



Protestival highs and lows

by Michael Balderstone

The cleanup after MardiGrass has been stretched out because we went to the third Sydney Hemp Expo the following weekend.

At Rosehill Racecourse the numbers attending and stalls were way up, as all sorts of people get into the green rush.

Back home was a different story with the gate takings way down at MardiGrass.

Like we sold half the tickets of last year! How come?

There was a lot of entertainment outside the armband area with friends telling me they didn't even use their tickets, but clearly the Roadside Drug Testing was the big slayer.

Three Winnebagos, 1800 tests costing \$49 each for those little blue plastic spit collectors found 90 positive results (about 5%) and endless stories of protestors doing u-turns when they saw the roadblocks.

Also stories of police telling visitors coming along the



Tweed that "Nimbin is full", and "The festival is sold out". Many turned around and went home.

So the culture war is well and truly alive. Are we really such a threat? And to what? The medicine is fast gaining acceptance. Are the weed's spiritual qualities undermining capitalism? It is a trifle confusing with medical Cannabis clearly breaking new ground every day. When it does get a proper green light, do they really think no-one will be driving?

The RDT testing program alone at MardiGrass would

have cost a lot more than all the festival itself! And that's without the other extensive policing including the Riot and Public Order Squad coming from Sydney. What for?

So we're rethinking the annual protest weekend and welcome suggestions. Already there's a contingent planning to camp next to the Winnebagos to support upset drivers. Do we hire buses? We had carloads of DFDs this year that were extensively used. Drug-free drivers! But still people stayed away in droves.

Looking at the positives, and there were plenty in the sunshine and good vibes once you got past the moat of police roadblocks: the HEMP Olympix was as magical and wacky as ever, the Hemposium was top class with speakers from all over the planet, the Parade and Rally were twice as good as last year, and many thanks to those who made an effort.

The lightshows were fantastic and I loved seeing the pub covered in pot!

Juliska's Fashion Show was a highlight, as was the Great Green Cabaret and Comedy on Saturday, but the world's first Suppositorium probably took the cake. For educational and entertainment value it wins the Gold Medal, and is sure to be on again next year. Don't miss it!

I looked at a movie of the 2003 MardiGrass with huge colas held aloft in the rally and weed a thousand times more open than this year. What is wrong with Australia?

MEDICAN WORKSHOP WEEKEND

Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th June, 11am - 4.20pm at the Nimbin Bush Theatre, entry by donation.

These workshops will cover practical approaches to making your own medicinal Marijuana products.

The medicinal uses and healing properties of the cannabis plant are many, and are increasingly being

recognised by authorities worldwide.

A range of expert speakers have been confirmed and the Bush Theatre Cafe will be open. Try the Hemp and Matcha Cheesecake!

From 12.30pm on Saturday, Neil Pike will be performing his trippy electro folk on the outdoor stage. On Sunday from 12.30pm, enjoy the jumping sounds of Blue Cat Swing.

Aquarius Legends winners



Mayor Issac Smith congratulates joint Aquarius Legends winners Wendy Ford aka Joan Baez (left) and Amulet aka Joni Mitchell

The inaugural tribute artist contest at MardiGrass, Aquarius Legends celebrated the colourful counterculture heroes of the Aquarius era.

It particularly celebrated those who spoke out on important social justice issues such as drug prohibition, civil liberties and environmental protection, as well as the universal love and peace values synonymous with the Aquarius brand.

Mayor Smith was impressed by the high standard of the performers and couldn't pick a single winner, so picked two. "They were all good, but both Joan and Joni were a class above," he said.

Aquarius Legends director Billy Cliff thanked all participants for bringing their legends to life. "Aquarius Legends will return next year, bigger and better," he said.

The battle continues...

by Dionne May

What may seem like a petty war in a world fraught with mind boggling environmental disasters, wholesale global greed and political insanity, is still a worthy and necessary battle here in Nimbin.

Yet nowhere in the world will you see and experience a battle line drawn with such love, creativity and home-grown style as you do at the Nimbin MardiGrass Drug Law Reform Protest/Festival.

Months of preparation for floats, banners, costumes and necessary supplies culminated again in a community display of pride and loyalty to her most infamous citizen, Mary Jane.

Love her or hate her, the truth is she is a gift to humanity. With the power to clean toxic soils, create building and wearable materials, paper, cosmetics, health food, medicines, and of course the ability to induce relaxation, clarity and inner peace... you would certainly have to be a very gullible sheep if your faith in current politics, unethical consumerism and the controlled media of Australia, has blinded you to the irrevocable evidence that cannabis IS truly the one plant on Earth with the ability to heal and help us all in some way.

So despite lower numbers, our green troop was still full of new youth and vitality mixed with creative old cannabis lovers and loyalist from around the world. This annual presence and combined



spirit of love, peace and tolerance defies all stereotypes and hopefully inspires cannabis lovers to stay loyal.

And boy is the pressure on to stay loyal! Even old and young Nimbin stoners are folding for the first time and it seemed every other drug EXCEPT cannabis was available this MG.

Truly a sad irony, that as medical marijuana hits her heights, still one joint or a couple of grams in Nimbin, at MardiGrass, means a humiliating public spectacle as police literally launch on you.

This MG I witnessed four heavily armed policemen grab the arm of a local young girl, whisper "Fuck off out of town" to her, try to unlawfully hold her without arrest, and until the forming crowd reacted, were fully intent on

searching her.

Perhaps it is not until you witness or experience this police brutality in the name of the drug law that you may help cannabis crusaders in our ongoing war.

In the earlier days of Nimbin, local cops would shake their heads and continually ask why we couldn't just smoke at home, completely missing the point of our often isolated, alternative lives and the very human necessity of sharing our time, lives and harvests IN our town, WITH our community.

We never believed that what we were doing was a crime, and like Mary Jane herself, we were all tired of being harassed, misunderstood, arrested and jailed for a dubious law that calls a plant a drug.

We literally ARE criminals for smoking pot and fighting for drug law reform has recently become a long and exhaustive road in Nimbin. The evidence is the deserted street, a smaller MardiGrass each year, no Laneway Boys keeping the shit out of town and relentless police persecution that is killing this one last alternative village in Australia.

MardiGrass is a glimpse of what could be and a symbol of hope for thousands of sick and persecuted citizens of Australia so an enormous thank you to all those that came, shared the love, and remain loyal to what common sense and experience dictates, that cannabis is the ultimate healer of humans!

See you all next year!



JUNE 23/24 MEDICAN WEEKEND AT NIMBIN BUSH THEATRE

Entry by donation
Starting at 11am both days and aiming to finish by 4.20!

Learn how to make and use Cannabis as medicine

Speakers confirmed from the Nimbin Hemp Embassy and the Hemp Club include Malcolm Lee, Rayman, Andrew Kav, Michael, Frances, Radie Al, Zane, Gerald, Dr Deb, Michael Stoopman, Steve Bolt on legals, and many users talking of their experiences.
Other contributors welcome.

Enquiries email: info@hempembassy.net or phone 02 6689-1842



Nimbin MardiGrass 2018



The photographers for our Centrefold are: Barbara Mills, Bob Dooley, Brian Alexander,

Gary Mimich, Greg Soward, Jo Beth Taylor, Marie Cameron, PAC, and Sue Stock.

