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Wangang and Jagalingou cultural custodians: Adrian Burragubba left, and Guridyuula, right.

Traditional Owners vs Adani's Carmichael mine

by Michele Grant

Adrian Burragubba, a Wangan and Jagalingou (W&J) elder visited Brunswick Picture House recently to provide an update on their long running campaign to protect their lands and sacred Doongmabulla Springs in the Galilee basin impacted by Adani's open-cut coal mine.

Adani's contentious project was initially approved by the Federal Environment Minister in 2014. The Stop Adani direct-action campaign lobbied local and international banks and insurers targeting 145 companies to discourage involvement in the project.

Conservation groups instigated court actions objecting to impacts on the environment and biodiversity, water usage and carbon emissions.

Permits allowing new port facilities including sea-bed dredging at Abbot Point and dumping of spoil in Caley Valley wetlands were challenged in three separate court actions.

The Tribunal withdrew the permits after Federal legislation banned dumping within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in June 2015.

Objections to using public funds to bankroll infrastructure led to the proposed new rail line being abandoned. A 200km extension to the existing narrow-gauge railway was completed in 2021.

A new airport for fly in/fly out workers became an upgrade of an existing airfield on a nearby property.

Funding difficulties and court action resulted in delays and downsizing from 60 million tonnes of coal per year to 10 million. The lifespan was reduced from 90 to 60 years with estimates of 200 million tonnes of carbon dioxide to be generated over the timeframe.

Work commenced in 2019 and the mine has been operating since 2021.

W&J rejected the Indigenous Land Use agreement (ILUA) presented by Adani in October 2014 claiming it would destroy their ancestral lands and cultural heritage.

A 'Defence of Country Declaration' presented to the Queensland021 parliament claiming their rights under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People were not being recognised or enforced fell on deaf ears.

In 2016 the Qld Native Title Tribunal overrode the objections of traditional owners and granted two mining licences to Adani on the basis the project is in the public interest.

Adrian Burragubba lodged W&J's appeal against the Tribunal decision but in August 2016 the Federal Court dismissed the challenge.

The community split over the ILUA offered by Adani in 2017 with 7 of 12 representatives accepting the take it or get nothing deal.

An appeal by the five dissenting reps was dismissed by the Federal Court with Adani seeking $680,000 in court costs, bankrupting Adrian Burragubba who led the action.

In August 2019 the Qld Government intervened and extinguished native title over 1,385 hectares of W&J country including their camping area used for cultural ceremonies, granting Adani exclusive freehold title.

The mining company took action in the Qld Supreme Court to have the W&J campers charged with trespass and a restraining order was issued so they couldn't return.

When the Burragubba family returned to conduct ceremonies the police were called and forcibly removed them from their land.

Disgruntled traditional owner groups united under the Clermont-Belyando Native Title Claim.

In 2021, after 17 years of legal wrangling the Federal Court dismissed their claim, removing their right to consultation or compensation in future mines after concluding they did not establish sufficient legal connection to their land under the Native Title Act.

W&J turned to the new Queensland Human Rights Commission. Section 28 of the *Qld Human Rights Act* (HRA) adopted in 2019 recognises the distinct cultural rights of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people and their special connection to land and sea.

Action resulted in the Qld police issuing a letter of regret for evicting the Burragubba family – a first for police!

In April 2023, the Qld Environment Department received advice from CSIRO and Geoscience Australia which identified "several major issues" with Adani's groundwater modelling and the threat of "environmental harm" to the Doongmabulla Springs.

In Feb 2024 W&J pursued a judicial review in Qld Supreme Court seeking an injunction to stop mining and provide "scientific certainty' the Springs were not under threat.

In January 2026 the full bench of the Queensland Court of Appeal ruled in favour of the cultural custodians. The court held that the refusal to issue an Environmental Protection Order can affect Aboriginal cultural rights and that inaction can affect the practical enjoyment of cultural rights.

The decision doesn't stop mining near the Springs, but it clears a pathway to trial. It's a significant breakthrough and confirms Aboriginal cultural rights are enforceable under Qld law.

The Queensland Government didn't appeal the decision. Its role in providing scientific certainty and protection of sacred springs will proceed to trial in the Supreme Court. A trial date is yet to be set.

Challenging and defending Adani's project has cost the community millions of dollars, while the profits for Australia are minimal and the risks for the Galilee Basin remain unacceptable.

A review of the public interest is long overdue.

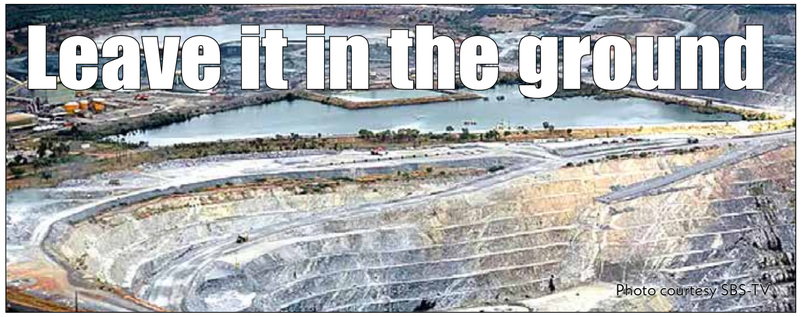


Photo courtesy SBS-TV

by the Roxby Vigil

Gazing over the wide expanse of South Australia to the West, imagining the day(s) of the nuclear blasts.

Those First Nations people residing unprotected in the Region reportedly felt the impacts physically and mentally. Sickness and fear.

First the white cloud, then the black mist creeping through the sandhills, through country. Some died in the aftermath. Sickness, skin sores, headaches, blindness followed. Some lived longer and died from cancer later. Thyroid sickness, interruptions to pregnancies, all kinds of illness are reportedly still happening there.

The water no longer drinkable, the ground not to be slept upon, no more hunting. The blast(s)' impacts spread far and wide, as far away as Cootamundra, 1500km to the east. In the Cootamundra Museum there is a record of the red radioactive dust cloud which engulfed the town on 22nd October 1953.

We have been in the Flinders Ranges with the people of the 29th gathering of the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance (ANFA). We hear the stories of affected people from Maralinga, people from Hiroshima and the Pacific Islands, messages from Mexico.

Between there and here lies the very large source of Uranium at Roxby Downs (aka Olympic Dam). These days it is seen as a major source of royalties, jobs and copper, feeding the coffers of government and industry, lining peoples' pockets and abetting the nuclear fuel cycle.

While the contamination from a blast is so evident, it is more subtle with mining; it still moves via radioactive dust particulates on the wind and through the water, but it is difficult to detect and differentiate from other cancer-causing sources of contamination.

A hastily re-worked *Roxby Downs Indenture Amendment Bill 2026* has recently been passed with no consultation time nor opportunity to review the changes and conditions that have occurred since 1982. This new legislation gives Roxby Downs a security of tenure until 2080.

The Special Mining Lease has now been extended to include a potentially larger-scale operation at Oak Dam. While the original Indenture had clauses for the project's renewal and oversight, these now have been circumvented.

The military zone to the South (the Woomera Prohibited Area) keeps its gates shut and its communication with the public sparse. What we do know is that the area has been used to upgrade weapons testing for land-based missile launch from Australia.

It may well be a future repository for nuclear waste from AUKUS, including deep high-level waste disposal tied into the contractual arrangements with US and UK.

An AUKUS Public Enquiry has been taking submissions until 1st September. See: aukuspublicenquiry.com

Civil 'private industry' rocket tests are being conducted around Ceduna; rockets launched in sacred, environmentally 'protected' country, with no permission nor care for people or country. Clandestine agreements tied with military. More than 20 further test launches are scheduled before 2028, involving take-off and re-entry, scattering toxic payload, waste and debris across the landscape. See: *westmalleeprotection@gmail.com*

Peace walk

The Peace Walk against AUKUS has begun from Port Augusta to Port Adelaide, highlighting the nuclear/military connection: AUKUS bases in Fremantle, Osborne SA and Wollongong.

All people can join the Peace Walk if they choose to support the resistance. It will conclude at Port Adelaide on 21st September, which is the International Day of Peace. Contact: *peacewalkersagainstaukus@protonmail.com*

Non-Proliferation Treaty

The world-wide 100 signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty will meet in New York. So far Australia is not a signatory, and will not be there. We are a non-nuclear country with an increasing exposure to the nuclear industry. Call on the Australian Government to sign this vital Treaty.

There are many people working with great intent to keep Australia nuclear free. It has been a long road and despite many failures there have also been successes: four radioactive waste dumps stopped and Jabiluka saved.

All with an honest attempt to keep the contamination of the nuclear industry from our lives.

Forest protectors face court

On 12th August, local forest protestors Indiah and Vivien appeared at Coffs Harbour court addressing charges delivered after taking non-violent direct action to halt logging operations in Pine Creek State Forest.

Indiah (21) had four charges delivered after suspending herself in a structure 30 metres high to stop logging machinery entering Pine Creek Forest on 23rd June.

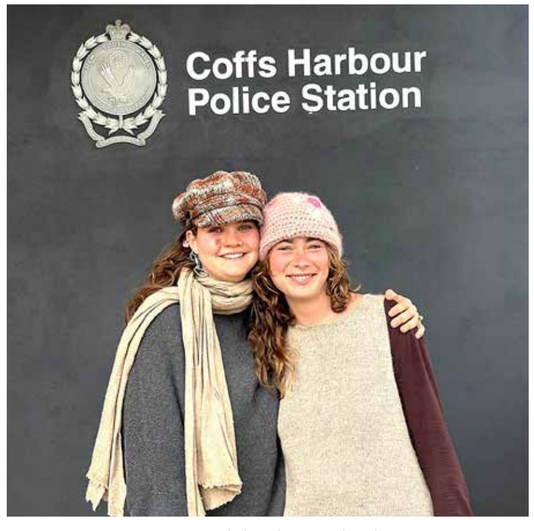
Vivien (21) was delivered five charges after locking herself on to logging harvesting machinery to halt operations inside the forest two days later.

"I am deeply concerned about the destruction of forests and the accelerating climate and ecological crisis. I accept the consequences of my decision. I also stand by the reasons that led me to make it," said Indiah.

Indiah pled guilty to all charges, receiving an outcome of a three-month conditional release order with no conviction or fine.

Vivien was granted an adjournment until September.

Please reach out if you have any further questions, to Jimmy on 0490-410-363.



Indiah and Vivien after their court appearance.

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Gwalia House: Not yet saved

by Edie Bush

Once our heritage is gone, it's gone.

This is one of the many urgent warnings in response to the acceleration of buyback demolitions across Lismore over the last two months.

On Sunday 2nd August, over 100 community members came together on the lawns of Gwalia House in Lismore for a community rally to demand: Stop the Demolitions, Save our Heritage.

Draped in colourful banners reading 'Save Me', 'Don't Trash Me', and 'Protect Our Big Scrub Homes', the iconic curves of the century-old Gwalia House set the scene for an afternoon of speeches, performances and an open mic.

A new clown collective called 'Clowning Down the River' paraded as the 'Deconstruction Authority', a group of bureaucratic clowns intent on feeding house materials to a hungry monster.

Local Arakwal man Uncle Billy Smith performed for the event and several people hosted a large letter-writing station.

Speakers Antoinette O'Brien, Dr Kevin Glencross and Sue Higginson MLC, and MC Mandy Nolan demanded protection for Lismore's heritage buildings and Big Scrub timbers, as well as accountability and justice for the harms caused by the NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) and for a genuine community-led flood recovery.

In mid-June, following a strong community response to the increasing rate of demolitions across Lismore, and the need to protect Gwalia House, Minister for Recovery and local Labor MP Janelle Saffin announced a new Homes Reuse Program.

100 buyback homes in the Northern Rivers have been allocated to this program and 75 of them are in the Lismore LGA, including Gwalia House.

Supporters gather at Gwalia House

According to the RA website, eligible organisations can submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to relocate listed homes for "affordable, social, transitional, crisis or key worker housing, or as community spaces that provide human and social support services" and be granted up to $135,000 towards the cost of this process.

The EOI opened on 9th July and will close on 17th September.

Housing Minister Rose Jackson stated that this program shows that the NSW State government is looking at "every sensible opportunity to get more homes into communities faster and make sure good, useable homes don't go to waste".

However, quotes estimate $1 million to relocate Gwalia, given its size and complexity.

Rally organisers highlighted there is no guarantee of protection for Gwalia, or any of the houses listed, if the requirements to relocate cannot be met.

Similarly, speakers also shared instances of local residents accepting buy-back offers on the grounds that their homes would be reused, often having done flood repair works, only to see them later demolished.

The announcement of Gwalia being 'saved' generated both relief and confusion on-line and in the community, interrupted the growth of widespread concern and made it more difficult for people to stay informed and active.

In this context, the key demands of the Gwalia rally were clear: (1) Protect our existing heritage buildings, (2) Honour the Big Scrub materials, (3) Allow caretaking leases for houses in the Homes Reuse Program, and (4) A moratorium to stop demolitions, and to reassess all buildings for their usability.

While the government assures the NSW public that they do not want to see good homes go to waste, local Lismore residents are regularly standing on footpaths or looking out their kitchen windows to see homes be pulled apart by machinery in a matter of hours.

They watch excavators scoop through brand-new kitchens, bathrooms and roofing, and look on as Big Scrub timbers are turned into splinters and piled into skips.

They hear of beloved local buildings going down, like the '20,000 Cows' restaurant and ashram, only to turn up the next day to a flattened lot.

Despite this, people are continuing to care and show up in myriad ways, and there is still time for others to join, or return.

Whether advocating directly to the RA and Lismore City Council to save houses, approaching demolition companies to salvage material, speaking to neighbours or gathering together, they are steadfast in wanting alternative futures to what government or corporate interests can conceive.

You can add your name to the Stop the Demolitions change.org petition at: *https://c.org?BRLxgSVkQ* Check Reclaim Our Recovery on social media.

The truth about the Homes Re-use Program

by kittykittymeowmeow

The Homes Reuse Program was released in June by the NSW Reconstruction Authority as an expansion of the broader Resilient Homes Program, a program which the recent Auditor General's Report published that 0 homes or lots out of the promised 4,382 were delivered as of March this year.

It's been over four years, and the RA have managed to fulfil not even 1% of their program, while somehow spending over $880 million of taxpayer money in the Resilient Homes Program, and a further $100 million in the Resilient Lands Program.

As defined by their website, "The Expressions of Interest (EOI) is offering buyback homes and temporary pods to eligible organisations for use as affordable, social, transitional, crisis or key worker housing, or as community spaces that provide human and social support services to local communities."

What is intriguing is that only $135,000 is being offered per buyback home to assist with the removal and relocation costs. Ironically the exact same amount that is budgeted per demolition. The program submission dates close on 17th September.

Investigating the EOI process on their website, it also clearly states that community spaces are able to apply. For years the RA was also in negotiations with several grassroots organisations in the region "in a process of coming with statewide policy for the use of spaces for community groups." None of which have been delivered.

The EOI clearly states "Not-for-profit community organisations" are able to apply; which surely suggests that they would be able to meet the eligibility process. It is also stated that "Applications will be assessed through a transparent EOI process."

Upon further investigation and correspondence, it is revealed that organisations also have to have "land ownership or long-term leasehold. That the proposed can be used for a minimum of three years.

"Proven experience in project delivery, property management, construction and/or tenancy management funding capacity to complete the works required. As well as needing to be in a low-risk destination site with evidence of the site being low flood risk."

What grassroots organisation could actually meet that criteria? With only a $150,000 budget.

What's more shocking is that heritage houses such as that of the iconic Gwalia House at 7 Coleman Street, which has a rich local history and connection as well as unique design, is listed for this EOI but has been estimated to cost as much as $1,000,000 for its relocation.

This hints at the EOI being more of a tokenistic gesture, as the vast majority of organisations would also need time to secure their own funding for such a program which is unfathomable in such a short deadline.

The community is worried about the fate of these houses after the EOI application process closes, especially now that they have been announced as useable spaces; all of those being listed in wonderful condition.

Especially now, considering that the EOI is actually so out of reach for any grassroots local community groups to even be able to apply. There is an absolute need for community spaces, and it's nonsensical to be demolishing buildings when they could put too much-needed use.

Furthermore, communication between the new wing of the RA under the 'Homes Reuse Program' has failed to maintain genuine conversation after weeks of attempted correspondence, again highlighting their negligence and lack of genuine transparency.

As the actual criteria is not even listed on their website, it seems far-fetched to call this a process that is being clearly communicated to the community.

It is essential that the EOI process is extended, as well as the criteria further explained, and grounded closer to reality for organisations to genuinely be able to apply. Also, that the demolitions are stopped until further investigation and implementation of the recent Auditor General's report.

Please contact Janelle Saffin MP, Minister for Recovery on 02 6621-3624 or email: *lismore@parliment.nsw.gov.au* or the Reconstruction Authority.

Also please sign the petition to stop the demolitions: *www.change.org/p/stop-demolition-of-historic-homes-in-the-northern-rivers-demand-real-flood-recovery-now*

Mega droughts and mega floods need mega solutions

by Stuart McConville

The current debate around flood mitigation and engineered solutions vs nature-based solutions is missing something huge.

According to a recent ANU policy paper, we should be planning for a mega drought, the like of which has never been seen by us whitefellas.

Science has shown that there was a 32-year drought less than 1000 years ago, pre-climate change. We now have the most powerful El Nino conditions on record occurring in the Pacific Ocean. It is entirely possible that we will be in drought before too long.

If we build flood retention basins as designed, how long will it take before we start using them for irrigation storage? I'd give it five years before their planned use is extinguished by our need for water, pretty much exactly what happened with the Wivanhoe dam releases that flooded Brisbane in 2011.

The conversation around floods has got to shift to a more rounded conversation about how to store water, as well as how to prevent extreme flood peaks. None of the CSIRO work has been scoped to provide these solutions.

Historically, humans have changed the hydrological landscape more than any other feature in an effort to supply water, which has given life to our ever-expanding population.

So, we are well versed in what does and does not work, and with new strategies that incorporate eco-technology and bio-mimicry we can excel in the sustainable management of water.

Unfortunately, we have largely created the problems we need to solve. Livestock and grazing in our catchments have compacted soil, depleted organic matter (which improves soil structure) and reduced evapo-transpiration compared to the forest cover we once had.

All these result directly in increased run-off and decreased hydraulic conductivity through the soil profile. Aquifers can't recharge as effectively as they once did, and water best stored in the ground is lost to the sea.

Indigenous mob remember floods as gentle events where waters rose slowly and receded quickly. Not the maelstroms of malicious mud we experience now.

Our challenge is to come up with a system that focuses on managed (or active) aquifer recharge (MAR) using all the available technologies. Dams are one of those technologies though the large-scale detention basins are not the answer.

I have a preference for networks of large dams in the mid-upper catchment that when full, shed water along key line swales (special contours) for hundreds of metres or more before flowing into the gully below.

The swales would look for aquifer recharge points (which could be engineered) and deliver water into subterranean storage. This type of MAR is not new. Mayan Indians used it to build advanced water infrastructure that still functions today.

The best of the nature-based solutions appears to be the re-vegetation of riparian zones at key points along creeks topography and hydrology. Using existing choke points, creeks are planted out with selected species that increase hydraulic conductivity and decrease overland flow rates, diminishing flood volumes by up to 10% (recent study by BRRVLN).

In order to fund the massive amount of riparian restoration that would need to take place, a wholescale conservation-based restructuring of agricultural land is required. I have a discussion paper that details this. If anyone wants a copy, please reach out.

Stuart McConville runs Pooh Solutions Waste Water and Composting Toilets. Phone 0427-897-496 Web: www.poohsolutions.com Email: poohsolutions @gmail.com

Yaibai Mumbala. Flowing Water

This is the objective of the Nimbin Water Collective: that the natural flow of the springs, creeks and rivers continues in a healthier and vibrant manner is the life-blood of our region and communities.

Indeed, following the months of steady soaking, the water table is high and surface waters saturate the landscape.

By contrast, when the sun is out it is hot and the evaporation rates in the coming months likely to be high – a condition we have been seeing for some years now.

In times of great change, core stability is key to weathering unforeseen events and giving rise to the possibility of being able to adapt to the changes as they occur.

Within the complexity of water flow, core stability lies in retaining the hydrological integrity of those processes upon which the system depends. That is, maintaining water levels within artesian aquifers and the pressure within those confined systems which forces water to the surface.

The higher basins are reliably recharged by rainfall, but the deeper underlying sub-aquifers, such as the Clarence-Moreton Basin (CMB) beneath us, is described as a geological reservoir potentially resultant of meteoric and plutonic processes from whence the pressure is derived.

All these elements are vastly understudied within the CMB with little real knowledge readily available to define potential impacts on the overall system. This is a major concern for the groundwater-dependent ecosystems such as is Nimbin.

Hence, the 220 metre bore into the CMB on the Alstonville Plateau to supplement Rous County Council's (RCC) bulk water supply requires further investigation.

At this point within our circumstances here in Nimbin it is important that all people are aware and pro-active in relation to protecting the region's waters and where conscious and environmentally sound land management is a high priority.

In the past months we have seen:

1) A Resolution passed by Lismore City Council (LCC) to seek confirmation of availability of water from RCC's bulk water supply, which would potentially be piped via The Channon to Nimbin. Most Councillors agreed to this Resolution without having viewed the Options Assessment on the water provision for Nimbin.

Part 2 of this same Resolution was that should RCC consider water provision to Nimbin as viable, then LCC would go ahead to seek funding for the project. No public consultation on this matter has occurred with the people of Nimbin.

2) LCC has completed the public submission phase to its Draft Strategic Plan (60,000 project). This project aims to incorporate a further 14,000 people into the Lismore LGA, with many of the proposed developments being expansions of the small villages of the LGA and some expansions of urban Lismore.

Many of these prospective developments have not yet been assessed for either extension of their current water supplies or potential provision from the bulk water supply. Nimbin is not currently included, as there remains a moratorium on new developments in Nimbin which would require reticulated water.

3) The CSIRO recommendations regarding catchment flood mitigation measures have brought forward highly contentious strategies, involving incursions into the land with knowingly minimal improvements to conditions of a high-volume flood event.

4) It has become known that the NSW government's amended environmental legislation will also now be underpinned by new regulations within the Dept of Planning that impact on the responsibilities of all government agencies (including Councils) to act with regard to public consultaion. We have been told that these draft measures are yet to be finalised and implemented.

The Water Collective is at this time seeking to gain further insight into the range of matters that potentially impact our regional waters.

We continue to advocate for the wholistic and environmentally sound strategies that many groups within the region continue to work on nature-based solutions.

Cessation of logging and land-clearing in the catchments; revegetation of critical and riparian zones within the catchments; purification strategies for the river systems; water recycling and re-use measures for outdoor use including roadworks, farm supplementation and firefighting.

Also in times of great change, the core stability of people and communities lies in co-operation and input of energy towards those clearly defined initiatives that will, in the long-run, determine how we will weather the future together.

Anybody wishing to contribute energy to the Nimbin Water Collective please make contact by leaving a message at the Environment Centre or via: *nimbinenvironmentcentre@gmail.com*

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Time to do democracy differently?

by Michael Balderstone

It's been a crash course in politics for me since a handful of MPs from the Legalise Cannabis party were suddenly elected a few years back.

The old HEMP Party, Help End Marijuana Prohibition, was born out of sheer frustration at our views about the drug war not getting heard. At election time we at least got a hearing and weed usually got at least 2% which was not insignificant. At least we got on the agenda, helped by the anonymity of the polling booth.

But once elected it's been incredibly hard to make any difference to the weed laws. We can talk but do we get heard, and does it make any difference anyway?

In WA the Labor Party, or is it Woodside, has full control. Victoria just changed the rules to stop any minor parties getting elected. It will be Liberals, Labor, Greens or One Nation and at the moment it will be lots of One Nation!

Jeremy Buckingham in the NSW Upper House is there for two terms, but here we are at the end of the first term and still there is no change, with Minns ignoring the recommendations of not one but two Drug Summits.

I watched the debate in NSW Parliament live on-line a week or two ago as the Bill to change the Random Drug Test rules, ever so slightly, failed to get passed. I smoked a big joint just to handle it, to keep detached. It was like so pathetic, I was left dumbfounded. Everything else in the world around them has moved on, but they still do decision-making like it was an 1850's debate.

Giving each MP 20 minutes to have a say sounds fair, but what's happened over time is we have party politics playing dirty games. The Labor members have to vote together, as do the Liberals, and I guess the Greens, not sure about them.

So the Liberal MPs one after another stood up and used their full 20 minutes, talking shit mostly, possibly even speeches a robot has written them, until all the time was used up so there could be no vote. Just a game of chess. A filibuster it's called, a cunning chess move that stops any vote happening. They can start again where they finished next month.

They're in another world down there. When you enter Parliament's rarefied atmosphere; I guess it's hard for the MPs not to feel very important, and they all fall into line and follow tradition like it's been done for ages.

There is no sensible debate – that happened at the Drug Summits. This is just a game of numbers, and it's mostly about retaining power it seems, rather than doing the right thing.

The basic framework of the NSW Government dates from 1856. It was created for a 19th century colony using the British Westminster model, and over time the system has been moulded by those in power to make sure they keep power if they can.

We are way more educated now, with mass communication and way bigger populations. It's a whole new ball game with the internet and virtually everyone carrying a mobile phone.

In Switzerland everyone gets a say on major decisions which would be easy now we're all hooked up on-line together. In Ireland and other places increasingly, people are using a Citizens Assembly or Citizens Jury to make recommendations to parliament.

A hundred random people are selected to hear both sides of the debate and then decide. A proper sensible discussion with people from across all walks of life. Not just University and mostly private school educated people.

We know from polls that the majority of Australians support at least decriminalising personal pot use, as do all the experts. So what do we do now? Cannabis law reform is a perfect example of the parliament representing us ignoring the experts.

Michael Balderstone and Jeremy Buckingham at MardiGrass.

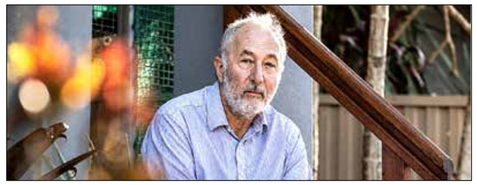
The laws have changed State by State across America with their system of the Ballot Initiative. With enough signatures, about 2%, the people get to vote on issues like legalising cannabis when election time comes around.

In America with weed, it started way back in 1996 with the famous Proposition 215 in California to approve medical cannabis, where 55.6% of the people voted yes. Incidentally, 80% of Americans support full legalisation now that they've seen it with their own eyes.

We need public opinion to be heard enough to change the law rather than trying to convince politicians which is proving nigh-on impossible with vested interests dominating discussion.

Time to do both democracy and drugs differently.

Conversations about drug driving laws



Former Magistrate, Professor David Heilpern *(pictured)* will be the special guest speaker at the next *Conversations in the Pub* forum at Lismore's Sherwood Hotel on Thursday 3rd September.

The topic of conversation will be 'Safe but Fair: A new approach to drugs and driving in NSW.'

The Convenor of *Conversations in the Pub,* Lismore City Councillor Jasmine Knight-Smith, said the topic was particularly relevant in light of proposed new laws currently before NSW State Parliament.

"The NSW State Government has introduced a bill to State Parliament to create a more commonsense approach for people using lawfully prescribed medicinal cannabis," she said.

"The bill is now being debated in the Upper House. If it is passed, drivers taking prescribed medicinal cannabis containing THC will no longer be automatically penalised.

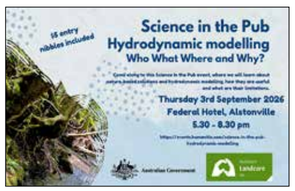
"This is an important issue to our community in the Northern Rivers, so the forum will be an opportunity to understand why change is needed, and what further reforms could be made in the future to ensure our laws around drugs and driving are both safe and fair.

Jasmine Knight-Smith said the forum would include a Q&A session with a panel including several high-profile local speakers, moderated by Lismore-based lawyer, writer and comedian Mark Swivel.

The event is free and will be held in the function room at the Sherwood Hotel. Doors to the function room will open at 6.15pm, and the event will run from 7pm to 8.30pm.

Follow Conversations in the Pub at: *https://www.facebook.com/ConversationsInThePub*

Flood resilience



There is an opportunity to learn more about using strategically targeted revegetation as a nature-based solution for flood resilience at a Science in the Pub event in September.

Experts from Macquarie and Southern Cross universities will unpack the science around nature-based solutions in clear, practical terms, and provide information about what hydrodynamic models can tell us about flood behaviour.

Richmond Landcare Inc, which is hosting this initiative, has conducted a pilot project on the Terania and Tuntable creeks in the upper sub-catchments of the Wilsons River catchment, using nature-based solutions.

The event will be held at the Federal Hotel, Alstonville on Thursday 3rd September. Doors open at 5.30pm with nibbles, followed by presentations and discussion from 6 to 8.30pm.

Tickets are $5 and can be purchased at: *https://events.humanitix.com/science-in-the-pub-hydrodynamic-modelling*

This project has received funding from the Australian Government.

NIMBIN'S SUSTAINABLE LIVING HUB
7 Sibley Street

Open 10.30am – 2pm Wednesday to Saturday

September What's On!
Workshops start 10.30am
For bookings, email: sibley@nnic.org.au

Special workshops:
- **Sat 5th Processing Home-grown Coffee** $15
- **Sat 19th Make a Water Filter** Explore principles and make an in-line water tank filter. $20
- **Sat 26th 10.30-12.30 Re-love market** This month's theme: Vintage and pre-loved clothes. $10/stall

Workshops each month: (by gold coin donation)
- **Sat 5th Sept. 9-10am and also Wed 16th Sept. 1.30-2.30pm**

Food, seed and plant swap Bring your excess, take what you need. Share tips, recipes and good vibes.
- **Thursdays 11am-1pm Spinners and Weavers**

Community Tools Library
Every Wed & Sat, 10.30-2pm. For home repairs, garden tools, food and craft equipment. Join at NNIC, Mon-Fri.

Basketballs and pump available to use at half-court with $5 refundable deposit.

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NIMBIN AQUARIUS foundation inc
Rescheduled
2026 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday 16th September 2026, 3.30pm
Yellow Door studio, Nimbin Community Centre

Chamber Chat

by David Hyett, president

One of Nimbin's greatest assets is the extraordinary collection of skills, knowledge, enterprise and experience within our community.

We have people working across tourism, technology, agriculture, arts and culture, construction, events, retail, hospitality and professional services, alongside many people quietly developing businesses and projects that the rest of us know little about.

Our community also continues to change. New people are moving into the area, bringing skills, experience, ideas and connections that we may know nothing about.

That presents an opportunity for the newlan introduction to the local business community. For those of us already here, it's an opportunity to meet new people and discover what capabilities they bring with them.

Which raises a simple question: do we actually know what each other does?

Every business relies upon a chain of inputs to achieve its end result: suppliers and raw materials, specialist knowledge, finance, accounting and bookkeeping, staffing, marketing, website and technology support, artistic and graphic design, trades and professional advice.

How many of those inputs could be sourced within our own community? We probably don't know, because we don't necessarily know who's doing what.

Networking isn't simply about finding customers. It's about discovering capability. The person who can solve a problem you've been wrestling with may already be sitting at the next table in the café.

Every time we source another business input locally, more of the economic benefit stays here. One local business supports another, relationships develop and our collective capability grows.

But first we need to know who's who at the zoo. Chamber meetings provide a regular opportunity for people from different parts of Nimbin's economy to meet, and importantly, you don't have to be a Chamber member to attend.

Come along, tell us what you do and discover what everybody else is doing.

Buy local. Source local. Connect local.

AI – another tool in the toolbox

Artificial intelligence is another area the Chamber would like to explore with our business community.

For many people, AI began as something that could help write a letter or answer a question.

It is rapidly becoming a practical business tool for research, marketing, analysing information, troubleshooting problems, investigating grants, planning projects, working on websites and reducing everyday administration.

There are legitimate questions around privacy, accuracy, employment and responsible use. But there is also enormous opportunity, particularly for small businesses.

Used thoughtfully, AI can help us do more with the skills, ideas and time we already have.

Chamber would like to investigate a practical AI for Nimbin Business workshop, potentially drawing upon local people already using these tools.

Rather than debating AI in the abstract, let's ask: What can this actually do for my business?

Nimbin seen through different eyes

The ABC's *Back Roads* episode featuring Nimbin screened on 27th August and remains available on ABC iView.

What was particularly refreshing was the way the program moved beyond the familiar stereotypes that have so often dominated outside reporting about Nimbin and instead captured something of the community itself.

The spectacular scenery certainly did us no harm, but a particular highlight was hearing from some of our young people down by the creek.

Their thoughtful and considered observations gave viewers a glimpse of what it can mean to grow up here and the different perspective this community and environment can offer.

It was a warm and beautiful portrayal of Nimbin that left you thinking anyone watching might be tempted to come and live here!

If you missed it, it's well worth catching up on iView.

Around the Chamber table

Chamber has approved $1,000 sponsorship for the Nimbin Fashion Show and $500 for the Nimbin Performance Poetry World Cup, supporting events that attract visitors and contribute to the cultural and economic life of the village.

Work continues around Nimbin's murals and visual identity, while Council is exploring waste education initiatives following discussions with local stakeholders.

The Youth Focus Volunteer Expo at the School Market on 18th September provides another opportunity to connect young people with community organisations.

Encouraging young people into volunteering, business and community life is an investment in Nimbin's next generation of skills and leadership.

Whether it's young people, new residents, technology, the arts or established local businesses, the opportunity is much the same: connecting people who have ideas with people who have the skills, knowledge and resources to help make them happen.

That's the Nimbin Advantage.

The Nimbin Advantage - Knowing who's who in the zoo

NIMBIN CHAMBER of COMMERCE
Join Nimbin's business community at nimbinaustralia.com.au

Nimbin CWA News

by Sue Stock, Publicity Officer

Dunga Derby

On 21st August, Nimbin CWA Branch had the pleasure of catering for the visiting Sunshine Coast Dunga Derby (Rally for a Cause) at the Nimbin Town Hall.

The Sunshine Coast Dunga Derby, is in its 5th year in 2026, and is a four-day car rally that saw 45 team vehicles an approximately 200 people travel from coast to the country while raising funds for Rally for a Cause to support the Sunshine Coast local community.

Funds raised by the Dunga Derby go to the Rally for a Cause Charity that supports families and individuals affected by life-limiting medical conditions or have had their lives disrupted by circumstances beyond their control. Five million dollars has been raised so far, which has provided support for over 400 families.

Nimbin CWA is always happy to support a worthy cause being carried out by good people, and this group is certainly both.

Nimbin CWA sewing group

This group is becoming very popular. There is currently a focus on crochet. There will be a change of date for the next get-together due to a clash with the Nimbin Show and it will be on from 10am Friday 11th September.

Nimbin CWA will be at the Nimbin Show where we shall be in the brick canteen and shall be serving scones, cakes and toasties and coffee. Do come and check us out.

Sarah Dobson, Nimbin Branch Secretary; Fiona Martin, Event Officer, Dunga Derby and Suzanne Snoeks, Nimbin Branch Cookery Officer

When are we open?

Nimbin CWA rooms are open on Wednesdays from 10am 'til 3pm. Our cooks provide healthy lunches for only $5 as well as slices of superb home-made cake, including gluten-free for $3.50.

The Op Shop is also open with many great bargains to be found.

We are open on Nimbin market days too and have espresso coffee and tea and (yes) scones with home-made strawberry jam and cream available for purchase.

The Nimbin CWA rooms are in the Community Centre grounds, next to the Rural Fire Service shed on Sibley Street.

Branch Meetings are held at 5pm, on the second Monday of the month, and new members are always welcome. Our next meeting is Monday 14th September at 5pm.

Our AGM will be held on 12th October at 6pm, where Branch executives and branch officers will be elected.

For all general enquiries, please phone 0457-363-925 or email: *secretary.cwa.nimbin@gmail.com*

Delivering for Lismore
Flood Restoration Portfolio
Lismore City Council

Extensive road landslip repairs are underway in the **Blue Knob area** to strengthen the long-term resilience of our local road network in periods of severe weather.

In welcome news for the community, two of the three repair sites, on Lillian Rock Road and Salkeld Road, are on track for completion by September. Work is also progressing well at the third site on Blue Knob Road, with full restoration expected by February 2027.

All roads remain open to traffic under traffic control. While Council and contractors work hard to minimise disruptions, certain construction activities, including piling and road sealing, may require longer traffic holds. Please allow extra travel time.

For info on these and other landslip repairs, visit **Lismore.nsw.gov.au/LRP** or scan the QR code.

Salkeld Road nearing completion.

Jointly funded by the Australian and NSW Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.
Australian Government
NSW Government