

A TASTE OF ART



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gallery

Blue Knob Ceramic Studio
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Gallery & Cafe hours:
Thurs 10am - 3pm, Fri 10am - 3pm
Sat 8:30am - 3pm, Sun 10am - 3pm
Ceramic Studio: Thurs - Sat 10am - 3pm
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Journeys with Shaun Murphy

by Anne Cook

Nimbin Artists Gallery artist of the month for October is Shaun Murphy.

During this time of Covid, when the prospect of embarking on journeys of discovery and revelation is seriously diminished, our featured artist Shaun Murphy invites the viewer to question their immediate reality and travel with him into his dreamlike, spiritual landscapes.

Shaun is an accomplished artist whose creativity spans a broad range of media from acrylics and oils through to sculpture and photography.

Shaun's work has been exhibited widely across the Northern Rivers in both solo and group exhibitions.

There are many strong influences at play in this artist's work with the foremost being that of the Italian metaphysical painter Giorgio de Chirico.

The figures in Shaun's large painting 'Terranaut (Traversing)' (pictured) are moving through the landscape and in turn are connected to the earth's



journey through space and time.

These figures provide the viewer with an opportunity to reflect and ponder on our own life journeys of travelling and arriving, and where our journeys might take us.

We too can seek this connection with things often unseen that empower

our potential to grow and learn.

The additional works that form part of Shaun's offering are four beautifully understated landscapes 'Dynamic Landscape 5'.

These ethereal coastal studies subtly transport us to a place of serenity and calm, where we are invited to feel the salt-filled wind

blowing across the waves; damp sand beneath our feet as we view the endless horizon. These landscapes hold us gently in their embrace.

If you would like to view these works, make a trip to the Nimbin Artists Gallery, at 47 Cullen Street, where we are open seven days a week from 11am to 3pm.

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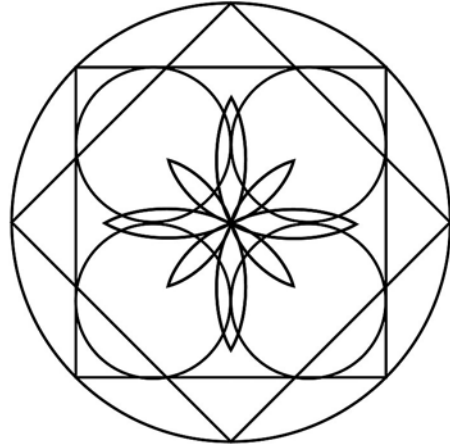
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Two new exhibitions at Blue Knob



'Icebergs at Rainbow Bay' by Helen Douglass

Blue Knob Hall's two new exhibitions are the member's exhibition, 'The Bold and the Beautiful' and Eric Smith's 'A Stitch in Time' in the Solo Space.

'The Bold and the Beautiful' was offered as a theme for 2020 before anyone had heard of Covid-19. It still fits for the circumstances a year later and required some imagination to create an artwork that might emerge from this.

The ability to feel the beauty and the pathos of the world at this time of pandemic, upheaval and uncertainty has provided a starting point for a creative expression of this theme. Nature and the small things in life continue to provide solace to many, and artworks that are bold and beautiful in colour and form, bold in ideas, can also provide us all with something to reflect on and enjoy.

'A Stitch in Time' in the Solo Space.

Eric Smith has been embroidering in the Northern Rivers area for almost a decade now. Some work has been done in public – at farmers markets and coal seam gas protests – and other work quietly, at his home in Cawongla.

This exhibit focuses primarily on work here, but also contains some pieces from his former life in California. His work is primarily cross-stitch and other counted thread techniques.

Inspiration comes from historical sources, so some works could almost be a hundred years old, others are political or a little bit cheeky, and some are feats you didn't know could be achieved with a needle. His attention to detail has won many awards at local agricultural shows, and even the Royal Easter Show in Sydney.

He believes that if you embroider an idea, it holds more meaning, due



'Equality Now' by Eric Smith



'Le feu' (detail) by Eric Smith

to the time it takes to create the work that holds it. Visitors on Saturday mornings can see one additional piece – the sign created for the BackYarder's Table, the stall he manned for many years.

Both exhibitions will run until Saturday 28th November.

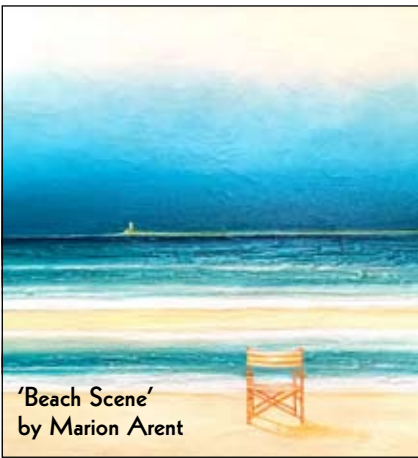
Artists & friends lunch

The next Artists & friends lunch will be on Thursday 29th October at 12.30pm. Phone 6689-7449 or email: bkhgallery@harbourisp.net.au

Studio 306 comes to Kyogle



'Assemblage 2' by Keith Cameron



'Beach Scene' by Marion Arent

by Ruth Tsitimbini

Studio 306 is the place where Marion Arent and Keith Cameron have set up work spaces for them both to continue with their interests and passion in being creative. 'Studio 306' is also the title for the exhibition they are holding at the Roxy Gallery over the month of October.

Both Marion and Keith are proficient in their chosen art forms and this will be the first exhibition they have held in the new Roxy Gallery location. In April 2013 their joint exhibition, 'Fire and Stone, Paper and Steel' attracted a lot of interest and since this time, they have moved house from Tabulam to Kyogle.

Marion's art reflects a Zen approach to life working largely in pen and ink. She works at turning her lines into words through intellect and transforming expression into an evolving act of visual poetry.

Keith, known for his amazing public art metal sculptures, in our region has had a long and involved interest in sculpting and fabricating in metal. As a qualified metal fabricator Keith was the artist behind the large Butter Churn sculpture in Lismore and the amazing Goanna, now installed in the garden area front of the Lismore Regional Gallery.

Both artists are passionate about creating art and sharing their love for all things creative and the Roxy Gallery is very fortunate to have them exhibiting in this new show 'Studio 306' from 7th October to 9th November.

The Roxy Gallery has expressions of interest forms (EOI) out for anyone interested in being involved in its annual end of year, beginning of new year exhibition. 'Change Is In The Wind' is the title of this non-thematic exhibition that provides opportunities for people to gain exposure for the works they have been creating throughout the year.

This exhibition will take place from December to the end of January 2021 and if you are interested in being a part of this opportunity, please collect the (EOI) from the gallery or email: roxygallery@kyogle.nsw.gov.au for information.

Disaster response on show

Mike Greenslade is a photographer and response team member with international disaster relief organisation, ShelterBox.

'2020 Vision – Eyes Wide Open in the Disaster Zone' is a collection of images from his 22 deployments to disaster zones around the world.

From the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti to the little-known refugee crisis in Somaliland, this exhibition and book aim to capture the strength of affected communities, often overlooked by other agencies.

'ShelterBox 2020 Vision – Eyes Wide Open in the Disaster Zone' is showing at the Fox Den Gallery, 34 Union Street, South Lismore, until Sunday 11th October.

Gallery hours are Thu-Fri 10am-4pm and Sat-Sun 10am-2pm. Fox Den Gallery is a Covid-safe venue.

Mike Greenslade will be present at the gallery to answer questions, and the exhibition includes a walk-through display of the family shelter and the other contents of a Shelter Box.

ShelterBox believes that no family should go without shelter, following disaster.

Take a break from your first-world troubles and come see this amazing tribute to humanity.



Cultural connectedness

Language of the Wounded is an exhibition of powerful new work by Penny Evans (pictured), a Northern Rivers-based artist of Gomeri descent. Referencing bones or keloid scars, Evans' ceramic wall installation explores a system of signs, an hieroglyphics-like language strewn across the gallery wall.

Each piece is striated and scarred, exploring the widespread traditional Aboriginal practices of body scarification like a history inscribed on the body, where each deliberately-placed scar tells a story of pain, endurance, identity, status, beauty, courage, sorrow and grief.

"These new works reference dispossessed ancestors fallen during frontier conflicts, the billions of our native animals who perished as a consequence of multiple environmental disasters in recent years, and intergenerationally traumatised peoples from everywhere," says Evans.

"The work also creates a rhythm of cultural forms that evokes cultural connectedness, a cadence that lies at the very heart of our country."

Language of the Wounded has evolved from the designs and patterns Evans has explored for many years in her ceramics practice. The simplest of symbols reverberate with references that are both deeply personal and broadly evocative.

The objects of Language of the Wounded are built from the earth and forged through fire; raised up by Evans to meet us. They look back at us. They confront us face-on; silently demanding we reconsider what they might be; what they might mean. They make us take the time to ask questions of ourselves and about how we should respond.

The exhibition is on show at Lismore Regional Gallery until 1st November.

Comic book on chronic pain lauded

Holly English, Byron Bay contemporary artist, comic-creator, cartoonist and illustrator (pictured), has been shortlisted for the 2020 Broken Pencil International Zine Awards (Comic Section) for her comic Grace.

"Grace is a chapter of a graphic novel I am working on about chronic pain. However, it seemed to work on its own as an individual comic for publication, so I decided to release it as it is," said Holly.

Holly was shortlisted in 2019 with her comic *Octopus & Lamb* and also shortlisted for the Australian Comics Award (Ledger Awards) for her comic *Byron Bay, A Time and Place*.

Grace is the story of Holly's maternal grandmother and her journey with chronic pain, suicide and the subsequent impact on her family.

Chronic pain and chronic illnesses are largely invisible – not only physically, but on many levels in society. Suicide and suicidal ideation are a real issue. It's not just about the pain, it's also about everything you lose with chronic pain.

"Sharing my own, others' and historical figures' experiences with chronic pain, I aim to shed light on this often misunderstood and stigmatised condition with honesty, empathy and



awareness, sprinkled with my certain style of humour," Holly said.

Broken Pencil is a Canadian-based mega-zine published four times a year since 1995, featuring reviews of hundreds of zines and small press books, plus comics, excerpts from the best of the underground press, interviews, original fiction and commentary on all aspects of the independent creative arts.

Their guest judges are doing a deep dive into the nominated zines/comics over the next few weeks, leading up to the BP Zine Awards Ceremony 2020 at Canzine (24-26th October), the international festival of zines, comics and underground print, going virtual this year.

Grace is a 24-page, black



and white, A5 comic drawn with ink and pencil. Holly prints her comics nearby at Digi-Print Pro in Bangalow and her petite zines at the library, keeping it all local.

"I hope this book will be a guide and support to those – and their loved ones – navigating health,

healing, the medical system, therapists and annoying self-help gurus to gently learn to accept the unacceptable, trust one's instincts and be kinder to oneself on this incredibly difficult path," Holly said.

For more information, go to: hollyenglish.com

What you eat affects not only you but also the health of the planet

by Bernadine Schwartz

I'm sitting on my veranda listening to the birds sing and the scarlet honeyeaters are back, my gardens have finally recovered, lush green grass again, new growth on the trees and flowers everywhere with bees buzzing and more rain to come apparently.

I should be overjoyed but it's more a feeling of relief, when I know this is only a reprieve from global warming, yet most Australians have selective memories and easily forget last summer, when the whole lot nearly went up in smoke and now suddenly, everyone's got their rose-coloured glasses on again.

We've always been known as the land down under, isolated by thousands of kilometres, even our seasons are back to front and to a certain degree we're insulated from the world at large, which makes it easier to ignore the environmental destruction that's taking place but we're all still living on the same planet under the same sun and in this supposed new age, you'd think we would be closer to recognising ourselves as one species.

Awareness in this country is appalling and it certainly doesn't help when our scientists and other experts are being suppressed by government and industry.

Prior to the unforgettable bushfires, an online survey was conducted by the Ecological Society of Australia, with

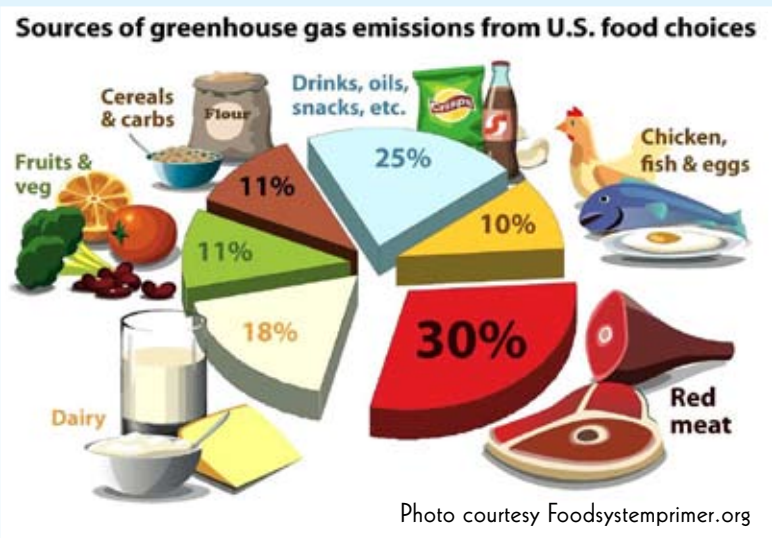
participants ranging from scientists to ecologists, as well as conservation policy makers, to determine whether they had the freedom to speak openly on climate change.

Not surprisingly more than half the respondents, who worked in government, universities, industry or non-government organisations, are under increasing pressure to avoid communicating any of their findings, with three quarters actually self-censoring their own work by downplaying or using misleading information, particularly in mining and logging.

How differently our history would read if we had ignored the Third Reich, yet global warming is our common enemy and rather than countries sharing the responsibility, they're still fixated on their rivalling economies, and we're all to blame, just some more than others.

Sharing and managing the world's resources was never an objective of globalisation, food included and according to the 2020 UN Hunger Report, we grow enough to feed the whole world, yet a re-emergence of famine is on the rise again, after slowly declining for decades and up by 60 million since 2014, making a total today of 690 million people or 8.9% of the global population, with 15 million being children.

Disturbingly, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN (FAO) revealed that the rest of the world wastes a colossal 1.3 billion tonnes of food or a third of all food produced for human



consumption, that could easily feed all those hungry families four times over and all this wastage is closely linked to globalisation, with its growing network of supply chains, that result in the loss of food along the way.

There was a time when our traditional diets were dependent on the seasons and the environment we lived in, but in these manic times we can eat whatever we choose, no matter what the time of year, yet so much is being wasted or simply discarded by farmers, supermarkets and consumers themselves.

Food actually accounts for 25% of global emissions, directly affecting not only your health but Mother Earth's too and a report from the IPCC stipulated, if we want to delay a climate catastrophe, it's futile trying to reduce emissions when the world's climate policy

doesn't include food, and to achieve this we have to immediately overhaul the global food system in its entirety, especially the consumption of beef, that has doubled since 1960 and continues to grow.

The controversial report urged all governments to implement dietary guidelines that endorse an increase in plant based diets, by reducing or preferably eliminating meat and dairy from their diets, that at present takes up millions of acres of precious land that we can longer afford and potentially could be freed up and help reduce deforestation.

Brent Loken is a food scientist for WWF and points out that decarbonising energy and transport is pretty straight forward but with food it's far more complex. If the world's top economies, including the privileged G20 nations, who

account for 75% of the world's outright emissions, followed these new guidelines, they could lower their food print to roughly 40% of the world's carbon budget for food, particularly the EU, US, Australia and Argentina, who per capita are huge offenders. But if the majority of countries persist with their current dietary guidelines we will need 4.6 more Earths.

A report from the WHO, revealed that obesity has risen by a third since 1975, especially in children and prevalent in mostly wealthy nations, like Australia and America, and if current trends persist it's predicted to reach a billion by 2025, despite the fact that one child dies every ten seconds from malnutrition and starvation.

When I see people who say they care about Mother Earth but their actions tell me otherwise, I can't help but wonder what the hell are those who don't care actually doing?

As each of us enters this world, our lives come with a responsibility not only to our family and loved ones but to all of humanity, no matter what their place of birth and also Mother Earth's ancient heirlooms, that we inherit and must preserve for the next generation till we depart but there'll be none of that.

Tragically for our children, we were left to our own devices for far too long and now we get to watch the culmination of decades of inaction that eventually will leave no winners, just an empty planet devoid of life that bears the outcome of greed.



The Nimbin Herbs Experience

by Elen Jones

Nimbin Herbs is emerging into spring with a new project in the village called *The Nimbin Herbs Experience*.

Based inside the old Happy High Herbs Nimbin shop, the Nimbin Herbs Experience is a spontaneous experiential session that invites visitors with an opportunity to tune in, turn on and drop out (as Timothy Leary so famously put it back in the sixties).

There's no need to take substances either (so we're not being too wild), and thankfully there's plenty of new research that shows how subtle changes in perspectives happen when we engage in meaningful conversation.

That, in essence, is what the Nimbin Herbs Experience is all about – connecting and sharing our love for plants and herbs.

This year we've noticed a change

in conversations with people from around Australia. As our collective crises deepen, it seems that people are looking beyond the mundane, coming to Nimbin to find hints of a new way forward.

At the very least, our reputation as an alternative community means people arrive with their eyes and ears more open, and it's through that slither of openness that the Nimbin Herb Experience might spontaneously emerge.

Like most things in Nimbin, *The Experience* is not something that can be forced. That's not the way things happen here. So as a team, we're practising deep listening together, letting the Nimbin Herbs Experience project reveal itself to us in a gentle, organic way.

If you feel the pull, pop in sometime and find out what *The Experience* has in store for you.

New structures needed for real democracy

by Hayo van der Woude

Democracy thus far is an unattained human aspiration. We mostly believe there is not enough to go around, and favour a party which may benefit us more. But really, we know they are controlled by profiteers.

I'm suggesting we can and must, change this ancient paradigm from the bottom up. Let's set a global example.

For 75 years we've been conditioned by US media, portraying it as a democracy defending the free world, especially its citizens. The dark side: it is an aggressive military power, determined to dominate and actively replace fledgling democracies, to benefit corporations. It has been the largest perpetrator of war crimes, starvation and displacement, if you include its proxies.

Like most people, US citizens react minimally while they benefit, and while shielded from truth. But the collateral murder film released by Assange was just too graphic and irrefutable for Deep State.

In reality our Julian has done a great service to America, and all humanity, by holding the mirror. Every country, every person, is capable of good and evil. It's time to make choices.

Lifelong close observation of the mining industry suggests corporations have global strategies.

Their tentacles burrow deeply into mechanisms of state, such as resource, military, agriculture and health departments.

Consider Rio Tinto's WA Yuugan caves, its West Papua mine, or Australia's sell-out of East Timor over gas on behalf of corporations. Pseudo democracy has no ethical backbone. There's always 30 pieces of silver on hand.

In the case of Assange, Australia behaves like a modern Pontias Pilate towards Washington. Assange gifted US citizens by exposing a rogue state. They may express their gratitude with determined activism and voting.

If backed by the highest ethics, we can create an unassailable tool to take control of government from corporations. An apolitical organisation, say 'Real Democracy Standards and Support' (RDSS), composed of citizens across the spectrum, could evaluate and grade all candidates for future elections.

Independents and new party candidates need guidance in ethics, and many aspects of their work. RDSS would score candidates on their background and suitability, to guide voters. Negative effects of childhood traumas, like being unloved or bullied at boarding school, would reflect in the scores.

When we hang our hopes on controlling parties, even the best are corrupted by factional gangs. Learn to love 'hung' parliaments instead! Release us from

wandering in economic deserts led by a corporate-controlled PM Moses, while relying on manna sprinkled from capitalist heaven.

Urgently start replacing the lot with an ethical team working for us. Think big. We can enter the Promised Land only by taking the necessary steps ourselves.

Imagine a PM chosen by parliament presiding over teams of mature politicians to get business working. Our lawmakers must replace whole sets of bad laws with simple essence.

Corporate socialism for a powerful few must give way to a level playing field for all business. Existing laws inevitably favoured successive vested interests, and grew into bureaucratic nightmares, costs, delays, irrelevancies, and business failures. Taxes, time and costs can be decimated – bureaucracy, law, accounting.

Real Democracy delivers in all areas. Enforcement is mostly the result of desperation and profiteering – minimal policing, sickness, homelessness, gaols. And a permanent social wage is absolutely possible.

Capitalism destroys farms, water, koalas, families and democracies, while looking for the next killing. More than half our collective income is sucked up by banks, tax avoidance and selective corporate socialism.

Real intelligence is inherently compassionate. These qualities are absent from corporations and immature politicians.

Neurological repair

I was very concerned to read recent studies showing that some people who have had Covid-19 go on to develop neurological problems from brain inflammation. It was noted that this also occurred after the Spanish flu epidemic early last century.

This got me thinking about other viruses and bacterial infections that similarly can result in long-term neurological inflammation with very serious symptoms. Examples include Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (also called ME, or Myalgic Encephalomyelitis), which may be associated with Epstein Barr virus, Lyme Disease and associated co-infections such as Bartonella, and a number of autoimmune diseases which can be triggered by so-called “stealth infections”.

There is also a condition called PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections) where severe brain inflammation can occur following streptococcal infection (eg throat infection) in children.

Most people who experience these infections, including Covid-19, don't appear to develop long-term neurological damage, but we don't fully understand what the triggering factors might be. There is ongoing research into this, and some identified links. There are known and assumed genetic predispositions to neurological illnesses.

Environmental effects including heavy metal exposure and other toxins can be a triggering factor. Nutritional status and the body's ability to use macro and micronutrients from food can affect risk. Another significant and not very well-recognised issue is the integrity of the blood brain barrier (BBB).

The BBB is a protective mechanism where cells that line the small blood vessels entering the brain form



a barrier that prevents the entry of harmful microbes and toxic substances, but will allow transport of essential and safe dissolved nutrients. It is very similar to the semi-permeable lining of the small intestine in the gut, which also performs a function of selectively allowing dissolved nutrients into the bloodstream after digestion, and preventing entry of inflammatory or harmful substances.

How the body is clever enough to know which to let through astounds me. Some of us have probably heard of “leaky gut syndrome”, where this delicate gut lining can be damaged and then allows the wrong substances into the bloodstream instead of eliminating them via the bowel. This damage is common, and can be associated with food allergies, autoimmune conditions and a range of other health problems.

Similarly, the BBB can become “leaky”, which logically can be associated with adverse brain effects from microbial infections and other toxins. The health and integrity of the BBB is believed to be a significant factor in susceptibility to damage and inflammation in the neuronal (“nerve”) cells in the brain.

Because this column is about natural remedies, and so far I haven't mentioned any herbal medicines,



Nature's pharmacy
by Trish Clough, herbalist

I will give a snapshot of one of my favourite herbs for neurological issues, especially those involving the brain.

The Chinese herb Gou Teng, *Uncaria rhynchophylla* (pictured) is traditionally used for tremors and seizures with symptoms such as headache, irritability and dizziness. Studies show that it has a calming effect on the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord). I use it a lot in my clinic for neurological symptoms from tick-borne infections, but usually combined with other herbs.

There are many ways to reduce risk by protecting the integrity of the BBB. This is a huge topic, so there will be follow-up articles with more details on beneficial herbs and nutrients. Issues to be considered will include the importance of oxygen and fuel to the brain cells, the connection between gut health and brain function (“gut-brain hypothesis”), and the role of neurotransmitters such as serotonin, dopamine and others. Relevant herbs will be covered.

Trish Clough is a Lismore herbalist who has been practising for more than 30 years. She now conducts her own clinic practice in Club Lane in Lismore after owning “Traditional Medicinals” for 20 years. Trish is available for consultations by appointment on 0452-219-502 or email: herbalist.trish@internode.net.au The information in the column is meant for general interest only and should not be considered as medical advice.

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Store light, heal right

My wind chimes are going off lately. Skies are swept clean and jet planes fail to disturb our atmosphere as they once did. Instead, the wind relays its wild incantations across our big blue green orb, consuming more and more of the energy we pump into the system.

Icy steel blasts of Antarctic gale arrive and are wedged beneath the carbon blanket to squeeze and push the thermal layers; pressure waves and troughs collide and dive, becoming maelstroms of storm bound for hard landfall.

It is the age of destruction, where our planets net destructive loss is greater than the net creative gain. The hand of time passes through the maximum exposure to yang, with just the point of light in the centre to remind us that there is a transition occurring.

We are losing our light... the ancient forests that locked the sunshine into the earthly matrix that we call fossil fuels are quickly being radiated back out into the void as light and heat energy once again.

What was the plan for this huge reserve of energy? Was it God-given for us to grow, consume and destroy? I don't think so. I think Gaia (our living planet) had a much grander plan for all this stored energy. We were well on our way to becoming a huge solar battery, millions of years of light stashed away safely (alas, not so).

If our Sun was alive, would it not be proud of its little locker of sunshine? Would it not be happy to see some of its hard won light get to an accumulating, creative planet? I mean most of what we know about in our own solar system and beyond has no way of storing sunlight that equals

our own. That must make us pretty special on an interplanetary spectrum, right?

But what was the end game? Perhaps we were indeed the chosen planet, chosen as the next great glowing orb as our own Sun dies slowly, also expending more than it can manufacture. If we were intended to be a net accumulator of sunlight, isn't it possible that what goes around comes around and Gaia, in turn, will one day radiate out light on a grand scale?

If we hadn't pulled the plug out prematurely, that is. It's ironic isn't it, a bunch of ecologically immature men running the show down here and we prematurely ejaculate the whole bloody planet!

It's not quite too late to stop it. We have five years or so now, to really make a u turn. From now on, every time you cost the earth, you need to stop and ask how



View from the loo
by Stuart McConville

much, and do you really need to.

And next time you are star gazing, think of all the light you have squeezed back out into space, and how far away you'd have to run to not see your own accumulated starlight. For most of us, it's a very, very long way.

Find any way you can to haul it back in. Help Earth store light and heal right.

Stuart runs Pooh Solutions compost toilets and consultancy, 0427-897-496 www.poohsolutions.com

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From humble beginnings

by Diana Gosper

From the back of a van, to a market stall, to a little shop front, to today's massive premises and online shop, RPC have seen a lot in its 33 years in business; Our passionate three founding members have exploded to 35 employees – and we are the biggest employer in the little town of Nimbin.

RPC is the largest solar powered workshop in the southern hemisphere, making us totally self-sufficient for power, with the added benefit of being able to sell excess power to the grid and buy it back again when needed (i.e. when there is insufficient sun).

Memorable moments in our journey include Confest '91, when three RPC workers drove 20 hours straight to arrive in time to power the entire site; 100 panels set up in the middle of the festival provided power for 5000 nearly naked and nearly normal people.

A year later, rock star Peter Garrett opened the new Rainbow Power premises at 1 Alternative Way. This was the early 90's, a time when RPC really were the trailblazers for alternative energy – not so anymore;

Now with hundreds of solar retailers in Australia, 21% of Australia's electricity came from renewable energy in 2018 making the rooftop solar PV a multi-billion dollar industry. In the last quarter of 2018 NSW generation from large scale solar farms for the first time exceeded the generation from gas fired plants (by 108 GWh).

Investing in the local area, RPC support a number of community events and organisations, but we don't stop there; RPC have a long



history of participation in solar projects in PNG, the Solomon Islands, and throughout the Pacific region.

Bucking Australian consumer trends of the early 00s, 2006 saw RPC rightly win an award for Most Environmentally Friendly Business (Lismore area); one of many environmental business awards to come.

Also bucking lending trends, banks and financial institutions in the 00's and early 10's started to offer 'green' and 'eco' loans to eligible people wanting to install solar power.

At RPC, we've always done things differently; one staffer memorably caught and removed a carpet snake that was in the caretaker's cottage – on her first day at work! In the recent bushfires many staff relocated their prized possessions to RPC, with quite a few using it as a temporary home also. During those two weeks staff came and went sporadically as they fought to save their homes and communities; RPC granting leave, supplying stationary, marquees, meals, tools, high vis shirts and at times transport, to those in need – small things but greatly appreciated in unprecedented hardships.

Music jams, table tennis tournaments and pizza nights are common at RPC; workshop attendees camp out the back, and they celebrate every workers birthday with a home-made cake. Staff help each other with system design and sales problems, and staff planning days make the most of their ever expanding knowledge base. Of course staff attend the famous weekend workshop Living with Solar free of charge, increasing their knowledge about off the grid stand alone power systems and their components.

Cosmic discussions regarding not just solar power, are common and encouraged; more than one innovative product has resulted from one of the many 'pipe dreams' or propositions from those early days of brainstorming in the specially designed courtyard, which for years served as a natural 'air-conditioned' meeting place. Water dragons, spiders and some snakes (of the non-venomous persuasion) are unofficial mascots! We do also have some canine mascots these days, and children of staff are often in the lunch room waiting for mum or dad to finish work, sometimes they might even

wash a car for some pocket money – old school! Children and adults from all over the world benefit from the many community and school educational excursions that Paul now facilitates at the RPC premises.

Recent changes to standards and legislation (and Covid) have seen the company stride into the new decade with aplomb, applying new technologies and design practices to ensure 100% compliance. RPC customers can rest assured that the safety of their home (or business) – and that of their family – is priority number one, and that no corners are cut when it comes to safety standards.

Although they now have new corporate uniforms and a company sales car (logo and all), they really are still just a larger version of that first market stall – likeminded people coming together to find a solution to the ever growing need for clean power.

Rainbow Power Company Ltd is an unlisted public company, Incorporated in 1987 when there were only eight solar companies in Australia – now there are hundreds.

Call for an obligation-free quote today, call 02 6689-1430.

Discover French bliss

by Aurelie Billot

Our French family fell in love with Australia and called it home in 2007. Since then, we have always shared French language and culture with interesting people who regularly ask us for 'typical French products'. So we made it.

'French Bliss' is born for you to find authentic French traditional products in Australia (starting with soaps), not just French-looking products.

Traditional French Marseille Soap (*Savon de Marseille*) has been around for centuries and is still a French favourite, for good reason.

Have you ever heard of it? Marseille may ring a bell, for it is a French harbour on the Mediterranean Sea, in the south of France. In terms of gastronomy, the south of France is the realm of olive

oil. No wonder olive oil is also found in this soap.

The first Marseille soap factory opened in 1593, using locally produced olive oil as raw material, along with the ash from the burning of the salt marsh plant *Salicornia*. Production was so popular that in 1688, Louis XIV introduced a set of regulations to guarantee its quality.

The name *Savon de Marseille* was limited to soaps that were made in and around the Marseille region, heated in cauldrons, and made using only vegetable oils (pure virgin olive oil traditionally, and then copra oil could be added as well).

Nowadays, only a handful of factories remain in the region, but they still manufacture world-beating natural *Savon de Marseille*.

Our Marseille soap is still produced the traditional way: heated in cauldron,



hand-cut, stamped and air-dried.

Marseille soap is popular for it is 100% natural, fragrance and preservative free. For that reason, it is gentle on sensitive skins (no allergic reaction as there is no nasty chemical) and eco-friendly (biodegradable within 30 days).

Plus, Marseille soap is renowned for being a multi-purpose cleaner for skin, hair and delicate linen (especially babies' clothing) but also used as a dish soap or against aphids in the organic garden. So, in France, this soap is used for everything!

If you want to go back to basics and find a household essential, this soap is definitely a must-have! 'French Bliss' offers French Marseille Soap in 150g and 300g olive oil or copra oil cubes. Visit: www.frenchbliss.com.au and enjoy a centuries-old Traditional French Soap with so many qualities.

There is so much more to tell about it...

French Bliss is a local importer of French authentic products. Our products are 100% made in France and follow a traditional and artisanal savoir-faire. Contact us: hello@frenchbliss.com.au

October tips for your spring garden

by Caroline Nature

This time last year we were at the dangerous end of an El Niño weather pattern that had caused drought and was creating bushfire events throughout Australia. Remember all the smokey days and dams quickly drying up? This year we are experiencing La Niña weather pattern that promises a wetter spring and summer. It's good news for gardens and gardeners all over! As I write this, the Spring Equinox has just passed. This symbolises the moment of equal daylight and darkness and the start of Spring. From now until the Summer Solstice on 22nd December, the daylight will get longer and that means more growth in the garden. Gardening according to moon cycles and seasonal changes allows us to develop a deep connection with nature's rhythm and flow.

1-9 October

The Aries full moon falls on the 2nd. In the following week up to the 9th as the moon is waning gibbous, it's time to plant root crops like carrot, turmeric, sweet potato, radish, Jerusalem artichoke, beetroot and yacon and pot up cuttings from perennial plants like Okinawa spinach and local Warragul greens, comfrey, yarrow, mint, oregano, rosemary, salvia and nasturtium. Potted cuttings are handy to extend the size of your garden without having to spend

money, and plants always make lovely presents. Water new plants daily if needed, and fertilise the roots of your plants with liquid compost tea or a good organic liquid mix this week. And mulch around all plants to conserve water and keep the ground cool as the plants grow in this warmer weather. The citrus is almost finished and new flowers are opening, mulberries are ripening with a flush each day, full of vitamins, and we have tiny blueberries and plums on trees, so watering the trees well each week will encourage the fruit, and remember to check for damage from insects. Do you grow bananas? Blue banana bags are a good way to protect the green bananas from bats and possums. When the green bananas start to yellow chop the banana down and hang the bunch inside where you can eat them as they ripen.

10-16 October

The waning crescent moon signifies the end of the lunar month and is the slowest growing week. Now is the time to weed, mow, prune, prepare beds and cardboard and mulch any pathways and garden beds to minimise water evaporation. Weeds use your plants' valuable water and the soils minerals. Try to pick weeds before they seed, then you can lay them back down around the plants to decompose. Or you can use weeds to make a compost

tea, maximising those stored minerals by pouring them back onto your garden. If your weeds have seeds, you may need to 'hot compost' them. See: www.organicgardener.com.au/articles/how-make-compost-tea and also: <https://goodlifepermaculture.com.au/make-hot-compost/>

17-23 October

New moon is Saturday the 17th. On this first week of the new lunar cycle (waxing crescent), plant leafy salad vegetables like broccolini, lettuce, cabbage and kale, summer herbs like parsley, mint, oregano, tarragon, rosemary, sage and thyme and edible flowers like borage, calendula, pansy, viola, heartease, zinnias, cosmos and nasturtiums. This combination is called 'companion planting', where the combination of herbs and flowers grown along side your veges and fruit trees will help with pest control, encouraging abundance, scent and beauty to your garden. And your salads will have variety which will in turn improve your health and strengthen your connection to supplying your own healthy food. Water all new plants daily and protect seedlings from harsh hot sun with a piece of shade cloth during the day.

24-31 October

The second lunar week (waxing gibbous) plant fruiting veges like tomatoes, eggplant,



I'd like to acknowledge the recent passing in Peru of a great gardener, teacher and human being, Shapibo shaman Alfredo. Thank you for your wisdom.

capsicum, beans, snow peas, okra, rosellas, cucumbers. Old pumpkin vines will be flowering again and growing little pumpkins. These pumpkins might not make it to full size as they grow better over winter, but you can eat the new shoots lightly steamed like a spinach and the flowers are also edible. Large seeds like peas and beans can be planted directly. Smaller seeds can be easily lost to insects like ants, I have more success if I plant into seed-raising mix in a pot first then transplant when they are a few centimetres high which usually happens in the same moon phase in four weeks' time. Watch out for ticks as the weather gets warmer; I use tea tree and eucalyptus oil spray to deter them.



Bushwalkers recharge at Bald Rock

by Peter Moyle

The club walks have been very well attended – in these trying times it's great to get out and about in our area for some serious recharging of body and mind. The weekend away at Bald Rock near Tenterfield was well attended and a mild spell had us only rugged up from the cold in the early mornings. We used a combination of off-track and fire trail to make our way to the top where we were rewarded by some gorgeous views in all directions. Not a long walk, but with plenty of breaks to take in our

surroundings, an enjoyable walk was had. A trip to nearby Boonoo Boonoo had us meandering along the beautiful river and at the big waterhole, we were not disappointed when a couple of platypuses came out to play. A relaxing couple of days, and what a great variety of landscapes the Northern Rivers has for us to explore. Changes are being made as circumstances change, and the border restrictions relaxed. The club website Nimbin Bushwalkers, or our Facebook page, have updates when changes are made. Visitors from other clubs or those looking for new adventures are always welcome.

Walks program for October

Sunday 11th October

38/38 and the Hidden Valley, Whian Whian SCA
Leader: Peter Moyle 0412-656-498
Meet: 9am Rummery Park camp area near Minyon Falls in the Whian Whian SCA. We were out this way earlier in the year and have decided to return to these beautiful valleys. Beautiful rainforest and hopefully waterfalls as well as lovely views from the escarpment. There will be some scrambling over rocks and some steep climbs up and down, suitable for experienced walkers only. If in doubt ring Peter for advice. Bring: water, lunch and hat.

23rd to 25th September

Black Rocks Campground, Bundjalung National Park
Leader: Megan Myers 0415-063-302
Grade: 2-3 Camp for a night or two, and day walkers are welcome on both the Saturday and Sunday. Visitors welcome – \$10 to help cover insurance. Day walks will start at 8.30am. This is a lovely coastal camp area under trees just south of Evans Head. Jerusalem Creek runs from here to the ocean, so some will canoe and kayak while there is a nice walk beside the creek and ocean walks as well. We will be booking some sites at the northern end; ring Megan if you want to share or book your own. National Park vehicle pass required, \$8 a day or buy an annual one. Camping \$12 per person per night.

Sunday 15th November

Simpsons Creek on the Brunswick River
Leader: Sue Macklin 0402-220-973
Meet: 8.30am on the town side of the Nimbin Bowling Club. The tides are perfect for another paddle on the Brunswick River. Sue and Steve will escort you on this lovely paddle to Tyagarah and back, easy going as their planning sees us using the tides both ways Bring: your kayak, canoe or stand-up board and water, lunch, sunscreen and hat.



by Kerry Hagan

It was with great regret that Nimbin Garden Club had to cancel its September meeting, due to changes brought in by the NSW government in early September. These changes included heavy fines for everyone exceeding the 20 people rule at a gathering, in fact an \$1100 fine for each person! As restrictions are being eased to allow us entry into QLD, up to 100 people in a theatre, 300 at a corporate venue, we are still not allowed 30 people to wander around a garden in an area that has not seen a single case of coronavirus. The Garden Club

committee is monitoring these rules on a daily basis and trying to ascertain exactly what constitutes a "venue" for a corporate event. So, if we can go ahead with our October meeting, it will be at Jon and Sue's place, 1034 Stony Chute Road, Wadeville, on 17th October, 2-4pm. We have a Facebook group page (Nimbin Garden Club group) where we will advise everyone if we can go ahead. Also an announcement on Hookups, an email to all our members and I can be contacted by phone on 6689-0514. Thanks to everyone for their patience and understanding.

