

Naked Bike Ride turns 10

by Mijimberi

How often do you get the chance to be an activist and an adored tourist attraction all at once?

Not often enough in this life, I can tell you. But the truth of it is that it isn't so hard to be a bike activist and a 30-minute Nimbin celebrity – even you can do it.

It's simply a matter of grabbing a bicycle that works ie. has brakes and a chain and a couple of pumped-up tyres, throwing on a helmet as you throw off your clothes, and joining us to celebrate our 10th ride up and down the main street of Nimbin.

Yes, the Nimbin naked bike ride has been going 10 years, and the message "share the road" has never been more important. Pedestrians and bicycle riders continue to be vulnerable on our twisted and tortured roads where car culture rules.

Narrow winding roads with potholes so big you could keep a pet hippo in them, forever deteriorating road shoulders, and the ghastly rough and corrugated surfaces: these are the conditions local riders are brought up on.

Despite this, riders and onlookers alike have been



Bike activist Chris Quayle enjoying last year's ride.
Photo: Linda Collings

flocking to Nimbin every year on the second Saturday in March in increasing numbers to keep the dream of alternatives to the combustion engine alive.

Driven madly to be free of the restrictions of clothes and oil, we wildly anticipate this

event months beforehand, all for the chance to hang out nude at the delightful and delicious Bush Theatre Cafe, painting flowers and dolphins and anti-imperialist slogans on each other's bodies before heading up town on our treddlies for half an hour of

bikevist fun in the main street.

Over these 10 years we have welcomed all ages from babies to great grans, celebrated all body types and made a space for diverse genders and creeds.

So if you have always hankered to join in, but have said "maybe next year", well next year has finally come. We are meeting to strip off and paint bodies at 10am on Saturday 10th March at the Bush Theatre. The ride will start when everyone is painted up and ready.

If you are a Facebook user, you can get more details by joining the group: world naked bike ride – Nimbin

If you haven't ridden your bike for a while, please give it a mechanical once-over to make sure it's in working order, especially the brakes. You might even like to get on it and take it for a spin.

WNBR rides in the district are:

- **Nimbin Saturday 10th March**, meet (Bush Theatre) at 10am to strip and paint up.
- **Lismore Sunday 11th March**, meet 10am (meet-up location to TBA).
- **Byron Bay Sunday 11th March**, meet (Butler Street Reserve) at 1.30pm to strip and paint; ride at 3pm.

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Pool Olympics a successful sojourn

by Sue Edmonds

An enthusiastic crowd gathered at the BBQ area on 26th January to watch the competitors in the annual celebration of all things watery.

The crocodiles kicked off the morning of hot competition. Only a couple of babies were lost in the depths, one noodle fell to pieces in the stress, walking backwards and forwards were both won by an outsider, Barry, who was so overwhelmed he couldn't even make a speech when awarded with the fabulous trophies created by his mother-in-law, Pauline.

The twins, Khatia and Luca, dominated the three-legged race, winning by a good country mile. They were successful in many events, taking home at least six trophies. Amelia and Barry won the fashion parade, Barry being the only bloke to strut his stuff.

This year we had a new lifesaver, Trish, who floated around in her stunning blow-up tube, keeping a keen eye out for mishaps, of which there were none. The tried and true synchronised swimming team, Slippery When Wet, did a demonstration performance of hula hoops in and out of the water, and were stunning with their precision and costuming as usual.

The Friends of Nimbin Pool were excellent at gathering a few dollars from the enthusiastic spectators. This money is set aside for incidentals at the pool.

Thanks to all the helpers, Tim, the sausage sizzler king, Margie as record keeper, Jane for her commentating and judging of the fashion parade, Mike for his photos, the Emporium and the bakery for their donations of food for the event, and everyone else who came along to make the morning another successful event.



Photos: Mike Birch





Relentless anti-Adani activism



by Alan Roberts

Already in 2018, people from our new 40ha Stop Adani farm in North Qld, have stopped ship loading at Adani's Abbot Point coal port twice, and closed Aurizon's rail line from the Bowen Basin multiple times.

These actions, plus community outreach, local council meeting protests etc, are being generated by only a small camp through which people from all over Australia are rotating, many of them leaving with detailed bail conditions that prevent them from going near Adani or Aurizon-owned infrastructure. But there's a fresh supply of eager felons all the time and the alleged criminals are repurposed as media managers and such like.

The first five-person lock-on at Abbot Point coal terminal with one ship loading lasted 15 hours, the second, was a five person lock on by the Coffs/Mullum crew requiring fast action under tighter port security with two ships loading and which lasted seven hours. They found the psychological pressure to lock off daunting – so be prepared. The *Townsville Bully* article was vitriolic, claiming \$50m losses from this!

The police and local council have moved to the harassment phase. Police are pulling over vehicles on a breathalizer ruse, sometimes thuggishly stealing banners and ropes, sometimes for a chat and to search for the notoriously difficult to transport sleeping dragons, about which they have an obsession. And they're always angling for an invite to our farm. During a meeting with our legal support person in a coffee shop, the police negotiator wanted to be informed when we did or did not plan any actions as it was straining their budget getting the terror squad up from Brisbane. We refused that request.

On my two-day, 862km scouting trip with a friend around the proposed Carmichael mine site there was no sign of any activity since Christmas – except for one place (see later). On the railway service camp pad closest to the proposed mine site, that was under construction in Nov 2017, mine were the only footprints since Xmas. The access road to it, which has to cross a wetland, was unbuilt.

There was evidence of at least one person at the Adani mine camp – one vehicle moved during the day and one dorm light at night. Adani's Artesian Basin bore pump (from the abandoned La Bona homestead) in the middle of the proposed mine site had been leaking for some time filling the old bore drains, in which several mobs of kangaroos were cooling themselves on a stinking hot day (pictured, top).

Ute tyre marks on a bush track were the only sign of activity in the proposed mine area. We followed these at night a long way and came eventually to fresh tyre tracks consistent with a big front end loader in a cleared corridor on the NE corner of the proposed mine, well inside Wangan and Jagalingou country. W&J's Murrawah Johnson has been informed of this suspected breach.

There was no observable heavy machinery at the Belyando Adani railway workers camp – this a place that had been busy for workers and blockaders before Christmas. There was only one ute there briefly. In those two days we saw no-one in the extensive proposed mine area.

Since we were there in November, some 70km of roads from Gregory Development Road almost out to the proposed mine have been upgraded by the local councils from bush tracks to wide, well-formed gravel roads with adequate table drains. Townsville and Rockhampton councils are now in hot

water from the criminal corruption commission, their ratepayers and us protectors for pledging \$34m to Adani for an airport across the road from the mine camp – an airport owned by Adani outside their respective shires. Adani is currently negotiating an airport tender with a Toowoomba firm. The current red dirt airfield is big enough for jets, but after 2mm of rain it's very slippery.

BBC India spent a day filming at our farm, then two days out to the proposed mine area, chaperoned by us – should be interesting.

Mullum bus people passed \$2000 of Stop Adani coins into circulation in Bowen and Collinsville. Funnily they caused more outrage in the media, with accusations of terrorism, than closing the port and rail! The balance of comments were in our favour as well as fun and literate – progress!

Decisions on the Stop Adani farm are made by consensus at daily meetings – there is no hierarchy. The house is office space. There are meeting spaces; good sand-filtered drinking and ablution water which is pumped from the Bogie River; a fairly decent workshop; lots of material; work and storage sheds etc. Paul from Djanbung is making steady progress, using indentured labour, on a permaculture garden system for the farm that's looking good. Food/transport is \$15/day for poor people or \$25/day for the rich. There are plans to build the farm population significantly and start a crowd-fund for about \$½m to pay back the loan and provide a legal fund kitty.

There is plenty to do at the farm, both in support roles and direct action, so if you can get up there now you'd be primed ready for when and if large numbers are needed. It's fun working and skillsharing with people from all around Australia.

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Monuments Project underway



"They formed a circle when they dug in at Terania Creek. A circle of the young and not so young re-settlers of the Rainbow Region and their friends. Holding hands, they made decisions which shook a Government, took Australia into a new era of public protest, and stopped the tread of a 20-ton bulldozer."

– Dudley Leggett, Terania Creek Action, 1979 Photo: David Kemp

by Trevor Reece

The Nightcap Monuments Project aims to help celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Terania basin rainforest logging protests which led to the later creation of the Nightcap National Park.

Apart from aiming to establish some permanent monuments to the historic Terania and Mt Nardi environmental actions, the project is hoping to consolidate much of the fragmented historical data from the protest period.

Many side projects are developing alongside the main monuments project, such as a regional photographic exhibition and collecting local film, audio, music and song recordings from the period. There are many project planning meetings developing and regional community engagement project teams are being formed for the Mullumbimby, Nimbin and Lismore geographical areas and their surrounding communities.

It is a substantial regional project, crossing a number of local government areas, and after almost 40 years the original protest campaign veterans are now spread across the Rainbow

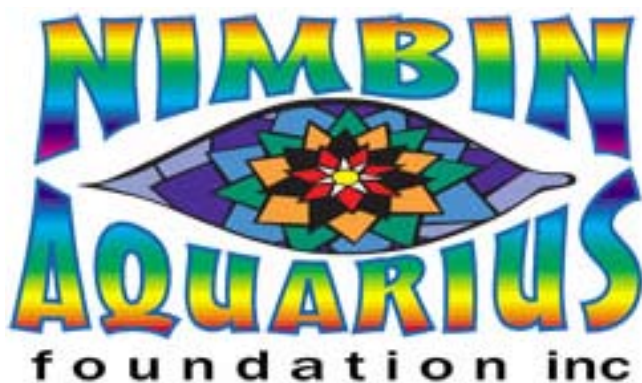
Region, the greater region of Northern NSW and even into South East Queensland.

It is felt it is significant to progress the project at this time, giving regard to the growing age of many of the original protest veterans and further for valuable historic data that should not be lost. The protestors' environmental actions left a substantial regional and national legacy, as well as the establishment of a World Heritage National Park.

If you have an interest in the project, you are invited to join one of the regional community engagement project teams near to your locality. The project is hoping to also attract interest especially from the younger generations of the community.

A monthly project email newsletter is also being distributed through the local area project teams and various local community networks. A project website is in the planning stages but likely to be some months away.

For further information, contact Trevor Reece, current Project Co-ordinator: treece545@gmail.com or the Brunswick Valley Historical Society: bvhs88@yahoo.com.au



by John Tozeland, Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc.

"You are the Festival"
– Johnny Allen, 1973

Community Engagement Circle, Tuesday 13th February, 2pm – 7pm at Nimbin School of Arts Hall

Spreading the word, communicating with thinkers, artists, writers, film makers, musicians and change makers of all kinds, the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation is set to explain its concept for the 45th anniversary of the Aquarius Festival and invite all to join in.

With a theme of Welcoming New Age, New Wave for 'A Celebration of Colour', the commemoration seeks to embed a platform of inclusion and diversity, and to engage in equal opportunity with respect and honour for the land and lore of the Bundjalung Nation in which we live and work.

For more information, go to: #MerryMonthofMay and: #NAF2018



Rally becomes march to change the date

Photo: Chibo Mertineit

by Aniko Papp

On 26th January, an occasion when millions throughout Australia celebrate the achievements of our culture, over 200 people gathered outside Lismore Courthouse to question whether this is really the most appropriate date.

Kleon Toffetti, a young indigenous man from Kyogle who organised the rally, and his mother, Julie Tyson, both gave speeches. All acknowledged the traditional owners of the Lismore area, which are the Widjagal Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation.

Kleon and Julie are from the Noonuccal nation (Stradbroke Island) and Darung nation. It was on the Darung nation, near Sydney that Captain Cook first made claim of Australian land for the British Empire.

"There's not many of us left," Julis said. "They tell us that our people don't exist. We were taught about the First Fleet. We were never taught about our country. We are surrounded by places in which our people were massacred."

People young and old, indigenous, and those of all colours, races, and types gathered together to advocate the changing of the date of Australia Day.

Initially, there were speeches including



Photos: Aniko Papp

Vanessa Ekins, deputy mayor of Lismore Council who said, "We acknowledge that this country has never been ceded. We need to learn about our local area and its history."

Comments flowed around the Courthouse as people milled around, including Nola Firth who said, "After 68 year of living here, I realised that we massacred the indigenous people. The least we can do is change the date."

Young people, such as Vincent and Lauren, said, "We need to respect the original owners of this land," and "We need to acknowledge our own history, not ignore it. Not forget about it and move on. We need action, rather than celebrate the genocide."

The rally then took itself to the streets of Lismore in an impromptu march around the block. Passersby joined in as

the march progressed, holding banners and signs, chanting: "Change the date," "Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land," and "No pride in genocide".

After the march, the rally came back to the steps of the Courthouse and people were invited to speak. One advocated powerfully that Australia Day should be called Shame Day.

Another related his own family history as an immigrants escaping the wars in Europe, but acknowledged also the shame that he feels about what was done to the first nation people, "We need to respect them and change the date."

In a closing statement, Julie Tyson said, "We need to be a true nation and acknowledge what happened. We need to walk hand in hand together... changing the date is just one of those steps we need to take."

Recycling helps Vinnies help needy

by Robin Osborne

Every day around 10 tonnes of discarded clothing and piles of sundry household items are placed in, or less happily beside, Vinnies collections bins throughout the North Coast and other parts of NSW.

First dibs on this mountain of material goes to the Vinnies shop volunteers who sort through the donations and set aside clean, undamaged items for sale in one of the 27 shops between Tweed Heads in the north and Laurieton in the south.

"After some sprucing up these first-quality items go on sale in local Vinnies shops, like Nimbin, Kyogle and Lismore," according to Angelo Grande, the Society's Recycling & Waste Management Facilitator for the past 16 years.

A small quantity of goods, soiled or damaged, must be sent to landfill, with the remainder being transported to the Vinnies recycling centre in the Lismore suburb of Goonellabah.

The centre, occupying 1600 square metres, is named after Matthew Talbot, the 19th century Dublin ascetic who is an inspiration for ex-alcoholics worldwide. It is the largest such facility in regional NSW, handling one-fifth of the state's total clothing donations.

Toys, household goods and other recyclable wares are sent to the Vinnies Buy Back Shop, next to the recovery centre at Murwillumbah tip. Some items – from luggage to car seat restraints –



Photo: Jacklyn Wagner

are sent overseas, mainly to Papua New Guinea, Australia's nearest neighbour.

PNG, along with several east African countries, is also a destination for the tonnes of reusable clothing that the centre reprocesses.

Angelo Grande's team of twenty, many on JobStart or other supervised programs, start with sorting wearable clothes from clean but tattered items that, shorn of buttons and zippers, will be blade-shredded and sold in 5kg or 10kg packs known as Vinnies Bag O' Rags. These are a mainstay for painters, mechanics, car detailers and DIY home improvers.

The bulk of the usable clothing is folded and bundled together for compacting into 210 kg bales using a converted wool press, one of the facility's cannily adapted pieces of equipment.

These huge packs are moved by forklift

to waiting trucks that will take them to shipping containers on the docks and on to outdoor markets in PNG and Africa where the recycled donations will be sold to local people at affordable prices.

"This is a recycling effort that starts with individual Australians and moves to an industrial scale," said the North Coast President of St Vincent de Paul Society, Yvonne Wynen.

"Each year we are rescuing nearly half a million tonnes of clothing that would otherwise go to landfill. The precious funds we earn are used to help local people doing it tough."

"This includes support with accommodation, food and pharmacy bills, the needs of children, drop-in facilities for homeless people... all made possible through recycling goods that society discards. It's a win on every level," Ms Wynen said.

Is the world going, going, gone?

by Bernadine Schwartz

Once upon a time, talking about the weather was considered small talk – my, how things can change.

The weather is prominent now in our lives, and will continue to be as this ticking time bomb, called global warming hangs over us all. The climatic changes we are beginning to experience have the power to do incredible devastation to our environment and what we have witnessed so far is just a sneak preview.

The Great Barrier Reef has gained a lot of attention in the news recently but even without the Adani mine, its future still hangs in the balance. Agricultural practices, mining and warming oceans have killed over half of the reef's coral since 1985, but we have just as serious a problem with our mangroves.

The WWF research has revealed that the world has lost over 35% of its mangroves and we are losing them at 2% p.a. At this rate we'll have lost the whole lot in just over 30 years!

Australia lost a 1,000 km stretch of mangroves in the Gulf of Carpentaria during March 2017 (6% of the Gulf's mangroves), while at the same time the Great Barrier Reef was experiencing massive bleaching. The media reported on the Great Barrier Reef, but no mainstream media outlet mentioned the mangroves in the Gulf.

This catastrophic event was unprecedented and occurred because of a four-year drought, making the water too salty and the water too shallow. What's concerning about this event is that die-back on this scale has never been recorded before on our entire planet and when this has occurred, it's taken decades, not months.

Mangroves play an essential role in protecting our coastline and providing fish with nurseries that are vital for their existence.



Image courtesy Norm Duke, James Cook University

Australia is third after Indonesia and Brazil for its abundance in mangroves, but more importantly the Gulf is considered globally exceptional because of its size and naturalness with mudflats and sea grass meadows, that provide food for well over a 1,000 marine turtles and dugongs.

Our coastline is severely compromised when mangroves are taken out of the equation, as they protect the shoreline from cyclones, storms and big tides. The roots of mangroves have a unique way of storing carbon, but if these roots are disturbed from movement of sediment this can lead to a massive release of carbon into our atmosphere.

If this continues, as WWF has predicted, the consequences will be severe not only for the environment but for the fishing industry as well.

What will it take for those who continue to jump on planes and tick off items on their bucket list? Do anything

you can to minimise the impact on this planet because no-one can predict what our future will bring. I've said this time and time again, but I can't say it enough when it continually falls on deaf ears.

We're squeezing every last drop out of our fragile planet, but we don't like to think about who's ultimately going to suffer, our poor unfortunate youth. Definitely not my generation, who are growing old.

Look around you at this beautiful gift we live on! All living beings on this earth are on the verge of losing their livelihoods. Who will be prepared for this catastrophe that's just waiting to pounce on us all?

This world of ours desperately needs a strategy similar to the Marshall Plan during WW11 because public displays, like the Paris Agreement are achieving very little. Our planet is a huge Easter Island– chop, chop, chop, going, going, gone!

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NIMBIN ENVIRONMENT CENTRE NEWS

by Cath Smith, President

Already it's the second month of 2018 – whew!

I mentioned in last month's *GoodTimes* that Galilee Blockade and Stop Adani held a stall at the Woodford Folk Festival, diligently sustained by Jan McNicol, Will Hamilton and a host of other volunteers, so that it was always open to provide public education on the issues of the Carmichael mine and the fossil fuel industry in general, including giving talks at the Musicians Against Adani concert in the Greenhouse on Saturday night. Hundreds of new activists were recruited, and money raised to continue the campaign.

So far our movement has caused the Queensland government to veto the NAIF loan to Adani, Downer EDI to lose interest in building and managing it (thanks Northern Rivers councils and other



activists), Aurizon to wait to see Adani's money before building the train line and a million Australians to do something to stop this deranged project.

It's not over yet, and even if Adani's mine is stopped, we still have to keep all the other fossil fuels in this country in the ground to have a 50% chance of keeping global warming below two degrees, so people get ready: we're going to need you!

At the moment, the Tamworth Country Music Festival is happening, and as always, Lisa Costello

from the NEC is there "personning" the Lock the Gate stall, disseminating information about coal and gas mining and its effects on the Great Barrier Reef, rivers, land and air. The volunteers at the LTG stall also sell merchandise to support LTG, get petitions signed and are informing the public about the upcoming Time2Choose rally in Sydney in March.

This year, the choice between dirty fossil fuels and clean, renewable power has never been clearer. Time is up for old, outdated technology that pollutes nature and our

health. The future we imagine, powered by the sun and the wind is on our doorstep. The only thing holding us back is the dirty energy companies and the politicians who do their bidding.

On 24th March, we will unite with people from all walks of life from across the state to tell the NSW government that it's Time2Choose the future we want. The Time2Choose rally will take place at noon in Sydney's Hyde Park.

If people are interested in carpooling or sorting out a bus, they can register their interest and we can see how. Contact Jacqui Mumford, network organiser at the Nature Conservation Council of NSW on (02) 9516-1488 or email: jmumford@nature.org.au

Nimbin Environment Centre meets at 5pm on the second Wednesday of each month. Next meeting: 14th February at 5pm at the Community School room, Nimbin Community Centre.



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15th annual Nimbin Women's Dinner & Comedy Gala

Thursday 8th March at Nimbin Town Hall, in celebration of International Women's Day. Featuring a bunch of local funny gals and special guests from Melbourne and Brisbane. Contact NNIC for tix/bookings/info and see the poster in this edition of NGT. \$30 dinner and show. (\$25 concession). All women welcome. Get your tix early to avoid missing out.

Love spreadsheets, profit and loss and bank recs?

Fancy a job as treasurer on the Management Committee of a dynamic community organisation? Then do we have the job for you! NNIC is looking for a new treasurer. The Management Committee meets once a month generally on Wednesdays at 5.30pm. For more info or to express interest, contact Nat at: admin@nnic.org.au

Nimbin Community Drug Action Team (CDAT)

The first meeting of 2018 will be on Thursday 15th February at 2pm, at NNIC. New members welcome. Nimbin CDAT's purpose is to identify and respond to harm arising in our community because of drug or alcohol use, and to prevent and reduce that harm where we can. Look out for the Adventures of Captain Competent and Clued-up Claudelia with their harm minimisation messages. To join Nimbin CDAT, contact: admin@nnic.org.au

Volunteer Positions Vacant

Front of House volunteers - with IT and customer service skills who can assist people using the PCs/copier, or with minimum Cert 2 in welfare/community development (or currently enrolled in) for our front desk reception role. Must be reliable and able to commit one regular day per week between 10am and 4pm (with breaks of course). A fantastic way to contribute to the Nimbin community as well as pick up skills and experience. Does this sound like you? Then drop into NNIC and see our fabulous Community Access Worker, Kath.

Sustainable Nimbin Community Plan

We are planning a Leadership Forum in March for the individuals and organisations who have identified leadership roles under the Plan, for the purpose of checking in, updating on progress and identifying any support etc. required. If you or your organisation are not currently an identified strategy leader but think you probably should be, contact us by phone or email so we can add you to the invite list. We will be in touch with all the project/strategy leaders very soon.

2017 Nimbin Community Xmas Lunch

A million thanks to Santa and the elves and the energetic Soup Kitchen team for yet another fabulous Community Christmas Lunch at the Nimbin Town Hall. Extra special thanks to Gail, Heidi and Kath. Thanks also to everyone who donated food and gifts for the children. And of course, thanks to everyone who came along to share the Christmas fare and frivolity.

Struggling with household bills? Got unpaid fines?

We may be able to assist with electricity and telephone bills, and you may be eligible for a Work Development Order enabling you to pay off your fines via volunteer work. Phone us on 6689-1692 or just drop in to make an appointment with Vicki our Community Case Coordinator.

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre (NNIC) is run by locals for locals to support the community to achieve their aspirations. Everyone is welcome. Lots of useful local and other info is available on our website. For appointments, phone 6689-1692 or just drop in between 10am and 4pm weekdays.



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Nimbin Hospital information

Child immunisation clinic

For 0-5 year olds, held on second Tuesday of the month. Next Clinic: 13th February. Phone 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health Centre)

Early childhood nurse

Every Tuesday. Baby checks, weighs, post-natal support. For appointments phone 6620-7687.

Women's health nurse services

One Thursday a month. Confidential service, pap smears, breast checks, contraceptive advice, post-natal checks, general health information. Phone 6689-1400 for appointment.

Wound clinic

Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8am. For self-referral, phone 6689-1288. Referrals also from Nimbin Hospital and GP clinic.

Cannabis clinic

Every Monday. Confidential counselling, Phone 1300-664-098 or 0427-465-708.

Drug and alcohol counsellor/psychologist

Every Thursday. For appointment, phone 6620-7634 or mobile 0428-109-474.

Nurse practitioner clinics

- Diabetes Clinics: third Thursday of the month, next is 15th February.
- Respiratory Clinic: second Tuesday of the month, next is 13th February. Phone 6630-0488 for appointments.

Community Registered Nurses

Monday to Friday, 8am-4.30pm. Assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy, provision of palliative care in the home, medication support. Phone 6689-1288 – leave message, will return call swiftly.

Nimbin NSP

Needle and Syringe program open Monday to Thursday. Arrangements can be made to see Community Registered Nurse.

Health advice line

Phone 1800-022-222 if you have a health issue. 24-hour, seven days a week free service. A Registered Nurse will assess whether you need to go to an Emergency Department.

Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at the hospital, at 10am. Next meeting: 14th February. New members welcome.



Australia's biggest floating solar farm

January saw the official launch of Australia's biggest floating solar farm.

Lismore Community Solarfarms set out to build two 99kW solar farms in Lismore, developed in collaboration with Lismore City Council – at Goonellabah Sports & Aquatic Centre and at the East Lismore Sewage Treatment Plant. They are the first ever council-operated and community-funded solarfarms in Australia and are flagship projects for Council's 2023 Renewable Energy Master Plan.

These community energy projects used a financial model which is the first of its kind in Australia. Two community companies – Lismore Community Solarfarm (Goonellabah) Pty Ltd and Lismore Community Solarfarm (East) Pty Ltd – were incorporated to raise funds from two groups of community investors, who are predominately local, which were in turn lent to council to build the solar farms.

These projects have generated considerable interest both nationally and internationally. Farming the Sun is deeply honoured to be at the forefront of Australia's community energy movement in working on these projects.

This success is tangible proof of just how strong the interest and support for renewable energy is – from community investors and philanthropists as well as professional advisors and more.

After several years of hard work between Farming the Sun, Lismore City Council and a community committed to renewable energy, it is incredibly exciting to see two solar farms now powering Lismore's biggest facilities – Goonellabah Sports & Aquatic Centre, and Australia's largest floating solar farm at the East Lismore Sewage Treatment Plant.

The Climate Council helped celebrate and launched their



Photo: Donna Harper, ABC North Coast

second round of the Cities Power Partnership in NSW, and their Australian Councils Powering Innovation Tour. The full morning agenda included:

- A tour of the innovative floating 100kW solar farm, led by Sharyn Hunissett, Environmental Projects Officer at Lismore City Council, and Suntrix Solar.
- Opening speeches by Mayor Smith, representatives of Lismore Community Solar, and Climate

Councillors Professors Will Steffen and Lesley Hughes.

- The Hon Benjamin Franklin, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Renewable Energy and Northern NSW, officially launched the floating solar farm.
- The Climate Council presented a petition with over 20,000 signatures congratulating Lismore to the Mayor and Directors of the two solar farm community companies.

The Council-Community solar farm model was created through the Farming the Sun organisation, and led by Starfish Initiatives in collaboration with Embark Australia and Norton Rose Fulbright.

Funding for the project was provided by the NSW Government's Growing Community Energy program, the Earth Welfare Foundation and the Diversicon Environmental Foundation.

Tips and tricks of stand alone power – choosing an inverter



by Guy Stewart,
Rainbow Power Company

Buying an off-grid battery inverter can be a pretty fraught process. I will leave aside the obvious size, voltage and price issues. Instead I will address the several non-obvious but very important things that also need to be considered.

Standby Efficiency is one of the most important things. This is the amount of power consumed by the inverter sitting idle, doing no work. It can be massive. A 100W standby load for an inverter that is always on equals 2.4 kWh per day! That is equivalent to 750W of solar panels and 10 kWh of batteries just for the inverter doing nothing!

Depending on the size of the inverter, an acceptable standby load is between 5W and 20W. Almost as a rule of thumb, the cheaper and larger the inverter, the less efficient it is with standby load. You will be paying for it in extra solar panels and prematurely failing batteries.

Surge Capacity is the next important thing. Cheaper inverters use a transformerless inverter, which is better suited to grid connected systems. They promote ridiculous power ratings like 5000W at 24V, but that is the peak supply at best. They will typically struggle to provide a quarter of that. Really cheap units can actually be unsafe, with not enough isolation between the AC and DC parts.

A quality transformer-based inverter will be much heavier, and due to the large coil of copper wire inside, much more expensive. A good quality inverter is rated at their continuous output, e.g. 3000VA, but they will typically surge to double or more of that very gracefully. They will attempt to run the load and typically overload only when they overheat.

Reliability. Costs of breakdown and access to replacements needs to be factored into the price. A failed inverter will also typically mean a dark room, a warming fridge, loss of internet

connectivity, loss of water pressure, and more. If you are in a remote spot, these extra costs can very quickly eat up any savings you made, as well as the inconvenience of finding another inverter at short notice and fitting it to the system under pressure.

Price and Longevity. The cost of an appliance, especially a durable one like an inverter, should be divided over the years of support/warranty and then the years of reliable service. A well-built inverter operated within its design should last a decade or more.

Output Quality. Most inverters these days put out a decent quality sine wave. But it's still worth mentioning that some put out rubbish modified or square waves which will destroy electric motors and other transformers.

If you would like further help with selecting an inverter that is right for you, please give Rainbow Power Company a call on (02) 6689-1430.



Recommended brands of inverters



Syringe safety hazards



On Thursday night, 18th January, medical waste syringes were left in the Nimbin Post Office driveway.

This is incredibly dangerous waste, contaminated with contagious diseases. For people to discard this kind of waste in a public space shows extreme lack of concern for themselves as well as our wider community.

Surveillance camera footage will be examined to identify the offenders.

The Mourning News: dying at home

by Megan James

There is a story about Buddha telling a young woman, who wanted her dead baby to be brought back to life, to go find a mustard seed from a household that had never been touched by death. From her fruitless search, she realised that she was not alone in her experience of grief and loss.

We will all suffer the deaths of people close to us, whether through accident or disease. Accidental death and suicide are not something we can plan for, but terminal illness gives us an opportunity to come close to the unfathomable mystery that is life and death. From my recent experience caring for a beloved friend with cancer, I have learnt much that I would like to share.

Apparently most people would like to die at home but instead die in hospital. And yet there are excellent support services in our region to help people die at home. It saves the government money, it gives the dying person access to familiar surroundings and people, and it enables carers and family to spend the last precious weeks and days



with someone they love before they leave on their last journey.

If you should find yourself facing the imminent death of someone you love and they want to die at home, contact your local community nurses for information about the support you can receive. They can refer you to the Silver Chain palliative nursing service, which provides 24 hour on-call advice and support as well as regular check-in visits, bathing and respite. This

support can be set up very quickly; there are no long waiting lists.

Aids such as shower chairs, walkers etc are usually able to be borrowed from your local hospital. A hospital bed becomes fairly essential once a person becomes bedbound, and is a great help for home nursing – it can be raised and lowered and offers an air-mattress that continuously moves slightly to prevent the development of pressure sores.

You really need two committed people to do it well. A small team of occasional volunteers is handy too – for shopping, cleaning and cooking and whatever else may be needed. Support with practical matters gives space for the primary carers to share spiritual support and love with the dying person, as well as making it possible for them to recover their energy.

It can be physically and emotionally demanding to be on call 24 hours a day, but with sufficient support it can also be incredibly rewarding and a beautiful time to share with the person leaving as well as those left behind.

Love makes angels of us all.



The real cost of rail

There's been a great deal of misinformation spread about the cost and necessity of rail services on the Casino to Murwillumbah (C-M) rail line by people wanting to rip up the line and replace it with an expensive bike track.

For eight years, local National Party MPs, and then leader of the Opposition, Barry O'Farrell, repeatedly promised to provide a commuter train service on the Casino to Murwillumbah (C-M) rail line and investigate building the rail connection to Coolangatta. They claimed a train service would cost no more than the (expensive and mostly empty) CountryLink buses that people hate or cannot use. The funds needed are far from enormous.

Train lines are much cheaper to build and maintain than roads and freeways, which create more traffic and toxic emissions in our towns. As the state government's own 2012 Condition Assessment Report and map for the C-M line shows, 75% of the line only needs minor repairs. Many of the timber sleepers on the heavy duty line had been replaced with steel sleepers prior to the service closing.

The cost of repairs to the three kilometers of line in Byron Bay was only \$1.8M. This means the total cost of restoring the C-M line for trains would be around \$80M – even doubled, it's only \$160M. This compares very favourably with the estimated cost of at least \$75M to rip up the rails and replace them with a hard surface for a bike track to be used by a few cyclists.

While local buses rarely carry more than one or two passengers, the Byron Bay zero emissions solar train had 10,000 passengers in the first month of operation – exceeding expectations. People are disappointed the train does not travel to more

local towns. Being able to take wheelchairs, prams, bicycles and surfboards on the train is an added benefit. The people have spoken loudly and clearly and when the state government does the right thing and repairs the line, the train operators could extend the service.

The bikers claim that they want to destroy the train line to save the corridor for future train services, then repeatedly contradict themselves by stating 'no government will ever provide train services on this corridor'. They claim the line is worthless as it only services eight out of ten major population centres on the North Coast and ignore the need to provide transport for five million tourists to the region. Too many local people have spent a lot of time, energy and their own money over fourteen years fighting for safe, sustainable, cost effective train services on the C-M line and they will not tolerate the destruction of this valuable line any more than they tolerated destructive CSG mining.

The number of deaths and serious injuries on our roads, including the devastating loss of whole families, are unacceptable. The bikers seem to have little concern for peoples' safety, or for those unable to drive, or afford a car. Traffic congestion and toxic emissions, especially in Byron Bay, is ridiculous and unnecessary. It's only a matter of time until tourists tire of this congestion and go elsewhere, then the local economy will suffer.

All of the above, plus the warnings of more extreme weather events if toxic emissions aren't reduced, means we can't afford not to get the trains running.

The same incompetent transport minister who discontinued the C-M train service also tried to close the Armidale train service,

but their independent MP, Tony Windsor, was not going to allow his electorate to be deprived of an essential transport service. Despite the combined population of the Tamworth-Armidale region being just over half that of the North Coast, (nor do they have five million tourists) they kept their train service, and still have it.

The National Party's broken promise to "get the trains running" contributed to them losing one long-held North Coast seat, and almost losing two others, at the last state election.

Candidates at the next state election who demonstrate genuine concern for the loss of lives on our roads and the massive environmental damage done by road transport, by campaigning for train services on the C-M line and building the rail connection to Coolangatta, will be elected. Then we will soon see the trains running.

Louise Doran
Ocean Shores

Rail vs road deaths

When I was younger and a big truck came up close behind me, without thinking I would instantly speed up to get away from it. When I decided to try and control my speeding I found that with a big truck close behind me I felt very anxious. I would have to pull over to let them past as it was so uncomfortable. These days I hardly drive anywhere outside of Lismore because there are so many trucks on the road, everywhere.

According to an 8 January article in *The Guardian*, in the year to September 2017 the number of deaths in NSW from crashes involving articulated trucks, such as semi-trailers, increased from 29 to 54, or 86%.

Decades ago, freight was often sent by rail but with the decision of NSW governments to cut railways across the state, we've become almost completely dependent on road freight.

A report by Ernst and Young states – "Without rail, the study shows, an additional 100,000 daily car trips would have taken place every year on New Zealand's roads, including 76 million light vehicle hours and 11 million heavy vehicle hours. Moreover, 488,000 tonnes of carbon emissions are cut by rail use,

Not enough parking spaces

Having read the NAG article in January's NGT relating to Council's community consultation regarding the Draft Nimbin Car Parking Strategy, I've noted the following:

- The council calculated the number of car parking spaces required for the precinct to meet current demand to be 703.
- The total number of existing car parking spaces available within the precinct, including on-street, off-street and council-owned space was calculated as approximately 823 spaces.
- The current 'estimated capacity for public parking' was 316.
- The Cubes development will require an additional demand of four spaces in the western car park.
- The Rainbow Café redevelopment will generate demand for 22 car parking spaces, however, only has provision for two spaces on site.
- The mixed use redevelopment of 60, 62, and 62A Cullen Street will create a demand for 44 additional spaces to the western car park.
- The approved shopping centre/supermarket development at 47 Sibley Street may place extra pressure on car parking in the Nimbin business precinct.

• Subdivisions currently under development around town will increase the demand for parking spaces. If the subdivision on 4 Blue Knob Road and the Growth Management Strategy for Nimbin is implemented, to open land within 4km of town for development, there'll be more spaces required. Oh, and what about the tourists?

Lots 10 DP 1221355 and 2 DP1179179, behind the Green Bank and the existing eastern car park have been ruled out as: "Engineers do not favour the area suggested... as it is steep".

I hope one of the councillors or the mayor, could use their monthly column to address how they plan to deal with parking, as I believe it will take more than line-marking in the western car park, moving buses and long vehicles to opposite the Bowlo and parking for bikes at the exit of the western car park to resolve.

Stan Palmer
Blue Knob

Footnote: Paula Newman, Lismore Council's strategic planning co-ordinator, said it is intended that councillors will receive a briefing on the draft parking strategy in March, with a report to council to adopt the strategy in April or May.

according to the study, while an estimated 271 road deaths are avoided each year."

Traffic congestion has not been mentioned as an issue in recent media about the terrible truck crashes happening. Politicians ignore any discussion about rail freight while our state minister for roads talks about giving electric shocks to truck drivers. New Zealand gives us a wonderful example of a solution to our problems. What are the real reasons our governments refuse to consider rail as an option?

Beth Shelley
Booerie Creek

Symbolic peace

I need to respond to the recent article by Bernadine Schwartz (NGT Jan 18) regarding the 60th anniversary and promotion of the current 'Peace Sign'.

For a very long time I have felt great concern that this symbol has been a hallmark of the peace movement around the world.

I am an intuitive person and have always felt that this particular image is counter-productive to peace, and possibly even a 'plant' from long ago to steer us all in the wrong direction.

When I look at this sign and mimic it with my body, I feel a negative 'down' energy – it's a feeling of resignation and passivity which to me is anathema to the positivity that a truly peaceful state of being would engender in me.

On the other hand, if this symbol is reversed it gives me a feeling of empowerment and joy which would be prerequisites for peace and also symbolises a tree (of life)

which epitomises peace and so many good things that trees bring to our world.

I have spoken about this over the years to many people who can understand what I am saying but some, as with Bernadine, have noted the historical significance of it. To me it looks like a rocket which is the very opposite of what you would think a peace symbol would be promoting.

Just food for thought, and maybe we can get a conversation going around this very powerful image that may have been surreptitiously taking the whole peace movement in the totally opposite direction for a very long time.

Lydia Kindred
Rosebank

Finite employment

What is employed? One hour per week! No wonder governments crow about 5% unemployment. What is the REAL unemployed rate?

Surely to be employed means you can earn a living; that is afford shelter, food etc. There must be many people working part-time jobs who still qualify for, and need, Newstart Allowance or the dole to eke out a living, yet the government's definition counts them as employed?

The ABS takes its definitions of employment and unemployment from the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The current ILO definitions were established in 1982, following a review of the previous definitions which dated from 1954.

The ILO concept of work for purposes of measuring employment is based on the

NGT welcomes letters and other contributions received by email or post prior to deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be edited for length, and articles for accuracy. Please include your full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

concept of production as defined by the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA).

In common with many other national labour force surveys, the ABS has set one hour in a one week reference period as the minimum amount of work for deciding whether or not a person is employed.

The ILO standards specify that the concept should be interpreted as paid work for at least one hour in a short reference period such as one week or one day. This 'one hour criterion' in the definition of employment is also considered fundamental to the ILO definition of unemployment, which refers to a situation of being completely without work.

Minimal wages growth over several years, rising living costs and an increasing wealth gap, and this is the lucky country?

Will some real people, with real life situations, who understand the day-to-day problems of falling income relative to rising living costs, stand up and get voted in to address our current shambles in Canberra?

Richard White
East Ballina

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NGT is published by the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation, 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin

NEXT DEADLINE:
Wednesday 21st February

Email nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

by Louise Mehta

It is with deep love and respect that we honour the life of one of the Grand Old Ladies of Nimbin: Sister Joy Smith, who died on Christmas Day, aged 83.

We were privileged to have her with us here in Nimbin for over 30 years. She was a brilliant acupuncturist, possibly the best in Australia but always humble and an exceptionally generous and loving human being.

Joy was born and grew up in coastal Queensland. Her parents ran a club and spent most of their time ensuring the club ran smoothly. With minimal attention from her parents, she left home as soon as she could, and enrolled in nursing. She loved this profession with a passion: it suited her caring and meticulous nature.

Her competency promoted her to theatre nurse quickly and then she rose to theatre sister. She loved this role; she could play a significant part in assisting the surgeons and the patients in their vulnerable state. Having done the job well for a number of years, Joy sought further



health knowledge and became fascinated with acupuncture and its ability to heal all sorts of disorders.

Acupuncture had started to gain credibility in the Western world, and through Joy's excellent working track record, she was selected to train in China. The country had just opened to the outside world. A teaching college was established in Nanjing for foreigners to learn acupuncture the Chinese way.

Joy had a European teacher but he could speak Chinese fluently, and translated the ancient texts for her. These texts were very powerful as they held sacred knowledge that the Mao dynasty had tried to eradicate; this greatly deepened her love of acupuncture and its magic.

RIP Joy Smith

After that, Joy moved to Nimbin to open up an acupuncture practice in town and use her nursing and health skills. She set it up in Chinese style – with red curtains and Chinese medicines. She started exploring homeopathy which also works with the body's own inner vibrations. The clinic was very popular and her business thrived. Joy Loved Nimbin and her home in the Blue Springs Community.

At the age of 65, Joy met the love of her life, Roy. They bought a camper van together and loved travelling round in it. Sadly, that very same year, Roy died, leaving Joy heartbroken. To ease the pain, Joy got a dog: a Jack Russell named Sweetie who became her constant companion.

Her passion for her work remained undiminished. She carried on her acupuncture for friends from home, giving them sessions in exchange for gifts. Many times she

would do sessions for free because of her generous nature and healing was more important to her than money. She is survived by her two children, Cassie and Guy and grandchildren.

Joy spent her last 18 months in a Lismore nursing home. She stayed lively and keen to help her fellow residents with their health problems. The night before she died, her dear friend Lynette phoned to speak to her. The nurse assured Lynette that Joy was way past responding. But the sound of Lynette's voice brought Joy back to life and she sat up and said, "Thank you, oh thank you." The nursing staff were amazed.

Joy died well, full of love and gratitude as always. Joy truly was an amazing woman who shared her knowledge and compassion with the world. Her beautiful memory lives on in our hearts. Joy used to say, "Tell your brain: please help heal my body."

Joy's food wisdom: eat more garlic, eat more papaya.

Vale Geoff Dawe

22 Oct 1948 – 13 Jan 2018
Eulogy by Janaki Pearson

Geoffrey R. Dawe was a remarkable original and controversial thinker/philosopher/writer/gardener before his time. He passed away peacefully, after a short illness. Geoff was 69.

In 1977 he headed north from Wagga Wagga to travel around Australia. He stopped at Tweed Heads and never left the area. He had found his tribe.

Geoff lived almost solely for the betterment of our beautiful world and was constantly challenging and engaging people to rethink how and why we do what we do.

Geoff cared deeply and shared through his own child-rearing that children are our paramount responsibility. Unconditional love and acceptance, no adulteration.

He cared deeply for our earth, with his bare hands, believing weeds are our soil's best friends. By definition, there are no weeds on Geoff's property.

He cared deeply about his local community, engaging in healing the Byrrill Creek valley since 1978 in the first landcare works. In 1987 he was a constant source in seeking to stop spraying 24D in the Byrrill Creek catchment.

He was a school teacher, carpenter, writer, gardener, compost-maker and a chemical-free bush regenerator.

Writing was always his passion and in his last years he spent hours each day at this work as well as in agronomy implementation on his own land.

He was a long standing member of both the Murwillumbah and Byron Environment Centres. His articles have been printed in NGT for five years.

He was a unique dreamer who visioned the way the world could be, too caring for his own good. A great father and friend. We love you and miss you.

Postscript: Geoff was buried on his property, after a farewell he would have loved, a community effort and very organic. One of his sons knew we had to use hand tools to dig his grave. On the day, 10 young men, all of whom Geoff had known since birth, dug his grave.



RIP Margaret McLaren

March 1946 – January 2018
by Karen Welsh and Leigh Arnold

Margaret McLaren was born and educated in London, where she gained a double degree in Philosophy and Theory of Science, while becoming heavily involved in politics (fighting 'entryism' by far left Marxists into the Labour Party) and developed a life-long love of the arts, literature and music, with a number of public piano performances to her credit.

She travelled to Australia in 1990, and on arrival in Lismore studied for a Diploma of Education, becoming a Southern Cross University tutor for the Business degree in computing.

It was then that Margaret moved to Nimbin and settled into Nimbin life. Over the years Margaret was involved in various local committees and was a founding member of the Nimbin Artists Gallery, which is now in its 21st year.

Margaret was a very private person who provided support and encouragement to a number of local artists, and those less fortunate, always with discretion and without fanfare. (Most came to light only after her death.)

Margaret had been increasingly unwell these past five years, but continued to choose to smoke, chose to keep her strong opinions and to speak out about injustices as she saw them, and was her ownself to her last.



Notices

Community Garage Sale

Rock Valley Hall, Sunday 25th February, 10am to 2pm. Household goods, clothes, books, bric a brac, plant pots, building materials, tools and more. Sausage sizzle and coffee cart available. Open to all, not too late to join. Send stall requests to Rock Valley Hall via Facebook. Stall fee: \$10.

AGM

Nimbin Show Society will be held at the Showground at 6pm on Thursday 13th February. All members welcome.

Al-Anon Family Groups

Is your life being affected by somebody else's drinking? Al-Anon Family Groups can help. Meetings held in your district. For more information go to: www.al-anon.org.au or phone 1300-252-666.

Gregory Brian (Ozzie) Osborne

6th March 1959 – 26th February 2018
Fondly remembered by family and friends
Rest in Peace

Jerome, Samuel Kenneth 'Sam'

Passed away 19th January 2018, aged 59 years.

Late of Dyraaba and formerly of Fishermans Reach. The best dad in the world to Monique, Emily and Luke. A selfless man who has touched the lives of many.

A funeral for Sam has been held.

Funeral Directors: Bernard Laverty Pty Ltd
Nambucca and Macksville
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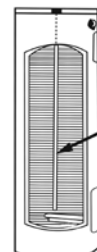
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