY



'Landscape with dog' by Elspeth Lake

'Elspeth etc... & Ettrick Friends' has just opened at the Roxy Gallery, Kyogle. This exhibition is a retrospective of works by local artist Elspeth Lake who will be joined by a couple of artist friends that stem from the Ettrick area.

Elspeth is a very interesting lady who came to Australia from England, and as a single mum raised her children while managing her work-life balance and maintaining her interest in visual arts.

Her paintings are at first glance traditional, but move into landscapes of thought around a given subject or a particular country scene. Exploring portraits, landscapes and abstract compositions, Elspeth's paintings reflect the many skills and interests she has developed over the years.

Elspeth has been a resident in Ettrick for a number of years and has made connections with other Ettrick residents who also have a flair and interest in working in the creative fields of painting, drawing and lead-light. Having shared interests in the arts, they met up to paint and draw in groups, and Elspeth saw it fitting to invite them along to exhibit with her.

'Elspeth... etc & Ettrick Friends' will be on display from 5th July to 5th August, and will have its official opening on Saturday 8th July from 12-2pm.

## Spin yarns in August

Kyogle's Yarn Spinning Phenomenon will take place on Saturday 12th August from 11am to 2pm in Strathenden Street.

The Kyogle and District Arts Council (KDAC) is hosting this wonderful event to add a bit more colour to our beautiful town and is really keen for all to get involved. This is an opportunity to spin a yarn both literal and physical.

In a bid to keep old craft skills alive and current, KDAC is after interested knitters or crocheters to stitch some yarns to attach to trees, bollards, and posts along and around the Stratheden precinct outside of the library and council chambers, ready to install prior to the Saturday event where a number of inclusive demonstrations in felting, pompom making, knitting, crocheting, spinning and public yarning will take place.

Drop into the Roxy Gallery or connect to the facebook site: [www.facebook.com/kyogleartscouncil](http://www.facebook.com/kyogleartscouncil) to put in a claim to yarn bombing something in this precinct area.

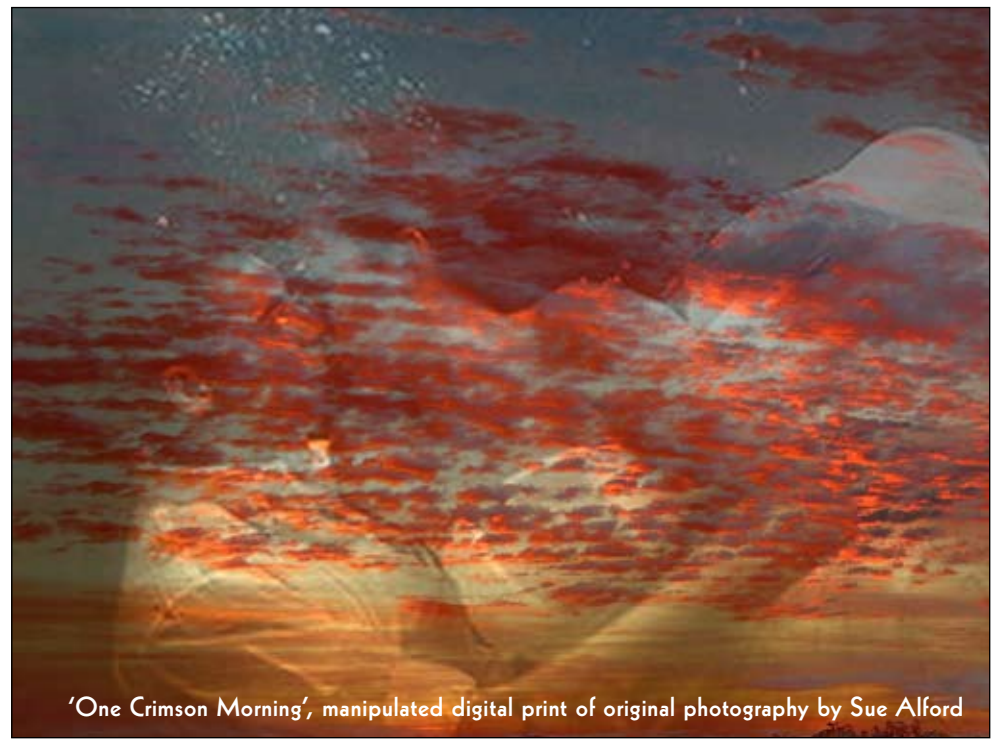
Along with the traditional craft skill of yarning, KDAC are also after people interested in hearing from people who have a story to tell or a yarn to spin.

The Yarn Spinning Phenomena is looking for written yarns – short stories or poetry – about Kyogle or about the event itself.

These will be included along with the yarn bombing. And there is an opportunity for the spoken word – a short story or poem – which will be presented live at 12pm on the day. All welcome to share a yarn.

This is for poets, writers and anyone who likes playing with words. For more information on the written or spoken word contact Graeme Gibson on 0408-676-550.

Right: Yarn-bombed street signpost  
Below: 'Afloat' by Elspeth Lake



'One Crimson Morning', manipulated digital print of original photography by Sue Alford

## 'Scarlet' returns to paint Lismore's Serpentine Gallery **red**



'Bushdance' by Ken Swan



'At Home With Mike' by Philippa Leader

Serpentine Community Gallery is very proud to present the ninth dynamic 'Scarlet' exhibition.

Exploring the senses, the sensual and the erotic, this is one of our very favourite shows. Each year its scope has broadened and this year the focus is on Sexuality, Love, Lust and the Erotic.

We thoroughly enjoy supporting the Northern Rivers and the wider arts community to push the boundaries of art in all its forms, concepts and messages.

Our curators are putting together an amazing exhibition featuring artworks by over 30 artists who live in our region. 'Scarlet's' eight previous showings have presented an incredible selection of stunning artworks, from those that get the imagination working overtime to others that leave nothing for it to do!

'Scarlet' opens on Friday 21st July. The night starts early, doors open at 6pm, and as the night progresses there will be music, art, socialising and tasty light refreshments, as well as a few surprises.

An open mic will be available so artists of all persuasions can share their expressions through song, poetry or performance in the spirit of Scarlet, while our art-loving community sits back to enjoy, and applaud, what others have to offer.

Babysitters are highly recommended as, following tradition it promises to be an adults only evening. Dress code is optional, but if dressing up is your thing, dress to the theme. Guests are encouraged to wear red, black and white for the mood of the evening. Entry is free, and everyone is welcome.

"Scarlet" is on view until 22nd August.

Postponed due to the Lismore flood, the Serpentine Community Gallery fundraising Art Auction will be finalised during the 'Scarlet' opening celebration on 21st July.

If you can't make it down to the Serpentine for the event, don't forget the artworks are currently on display and 'silent auction' bidding slips are now available at the gallery. NB: The highest silent bid for each work received prior to the event will be used as its reserve price.

Many thanks to the very generous donating artists: Ken Swan, Lindsay Hunt, Marie-Lise Laviolette, Michael Chapus, Prudence Lawrence, Michael Clifton, Theodore Kennett-Raj and Linda Saville; and thanks and good luck to the bidders.

An interesting exhibition of interesting times, the group show 'Please Explain' – showcasing the political climate and current issues as seen through the eyes of local artists – is on view until 18th July.

"Please Explain!" is a term most of us are familiar with; however its origins and entry into the contemporary Australian lexicon is irrelevant in this context. It was chosen as a satirical and/or serious theme to provide artists with the opportunity to delve into any and all current issues in any creative manner and medium of their choosing.

We are living in times with broad struggles from basic human rights to Earth rights during times of narrow streams of media, and our artists' interpretations, collectively, create a story, an overview of the world as we see it.

The gallery is located at 17a Bridge Street North Lismore. For more information: (02) 6621-6845 or visit: [www.serpentinearts.org](http://www.serpentinearts.org)



# Sowing the seeds of discontent

## Manna Matters

by Thom Culpeper

What is Svalbard? What was Aleppo? What was Abu Ghaib? What is the 'Vavelov'?

All of these are and or were Seed Banks. In all cases they housed and conserved the genetics of the historical seed treasures of humanity's farmers and cultivators. Most have now been pilfered or destroyed by American and/or European chemical conglomerates.

On the farm lands of the 'Fertile Crescent' of Mesopotamia, watered by the Tigris and Euphrates over 8000 years, humanity developed what we now know as agriculture.

The seeds of these crops were freely selected, husbanded and re-sown by generations of farmers; the survival and yields of plant types being of utmost import to the skilled tillers of the Earth.

Seed was at the core of this genius. Food was the imperative: the sacred duty of the farmers.



Svalbard Seed Vault Norway

Today most, if not the majority of plant material is curated and stored in the Northern Hemisphere, as a search on Yandex will show. This part of the planet is now a borderline annihilation and world extinction region, as most of the filthy nukes are located above the equator.

Regional Southern-food-gene sources, South America, the South Pacific, the Africa's, Indonesia and most of the lands by the 'Wallace' line are now 'husbanded' elsewhere. The War-mongering fascist maniacs of the 'North' are in no way to be entrusted with the care of humanity's food genes!

Their prime interest is to materialise the cash yields of this food imperative of

humanity, and as Kissenger said, "Control oil and energy, you control the countries; the seeds, you control the people."

The American/EU corporate-fascists that run 'rackets' such as Monsanto, Dow, Upjohn, BASF, Bayer, Synagenta, Pioneer, Cargil, Volvo and their chemical cronies, now control 90% of patented, stolen genes. ([www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2007](http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2007))

Many organisations that should have an ethical position on this reality are well and truly in the pockets of the vested interests. "Don't work for us, you're out in the cold."

Solution: Save seed, distribute seed, exchange seed and take no notice of

government bullshit about food security.

And here in the Southern Hemisphere, politic for safe reservoirs of humanity's food genes. We in the South are peace loving people. We must look to the future of OUR food security. A Southern Hemisphere Seed Bank is imperative, now.

Australia is 'accommodating' a World Seed Conference on 6th-8th July in Brisbane. Make your position on food security known. Save seed! Curate and distribute crop-food-seed freely!

If you have rare and unusual food seeds, please contact Seedswapper on twitter. We will arrange for their 'safe' and ethical propagation. Viva Life...!

## Plant of the month

### Strangler Fig *Ficus watkinsiana*



by Richard Burer

This large majestic and stately tree, is our true tree of the rainforest.

This fig is widely buttressed and usually surrounding the bole or the remains of the host tree that had originally supported the fig tree, hence "Strangler Fig".

Found in all types of rainforest, Strangler Fig is eaten by a long list of birds, including fig bird, rose crowned fruit dove and

regent bower bird.

On the farm we have planted a few over the years, with the one pictured being several years old.

Trees typically planted at home have grown to about 500cm a year at our place. Other varieties of rainforest figs have similar growth rates.

At 45m maximum height, it might take 100 years to get to its full glory; however less old specimens look at home in their rainforest gullies.

Easy to grow from seed.

## Food matters



Co-op AGM

It takes many hands to make a Co-Op work. Nimbin Organic Food Co-Op's next AGM is on Monday 28th August, 6pm at the Green Room, Nimbin Community Centre. All members welcome. Contact our Volunteer Coordinators on 0497-833-717 and join our happy smiling team.

This month's food mythology concerns the humble Lemon.

According to Greek and Roman mythology, citrus fruits were the dowry of Hera (Juno), the bride of Zeus (Jupiter), who kept them jealously hidden away in a blissful garden situated at the western end of the Earth, where the sun dies every day and where lived the Hesperides.

Each of the three nymphs guarded her own fruit: Aigle tended the citron, Arethusa the lemon and Hesperethusa the orange. Thus the Hesperides were the nymphs guarding the "golden apples" which Hercules in his eleventh labour stole from the garden and gave to mankind.

Theophrastus of Eresos, the Greek father of botany of the 4th-to-3rd centuries BC, described the lemon as the apple from Medea, resulting in one of the first botanical names

for the lemon being *Citrus medica*, meaning "coming from Medea".

### Preserved Lemons

Preserved lemon has loads of uses. It adds a salty citrus note to risottos, cous cous, grain salads, grilled meat or fish, and is a very handy jar to have in the fridge.

8 small lemons

300g sea salt

2 cinnamon sticks

1 tbsp coriander seeds, roasted

2 bay leaves

Scrub a one-litre jar with hot soapy water and dry it.

Wash the lemons in hot water, tap dry and cut in half.

Squeeze half the juice from the lemons into a bowl and cut the lemons in half again. Add them to the bowl with the salt, cinnamon, coriander seeds and bay leaves and mix well.

Stuff the lemon quarters into the jar, pour over enough juice to cover them, put the lid on and store in the pantry for five weeks.

Once the jar is opened, they will keep in the fridge for six months.

Until next month, eat well.

## Fibre ties us all together



by Eric Smith

The 2017 Fibre Festival happened on a rare rainless day, June 3rd, and a very open and sharing group of fibre enthusiasts all gathered: to teach, to learn, and sometimes to just enjoy.

The talks in the workshop space were varied. Jennifer MacLennan, who trades in Lismore as the dressmaker Miss Mildred, gave an inspiring talk about escaping the ordinary life to pursue what you are passionate about. Hellena Post visited from Brisbane for another lively talk about the therapy of fibre (among other things), and then interviewed local artist Lae Oldmeadow, who gave us a little insight into both the inspiration for his works, and how his history has shaped how he makes them.

Our MC Stephanie Seckold gave a brief talk on her work growing local cotton, and the last presentation was Eric Smith and his non-electric sewing machines, with a little of the history of the development of these machines so many of us use.

Under the hand-woven stage, Granny Breathweaver led a crowd of enthusiastic learners in making Bangalow Palm carry bags. The fronds, after soaking, are supple like leather, and can be quickly sewn with string from the palm's pod fibres. These bags, natural and non-toxic, replace the wasteful plastic bags that hurt the earth and are enjoyable in the making.

And the marketplace, with sellers of all ages, was as colourful and lively as usual, with many sellers practising their craft at their stall.

The diversity of the festival is very much reflected in the exhibit at the gallery, "Threads". It is well worth a look, and is on until 30th July.



### Spotlight on Lisa Lucken

At the end of last year, Lisa took some extra plants from the nursery where she works, and held a fundraiser for the Sibley Street Project.

It was so successful that she has been running it every other week ever since, adding Nimbin Preschool and Barkers Vale School to her fundraising list.

Her wares are mainly indoor plants, shady area plantings, and hanging baskets. They are lush and beautiful, and sell quickly, so get there early for best selection. She is happy to share her knowledge, and is a pleasure to talk with. Don't miss her stall.

The Blue Knob Market is on every Saturday from 8.30 'til noon in front of the Blue Knob Hall Gallery and Café. We're always glad to see you.



# Detoxifying from heavy metals and healing multiple chemical sensitivities

by Robin Stein, Healer

## Part 2

With chemtrails endlessly across our sky or not, each of us will probably have been absorbing heavy metals through our skin, air, water and probably food as well, over long periods of time.

For this reason, all drinking water really should be purified. The alkaline minerals can be replaced with a pebble of Celtic sea salt in each glass. If you are detoxifying from anything, you will need 2-3 litres of water throughout the course of each day to assist the liver and kidneys to eliminate more successfully.

When I wrote about detoxifying from heavy metals some years ago in my book *The IVF Alternative*, I talked about Hübner silica gel successfully removing aluminium from the body. Coriander also has the power to remove aluminium, along with mercury and lead. For lead poisoning, six grams of Vitamin C, spread over the course of the day, is required for several days.

Pacific kelp contains a non-nutritive substance called sodium alginate, which attaches itself to lead, other heavy metals and radioactive elements, carrying them harmlessly from the body. Zinc and selenium in the correct ratio bind with cadmium to excrete toxic levels from the body, while magnesium and zinc in a ratio of 20-1 will increase Copper excretion through urine.

A diet rich in sulphur and iodine – foods like eggs and onions – will also



increase detoxification from excess copper, as well as radiation poisoning from Radiotherapy. I love Pacific kelp for detoxification because it will also supply necessary minerals in perfect ratio.

Since then, I have discovered some amazing ways to detoxify from heavy metals, to improve gut health and immune function, as well as many more benefits.

The first of these is **Zeolite**. Zeolites come from a group of porous aluminosilicates found naturally in volcanic rock and ash. Zeolites are sold as dietary supplements, as well as being pushed strongly on the internet as a means of removing heavy metals and toxins from the body very successfully. Zeolite is also being heralded as a successful cancer treatment.

**Fulvic and humic acids** occur naturally in our earth and are preferred as super fertilisers by those with organic and biodynamic market gardens. Apart from gardens, vegetables and humans, horses benefit greatly from both acids.

When taken internally, they improve gut health, immune function, skin and brain health, as well as assisting the body to detoxify heavy metals. They are considered the ultimate 'nutrient booster'

as well as active chemical compounds.

They work to assist the body to absorb and utilise other nutrients far more efficiently, assisting the cells to take up antioxidants and electrolytes, to slow ageing, improve digestive health, and to protect brain function. Due to their unique chemical structure, they are able to fight free radical damage that contributes to the process of ageing, as well as to nearly every chronic disease there is.

If you find yourself with **Multiple Chemical Sensitivities (MCS)**, you are likely to be deficient in vitamin B6 and magnesium. A deficiency lowers the amino acid L-Taurine in the body and this deficiency is linked to MCS, as well as to moodiness, irritability and depression. L-Taurine will also assist those sensitive to alcohols, aldehydes, ammonia, chlorine and chlorite and solvents.

The easiest way to replace magnesium is through liquid colloidal magnesium. L-Taurine is found in eggs, fish, milk and all meats, but not in vegetable protein. It can be synthesised in the liver from the amino acid L-Cystine, and from methionine, another amino acid elsewhere in the body. However, synthesis requires vitamin B6.

*Robin Stein is the author of six books. Her two books on health are The IVF Alternative, and The IVF Alternative Companion. She can be contacted by email: robinstein@gmail.com*

## The jaw and Bowen Therapy

by Tonia Haynes

Hi all, well it appears the time of affirming 'leeches are my friend' has passed for now.

It's worth remembering though, whilst digging our cars out of the bog, that California hasn't had rain for four years.

It has been so dry that Trump's new presidential stamp wouldn't stick to the envelopes. Mind you, after millions of dollars of research, they did discover that people were spitting on the wrong side of the stamp.

Speaking of spitting, I did a fantastic workshop on the effects of a dysfunctional jaw a few months ago. Or to be more precise, the hinge of the jaw. Called by them, who just lo-o-ove long words, the 'temporal mandibular joint' and by those lazy ones, who are inclined to speak in acronyms, the TMJ.

Misaligned or clicking jaws may have a huge effect on the rest of our bodies and wellbeing. They're usually created by accidental injury, bad dental work or stress.

Yep. Clenching one's teeth in pissed off mode, or

grinding them during sleep can cause all sorts of long term, unattractive scenarios.

Headaches, migraines, shoulder and neck pain may well be related to a dysfunctional TMJ.

And because everything is connected to everything else in the body, often through the spine, your jaw hinge could well be causing your sciatica, back-ache, stiff hips, or even, stiff ankles.

Being that the human body is a complexity of mystery and one of my insane passions is realigning bodies, I found this new learning to

be a little like discovering the Holy Grail of bodywork.

I'm not saying this is always so, but it may be an important part of the whole problem.

So, considering I treat the body as one unit if you have had a long standing muscle, limb or spinal problem that keeps re occurring it may well have something to do with your lovely face.

I'm in clinic in Nimbin, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Start early, finish late and I'm covered by most health insurers if you have alternative cover. Phone 0439-794-420 for an appointment.

Love, Light and Giggles

## Understanding the transpersonal and spiritual

by Derek Tys

I have heard people say that they are not spiritual; or that they don't know what it means, and speak of it in a dismissive way.

Spirituality pertains to a sense of, or a connection with a higher power, something greater than oneself (God/Goddess, Spirit, nature). It also refers to a sense of proportion, to lose oneself in some great other; to experience awe. Examples of this include:

- to climb a mountain and become lost in the view;
  - to gaze into the depths of the night star field, and maybe feel small in the immenseness of space.
  - to gaze in wonder at the spectacle of nature.
  - or maybe you are a new parent and are lost in the wonder of your new born.
- The 'transpersonal' encompasses states, stages, and realms. Breaking the word

transpersonal down we can see that it consists of two words:

Trans = movement between  
Personal = persona/ the masks we wear  
So put together, transpersonal would mean: to move between/ beyond the masks we wear. Sometimes the word 'transpersonal' is seen as the pursuit of the authentic self.

Having said this, both these areas flow into the other. It would be possible to have a transpersonal interaction with the world, and not ascribe to possessing a connection with a higher power (and thus not fit the definition of spiritual!), yet see themselves as possessing a 'spirituality'.

The word 'spiritual' is used very loosely and sometimes interchangeably with religion. To be religious is not necessarily to be spiritual; to be spiritual is not necessarily to be transpersonal; to be transpersonal is not necessarily to be religious!

The realm of connection is at a place 'within' us. This is the place where there is an interface of dialogue between external events and interior meanings of those events. Human beings need, create and seek meaning. We seek to invest a meaning into things.

Things exist in a landscape of our creation. And this 'meaning-creation' has a language on a few levels: shared language by virtue of being human, and a personal language exclusive to us.

### Coming Up

Saturday Group art therapy: 9-11.30am. Running over five weeks. Contact Derek for when the next group is running. Phone 0429-191-656 or visit: [www.derektys.com](http://www.derektys.com)

*Derek has a Bachelor of Social Work, Advanced Diploma in Transpersonal Art Therapy, and Diploma in Transpersonal Counselling. He works from a Jungian and transpersonal perspective in Lismore.*

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# PIONEERING A FOOD FOREST WITH 'WEEDS'

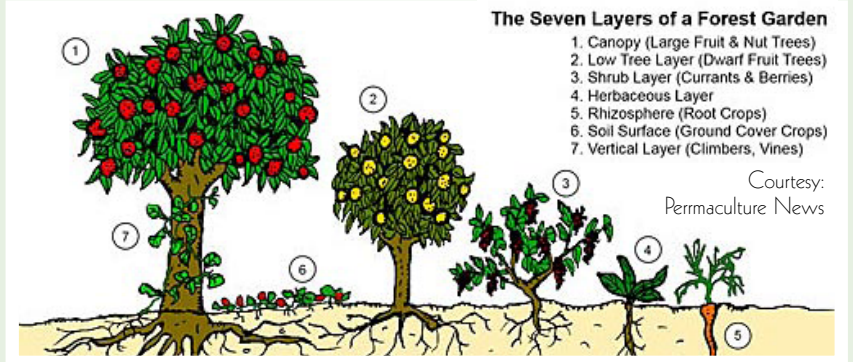
by Geoff Dawe

Many people despair of the means of keeping ahead of the weeds. A trick is to not attempt so much to keep ahead of them as to use them as part of one's agriculture. When this occurs, weeds are not seen as weeds, but as an essential part of one's food forest ecosystem. They are not then removed so much as tended.

In an area incorporated in a developing food forest, paths of 90cms width have been cut on the contour of a slope of 30-40 degrees with spade and mattock. These paths are placed so the mature width of fruit and nut trees grown between them will generally just come to the edge of the paths.

Minor paths called goat tracks because of their width of 30cms., are positioned approximately halfway between the major paths and fruit trees in order to be able to service young fruit and nut trees and other human food plants.

With the circumstance of comparatively steep land, facing south, and wishing to let more light into a dwelling at the base of the slope, one-two metre high lilly pillies, small enough to not shade the house area, are run around the slope at two metre spacings. These serve as shade-tolerant



Courtesy: Permaculture News

trellises for passionfruit vines. The lilly pillies are set on the contour with an A frame level. A 90cm. wide path accesses them on their southern side; a goat track on the northern or higher side.

These lilly pillies grow with "weeds" such as Crofton weed, aduratum (billygoat weed), the native bracken fern and wild tobacco. None of these weeds are removed, for all provide roots in ground on a comparatively steep slope. Nevertheless, weeds in the area where the daily piss buckets with seaweed solution are distributed, are cut back and used as mulch in that area.

Wild tobacco forms most of the canopy while the system is immature. While working in its vicinity, wild tobacco is pruned for its wood and leaves as mulch. The major tool for maintenance of the system is scateurs. The pruning is judicious in that branches in fruit, and feeding for brown pigeons, are left, while harsher pruning occurs in autumn and winter to allow in more light.

In the growing of the food forest, there is no pressure to relieve weed growth. Mulches are heavily sought in the region of food plants and so-called weeds are recognised as the source of mulch.

None of this source of mulch, except in the immediate area of a food plant where previous fertilizer restitution has been made, is removed by killing it. To do so would be to set the system back. In fact there are plenty of areas of "weeds" within the circumscribed food forest area that are going fully through their cycles and setting seed.

These areas of extensive "weed" are areas where the gardener has not yet decided what food plants would be best grown. She fantasises particular plants while passing this area occasionally with piss buckets. Her fantasises are being refined particularly in the light of topography, aspect, temperature, available plants and noticing how previously planted plants are faring.

When the fantasy has reached its zenith it transforms to action. Before cutting the weeds to the ground, thus shocking them, and covering them with thick mulch including their own residues, thus shocking them again, she fertilises them! Actually she is fertilizing soil also in preparation for food plants. This area is then left for a while for fertilizer to be incorporated into soil.

When humans get to the stage where they rationally fertilize "weeds", they then know God's in his heaven and all's right with the world.

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## A gardener will never get bored

### Weed Words

by Triny Roe

Pruning, slashing, mowing, harvesting and WEEDING! A gardener will never be bored as there is always something to do when looking after land.

Weeding is inevitable in the Northern Rivers. More rain than you can poke a stick at and a mild sub-tropical climate create ideal conditions for growing everything. Ornamentals, fruit trees, veges, rainforest and other natives thrive as well as the numerous and various opportunistic plants you don't want. The ones some call weeds will often come by themselves and ultimately need to be managed. Many we bring in ourselves, purchased from a nursery or market stall only to discover a few years later that we have introduced a problem plant or one that grows a lot bigger or spreads more dramatically than expected.

Guidelines for gardening in a rural region include: Know what you already have to start with. Work with what you've got. Some might need to go. Choose new plants wisely.

Duranta, aka golden dewdrop or pigeon berry, *Duranta erecta* or *D. repens*, is an attractive shrub for the garden and a popular hedge choice. Readily commercially available and not on any restricted schedule, this species however does feature in lists of environmental weeds.

This hardy bush is yet another problematic garden escapee causing damage to bushland and creek bank ecosystems. The newer cultivars marketed with trademarked names such



as 'Sheena's Gold' are reputed to be less weedy but it could just be a matter of time.

Originating from tropical and warm subtropical Americas, duranta has naturalised in several countries such as Philippines, China, India and Pacific Islands including Fiji, Tonga and Hawaii.

Listed in the top 50 environmental weeds in Northern NSW and Queensland, this bushy shrub is also recognised as weedy in the Northern Territory and on Norfolk Island.

Favouring creek banks, low lying paddocks and other moist areas, duranta has also invaded both dense and open forests. It will also readily colonise disturbed road side areas.

Growing up to six metres high in clumps almost as wide, it has graceful drooping branches. As the plant matures it develops pairs of spines along the stems. Sprays of lilac blue flowers earn it another sobriquet of sky flower. These fragrant blossoms attract

butterflies. The flowers are followed by clusters of long lasting bright yellow berries. The berries are eaten by birds which spread the seeds far and wide. Note here that these berries are poisonous to many mammals and have been responsible for deaths of stock, pets and children. Garden waste dumping in bushland is another common mode of dispersal of this plant.

Plant instead natives such as lemon myrtle, *Backhousia myrtifolia* and lilly pillies, *Syzygium* and *Acmena spp* instead.

Look for ways to reduce herbicide use. The world now has a huge problem with herbicide resistant weeds. Annual rye grass, originally introduced as a pasture grass for stock, interferes with grain cropping. Chemicals no longer kill it. Around Australia 25 species of weeds have developed resistance to at least one type of herbicide. Some weeds are developing multiple resistances.

Slash instead of spray. Lay cardboard under mulch around trees. Wrap black plastic over small stumps of large woody weeds to exclude light and effect a kill.

While chemical mega-companies frantically try to develop new compounds an inventive grain farmer, Ray Harrington, from WA developed the Integrated Harrington Seed Destructor. This high speed mill device fits in the harvester and grinds the chaff including any weeds seeds to a fine pulp. The damage caused to the seeds prevents them germinating resulting in clean and mostly weed free boundless plains of grain.

Happy weeding and don't forget the follow up.



# Koala Kolumn



by Lorraine Vass

An aspect of Friends of the Koala's core business that we don't talk about much is our contribution to scientific research on the koala.

When I joined the organisation in 2000 it was quite challenging to find material on koalas in the Northern Rivers. A few local studies undertaken by Bruce Gall (Tucki Tucki Nature Reserve), Judy Faulk (Tweed) and Steve Phillips (Lismore and Tweed) had been published. Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education/University of New England student projects and papers delivered to the 1988 NSW Koala Summit were also available but by and large our koalas appeared to be among the more under-studied populations in NSW.

I'm pleased to say that times have changed and that Friends of the Koala has had a part to play in securing the scientific interest which triggers publication. For a start our admissions and sightings records dating back to 1989 provide a comprehensive assemblage of regional data which has and continues to be used to guide the comprehensive koala plans of management in place and a range of other conservation initiatives and campaigns as well as adding to koala knowledge.

Perhaps our most impressive endeavour to date has been collecting and storing ear tissue from deceased koalas for genetic analysis. During 2005-6 we accumulated 150 samples, from Evans Head in the south to Mullumbimby in the north and west to Tabulum although they weren't used until 2008 when



The Friends of the Koala contingent with the Golden Leaf Award for 'Excellence, Wildlife Group' presented at the National Koala Conference

Kristen Lee, a PhD student in The University of Queensland's Koala Study Program, extended her thesis on koala genetics in Queensland to include the Northern Rivers region. These findings were eventually published in 2012. This prompted us to adopt routine sample collection into our procedures which has enabled us to provide tissue for a number of studies as well as to the Australian Museum which is becoming NSW's primary repository for koala samples.

A more recent development has been in collecting specific tissue for various projects in which the University of Sydney's Koala Infectious Diseases Research Group is involved. This has been made possible through our capacity to carry out full autopsies at the Koala Care Centre. An additional benefit from these autopsies is the forensic assessment of the koala's health status leading up to its end-of-life event.

Since 2008 Friends of the Koala

has been a collaborative industry partner in four Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage projects. Three of these projects have focussed on developing vaccines to protect koalas against Chlamydia and Koala Retrovirus (still work in progress). The fourth is developing an integrated socio-ecological approach to koala recovery.

Understanding the connection between people and biodiversity is fundamental to arresting species extinction. We and our koalas are competing for the same space which, as we know too well, forces compromises between conservation actions, people's livelihoods and the priorities of governments. The dire status of some of our koala populations, particularly in coastal areas is largely a consequence of government policies. Yet in recent years all levels of governments have made a considerable financial investment into koala recovery in our region and sections of the community are actively involved

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To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat, ring the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage  
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in on-ground recovery focussing on koala welfare and habitat enhancement. Basically the project seeks to extend and optimise the outcomes from these investments.

Besides taking a long time to hatch, research projects involving government funding and numerous partners (in this case the University of Queensland, Southern Cross University, the University of Sydney, Tweed, Byron, Ballina and Lismore Councils and Friends of the Koala) are bound by legal agreement which takes many months to finalise. Nevertheless, a year into the three-year project staff appointments have been made, the community survey questions and field survey design are well on the way, and available landuse/vegetation, community and koala data are being gathered. More about this in future Kolumns.

The second National Koala Conference, hosted by the Koala Preservation Society, Australia which operates the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital was held in that fair city at the beginning of June. Such gatherings are few and far between and Friends of the Koala made a special effort to encourage active members' attendance. Just as well we did. During the

conference dinner the inaugural Golden Leaf Awards for Excellence were presented in five categories: Research Institution, Spirit of Science, Individual, Researcher and Wildlife Group which, much to our delight was won by Friends of the Koala.

In presenting the Award, the Koala Hospital's Clinical Director, Cheyne Flanagan, referred to Friends of the Koala's outstanding contribution over the past thirty years or so in regard to not only rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing koalas but also our work in habitat protection and enhancement, advocacy, research and on strategic issues relating to koalas.

The Award was a total surprise and came at the end of a particularly hard year for our front line rescuers, leafers, hotline monitors and carers who dealt so well with a significant surge in the number of koalas rescued in the last half of 2016. For them it was great recognition of the endless time and effort they put into fighting for our Northern Rivers' koalas.

I might also add that in light of stepping down from FOK's leadership, such an accolade from peers of the group's work was a real buzz.

## Like an ancient, whispered song

The timbre of the oars in the water is like an ancient, whispered song.

While everywhere else the rain pours down, on this murky canal just a kilometre from Hat Head National Park, the sky is smiling. I'm surrounded on all sides by even stands of melaleuca and reeds, encased in a private world between the ocean and a mountain covered in Blackbutt.

I've been here before. Seventeen years ago, as an idealistic nineteen year-old, I joined a group of people who stepped into an auction room and secured an incredible piece of bushland covering two mountains just outside a sleepy coastal town on Australia's mid-north coast. It was covered in all kinds of legal instruments too, we found out, which would curb our ambitions for development for over ten years. One of the land's great assets was a coastal wetland, dominated by melaleuca forest, and traversable by two kilometres of canal originally cut in the 1950's to drain the great Belmore swamp to the north-east. The subsequent contraction of the freshwater wetlands, from thirteen square kilometres to less than five, resulted in a changed ecosystem, acid-sulfate build-up, salinity, and fish kills. Mullet and prawns can no longer migrate past the canal

gates behind the estuary mouth, and cattle run riot over the anoxic black ooze.

Now back on the wetland, I tell you, it's still incredible. The recent high rainfall means the half-kilometre walk to the canal is through knee-deep water. It's crisp, brackish water, thick with the aroma of peat and melaleuca. Deep wallows made by wild pigs have left tender white lily roots uprooted and floating. The one or two giant flooded gums at the interstitial zone between eucalyptus forest and wetland have put on girth, as if in quiet and successful middle-age. It's other-worldly; a place humans don't live, or plan to stay. The silence and water and smell of the place remind me that there are still places in the world that defy our easy definitions: neither lake, nor land, it is both. Perhaps it comforts me too, that nobody comes here. Nobody wants this place. It is free to be itself.

Paddling northwards, I weave my way under and around fallen paperbarks which have collapsed, tannin-stained, across the water. An Azure kingfisher flits always just ahead of me, and ducks explode out of the channel. The old spoil from the original cutting of the canal lies heaped along the banks, creating silty islands. Tiny shellfish in their hundreds lie exposed in

the spoil, bleached white and made parchment-thin with time.

This wetland, like most Australian wetlands, has borne the brunt of misguided land management practices and ecological ignorance since European occupation. Indigenous peoples valued and still value wetlands as important sites of biodiversity, and sources of foods such as turtle, water-snake, mud crab, pandanus, nardoo, lotus and taro, to name a few. The ease with which the Yolngu magically float across the Arafura swamp in bark canoes – made famous by the film *Ten Canoes* – is in stark contrast to the way in which we have bulldozed, drained and filled wetlands as if with a kind of hatred for their cryptic nature and perceived uselessness.

What remains of our wetland ecosystems is highly degraded, modified and fragmented, and many are now endangered. Seven ecological communities associated with wetlands are listed as endangered or critically endangered, meaning that they are at risk of disappearing in the very near future. More than one hundred species of Australian waterbird spend crucial parts, or the entirety, of their life cycle on wetlands, meaning that these species too are at risk.

But wetlands in Australia are



by Anastasia Guise

finally being recognised and formally protected. In addition to the thousand or so nationally important wetlands, over eight million hectares of Australian wetlands are protected for their international significance, in particular as important feeding and resting grounds for migratory birds.

These birds migrate yearly along the East Asian-Australian flyway, between their breeding grounds in the Arctic, through China, Japan, North Korea, and Australia. These incredible migrations deserve our respect, and their feeding-grounds our protection. For example, one of the most endangered birds in the world, the bar-tailed godwit, has been recorded to fly non-stop for nine days from Alaska to New



Zealand.

I know this wetland is not what it once was. The silence here is too quiet: the quiet of an aftermath. There are no black swans, or bar-tailed godwits. But it's also the silence of a place holding its breath; waiting for its time to come again. Even though my shoes are waterlogged, and my shins slick with peat, it has been a privilege to be here, on the water amongst the reeds.

Anastasia is an author and environmentalist, writing on ecology, science and humanity. Facebook: [anastasiaguiseauthor](https://www.facebook.com/anastasiaguiseauthor)



# Health and longevity from the world's centenarians (Pt 2)

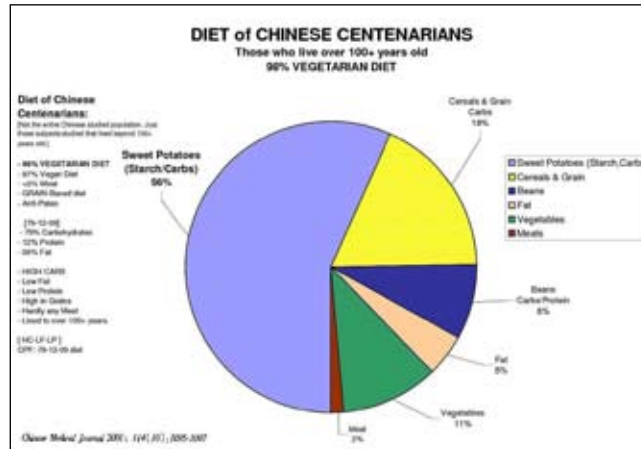
by Cameron Storey

"From an evolutionary standpoint, the human body is 99.98% identical to what it was 10,000 generations ago. We did not evolve with constant access to food because the food was sporadic. So our bodies are actually designed to go for days without eating. When food was plentiful we ate more than we required and stored the excess as fat. When times were scarce, we would fast and survive on our fat stores." – *Eat Less, Live Long* by Jason Shon-Bennett.

Most of the centenarians studied so far follow similar eating patterns. "Sardinian centenarians eat 1800 to 2100 calories a day, 30 to 50% less than your average western intake. The Vilcabamba Incas, Ecuador, eat a vegetarian diet of fresh vegetation, such as avocados, quinoa, sweet potatoes, fruit, seeds, nuts, wholegrains and beans and rarely an egg or two and half the average western calories intake. On the Island of Ikaria, Greece, 30% of inhabitants live into their 90s. The Ikarians eat a

locally grown vegetable and fruit-based, nutrient dense diet with plenty of greens and olive oil. On average they eat meat just five times a month (mostly fish).

The healthy old people of Bama, China, eat just two meals a day, eating considerably less than we do at around 1500 calories per day. They eat a local, fresh, plant based wholefood diet that is naturally nutrient rich and yet low in protein, fat and cholesterol. A group of 128 centenarians, aged from 100 to 110, from Guangdong province, China, were interviewed and some of the crucial findings were: fresh fruits and vegetables are the most common eaten foods, 90% walk for daily exercise, 70% stop eating before they are full and fatty and processed food is shunned. Korean centenarians claim eating more vegetables, eating less overall and not drinking alcohol as their main secrets. Loma Linda, California, the healthiest place to live in the US, is a vegetarian community with no liquor stores and has been smoke free for three



decades. When compared to 100,000 US and Canadian citizens the strict vegetarians are: 13kgs lighter than meat eaters, have lower systolic and diastolic blood pressure, less hypertension and live an average of 9.5 years longer. There are no fat centenarians. The heavier and more overweight you are, the higher your chances of suffering strokes, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, arthritis, mental disorders and dying young. The three dominant family groups of bacteria in the human gut are *firmicutes*, *bacteroidetes* and *actinobacteria*. To remain

healthy with a strong immune system, you need a proper ratio between *firmicutes* and *bacteroidetes*. The more overweight you are, the higher your *firmicutes*. The leaner and healthier you are the higher your *bacteroidetes*. (Washington University, School of Medicine) The prebiotic and probiotic rich super-foods that best transform our gut bacteria are the high fibre, whole-plant foods such as fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds, wholegrains and legumes as well as naturally fermented foods. The Okinawans, Japan, have the highest rate of

people living to 100-120 years old, seven times higher than other populations in the West. Over 97% of the population is disability free, the longest disability free life expectancy in the world. They eat vegetables, wholegrains, soybean foods, fish and fruit with barely 5% dairy and other meats combined. The negative experience of menopause is an unheard of phenomena in Okinawa possibly due to high intake of natural oestrogens from soybean foods and flax. Okinawans have the longest healthy life expectancy without requiring drugs and without getting the diseases that kill Westerners at relatively young ages. Never in the history of nutritional research has the evidence been more clear and consistent: a high wholefood carbohydrate, low calorie, plant-based diet is the best for long term health. There's no doubt about it anymore, despite what you might read in books advocating low-carb, high animal protein diets. Okinawan Centenarian Study researched for 37 years meticulously following the

healthiest, oldest and longest lived population in world history. Hundreds of studies, over hundreds of years, looking at centenarians and people of all ages, races, creeds, colours, body types, blood types and sizes in countries all over the world have shown that the more meat you eat, the more weight you gain, the sicker you are and the more risk of heart disease, cancer, obesity, diabetes and early death. (Professor Sabine Rohrmann et al, University of Zurich, 2013 and Harvard Medical School study, 2009) The Laplanders, Greenlanders and the Russian Kurgi have the highest meat protein consumption in the world and are among the populations with the lowest life expectancies, often dying when they are barely 30 years old." *The Dharma Centre on Lillifield Community has four yoga classes a week. Phone (02) 6689-7120 or check our Facebook page: Dharma Centre – Lillifield for more details and directions.*

## Choices that I make

I am creating my life through the choices I make.

It's quite amazing when a well known concept suddenly turns into a living experience... Feel invited to join my check-in for integrity of current, ongoing and future choices. I'm starting with a few big questions:

- What kind of life do I want to create?
- What's really important for me? What do I hold close to my heart?
- Am I carrying old stuff that doesn't serve me anymore?
- What am I good at? How can I be of service?

Material choices are usually regarded as the big choices in life; where I live, with whom, the lifestyle I create and adhere to, friends and family business, etc.

Actually, it's the seemingly small choices which have long turned into habits that shape my life more than anything. The vocabulary I use, the way I meet myself in the mirror each morning or the kind of judgments I make. Those 'little choices' determine my quality of life far more than my circumstances.

I can choose to greet myself in the mirror with a heartfelt smile every morning. I could carry a matchbox of beans with me and every time I see something beautiful, put a bean into my pocket; then, at the end of the day, count and remember the occasions. Or I can decide to implement changes to the language I use, just to name a few powerful options.



by Betti Wille

*"Whatever we have done with our lives makes us what we are when we die. And everything, absolutely everything, counts."* – Sogyal Rinpoche

What else can I do for good choices?

I choose to be honest. Every lie, every little trick of self-deception takes me away from making healthy choices. These may not always be easy to identify. They could be 'vows' I took as a child or young adult when encountering a difficult or painful situation, like "I will never again allow intimacy – I will protect myself" or "I will never be like my mum/dad – I will always be in control of things". I have found that I am run by subconscious programs like these – a realisation that introduced a new freedom of choice.

This one is extremely liberating: I choose to become what I'm looking for. If I start appreciating more I will satisfy my need for appreciation. By listening to others properly I address my own need to be listened

to. By loving as much as possible I experience love that nurtures me.

Most readers will have heard of the power of the present moment; to actually experience it is a powerful choice. I could ask: What am I feeling right now? The answer might be "I don't know" – but wait, breathe right into this field of not knowing... What else is there? Are there physical sensations? Does it feel agreeable or not agreeable?

*"When we feel conflicted about a particular decision or action, our bodies often hold the answer – if we take the time to stop and tune in."* – Sharon Salzberg

Here is another potent little exercise that can be done anywhere at any time. I choose to do it first thing in the morning after waking up and when I remember, last thing before going to sleep. I focus on the physical sensations within my body. What does it feel like to be alive in this very moment? Whatever shows up, I choose to provide a safe space for my inner experience and meet it with loving kindness.

The heart is like a garden. It can grow compassion or fear, resentment or love. What seeds am I planting?

I'm going to choose wisely.

*Betti practices Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy and community classes in Nimbin. Contact [biodynamic.touch@gmail.com](mailto:biodynamic.touch@gmail.com) or phone 0490-292-138.*

## Freedom is coming

by David Ward

Substance use can be a thoroughly enjoyable indulgence, when kept in balance as a secondary or alternate state of being.

It can also be a totally controlling dependence, once we decide to make it our primary reality, when we believe we must stay there at all costs, when our most important task becomes that of maintaining our levels.

Although others can be affected by our way of life, it is ultimately our business and our choice whether we continue on this path or not. Using drugs and alcohol in this manner eventually shows up as an unmistakable decline in health, function and potential.

For concerned onlookers wondering how to help, there exists the concept of intervention. Although interventions are best initiated personally, the right kind of external input at the right time can prove invaluable.

In my case, a friend wishing to intervene in my obvious decline, simply and skilfully made me an appointment to see a local homeopathic practitioner. I put my trust in this expert, believing in the seemingly ridiculous suggestion that just ceasing my heavy coffee consumption would make a huge difference to my future wellbeing and destiny. Keeping up the

appointments, freely investing in myself and being religious about taking the specially formulated drops she supplied has had a profound effect. Looking back it seems that of all the powerful substances I sought and freely consumed, in terms of life changing properties, these infinitely diluted drops were magically more powerful than all those other elements put together.

Interpreting this chain of events, it would appear that the drops had opened up a new channel within me, both pointing me in the direction of yoga and simultaneously making it fully accessible to me.

The rest is history, and 11 years later this magic portal remains open. I still find myself totally free from interest in or cravings for any of my old substances. I am also still gaining in strength and youthfulness, still finding improvements in the function and comfort of all the organs of my body.

We don't necessarily need an addiction expert, you can be your own expert here, and it doesn't have to be a complicated process. It's just a matter of determining that you want to make the change, believing in the possibility and introducing an alternative to do the same job in a sustainable and positive way.

Perseverance ensures you don't have to do the potentially hard work over

again, making the best use of your time. Seeking support will ensure you stay on track.

It may sound implausible, but it's a matter of chasing a new kind of high, just like the old one in many ways but truly strengthening and rejuvenating. There's no price to pay financially or otherwise, and no sense of hangover or depletion.

It's the new thing you do to prime yourself for facing the world, before a special event, a walk in nature or a sexual encounter, whatever your needs, this becomes the perfect ecological enhancement.

For all those times you would have been reaching for a drug, this is going to be far more effective and fulfilling. Every time you find yourself contemplating what comes next, rather than those familiar substances being there for you, you'll find yourself just taking a breath and registering that wonderful sense of completeness that only your yoga and meditation can bring.

Just as with our old addictions this too will be habit forming, addictive in a positive way. Once a day will usually be enough to set you up for all the events the day has to offer, while an extra session can always be drawn upon when you're required to go above and beyond the call of duty.

*Phone David on 0447-820-510*



# Rehabilitation of rescue ponies

by Les Rees, Equine Naturopath

On a visit to the RSPCA, I discovered two traumatized, emaciated ponies. They were part of a large consignment rescued from a property and a life of neglect. Sadly this often happens when inexperienced people take on ponies without prior experience in equine welfare. When things get too hard they walk away and leave the animals to get on with it often resulting in inter-breeding, lack of food, water and foot care. There are hundreds of cases reported annually but sadly, few are rescued and re-homed.



Merry and Pippin arrived at the RSPCA in Tasmania as walking skeletons. Pippin was so poor that he had to be helped to his feet after lying down since he had no energy or muscle to aid him to stand. I was originally attracted to Merry because she had such a positive and brave nature in spite of all that she had been through and because she had bonded with Pippin, who without her to protect him, would certainly have died.

I made the decision to take them both as Merry had taken on the role of Pippin's protector, and because he was absolutely traumatized by any human contact. They needed each other.

Being flight animals, a horse's instinct is to flee in frightening situations. This causes a physiological response that deepens respiration and raises heart rate as blood sugars are re-directed to power the muscles needed for flight. This can be problematic for animals in continual

states of agitation because the blood sugars are directed away from digestive function, effectively shutting it down making it difficult to gain weight and causing further digestive problems.

As I see it, the way to tackle the problem is twofold. Firstly there is the physiological aspect and secondly, the psychological conditions caused by stress. It's important to gain their trust and to re-establish balance of the physiological processes within the body.

Step one is to establish a routine so that they feel comfortable in knowing what will be happening at any time during the day.

Step two is to address the feeding regime and add some herbal medicine to aid the digestive process and nervous exhaustion and correct any adrenal overload.

After a few weeks, we got to the stage where Pippin was happy to be patted and groomed but he was still difficult

to catch in an open paddock. In the stable he was happy to be caught providing you didn't make any sudden moves which would send him into a state of panic! The regular routine proved to be very calming for little Pip and he was in the right place at the right time having developed an understanding of what would be happening.

The establishment of regularity plays an important part in the rehabilitation of traumatized horses. Pippin was also called over in the paddock throughout the day and given a few treats for coming and taking them out of my hand. This was gradually replaced with pats as we establish

our relationship. All of the above had a positive effect on him and he was gaining confidence and weight daily.

Little Merry was far easier to work with, quickly gaining courage and helping Pip by demonstrating her trust in us. It took many months for Pip to settle completely as he panicked over the smallest of things but gradually we got there.

When I think about the terrible start they had, it makes me sad to think of the others that aren't so lucky. If you're thinking of taking on any rescue horses, remember that their life is in your hands and that you have a responsibility to look after them. They can live for an average of 20-30 years, this is a huge commitment.

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# Expand and contract

by Suzy Maloney B.Eq.Sc.

Here is a great little exercise that will improve your feel for your horse and your riding skills, make your horse suppler and increase safety when riding. Sounds too good to be true?

What I'm talking about is extending your horse out within a gait and contracting it back in. Often when I'm teaching a student they will complain about a horse being too slow or too fast in a gait. A horse creeping along with minimum effort is no fun to ride, but neither is a horse that's going too fast and feels like it's going to bolt. This exercise addresses both these issues and is fun to do. Sounds simple, so now let's break it down into its component parts.

Start your horse walking and allow it to find its own natural tempo. Let your seat follow the motion of the horse's back perfectly so you are both moving as one. Once you are feeling comfortable increase the forward thrust of your seat, lift your energy and see if your horse responds by walking faster. Give them time to respond as this may be new to them. If there's no response back up your seat aid with leg aids until they're walking faster. Make sure you take the aid/s off immediately once you feel a response. Repeat this until the horse is walking very fast and is on the verge of trotting. But don't let them trot. Be ready to control any trotting with your rein aids.

Then cease all driving aids and start half halts with the reins. Slow down your seat. Combine rein aids and seat to get the horse to walk as excruciatingly slow as possible, but don't let them stop. Be ready with your leg aids if they go to stop.

Now you have three walks, the horse's natural tempo, the fast walk and the slow walk. Go back and forward between them, feeling what it's like to expand and contract. You need to really feel your horse to achieve this, which is great for rider development.

Next put your horse into a trot. Allow them to trot at their own natural tempo. Find a rising trot rhythm so you are moving in perfect synchronicity. With a rushing horse you might start with contraction and for a slow horse with expansion. Use the seat first. To slow the trot, rise slower than the horse. Spend a moment too long in the seat and a moment too long in the air. Allow your weight to sink into the saddle, feel soft and slow yourself. See if your horse reacts to this, if not, back it up with a restricting rein aid. Get your horse trotting slower and slower but don't let them walk.



This takes great feel and timing and is a wonderful exercise in itself.

Then ask the horse for a larger trot. Increase the tempo of your rising, spend less time in the saddle (for real slow movers, imagine your saddle is burning hot), bring your energy up and back up with leg aids if necessary. Don't let the horse break into a canter, see how fast and extended a trot you can get without cantering. Then ride and let the horse go at its normal tempo again. Mix up the three trots until you can move freely between them.

Repeat this at a canter. Allow the horse to canter at its normal tempo, then expand or contract. Always use the seat first. Be ready to back up seat aids with the legs and hands. Backup needs to arrive fairly quickly. Give them a few moments to respond to the seat and if nothing's happening, back up. And always release when the horse responds, you can re-apply the aid if required. Have fun with this exercise and reap the rewards of a more responsive and safer horse while improving your own feel and timing.

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