

# Uruguay Dreaming: How we could legalise pot

by Bob Hopkins

Since the last MardiGrass, the South American nation of Uruguay has become the first nation in today's world where cannabis use has been completely legalised.

Uruguay is a small nation bordering on the Atlantic Ocean on the south eastern-coast of the South American continent, lying between Brazil to the north and Argentina to the south. It is home to about four million people. It is ranked first in Latin America in democracy, peace, and freedom of the press. They contribute more troops per capita for UN peacekeeping than any other nation.

However, things weren't always so liberal. A military civilian tyranny existed between 1973 and 1988, but following liberation subsequent governments, plunged the country into economic turmoil, increased foreign ownership and unemployment. Until in 2009 when the Broad Front, under President Jose "Pepe" Mujica, a former left wing militant who spent 15 years in prison during the military rule, won power and despite adverse public opinion polls in a predominantly Roman Catholic nation, legalised abortion in 2012, followed by same-sex marriage and cannabis reform in 2013. This was done despite 60% of the population opposing the change.

The cannabis law reform, which finally came into being in 2017, was based on the twin aims of, firstly, changing users from being seen as criminals to those deserving of health care and support, and secondly, the elimination of the role of the drug cartels from Columbia which, until then, were the principal suppliers of cannabis in Uruguay.

These cartels were also suppliers of cocaine and a local toxic 'crack' type substance known as 'pasta base'. By eliminating this connection to cannabis supply



and making the otherwise massive profits untenable, the initiative was seen as a means to reduce use of the heavier substances. This is the same rationale applying in the Netherlands.

The state was to become the supplier of cannabis, providing a number of types with specified cannabinoid ratings, grown under contract to the government and distributed through special federal dispensaries providing registered users with 40 grams per month at a price that undercut and removed any opportunity for profit from the drug cartels. This amounted to a price less than 10% of the price we pay those who are in reality criminals, not the folk heroes they would like to be considered as, in Australia.

In addition to the monthly quota, registered users were entitled to grow up to six plants per year for personal use and have access to growing clubs for different varieties. The cannabis grown is not available to overseas visitors, thus removing the drug tourism attraction of European nations.

The registration of users meant governments could track and, at last, gather accurate data on use and resultant medical or mental health conditions: however it is also the major objection by users with the laws. It is also worth noting that in the first six months of legal cannabis being available, reported

crime fell by over 20%.

So instead of the popularity-driven politics of Australia, here was a governance based on recognition and affirmation of the "common good" – legislation that aimed to provide social equality and harmony, and that sought to remove the infatuation with illegality that is so prevalent in our society. And with no aggressively promoted cannabis sales directed towards maximising profits or government revenue such as exists in the US states or is being proposed in Australia.

Uruguay has shown us that an intelligent, brave and visionary government can effect change. This sadly is a fact of life lacking in Australia where the major political parties manoeuvre to provide their political supporters with a monopolistic control of the cash cow just waiting to be exploited.

This is capitalism at its worst with its free market ethos and which is in reality neither free nor ethical but rather government supported tyranny. And that's where we stand in Australia today. No vision, no compassion, no generosity: a nation where a major corporation BP, in support of its claims to develop offshore oil mining in the Australian Bight, declared oil spills would be good for the economy because it would provide jobs.

Mark Twain wrote that the way to give any product an increased cash value was to prohibit its use. The big unanswered question remains: how do we arrange distribution of cannabis in a society that on one hand conveniently declares it a national corrupter of innocence, and on the other recognises its therapeutic, nutritional and industrial uses and capabilities, and overall benign effects.

We, at the moment, live with a huge black market economy that profits those who currently traffic in and exploit this bad law for their own personal gain. No money flows to the communities it is earned in

to support rehab facilities.

Most of those who use cannabis by default of its illegality are involved in this trade to some extent and individuals stand to incrementally become more and more corrupt as their involvement in the trade and subsequent greed takes hold. And, as mentioned before, become caught in an infatuation with illegality where no longer any moral compass holds sway.

Just for the record, and to counter the notion that 'hippies' have always broken laws, this dealing of illegal substances must be seen as distinct from those who, for instance, like conservationists, act protecting endangered environments from despoliation, war resisters opposing military incursions, and animal rights activists seeking to protect species and habitat from extinction. These are driven by a moral imperative and not personal gain.

On the other hand, we are threatened by the capability of exploitation by cashed-up self-interested minorities: often the very same people who previously found it convenient to condemn users as criminals.

These are venal supporters of political parties who seek for themselves monopolies on production and who are more than capable of aggressive promotion of its use for their own gain and to society's detriment: something akin to the way alcohol is marketed.

Despite its generally benign nature, there are those susceptible to potential psychotic reactions and who deserve protection. Especially young people.

Although I no longer smoke pot, I would simply like to grow a plant or two in my backyard for primarily therapeutic use, should the need arise. But those like myself are rarely considered. And why not? Legislators are quick to point out the profiteering in cannabis but fail to admit that these crimes are all committed in a time of overall

prohibition. And so it goes.

But we're living in a nightmare, a bizarre combination of greed at all costs and a full frontal assault on the integrity of this most magical of planets we call home.

Above all else I would love to live to see the protection and replenishment of our planet's ecosystem; the restoration of social justice to indigenous people everywhere and a recognition that they are the natural and traditional owners of this land they have occupied since deep time; the worshipful relationship of human to environment, instead of its exploiter; and the integrity of all native species against destruction of their habitat and species extinction...

That's why I support MardiGrass. To focus on and demand good governance, compassion and mercy, gentleness and kindness. Agape: the notion of an unconditional universal love, something like what happened in the 60s before self-interest and excessive substance abuse took sway. I'd like to see cannabis use returned to a sacramental sharing without any mention of money: the Divine and Mammon just can't coexist.

Rather, the sadhus of swing sitting at evening after work around the temple fires sharing chillums and finding consolation in the fruits of the earth mother. Nothing less. I'd love to see that all those years of banging away against the closed door of entrenched privilege yield us some gains and inspire our hopes for the future

And just for the record: The Uruguayan legislation was the principal inspiration for the Greens Cannabis policy released on 15th April.

Gandhi said, "You may well be a minority of one but the truth always remains the truth." He also said "We must become the change we want to see in the world."

Je suis MardiGrass. Join me this one last time.

# I'm late, I'm late... for a very important date... It's MardiGrass weekend!

by Dionne May

It's not so unusual for life to imitate art, especially here in Nimbin where chasing time can literally be like Alice chasing after that rabbit, down that hole... and ending up at that Mad Hatter's Tea Party!

Speaking of which, the annual Nimbin MardiGrass Protest Festival is at our doorstep once again, and Nimbin is holding her breath, deeply inhaling glorious new harvest organic buds, as this May edition of NGT hits the streets on the eve of the big event.

This weekend is our town's biggie. It is the call to arms of all the hidden green nation, the recreational, medicinal, industrial, cosmetic, hemp and cannabis growers and smokers, lovers and tokers... to join Nimbin in her annual crusade of the common people, along with that amazing colourful cannabis crew, to help us collectively protest proudly and peacefully against Prohibition Laws that turned us into criminals with a law that should have never existed.

MardiGrass is a cultural experience and at heart the weekend unites citizens of Australia in our fundamental right to protest this drug law and to show our solidarity in the face of on-going persecution from our ignorant government and police force, ever-willing to destroy lives, families and reputations in the name of this law.

Quite frankly, the argument begins and ends with the statement "cannabis is a plant". Medicinal qualities surely equate cannabis with health issues not legal issues. One "common sense law" could perhaps gag some of these ill or



misinformed politicians, police and journalists who insist on perpetuating antiquated arguments in a world of instant global information.

For example, the June 2015 edition of the *National Geographic* Magazine featured: "Weed...The New Science of Marijuana". In a concise and informative survey, author Hampton Sides puts together powerful information from across the globe regarding all the properties and possibilities of cannabis.

His article documents many specialists:

A young organic chemist in Israel, Raphael Mechoulam who in 1963 first began to study the plant's chemical composition and discovered THC and CBD properties, later becoming known as the patriarch of cannabis science, describes cannabis as a "medicinal treasure trove waiting to be discovered".

Spanish biochemist, Manuel Guzman, studied cannabis for twenty years as a medical cure for cancer states "cannabis as a drug is scientifically serious,

therapeutically promising and clinically relevant".

Geneticist Nolan Kane, who specialises in evolutionary biology declares cannabis is "an embarrassment of riches" and "transformative in its impact across industries including medicine, agriculture, biofuels and diet".

As I said previously, there is a world of good cannabis information out there, especially this weekend in Nimbin... It's local, it's organic and it's "high time" you were there!

Join us in this crazy beautiful protest. Armed with love and imagination we can change this law.

There's never been a better time than right now to join Nimbin in her colourful resolve to bring sanity to drug laws and to show our collective loyalty and dedication to this miraculous plant and our proud alternative community in the Grand Parade on Sunday.

We need you all, so be brave, plan wisely, dress fantastically and we'll see you all there!



## Secret Ganja Faerie Garden

by Chantico

Hey psst, shhh...

We are going to have a secret faerie garden on the Saturday of MardiGrass, one time only, 11am-4pm at the Community Centre near the peace-sign hand sculpture.

Follow the signs and look for the leaves, and go into the secret faerie garden (aka dance studio) where inside you'll find faeries making magic as they get ready for Sunday's parade. There will be a photo area with some things to dress up into, take a pic with friends and family either on your phone, or for a small fee we can print it out for you.

There will also be a few things for sale to support our fundraising, as we are not for profit, money going towards rent of faerie room, costumes. It also helps towards costs of faerie protest adventures to expos, rallies etc, so come visit the faerie garden and be part of the magic.

We've been going to hemp expos in Sydney and Melbourne, with the next one coming up the weekend after MardiGrass.

A couple of faeries will attend, and we shall talk about all things cannabis and hemp-related, take pics, sell a couple of things and give away stuff from Nimbin like MG programs, *GoodTimes* and tourist booklets, and any other things local businesses donate.

So we'd like to say thank you all for the support and generous donations to help make it all happen.

# New radio series maintains the drug war over, if you want it

When Phil Bromley moved from Sydney to one of Australia's most famous and surprisingly popular tourism destinations, Nimbin he felt like he'd found home.

Six years on, after observing and experiencing the relentless police harassment and mainstream media victimisation of his new hometown, Phil felt it was time to let the town tell their story in their own words.

*Exposing The War On Drugs* is an eight-part radio documentary series that looks at how the war on drugs has affected Australia and the rest of the world. Each half-hour program is being broadcast on Nim-FM on Fridays, 1-1.30pm and around Australia on the Community Radio Network. It is also streaming online at: [www.exposingthewarondrugs.com](http://www.exposingthewarondrugs.com)

With the spotlight on Nimbin, Australia's most famous "alternative" town, the team from the local community radio station Nim-FM, explore drug prohibition, medicinal cannabis, addiction and Nimbin itself; and offer some solutions to the costly drug war that has raged since the early 1930s.

Episode 1 – How did we get here traces the rise of prohibition and the man behind it –

Harry Anslinger, the first chief of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics in the US, who shaped most of the world's drug policies.

Episode 2 – History of Cannabis looks at the journey of cannabis throughout history and the media hype that has demonised this comparatively harmless herb.

Episode 3 – Never Normal Nimbin traces the history of the village and its rise from a dying tourist town to the third most popular tourist destination in its home state of New South Wales.

Episode 4 – Australia's Alternative Capital looks at how Nimbin has developed into an activist community and how it's often misrepresented in mainstream media.

Episodes 5 and 6 are dedicated to medicinal cannabis and the reality behind the erroneous conservative hype in Australia that's costing many children's lives.

Episode 7 – Law and Disorder delves into the insanity and baseless laws that have been developed to support the war on drugs.

Episode 8 – Solutions finds the beneficiaries of this war and how to end it.

The series is a colourful array of interviews



Supporters outside the Port Macquarie courthouse, where Medical cannabis grower Tony Bower was refused bail. Photo: Chibi Mertineit

from professionals, politicians, advocates for change and locals; including a wide range of interesting and tongue-in-cheek movie quotes, set against music from the eras taking the listener on a fun-filled and absorbing journey.

The series was made by Phil Bromley and Peter Miller, with narrators Mim Handley and Holly Tutin, and research and interviews by Duuvy Jester, Martin Preedy and Ava Bishop. Feedback is always welcomed and appreciated. Follow us on facebook: [www.facebook.com/expwardrugs](http://www.facebook.com/expwardrugs) or visit our website: [www.exposingthewarondrugs.com](http://www.exposingthewarondrugs.com)

The series was funded by the Community Broadcasting Foundation, with thanks to the Community Radio Network and the Community Broadcasting Assoc. of Australia.



Nimbin local Helmut was one of 24 people searched during a four-hour police operation with a sniffer dog on 24th April. Seven people were charged in relation to drug detections of cannabis and ice, and seven move on directions were issued. Photo: Frans Walschots

This is possibly the best thing I have ever done and at least in part off my own bat. The IUM, International Undacuva Magazine, had a long story on Trump and Sessions arguing over weed last month. Turns out Trumpy knows quite a few people enjoying a toké and he himself has a bottle of CBD for his anxiety in the drawer of the Big Desk.

I had to deliver some of the good Aussie sun-grown CBD to James, from the Mullers and Packers, who is at McLean's super elite and most expensive on the planet detox centre in Boston. He confirmed to me the Prez is gobbling CBD like it's gold and suggested I take him some of the Aussie batch.

Couldn't believe how easy it was to get into the inner sanctum of the White House dropping the Packer name and in no time I was on the verandah staring at the famous hair. Trumpy and Jimmy are clearly close and he wanted to know all about how his rehab was going. He seemed genuinely concerned.

"The gambling empire he's created is killing him," he said. "Half the population is addicted and his conscience is eating him alive. And from the inside," he said dramatically with that famous both arms in the air, palms upward like I am God sort of look.

"The only risk those people take is the gamble and never with their real lives. We've got that end covered with our insurance companies anyway," he kind of said as an afterthought to himself.

He went on talking, to himself more

## STREET SHUFFLE

Journal of the North Coast's longest serving covert

than me, or that's how it felt. "He's killed risk and there's no way you can be happy without some adventure, an element of unknown, some risk that gives the moment an edge. Without it you may as well be dead," he concluded dramatically, now looking at me. Or more like glaring at me. Me with my freshly minted new face encasing old eyes. Did I look weird I kept wondering? They assured me no one would notice and he didn't seem to.

"Risk is how I made my billions Aussie boy," he snorted. "But Jimmy's conscience is eating him alive. He has half the nation addicted and scared shitless of risking their real life over there in the world." And he told me the whole story all over again. Almost word for word. I listened fascinated, watching him talking himself into believing it.

Then I realised the Aussie CBD was kicking in. Totally different the outdoor grown bush weed compared to the pampered indoor stuff he was used to. He started talking to himself openly, pacing around the giant Oval Office. There were fantastic views from every window, perfectly manicured gardens and lawns. You could think all was right in the world looking out these windows with good weed coursing through your blood.

"Want to come with me to Colorado?" he suddenly blurted out

and without waiting for an answer headed to the door. I followed as he barked instructions to his staff about buying pot stocks immediately, and other stuff. Something about buying new food for his friend's dog he wanted. By the time we got to the chopper it was ready for take-off.

The Governor of Colorado Cory Gardner met us at the airport and we were off on a whirlwind tour of their leading Dispensaries. Every single one we went to handed the President a huge brown bag full of goodies. He just handed them immediately to one of the many heavily armed aides that surrounded us constantly. But when we got back in the car the big brown bags were mysteriously always there. By the time we got back to the airport we had half a dozen pounds of the best weed in the country, not to mention the hash, tinctures, resin, and so on.

But the big news for me was the conversation between the Prez and the Governor as we walked around. He clearly told him, and deliberately in front of others so all could hear, the Feds would not challenge the state laws on weed. He even said he had plans to support changes at the Federal level that will strengthen state's rights. I heard him say several times, "Ignore Sessions, I'm in charge". By the time we got back to Washington some weed shares had risen twenty percent.

**medican**

MEDICAN WORKSHOP  
WEEKEND DATES  
@ The Bush Theatre  
23-24 June  
20-21 October  
19-20 January 2019  
[info@hempembassy.net](mailto:info@hempembassy.net)  
02 6689-1842

#homemade

INTERNATIONAL FRs   
BROADCASTING THE REVOLUTION  
10TH ANNIVERSARY  
[homemade.org](http://homemade.org) [frsinternational.com.au](http://frsinternational.com.au)

## OPENING CEREMONY

5 pm Friday: Allsop Park  
 Opened by Lismore Mayor Isaac Smith  
 Fire dancers will herald the arrival of Chibo  
 carrying the Hemp Olympix Torch with the  
 Eternal Flame For The Victims Of Prohibition,  
 the Bundjalung Custodians will do a smoking ceremony  
 and welcome to country followed by a minutes silence to  
 remember our Brothers and Sisters, Victims of this  
 senseless War on Drugs.



### Sativa Stadium

Saturday & Sunday  
 Register at Sativa Stadium for the  
**2018 Hemp Olympix!**  
 \$2 Entry into all  
 HEMP Olympix Events.  
 12 pm Saturday: **Tug O' Drug Peace**  
**Straight versus Spin**  
 with the **Big Hemp Rope!**  
 The tug is followed by the Hemp Olympix  
**Bong Throw and Yell**  
 and the  
**Over 50s Bong Throw & Yell.**  
 "The older I get, the better I was"  
 and then the  
**Growers Ironperson Event.**  
 Finals on Sunday.

### Hemp Olympix Joint Rolling

5 pm Sat & Sunday **Nimbin Town Hall**  
 Must burn from one end to another!  
 The 4 Categories:  
**Speed Roll** – Roll a standard  
 3-paper joint as fast as you can.  
 Joints must include a cardboard filter  
 or will be judged incomplete.  
**Artistic Roll** – Roll the most beautiful joint  
 within 10 minutes with as many papers  
 as you like.  
**Roll in the Dark** – Athletes are blindfolded.  
**Adverse Conditions Roll** – Dependent on  
 weather conditions on the day  
 and the judges' creativity.

HAVE YOUR PHOTO  
 TAKEN WITH THE

## GUNJA FAERIES



AT THE SECRET FAERIES GARDEN  
 (AKA the Dajee studio at the Nimbin community centre)  
 Saturday 11 am till 4 pm  
 by donation

The unbelievably unreal,  
 freakin' farout & fantastic

## KOMBI KONVOY



rolls up in Nimbin at 4:00pm  
 having wended its way  
 from Byron Bay.  
 Line the street to welcome  
 up to 100 kombis!



4:20

## STONER BLAZE

## & GLOBAL MARIJUANA MARCH

On Saturday  
 @ 4:20 (der)  
 Main Drag, Nimbin



### World Stoned Chess Championship

11 am: Sat. Old Museum site  
 Register for the MWSCC  
 (MardiGrass)  
 12 pm: World Stoned Chess Championship  
 Winner decided by sunset.  
 Drug testing will be compulsory,  
 but not after every move.

### Hemp Fashion Show

6:30 pm Friday Nimbin Town Hall  
 Come feast your eyes upon the greatest of hemp fashion  
 showcasing some of the northern rivers regions finest designers.

2018

# MardiGrass



## CANNABIS LAW REFORM RALLY & GATHERING



### \* Prohibition is an incitement, not a control! \*

The MARDIGRASS Parade is not a spectator sport. Please feel free to join the parade and show your support for pot law reform.  
**We're all in this together!**

Gather and get ready for the MardiGrass Parade!!

At 2 pm, meet at the exit of the western car park, across the road from the Community Centre Market.

**The march is the main event, so please walk with us for cannabis law reform!**

This is our 26th consecutive annual Rally for Cannabis Law Reform. We vowed to Rally every year on the first Sunday in May until we are no longer criminals for using this herb. Prohibition is an incitement, not a control! MardiGrass will become a Festival when we can celebrate the herb without fear of prosecution and persecution. When the Police have a float in the street parade behind the Ganja Faeries, Big Joint & POLITE, then we really will have a proper festival and celebration. In the meantime, this annual event is a **POLITICAL PROTEST RALLY.**

Led by the Widjibal Elders of the Bundjalung Nation, with children holding the Koori flag, the parade this year will start off at 2.30pm from the Western carpark and make its way south along Cullen street where it will turn left at the Greenbank and head down to the Hash Bowl Stage in Plantem Park for the Cannabis Law Reform Rally, speeches and MardiGrass Float Prize presentations. Just follow the GANJA FAERIES and the BIG JOINT!!

The Ganja Faeries celebrate the spirit of MardiGrass. They dance behind the Bundjalung people who traditionally welcome the protesters to their country each year. Their dance has itself become a tradition simply because the laws remain unacceptable to all self respecting ganja users, be they Bundjalung, faeries or otherwise.

The parade will end in Sativa Stadium with rally speeches from Bundjalung Elders, Bob Hopkins, Michael Balderstone, Ganja Faeries and cannabis activists and law reformists from around the globe.

### Pot Poet's Breakfast

10 am Sativa Stadium  
 Hosted by award-winning Nimbin poet olympian  
**David Hallett**, this poetic wake-up call will be a  
 pot-pourri of Nimbin & other worldly poetic tales.  
**Visiting pot poets are very welcome!**



For more info  
[www.nimbinmardigrass.com](http://www.nimbinmardigrass.com)

## Nimbin Lights

Legendary 60s light artist Ellis D. Fogge  
 and his troupe of tripping doof gnomes  
 create colourful clouds of culture  
 using an array of electronic light wizardry  
 to transform Nimbin's streets.

## Comedy

Stand Up Comedy Show  
 7.30 pm : **Nimbin Town Hall**  
 MardiGrass comedy  
 in the Town Hall  
 Saturday night at 7.30.  
 Hosted by  
**S. Sorrensen and Alan Glover,**

Comedy @  
**Disco Sista's Tent**  
 Friday, Saturday &  
 Sunday nights  
 Hosted by  
**Laugh Mob**

## Music

Friday @ the Town Hall  
 Music & Dance, Light & Magick  
 7:30 pm: **GREAT GREEN CABARET**  
 9 pm: **THE PICKER'S BALL**  
 Saturday @ the Town Hall  
 10 pm: **The Harvest Ball**

Saturday & Sunday Live Music @  
**HASH BOWL STAGE**  
**MINGLE PARK**  
**BUSH THEATRE**

**GREEN LIGHT PARTY**  
 Friday, Saturday & Sunday night  
 DJs @ Disco Sista's Tent

**NIMBIN STREET DRUMMERS**  
 Friday night Main Drag, Nimbin

**FOOD COURT MUSOS**  
 Saturday @ Community Centre

Saturday @ 8 pm  
**DAISY'S SEEDY DISCO**

7pm Saturday @ Old Museum Site  
**SILENT DOOF**



Cops & criminals, doctors & delinquents, academics & activists,  
 politicians, pot-growers, patients, panderers & plain ol' pot-heads...  
 we got 'em all at the...



As usual MardiGrass offers full tilt ideas and education all weekend  
 at this year's **HEMPOSIUM** where we pull back the curtain to reveal  
 creative and abundant places around the globe basking in the  
 post-prohibition green glow. There is an impressive line-up of experts,  
 passionate educators and advocates, who will share their cannabis  
 expertise and experiences, and reveal the gains made in both Australia,  
 and throughout the planet.

Running from 12 to 4pm Friday 4 May in the Nimbin Town Hall.  
 From 10am to 4pm 5 May on Saturday in the Town Hall,  
**Disco Sista's Tent, the Hemp Tent and at the Grassroots Market.**  
 And then again on Sunday 6 May from 11am to 2pm.  
 Check out the program and speakers:  
<http://nimbinmardigrass.com/hempodium-program/>