

Nimbin festival-goers stranded on NYE

by Jagad Samuel

What happens when 36 attendees at a World Peace Festival get stranded?

In a serendipitous turn of events, a NYE festival dedicated to peace on earth held at Flourish Sanctuary Retreat Centre, Nimbin, faced an unexpected challenge that would ultimately become the catalyst for a profound experience in communal unity.

On New Year's Day, 36 attendees, aged between 8 and 76, found themselves stranded and unable to leave due to being flooded in. As if taken out of a plot from a feel-good movie, what transpired throughout their unexpected stay would reshape the essence of the gathering and their hearts forever.

When torrential rain, combined with Lismore council's ill-informed river management strategy, left the festival roads impassable, attendees were faced with an unforeseen obstacle.

However, instead of succumbing to frustration, a remarkable transformation unfolded as the community came together to transform adversity into an opportunity for shared growth, good feelings and an unexpected plot twist on how World Peace can come about.

As the unrelenting rain confined 36 late-leaving festival attendees to the grounds for two days, the



initial concerns of the organisers centred around the safety and well-being of the attendees as some buildings on the land had blackouts.

Though concerned about the safety of attendees, the organisers kept a level head. Questions about provisions, shelter, and the overall comfort of the stranded individuals prompted a swift and skilful response from the organisers.

Organisers recognised the need for immediate action to address the unforeseen challenges posed by the adverse weather conditions.

Emergency services were notified, crisis meetings

were convened, contingency plans were activated, and communication channels were established to ensure that the attendees were well-informed and reassured.

In this critical moment, the organisers' primary focus was to create a safe and supportive environment, assuring everyone that their safety and well-being were paramount amidst the unexpected turn of events.

In the face of adversity, the stranded festival-goers embraced a spirit of co-operation not always found in our highly individualistic society. Musical instruments and melodic voices drowned



The flooded road into the Flourish Sanctuary

out the noise from heavy rain, and the festival's heartbeat continued with songs, dances, and impromptu performances.

The gathering became a hub of creativity, showcasing the diverse talents of its participants and performers still present.

Undeterred by the circumstances, the community adapted and expanded their activities. Biodanza, yoga classes and meditation circles emerged, offering a chance for self-discovery and shared mindfulness. These practices became anchors amid uncertainty, fostering a sense of calm and connectedness.

As the rain persisted, the attendees established a communal kitchen, pooling their food supplies and culinary skills. The act of coming together to prepare and enjoy meals became a symbol of resilience and co-operation, breaking down

barriers and reinforcing the sense of community.

By some miracle, when all the food was pooled it turned out there was more than enough food despite the flood being unexpected. Later, four festivalgoers made an epic attempt at a journey into town to get food supplies, which was successful.

Surrounding neighbours also generously offered food after hearing about events on Facebook, but organisers declined, knowing they had enough food.

When the rain finally subsided, the collective spirit of the group manifested in a remarkable act of community service. Recognising the impassable state of the road leading out of the festival grounds, an awesome team pitched in to repair it while others engaged in a clean-up effort and cooked food to keep spirits high.

This shared effort not only mended the physical

road but also symbolised the new-found unity among the festivalgoers.

Throughout the flood, individuals tapped into their unique skills and contributions, realising the power of collective effort. The festival became a microcosm of an enlightened society, where each person played a vital role, contributing to the greater good.

The experience was a profound reminder of human potential, a lived experience of the gifts inherent in community and the strength that arises when people stand together.

In the end, the unexpected challenges led to a profound revelation – the creation of peace in their part of the world. Through shared experiences, co-operative efforts, and the discovery of each person's unique role, the stranded festival-goers not only weathered the storm but emerged with a renewed sense of unity, purpose, and, ultimately, peace.

The festival that started as a gathering for world peace faced an unexpected detour, but the resilience and co-operative spirit of the attendees turned it into an inspiring tale of unity and harmony.

In overcoming challenges, discovering individual strengths, and working together, these 36 stranded festivalgoers created a lasting memory of true peace in their corner of the earth.



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