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Paint up and saddle up



by James Fuller

I seem to recall we started this thing back in 2009. We missed a year, though, so that makes this our 15th ride?

No matter, let's do another one on Saturday 9th March.

As always, our gracious hosts, the Bush Theatre are waiting, where we start preparations at 10am, so don't prepare too early, as we have had complaints about

people being cold while waiting for the ride!

Think shortly after midday, but it is always a little unclear exactly when. And we like it that way.

The Bush Theatre building houses several tenants, so please keep unclad activity in the Bush Theatre Cafe area itself.

There is an after-party that will be disclosed at the end of the ride, but as always we don't have to go from the

World Naked Bike Ride

Nimbin Sat 9 March

Meet at the Bush Theatre @ 10am

Clothing optional - helmet compulsory

Byron Bay Sun 10th Mar

Details on FB

venue immediately. And as is customary, the

ride at Byron Bay is on the next day.

Women's Health Clinic now available in Nimbin

A Women's Health Clinic is now available at Nimbin Multi-Purpose Service (MPS) on the third Thursday of each month.

Bookings are available between 9.30am and 3pm with Jennifer McKay, Women's Health Clinical Nurse Consultant.

The Women's Health Clinic provides a range of screening and treatment services, including:

- cervical screening
- breast checks
- pregnancy testing and advice



Women's Health Nurse Jennifer McKay, local resident Jane Mari, and Viola Asi, Nimbin MPS Administration Support Officer.

- postnatal checks
- continence assessment

- sexually transmitted infection screening, and

- referrals to other health services.
- The clinic can also provide information about menstruation, sexual and reproductive health, menopause, osteoporosis, continence, relationship and lifestyle issues.

The next Nimbin clinic is on Thursday 21st March.

If you'd like more information, or would like to book an appointment, please contact Viola Asi, Administration Support Officer Nimbin MPS on 02 6688-1400.

Kitchen upgrade at CWA Nimbin Branch

by Sage Bryant, Publicity Officer

We had a very busy end to 2023. We were honoured to cater for the 70th year celebration of the Nimbin Rural Fire Brigade community event in October.

And for Remembrance Day in November, we planted out the Memorial Garden with poppies.

Over the years, many locals have kindly made red, purple and white poppies for our Remembrance Day installation. This year we added to it by creating a hanging Poppy Waterfall.

Late in 2023, Nimbin CWA Branch were extremely grateful to be one of the recipients of a Northern Rivers Community Foundation community grant.

This grant enabled us to renovate our kitchen space with a new dividing wall, a large commercial stove, an additional bench, and large cooking pots.

The works were completed over the Christmas break and will enable us to produce bulk-cooked foods on site.

Our new commercial kitchen ensures that we will be reliable and resilient in times of disaster, as well as ready for everyday community catering needs.

Op Shop

As the only op-shop in the Nimbin



village, the CWA rooms will now be opening the doors for an additional two days a month, so that this vital community need can be more accessible.

From Wednesday 6th March we will be running Op Shop days on the alternate Wednesday with our current Open Days (see dates below).

IWD

International Women's Day is on Friday 8th March and we invite the community to join us to celebrate at 3pm on the stage area next to our rooms. Please bring a plate to share.

Dates to Remember

- **Open Days:** 10am-3pm, 2nd and 3rd Wednesday of the month, pop in for lunch and a chat.
- **Op Shop Days:** 10am-3pm, 1st and 4th Wednesday of the month.
- **Community Market Day:** 9.30am-3pm, 4th and 5th Sundays of the month.
- **Street Stall:** 9am every Saturday, outside the newsagents.
- **Branch Meeting:** 5pm, 2nd Monday of the month, new members welcome! For all enquires, phone: 0461-412-831or email: secretary.cwa.nimbin@gmail.com



Photo: Chibo Mertineit

by Chibo Mertineit

As I arrived on the main beach in Byron Bay on 14th February, Valentines Day, at 6.45am, I walked towards a sea of red-clad women who were joyfully dancing, practising their dance for the official start of the worldwide campaign at 7am, 'One Billion Rising'. What a sight, so powerful.

As I slowly got closer, I saw more women in red running from their cars to join in. Getting closer to the huge group, I felt the amazing energy radiating from them.

Australia is the first country in the world from where the wave of dance protests against violence starts to roll.

As it says on the website onebillionrising.org: "As in every year, activists across the globe localised the call to RISE FOR FREEDOM and 'Create the New Culture' with self-determined and specific regional, national and community-based issues."

The theme 'Rise for Freedom'

resonated hugely in the context of gender, race, war, poverty, environment, youth, indigenous and workers issues – where we see the gravest oppression and destruction, and sustained violent eradications of freedom.

In 2024 we escalate the call to Rise for Freedom because of the persistent intensification of violence – on-going rape, hate, exclusion, killing, discrimination, exploitation, abuse, wars, division, occupation and control. Control over our bodies, minds and resources.

Of unprecedented fascism and of fascist governments destroying all freedoms. We cannot stop now.

Domestic violence has risen in the Coffs Harbour/ Grafton area for example by 71% in the last five years and there are 84 NSW councils calling for a parliamentary inquiry.

This was after we had the biggest women marches in the country with the theme 'Enough is Enough' with amazing personalities speaking up at that same time. That was when our Prime minister

Scott Morrison reminded us after the marches that in other countries they would have been shot.

I see a few men, some in red, in the back taking part, because this event is open to all humans. I hear Zenith Virago, death walker, co-ordinator of the moves and more, up the front saying: "We are united, connected and determined. We honour all indigenous peoples and their connection and relationship to the land and sea."

Then the acknowledgement and respect for country. In the first six weeks of this year, eight women have been killed in Australia.

The name 'One Billion Rising' comes from a United Nations estimate, stating that one of three women will experience personally physical or sexual violence during their lifetime, and is a fundraiser for local domestic violence services.

It's time that men stand up and speak up. 'Break the Chain' is the name of the song and you can see the dance moves on YouTube.

Walking in or on water

by Sue Edmonds

It warms my heart hearing stories of people discovering our Nimbin swimming pool.

Newcomers to the area, and other who have lived here for decades, are surprised when they discover a free pool, perfect for walking in, at whatever depth they are comfortable with, suiting their mobility.

Gravity is defied, the luscious water holds them up when they use muscles and joints and make movements which are difficult and painful on dry land.

Serious lap swimmers occupy the deeper middle section, the walkers and waders stay in the shallows.

The pool is open every day, early – 6am-ish – until sunset.

Like all council pools in NSW, it closes over the winter, opening again at the start of the school holidays in September. This is when the council has five months to do the annual maintenance.

Our Nimbin pool was opened in 1978, after 10 years of serious fundraising in the community. The original secretary, Daisy Stewart, recalls living on-site in a caravan, after all the fund raising and completion of the pool.



It has always been a free pool, a treat to us from the Lismore City Council.

Over the 45 years, thousands of children have learned to swim, thousands of big people have swum, paddled and sat around talking and enjoying the cool spot. Schools use it for lessons and some disability providers take their clients down for a dip.

Friends of Nimbin Pool (FONP) stepped in 15 years ago and have provided all the seating, plus the water drinking fountain near the BBQ area.

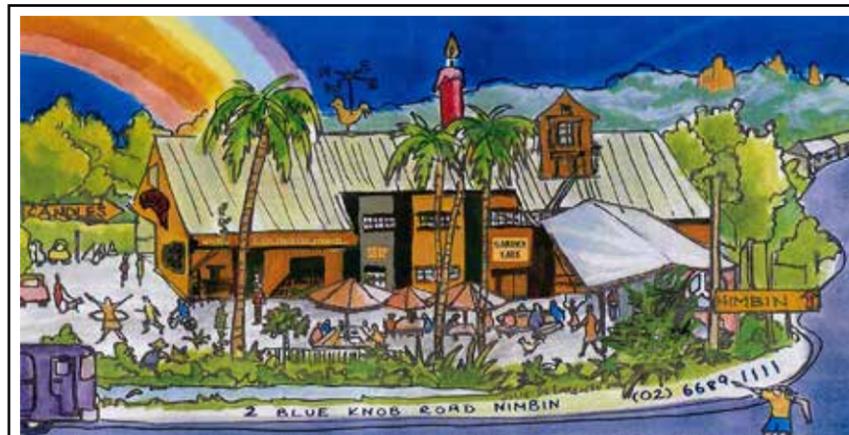
FONP have a wish-list for a custom-built ramp to enhance disability access. This would enable people in wheelchairs to enter the water safely.

FONP will lobby to have this built between seasons, hopefully to be functioning when the eagerly-anticipated toilet block with disability access is completed.

Rumour has it the funds are available, electricity and water are nearby; it's not rocket science, there's hardly a public park in NSW without a toilet, Nimbin is unique, in more ways than one.

To join FONP, email this address: friendsofnimbinpool@gmail.com to be added to the mailing list, receive occasional news briefs, and you could make suggestions.

There are even non-swimming members.



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A Culture of Peace site behind the Nimbin war memorial?

by Benny Zable

"Those who love peace must learn to organise as effectively as those who love war"
 – Martin Luther King Jr.

A world dominated by a murderous military industrial complex is a clear warning we are in deep trouble, calling for humanity to ramp up a culture of peace.

Back in June 1967, I volunteered to do civilian work in Israel as the war with its neighbouring countries erupted. I was assigned to work on Kibbutz Misgav Am, on the Lebanese border.

While doing water irrigation duties in the valley below, I witnessed a formation of fighter jets fly over me and drop a whole load of bombs across the Golan Heights.

The next day a number of us volunteers were taken to one of the villages that were bombed. A whole lot of the area was taped off as body parts were being collected among the rubble that was once a thriving living community.

I came across that devastation floating around and took a couple of photos of a large Arab family that once lived in one of the bombed houses. This witnessing made me think



Graham Dunstan installed the Peace Dove painting on the Nimbin graffiti board at rear of the bus shelter

and question and seek alternatives to this through humanitarian processes by painting and drawing and displaying them publicly around all kinds of places.

Fast forward... Over a number of decades now I have focused considerable time and energy in Nimbin, creating and embellishing a culture of peace meeting place for sharing with all who passed and gathered on the other side of the Nimbin war memorial.

First, I added a couple of "May Peace Prevail On Earth" signs on the shelter, which I purchased from the World Peace Prayer Society in upstate New York. Then I painted an exact replica of the 'IMAGINE' mosaic I

had traced from the Central Park memorial to John Lennon.

Then I made for the Art in the Park folks a copy of Masha Silvestri's 'Peace Dove' design, which is made up of many languages.

As I was wandering by one morning, I discovered someone had dismantled the Peace Dove installation despite the sign I had placed underneath it, which stated quite clearly not to alter anything on the graffiti board without discussing it over with me first.

I would like to know who in the community had dismantled the Peace Dove painting? The graffiti board backdrop for the Peace Dove painting was a perfect

contrast to the anger and pain from the many who expressed themselves on this board.

It looked like a Jackson Pollock painting, reminiscent of rock art painting. Overlaid randomly, it told a story over decades here. Now that has been painted over. It is a shame.

I have now moved away from Nimbin to live in Lismore as a first stage before moving back to Melbourne where I came from before migrating to the Rainbow Region.

I am currently working on an indoor version of the 'IMAGINE' ground mural in Lismore that I had painted in Nimbin. Peace and love.

Nimbin Advisory Group meeting report

by Megan James

The Nimbin Advisory Group (NAG) hadn't met for six months when Council cancelled the November meeting due to staffing issues.

The Meeting was attended by Harriet McKinley and Andy Parks sharing the purpose, scope and community consultation strategies of the Nimbin Place Plan. The plan will be developed by the Nimbin community and ultimately adopted by Lismore Council.

All residents of the area are encouraged to complete the on-line survey to ensure full equal participation in creating a future vision for our community and how best to work with Council to manifest that vision.

Discussion groups will also be held with secondary students and First Nations people.

7 Sibley Street, comprising Peace Park, the skatepark and basketball court (gifted to LCC by the Nimbin community), is a key element in the Plan. Residents will have input about future development there, and plans will be clearer once community engagement, including the on-line survey, is complete.

There will be a two-part community workshop held in Nimbin Town Hall on Monday 4th March at 5.30pm and Wednesday 6th March at 7.30pm, catering provided. Please register for one or both workshops and have your say.

Water Security was again a major topic. The meeting requested that Matt Potter, who manages water and wastewater treatment for LCC, attend the next NAG meeting early to meet with residents from the Gungas Road area to outline remediation plans and

progress, and that updates on road repairs, water security and quality be provided at each NAG meeting.

Gungas Road culverts are being replaced with concrete viaducts, and pipeline construction is well underway.

Concerns were expressed about capacity of water and sewage infrastructure (currently small) to address more housing development. The reticulated supply is already fully committed, but there is some capacity still in the sewage system.

A study on the feasibility of connection to Rous Water, with community input, is proposed, along with other options.

Village maintenance needs and workers, both paid and voluntary, was discussed and regular updates requested. Maps, signs and bins need regular cleaning. These needs are also being considered in the Nimbin Place Plan and are being driven by the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce committee, alongside Jungle Patrol Community Safety who currently have the Council contract to clean the main street, public toilets, Allsopp Park and the Skate Park.

It was suggested that full-width speed humps replace bollards in the Western carpark. Cliff Chadburn, Council's head of fleet and open space, attended the meeting and is planning for Parking and Pedestrian Crossing line re-marking and pothole repair to be established on a rotating three-monthly schedule.

Stormwater run-off needs to be better managed. Dangerous aspects of the new walkway beside Birth & Beyond were discussed. Lighting, railing and heavy-duty reflective strips will be installed on the steps.

Rainbow Road Walking Track

representative, Stan Palmer will report to future NAG meetings. A contractor to construct the walking track has been chosen, site works are due to begin in March with completion expected in June 2024 (weather permitting).

It was suggested that a Friends of the Walking Track group be formed under the umbrella of Nimbin Community Centre (NCC), who holds ownership of Aquarius Park (11a Alternative Way) on behalf of the wider community. NCC has formed a Landcare group to address maintenance and restoration into the future and it was suggested by the NAG that establishing a Friends of Group could support this initiative.

The Chamber of Commerce sought feedback on whether the Nimbin Special Business Rate Variation Levy should be applied to a wider area to pick up the new businesses that have been established on the perimeter of the village as the commercial area expands. This was supported by the NAG.

Library services were not discussed, but a report informed NAG that a new Mobile Trailer will be purchased, using grant funds and reserves, to replace that lost in 2022 flood. It is expected that a more environmentally-friendly prime mover will be purchased also.

The new toilet block in Peace Park was originally promised \$400,000 during the 2023 State election campaign, now reduced to \$350,000. Before work can proceed, Council staff have to ensure scope of works (accuracy, detail and meeting community needs) before submitting to State Govt for funding approval.

The meeting had a very big agenda and some items had to be deferred to our May meetings as, under this Council's policy, meetings can only run for 1.5 hours.

Wallum heathland in danger at Brunswick Heads

by Omega Breakspear

Concerned locals and environmentalists have resorted to direct action to save the beautiful and unique Wallum in Brunswick Heads.

On Sunday 18th February, after an inspiring walk with local ecologist James Barrie, a well-organised group marched onto the development site and erected tree sits in two magnificent gumtrees earmarked for destruction.

Well-built constructions were hoisted up the trees, together with food, water, sleeping bag and a mosquito net. Despite opposition from on-site security, two 'possums' climbed the trees and spent the next few days braving threats, strobe lighting and loud music blaring at them by the developer's security.

On the following Wednesday, the group breached the security fencing again and supported a swap-over of 'possum' tree sitters.

The Byron Council approval of Wallum Estate is a classic example of the so-called zombie developments decimating critical habitat and local communities across NSW.

Sue Higginson, MLC who visited the site, said that a Bill is being presented to Parliament in the next few months banning this kind of development and approvals.

The development will destroy an incredibly rare stretch of coastal bushland with some of the last remaining homes for 24 threatened species, including the glossy black cockatoo, many beautiful and rare orchids and the Wallum Sedge Frog.

The site is part of rare marsh and heathland with a rich substrate soil of coffee rock built up over thousands of



years from sternum moss and other organic matter. Ten hectares of the site have already been slashed, although the Sedge Grasses and Boronias are quite resilient and have grown back.

However, once this acid sulphate soil is disturbed by the bulldozers it releases sulphuric acid, creating an environmental hazard remediated by spreading lime everywhere. To save the frogs, of which there are many, the developers plan to dig a hole, fill it with water and dump them in it.

Three new DAs in Brunswick Heads, including a 39-room boarding house in Torakina Road, Bayside, adjacent to the Codlea site, were approved by Byron Council in 2020/21.

Hundreds of members of the Save Wallum group had gathered at Byron Council chambers urging Council not to approve developer Clarence Property Pty Ltd's application for a subdivision certificate. The developer had already commenced legal proceedings against the Council in the Land and Environment Court for delaying the process.

The DA covers bulk earthworks (up to two metres of fill required), drainage (running into Simpsons Creek), roadworks (only one access road), fire protection (50 metre buffer zones were recommended by RFA), and a Vegetation Management Plan.

The Foreshore Protection Group and the Brunswick Heads Progress Association had sent submissions to the Council. They requested that the Council refuse the DA, and the site and land to the south be acquired as state compensatory wildlife habitat and added to the adjoining Tyagarah Nature Reserve.

An attempt to have the site Heritage-listed failed due to lack of support from the Arakwal Corporation or the Tweed Byron Land Council.

Wallum is one of the most beautiful and biodiverse iconic places in Northern NSW and I urge everyone to have a look. Visit the information tent at 15 Torakina Road, or join the Wallum Protectors 24/7 Community Vigil at the end of Omega Circuit in Bayside, Brunswick Heads.

DAY X in Lismore

by Wye Von

DAY X – Julian Assange's last appeal to fight the extradition order from the US – was heard at the London High court on the 20th and 21st February.

DAY X gatherings demanded the colluding state powers to #FreeJulianAssangeNOW.

Since the US have stated they want him killed, the CIA got caught plotting his murder, and because the US lawyers cannot rule out that the US will not bring back the death sentence, it would be illegal for the UK to allow the extradition.

Lismore came together on the final eve of the Appeal #SpeaksUpForAssange. We were invited by Stella Assange to participate through a live streaming, through 'Truth Not War'; a grassroots campaign that revolves around the arts to educate and bring support for WikiLeaks and Whistleblowers.

Its focus is on Julian Assange and David McBride, the Afghan files whistleblower – both at risk of being lost into the rogue state's prisons for life.

As the live updates were pouring in, it soon became clear that the entire appeal was completely flipped for

the entire world to see.

It was the abuse of state power that got put on trial. Every highly illegal manoeuvre was brought up and picked over and reported on, only not in mainstream media, which were mostly silent.

Public support is at an all-time high and rising fast, we must firmly register our demands for an immediate release. The most terrifying element for the state powers thuggery is public support to keep rising. Register for the Assange Campaigns – Meet Your MP program. Visit: www.truthnotwar.com and ask to be put on the email list for updates.

In real time while the appeal was unfolding, Lismore's songsters belted out an earthshattering array of freshly-written tracks for Julian Assange.

The data being fed into team Stella's platform was jamming up and spilling over with an unbelievable outpouring of raw justice from the millions of global actions carrying their silicone pitch forks.

TNW sent out a deliberate stream of battle cries to rally all, and in particular a shout out to other musos to #SpeakUpForAssange.

The response has been



Lucie Garlik and RASPZ performing at the Lismore gathering.

overwhelming, one HUGE band to be revealed and roughly 30 independent musos from five corners of this land mass.

Lismore's fight for Julian's immediate release was none other than a 'Lis-Stock' Meet our local musos who are kicking off this movement.

They included RASPZ, a Northern Rivers hip hop artist, Lucie Garlik, Wendy Ford and Gair Jenko who sang his song 'Collateral Murder'.

Speaker of the night was our own famed lawyer Eddie Lloyd who delivered a sobering and stern message that we absolutely cannot sit this one out, we have to get involved.

Her knowledge comes from supporting Afghan Files Whistleblower and ex-military lawyer David McBride, where our own state authorities are trying to jail McBride for life

for exposing war crimes while proven war criminal Ben Roberts-Smith has been given immunity from prosecution.

ACT Supreme Court sentencing date is 12th March. So it's back to #ConvergeOnCanberra for McBride, with his kids, 70,000 fans in tow, his array of gifted campaigns #TruthIsALonelyWarrior and our fave, #McBride4DefenceMinister

It'll be quite the colosseum style show; the people's hero who signed up to die for his country gets "jailed for life by his country".

We the people are the fifth estate, the most powerful of all. DAY X is not packing down – it has only just begun.

Email us: truthnotwar@proton.me to hear of the next event in Lismore.

Be seen, be heard, be creative. Keep educating each other and show up.

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In your neighbourhood...

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre News

Workshopping the Sustainable Nimbin Community Plan (SNCP)

All folks living within 30 km radius of the Nimbin village are invited to participate in the Sustainable Nimbin Community Plan (SNCP).

The Plan will only be as good as the people who contribute to it – so come get amongst it and have your say! Your brainpower is needed.

Get these into your diaries, folks: community workshop dates and SNCP key focus areas – you are welcome to attend one or some or all of the workshops.

- **Saturday 6th April:** Food and Farming Security plus Ecosystems and Biodiversity
- **TBA:** Economic Development – (mid to late April).
- **Saturday 25th May:** Energy plus Transport
- **Saturday 1st June:** Arts and Culture
- **Saturday 27th July:** Social and Political
- **Saturday 3rd August:** Water Security
- **September:** Final presentation – Draft Revised SNCP (date to be confirmed)

All workshops are held between 10am and 1pm, unless otherwise advised. There will be snacks and drinks to help sustain you in your efforts.

Up to date information and venues will be posted on Nimbin Hook Ups, NNIC and 7 Sibley Street Facebook pages, and our website. Also look out for posters around town.

For regular email updates, get onto our email list via Steph: sibley@nnic.org.au

If you missed the workshop on Saturday 2nd March: (Housing and The Built Environment plus Health and Wellbeing), but are keen to contribute, email Steph.

We will post the draft results from each workshop on our website as soon as



possible afterwards, so that people who were unable to make the workshops can have a look and provide input, etc.

Many thanks to the Northern Rivers Community Foundation for funding support.

Need Assistance?

At NNIC we can help with a wide range of information and support e.g. material aid (including pet food/supplies), hot meals, referrals and confidential counselling and support, assistance with mobile phones/devices, printing, copying, internet access and disaster recovery support.

Food Pantry Wednesdays, Soup Kitchen Fridays, plus lots more. If we can't help we probably know who can, so come on in or give us a call. 71 Cullen St Nimbin (next to the park), tel. 6689 1692, open 10am-4pm Mon-Friday. (Centrelink Agency Mon-Fridays 10am-2.30pm.)

New to Nimbin?

Have you moved into Nimbin recently? Or do you know someone who has? Maybe you have a new neighbour? Then the Welcome to Nimbin Kit is for you!

This Kit is designed to start conversations between new neighbours and help newcomers with lots of useful info to help you find your way and ease into the amazing fabric of the Nimbin community. Hard copies of the Kit are available for \$5.50 at NNIC.

The Kit is also available on our website: search for "New to Nimbin". The list of volunteer organisations and contact numbers is only available in the hard copy

version, which also comes in a handy folder with great cover artwork.

Please don't feed the wildlife

It is not recommended to feed wildlife because:

- Human food does not support a nutritionally balanced diet for wildlife: processed seeds, bread and other foods that are not part of an animal's natural diet can result in deficiencies that can significantly impact their ability to survive and thrive in the wild.
- It can encourage wildlife to seek out humans, which is dangerous for animals and people.
- Animals that expect to be fed by people can become problematic, harassing

people for food when they are hungry.

- It can change natural behaviours. Animals that people feed may lose their ability to forage for natural foods and to be able to cope by themselves in the wild.
- Hand-feeding can result in the transfer of illness to and from the animal.

What you can do, however, is leave shallow bowls of water around for animals to use.

Bowls should be placed at varying ground levels (including in trees) with a rock in the middle or a ramp of sticks so that small animals can get in and out easily.

Make sure the container is not metal, as it will get too hot. Clean it thoroughly before use and provide fresh water every day. (Excerpt from WIRES Factsheet)

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- The Outsiders Group 1st and 3rd Thursday, 11am-2pm at various rural cafes, self-funded plus donation to NACRS
- Wise Ones at Koonorigan Hall/Dunoon 4th Monday, 11.30am-1.30pm, bring a plate to share
- Bus outings – 2nd and 4th Tuesday. Scenic drives, cafes for morning tea & lunch (you pay), bookings essential, fees apply.

Phone **6689-1709** or visit NACRS at Bottlebrush Studio, the rainbow building at Nimbin Community Centre.

www.nacrs.com.au

Nimbin Hospital information



Child immunisation

By appointment, please phone 6630-0400.

Early childhood nurse

Every Tuesday. Baby checks, weighs, post-natal support. For appointments, phone 6630-0400.

Women's health nurse services

Third Thursday of the month, next is 21st March. Phone 6688-1400 for an appointment.

Wound clinic

Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8am. For self-referral, phone 6688-1433. Referrals also from Nimbin Hospital and GP clinic.

Drug and alcohol counselling services available

For an appointment, please contact 6620-7600. A trained professional will ask you a few confidential questions and will provide you with an appointment time.

Nurse practitioner clinic

Diabetes clinics: third Thursday of the month, next is 21st March.

Community Registered Nurse

Monday to Friday, 8am-4.30pm. Assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy, provision of palliative care in the home, medication support. Phone 6688-1433 – leave a message, will return call swiftly.

Nimbin NSP

Needle and syringe program open Monday to Thursday. Arrangements can be made to see a 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

Monthly meetings are held on the 1st Wednesday of the month, 9.30am in the CWA room. New members are most welcome.



by Scott Sledge, president

My calendar for the month of March looks busy with myriad political functions, mostly aimed at limiting climate change extreme events by supporting more tree planting and reducing logging, especially of native forests.

That trees are the most effective means of reducing atmospheric carbon is beyond dispute. Can we save what is left of our publicly-owned forests?

Logging native forests

This year both Victoria and WA have stopped logging public native forests, and other States could follow that example. We held great hopes when Labor governments were elected nationally and in NSW, but Labor is frightened of negativity from the Forests Products Association and from the union representing forestry workers.

The FPA uses oily propaganda to make us think that we need to cut native forests for home building, despite 90% of timber used in construction being grown in plantations. Native forests are habitats to myriad endangered Australian birds and animals.

The forest workers are in a good position to negotiate a transition to conservation forestry, with workers employed to maintain fire trails and control invasive weeds, paid with the \$20 million - taxpayer dollars - currently paid as subsidies to Forestry Corp NSW on average every year.

Forestry Corp is owned by the government, so when they get caught flouting the rules (which is common practice) we the taxpayers pay their fines! Outrageous!

The EPA is not interested in enforcing the rules. It recently said that loggers no

longer have to look for endangered wildlife (too difficult!), but if endangered species are recorded, logging can't take place within 50m of habitat/den trees. A recent Court decision said arrangements for forests management is a political matter, not a legal one, so we have to be vigilant as citizens.

In response to this irksome shirking of responsibility by government agencies, NEC, KEG, NRG and other environment protectors are posting citizen science data on Bionet.

We have planned a wildlife spotting exercise in an area scheduled for logging to commence in April: Richmond Ranges SF, SW of Kyogle. We will camp in the adjacent National Park Peacock Creek campground for two nights to allow searches to include spotlighting to identify glider habitat trees.

Carpooling from the Amphitheatre Car Park, Kyogle 3pm on Friday 15th March.

Many birds and arboreal mammals rely on trees with hollows (dens) for nesting. If we can record the location of such habitat trees, the loggers are legally required to refrain from logging around them.

North East Forest Alliance President Dailan Pugh said, "NEFA identified that across the 85,000 ha of north-east NSW's state forests currently being logged or proposed for logging this year, there are 675 historical records of Southern Greater Glider, with only 24 being made by the Forestry Corporation since 2018, and not a single den tree identified.

"Despite Greater Glider and Yellow-bellied Glider being on the verge of extinction, the EPA are knowingly making gliders vulnerable to harm on the North Coast by refusing to uphold the law and ensure their den trees are identified and protected."



Forest protectors Kashmir Miller and Valerie Thompson with supporters outside Ballina Court. Their case will now be heard on 31st July.

Despite the Minns government pledge to establish a Great Koala National Park in forested areas near Coffs Harbour, the Labor government has refused to commit to a logging moratorium in public forests where Koalas live.

They have instead appointed an advisory committee, which includes nature protectors such as Dailan Pugh and Jim Morrison.

Rise Up for native forests!

Concerned citizens around the country are marching in March to end destructive native forest logging.

Join Sean O'Shannessy (Lismore Fridays for Forests Organiser) for the regional March in March event at 10am, 24th March from Lismore Quadrangle. Bring friends and family!

Why we're marching: In North-east NSW, logging of native trees in Cherry Tree, Braemar, Myrtle, and Doubleduke State Forests is killing endangered species like the koala. Propping up the state-owned Forestry Corporation comes at a huge cost to taxpayers, and it also destroys some of Earth's most vital carbon storehouses, reducing our ability to fight the climate crisis.

We need to make the governments listen to people who advocate for a sustainable future for our children and grandchildren.

We will likely hold a demonstration outside Labor Federal Member Justine Elliot's office in South Tweed from 11 am on Friday 8th March.

Contact the NEC to find out about protests and direct actions being planned for March. Phone 02 6689-1441.

"Right now, when we need forests the most, we are still destroying them. We need to protect and restore native forests. Rise up for native forests at a march near you." — Bob Brown

The Nimbin Nesting Box Project

This project got off to a good start with an information night held 22nd February. It is funded by wildlife rescue organisation, Wires.

Many thanks to Natalie Meyer from Wires and David Brook from WildBnB for their presentations showcasing the work they do and the importance of providing habitat boxes for hollow-dependant species.

NEC is partnering with Wildbnb who will construct and install the artificial hollows, constructed from sustainable and recycled

materials, for a range of species – birds and mammals – in suitable locations around Nimbin. Landholders who would like to participate have until 28th March to apply.

Send details of size of the property, location and what vegetation and wildlife is currently there to: nimbinenvironmentcentre@gmail.com

Save Wallum

The community is strongly against a proposal to convert the last small area of coastal native bushland near Brunswick Heads into a luxury housing estate consisting of 124 residential lots, three medium density lots, a web of roads and supporting infrastructure and three reserves.

While we need more housing, these blocks will be developed for wealthy buyers, not social or affordable housing. The Federal Government is being asked to call in the development under the EPBC Act as it is the last refuge for an Endangered Ecological Community.

The NSW State Government could also intervene, but seems unlikely to act. I think we need an urgent review of processes for development on sensitive land to fast-track worthwhile projects and scupper these "zombie approvals."

Here's a snapshot of Wallum's ecological beauty that will be destroyed unless we intervene:

- There are 24 threatened species on the site and 215 flora.
- The entire site is mapped as High Ecological Value (HEV) and is a wildlife corridor in the coastal zone. It is the Endangered Ecological Community of Swamp Schlerophyll Forest.
- The site constitutes a significant part of the mere 1% remaining Wallum Heathland in Byron Shire.
- 76 old-growth Scribbly Gums will be destroyed if the luxury development goes ahead.
- Amongst the species that would be impacted: koala, glossy black cockatoo, wallum froglet, eastern grass owl, little bent-wing bat, pink nodding orchid and countless others.

The Wallum Protectors are holding a 24/7 community vigil at the end of Omega Circuit in Bay-side, Brunswick Heads. Please consider joining them or visit the information tent on-site at 15 Torakina Road. Find out more at: www.savewallum.com

Grab your torch and let's head for the forests

A Citizen Science weekend is planned for the weekend of 15th-17th March in the Richmond Range NP, to look for some of our favourite furry friends.



Forest and nature lovers will come together as citizen scientists, at Peacock Creek Camping Ground, Richmond Range National Park, just south of Kyogle.

There will be workshops and opportunities to participate in spotlighting, looking for scats and data collection of local flora and fauna.

As part of the programme, we will be joined by ecologists, informing us on endangered and vulnerable local species, such as the Southern Great Glider, Golden-tipped Bat, Southern Myotis Bat, Little Bent-winged Bat, Long-nosed Potoroo, Masked Owl, Koala, Sooty Owl and Marbled Frogmouth.

Camp out for the weekend or come for the day. All welcome. Phone 0467-236-976 to register your interest or book a camping spot.



Gungas Road Community Meeting

Lismore City Council staff would like to inform residents about the upgrade works they have planned for Gungas Road.

It is their hope that providing face-to-face conversations will help provide clarity and accurate updated information.

While concrete viaducts and pipeline construction is well underway, concerns have been expressed about the capacity of water and sewage infrastructure.

LCC executive staff will be attending, including Matt Potter, who manages water and wastewater treatment

for LCC, to ensure residents' questions can be answered on the spot.

The meeting will be held at Black Sheep Crossing from 4pm on Thursday 7th March.

The meeting is not restricted to Gungas Road residents; anyone interested may attend.

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Workshops: 10.30am – 1.30pm

- **Fri 8th: Monthly Crafternoon 5.30pm** – bring a project, join like-minded crafty friends, by donation.
- **Sat 9th: Plant propagation** – Food plants for free! (Off-site, bookings essential, \$50)
- **Sat 16th: Camphor wicker-work** – Trying to clear Camphor Laurel? And it keeps coppicing? Learn to make gates, furniture and more with new growth \$15.
- **Tues 19th: Knitting group** – by donation.
- **Sat 23rd: Grow your own gluten-free bread** – How to grow, process and make flatbread with cassava, a resilient, locally hardy tuber, \$15
- **Sat 30th: Autumn Seed Exchange** – Bring along your saved seeds and cuttings to swap.
- **Community Tools Library:** Every Wed and Sat, 10.30am – 2pm. For home repairs, garden tools, food and craft equipment. Join at NNIC Mon-Fri. *Basketballs & pump available, \$5 refundable deposit.*

Tell the truth about Captain Cook

In response to comments made by Jeremy Johns (Letters, February NGT) regarding Captain Cook and the fate of his statues, the issue is far more complex than Captain Cook simply being an accomplished seaman who innocently sailed into uncharted waters.

He was commissioned by the British Empire to find (uninhabited) land for the Empire's expansion. Upon landing in Australia, he encountered the First Nations Peoples and continued to encounter them along his journey north to so-called Possession Island.

He stood on a hilltop and declared the land "possessed" knowing that it was already inhabited by indigenous people.

He recorded the event in his journals: "I now took possession of the whole eastern coast, from latitude 38 deg. to this place, latitude 10deg 30min, in right of his Majesty King George the Third, by the name of New South Wales, with all the bays, harbours, rivers, and islands situated upon it. We then fired three volleys of small arms, which were answered by the same number from the ship."

This was a duplicitous act by him on behalf of the British Empire which led to catastrophic consequences for our First Nations People; consequences which reverberate to this day.

Captain Cook may not have foreseen the extreme violence and atrocities which were to befall the First Nations People, however he was no innocent bystander.

He himself inflicted violence upon many indigenous cultures as he continued his travels throughout the Pacific and South Pacific.

Cook did die a violent death in Hawaii, however again, he was anything but an innocent bystander who was unfairly attacked.

Australian historian, Henry Reynolds has written numerous great books about the frontier wars, one of them being *Truth Telling*; a must-read. It gives the whole

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 Nimbin GoodTimes.

history, not selected truths. Truth Telling is essential for the people of this country if we are to reconcile, heal and move forward together.

Katie Lou Lennox Head

In response

The report by Mark Graham on the Nimbin GoodTimes front page (Feb 2023) shows he is a brave icon, thankfully well supported by Sue Higginson.

Various state agencies need to be confronted for cashing in on trees. His observations on the role played by forests are magnificent and very true.

It is close to 50 years since the Terania Creek Nightcap Range confrontation that launched widespread green awareness, yet plundering wilderness is still going on.

Sure, forests regenerate, and can be sustainably harvested, but there are many limits to be set and enforced. Humanity needs healthy nature to keep people alive.

By removing too much, community is imperilled. Enough damage has been done. Time for sustainable policy.

Modern biology confirms what we all know: we are part of the tree of life, genetically related, needing nature to thrive. Trees are not cash for thieves, but a necessity for all, not only people and flora, but wildlife too.

The idea that we are at the apex of all life is a silly illusion: allows individuals to think we can defend forests with one hand and eat animals with the other. It must be seen as hopelessly



outmoded. Crude but practical at lower populations in ample nature, e.g., early settlers and tribal First Nations, but invalid at current population pressures.

We can do well with plant-based protein: cheaper and healthier. Breeding 'livestock' to consume drives the change from wilderness to pastoral farms. It is cruel and wasteful.

Animal farming takes many times land and water over plant farming. The things humans do to pigs, cows, crocodiles etc are disgusting.

While Mark Graham and all forest activists deserve our admiration for defending our common heritage, do some Nimbinites want their forestry cake and eat it too? Aquarius is plant-based sustainability.

By all means hold FCNSW and EPA to account, but don't fuel mindless consumerism.

Be a true environmentalist, not a slave to old habits

Pieter Verasdonck Larnook

Thank you Janelle Saffin

It is true many people were affected both emotionally, physically and financially by the terrible severe flooding events which hit Lismore and surrounding Richmond River districts in 2022.

These facts cannot be changed, the damage was immense. The disaster was one of the most extreme in Australian history.

With Premier Minns in front of television cameras rolling he announced the NSW Government with Landcom and the NSW Reconstruction Authority will open a parcel of land for housing development to tackle the housing crisis in the Northern Rivers

and support flood affected residents.

This land, 72 hectares, was previously reserved for the use by Southern Cross University.

Landcom and the NSW Reconstruction Authority have signed to deliver over 400 dwellings in East Lismore. The \$700 million Resilient Homes Program and the \$100 million Resilient Lands Program is one of largest projects in Australian history.

Importantly, at least 20 per cent will be set aside for affordable housing, while a number of the serviced lots will be made suitable for the relocation of existing homes from flood affected areas.

I do not know if the whole community can fully comprehend the achievement of this announcement. The extent of this will generate wealth for the community for many years, guaranteeing homes and safety.

It should be acknowledged that this type of unique investment could only have come about because of the driving force of our local State Member of Parliament the Hon. Janelle Saffin.

It is clear her efforts, have come from her applying sustained pressure applied at the highest levels both at Federal and State governments. I do not know of any other person or politician who was in a position to achieve this.

In speaking to the media on the topic, she was relentless. Janelle Saffin has served the Lismore community better than any other politician in the city's history.

Direct Impacts of this development in east Lismore, will be over 200 jobs. Indirect impacts are calculated by applying money multipliers to account for the supply chain effects

on producers construction materials, transporters, banks, retail employees, white goods, businesses, cafes, hotels, chain stores, super markets, will all gain.

This development has the capacity to deliver strong economic returns for the Lismore economy of millions of dollars.

If you see Janelle Saffin, please give your thanks, she deserves it.

Mark Pestell Nimbin

Security Council

Is there anything more absurd, less democratic or more in need of reform than the United Nations Security Council?

As we all know, there are 15 countries on the Council with five being permanent members and the rest serving a one-year term.

Of the five permanent members, three are supposed democracies and two are autocratic. Each permanent member has a veto.

There will always be politics and self-interest between these opposing systems, and this was clearly demonstrated recently when America vetoed the vote to call for a ceasefire in Gaza.

The result is the will of 14 countries has to bow to the will of one. It's time to reform this archaic system and remove the absurdity.

Peter Brooker Nimbin

Charity

I remember being with a B-grade celebrity boyfriend at a charity fundraiser, and all they could talk about is what they thought was best for these 'tribal folk' in another country.

I was rather astonished, as I have been involved with NGOs my whole life.

If I've learnt anything, it's asking people from the certain place/country/minority group what they need, rather than what we think they need.

And then the bigger picture of how to create that in a sustainable way.

Western ideals of charities have been upside down ever since the missionaries and colonialism.

It still happens a lot. Some people are getting it right now.

(But I really don't think the folk in Palestine need bhajans sung to them at the moment.)

Holly English Suffolk Park

RIP Gum

by John Seed



Photo: Linda Collings

The first time I met Gum was in 1980 at Ian Dixon's bales at Tuntable.

Dicko had asked me to come and talk about where we go to from here: the results of the Terania Inquiry would be out soon and it was a foregone conclusion that they'd offer us a pittance then log the shit out of everything else including Mt. Nardi.

Also at the meeting were Gum, Chris and John from Wattle Creek Hamlet. We all decided that we should campaign for protecting a much larger area including Nardi in a national park which we would call Nightcap.

During that campaign we were walking through Nardi with the late Len Webb, head of the CSIRO's Rainforest Ecology Unit and doyen of Aussie botanists.

Gum claimed he could identify over 200 of the local rainforest species and Len kindly explained how this was impossible without having a book, Gum proved him wrong.

The following year I was blockading Nardi with Gum and a huge crew from Tuntable; the year after that down the Franklin (Lisa Yeates reminded me how Gum wove himself a sleeping net in a tree hanging over the river which rose four metres one night and he found his arse was soaked).

The next year we were in the Rainbow Bus heading to blockade developers up the Daintree.

And who could forget those Nimbin Town Hall concerts with Beebop and Julie, Paul Joseph, Lisa, Lina and all those Nimbin Country Sheilas when Gum jumped onto the stage throwing dozens of exquisitely rolled joints into the adoring crowd? As immortalised by Beebop's portrait of Gum: 'Ned'.

Then in the 1990's, funded by the Australian Council of Churches and the Australian Government, Gum was the key to saving hundreds of thousands of hectares of "cream of the genes" tropical rainforest in PNG with the wokabout sawmill project immortalised in 'Chopping Down the Trees to Save the Forest'.

So many stories. What a great man. Rest in Peace, Gum!

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The Nimbin GoodTimes acknowledges the Bundjalung people, the traditional owners of the land and waters on which we work and live, and pay our respects to the Elders both past and present.

Bookkeeper Martha Paitson
Web www.nimbingoodtimes.com
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NGT is published by the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation, 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin.
NEXT DEADLINE:
Friday 29th March
Email nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

The hidden history of AUKUS

by John Jiggins

On 15th September 2021, the ABC announced that Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, would be holding a press conference with British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, and US President Joe Biden.

The trio of Anglo-leaders were gathered to announce the birth of AUKUS, an acronym formed from the initials of Australia, the UK, and the US.

Those who watched that press conference found themselves bewildered spectators to a momentous occasion in Australian history; the big reveal of a clandestine scheme that was hatched by the secrecy-loving Scott Morrison with the aid of a tiny cabal of immensely powerful friends.

A new security partnership was being launched— clearly aimed at China, though the name 'China' was as unmentionable as Voldemort. AUKUS was sprung on an unsuspecting Australian people, fully formed and completely out of the blue.

The occasion was a giddy success for Scott Morrison, though spoiled when President Biden began his AUKUS speech with one of his characteristic verbal stumbles, correctly remembering the name of UK PM, Boris Johnson, but fluffing Scott Morrison's!

Unable to recall the name of the Australian Prime Minister, Biden introduced him as "that fella down under", an ungrateful acknowledgement, given the key role Morrison played. John Howard called AUKUS Morrison's greatest achievement, while Peter Dutton listed it as the standout achievement of Morrison's government, which it was, dwarfing even 'robo-debt'! While two of the designers of AUKUS – Johnson and Morrison – were present, Biden was clearly somewhere else.

Before this carefully crafted reveal, only a very few had any inkling of the AUKUS project. The AUKUS deal was crafted in secret by Morrison, with no public discussion of AUKUS, no mention in the media, nor in the parliament, nor in cabinet. It was another secret among the many that Scott Morrison curated.

AUKUS is the most expensive project ever undertaken by an Australian government, yet only one Australian had input into the AUKUS planning, our secret Prime Minister, Scott Morrison.

Crucial details, such as the cost of the scheme and how the financial burden was to be shared, were concealed. AUKUS was mind-bogglingly expensive and, under Morrison's deal Australia would be the country footing the bill, placing our economy under enormous stress for decades, while the US and the UK would benefit handsomely through weapons sales.

The loser and the beneficiaries of the AUKUS deal remained another secret, buried deep in the big bag of secrets of Australia's most surreptitious Prime Minister.

The worst deal ever

Like Morrison himself, AUKUS had numerous detractors. "The AUKUS

nuclear submarine project will bleed the Australian Defence Force white," prophesied former submariner and senator, Rex Patrick.

Former Prime Minister Paul Keating summed up AUKUS as "the worst deal ever".

The Worst Deal Ever began its long life in 2009 as the Future Submarine Program, a modest and sensible proposal to purchase 20 off-the-shelf submarines for \$30 billion to replace Australia's aging Collins-Class submarines, which were due for retirement in 2024.

Japan, Germany and France were identified as potential suppliers, and they were given 15 months to submit their proposals, which Australia would evaluate before awarding the contract to the successful bidder to begin manufacture in 2016 for delivery in the 2020s.

Tony Abbott was the Australian Prime Minister in 2016, and it was widely expected Abbott would award the submarine contract to the Japanese because Abbott was close to Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. However, as the ABC documentary, *Nemesis*, reveals, Scott Morrison and Malcolm Turnbull were busy sharpening the knives.

Abbott's political assassination by Turnbull and Morrison resulted in the Future Submarine contract being unexpectedly awarded to France, resulting in a further three-year delay because the French submarines were nuclear powered, and Australia wanted them to be re-designed to be conventionally powered.

When Morrison became Prime Minister in 2019, the Future Submarine Project was running well behind time, due largely to his successful undermining of Abbott. This spawned Morrison's disastrous AUKUS response. And an American voice was in his ear, whispering of nuclear submarines!

Pompeo

The planning for AUKUS began under the Trump administration, but Morrison didn't negotiate with President Trump.

His AUKUS ally was Mike Pompeo, the former CIA director who Trump promoted to Secretary of State.

According to Paul Kelly in his 2022 book, *Morrison's Mission*, Pompeo and Morrison shared phone calls every week and had a very intimate collaborative relationship, which Kelly attributed to their shared faith as both men are born-again evangelical Christians.

Other commentators believe their weekly discussions were concerned more with AUKUS than Jesus. The unholy trinity who secretly created AUKUS were Morrison, Johnson and Pompeo.

With the usual help from the MSM – who always love a huge phallic symbol and grow wildly excited at the talk of war, Morrison somehow got away with his outrageously over-priced scheme, which was uncritically applauded. The Australian media sold AUKUS with a China scare and the spin that the US was generously gifting Australia with nuclear submarines, which were really, really big toys!

The stealth Prime Minister

The portrait of Morrison that emerges from *Nemesis* is one of a behind-the-scenes operator, a Machiavellian plotter securing power by intrigue and manipulation, cunning, deceitful, conniving, a conspirator clothed in secrecy, whose ascension to the Prime Ministership was achieved through the stealthily executed dispatch of his leaders, Tony Abbott first, and then Malcolm Turnbull.

In her *Sky News* response to *Nemesis*, Peta Credlin, Abbott's dominatrix former Chief of Staff, pointed out that had Morrison not betrayed Abbott, the Japanese submarine deal would have gone ahead, and the submarines would now be arriving at the modest cost of \$50 billion, whereas Morrison's economy crippling AUKUS deal cost \$368 billion (and rising) for eight submarines that won't arrive until the 2040s!

Before his knifing of Turnbull, which would doom the \$90 billion French bid and instigate Morrison's wildly more expensive AUKUS deal, Morrison performed an outrageous act of duplicity.

Smiling his smug crocodile smile, Morrison publicly declared his loyalty to his leader, even as he organised Turnbull's political termination.

Asked to describe Scott Morrison in one word, Malcolm Turnbull chose, 'Duplicitous!' Following the subsequent scrapping of the French submarine deal to make way for AUKUS, French President Macron denounced Morrison as a liar.

The afterlife of AUKUS

After the debacle of the 2022 election, Morrison retired to the back bench while he pursued opportunities in global geostrategic affairs related to AUKUS, often teaming up with Mike Pompeo.

It was his "dear friend" Mike Pompeo, in his role as Chair of the Strategic Advisory Board of the Hudson Institute's China Centre, who invited Morrison to join the Strategic Advisory Board in November 2022.

On 23rd January 2024, Morrison announced his departure from Parliament to take up "a series of global strategic advisory roles and private boards", drawing on his experience and networks in the region, "in particular through AUKUS and the Quad".

The private boards were American Global Strategies, and DYNE Ventures, which also employed Mike Pompeo as a strategic advisor. DYNE Ventures boasted that it "expected to profit" from Mr Morrison's role as architect of AUKUS.

A week after Morrison's resignation, The Australian Citizens Party (ACP) wrote to the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC), requesting them to investigate former Prime Minister Scott Morrison's decision to join private companies who will profit from the massive defence expenditure resulting from his decision to establish AUKUS.



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