

NIMBIN COMMUNITY CENTRE'S ANNUAL REPORT 2017

The last year has been challenging for Community Centre management and staff. Early in the year we lost our long-serving President and friend, Dick Hopkins, after his battle with cancer. We are in the process of erecting a sandstone memorial seat in Peace Park in memory of Dick's considerable contribution to the community. His passing highlights the ageing nature of the Community Centre committee. Most of us have served the local community for over 25 years and either we die in office or younger community members step into our shoes. Our AGM is this month (details provided elsewhere) and we'd welcome younger blood. We need it! We have also seen a few coordinators come and go this year and have recently welcomed Inez Price and Teresa Biscoe who will job share the role until the end of the financial year, and hopefully beyond.

We have made some significant improvements to buildings and grounds over the past 12 months. The walkways are an ongoing expense but we have agreed to retain the majority of them as they provide considerable weather protection. We recently replaced the rotten walkway adjoining the Cultural Centre and removed the red cedars we planted in the quadrangle many years ago, as the roots were destroying the surrounding bitumen surface. A word of warning – don't plant red cedars near pathways or houses! We also, somewhat reluctantly, agreed to dedicate some of the grounds to car parking for Aged Care clients.

We had to remove a significant tree at the back of Birth and Beyond as it was ant infested and heavily pruned another. They were both planted 28 years ago by the Environment Centre and Seedsavers, long before the car park went in. Less obvious improvements include a very expensive upgrading of the mains power box, painting of the Bark Hut together with replacement of rotten timbers, and installation of water filters in Birth & Beyond and Acacia that serve groups using the meeting spaces in both buildings. Acacia is the building facing Cullen Street and many of you have appreciated the newly painted hallway.

Security has been an issue for us this past year. We have had to lock all gates into private properties located on Thorburn Street. We have also had to take a strong stance against dealing from the site and associated anti-social behaviours impacting on our tenants. Managing homelessness and mental health are also challenging and the subject of much angst at committee meetings as we struggle to find creative solutions.

The Community Centre committee consists of an active group of people who have involved interests in numerous other community groups and networks. This assists to keep the Community Centre engaged with the wider community. We have membership of the Nimbin Advisory Group, are very active in the local Chamber of Commerce, Nimbin Food Coop, Nimbin Environment Centre, NA, Nimbin School of Arts, Nimbin Hemp Embassy and Mardi Grass. We auspice Nimbin Flix and Nimbin Markets. We have recently appointed Stephanie Seckold as Market Coordinator and look forward to assisting Steph to realise her dreams for the market. We have a 50% ownership of 7 Sibley Street and look forward to imminent changes on the site thanks to the efforts of Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre.

We continue to auspice the Nimbin walking trail project and recently agreed to redraw the route to follow a designated legal right of way from Cullen Street through to Alternative Way. Changing the route avoids tricky negotiations with private landowners and will smooth the way for stronger Council support. The trail will diverge through grounds owned by Nimbin Headers in stage one to also provide access to Cecil Street. Once the route is redrawn and costed all figures and information will be updated and we will actively be seeking funding for its construction. This project has been a long time in the making and has had considerable funding dedicated to it so we are keen to see it come to fruition.

The Community Centre was successful in obtaining funding to install solar under awning and mural lighting in Cullen Street. The panels and associated infrastructure will be housed at Birth & Beyond and the operational costs (if any) will be borne by rates collected from the Nimbin Special Business Rate. Thanks go to Nimbin Chamber of Commerce for their considerable financial support of this project. Council also contributed \$2000. In addition, we have looked to improving Allsopp Park. We lobbied for improved seating and tables in the park and thank Adrian Williamson for his generous contribution to this project. We have also worked with Council to see the mural in Allsopp Park replaced and are excitedly awaiting the new mural currently being worked on by local artist Gilbert Lawrie.

The Community Centre owns and manages property at both 54 and 81 Cullen Street and our main income is rents from these properties. We also receive an annual \$10,000 contribution from Council but this is to be withdrawn from next year. We will also be losing employment subsidies so are facing considerable budget shortfalls. Consequently, we are reviewing all expenditure and our rental policies. Unfortunately rents at the Community Centre look set to increase in coming years.

For the future we are working with Aged Care who received a grant, assisted by our financial support, to put a veranda extension onto their rainbow coloured building (which we're about to give a fresh coat of paint). This will be a lovely addition, providing both light and a wonderful outdoor space for users of their services. We are also looking for strategies to deinstitutionalise the Community Centre in consultation with tenants and the wider community, building on extensive consultations undertaken in the past. This issue will be the subject of some discussion at our tri-annual meeting with tenants this month and feel free to send us your ideas. We have also received funding to put a toilet into the Cultural Centre and this will happen shortly.

Our thanks go to everyone who has been part of contributing to Nimbin Community Centre and Birth and Beyond over the past 12 months. We have great tenants who provide fantastic services and we will endeavour to continue making decisions that serve their and the community's best interests.

COORDINATORS REPORT

We have had our first few weeks in the job and are settling in well. The position as coordinator is challenging and rewarding; it involves wearing a number of hats and fielding a lot of general enquiries. Between us we feel we have the skills and community connections to do the job. We would like to thank the Committee, the staff from the NCCI office and the community for all the encouragement and support we have received since taking on the position. We would also like to thank India Morris, the last coordinator who did a great handover to us, and the previous coordinators who have contributed so much to the NCCI in their time in the position and clarified the role for future coordinators.

AN INVITATION TO NCCI'S AGM & TENANT & COMMUNITY MEETING

All interested tenants and community members are invited to the Nimbin Community Centre's TENANT AND COMMUNITY MEETING on the 16th of November 4.30pm -5.30pm at Birth and Beyond. Nibbles will be provided.

The tenant meeting will be immediately followed by the Nimbin Community Centre's ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at 6pm.

If you would like to get involved and take part in the future of Nimbin Community Centre, why don't you become a member? Membership fees: \$15 (adult), \$10 (seniors over 60) and \$5 (youth). Your membership assists to guarantee the success of the organisation as an effective vehicle for current

& future community initiatives. Memberships received before the NCCI committee meeting on the 9th of November can be approved in time for participating in the AGM.

ROOM HIRE

Are you thinking of running a class or workshop? Do you need a meeting space? The Nimbin Community Centre Dance Studio and the Birth and Beyond Room are available for hire at \$11 per hour or \$33 per day, with a \$20 key deposit. Information about classes is available from the coordinators at the Nimbin Community Centre. Please ring 66890000 to make a booking

NIMBIN MARKETS



Spring's in full swing at this month's Nimbin Market!

NCCI would like to welcome new market coordinator, Stephanie Seckold. Expect to see some bright new faces at the monthly Community Centre market (4th & 5th Sundays). Produce, plants and local craft stalls as well as workshops, kid's activities and book readings by local authors are some features of the new look Grassroots market, as well as our regular stallholders, retro & recycled goods. If you would like to share skills, promote classes or book stall sites, contact Nimbin Community Centre at 6689 0000 or ncci@nimbincommunitycentre.org.au