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Autumn Arts Extravaganza



by Donna Sharam

Nimbin Artists Gallery is once again showcasing the best of local art in its 2018 Autumn Arts Extravaganza.

The Gallery committee has assembled a fantastic and varied collection of 2D and 3D art from the area's best creatives.

Included among those showing are Amanda Bragg, Denis Meagher, Anne Cook, Yvonne Preston, Rod Johnson, Jason Morning, Petrena Shaw, Deb Guest and Francisco No Mad Potter.

Nimbin Artists Gallery is a volunteer-run organisation that has been supporting local artists for over 20 years, and is proud of its record in giving proceeds from its sales back to the community by way of grants and donations.

This year a new annual art award has been introduced, called the Sally Art Award, for a work selected by the

gallery's private benefactors, with a \$500 cash prize. It was won by Judi Lane.

This is a gesture in further support of our local art community.

This award joins the existing Margaret McLaren Art & Photography Awards for our local school-age participants each year.

Art brings beauty into the world. Artists look at things differently, they allow you to see things differently, they inspire and bring soul into your life.

Very few artists make a good living. They need our encouragement. So come along and support local artists and the community in general. The art on show covers a myriad of styles and pricing: there really is something for everyone.

The exhibition runs until 29th April, and is open daily from 10am - 5pm in the Nimbin School of Arts Hall, Cullen Street, Nimbin. For any enquiries please contact the Gallery on 02 6689-1444.



'Flower Power' by Pauline Ahern



'Elven Garden' by Donna Sharam

Landscape within

'Landscape Within' is the new exhibition currently showing at Blue Knob Hall Gallery.

The artists who contribute to this community gallery are given a theme to work with for each exhibition and this theme ranges from anywhere between dreams, fantasy and reality.

The inner landscape is sometimes ephemeral, emotional, deeply feeling and to quote a Leonard Cohen song line, "inner feelings come and go"... often transient.

The artists who have exhibited in this show have presented work in 2D and 3D. They have shown us the landscapes of our dreams, somewhere we might escape to, or those real places we carry within us that are remembered and hold meaning for us.

The artists have risen to the theme and Papillon's mixed media sculptural piece, called

'Inner Child', is a somewhat confronting image and is expressed eloquently in all its rawness. It presents an inner life that we don't often get to see and carries this theme to a deep and feeling place.

The exhibition runs until Saturday 12th May.

Artists & Friends lunch

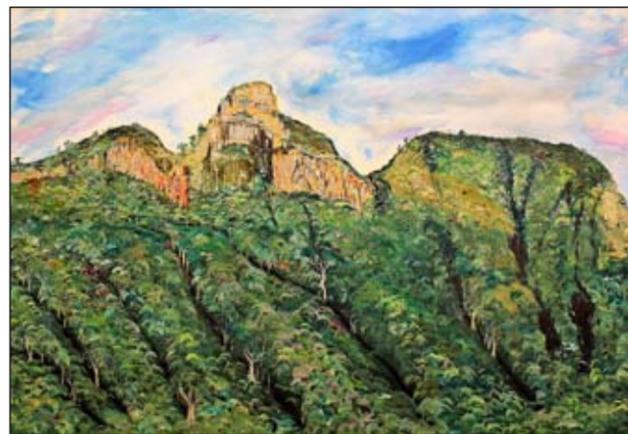
The next Artists and Friends lunch will be held on Thursday 26th April at 12.30pm. This is a set menu with mains and dessert for \$20.

Please call the Gallery on 6689-7449 or email: bkkgallery@harbourisp.net.au if you would like to come along.

Gallery & Café opening hours

The Gallery & Café are now open: Thursday 10am - 3pm, Friday 10am - 3pm, Saturday 8.30am - 3pm, and Sunday 10am - 3pm.

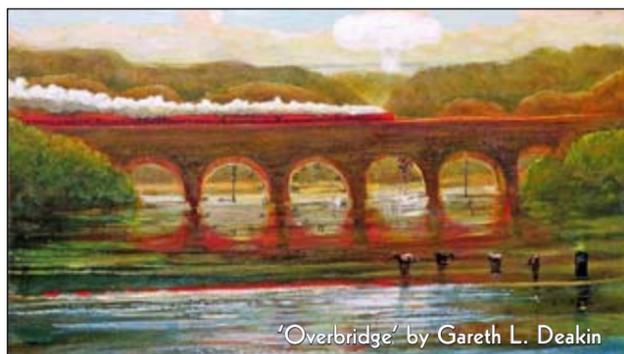
Hope to see you there.



'Sphinx Rock & Mt Burrell' by Helen Douglas



'Inner Child' by Papillon



'Overbridge' by Gareth L. Deakin

Art in a Tin Shed

A group of members of the Casino Men's Shed, both men and women, who collectively get together to share ideas and learn new skills, have come together to exhibit their works in a new exhibition.

'Art in a Tin Shed' is an exhibition which lifts aspiring new artists to another level by providing them with an opportunity to share their works with the public for appraisal.

Meeting once a week, this group of mostly retired individuals take over a section of the Casino Men's Shed, position their easels, pull out their paints and begin exploring their hidden talents.

Facilitated by Ruth Riordan, this group has become a fantastic way to share, explore, support and grow through and in art making.

'Art in a Tin Shed' reflects the joy and interest that people who do not come from an arts background can obtain by collaboratively working together. The exhibition will be on show at the Roxy Gallery, Kyogle until 5th May.



'Untitled' by Lisa Wright

Vicki Swift retrospective

by Fiona McConnachie

The Serpentine Community Gallery has been very proud to have hosted the Interrelate sponsored exhibition 'Journeys of Hope - Celebrating Strength and Resilience.'

Interrelate was funded in 2013 to provide Royal Commission Community Based Support Services to survivors of child sexual abuse and their families, as well as witnesses and employees of the institutions and organisations where abuse took place.

In working towards dealing with the effects of childhood trauma many of the people who engaged with this service used the creative arts as part of their recovery journey and as a result wanted to have their work displayed in a way that would raise community awareness, provide hope for other survivors, and acknowledge their strength and resilience.

The opening of 'Journeys of Hope' on 23rd March was a tremendous success; well attended by not only interested members of the public but also by Interrelate staff and exhibiting clients and their friends and family. Kevin Hogan MP gave the opening speech, along with Julie Leete from Interrelate.

We have been very pleased to support this exhibition, honouring both the effort and successes of clients and to raise awareness of child sexual abuse within the broader community.

'Journeys of Hope' ran at the Serpentine until 4th April, and now is travelling to Sydney and on to Parliament House, Canberra.

Our current members' show is called 'Fall' and is on until 1st May, with the opening at 6pm on Friday 6th April. This is our first members' exhibition for 2018, and hope that all can attend the opening night. For more information, please don't hesitate to call us on the number below.

Following 'Fall' will be a

retrospective of artwork by Vicki Swift, a well-known and much loved member of the Northern Rivers art community who died suddenly in February 2017.

Vicki was born in Lismore in 1946 and lived on the North Coast for most of her life. She undertook several formal studies in art, initially in Newcastle, and then completing an Associate Diploma (Lismore CAE) and Bachelor of Fine Art at Southern Cross Uni.

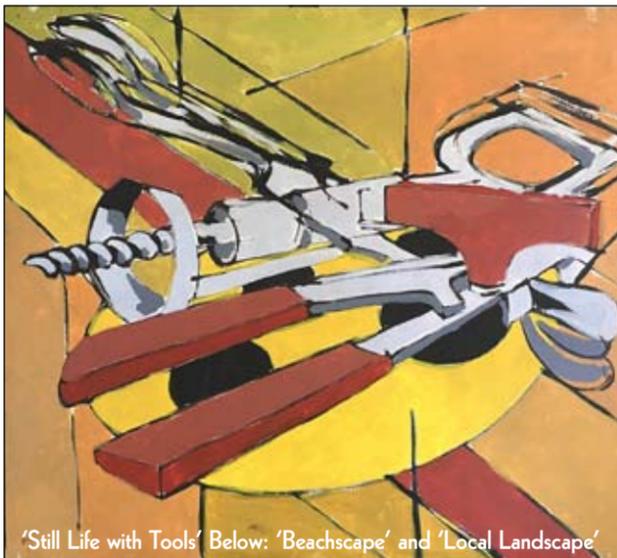
Inspired by her love of the beach and nature, Vicki's artwork captures the softness and intricacy of the natural landscape. Working mainly in acrylics, but also in oils and graphite, her artwork reflects her view of the minutiae of daily life and the natural environment around her.

Poor health unfortunately limited how much painting Vicki was able to do in the latter part of her life, but she never stopped appreciating and loving others' work. Influences on her art include Michael Taylor locally, as well as Richard Diebenkorn and Fred Williams.

Vicki has been sorely missed by her friends and family and her daughter and son-in-law want her work to go to people who loved her and her art. As a consequence they are willing to negotiate the prices to ensure that they go to a "good" home. This is a chance to buy Vicki's beautiful landscapes and to enjoy and share in her legacy.

The exhibition will be on from 2nd to 29th May, with the opening on Friday 4th May at 6pm. All are welcome to attend this celebration of the life of a respected and loved member of our art community.

The Serpentine Community Gallery is at 17a Bridge Street, North Lismore, phone 6621-6845, email: gallery@serpentinearts.org web: www.serpentinearts.org Facebook: SerpentineArts Instagram: [serpentinecommunitygallery](https://www.instagram.com/serpentinecommunitygallery)



'Still Life with Tools' Below: 'Beachscape' and 'Local Landscape'



Market Co-ordinator, Steph Seckold

Pop-up Art Gallery

Nimbin Market introduces the pop-up Art Gallery!

Local artists are invited to bring works for sale to be displayed in the main hall of the Community Centre's Acacia House on market days, the 4th and 5th Sundays of each month.

April has two markets this year, the 22nd and 29th, so pencil in your diaries. Contact: nimbinmarkets@gmail.com for more info.

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Sacred herb of the druids: yarrow

With the onset of Autumn weather, I feel excited about planting new things. I bought some yarrow from the Lismore produce market as I'm wanting to grow more medicinal herbs. My favourite yarrow is the pink flowering variety so I was very happy to find this.

Yarrow was named *Achillea millefolium* after Achilles, the Greek warrior who was a hero in the Trojan War. Yarrow's important medicinal use is to staunch bleeding, and so it was used as a wound medicine during wars. Legend has it that Achilles appealed to the gods to protect him, and they

immersed him in a vat of yarrow tea (hopefully cooled down), holding him by his ankle. This supposedly gave him protection, except for the unimmersed ankle which became his vulnerable spot. Hence the terms Achilles heel and Achilles tendon.

Thinking further about yarrow, as you do, I remembered when studying herbal medicine with Dorothy Hall that she said yarrow was one of the sacred herbs of the druids. In ancient Celtic cultures, the druids were respected learned men (priests, teachers and judges) who looked after the spiritual activities of the community.

(I'm guessing that the women doing similar things were known as witches and perhaps were more available to less well-off, but I'm speculating). Rituals were performed using many different plants. Yarrow was used as a divination tool, particularly the flowering stalks. It was a sacred plant believed to be protected from supernatural influences. It was used to give protection from evil and disease.

Interestingly, yarrow stalks were also used as a divination tool in ancient China for consulting the I Ching. As in ancient Britain, yarrow was considered a sacred plant with spiritual qualities. I find it fascinating when cultures in very different parts of the world (at times when international travel was limited) have identical uses for medicinal plants.

Modern science enables us to know many of the active

constituents contained in the yarrow plant. Analysis of the constituents of medicinal plants around the world invariably confirms traditional use, which I find fascinating in itself. (It can't yet explain how yarrow works as a divination tool, but perhaps in time...)

The plant chemistry is quite complex, with the leaves and flowers containing such ingredients as flavonoids, vitamin C, bitters, tannins, alkaloids, sterols, phenolic acids, coumarins, sesquiterpene lactones and volatile oils.

Medicinally, yarrow is mainly used in regulating the flow of blood throughout the body. It is useful in fresh bleeding (as with traditional use to treat battle wounds), bruising and haemorrhage. It helps regulate the menstrual cycle, encouraging blood flow if it is absent, but also reducing heavy bleeding.



Nature's pharmacy
by Trish Clough, herbalist

Yarrow's action in staunching bleeding is very effective for men with urinary bleeding from benign prostate enlargement. This can be an alarming symptom requiring medical investigation (in case of more sinister causes). It can be difficult to treat in general, but I find a combination of yarrow tincture (along with other prostate herbs) to be very effective for this otherwise difficult to manage symptom. As well as regulating blood,

yarrow also regulates the flow of water throughout the body. It promotes elimination of water through the skin and the kidneys. A cup of warm yarrow tea helps induce sweating (diaphoresis) to bring down a fever. It has an astringent action in the intestines (from the tannin content) and so is useful with diarrhea.

Yarrow was used and revered by women in ancient times in Scotland because it had the power to enhance feminine beauty and cause a person to fall in love with the wearer. I thought this was a lovely thought to finish this month's column.

Trish is available for consultations by appointment on 0452-219-502 or email at: herbalist.trish@internode.net.au

The information in the column is meant for general interest only and should not be considered as medical advice.



Bread-maker Myfanwy Stirling serving John MacLaren at the Nimbin Organic Food Co-op

by Neil Amor

Over the coming months, Food Matters will highlight some of the people behind what we eat.

As Autumn creeps in, thoughts turn to bread... really good bread... and Nimbin is fortunate to have some passionate bakers in their hills.

Jason and Myfanwy of Nimbin Sourdough have been making and delivering high quality bread and unique pastries and biscuits to an appreciative community for the last 10 years.

Jason, originally from New York City where he cut his teeth as a chef, headed for a sea change and arrived in Bangalow before being seduced by the allure of Nimbin, Myfanwy's home town, finding it much more suitable for their young family.

Starting small from home, they soon had people queuing up at their house, so they started supplying Saturday's Blue Knob Farmers Markets.

Shortly after, with the help of his artisan father-in-law, they constructed a wood-fired brick oven with a capacity of 35 loaves at a time.

Obviously not having enough to do, they helped set up the Wednesday Nimbin Farmers Market, where you can find them plying their wares (still with a queue), or you can pop in to the Co-op on Thursdays to get your bread... but be quick.

Here's one of Myf's favorite recipes:

Panzanella

Tuscan tomato and bread salad

320g (about half a loaf) Nimbin Sourdough loaf of your choice

2 tablespoons olive oil

5 vine-ripened tomatoes, roughly chopped

1 continental cucumber, peeled at 1cm intervals, roughly chopped

1 yellow capsicum, deseeded, chopped

1 celery stick, trimmed, sliced

1/4 red onion, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon red wine vinegar

1 garlic clove, finely chopped

Salt & freshly ground pepper

Torn fresh basil leaves, to serve

Method

Tear the sliced bread into rough pieces about 3-5cm in size. Heat half the olive oil in a large frying pan over a medium-high heat. Add half of the bread.

Cook, tossing occasionally, for four minutes or until golden. Transfer to a large bowl. Repeat with the remaining olive oil and bread.

Add the tomatoes, cucumber, capsicum, celery and red onion. Combine the extra virgin olive oil, red wine vinegar and garlic. Add to the salad. Season with salt and pepper. Use clean hands to toss until well combined.

Set aside for 30 minutes to allow the bread to soak slightly. Scatter with torn basil leaves to serve.

Until next month, eat well.

Fifth year for Fermentation Festival



Deborah Perry
Inset: Mika and Tomo
Below: Peter Hardwick
Photos: Steve

The fifth Blue Knob Farmers Market Fermentation Festival in March was a successful event, with some great speakers and a great turn out of locals and many interstate travellers.

This event is part of the bigger picture of food sustainability in our Nimbin community. We want to encourage people to learn traditional skills about preserving and creating healthy food, and we are always encouraged by the interest this event attracts.

In the future we are thinking of organising a full day of workshops and presentations.

This year's speakers presented lots of great information, from making pandanus palm vinegar by Peter Hardwick to a very tasty fermented cashew cheese by James Creagh, how to heal your dog's leaky gut by Deborah Perry, Jess McDonald sharing her experience with healing the human gut and Rothsey talking about medicinal tonics.

This year's theme was 'Food is our Medicine' and was supported by the talks by Jess McDonald about the Gaps diet and her experience of healing her child using this diet and including many ferments.

Following the talks there was a very energised competition of ferments, with plenty of taste-testing by those present, who judged the winners. Tom Rothsey won the prize for his fabulous sauerkraut and lemon myrtle and Maggie Clarke for her delicious fermented cake.

The event ended with a sit-down meal that offered a healthy choice of locally grown and fermented foods and desserts.

Much thanks to Blue Knob Gallery, Blue Knob Farmers Market and the organisers Gillian Tubbs, Eric Smith, Deb Perry and James Creagh.

The event was recorded by Paul Tait and will eventually become available as a DVD from the backyarders table at the Blue Knob Farmers Market if you missed out.

For more info, contact: jamescreagh@hotmail.com

Wheat, dairy, guilt-free indulgence

by Robin Stein, intuitive healer

It is very difficult to find a wheat and dairy-free cake that is truly moist, delicious and good for you, and also a cake 'everybody' will love.

This has become my favourite cake and I've adjusted the recipe over the years until I thought it was simply perfect.

The ingredients are organic and I'm sharing the recipe with you so you can enjoy it as well. Ingredients are measured in a 250ml cup.

Robin's Sticky Date Cake Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- One cup of organic olive or coconut oil
- One cup of organic rice malt
- Half cup of coconut or rapadura sugar
- One rounded dessert spoon of pure, raw cacao powder
- Three large, ripe bananas
- 250 gms dates, soaked in warm filtered water for 10 minutes
- 250 gms crystallised ginger, soaked in warm water for 10 minutes to remove excess sugar or rice flour
- One cup of coconut flour
- One cup brown rice flour
- One cup rye flour
- 3 cups of ground almonds (I



put these through my coffee mill – make one cup more coarsely ground for texture)

- 100gms dark, organic chocolate, broken into pieces
- Two teaspoons Potassium Bi-Carbonate (contains no aluminium)
- One heaped teaspoon organic baking powder

Method

I use an old, enamel 32cm (diam.) frying pan as my cake tin. Line your tin with several sheets of kitchen paper first, then line with plain brown paper. Do not spray the paper.

Keep several pieces of folded brown paper and put this thick pad over the top of your mixture to prevent the top of the cake burning – it

will be in the oven for more than two hours. Heat oven to 180°C.

Into a food processor, put eggs and rice malt. Mix thoroughly on a medium setting. Turn the speed to low and add the cacao powder. Break up bananas and add.

Drain dates and add to mixture one by one to make sure no date stones go into your cake by mistake, then add ground almonds, bicarb, baking powder and coconut flour.

At this point my food processor struggles, so I tip the mixture into a large bowl so I can do the rest of the mixing by hand. Add rice and rye flour, then the

chocolate pieces and ginger. Mix very well and tip the mixture into your cake tin.

Bake for one hour at 180°C. Then place extra brown paper on top of the cake, turn the oven down to 170°C and bake for a further one and a half hours.

When the cake is cooked, open the oven a few cms to let most of the heat out, then close the oven and leave the cake to settle until the next day. If you try to take the cake out and cut it, it will crumble and fall apart. So please be patient and you will be well rewarded.

The next day, turn the cake out onto a platter and remove the paper carefully. Then place the cake right way up. You now have a very moist cake with a wonderful texture, so you will need to cut it very carefully with a bread knife so you can cut through the chocolate and ginger pieces while keeping your cake intact.

The flavour and texture improve over a few days, and your serving size should not be too large because this cake is also very rich.

It is delicious by itself, or served with natural mango or lemon sorbet. Enjoy!

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Cultures matter: Kvasses

by Thom Culpeper

Kvass, a Russian fermented Rye bread beverage is now a way forward to enjoying digestion-correcting ferments. The west has discovered this Slavic beverage and small and not so small kvasseries are being established. Crowd-funding is helping to finance some larger establishments.

'CoCola' and its mate Pepsic have been hustled out of the East by a new ferment, 'Nikola' (in Russian, sounds like NOT-Cola), the former CoCo now has only 2.1%, while the later, 'Nikola' has taken 39% and another Kvass, 'Ochakovskiy' has retaken another 18.9% of the citizens' imbibing choice.

The Americans have thrown in the towel, closed down or amalgamated. The current hullabaloo on matters Russian has made 'Yanqui' business a 'thin ice' endeavour... "Ye reap as ye sow!" Justice is more than often, poetic and 'foot-shooting' definitely mitigates even against dirty dancing in most cases.

Rye-bread & beetroot Kvasses

Ingredients

- 5 litres of water
- 5-7 slices of toasted bread or crusts
- 150 grams of sugar or honey or, (your choice)
- 2 tsp of baker's yeast or a dessert spoon of live 'starter'
- Some raisins...about 3-4 to a bottle. They will indicate when floating when all the sugars are fermented out.



The 'Catching of the Rye'.

All of the remnant crusts, the stale cuts of your rye breads together with water, sugars or honey some raisins and 'baker's yeast' or a rye sourdough starter will be used in the making of the Kvasses. You will need a couple of large stainless steel cooking vessels, a very fine sieve, a funnel, 1 litre sealable bottles, (you may consider ex-soda bottles or ex-Champers punts, they are pressure safe).

Rye method

Toast the bread or dry them in the oven, to a dark toast, DO Not burn them, break them into small pieces.

Boil the water add all the sugars to dissolve, pour over the bread pieces and cool to about 40C. 'Pitch' the yeast in 3 tablespoons of warm water. Add the ferment culture to the bread/water mix.

Beetroot method

Scrub and wash 2 kilos of beetroot, using a mandolin set at 3ml cut, julienned the beetroot, boil 2 gallons of water, add the beetroot and allow to cool. Add the a yeast starter, let it ferment overnight. Do as below, amend with 'fabulous' red fruits of your choice after initial ferment.

Cover and leave to ferment for 12-14 hours. Harvest the Kvass through several layers of filter cloth into a cleaned vessel. Bottle out, adding 3-4 dried raisins or sultanas per bottle, leave for a couple of hours to "get going", refrigerate for 2-3 days. Crack one (let the pressure off, carefully)!

Culpeper makes a collection of Kimchis, Sauerkrauts and Kvasses. One Kvass, Beet and Dragonfruit, is worth a trip to Blue Knob Markets on Saturday. Does anyone have 'spare' dragonfruit? Exchange? thewholeearthveg@gardener.com

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How to tackle weeds

WEED WORDS

by Triny Roe

Weed, weeds, weeds, everywhere you look! Sometimes it can be overwhelming. The task of weed management seems so huge that it is difficult to know where to start. So nothing happens.

Then the weeds take over. Then you're unhappy. The neighbours are unhappy and so is the Council. Some of the worst weeds have legislative control measures and weed inspectors are out and about searching for the serious ones and educating the community.

How to tackle?

Do 'a little and often'. Break the task down into bite-size pieces. Don't try to do everything all at once. Limit weeding sessions to one or two hours at a time. A whole day spent tackling a dense infestation can lead to exhaustion and burn out. Don't overdo it and you'll be ready and keen to do some more next time.

The Bradley Sisters pioneered their method of bush regeneration during the 1960s and 1970s. These two women gently hand-weeded their local bushland according to three principles. Start in areas of best and cleanest bush – target outliers first before moving onto the solid infestation. Minimise soil disturbance. Work gradually and allow natives to re-establish as you go.

Strategically time the weeding. Some

species are strictly seasonal. They flower all together once a year. Crofton Weed is a good example. Plan to pull this one in July and August just before it flowers in September. This dense-growing weed inhibits natural recruitment and bush regeneration.

Careful timing of removal of thick patches from areas of forest and along creek banks can result in the return of native ground covers such as native raspberry or *Pollia crispata* (see photo) in one to two years. Follow up will still be required but as natives re-establish there is less likelihood of the exotics invading.

As Summer comes to an end, there's not as much mowing but there's still plenty to do on the land. During your regular inspections for new weeds look out for Groundsel Bush. This woody weed is easily recognised with its distinctive toothy spade shaped leaves. With wind-blown seeds, it can come from a great distance.

Now beginning to flower, please nip this one in the bud. One dirty paddock can provide seed for an entire valley. When the soil is damp, new seedlings will pull out easily with a little encouragement.

Giant devil fig, GDF, is another one to watch out for. Birds and bats will carry seed from nearby and more distant properties. Regular flooding in the region also distributes this species. GDF is easily removed at the seedling stage with a hand tool. Make sure all



Native raspberry

the roots are completely gone. If left to grow to four metres, GDF will be difficult to deal with and have a massive root system. If you don't have GDF now, you could get it soon. Watch out.

Check slashers, mowers, and other machinery for dirt and plant debris. Clumps of mud may look innocent but can contain a plethora of minuscule seeds. Ask contractors what decontamination procedures they use.

Do your own inspection. Sometimes you will see live plants merrily growing in soil lodged on nooks and crannies of the equipment. There's a whole ecosystem on that bulldozer.

Many hands make light work. Join a local Landcare group, or start your own. Richmond Landcare provide information and support for all Landcare groups in the Richmond River Valley. Get more information from their website: www.richmondlandcare.org

The Gungah Road Valley Landcare is a newly formed group to rehabilitate and maintain sections of Mulgum Creek and its tributaries.

Happy Weeding.

Plant of the month

Brush Cherry *Syzygium austral*

by Richard Burer, Natural area restoration consultant

Syzygium austral is a small tree found in all types of warm rainforest.

Commonly known as Brush Cherry, it is very common on the North Coast, and particularly in the Nimbin area.

It is often found in damp



gullies and by creeks.

Purple/maroon fruits hang in abundance from winter to spring and are a favourite bush tucker for the kids.

This very attractive evergreen tree is easy to grow and makes an excellent screen, garden or native planting for most situations.

For those interested, there is a very old tree on Calico Creek (on Blade Road, Nimbin, opposite the tip) that looks to have had many a camp and feast over the last couple of hundred years.

Creek restoration project at Jingi Walla Farm

Jingi Walla Farm at Lillian Rock has just been awarded a NSW DPI Fisheries' Recreational Fishing Trust's 'Habitat Action Grant' of more than \$5,000 for the restoration of a small headwater creek on the property.

The property is a mixed farm of 150 acres, growing organic garlic and native foods, and raising beef cattle.

The farm also has a thriving Farmstay tourist business that is especially popular with Brisbane city dwellers.

The creek undergoing restoration, French's Creek, flows into Leycester Creek, a tributary of the Wilson River that flows through Lismore. It also provides water to the famous Hanging Rock Falls in Wadeville.

Much of French's Creek has forested banks, however Lantana and Crofton weed have taken over in many sections.

"We are really proud that we have been awarded this grant to help us restore French's Creek to the pristine headwater creek it once was", Dr Kirsten Cowley, Environmental Scientist said.

"We've seen both platypus and yabbies

in the creek, so we are eager to ensure good water quality and habitats for these species.

"Restoring the native vegetation along the creek and fencing off the cattle will also help to encourage fish breeding as well as improve water quality downstream," she said.

Jingi Walla Farms' owners, John and Kirsten Cowley have only been on the farm for a year and are blown away by the beauty of their farm and the Northern Rivers region as a whole.

"It's great to live in an area that still has its forests and clean waterways and within a community that shares our environmental values," John said.

"Jingi Walla means welcome in the local Bundjalung language, and we've certainly been made to feel welcome here."

The 'Habitat Action Grant Program' is financed from funds generated through collection of the recreational fishing licence fee in NSW, and is managed by NSW DPI Fisheries on behalf of the Recreational Fishing Trust.



Woofers Syd White and Noah Jacques removing lantana from the banks of French's Creek

Who's afraid of Happily Ever After?

I'm suspended on a footbridge above the Pacific Highway, overtaken for a moment by the urge to drop a banner. It's the perfect place. Highly visible, spanning four lanes, right where traffic slows into a semi-bottleneck. It's just before the Easter long weekend. I inspect access points at one end of the structure and find easy foot-holds leading up to a safe – but hair-raising – grille roof-top.

My thoughts hang suspended too; wedged somewhere between nostalgia, romanticism, and a very real grieving. For the planet, its creatures, for a small and simple life. The last male northern white rhino was euthanased just last week, the giraffe has been listed as vulnerable by the IUCN, and, closer to home, hectares of incredible forest are falling under the bulldozers.

Is it just middle age, or was there a time when I was actually excited about the future? What about society as a whole? Once we got over that hump that was imminent nuclear armageddon, we seemed set to sail into an era more prosperous, stable and informed than any of those that preceded it.

Teenagers were eager to leave home

and take apprenticeships, university was free and full of ferment, the beaches were empty, and one could still make a living off the land. There were mountains to climb and little white picket fences to paint, and plenty more fish in the sea.

For those who were Western and white, at least, the little dream of a quarter acre block, a holiday at the beach in the old Holden, and a gold watch upon retirement were not so far out of reach. For many there was a peaceful satisfaction in it. The world had been torn up and put back together again. Those who fought in wars of horror and survived returned to grow old in the sunshine, never imagining the horrors that lay ahead for us.

Bold game-changers, such as Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, ushered in an era indeed more environmentally enlightened than the decades before it. But somehow the great beast grew around us and ahead of us, swallowing our every move. If we danced, it followed in our footsteps, if we flew, it seeded motels and smiling tour guides at our every destination.

Smoothing our pillow, massaging us into complacency. Where we moved, how we worked, who we loved

– these all became commodities to feed a beast we could not kill because we had spawned it.

Almost every conversation we have now about our future is that there isn't one. Every tipping point we predicted has not only tipped but overflowed. The whisperings and warnings once so carefully-crafted by environmental scientists who believed in logic and goodwill turned incredulous and angry, and then into the muffled protests of the knee-capped hostages they have become.

We never believed we'd be so bad. We made cinema to play out our shadow side, but now everything including our breakfast is a movie, with plots as grandiose as any blockbuster we ever produced: *Save the World! The End is Nigh! The Sky is Falling! The Sea is Rising!*

So what are we doing with all this nihilism and despair? Well, we're living like there is no tomorrow. We're partying like it's 1999. We've made bucket lists as long as my right arm. Antarctica. Iceland. Last year we took more flights than in any other year in history, despite swathes of agreements, targets, affirmations and tech-speak about reducing CO2 emissions.



by Anastasia Guise

What should we be doing with all this anger and despair?

Well, I'm going to start by dropping a banner from this bridge. Small is beautiful. Keep it simple. Grow some food. Exit now. Forget driverless cars – what about emissionless ones? Any and all of the above.

But I won't stop there. After that, I'm going to jam up that highway, and while I serve each pissed-off and powerless driver frozen banana pops, I'm going to direct every single one of them to the Federal Minister for Transport and the Federal Minister for the Environment's private mobile phones.

After ten minutes of irate holidaymakers screaming down the

lines at them, these two knuckleheads will mandate an end to all petrol and diesel vehicle sales in this country; introduce subsidies and incentives for electric car sales and conversions, and while they're at it, declare a moratorium on all non-essential air travel, including their own.

They'll immediately and painstakingly commence – with their colleagues – the dismantling of the coal-oil complex and transition every suddenly unemployed worker into hemp production and riparian restoration works.

But I'm not done. After that, I'll plant my winter crops into the clean food bowl my neighbours and I share: two thousand leeks and carrots, three hundred broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower seedlings, and dozens of shelling peas pushed thumb-deep into the throbbing soil.

In the late afternoon, I'll wind my way up through the little rainforest I've planted, fingering a scrap of dirt-stained paper in my pocket, composing the poem I will send to everybody I know, to ensure that it is not just me. It is not just this day.

I've been on my feet for sixteen hours by now. But I don't care. I'm excited. Because then I'm going to do it all again the next day, and the next, until the future appears again.

Facebook: [anastasiaguiseauthor](#)

Koala Kolumn

by Susannah Keogh, Care Co-ordinator

Benji. Each koala that comes into our care here at Friends of the Koala is given every opportunity to rehabilitate and/or recover from their illness or injury. A lot of work is put into making this happen at the Care Centre, the vet clinics and wildlife hospitals. It is a joint partnership with the same goal – to save every koala where possible and return them to the wild with excellent health and good quality of life.

Benji was rescued in early September last year from Nobbys Creek in Tweed Valley. He was perched low in a non-food tree at the side of a road with no visible food trees in any direction. While he appeared to be healthy, we consider koala behaviour a more significant indicator of sickness/injury than anything else, so his position low in the tree was a very bad sign.

He was also unresponsive, easy to capture and handle which was also very concerning. Despite all that, he was in very good condition – a fact that always works in the koala's favour. Our rescuer, Rhonda Miller, lives in Tweed Heads so she was happy to take him straight to Currumbin Wildlife Hospital the following morning.

His initial assessment at Currumbin was unusual – no abnormalities were detected despite the several behavioural signs suggesting something was wrong, so he was returned to our Care Centre for observation. He was an immediate favourite as he was curious (wanting to grab and sniff all the volunteers who worked in his enclosure), had a huge appetite but was particularly slow moving, which concerned us.

After two weeks in care, he developed a head tilt and started having balance issues as a result, so we returned to Currumbin for further investigation. His tests were inconclusive but the vets were confident it was either brain disease or injury. Bloods were sent away for Cryptococcosis which can affect the brain, but returned negative.

Benji returned to Currumbin several times in the following months. His condition appeared to worsen at about 4 weeks after rescue, with the right side of his face appearing paralysed. His mouth hung open with his tongue hanging out a little, his ear was down and his eye lid looked droopy. It made us love him all the more. He was still so content in care regardless of this, keeping a good appetite the whole time.

The most significant change was that when he came to ground, he just walked in tight little circles. This did not bode well for a koala who needs to function in the wild. Every time we returned to Currumbin, it seemed to become more and more clear – he had been hit by a car and had brain trauma. The good news was that he finally seemed to be improving. We put him in our biggest



enclosure where he climbed and ate and regained some of his condition but he needed something we couldn't give him – time in the trees.

After discussion with Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital about Benji's particular circumstances, we transferred him up in early December. They have large fenced off areas of big eucalypts where adult koalas are placed after long periods of care-giving an opportunity to watch how well they would cope if released. Benji had no problems climbing, so we were very happy for him to have a few months in their plantation to get strong and continue to improve.

Three months later, head vet Dr Rosie Booth from AZWH called to discuss Benji's future. As expected, his condition was brilliant from all the climbing and he had gained lots of weight. Unfortunately, every time Benji came to ground to change trees, round and round in circles he went. As Rosie said, if he were released, "He would be in the mouth of a dog within a month." But he was otherwise completely functional and had a great quality of life.

The question is, what happens now for this lovely boy? As he's been assessed by a vet as unreleasable, the process we now have to go through is to apply through the Department of Environment & Heritage for him to go into permanent care.

Unfortunately, we're unlikely to be able to have him permanently in care with us, so the best we can hope for Benji is that he is accepted into species management. This is a process whereby zoos and wildlife parks can bid for a koala under their licences. Whilst he does have brain damage, he is an otherwise fully functioning male and could breed either directly or through collection of his sperm.

Benji's story is another example of just how hard our volunteers and vets try to do everything they can to save each koala taken into care. It also shows the amazing results that can be achieved through cooperation between wildlife groups and wildlife hospitals.

Congratulations to all involved in saving Benji's life.

Nimbin Garden Club notes



by Pawpaw

On a glorious Saturday afternoon in March, 20 members of the Nimbin Garden Club visited the property of Joy and Michael Smith on the Koonorigan plateau.

The Smiths, married for 41 years, moved to the land 17 years ago, and as a united team have transformed the property from a nearly bare block to a productive loved home, orchard and garden.

The 23-acre property has a number of paddocks for a small grazing herd of cattle that provide the Smiths with organic grass-fed beef.

Emphasis is placed on producing as much fruit and vegetables as possible, taking into account camping adventures away and marauding hungry creatures getting their share of the spoils. Enough food is grown to preserve by drying and freezing, and a generous amount of produce is bottled.

Michael has an interest and considerable knowledge in bush tucker and ways to utilise these foods. His experimentation with home-grown botanicals and sugar has produced some exotic evening drinks.

There is a spectacular view in almost every direction. The house garden has an astonishing variety of bromeliads, roses, vegetables, natives and exotics with surprising shady nooks and crannies to sit and contemplate life. Dotted around are a variety of citrus, grapes, bananas, kiwi fruit, figs, mulberry, pawpaw, macadamias, cherry guavas, bunya pine, ginger, Davidson plums and more.

After the usual delicious afternoon tea where we were generously encouraged to imbibe some of the produce, Michael showed us his home made bio-char contraption. Using coffee husks and old macadamia shells, a new product in the form of bio-char is made.

Garden Club members are very appreciative of community members who graciously share their private space and passion for the land with us. Thank you Joy and Michael.

Our next visit is to the home of Gabriel and Heather at 80 Crofton Road, Nimbin, on Saturday 21st April from 2 – 4pm. Please note that as this is a working farm, all people attending are requested to wash all footwear before the visit to ensure no spread of weeds or contaminants.

Visitors and guests are welcome to attend. Please bring a cup, a chair, and a plate to share.



Photos: Peter Brooker

You'll never be the same again

by David Ward

Things can happen in this life that leave us changed forever, physically and emotionally. They forcibly remove us from our comfort zones giving us the chance to develop and grow.

It can be extreme when everything we've built up and know in life falls away, leaving us exposed and vulnerable. It's something of a feature of our society, one person's crisis creates another person's opportunity, keeping things ticking over nicely.

The same system offers many supports, although in our vulnerable state we may require assistance to develop the worthiness to ask for them.

There also exists the biggest industry of all, offering that convenient approach, where all pain and discomfort can be avoided. That special deal whereby a vast range of products and pursuits offer us an alternative to the inconvenience of having to be shaped by our life's events.

It's a means of keeping things the same, thinking and feeling as little as possible, no matter what's happening. Convenience always comes at a cost, this way of life is so effective at numbing our senses we can be deep in a state of PTSD and think everything is completely normal.

We can be regularly having suicidal thoughts, getting used to this way of thinking

without realising that it's a desperate message from our higher selves, telling us to take action, to seek help and make changes. We start to believe we are powerless to change our course, just watching and shrugging as our health slips away, our bodies losing their shape and function.

It really is a case of us being expendable in the scheme of things, we have to keep up, we can't expect there to be allowances made for us, we can't afford to feel and it's too painful anyway. It can look a lot like there is no time or incentive for us to take back control of our lives and our feelings.

Vital Choices Power Vinyasa Yoga, at 5.30pm Thursdays at the Inner Light Centre in Keen Street Lismore, provides an opportunity to reclaim our basic human right to interactive and conscious self-care.

It all starts with just one short integrating series of four poses, involving breath, heat, flow, a focused gaze and core stabilisation. Once we build on this foundation and bring it into our daily lives, we'll never be the same again. A new kind of exhilaration replaces all those past methods of distraction.

We have rediscovered the courage to feel and made the choice to re-enter the evolutionary process of life.

The Vital Choices Program offers proven strategies to end all addictions. Phone David on 0447-820-510.

How can we help animals?

Animal Talk

by Donna Connolly

Give animals a voice. They need us to be brave, strong and to speak their truth.

There needs to be accountability, more compassion and respect, for all living beings.

We have been given guardianship of this amazing planet, and all of the unique ecology that inhabits Her.

Sadly, one of our amazing creatures became extinct this week, while we looked on from the sidelines.

Sudan, a magnificent white Rhino of 45 years, was the last representative of the species that fell victim to the greed of man, mainly from poaching and habitat loss.

He was the last living White Rhino who was born wild.

500,000 rhinos lived across Africa and Asia at the start of the 20th century. How did it get to this? When should we have stepped in?

How many more species do we have to lose?

With the loss of Sudan. We lose an integral part of us.

Every living thing on this planet holds a special purpose and place, losing them is losing the diversity of our unique ecosystem and a part of ourselves too.

The animals are holding up a mirror to our behaviour, they are calling out for us to help, we need to speak up before it is too late.

We can't let Sudan's passing be in vain.

Another way we can assist is to listen. To them, their body language.

Find the meaning in their predicaments. Be there for



Joseph Wachira, 26, comforts Sudan, the last male Northern White Rhino on the planet, moments before he passed away. Ami Vitale—National Geographic Creative

them.

It is imperative to open our hearts and intuitive mind. Listen, be engaged, and try to understand the situation from their perspective. Be present.

Even though we interpret things from a human experience and understanding, it is important not to "humanise" them and their idiosyncratic ways.

Animals are sentient beings that have been sent to help guide us to be our best selves, sometimes their presence is a subtle way for us to change our lifestyles or habits as we make way for them in our world. Each creature is unique with an individual personality, it is up to us to allow that to shine through. Don't dull their true essence.

I tend not to use the word "owner", as nobody has the ability to own another soul or sentient being. I use the word Guardian, mostly.

Meaning: on a domestic

level we take responsibility for their food shelter, unconditional love and well-being; on a global scale we are responsible for habitat, understanding their basic needs and not interfering with, or exploiting them in any way.

As guardians it is up to us to ensure that we are making choices and decisions for the greater good, for the animal, species, planet and all living things.

When the American Indians hold council there is always a person present who speaks on behalf of the wolf (representative of all animals). And most indigenous people make decisions based on the projected consequences of seven generations.

Sadly today's society has a focus on money, profit and short term gain.

We need to get back to our roots, we have to get back in touch with our source of self, and do what's right. Before it is too late.

Make conscious choices – eat less meat and show gratitude to the animal that has lived for you to nourish yourself.

Research where your meat, eggs and dairy come from. How are the animals treated, are they shown love and compassion? Is it ethically sourced? Have the animals suffered in any way?

I have asked farm animals (chickens, cows, pigs and goats) how they feel about this being their destiny, the answers have always been along the same lines. As long as they are treated with dignity and respect (that they deserve).

And dealt with humanely at the end. They accept that this is part of this life's journey for them.

They are not afraid of death or dying and just see this as another step along the path of life.

Here are some recent words of wisdom from the Dalai Lama that resonate at this time:

"I am one of the seven billion human beings alive today. We each have a responsibility to think about humanity and the good of the world because it affects our own future. We weren't born on this planet at this time to create problems but to bring about some benefit."

If you would like to deepen your connection and communicate better with animals please send me an email as I am facilitating classes throughout the year.

Email: rivergem88@gmail.com Website: rivergem.com.au Facebook: [RiverGem Readings](https://www.facebook.com/RiverGemReadings) and Reiki Intuitive Healing

The science supporting MDMA/ecstasy legalisation

MDMA (3,4-Methylenedioxy methamphetamine), AKA Molly, Adam, Ecstasy, X, E, XTC was first synthesized in 1912 by Merck (Germany) and is a schedule 1 drug, meaning it is supposed to have no recognised medical use and a high potential for abuse.

Just having a potential for abuse alone is not a criterion to stop public access, otherwise there would be bans on sugar, alcohol, tobacco, sex, and social media, etc. There have been numerous studies indicating a range of benefits if used in the correct dosage range, with a healthy intention and in a safe and conducive setting.

"Effects include significant increased empathy, mild euphoria, personal insight and heightened sensations including sexual sensations. MDMA increases the release and slows the reuptake of the neurotransmitters serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine, it also releases oxytocin and prolactin – the hormones nurturing and bonding.

"MDMA reduces activity in the amygdala or the fear-producing portion of the brain, and it increases activity in the frontal cortex, where we combine ideas into association. In 2014 up to 29 million people between the ages of 15 and 64 used MDMA.

"With MDMA and any substances that have been used by millions of people, we know that there are one in a million side effects: we know that sometimes people can overheat and die when they're dancing all night without adequate fluid replacement and we know that people can die from drinking too much water, causing hyponatremia." – Psychedelic Medicine by Dr. Richard Miller

Despite common misperceptions of accidental deaths caused by illicit drugs, in 2014 prescription medications were responsible for more drug-related deaths (71% or roughly 100,000 people per year in Australia) than illicit drugs (29%). (ABS statistics) The misperception probably comes from the non-reporting of pharmaceutical drug deaths (good for big Pharma and



by Cameron Storey

Govt) and the sensationalizing of illegal drug deaths, especially MDMA or other synthetic equivalents (also good for big pharma, Government propaganda, media sales, and distracting the public).

The mainstream media distorts the public's image of MDMA by reporting every single death in great detail, however it does NOT report deaths by say Benzodiazepines, Paxil, Diazepam, Methadone, Oxycodone, Aspirin, Paracetamol or Antihistamines in the same way, any of which, have a higher death

toll and emergency admissions rate. If quality control of what is in MDMA is a problem, then regulate it and educate people on the correct dosage and precautions of mixing medications like every other pharmaceutical drug and their even greater side effects.

Between 1979 and 1985, when MDMA was legal, a large number of psychologists and psychiatrists began using MDMA-assisted therapy in their clinical practices. They used MDMA for fatigue reduction, reduce end of life suffering, to reduce PTSD, end addiction, relationship counselling and self-discovery.

In 1985 MDMA's medicinal use came to an end when it became illegal and the funding of scientific studies featuring it also came to an end. Richard Nixon's personal war on drugs was declared to be a "World Wide Offensive" and the starting budget was 350 million dollars in 1971 (now 30 billion).

This offensive suppressed scientific research into a range of so-called illegal drugs not just in the US but in many other countries. So if you were just waiting for scientists to prove

the efficacy of MDMA therapy you had to wait another 40 years or so and even then their study range was and is severely limited.

"The war on drugs has failed due to its mass incarcerations, corruption, political destabilization and violence in Latin America, Asia and Africa, to systemic human rights abuses across the world, negatively affected the lives of millions of people, all of this while we waste billions of dollars every year only to create and fuel powerful drug cartels while the goal of the war on drugs seems less achievable than ever, a world without drugs." – Kurzgesagt

"I think getting MDMA-assisted psychotherapy approved as a prescription medicine by the FDA and the European Medicine Agency will be historic and we are anticipating that will happen in 2021." – Rick Doblin PhD, Founder of MAPS: The Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies.

The Dharma Centre and Medicinal Gardens on Lillifield Community has three Yoga Classes, and on Fridays at 9.30am a Yoga Class is held at Birth and Beyond, Nimbin. Phone 02 6689-7120 or Facebook "Dharma Centre – Lillifield".



Making the change

by Suzy Maloney

but I still kept doing all the same 'domination over' tactics. I rode the same as I had been taught and was impressed with the results I was getting from the bitless. My horses were softer and more responsive and stayed calmer in elevated situations.

But then the magic of the bitless bridle started having an effect on me. The connection between myself and my horses started opening up and changing. There was no longer pain for them while being ridden so they slowly emerged from this place where they'd been hiding.

It was only then I realised what a huge thing a bit is, for the horse. For us it disappears when we pop it in the mouth and the mouth closes. We can't see it so we don't think about it. But the horse does. The whole time the horse is thinking about the pain in its mouth.

Without that pain, the horse starts thinking more about you and what's happening. They start responding to more subtle cues, which they can now perceive without the loud noise of the bit. The rider can get lighter and lighter with the cues and the horse will hear them. The rider ends

up doing less while the horse does more.

This lady thought her riding skills weren't good enough to ride bitless. But if riding skills aren't high you should definitely be bitless. To put a bit in the hands of an inexperienced rider should never happen for animal welfare reasons.

With a bitless bridle you have full control but if something happens and the rider jerks on the reins there is no pain for the horse. This means the horse stays calm which is much safer for the rider.

After we'd talked for a while the woman asked if she could try the bitless bridle. I will assist her with transitioning and with her confidence, but I know that once she 'gets it' she will never look back.

It's one of those 'you don't know what you don't know' situations. Once you know, you will never use pain and domination tactics with a horse again. It's a whole new world of connection and communication.

Happy Horses Bitless
Phone 0401-249-263

Email: happyhorsesbitless@gmail.com Web: www.happyhorsesbitless.com

Facebook: Happy Horses Bitless Bridles

I was talking with a lady who obviously understood that animals are sentient and should be treated with respect and kindness.

But even though she was clear about how animals should be treated she had trouble getting her head around the idea of riding with a bitless bridle. This got me to thinking about the 'culture of horse riding'.

In this culture it is a known fact that you cannot control a horse without a bit. It is ok to use force and pain to make a horse do what you want. The horse must do as you say, in fact if you don't 'make' the horse do it you are 'letting the horse win' (the horses have no idea it's a competition!).

I must admit this is the world I came from. I

aspired to do it all 'properly' and prove my worth by winning ribbons. The fact that it meant hurting my horse sometimes (it's called 'correcting') was accepted as normal and everyone did it. I undertook years of riding lessons to gain my coaching certificate and used harsher and harsher bits. I rode with spurs and a whip. It was normal, everyone did it.

And then something happened. A client of mine was getting a bitless bridle so I wanted one too. We went to Equitana and chose our bridles and I went home to try it on my horses. I had three main riding horses then and another two at work. I tried the bitless bridle and they all went really well in it.

It felt great because I wasn't hurting my horses anymore

Rehabilitation of rescue ponies



by Les Rees,
Animal naturopath and massage therapist

On a visit to the RSPCA, I discovered two traumatised, 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 traumatised 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 traumatised 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. Several years on and we have relocated to the Northern Rivers and they are loving their new life here.

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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