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From the mayor's desk

peoples was inspiring. I was particularly moved by the idea that the stories, the culture, the traditions, are carried not in the head or the heart, but in the gut. Right in the core, the centre. Such a physical place and distinct form the thoughts or feelings associated with other parts of the body.

This makes a lot of sense to me, as we need to move back to a society that respects these physical connections. Too many are happy to sit in the head and argue for the sake or arguing, while the smarter person wants to feel, connect and embrace. In a world full of judgment and division, the Bundjalung elders past and present are calling us to be more than we are or were.

If you have not yet spent time with the mural, I mean real time where you study the many different aspects and messages, you really should make the time. I know that this is a significant work for Nimbin and a symbol of better years ahead as it becomes more of a cultural hub for our local mob, and those of us who are just visiting country.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our Australia day award winners and thank the local Aboriginal community for their participation in making this day significant for new Australians.

There has been a lot of discussion about the day and who or what should

happen, so council is conducting an extensive consultation this year to see what our community thinks. Once that has been done the results will be passed on to our Federal Member Kevin Hogan to present to the Minister and parliament.

Some have called for council to step in and move or ban ceremonies, but without the views of our community I believe this is premature. So I would encourage locals to look out for your opportunity to have a say on Australia day, so we can represent your view well and provide guidance to our Federal Parliament when this debate is had in the future.

As I write this I am ending my week camping with the family and wondering what is ahead for us all in 2018. Last year proved to be very difficult for many, with natural disaster adding to what can sometimes feel like the daily grind of life.

I would encourage everyone to look at 2018 as an opportunity to lead. I often get singled out, for better or worse, based on my "leadership". But my inspiration comes from the many people in our area who don't know that they are leaders too. Let's go the extra mile this year and love like we're not scared. As Uncle Gilbert said, then and only then, will we know what is real and truly feel it in a place where we know it makes a difference.

by Cr Isaac Smith

January is generally a quiet month in Lismore, but not so in Nimbin. As our tourist hotspot and local village to the North, it is always an interesting place to spend time and the first few weeks of the year was no exception.

How good was it when the new mural in Allsopp Park was unveiled last month? I was really pleased to see so many locals gather to hear our Bundjalung stories and witness the unveiling of the new mural by Uncle Gilbert. The amazing story of the goanna and the snake that formed our region is beautifully captured and expressed for all to see.

To stand there and listen to Uncle describing the history of our first



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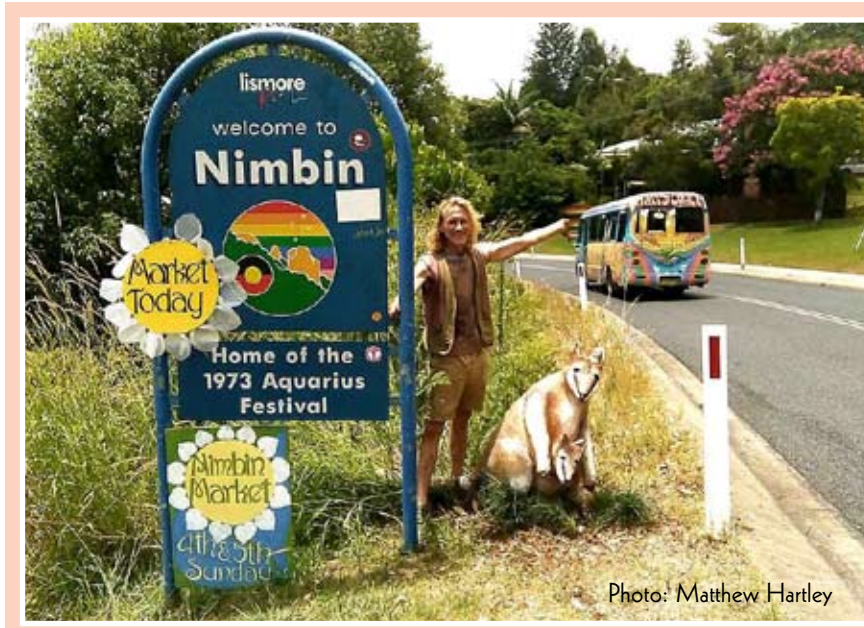


Photo: Matthew Hartley

Hoo-roo! Sculpture at village entry

Local artist Gito von Schlippe (pictured) installed this cement kangaroo at the eastern welcome sign at the end of January.

Gito, whose work was featured in last month's NGT, has produced several pieces that adorn the village, each with an environmental theme.

His sculpture of the young Migaloo whale can be seen in the Artists Gallery. Now perhaps the kanga needs a name.

Chamber Chat

by Teresa Biscoe, president

The Chamber has been taking a little break over the silly season and our first meeting of the year will be at the beginning of February. We have however not been completely idle.

We are already planning the next General Meeting for March and hope to have some great guest speakers at the event.

I attended a great meeting with Chris Bond the North Coast Region Emergency Management Officer and Kerrie Gray from the Red Cross in Lismore a couple of weeks ago to discuss having an emergency management services forum for the community. The idea of the forum is to engage our various service agencies and the community in exploring what resources and services we can access in an emergency situation.

We envisage a Q&A session around who the responsible agencies are in particular emergencies, what happens thereafter in recovery, and ways that the Nimbin community can build

its resilience to disasters and major incidents.

I found Chris and Kerrie very helpful and we discussed a number of issues to determine the scope of the forum. We hope to work towards a community emergency response plan that will facilitate and support an effective immediate response to emergencies like fires and other destructive events.

We hope to engage as many local community organisations and groups at this event. The forum date is yet to be determined but will be sometime after the March General Meeting.

Diana Roberts and I attended a meeting in early January with Thomas George, our state MP to discuss getting his support for the newly updated Rainbow Walking Trail Project. Lismore Council, Kevin Hogan and Thomas George have all indicated that they are prepared to support this very worthy project.

We will be seeking funding for the project this year and need the wholehearted support of local, state



and federal representatives to have the best chance of getting the grant. Many thanks to Diana Roberts for taking up the project when Gill bowed out late last year. She has been working very hard behind the scenes, updating the tourist survey results, renegotiating with the stakeholders and redefining the scope of the project.

If you are a local business and haven't joined the local chamber, please consider membership. We are a voice to council for local concerns. We have a number of wonderful community projects we are pursuing to improve the visual amenity and infrastructure of the village and aim to protect and support our wonderful village lifestyle.

We are all volunteers and would love more support and feedback so we can improve our service and delivery to the community.

Here is looking forward to a great new and dynamic year.

Changing the date isn't enough, we need to change the country

by David Shoebridge
Greens MP

230 years ago, on 26th January, the violent invasion of this continent started. Since then, the oldest continuous living culture in the world has faced state-sanctioned dispossession, disrespect and racism.

The violence against Australia's First Peoples began on 26th January and has never let up since. This isn't just part of our country's history, it is an ingrained part of Australia in 2018. To suggest that these are just historic wrongs is grossly disrespectful.

It is grossly disrespectful to the 11,300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people locked up in Australia's jail today. This is more than twice the number of Aboriginal people in jail at the time of the Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody. This makes Indigenous Australian the most imprisoned people on the planet.

It is grossly disrespectful to



David Shoebridge and Senator Lee Rhiannon at The Block on 26th January

the 17,664 Indigenous children who have been forcibly removed from their families, from their homes and from their culture. It ignores the pain of the thousands of mums, dads and grandparents who will be home on 26th January with a hole in the hearts and a cold bed where their child once slept.

It ignores that there are almost

twice as many Aboriginal children who have been taken from their families in 2018 as in 2008 when Kevin Rudd apologised for the stolen generations. After all, "sorry" is meant to mean that you won't do something again.

It is grossly disrespectful to the 73 Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory who have endured 11 years of the openly

racist and paternalistic Northern Territory Intervention. It ignores the appalling increase in suicide, self-harm and mental health concerns that have accompanied the intervention.

Going to jail, seeing your friends and family put in jail, being taken as a child and fearing that, in turn, your children will be taken; this is the lived reality of far too many of First Nations people. This kind of systemic discrimination won't end if we just change the date.

If we can't face up to the reality of invasion then, how will we ever accept the ongoing harm that Aboriginal people have suffered ever since?

We have a serious problem with truth-telling in this country, and this prevents us from taking responsibility and righting wrongs. It also prevents us from hearing the wisdom that comes from First Nations people who have had more than 60,000 years of living on this land.

In a respectful relationship we would acknowledge the past, take

responsibility for the present and work together to build a joint future. However, this respect needs a foundation of honesty, an honesty that's largely missing on the part of non-Aboriginal Australia.

Of course we should change the date. Of course we should lower the flags to half-mast on the date of the invasion. But we need to be demanding an end to the oppressive structures that First Nations people face every day.

In NSW this means winding back discriminatory police powers, bringing Aboriginal people out of prison, putting an end to the intervention, giving Aboriginal people control over their families and children, providing reparations to the Stolen Generations and working towards treaties.

On 26th January, I'll be at the Block in Redfern, marching in solidarity with First Nations people. As each year goes by that solidarity builds, and with it the respect we need to finally unite us.

Raft of good ideas at Lismore Council



Guy Stewart and Cr Bird at Lismore's new floating solar farm

I can't keep saying Happy New Year for much longer, but I do want to wish the readers of the *GoodTimes* a prosperous, peaceful and abundant 2018.

People often tell me they read this column so I wanted to take a moment to send you my well wishes. I hope that your year serves you well as we continue our adventure together in this precious part of the world.

I also want to thank Bob Dooley and Sue Stock who put this paper together each month. We are lucky to have the *GoodTimes* to bring us local stories and local voices, and to provide an antidote to the Murdoch press.

Speaking of which, you may have seen some of the media regarding the failed meetings in December and January. It has been confusing so I would like to explain what has been happening.

At the conclusion of the December meeting, four rescission motions were lodged to contest items that were determined at that meeting. The items are; to hold a workshop to discuss

Word of the Bird

by Cr Elly Bird

and progress the proposed Lismore Square expansion; to approve a DA for the Lismore Greyhound track allowing an extra twenty race meets each year; to apply to IPART for a five year extension of the existing Special Business Rate Variation Levy; and to work with the Office of Sport to assess the viability of a Sports Hub in Lismore, including a winter olympic ski jump training facility.

A few days later Cr Marks and Cr Battista called an extraordinary meeting to consider the rescissions motions. Any two Councillors can call an extraordinary meeting at any time and that meeting must be called within two weeks.

Councillors traditionally take leave over Christmas, just like the rest of our community, and five Councillors were away on approved leave on the date that the meeting was set. Cr Ekins was an apology for

the first attempted meeting so there weren't enough Councillors present to achieve a quorum and the meeting lapsed.

It was called again a few days later with the same result. The meeting was then set for January the 9th which was the next date that enough Councillors would not be on leave for a quorum to be present.

The process that has been followed is correct and allowable and the Mayor and staff have properly followed our code of meeting practice to try and resolve the matter.

At that January meeting I made the decision to leave the chamber, when I left the quorum was lost so the meeting was closed. My reason for leaving is that five Councillors were absent, including every Councillor who signed the rescission motions, and I chose not to participate in their absence.

Lismore City Council has eleven Councillors, democratically elected to represent our community. I could not participate when nearly half of those



by Kevin Hogan MP, Member for Page

It was great to see three research projects at Southern Cross University receive a total of \$1.3 million in funding recently.

The first aims to reveal whether groundwater is a major missing source of nutrients to the Great Barrier Reef.

The expected outcomes of this study will provide both land and marine managers with crucial insight into how to allocate resources to best manage water quality to meet environmental outcomes.

The second project aims to investigate the role of ethical practice in improving child safety. This will lead to better-targeted, child-informed policy and practice for organisations involved with children, and important knowledge for organisations seeking to optimise, promote and protect children's safety and wellbeing.

community representatives weren't present. It would have been a disservice to our community to deny them the opportunity to participate, as they were elected to do.

By the time you read this the extraordinary meeting will have happened and we will be back on track for the coming year. The main reason I wanted to take the opportunity to explain my actions was due to some

media reports suggesting that we were treating the community with contempt.

I absolutely reject that suggestion. My role as Councillor is incredibly important to me and regular readers will know that I respect and value our community. I know that other Councillors do as well, and in our individual ways we all have the best interests of our community at heart.

The final project that received funding in this round explores the effects that coastal mangroves have on storing carbon around our waterways. This project may lead to new ways in which we store carbon emitted into our atmosphere.

Earlier this month, I inspected the new LED Koala Warning Signs being used on the Pacific Highway upgrade.

The new radar-detected signs warn oncoming motorists to slow down in Koala 'hot spots'.

I also visited the Koala Feed Tree sites. About 110 hectares with more than 80,000 Feed Trees have already been planted with another 20 hectares about to be planted as part of the Woolgoolga to Ballina upgrade.

This year, the Government is also rolling out NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) across our community.

So, that said, as always you can contact me for community or Council matters at: elly.bird@lismore.nsw.gov.au or on 0418 639 927 and I will do my best to help however I can.

On a brighter note the Floating Solar Farm has been finished and is operational (pictured), but I'll talk more about that amazing Council initiative another time.

Community Centre News

by Teresa Biscoe and Inez Price, co-ordinators

Unveiling the mural

Hey everyone – Happy New Year to you!
On Friday 12th January the beautiful mural painted by Gilbert Laurie, Lewis Walker and Oral Roberts was unveiled before a large crowd of villagers and Centre members (pictured.) at Allsopp Park. This is a wonderful work of real local cultural significance.

It was a beautiful day and what a celebration! Gilbert told us all the story of the painting and what it means. For many of us it filled out some of the gaps in our knowledge of our story. As Gilbert said, it is a gift to our community, and will be probably be the most photographed mural in all of Australia.

In future, there will be a plaque with the story so that it can be read and understood by anyone who visits. We are in consultation with the relevant people to create and erect this, and further look forward to having a small roof built to protect the mural we are all so very proud of.

Protecting existing murals

The warrior mural painted on the wall of the Nimbin Bakery facing Armonica Cafe is currently being restored by Elspeth Jones and was funded by the Nimbin Community School. Thanks to Elspeth and the Comskool, for helping to preserve the work of one of our own much loved artists, Burri Jerome, for future generations to appreciate.

New tenants

We have a couple of new tenants to welcome into the Community Centre – we welcome Chris Robb who has taken over Zeebooks. The bookshop has a new crisp look and Chris is busy getting to know all of his new (and past) customers.

We also welcome Adam Richmond who is now in what was known as the old youth club. He's given it a lick of paint and is working with stones and precious gems and welcomes interested people to see what he's doing in there. He will be conducting workshops in the future.

We also say goodbye and a big thank you to Wayne Cuthbertson who has successfully run his community gym here for several years.



Dance studio/Birth and Beyond

We have a fairly full program of casual hirers at the Dance Studio and Birth and Beyond. There are several yoga and dance classes to choose from, and from February there will also be a juggling class and a Sevillanas dance class.

Check out our calendar at: www.nimbincommunity.org.au/index.php/calendar/month.calendar/2018/01/22

Alternately if you'd like to hire any of these rooms to run a program, please contact either Inez or Biko at the Community Centre office on 6689-0000.

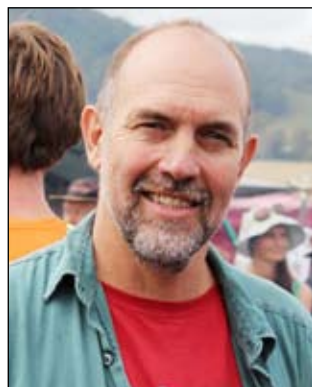
Elections as far as the eye can see

Brace yourself for a lot of elections in 2018/9. Apart from a looming federal poll this year, we are expecting elections in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, and the NSW state election will be March 2019, but because it has a fixed date, the campaign starts nearly a year out.

Elections are only a part of democracy, of greater importance is our 365 day of the year determination to stay informed and work with our communities to speak truth to power and push hard to make the world a better place in countless ways. However, elections are important because parliaments are where laws are made, and some campaigns really rely on legislative change to succeed.

The power of the two major parties and the corrosive impact of corporate donations has certainly made a lot of us very cynical about the electoral process. But we still need to make smart choices.

There remain significant differences even between the major parties. Every new term of an LNP government is another harrowing episode of neo-liberal extremism where we endure more hollowing out of basic services and fairness in our society. Labor governments are reliably less aggressive in



by Aidan Ricketts

social and economic policy, and have proven themselves to be better macro economic managers in the past thirty years than the ideologically driven LNP.

But if we really seek social justice, environmental sustainability and a genuine effort to tackle corporate corruption in politics we need to look past the big major parties and hope that the Greens get a chance to advance their legislative agenda on things like a federal ICAC and reform of the shifty world of political donations.

The very best way to hold the major parties to account is to make them reliant on minor parties to form government, a hung parliament. The Gillard government relied on minor parties and independents in both houses of parliament, yet was one

of the most legislatively successful governments of recent decades. It isn't easy breaking the two party system.

The Democrats failed and the Greens after thirty years are finally making headway in winning lower house seats. The maths of the voting system specifically supports a two party system, emerging parties need to fight not only the politics but even the maths.

Once minor parties take enough lower house seats to force the government into minority status they can then really start to exert some pressure on the government of the day. In a close election, this may mean that as few as three or four seats going to a minor party can give them balance of power.

Federally, the Greens may get there in 2018 if they can take some more inner city seats in Melbourne and Sydney, but it is an uphill struggle.

In the NSW state election, the major parties are even further advantaged by the fact that preferencing is not compulsory, and so many voters simply waste their preference power by failing to fill in every square. This simply advantages the big parties.

The Greens would likely have won both Lismore as well as Ballina last

state election if voters had followed the advice to 'number every square'. David can beat Goliath but it's a major push to do so.

Wrestling a seat off the majors brings advantages locally. Again, (somewhat cynically) the majors tell you that you need your local member to be from a major party so they can have access to the money controlled by the government. That's virtually admitting to the practice of pork barrelling, (using public funds to reward voting patterns). In reality however, once your local electorate displaces the old parties your local area gets a lot of extra attention and becomes hotly contested in future elections. If it actually forms part of a balance of power bloc after the election, then your local area has very substantial political power.

That's a short summary of the maths, the politics and the reality of breaking the political duopoly. We all know the duopoly isn't working for us, but we need to change our voting habits to change the system

Enjoy the spectacle this year, and when you tell the election booth workers that you know what you are doing when you vote, I sincerely hope you do, as many people have a very poor understanding of how our electoral systems work.



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from the atmosphere, well now you can.

Imagine an Aqua Hemp pond to produce aquatic fish, snails, mussels and crayfish for eating, and their poo and bugs could make the fertility to grow your favored herbs, well now you can.

On Friday 9th February, Virgin Hemp Farms will have an open day at 87/89 Cecil Street Nimbin,

starting at 11am and finishing at 4pm. Cost is \$20 which includes a farm tour showing all the above and delicious hemp foods!

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Book to feature hand-built homes

by Mandie Hale

Thank you to everyone who contacted me after my first call-out for people with interesting hand-built houses in the Nimbin area for inclusion in a book.

Each building has been unique, and the stories of the building process demonstrate that anyone with the inspiration, determination and capacity to learn new skills can create an interesting, beautiful and functional space.

Each of the homes reflects the creativity of the people who live in them, in the details of the building, the surrounding gardens, and the imaginative interiors. It is this creativity that has emerged as the common thread. Many of the people who have created these places have been artists of some kind, and others have made the home their work of art.

I am nearing the end of the photographing and writing stage, but still have room for a couple more buildings that demonstrate creativity and thinking outside the box architecturally, or maybe a home that has not been hand-built but stands out by being stylish and different.

I am also interested in small but



creative structures... maybe you have an interesting outdoor shower or amazing sculpture garden...

If you have a house or structure that fits these criteria, or know someone who does, I'd love to hear from you. I understand that some people may choose to remain anonymous, and I will respect their desire for privacy – names and locations or identifying information need not be used.

A percentage from the sale of each book will be donated to the 7 Sibley Street Sustainability Project. Contact Mandie Hale at: halegarden@yahoo.com.au or leave a message on 6689-1145.



Subsidies for Raise the Roof choristers

Jessie Vintila, director of Raise the Roof Choirs, has 18 new low-cost choir places for 50+ year olds with financial barriers, thanks to a grant awarded by Family and Children's Services' Sing Your Age program.

"New singers are always welcome to join Raise the Roof," says Jessie, "but this grant means we can welcome new singers who have financial barriers stopping them coming."

"There are so many joys and benefits of being in a choir – you make new friends, stimulate your brain, improve your physical health and immunity, and experience the bliss of singing simple but glorious harmonies!"

"You don't need to read music, or have a 'great' solo voice to make beautiful music in a choir. Even people with the most basic singing ability get the chance to improve, build confidence, and become wonderful

Raise The Roof combined choir performing at the Mullumbimby Music Festival in 2015
Photo: Lyn McCarthy, Niche Pictures

contributors to the group, in a safe and fun environment."

With a choir directing career that spans 22 years, Jessie is also an award-winning singer/songwriter, and a proud member of the GLBTQI community. With her partner Emma Royle, she runs Sing the Camino singing and walking tours in Spain and Portugal.

She has worked as a music leader with seniors, people with disabilities, and children, and performed and led mass singing at countless community events in support of Indigenous Australians, refugees, mental health, women and the environment.

The Sing Your Age program aims to bring people from diverse backgrounds together to sing and build new

connections in our communities.

There are about 80 singers in total, across the four Raise the Roof Choirs, with members of all ages.

The four weekly Raise the Roof sessions are held on Mondays 6.30-8.30pm in Uki, Tuesdays 1-3pm in Suffolk Park, Tuesdays 6-8pm in Brunswick Heads, and Wednesdays 11-1pm in The Channon.

The four groups perform together as a mass choir at community events like Mullum Music Festival and Bangalow BBQ Bluegrass Festival. Raise the Roof sing gospel, folk, jazz, bluegrass and more.

To apply for a subsidised place, contact Jessie by 5th February on 0417-277-211 or email: info@raisetheroofsinging.com

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ArtWomb

ArtWomb is a collaborative musical and visual arts jam that creates a comfy space where artists and novices alike leave their ego at the door, kick back, relax and create art together.

Artwomb incorporates music, painting, circus, dance, poetry, comedy, sketching, contortions and crafting – all created spontaneously in a live collaborative atmosphere.

A passionate team of talented musicians, poets, gifted painters and MCs facilitate a space that encourages all to contribute with an open stage and shared visual art jam, with quality paints, sketch pads and artistic tools supplied, encouraging quality art to emerge and grow. It's an incubator for new artistic collaborations.

The idea is simple: get all kinds of art loving folk mixing with artists of different styles, abilities and mediums together in the same space, sharing, learning and growing.



The painting and drawing accompany the music – ArtWomb's house band The Fill Inns will be hosting an open mic and improvised music jam on the outdoor stage, sharing original music across many genres, providing a selection of quality instruments and a space for individuals to share their own creativity can result in some amazing music.

Previous ArtWombs have garnered collaborative creations and interesting productions.

The Arts Jam will be held on Sunday 4th February, 1-5pm, entry by donation, in the gardens of the Nimbin Bush Theatre by Mulgum Creek, and the Cafe will be open serving delicious food. Let your inner artist bloom and blossom at Artwomb.

Waitangi Day at Bush Theatre

Waitangi Day is named after Waitangi where the Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand's founding document, was first signed on 6th February 1840, and commemorates a significant day in the history of New Zealand, or to use the proper Māori name, Aotearoa, where it is observed as a public holiday each year on 6th February.

The Treaty was first signed by representatives acting on behalf of the British Crown and initially, more than 40 Māori chiefs. It made New Zealand a part of the British Empire and guaranteed the Māori Peoples rights to their land. This was the first such Treaty signed with indigenous peoples by the British, and was due in large part to Māori resistance to heavy-handed British colonisation.

The Nimbin Bush Theatre will be celebrating Waitangi Day on Saturday 10th February, so folk have a chance to come along to experience the wondrous feast that is a hāngi. This is a traditional Maori method of cooking food using heated rocks buried in a earth pit



oven. It is still used for special occasions.

To "lay a hāngi" involves digging a pit in the ground, heating stones in the pit with a large fire, placing baskets of food on top of the stones, and covering everything with earth for several hours before uncovering (or lifting) the hāngi.

We will be presenting an all-you-can-eat hāngi from midday for the great price of \$15. We will have veg and non veg options and will be cooking chicken, pork and beef as well as oodles of veggies such as kumera, potatoes, carrots, zucchinis and cabbage, which are so

delicious when steamed under the earth that you won't believe it!

In the evening we will present Duncan Woods and the Notable Few on the outdoor stage as part of their "Notable Nip" tour.

Duncan Woods is a Zimbabwean-born, Australian-grown, travelling singer-songwriter surf-roots-funk man who creates feel good musical vibes. Rhythmic guitar work under quick sharp lyrics are Duncan's bread and butter play. His reggae-rap vocals, weaving between earthy grooves with ease, will have you

nodding your head in the back row or bouncing at the front without much need for encouragement. The Notable Few are his band and they groove and rock with a wicked style.

In the words of Duncan Woods, "We'll be kicking all of our original tunes and swirling up a big session in Nimbin, we may even throw in a coupla Kiwi covers as a nod to our NZ neighbours!"

Electric funksters Catnip are a five-piece band bringing the funk back with high energy riffs which will ignite your dancing feet and make your senses tingle. Formed in 2015, the group started developing their own grooves which caused cats to funk out and get low: they are dedicated to getting you to move! Like the love children of Fat Freddy's Drop and the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Catnip will bring the funk home for this show!

This will be a sweet-as end to Waitangi Day. Come and celebrate our near neighbour Aotearoa on Saturday 10th February from 12pm. Entry \$15, includes all-you-can-eat hāngi. BYO. Kid friendly.

Songwriting and storytelling lie at the core of alt-folk group, Elbury. Born in a brick-and-concrete pillbox on the side of Red Hill, Brisbane, they play awkward tunes in minor keys with awkward lyrics and obscure themes.

As a song-writing team, Elbury plunder diverse literary sources for inspiration and try to find unique perspectives on the quirks, puzzles and tragedies of life and the human experience resulting in a dark but theatrical alt-folk-rock. The band frequently defy categorisation and move easily between mellow jazz interludes, rollicking folk-rock triumphs and intricate Baroque passages.

Elbury combine intricate finger-picking, deep bass grooves, considered arrangements and plaintive harmonies presented with a committed and heartfelt performance played by five consummate musicians. The music is moving and ultimately beautiful.

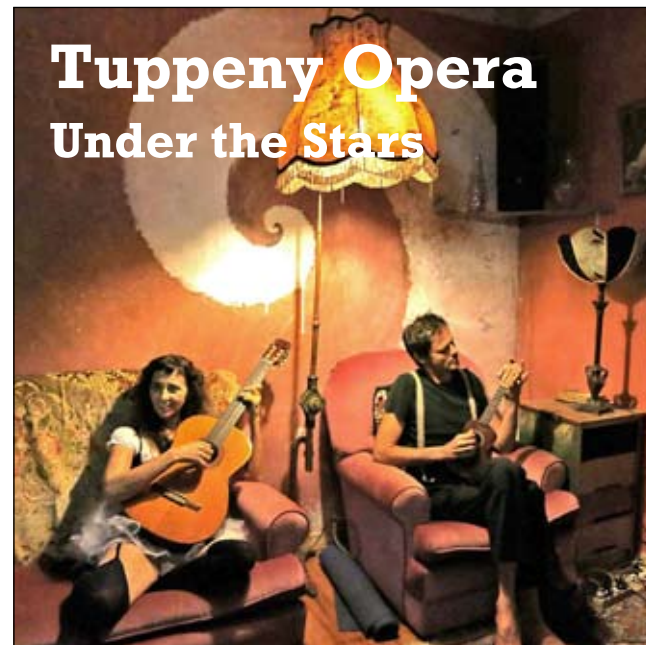


Winsome melodies take centre stage, with three-part harmonies and a close weave of organic and digital textures wrapped around gorgeous vocals.

Catch them on the outdoor stage of the Nimbin Bush Theatre for a night

of magical music under the stars on Saturday 24th February, 7pm at the Nimbin Bush Theatre, entry by donation. BYO, kid friendly. The cafe will be open serving delicious meals, coffees and treats to complement your sensory experience.

Tupenny Opera Under the Stars



Tupenny Opera are Maya Sapir and Dave Weir, two excellent local musicians who perform a quirky brand of alt-folk, heavily influenced by the grimy burlesque ethos of yester-year.

Maya Sapir plays bass and sings with a voice that has operatic range and overtones, but is also anchored in traditional folk. Dave Weir plays guitars and banjo and lead vocals and provides sympathetic backing harmonies.

After many years of playing together, their mutual sympathy as performers is evident in their finely crafted songs and engaging performances. Their songs cover a gamut of human experiences with a dramatic flair.

They were the winners of Best Indie Song at the 2017 Dolphin Awards for their song, *Our Wars*, and the vibe is steadily growing

around their music.

The name Tupenny Opera alludes to a form of entertainment that became popular in the 19th century. This was entertainment for the working class and was presented as opera, but without its elite cultural perimeters.

It was often a bawdy affair, with anarchistic references poking fun at the capitalist and class system, and was presented in basic auditoriums with hay floors and cost no more than one or two pennies, hence Tupenny.

Catch them on the outdoor stage under the stars at 7pm on Friday 16th February, entry by donation, for a night of old meets new re-invented with an unorthodox and avant garde approach.

The cafe will be open serving delicious meals, drinks and treats to enhance your experience. BYO is OK.



Paua will be performing with local support at the Nimbin Bush Theatre on Friday 9th February 8pm, \$20 all ages.

Paua's tribe includes Maori heritage hailing from Aotearoa (New Zealand), combined with a multicultural collective of musicians from Australia and Philipines. The band members came together with a mutual passion for reggae music.

Paua take their audience on a joyful trip via reggae fusion, soulful RNB and incognito jazz spills, creating heavy roots-reggae grooves that have feet dancing. They are famous for packing out venues, creating chemistry with their audiences with their high energy performances and good vibes.

Many of Paua's releases have hit #1 on the iTunes reggae charts in Australia, New Zealand and abroad, including 'Sometimes', and the conscious 2015 single 'What's It Gonna Take?' Paua's releases have received mainstream and regional radio play in the South Pacific and globally.

Paua are coming to Nimbin for the first time as part of the Nimbin Bush Theatre's Waitangi Day weekend celebrations. Lead singer Jay says, "If you make music from the heart, write words from the soul and give it your all every time you perform, then just maybe others will feel it too". Paua to the people!

The Cafe will be open serving great food and drinks. BYO OK. Tickets on sale online at: www.nimbinbushtheatre.com/events

Milton Man Gogh are an experimental jazz trio from Brisbane, formed as an outlet for the members to play the original compositions that no-one else wanted to play.

Having performed and recorded together in various freelance and original settings over the last few years, the boys felt that the combination of yarns, music, a tortured artist and a certain domestic beer made perfect sense.

These are the young guns of the jazz music scene, they are consummate players who approach the genre with an anarchistic freedom while giving a respectful nod to the solid



foundations on which they stand. Be prepared to be amazed by their playing, their creativity and their passion, served with a dose of self-

depreciating humour and rat-baggish charm.

Milton Man Gogh's have released their debut album, *Stress to Impress*, to great reviews, including this one from Alex Sievers, Killyourstereo.com: "Simply put, MMG's new seven-track album scratches both the itch of wanting both a solid jazz album and a good experimental release."

Catch the brilliant Milton Man Gogh for a dinner under the stars on the outdoor stage by Mulgum Creek at 7pm on Friday 23rd February, entry by donation, kid friendly, BYO. The cafe will be open serving great meals to delight.

Faith i Branko Quartet comes to Lismore

Northern Rivers' resident world music band, Orkeztar Lizmoré, is excited to present yet another of its outstanding workshop/concert series, this time featuring the extraordinary talents of Serbia's primo Roma violinist, Branko Ristic, performing with his partner, UK accordionist, Faith Ristic.



Together, they are Faith i Branko, and currently they're touring the Southern Hemisphere as the Faith i Branko Quartet, with Stefan Melovski on guitar and Victor Obsust on double bass, performing high-energy virtuosic Roma/jazz-influenced originals.

Faith i Branko combine the accordion, violin, effects pedal and tabor pipe to take the audience on a journey from melancholy Roma violin laments to storming 'kolos' plus explorations into jazz

improvisation, swing, Gypsy rumba and Indian/Turkish-influenced violin solos. These styles form a musical set which is joyous, passionate, boisterous, fiery and spirited, interspersed with haunting laments.

Serbian-born Branko Ristic is a self-taught violinist with a painful personal history. He met his British wife, Faith, in 2009 when she was looking for a gypsy violinist to join

her circus troupe. They now perform as a duo and band all over Europe, the UK, and now down-under for the summer.

Branko's skill on the violin is such that UK *Folk Roots* magazine has predicted that he is set to become "one of the leading Roma violinists of the century" and *BBC Radio* stated that: "Paganini would be proud." His violin soars at breakneck

paces, whilst Faith's "nimble accordion accompaniment provides a beautiful bedrock" (*The Guardian*). He opens his heart in their slower compositions, revealing at times the sadness and darkness beneath the frantic virtuosic revelry.

Faith i Branko will appear at Lismore City Bowling Club in Molesworth Street on Thursday 1st March to conduct an instrumental workshop at 5.30pm, followed by a concert performance by the full band at 8pm (time for a dinner break in between). Entry: \$20/\$15 each event, or \$35/\$25 for both events. All ages and levels of musicianship are welcome.

This will be a very special event in Lismore, and string players especially will be sorry if they miss this gig! See the Faith i Branko band website: www.faithibranko.com

MOVIES AT THE BUSH THEATRE

The Man Who Knew Infinity

8pm Friday 2nd March
Rated PG. \$10 entry.

The Man Who Knew Infinity is the true story of a friendship that changed mathematics forever. In 1913, Srinivasa Ramanujan (Dev Patel), a self-taught Indian mathematics genius, travelled to Trinity College, Cambridge, where over the course of five years he forged a bond with his mentor, the brilliant and eccentric professor, G.H. Hardy (Jeremy Irons), and fought against prejudice to reveal his mathematical talent to the world.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Srinivasa Ramanujan is a



struggling citizen of Madras in India working at menial jobs at the edge of poverty. His employers notice that he seems to have exceptional skills at mathematics and they begin to make use of him for rudimentary accounting

tasks. It becomes increasingly clear to his employers that Ramanujan's mathematical insights exceed the simple accounting tasks they are assigning to him. They contact G.H. Hardy, a famous mathematician at Cambridge College, who takes a special interest in Ramanujan, eventually mentoring him and guiding him onto worldwide recognition as a mathematical genius.

This is an inspiring story of adversity against racism and poverty and a deeply moving film, both hopeful and tragic, and one that has been greatly admired for its revelations and celebration of the life of the great Srinivasa Ramanujan – the man who knew infinity.

Catch Maudie at Nimbin Flix

Maudie is a highly acclaimed 2016 English-language biographical film directed by Aisling Walsh and starring Sally Hawkins and Ethan Hawke.

A co-production of Ireland and Canada, the film is about the life of artist Maud Lewis, who painted in Nova Scotia.

In the story, Maud (Hawkins) struggles with arthritis, memory of a lost child, and a family that doubts her ability, before moving in with a gruff fish peddler (Hawke) as a housekeeper. Despite their

differing personalities, they marry as her art gains in popularity.

The film was shot in Newfoundland and Labrador, requiring a recreation of Lewis's famously small house.

It was selected to be screened in the Special Presentations section at the 2016 Toronto International Film Festival and won a number of awards at other festivals. After festival screenings and wider releases, *Maudie* received positive reviews. It was also nominated for awards for Hawkins' performance, and



for seven Canadian Screen Awards, including Best Motion Picture.

The fact that the film was shot in Newfoundland was the subject of controversy in Lewis' native Nova Scotia. Nevertheless, the popularity of the film sparked a resurgence of interest in Lewis' art.

The movie, chosen because we've received so much positive feedback, will be screened on Saturday, February 10 2018 at Birth and Beyond – doors open 6.30pm for screening at 7pm. Free to members or \$10 entry with refreshments available, so please support your local film society.

BYO 2 Blue Knob Rd, Nimbin

Café open from 9am every day + Friday nights & Special Events

FREE LIVE MUSIC EVERY WEEKEND ON OUR OUTDOOR CAFE STAGE: 1-4PM SATURDAYS / 10AM-4PM SUNDAYS

FRI 2 FEB 7pm DONATION	Dinner Under the Stars THE MAGNIFICENCE New Orleans' jazz + Gumbo on the menu	
SAT 3 FEB 11am FREE	Monthly Seminar CRYPTOCURRENCIES Discuss Bitcoin & more - All levels welcome	
SUN 4 FEB 1pm DONATION	Creative Collective ARTWOMB Inclusive art/music jam	
FRI 9 FEB 8pm \$20	Big Band Dance Night PAUA [NZ/BRIZ] 7-piece reggae/funk	
SAT 10 FEB 12pm FREE MUSIC \$15 HANGI	NZ Celebration WAITANGI DAY NZ music + Hangi feast	
SAT 10 FEB 7pm DONATION	NZ Dance Night DUNCAN WOODS & THE NOTABLE FEW + CATNIP 8-piece NZ reggae/HipHop/funk	
FRI 16 FEB 7pm DONATION	Dinner Under the Stars TUPENNY OPERA Burlesque meets Alt-Folk	
FRI 23 FEB 7pm DONATION	Dinner Under the Stars MILTON MAN GOGH [BRIZ] Experimental jazz	
SAT 24 FEB 7pm DONATION	Dinner Under the Stars ELBURY [BRIZ] Indie jazz/folk	
FRI 2 MARCH 8pm \$10 PG	Movie Night 'The Man Who Knew Infinity' True story of an Indian maths genius	
SAT 3 MARCH 11am FREE	Monthly Seminar CRYPTOCURRENCIES All levels welcome	
SAT 3 MARCH 8pm \$15	Live HipHop SHORTY MAIN + Sway Cool+ DJ Sepnutz + local guests	

COMING UP!
FRI 16 MARCH - Tailor Birds
FRI 23 MARCH - Tori Forsyth/Carl Bartender
SAT 21 APRIL - Diana Anaid [Album Launch]

TICKETS & INFO
www.nimbinbushtheatre.com/events
BOOKINGS & ENQUIRIES
(02) 6689 1111

LISMORE LAUGHS

JOSH EARL MERRICK WATTS TOMMY LITTLE

9 & 10 MARCH

LISMORE CITY HALL'S ANNUAL COMEDY WEEKEND

TICKETS LISMORECITYHALL.COM.AU OR 1300 066 772

LISMORE CITY HALL

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Nimbin Hotel & Backpackers

53 Cullen Street, Nimbin. Ph: 6689-1246

February Gigs

TRIVIA NIGHT EVERY WEDNESDAY, 7pm

Thursday 1st	7pm	Surf Report
Friday 2nd	7pm	Elliots
Saturday 3rd	7pm	Q
Thursday 8th	7pm	TBA
Friday 9th	7pm	Mark David Express
Saturday 10th	7pm	khan
Thursday 15th	7pm	Bill Jacobi
Friday 16th	7pm	Salt and Steel
Saturday 17th	7pm	Two Tears In A Bucket
Thursday 22nd	7pm	David Barbara
Friday 23rd	7pm	Adam Hole Band
Saturday 24th	7pm	TBA

JOKER POKER EVERY THURSDAY EVENING

the mended drum

Open for Lunch & Dinner Daily Specials

Another bumper year ahead for LTC

Lismore Theatre Company has just completed its 2017 season, bringing five productions to Lismore and district theatregoers, culminating in their popular Christmas pantomime, *Jax and the Beanstalk*, an imaginative take on the traditional story. All productions attracted substantial audiences, keeping the company alive and well, and ready for the 2018 season.

Sharon Brodie, president of the company said today that she was looking forward to 2018 being another bumper year.

This year's programme includes *Lipstick Dreams*, an Australian comedy featuring four women from the Blue Haven hair dressing salon who exchange their hair brushes for microphones, when they form an all girl singing group and enter a talent quest.

A play full of laughter, tears and toe-



Young stars of *Jax & the Beanstalk*

tapping sixties songs, opening 6th April.

In May/June audiences can look forward to *Cagebirds*, an unforgettable

play by English playwright David Campton which explores the themes of human behaviour, freedom and oppression.

Then in August, *Cosi* comes to the Rochdale stage: a comic drama, set in the remnants of a burnt-out theatre, and drawing upon the political and social context of the Vietnam War, Louis Nowra's well loved play challenges our perceptions about love, madness and politics.

In October, *Soft Murder*, a satirical comedy, written by local playwright Bette Guy, will make you laugh loudly, and think deeply. And of course in December the end of year pantomime returns.

Keep an eye out for these forthcoming productions at the Rochdale Theatre. For further information, to get involved or become a member please contact us at: lismoretheatrecompany.org.au

Holy crapper: compost toilets in Bhutan

by Simon Thomas

It all started in 2003. I was living the self-sufficient dream at Vajradhara Gonpa near Kyogle when my Bhutanese meditation teacher, Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, accepted a dinner invitation.

At some point, he nipped out to use our Rainbow Region style composting toilet and I guess he was impressed – so impressed that ten years later, when I asked if he needed help with any volunteer jobs, he recalled the occasion.

"I have a monastery in Eastern Bhutan," he told me. "We have enough toilets for the monks, but when we hold a big ceremony, there are so many visitors who make a terrible mess with their business. Can you build an ecologically sustainable toilet as an example to the villagers?"

"Ah, I'm better with solar than with crap...."

"Electricity is not important," he tells me. "Asia is drowning in its own shit."

"So... how many people are we talking about?" I hesitate to ask.

"We don't know – at least 5000." Oh dear, that is a lot

of poo.

The Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan is a wonderful place, so I agreed to have a go. I mean, how hard can it be?

April 2014 was my first visit to the remote Chokyi Gyatso Institute, an amazing institution perched high above the tiny hamlet of Dewathang. Located on the edge of the Himalayan massif, the outlook is across the great Gangetic plains, and the landscape is precipitous.

With every inch of usable land already occupied with buildings, I was offered an impossibly steep site at the bottom of a treacherous track. Lupon Thinley, the monk in charge of building, assured me that with retaining walls and a decent staircase, they could create a workable site, so I reluctantly agreed, and tasked him with site preparation.

I returned in January 2015 to discover that they had already constructed their own wayward idea of composting chambers, although they had not even seen my plans. An engineering check quickly determined that compost toilet mark 1 would collapse



under its own weight in no time, so I ordered its demolition and engaged a building contractor.

Three months is a very short time in Bhutan, but we managed to get a fair portion of the building completed before my visa expired, and I left the construction crew to finish it off. Dewathang's annual rainfall is 5.5m (compared to 1.5m in Nimbin,) and the great flood of July 2015 was quite an event. The resulting landslide ran straight through the nearly completed toilet block mark 2, destroying it beyond repair.

I returned months later

and was given another site, closer to the temple and somewhat more stable than the first. My visa again expired shortly after construction began. The plan was that I would return before the first usage of the facility to prepare the compost chambers with organic material and check that the work had been properly completed.

I was shocked a few months ago to be informed that the toilets had been opened up for a small event, and that they were rather smelly... no wonder! Without correct preparation, they were crapping into an empty concrete room.

I made for Dewathang as soon as my program would allow. So it was that I returned in December 2017 to sort out the mess. After a month of fixing up faults and problems with the construction, on Bhutan's New Year's Eve, 17th January, 2018 – almost four years since the original idea was flown, I handed over the keys to what probably qualifies as the most expensive toilet in Bhutan!

Check out the Dewathang song at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHhf1ZrKFds

NIMBIN BOWLO

25 Sibley Street Nimbin. Phone 6689-1250

What's On in February?

- **Sunday 4th** – Visiting Club: Iluka Bowls
- **Saturday 17th** – Mullumbimby Old Boys
- **Sunday 18th** – Westpac Helicopter Fundraiser
- **Saturday 24th** – Geebung RSL
- **Saturday 17th** – Burringbar Bowls
- **Open Mike** – Wed 14th & 28th
- **Social Bowls** – Sundays, 9am

KENO First-timers and novice bowlers welcome

BISTRO LOUNGE

25 Sibley Street Nimbin. Phone 6689-1473

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT THIS MONTH

Every Thursday, 6pm **Joe Blow**

- **Friday 2nd, 6pm Brommers**
- **Friday 9th, 6pm Sarah Stando**
- **Friday 16th, 6pm Mark David**
- **Friday 23rd, 6pm Sayed Duo**
- **Friday 2nd Mar, 6pm Rob Cass**

Lunch & Dinner Wed – Sat

Sunday lunch specials

Catering for functions of all budgets and tastes

Injustice drives people crazy

by Michael Balderstone,
President, HEMP Embassy

Benny keeps phoning me from hospital. Sometimes four times a day, the number of calls he's allowed. Mostly he raves about Jesus who sits at the end of his bed talking about how good cannabis is, and how unholy the war on drugs is. The eye-opening spiritual plants now all illegal. God's special gifts to mankind. The traditional doorways to Truth.

Once Benny, a country boy now in his fifties, took his bong and mull bowl to the local pub, sat up at the bar and started a chop. They called the cops and yet again he was carted away, but not before Jesus appeared in the dart board. A lifetime of being carted to the nut house because they can all see how harmless he is. He gets furious at the cops as he'd rather go to jail than get the jabs from the hospital, which can then take months to escape from.

This time it's different. I can hear it in his voice and I've known him for over 20 years. He's determined to stand his ground and demands time with a psychiatrist. She calls me. A strong European accent. Basically if he won't bend over, zey will av to put him away for a vezy long time.

The next time Benny calls, I strive to get him to co-operate. They won't let you out unless you play ball I tell him. Their game and their rules. He refuses totally, insisting on being totally honest and that the Truth will set him free. He won't hide when he smokes pot. I told him not to caste his



Medican workshop in January

pearls before swine but he didn't get it at all and went off into some rant about how nice pigs can be and off course they are God's creatures also.

He called again today, from another hospital. A slow doped up voice mumbling to me. He'd managed to keep my phone number when they transferred him. Craving tobacco as he isn't allowed to smoke in the new hospital, he sounded beaten and soon hung up.

Prohibition is driving people crazy. Injustice, glaring injustice drives people insane. Benny always loved weed. It was a religious experience for him. He used to travel to Nimbin to score because "the organic stuff feels better Mick". Weed saved his life he told me thousands of times. Hundreds of people have said similar to me. It just gives some people a break from the river of incessant worrying thoughts that never stop. Similar to why a lot of people enjoy a beer at the end of the day I imagine.

Benny is an extreme case, but there are so many who prohibition is driving crazy. The nurse who has suddenly discovered what good medicine it is and just cannot equate that others in her hospital have closed ears

to the good news. Someone reported her and she's suspended now.

Every week the HEMP Embassy gets phone calls and emails from people whose lives have been tipped upside down by getting busted for pot. And the numbers are growing because of saliva testing drivers. Once people start thinking about the laws, and many don't until they get in trouble, they get angry.

And some have real trouble rationalising it all, after discovering such serious injustice is driven by greed and profit making. They come to the Embassy wanting to help, expecting to make a difference. Quickly! It's so obvious to them that we just need to change the laws. It's a no brainer, surely the politicians will listen.

But they underestimate the power of money and the influence it has. The entire health system is just a giant business. And what better business is there than reducing pain, making people feel good? What life is all about. What everyone wants.

Big Pharma basically writes the doctors' university syllabus on how to treat illnesses. Herbs, plants are not included at all, it's just pills. Concoctions they have created and patented, mostly from plants of course. And

those plants themselves are usually banned from being used by me and you. Like Cannabis, Coca and the Opium poppy, which were the basis of pretty much every pain-relieving medicine a hundred years ago. They write the business plan from whoa to go. Talk about a conflict of interest.

The corruption is blatant, and rife. Doctors get bonuses for using certain drugs. American doctors get huge bonuses for getting children on the immunisation path, maybe in Australia too. And then there's the Big Pharma conferences at fancy resorts with all expenses paid.

Hardest for me to swallow however, is how doctors barely touch on diet in their seven-year training. It's as if it's not important. Maybe they do a day or two on vitamins and minerals, not sure. But how many doctors ask you about your diet? Or recommend less coke or more organic wholefood? How important is diet in illness?

We're talking serious money here. Making people healthy means no need for pills, while keeping 'em unhealthy and alive is good for business.

I can't believe it's deliberate, I just can't. Can we be that greedy? Greed is really an illness of sorts eh, and with no pill to fix it.

Or no legal pill!

NIMBIN FASHION SHOW

2018

SAT 24TH FEBRUARY
NIMBIN TOWN HALL

DOORS OPEN FOR THE
MATINEE SHOW @ 1:30PM
EVENING SHOW @ 8PM

FEATURING DESIGNS BY
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POPPIE ROSE
VOM-WE FELTED FASHION
DANGAIA
THE VELVET WREN &
THE GYPSY WAGON
MAYA KRASNA
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FOOD & DRINK AVAILABLE

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Phil Bromley

Early bird tickets for Renew

Renew Fest opened its early bird season in January and will last until 14th February, in celebration of its third birthday. This heartfelt homegrown grassroots festival is being infused with the beauty of the new year, as the organisers attune to Renew's 2018 festival theme, 'Deep Listening'.

Festival Director Ella Rose Goninan said, "With 'deep listening' as our overarching theme this year we are bringing care to all facets of the program to support a collective listening experience.

"As the guiding motive of Renew Fest is to give rise and celebration to collaborative actions of regenerative change, this year's festival will be exploring the importance and place of deeply listening to life as we seek to bring renewal to the story of our environmental humanity."

Last year's festival patron and internationally acclaimed heart-to-heart parenting advocate Robin Grille is



thrilled to be returning once again for Renew Fest 2018. Robin said, "I found Renew Fest 2017 to be a heart-warming and uplifting experience, in which we could see a truly new world clearly starting to take shape, with love, with excitement and with grounded possibility.

"The festival is a place to be recharged, to discover how powerful we are when we join together in vision

for a transformed world. I love Renew Fest for its "can do" energy, and for the sheer abundance and variety of "how to's". I am thrilled to be invited back to participate in this dynamic, nourishing and colourful festival in 2018.

And, most interestingly, the theme and emphasis of this year's Renew Fest will have a surprising brand new twist... To purchase your early bird ticket, go to: www.renewfest.org.au

15th Annual Nimbin Women's Dinner & Comedy Gala

8th March 2018

Nimbin TOWN HALL

IWD

Featuring:

Selina
Jenkins
(Melbourne)

Devi
Thomas
(Lismore)

Catering by
Steph
Sound &
Lights by
Disco Sista

Press



For Change

Also
Featuring:

Triny Roe
Maire Barron
Jasmine
Fairbairn
Simone Éclair
Sue Hird
Grace Jarvis
Stephanie
Tisdell

Tix /bookings via NNIC at 71 Cullen Street, Nimbin 2480
66891692

\$30 includes entry and dinner (\$25 concession)

Doors Open: 6.30pm SHOW Starts: 8pm

Brought to you by Nimbin Neighbourhood & Information Centre

www.nnic.org.au or see our facebook page