

rusty's

BYRON GUIDE

people, politics and culture



the climate is changing

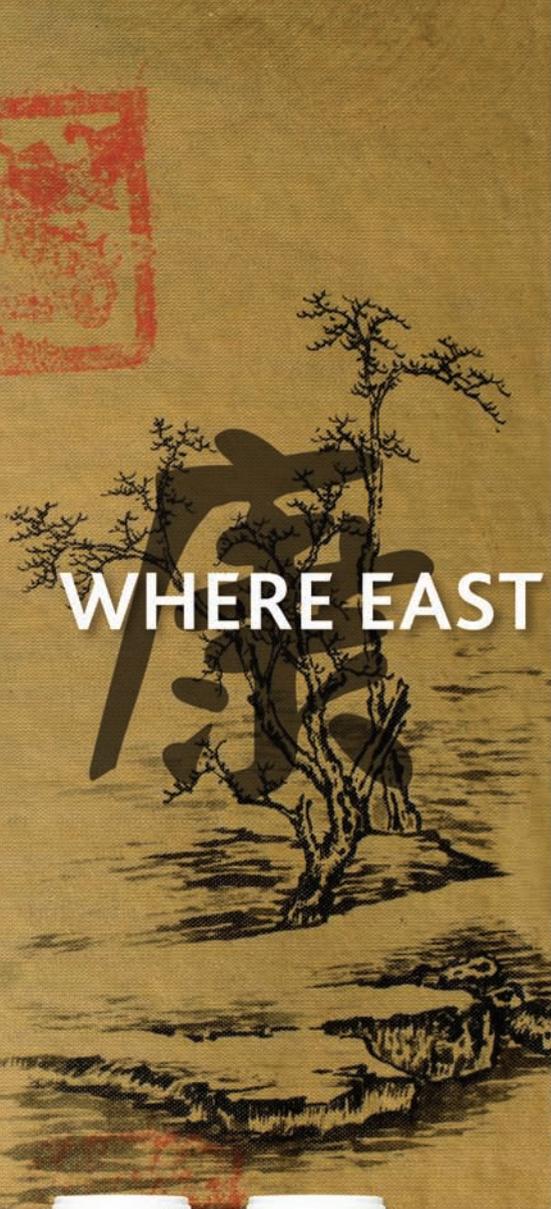


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JENNIFER CLEMENT

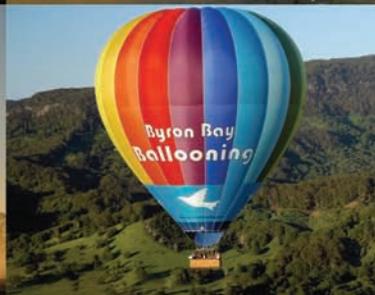
You speak to me on Thursday
I listen, in America, on Wednesday.
When you live one day ahead of me
all your Mondays will be my Sundays.
My tomorrow promises are your
yesterday vows.
You know so many things
as you are a day ahead and read about
the volcano, war, the great discovery.
In yesterday I did say. In yesterday I
told you.
At twelve I cross into tomorrow
and your today.
I bring the Queen of Hearts
up my sleeve,
in the cotton shade
of my arm, against skin and
buttoned in

I have poems up my sleeve
and prayers
a spell
a sister
bell to toll
rice to cook
salt and some silence even
in case I need a rest
and up my sleeve I have aspirins
a stick of gum
and way, way up my sleeve
I have an elephant
and the Pacific Ocean
and the Moon,
the so, so stepped on Moon,
for the voyage of midnight
toward one second after.

Jennifer Clement was born in the USA, grew up in Mexico City, is the author of three novels and four books of poetry. Her novel Prayers for the Stolen was the New York Times Book Review Editor's Choice. She is the first woman to be elected president of PEN International, which promotes literature and freedom of expression.



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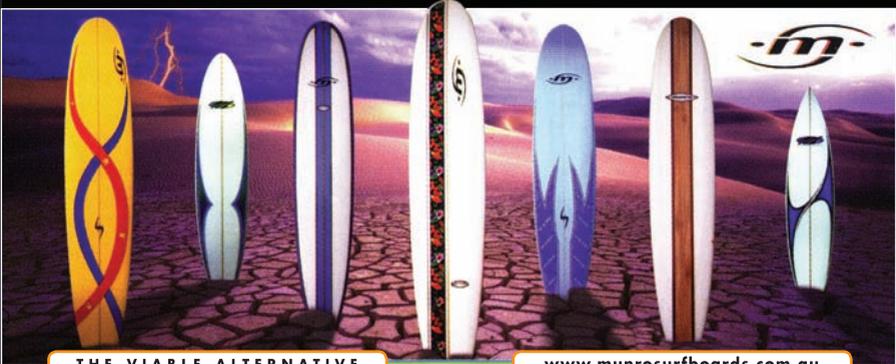
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byron is alive and wild

RUSTY MILLER & TRICIA SHANTZ

.... and not for the faint at heart.

What have people been talking about over the past year here in Byron Shire? Well, the usual things: inappropriate development, traffic (both on land and in the water), the Pacific Highway upgrade, the train corridor, pot-holes, population and density, and changing climate and rising sea-levels. They've also been talking about our home-grown food and clothing industry, indiegogo sensation, the Flowhive, our great coffee, splendid restaurants, and the potential relocation of the Byron Community Market and Byron Farmers Market. And, of course, dramatic global events that affect us all – not to mention the collective sigh of relief when Prime Minister Tony Abbott was replaced by Malcolm Turnbull.

Every paradise has its trials and issues. Undoubtedly one of the central talking points this year was sharks. Of course, sharks have always swum in Byron's waters. To old-timers, the presence of sharks back in the days of whaling and abattoirs makes their numbers now seem infinitesimal. Renowned for its paradisiacal beauty and utopian ideas, our shire has weathered many challenges since its first occupation.

Wayne Lynch, the legendary surfer, reflects, "The shark question is complex. Firstly, it's a wake up call, a dose of reality that we share the ocean with these animals. It's not a giant swimming pool designed for our indulgent pleasures. It's a wilderness of sorts, and the sharks are always there. I've grown up with this reality, and it's occurred to me that most people haven't. To be aware and informed may make some difference. It goes without saying that it's tragic to have someone attacked, the last thing anyone would want to have happen. Research and knowledge could go a long way in conjunction with technology to helping the situation."

One theory, amongst many, is that with the changing climate there is fish depletion in conjunction with over-fishing by factory ships and long-lining methods. But everyone has their own theory. Meanwhile, we are all trying to sensibly figure it out.

In the Guide we endeavour to bring our particular Byron reality to our readers, however it's just one view among many scenarios of lifestyles within our Shire. What is still so magnetically attractive about this place is its physical beauty and social and cultural richness. These precious advantages are what draws and keeps people here. Byron Shire is an ever surging, multi-faceted organic being sprouting out new ideas and creations (like the ever prolific Camphor Laurel trees). People here are highly engaged and concerned by what we put into and onto our bodies, taking responsibility for our actions in what we buy, what we use, what we wear, where things come from and how things are made.

With our friendly welcoming way, we local residents are builders of our community's social fabric, and it's a constant duty. As at 2011, 24 per cent of Byron Shire residents report working as volunteers, which is the highest volunteering rate in NSW. Democracy is not just given to a society. It's earned and then it needs to be constantly maintained. This requires people to not just turn up and vote at election time but to be involved in actions between elections.

Eminent British philosopher, A.C. Grayling, said, while speaking here in Byron, "Democracy is noisy." And, in Byron it is extra loud.

Having participated in the climate change rally in late 2015, along with many thousands around Australia and the world (as well as many other protests over the years), it reminded me of the first time here in Byron

*A smooth sea never
made a skilful sailor*

ANON



that I felt I should, stand up and comment against what I thought was a wrong activity by a government authority or corporation. Deep inside I knew it was wrong and in fact harmful to the society. This was the chain sawing by the Council of the large fig trees that lined the ocean side of Lawson Street and the year, I believe, was 1970. I had a particular attachment to those beautiful creatures because in those days when you backed in to park it was shaded from the hot sun (and of course free).

I was a new foreign arrival then having just come from California, not yet a citizen of this country and so somewhat hesitant to make comment. But it seemed so wrong to be cutting down the over 50 year old trees. Along with some locals we approached the council workers and informed them of our concerns to their actions. They laughed at us and told

us to get out of their way. Their job was half finished already, as they had arrived really early in the morning and we had to back off.

I felt so powerless all those years ago that I couldn't do anything to save the trees.

It has come a long way in my 45 years here relative to being able to comment and take action to counter government/corporate actions that harm the environment and ultimately our society and culture. Byron's community resolves have been able to stop high-rise and many other developments we deemed inappropriate over the years. We've won and lost ... but altogether looking back and now looking forward we are a very awake and conscious community.

To quote Patagonia CEO Rose Marcario "The forces that seek to destroy the world won't stop. What they don't realise is we won't stop either."



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knocking around byron

MALCOLM KNOX

It was in Byron Bay that I had my first death threat.

July 2004: my favourite writers' festival in one of my favourite places on earth, and I was about to start a one-day workshop with aspiring novelists in a tranquil little tent when Karen Reid, the head of publicity for Random House, pulled me aside.

'We're going to have to make security arrangements for you,' she said. 'John has left Bribie Island and said he's going to' (she put up quote-fingers) "sort a few people out'. We think you're at risk.'

If only the fiction I was teaching or the novel I was at the festival to promote were worth being killed for! But the threat stemmed from my work as a journalist. Two weeks earlier I had broken the story that Norma Khouri, the author of the honour-killing memoir *Forbidden Love*, was not the Jordanian ingénue and victim she had made herself out to be but a Chicago housewife and mother of two living on Bribie Island with her husband John Toliopoulos. John had alleged criminal links back in Chicago, supposedly 'Greek Mafia'. When Norma's charade fell apart,

she had flown straight back to America, but John's past transgressions made re-entering the US problematic. He was staying in Australia to, among other things, sort people out.

The death threat, as with much concerning Norma and John, was hollow. But I can't go back to Byron without at some point feeling the chill of that moment. I had my wife with me, and two infant children. We were moved to more secure lodgings. Guards were detailed, but the festival has never been built for security. In an oasis of intellectual freedom in a field north of town, I spent three days looking over my shoulder.

My assassin was a figment of the imagination then, and he remains one now. Byron Bay is a town of memories, half and whole and sometimes purely dreamt-of. Whenever I go back, I don't feel I have travelled in space so much as in time. I reconvene with my ghosts, who lurk on every corner. Of the 1.7 million people who visit Byron Shire each year, I wonder how many are also laying down time capsules for their futures. I wonder how many will go back in ten, twenty, thirty years, pause on the path outside the Great Northern or on the steps to the

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No man is good enough to govern another man, without that other's consent.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN 1809-1865



Lighthouse or in a bush track behind Belongil to be confronted by their own past selves?

My parents took me through Byron as a young child, but the first visit I remember is when I was 20, a university student marauding up and down the coast in a Holden Vacationer with three accomplices. We pulled up one night at the pub in Mullumbimby. My friend Kim stepped outside for a few minutes, to discover that the tree outside the pub had a plate-sized hole in the middle of its trunk. This became the subject of intense conversation between Kim and one of the locals in the pub, which led, eventually, to an invitation to all four of us to come and stay as long as we liked at his place out of town in a location called Wanganui.

We had nowhere to stay and no other plans. Our host, known only as 'Pommy Mick' or 'Mullumbimby Mick', is probably remembered by some in the area, though I haven't met any. I wonder what happened to him. He had a dark beard. He took us to his house in the bush, where he had two wives and innumerable children. We hung out, went swimming at a waterfall, and drove down to Byron Bay. I remember few details, but having my breath taken away by the view from the park in front of the Beach Hotel – I remember that. The lay of the land, the shoreline in both directions, the wreck, I have never been so struck by how perfect and right an arrangement of geography can be. It still hits me, every time.

A summer later I was back, with three different friends, on a lovestruck trip. Partly to impress the girl, I'd guided them up to Mullumbimby, and to Wanganui, in search of Mick. He had dematerialised. No locals knew who I was asking about. Had I made him up? But I had sold the hospitality of the region so hard to my friends, when we were driving around lost late at night, I pointed to a lit-up farmhouse where I knocked at the door, made some small chat with the owner, and in a pause, peered over his shoulder in an

accommodation-seeking manner and asked, 'How are things here?'

The invitation wasn't forthcoming. I was reading and regurgitating Hermann Hesse at the time, and as he had learnt from the Buddhists, you can't step into the same river twice. Nor into the same Wanganui. We drove down to Byron and spent our last cash on a site in the caravan park, where we set up a tent.

We needed to eat, however, and I remembered seeing a sign, as we'd driven past the Byron Bay Golf Club, mentioning a raffle for a meat tray. We went up there, scored a ticket, and won! That night, we barbecued in style. My luck had changed, with the meat if not with the girl.

Byron in my later twenties meant visits to my mate Doctor John, who was working as a registrar at the hospital in Nimbin, to his mother's chagrin. She couldn't tell her friends in Sydney that her son was there; she told them he was 'near Lismore'. He lived in a converted train carriage, a red rattler, and then a cute A-frame. We found the forest waterfalls and waterholes I'd swum in before, and when we went down to Byron we were like out-of-town hicks. The place seemed so busy, so city-paced, too fast for us. At nights we poked our toes into the Piggery, the Great Northern and the Beachy, before retreating from the dazzle, panicky, back into the hills.

Over the years, as life settled onto its stumps, the magnetism of Byron held and even grew. I got married, and in May 2000 we planned our dream holiday, a week in a tiny fibro cottage overlooking Belongil Beach. I went back to the caravan park and cut through the paths that I'd walked on a decade earlier, when I was a different person. We got a phone call, in that cottage, telling us that my first novel was going to be published, and I became a different person yet again. Always, we shed our skins and became new in Byron.

The place was changing, but so were we, and you can't stop progress or ageing, though Byron was one place where you could hold out hope. In 2002 we rented a house at Tallows with another couple. We were families now, with baby boys, and we were expecting our second. I went to the Golf Club with the other father, and time wrapped around on itself again: the raffle for the meat tray! He's a chef, but I don't think he could quite identify with my story about being so unprepared with food.

It was a big house we rented, and our friends set up a baby monitor in the room where the two toddlers slept. The monitor connected the children with the master suite some distance away. One night, as we tidied up and prepared for bed, my wife and I snuck in to check on the boys. Something about the way our son was sleeping gave us the giggles, which we were stifling, hoping to be quiet, when the door opened with a roar and the chef barrelled in with wild eyes and clenched fists. I thought he was going to kill me. He'd heard the weird snuffling sounds on the monitor and thought the kids were being attacked. It took us a while to calm him down.

Since then, I've kept coming back, usually alone but sometimes with my family, the children now old enough to be bored by my reminiscences. Here's the spot where we cut through from the campsite. Here's where we stayed when they thought someone was out to get me. Here's where I stood outside the Beach Hotel and saw my first fire eater. Here's the Piggery.

These were augmented by later memories, from writers' festivals, spiced with unavoidable name-dropping. Here's where Malcolm Fraser was rude over lunch. Up that road is where Di Morrissey had her fantastic parties. Here's where I got drunk with Richard and Martin Flanagan. Here's where I lost them and couldn't find them again. Here's where a character from one of my novels, the mother of surfer Michael Peterson, accosted me in public and I thought I was going to be killed again. And biggest of all – here's the Railway bar, where I met Tom Mooney, now the licensee but once a mighty Manly-Warringah Sea Eagles winger, where I confused him so badly one evening with my tale of having been a kid wearing the Number 4 jersey just like my hero Bobby Fulton, that later in the night Tom introduced me to a mate of his with: 'See this bloke, he used to play in the centres for Manly!' My whole rugby league career existed for a few minutes one night at the Railway in Byron.

It's a foundation of existence to know Byron Bay is still there, a fortress of solitude, a cave of memory. You could write a book about experiences in Byron; I'd be one of hundreds of thousands who can say this. I could have died there, more than just the once. But I didn't. I lived there.

Malcolm Knox is the author of 21 books, including the novels The Wonder Lover and The Life and many nonfiction works. A journalist with The Sydney Morning Herald since 1994, he has won two Walkley Awards for journalism. Settling for second-best, he lives in Sydney rather than the northern rivers.

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the slash

JAMIE BRISICK

Stephen Alesch is an architect and interior designer, the husband half of husband/wife team Roman and Williams Buildings and Interiors. Stephen and his wife, Robin Standefer, have designed a slew of notable hotels, Stephen and I have been friends since 8th grade. We skated, surfed, and slamdanced together through junior high and high school. We spent a languorous weekend at their Montauk home, talking, cooking, surfing, listening to music, and riffing on surf moves as they relate to life moves. One evening, over a third or fourth glass of good rosé, Stephen waxed rather magnificently about what he calls "The Slash." I was rapt, I kept my audio recorder going, I share it with you here...

The Slash is something to consider carefully. It exists in a few rare places: surfing, of course, but also in the flight of birds, signature writing, architecture, flowers, cooking. A well-placed slash is a rebellious but controlled display of excess power, a small-in-time but big-in-meaning move that is tucked into what would for most people be simply plodding through life focused on safety and security. It's throwing caution to the wind at preferably the most dangerous moment and continuing on as if nothing happened. In signing our name, it's seen most clearly. What starts as a struggle to simply handwrite our name in grade school becomes a whip-whip display of cocky bravado, more and more minimal with age, but always unique and bursting here and there, quietly ending with an especially cocky slash.

In cooking, it's not only a slash of zigzag sauce on a plate - that's the equivalent of over-the-top slash surfing - it can be a more careful sear of a steak or toss of cognac on the fire, a flip of the wrist and meat when a lesser-skilled cook is struggling with a spatula, making their food grey, uncaramelized, overturned, blah...



Photo: Emiliano Cataldi

In architecture and design, it's similar: overuse and it's a Frank Gehry or Zaha Hadid mess, one peacocking move after another, rebellion on top of rebellion... Carefully done, driving down the line with great fundamentals, arcing a mighty graviton of a slash under the lip, Dane Reynolds-like, in raw ugly/beautiful style and then continuing on without any speed loss - that's the metaphor of good design. Specifically that is great fundamentals in traditional design - mouldings trim, beams, doors, windows, craftsmanship - but then instead of gently finishing with a bow tie and classical music playing in the background, you leave the ceiling unfinished, the furniture clashes, the light fixture you design confounds and the music in the room makes no sense, but in the end it somehow ties together, it is satisfying. Not unlike Tom Curren's (3 times World Champ) look-back slash of the early '80s. It made no sense—what was he looking at? So wrong! So good!

I love watching seagulls fly while surfing, not searching for a lost bag of chips, but banging steep arches into the wind, half bored, hardly trying, nonchalant but critical maneuvers with high-stakes price if there is failure or miscalculation. Sometimes I'll see a dead gull near the bluffs and I believe that in the night, with gusty winds, the gull tucked one in on too big a gust and got slammed into the clay bluff, like countless surfers everyday with abandoned slashes in shorebreak closeouts, or kooks with cartwheeling kickouts, all striving to complete one, proving their skill, coolly showing off their dexterity at a critical moment and most importantly, continuing on without lost speed and acting as if nothing just happened...

The greatest gift you can give someone is your time. Because when you dedicate your time you are offering a part of your life that you will never get back.



This to me is the most important aspect of living, and life without a slash is just life on the shoulder, life in the flats. Like surfing ditch plains on a two-foot day on a ten-foot board doing the stinkbug fifteen feet in front of the crumbling mushy pocket. Working in NYC is like surfing in the pocket, and I have the benefit of surfing with my wife who absolutely rips in the pocket, an island local, who surfs like Andy Irons at Kalihiwai. I've learned from her and trade waves with her - hooting, competing, spraying people in the face and laughing. My actual surfing doesn't match this metaphor, I'm still improving, still mostly racing down the line, making the section, a handful of times I have tasted the success of a high-consequence slash, most of mine are hidden acts of abandon.

I heard a quote once from someone, I can't remember who: "No one has ever fallen on a surfboard." Falling or wipeout is an abandonment, often hidden from even yourself. Staying on your feet is a matter of not giving up, of life and death, and if you're lucky, a spare second to snap a casual but critical slash with half-closed eyes and mildly-bored body language... That is life lived!

Jamie Brisick is the author of Becoming Westerly: Surf Champion Peter Drouyn's Transformation into Westerly Windina, We Approach Our Martinis With Such High Expectations, and Have Board, Will Travel: The Definitive History of Surf, Skate, and Snow. His writings and photographs have appeared in The Surfer's Journal, The New York Times, and The Guardian. In 2008 he was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship. He lives in Los Angeles.

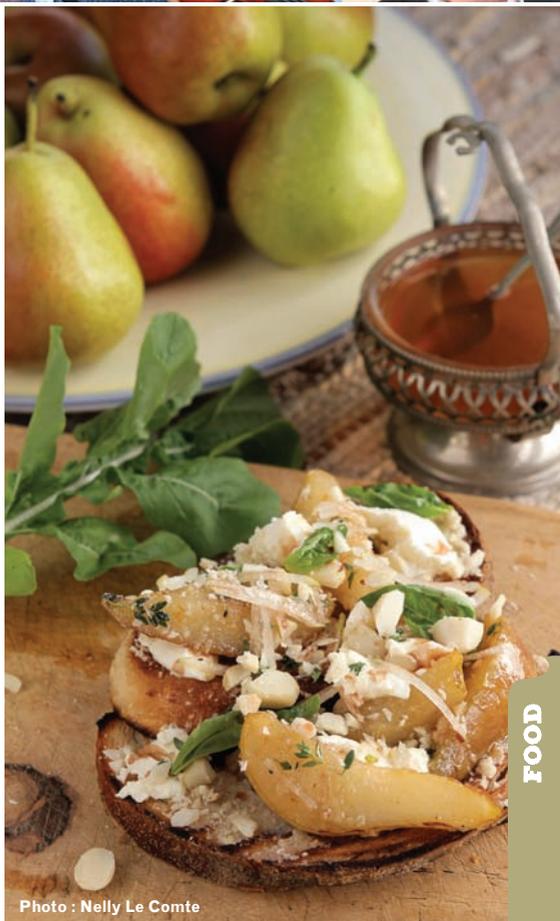


Photo : Nelly Le Comte

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DAVID SWEET

Byron Bay* is a coffee town. Laid back, maybe. Laid back about coffee – not a chance. In my early days of coming up to Byron from Melbourne my most distinctive memory of the hot drink scene, and yes, it was a “hot drink scene” in comparison to Melbourne, was being able to order the titillatingly named “LSD”. The Latte Soy Dandelion had no elements of a coffee yet was rampant through the cafes of Byron. Although Byron was ahead of the time, coffee back then was largely of a single origin - International Roast or Moccona.

The LSD fad receded at the same pace as Byron Bay house prices grew.

Byron is now a serious coffee town. It is now a town where the hissing of the latest La Marzocco espresso machine drowns out the twang of surfers' leg ropes in the morning. The coffee culture in Byron is now just as tribal as the surf scene.

As most 'locals' came from Melbourne or Sydney they have their entrenched preferred styles. Discussions will often be about how thin the milk pour is, about the residue on the palate, or whether (heaven forbid) they have been

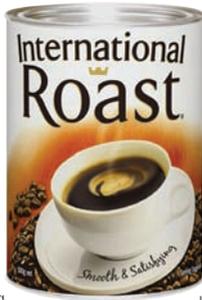
inadvertently fed beans from more than one origin! A barista leaves one café and takes half of the clientele with them.

For many years now truth seekers have visited or made Byron their home. On any given weekend there are a plethora of yoga, breath work, paleo retreats to chose from, and there is likely a festival to compliment the spirit seekers' pathway. The coffee scene has permeated into this Byron spiritual scene. Participants will often comment that a good festival is now one that both advertises AND has good coffee.

This intertwining of the spiritual and coffee culture can create problems. A number of local Baristas have been disturbed to witness the existential crisis that occurs when truth seeking coffee snobs realise that a flat white and a latte come out the same when served as a takeaway.

Thankfully, this new wave of coffee snobbery has lifted the quality of coffee in Byron to exquisite levels. Enjoy! *Includes Brunswick Heads, but not Ballina.

David Sweet, ex Union Lawyer, sometime Ecologist and full-time coffee drinker, a naturalised native of Byron Bay whose habitat is the undergrowth of the cafes of Byron Bay.



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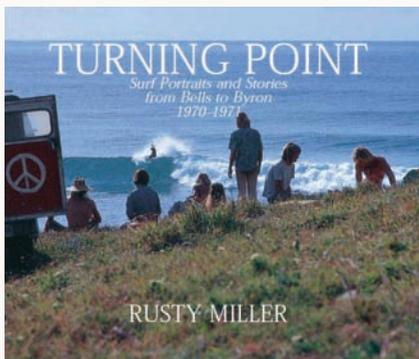
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revolution is brewing

KATIE HANDFORD

There is a socially observant theory I'm putting to test: I've never lived in a place that has and continues to produce so many unique, innovative business ideas and projects. Everywhere you turn, at any café, it's hard not to stumble across a conversation about someone starting up a business, whether it's female surf wetsuits, paleo granola, or an up-cycling clothing exchange.

So what fuels all the ideas and the breakthrough light bulb moments? Well, caffeine of course. American writer and historian Mark Prendergast wrote the well-known book *Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How it Transformed our World*. It essentially explains that the coffee bean and its gift of luscious liquid goodness is critically responsible for transforming the world, and indeed, altering the course of history.

Prendergast reports that both the French and American Revolutions were planned in coffee houses. It wasn't until around the 17th century when traditional public houses started serving coffee, a stimulant, as opposed to the prior dominant choice of alcohol, a depressant, that major societal changes started to occur: egalitarian environments emerged, new ideas were born, indeed revolutionary concepts. The irony being that the source of the beans was not so egalitarian. The beans responsible for fuelling such revolutions were produced by African slaves.

Fuelling sobriety, creativity, and indeed slavery, coffee did not come from the most ethical foundations. Byronians have a reputation for wanting quality food products, produced locally, organically or at the least sourced ethically. Coffee is no exception to this cultural value.

They are looking for the coffee that is fair trade, beans roasted locally or in Australia, and may be organic. If they are not organic, then look for the beans that come from farms and small estates that are sustainably managed with high standards of agricultural practice and specialise in high grade bean and who form direct relationships with these growers so their supply arrangements are made with people managing the farms. At last count there were 52 cafes in Byron, a number of which meet the criteria. So be selective.

While the stimulant effect and social setting explains a lot about Byron's entrepreneurial and revolutionary tendencies, it doesn't explain the motivations of our coffee snobbery, which is that, people in Byron are demanding in their coffee style and in the Byron Shire, there's an abundance of seriously good coffee.

Katie Handford, local coffee addict, journalist, facilitator of Byron Yoga retreats and dabbles in engagement for social change. She graduated in 2008 with a B. Journalism|B. Arts from the University of Queensland, and more recently a Grad Dip. in Education from SCU.

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(paraphrase)
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off the highway

CRAIG MCGREGOR

The election was due that weekend. They voted early by post and decided to take a few days off. They had been intending to go to the range country but they had heard on the car radio that a police siege was going on at a remote homestead further west. Man with a shotgun. Hostages. The roads were blocked off, so in the end they headed down the coast to a bleak, desolate stretch of sand dunes and red cliff face where you had to know where the dirt track was to even find it.

There were a few other campers about. Some of them were in vans which looked as though they had been there for six months or more. A couple had weather-stained extensions of tarps and striped canvas. Fishing rods were leaning up against the paperbark trees. Spare tyres. jerry cans. Four-wheel-drive track marks in the grubby sand. Holidays. Or out of work. Not much work to be had around here.

A helicopter flew overhead, turning inland from the cliff line. Heading west.

They found a tent site in among the banksias and bitou bush and faced the opening so that the sun would enter in the morning. At their backs was a flat open space, a plain of bare heath country, treeless, denuded of anything except a brittle dry grass which looked more like the outback than the coast, and behind that a conical mountain outcrop with absolutely symmetrical sides like a schoolchild's isosceles triangle. Behind that again, gigantic black thunderclouds spiraling upwards, shaping and reshaping themselves in the wind. It could mean rain or it could mean another phantom disturbance.

When they arrived the tent was jammed so tight inside it's bag he couldn't move it. She took over, rolled the bag down with practiced hands. 'It's called safe camping,' she said, smiling. When the fire refused to light she got down on her knees, hair falling forward across her face, and gave it a blow. 'Only for fires,' she said.

The first morning wind blew and sand gritted their hair. They trudged along the path to the nearest headland and back, breaking through the scrub occasionally to catch sight of dunes, and pale grey sandgrass, and the tops of waves whipped back like the spray from waterfalls. Spiky casuarinas acorns and wattle roots littered the pathway. The coast had been sand mined but there was enough rutile still to leave black stains in the sand.

At night the low moan of the surf came in through the canvas. Sometimes a heavy wave fell over with a thud which wakened him. He lay there, disquietened. The sea was supposed to lull you to sleep, he thought. Instead he lay there, sleepless, listening to the detonations of the surf, the buzzing of insects, the mewling of nightbirds, the howling of dingoes, the creaking of casuarinas, the pounding of crabs, the thudding of wallabies, the sobbing of emus, the gnarling of bandicoots, the screaming of RAAF jets practicing their night bombing runs.

The next morning he felt tired and found he couldn't move his left leg. She was lying on it.

'Move your body,' he said. Grunt. He threw some casuarina needles on last night's fire but it refused to light. Thank god for Mister Primus. The cone mountain looked black and forbidding but the plain was lit by watery morning sun. He could just make out the shapes of kangaroos, humped like dungheaps or armadillos, grazing. When they stood up they were suddenly transformed into

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*Roots are not in a landscape
or a country or a people,
they are inside you.*

ISABELLE ALLENDE



grey spirit beings, as static as speargrass, before leaping away and fading through the scrubline. They are authentic ghosts, he thought. Aboriginal.

When the tea was made he took it to her and then sat outside and watched the sun light up the woodheap, the garbage tank, the pit toilet, the dirt road, the other tent where the fishermen were, the station wagon. It had their swimming costumes tied to the aerial. The back window was coated with dust. He practiced a James Brown song: 'Wash me now!'. Wattlebirds were coughing and spluttering in the backs of their throats. There were piles of horse shit on the road where brumbies had come up to graze near the tent sites that night before retreating to the heath plain. The horses were a discoloured black and white, like burnt tree stumps, and left tracks through the swamp grass which bordered the lake. The ranger didn't like the brumbies, they weren't indigenous, but if you followed their tracks through the paperbarks and reeds you eventually came to this dark, flat, blotting paper spill of water where the horses drank.

Another police helicopter, heading for the ranges. Maybe the siege was still going on. They had deliberately left their radio behind. They were supposed to be celebrating. Being together?

The lake ended in an estuary. It was the colour of dark cola from the tea-tree seepage and tasted brackish, half-salt. When you swam in it the mud stirred up from the tea-tree roots; you came out

expecting to be black like a bunyip. The estuary was separated from the surf by a thin band of sand, as narrow and ruler-edged as a painting, so that the whole world---the sea, the lake, the land---appeared to be submerged below it's level. Weird. The sky, cobalt blue, seemed somehow suspended beneath it, upside down. It was a place for hallucinogens. ferals, astrals, alternative mindsets. 'Did we have any mushrooms last night?' he asked. 'I didn't.' 'If you didn't, I didn't,' he said. 'We're not identikits,' she said, laughing at him. 'You're free to believe you had mushrooms if you want to. Freedom is precious, you can believe what you like.' 'I didn't ask for a sermon,' he said.

No response. She was reading a paperback on contemporary approaches to mysticism.

'Do you think' she asked, puzzlingly, 'this age is essentially spiritual or cynical?' 'Neither. There are no essences. There are only things, and qualities, and relations. The age is never essentially anything; labels are tricks invented by journalists.' 'Do you think sex is sacred?' 'No,' he said. 'But I think it's scarce.' Silence. 'It's going to be even scarcer after that.'

Eventually the rhythms of the place took them over. In the mornings they watched the chocolate box pinks fade from the sky and the electricity sub-station power lines emerge from the darkness. The beach glittered and glistened when they swam, naked, in the surf off the red-rock point. If there



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were fishermen around they walked a kilometre up the beach to where only the occasional four-wheel-drive disturbed them. Shells and stones and broken bits of coral littered the high tide mark. At one rocky outcrop great piles of kelp had been marooned, a jumble of brown waterlogged stalks and lettuce leaves waiting for the tide to take them to the sea again. Sometimes, at high noon, the glare from the white sand was so intense he had to shut his eyes against it. It was hard to believe it was autumn.

They noticed, though, in the late afternoons great post-cyclonic clouds drifted in from the north, white at first but then a bruised gun-metal grey, as forbidding as a newspaper headline. It only rained at night: first a buffeting of wind through the casuarina tops, then fat heavy splats of rain on the tent fly, a sudden downpour, and then the sound of the surf, multiplied, returning.

'Did you tighten the guys?' she mumbled.

'What's their names?' he said.

'Great'.

'This is the life,' he said. 'Hermits'.

'I thought they lived alone.'

As the sun burned into their skins, salt crusted their bodies; his unshaven face began to itch, her hair began hanging in lank ringlets, and the idea of living like a hermit faded. They ran out of water. The nearest town was twenty kilometres away. But it probably had showers.

The place was an exercise in the Australian vernacular. It had a bowling club, a general store, a petrol station and little else. Not even an RSL. There was a fish co-op down near the jetty but it was closed. Tents and caravans were lined cheek by jowl along the waterfront and up the hill to the saltashed Norfolk pines. The weatherboard surf clubhouse doubled as the caravan park office; it, too, was closed. Most of the shabby two-storey holiday cottages were shuttered up for winter. They had names like *Dun Workin* and *Seldom Inn* and *Pacific Palms*. It was as though the township had been left over from the 1930's, embalmed. The nearest Centrelink office was 60 kilometres away. Yet when the school bus pulled in the kids who jumped off wore long hair and back-to-front rap caps and carried blade skates.

This is what we used to be, he thought. The good old days. Depression, the war, the poverty of

families trying to drag a living out of the sea.

The general store had flypaper hanging in scrolls from the ceiling. It also had a fish tank, a frozen food refrigerator, and a liquor licence in a separate room labelled Grog Shop. Yairs mate, y' can have some water. Out there by the bowser. Yairs mate y' can drink it if y're game. Comes from the river. Don't taste too good but it's ok.

They filled up their plastic cans and stuck them in the back of the station wagon. Next to the workshop a tubby young bloke with tattoos on his upper arms was squatted with his head in his hands. Nobody was taking any notice of him. The workshop housed a Holden ute with the entire motor ripped out of it. A car pulled up with what looked like two housewives in it; they gossiped with the bloke in the shop and helped themselves to petrol and drove off towards the bowling club. The young bloke with tattoos didn't look up.

They drove back towards the campground in silence. The 100kph sign on the outskirts of town was riddled with bullet holes. Dust, a wrecked car, desolation.

'You can't do much about it,' he said finally.

'You can help,' she said.

'How?'

'Money. Lots of it. Schools. Health services. Welfare...'

'That was a generation ago. That was the seventies.'

'They never really tried it,' she said. 'Some of them pretended to, but they didn't. Or they didn't try it for long enough. Then the greed machine took over.'

'You're right.' He drove on in silence. 'It's got to be turned around. It's so bloody obvious... it's got to change.'

'Do you reckon,' she said, 'these people won't still be down the bottom?'

The campsite looked good but barren. The family in the four-wheel-drive had left. They poured water over themselves to wash the salt away, lit the fire, and settled down to listen to the ritual evening sequence. Cicadas, first the high shrill greengrocers and then the deep black prince thrummers. Currawongs crying lonely as curls. Crickets, the eternal sound of his boyhood. Plovers over by the marshlands near the lake. Then nothing, except the surf.

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OWEN JONES (GUARDIAN)



Worm Hunter. Painting by Geoff Williams



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He shivered, put on a jacket. Overcast. By the time the wind blew the grey away they were asleep. He dreamed of islands, elections and whiteboard solutions to metaphysical problems. He woke once, trying to make half-awake sense of what they'd seen during the day and what they'd talked about that evening, then rolled over and went back to sleep. He could hear her muffled breathing next to him in the sleeping bag.

Next day he noticed, with unexpected clarity:

Shells like pippies in the sand, and pebbles rolling backwards and forwards with each wave like Arnold's Dover Beach but soundless, will-less, at the mercy of the current.

Casuarinas down near the beach which were whitened with salt, like skeletons, drowning in the dunes. Lorikeets gobbling and squabbling in the banksias like drunken barbarites. Sandballs which the beach crabs had left around their nocturnal holes, as delicate and asymmetric as Balinese fans.

That the rainbow-crocheted overblanket inside their tent looked more post-hippie than trad Appalachian craftwork.

When she shaved her legs in the open she balanced on her bum to do it, limbs waving in the

air like a cockroach on its back. When he washed off under the bucket she looked at him too.

On the last day, when they went swimming in the lake, it began to rain and the rain was warmer than the lake. Warm rain, his brother had said to him once, that's the north coast for you. By the afternoon it had cleared. They lay down, naked, under the banksias, where the dunes were moving remorselessly inland. Afterwards she said: 'I could get to like it. It's better than a motel.'

On the way home the car radio said the police siege had ended. Three dead, one wounded. They brought them down out of the mountain in a four-wheel-drive ambulance. The killer was a drifter, a bush labourer, a no-hoper, everyone said. He took the shotgun to himself.

No one knew why.

The election results were still trickling in. The old knuckled Australia seemed likely to survive. He turned on the windscreen wiper. Left, right, left. It was worth saving. He thought.

Craig McGregor is a writer and a surfer. He has written 24 books and has co-authored two books on surfing : 'This Surfing Life', with Midget Farrelly, and 'The History of Surfing', with Nat Young. This story is from his latest book 'MOTEL-a novella of love, desire and marriage'.





FALSE PROFITS

Geoff Williams, Mullumbimby artist, who passed away in 2015, left a vibrant legacy of art which was as varied in meaning and significance as the genres he practiced. Besides designing our Echo newspaper rainbow logo, his works also exist extensively in illustrations, film set design, dioramas, murals and buildings throughout the world. We are honoured to include two of his rich, cultural paintings in our 2016 Byron Guide.

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sustaining fashion

COURTNEY MILLER & CATHY SULLIVAN

I once met a NYC fashion trend forecaster on the beach in Montauk. It was post a surf session, while the last of summer holidays was celebrated and the sun tore golden strips across our bodies. She was lamenting the loss of the individual, the truly unique. The global world falling in on itself to mime and imitate in ever diminishing circles.

Travel often forces us to see the distinctive way people assemble themselves, articulating and interpreting their world through the fabrics and textures they put on their back. And although there is still a different twang, there is a sameness, a similar viewpoint coming through that seems akin to everything else in the world.

That's often the critique we locals have of Byron. It's lost that little je n'ai sais pas with the same Rockmans and Supres you can find in any other shopping locale. Yet, Byron is a fashion unto itself.



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It's a place that exudes a distinctive vibe, a curious twist on life. An all too appealing approach to our short lives on the spinning globe.

If you could bottle Byron and sell it, the Council could fix our roads without batting an eye. But of course you can't. So people eat what Byron people eat (Naked Treaties), do what Byron people do (surf, drink dandelion tea) and wear what Byron people wear (not much or possibly Spell) trying to don the essence of Byron. But really it's about questioning and challenging the standard.

Like food, fashion is slowly something people are thinking more about; how is it possible someone, or something, is not done over when a T-shirt costs \$20? Is it actually sustainable season after season? The thinkers are asking - where does it come from, what should I pay, who gets paid, how much profit do they get? How healthy is it for me / the environment? What are the long-term implications?

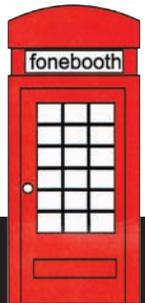
And Byron is right on trend. It's annoying sometimes, but the Byron crew are a curious bunch. It's that tricky kid in the class always asking the difficult questions you don't always have answers for.

What are the answers in a world where we are so far removed from the process and yet you can order and get delivery of almost anything in 24hrs (outside regions) design your own shoe or monogram your initials. What are we buying?

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*We die twice:
first when our heart stops,
and again when the last
person who loved us dies.*

GOETHE



The answer is quite simply the fashion we buy cannot be considered sustainable. There is an impact at a farm level, all the way through the factories that make the clothes we buy, through to our homes where we wash and care for our clothes. There is an impact on the environment and an impact on and in the societies that touched our clothes all the way through the supply chain. And, unfortunately, more often than not, this impact is a negative one on the people and communities.

So what role do we play, and how are we meant to know what to do? It starts with a mindset-shift, on our part, as the customer. It is no longer about where our clothes are made, but more so how they are made. Given we know that sustainable clothing is somewhat of a myth, how can we use the power of our money to buy more responsibly?

Given that our skin is our largest organ, we should now be paying attention to what we are rubbing into and against it, in the same way we have started to care about what we ingest into our bodies.

So here are some practical tips on the types of products or processes that allow you to shop, knowing you have lessened your impact in the process:

1. ORGANIC COTTON - Grown without the use of synthetic chemicals, supports soil biodiversity and healthy eco systems. Ask if the organic cotton is certified and make sure it's not a blend of conventional and organic. Australian

brands who use this bassike, KitX, Jac and Jack..

2. FAIR TRADE - Workers are paid a premium above their fair and living wage; at the end of the year the workers decide what to spend the money on e.g. a cash bonus, a new school or sending women to university. Fair Trade also stabilises the price that is paid for goods throughout the year, to aid with planning. Fair Trade products come with a green swing ticket.

3. HEMP - Grown without GMO seeds, synthetic fertilisers, pesticides; hemp has a low impact on the environment. Cultivating hemp improves soil health and has been know to prevent soil erosion. Afends is a great go-to brand for hemp products in Byron.

4. BLUE SIGN - Blue Sign is a Swiss company that works with leading brands to eliminate hazardous chemicals and substances throughout the supply chain. The system partners with brands to deliver a better-than-market-average reduction in resource consumption. Products that have passed through the system have a bluesign logo on them and you can find these products from Nike, Patagonia, G-star Raw, Adidas, Wolford, Puma.

5. TRACEABLE DOWN - Animal welfare is a key consideration for brands that use Traceable Down. This ensures through auditing and strict supply chain standards that the birds are not force-fed or live-plucked.

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6. BIONIC YARN - This New York start-up makes denim from recycled ocean plastic. Pharell is their Creative Director, and you can buy ocean plastic denim jeans from brands like G-star – rawfortheoceans.

7. UPCYCLED AND/OR RECYCLED - We throw away on average 11 million tons of textiles each year, making upcycled or recycled clothing absolutely the new black of fashion. From handplanes, like Enjoy, to jackets, see Byron Markets. Upcycling our clothing is the current zeitgeist.

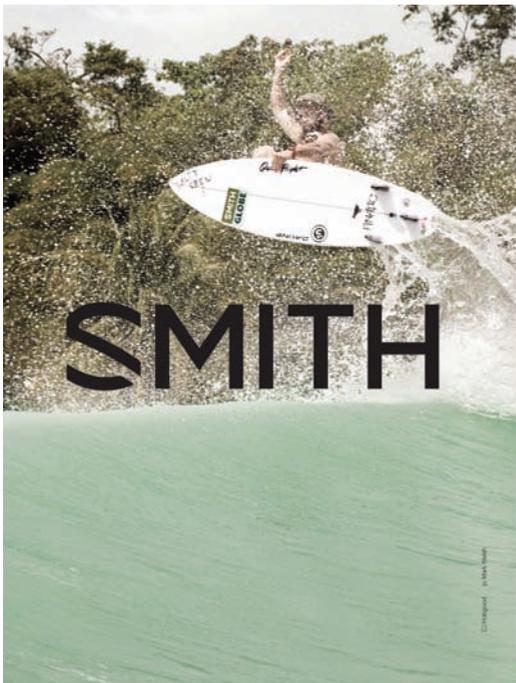
8. BIO RUBBER - Plant-based rubber, 100% petroleum free, is showing up in everything from wetsuits, Yulex at Patagonia, to biodegradable yoga mats at Yogi Peace Club.

This little Byron seaside town is unusual and challenges us to think about the world trends around us. It vacillates, like all of us, between the mainstream and the unconventional but we hope you love it for that and use this info wisely.

Courtney Miller was born in the Byron Bay Hospital, grew up here and is the General Manger of the Australian Fashion Chamber. Cathy Sullivan is Patagonia Byron Bay owner and responsible fashion life student.



Photo: Tao Jones



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We may need Millennials to remind us what we should have remembered from the 60s, that social change comes only once you stop playing charades.

JAMES WOLCOTT



Diabolical

...the emergence of neo-liberal hegemony coincided almost exactly with the time when concerns about climate change moved from being a topic of discussion among a small group of scientists to a matter of general social concern and alarm. At the very moment when the neoliberals came to dominate the political economy of advanced capitalism, a rational response to climate change required powerful government regulation and intervention, state action to rein in the activities of the fossil-fuel corporations, state industry policies investing heavily in renewable energy, high tax on carbon pollution, recognition of the catastrophic potential of market failure. These were precisely the policies and attitudes that neoliberals had cast into the rubbish bin of history and that they most abhorred.

Robert Manne. *The Monthly* magazine Summer issue.
Dec-Jan 2015-2016.



Photo: Nelly Le Comte



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state of the nation

MUNGO MACCALLUM

2015 will be remembered as the end of the dark age of Tony Abbott.

The mindless slogans, the deliberate obscurantism, the anti-science agenda, the ranting, the insults, the bluster and division finally subsided to be replaced what was heralded as more civilised polity. Our new leader, Malcolm Turnbull, is an altogether more urbane figure, consultative, plausible and above all coherent. It is a welcome relief.

But it would be a mistake to believe that Turnbull is a genuine progressive, a Renaissance giant in the mould of Leonardo da Vinci. He is far more a Medici prince, a fabulously wealthy ruler who will certainly dispense patronage to projects when it suits him and when it is in his best political interest.

He will not only be constrained by a clique of conservative and obdurate cardinals within his own parliamentary conclave, but his own hard-earned catechism will ensure that he will not initiate changes which might really affect the society over which he reigns.

Not that he will want to; like most of those who have achieved serious power, the idea of

revolution – of changing the system that has given them the throne – is simply unthinkable. Turnbull is a capitalist, a free marketer. He may have some liberal leanings, but he is not firebrand.

Thus he genuinely believes in the reality of climate change, and would like to do something about it: but he won't, at least not for the moment. He may endorse renewable energy, and he will certainly not share Abbott's irrational phobia about wind power, but he will cling to the illogical, expensive and ultimately ineffective Direct Action agenda of the previous regime until the facts, economic, meteorological and most importantly political, will force him to act.

In the meantime, the absurd mantra of “no carbon tax” (by which Abbott really meant no market-based solutions at all) will stand as dogma. And while Turnbull may be a republican, he has no intention of deposing old King Coal. Abbott said coal is good for humanity; Turnbull's new Resources and Energy minister, Josh Frydenberg also describes it in spiritual terms as a matter of morality – a boon to those suffering baseline electricity deprivation. So there will be no abatement of the current subsidies to the miners, and of course there will be no mining tax.

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*Music is a higher revelation
than all wisdom and philosophy.*

LUDWIG VON BEETHOVEN



Then there is the policy on asylum seekers: the boats will still be stopped, whatever the human cost. Turnbull may be more compassionate (or at least more sanctimonious) than his punch-drunk predecessor about the plight of the abused, brutalised and traumatised victims confined and silenced within the overseas gulags, but he is just as unyielding: it's our call, and bugger the United Nations – indeed, the rest of the world.

The total lack of transparency – indeed, accountability of any kind – is to be maintained, and, if possible, strengthened.

The repression of the Abbott age has now become a permanent, even a desirable, feature of the political landscape. The age of privacy is over; the age of dissent, even of tolerance, is threatened, as Turnbull offers little more than honeyed words to bring it back.

And this, of course, leads on to the big one: foreign policy, and Australia's obsession with following the American adventures into the Middle East, an area which should have been forbidden territory since the Anzac disaster a century ago.

In recent times our governments have flowed us willingly, even eagerly, into Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iraq again, and then back into Iraq and across the border to Syria. The justifications have been contradictory and confusing: at various times we have invaded by claiming that we are repelling aggression, eliminating terrorists, getting rid of weapons of mass destruction, overthrowing brutal dictators, restoring the rule of law, degrading and destroying a death cult defending democracy (by which they mean Western capitalism) and, more credibly, securing the resource of the United States, most importantly oil.

And this is what it has really come down to: we are not in the Middle East because it is in our national interest, or because we are good international citizens – if the latter was the case, there would be far more useful tasks a small to medium power could pursue, and we would not have to go to the other side of the planet to attempt them. We have joined Washington's wars because Washington

wants us to.. and when we are asked to jump the only question is how high and how often. We are there because they are there.

There are those who argue that this is the right, indeed, the only course we can aspire to; the American alliance is the be-all and end-all of our defence and however wrong-headed the approach the White House dictates, it is up to the Lodge to do what we are told. Our successive Prime Ministers regularly declare that friends can disagree; but when it comes to wars, for whatever reason – or lack of it -- they invariably concur. And so we soldier on through the blood and slaughter, making enemies of the survivors and alienating those immigrants who see us, understandably, as invaders against the lands of their births.

This is not just futile: it is self-evidently counter-productive, perverse and stupid. It was what we expected of Tony Abbott; he was, after all, simply following the habits of a lifetime. But Turnbull, we had hoped, would display more intelligent, even more independence. We are still hoping, but with little real expectation. The Renaissance, if it ever dawns, will be a long, slow and tortuous process.

In the meantime the rhetoric, the jingoism, the flag-waving (ours or theirs?) will continue. It will be just unhelpful, just as silly, but perhaps it will be a little more grammatical. It's not much, but at least it's something.

Mungo is one of Australia's most eminent and profound political journalists and the author of numerous books. He moved to the North Coast in 1988 to continue work as an occasional political commentator for various media.



Photo: Rusty Miller



the real meaning of 'eco'

GARTH MURPHY

The importance of the words ecosystem, ecology, ecosystem function, economy and their application to natural and human systems and organizations is that they put humans at the responsible center of our world and all of its organisms, living, social, political, business and technical. In the ecosystem worldview the connections are valued as much as the parts, and it is the informed connections we make that render the whole greater than the sum of its parts, that allow maximum sustainable productivity and biomass with the minimum of fuss. If you look for, understand, value and employ your personal connections to this universe-in-one-wonderful-planet Earth, in which we find ourselves, then you too can discover the most effective ways to enhance your ecosystem function and therefore the whole.

We are part of an intimately connected whole. Understanding and appreciating how ecosystems work and integrate and interconnect opens millions of avenues to individually and collectively enhance our world, to allow it to thrive and perpetuate in all of its glory. This is as opposed to blindly consuming, depleting, polluting, exhausting the natural capital of and ultimately destroying this incredible home we claim to love

and cherish in all of its magnificent diversity.

Ecology: from Greek, oikos, house, home, habitat and logos, study: study of a home.

Ecosystem: All of the interactive biological, social and physical elements that comprise a defined home, habitat, space or construct and all of the ways they are connected to create a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

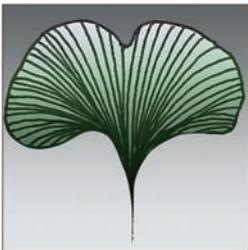
Economy: from oikos, home, habitat, and nomia: management: ecosystem management.

Ecosystem Function: The role of each component of the ecosystem and the contribution it makes to the interactive productivity of the whole.

Enhanced Ecosystem Function: The goal of Economics, to make each individual component and the whole ecosystem more productive, resilient and sustainable; strengthening the connections.

Ecosystem Services: Measurable products and services an ecosystem contributes for the benefit of humans, for other living components of the system or for other connected ecosystems.

Natural Capital is the total value of natural ecosystem services to an extended ecosystem.



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Rising inequalities is one of the great challenges of our time, which we desperately need to address.

THOMAS PIKETTY



Eg: A field of grass is natural capital for a dairy farm, with a value in dollars/cow. But it has further value as a producer of oxygen and sequester of CO₂, as flood and erosion prevention, and as habitat for beneficial birds, insects, plants, animals and bacteria that contribute the natural capital of their bodies and activities to further enhance the value of the field of grass and its dairy enterprise.

Social Ecosystems: Humans and their organizations and interpersonal, interconnected networks that are integral components of every ecosystem they inhabit: Family, tribe, church, band, company, club, party, labor union, army, government, news media, print media, social media.

Integrated Ecosystem: A house, car, farm, airline, hospital, sewer treatment network, city and ocean are great examples of complex integrated ecosystems with natural, technological, biological, social and business ecosystem components, including humans who inhabit and usually manage them.

Integrated Ecosystem Management: The work of modern ecologists/economists: homemakers, parents, city councils, company directors, governments, fishermen, farmers, educators: everyone.

Agri-ecology: The study, design and manage-

ment of agriculture as a dynamic ecosystem, integrating natural capital and services with human social capital and technology, for maximum sustainable productivity of healthy food, zero waste and enhanced cost/benefits for all ecosystem elements and stakeholders.

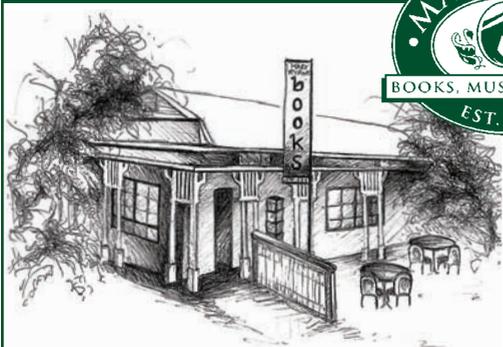
Ecology/economy of our Personal Ecosystem: The study and management of a single human body as an ecosystem, with its 26 organs, 220 different tissues, 20 trillion cells, 10 trillion single cell gut bacteria, nervous system, emotions, beliefs and intake creating an integrated whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

With a pacific view, Garth enjoys his life on the coasts of California, Hawaii, Australia and Mexico. His interests include surfing, playing music, gentlemen, strong women, writing and wildlife. Job: ecosystems management,



Photo: Tao Jones

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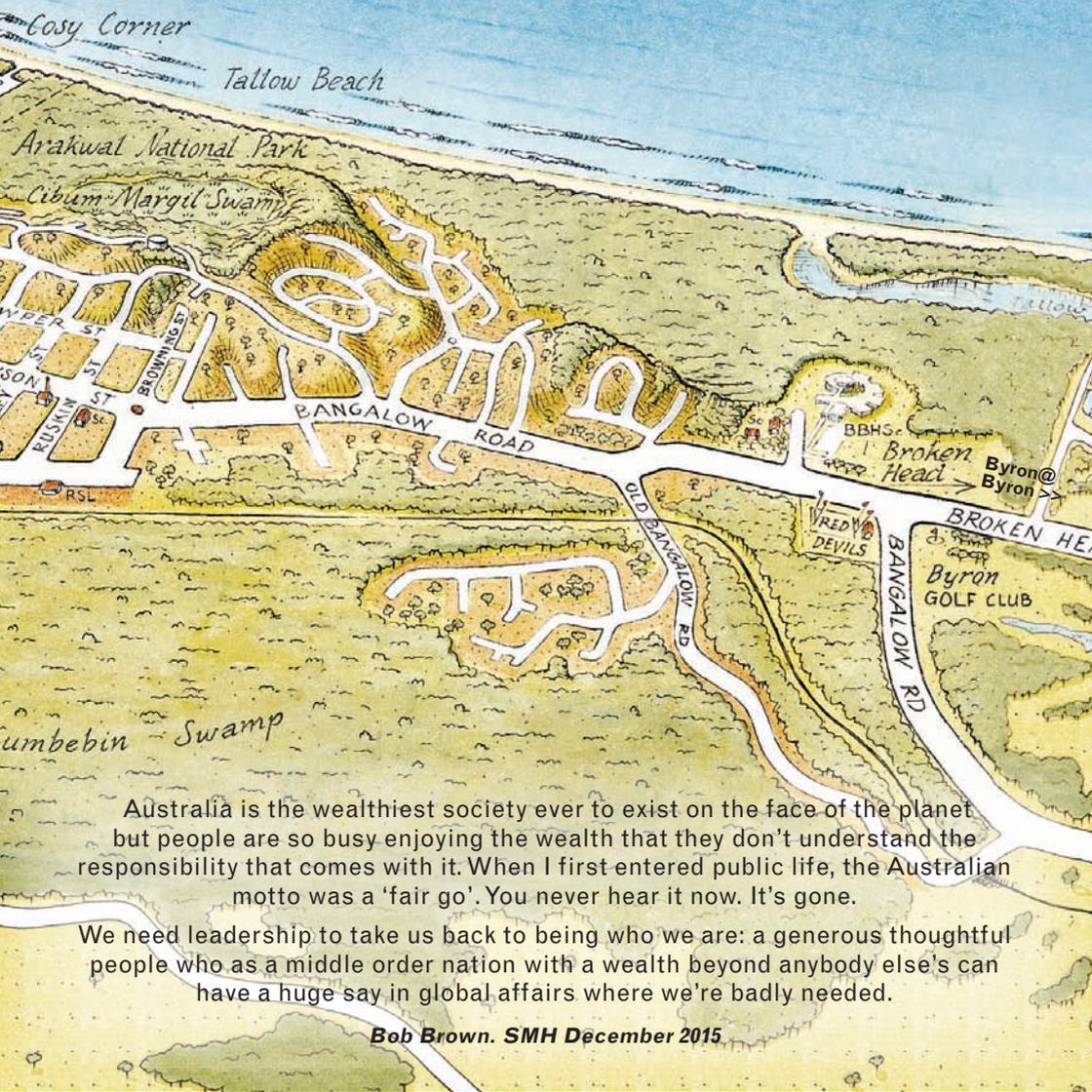
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Australia is the wealthiest society ever to exist on the face of the planet but people are so busy enjoying the wealth that they don't understand the responsibility that comes with it. When I first entered public life, the Australian motto was a 'fair go'. You never hear it now. It's gone.

We need leadership to take us back to being who we are: a generous thoughtful people who as a middle order nation with a wealth beyond anybody else's can have a huge say in global affairs where we're badly needed.

Bob Brown. SMH December 2015

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sampling the new economy

GILES PARKINSON

When visitors to Byron Bay ask me what I think are the must-sees during a short visit, I usually give them a couple of options. The first is to look at the ocean, from whatever vantage point they choose – be it near the lighthouse, the mystique of Little Wategos or Broken Head, or indeed anywhere on the magnificent curve of those beautiful beaches stretching north or south.

The second is to visit the Byron Bay Farmers Market on a Thursday morning: local providers offering their goods and services, the sounds of local musicians, a sense of sharing. A place to meet and greet and just to be.

For me, these two places sum up what I treasure about Byron Bay and its environs – a deep love and respect for its natural beauty, and a deep sense of community. And it is this shared sense of community that is putting the Byron Bay region at the forefront of developments in renewable energy, and helping design our clean energy future.

As a journalist covering developments in renewable energy and climate change policy, I get to travel far and wide – visiting projects, attending conferences, seeing launches of new products, hearing politicians speak and promise the world, watching negotiators struggle with the complexity and self interest of climate change negotiations.

In every way you can possibly imagine, the developments in renewable energy hardware and software of the last few years have been amazing. It has changed the conversation: what was once too expensive is now cheap, what was once considered impossible, is now within reach.

These developments will continue in the coming years, most likely at an even greater pace. The future of energy is pretty clear, and it won't be so much as an evolution as a revolution.

We are moving from the century-old model of huge grid infrastructure, centralised generation and powerful utilities, to a decentralised grid, where most of the electricity is generated locally, much of it by consumers themselves in their homes, businesses, farms and communities. Much of this revolves around the concept of community power and micro-grids where power generation is shared between buildings, and among houses, and community-owned solar, wind and mini hydro and biomass becomes the norm.

The success of farmers' markets tell us that consumers are losing faith in mainstream offerings. They want an alternative to corporate oligopolies. This is now extending to the energy industry.

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*A hero is a person
who has given his or her
life to something bigger
than oneself.*

ANONYMOUS



at a fraction of the cost of grid supply. Batteries in individual homes and businesses can store excess power for use at times of low generation or high demand, and batteries stored at community and grid level will provide options for those who, for one reason or another, cannot generate their own power. Excess power might be sold to neighbouring communities or micro-grids.

New types of businesses will emerge; ones that take inspiration from the community spirit of institutions like the Byron Bay Farmers Market, and let people find an alternative to the oligopolies that have dominated the energy industry for decades. Of course, this has been the dream of community activists in any number of industries and sectors for some time. Now it appears this will be attainable in an industry no one thought possible, the supply of energy.

New technology is making it happen, enabling not just a reduction in costs, but a positive environmental outcome. The plunging cost of solar and storage will push out fossil fuels – not just because it makes sense environmentally, but because of pure economics. The rise of the prosumer – consumers who produce their own energy individually – means they will have real alternatives to the take-it or leave it offerings of a few powerful industrial giants.

And it is this sense of community that will likely make Byron and surrounding regions a leader in this new model. A solar array on a sports centre

will supply power to the sewage plant. It doesn't sound too dramatic, but it is the first concrete move towards the sharing of power. Community groups have formed in Mullumbimby (Corem) and other communities in the Northern Rivers (Enova) to pursue their own opportunities.

Councils, such as Byron Shire, are seeking to have zero net emissions, or use 100 per cent renewable energy within a decade; and individual towns – like Tyalgum further to the north – are looking to go one step further and create their own mini grid. We sometimes despair at the pace of change in Australia, and the political and industrial rhetoric. But there are some significant moves that are taking place in this country. In Canberra, the local government has a plan to take the Australian Capital Territory to 100 per cent renewable energy by 2025.

In South Australia, nearly half of all demand is being served by wind and solar power. Within a decade, there will be enough electricity generated just from rooftop solar to meet daytime demand. By March 2016, there will be no coal-fired generation in that state.

The same prediction – about rooftop solar meeting daytime demand – is being made for Western Australia, where a conservative government is rapidly jettisoning its attachment to dirty, heavily subsidised coal generators, and looking to a future of rooftop solar, battery storage and



Photo: Tao Jones

electric vehicles. So, consider Australia's future: One where it taps into its most natural of resources – the sun and the wind. One where 100 per cent of our energy supply comes from renewable sources, including for transport.

One where solar fuels are being exported from massive solar arrays in Western Australia and northern Australia to nations such as Japan and Korea, hungry for clean fuel imports.

And when the local community largely looks after its own electricity needs, through locally sourced, and community owned and shared generation and storage. And it will start, right here in Byron Bay.

Giles Parkinson, former Business and Deputy Editor of the Financial Review, has been a Byron Bay resident for two years. He founded and edits the website reneweconomy.com.au and onestepoffthegrid.com.au



Photo: David Young



Photo: Tao Jones

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the lone goat gallery

what's in a name?

SANDY GANDHI

As a single, female comic who spends much of her time acting the goat, it made sense that I was asked to MC the official opening of our community art space, the Lone Goat Gallery at the new Byron Bay Library, back in August 2013 – I also like to bat for the undergoat and this is a tale of stealth about a much maligned goat by some.

I explained I wasn't actually the Lone Goat but the artist familiarly known as Sandy Gandhi of Byron Bay, Australia's most easterly Indian. I was proud to represent all kinds of artists – including con artists, crap artists and piss artists – who are always well represented at any Byron Bay gathering with free food and booze. Before the official part of the proceedings I related a brief history about the Lone Goat in question or Wategoat as she was affectionately known, named after her favourite beach, Wategos – and what a goat she was!

For many years there was a family of feral goats living in the bushy cliffs on Cape Byron. Having established they were endangering the native flora, they had to be removed. But, she's the one that goat away when the rest of her family were caught and relocated eight years earlier, in 2006. The speculative origins and the appearance of

this dreadlocked, fractured, feral family's plight are not dissimilar to other Byron Bay families who've been driven out of their homes – all victims of a nanny state apparently.

With a life span of twelve years, Wategoat was well into her goatage and visibly arthritic, on her last legs so we thought, when she seemed to have come to a sudden halt in early 2013, precariously perched on a jagged rock for quite some time. A second attempt was made to grab this goat by an RSPCA abseiling SWAT team. It was a costly and dismal failure but extremely entertaining and viewable on YouTube. In the TV footage of this Man versus Wild like episode, it's highly debatable as to who looked more like a silly old goat, as Wategoat put the R into RSPCA by giving them a right royal runaround. Surely her days being numbered and 2013 being the Year of the Goat in the Chinese Astrological Chart, were reason enough to let leaping goats lie, especially if they're old and frail - way to goat Wategoat, it's evident we can lead this goat to water but we can't make her sink.

There was much debate on what to name the new gallery. Our lighthouse resembles a giant spliff making Byron Bay Australia's most

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Question everything, be curious forever, and never forget that life is about people, so make buildings for people.

FRANK GEHRY



easterly joint, and many of us are more a natural, horny goat-weed kind of folk, inhalers and 'in jest' ers who don't like the sniffers. Besides, who knows what's growing in the bush that Wategoat inhabited – the Stoned Goat Gallery perhaps?

For various reasons, valid and invalid like Wategoat herself, some would be relieved to see her goat to her maker sooner rather than later. Others thought she should have her own Facegoat page and Trotter account. Keeping in mind that Wategoat was still out there we got on with the naming ceremony before it became a memorial service.

The official part of the ceremony was led by our Mayor, Simon Richardson, sporting the entire feral family and not just a lone goatee. Our ex Mayor who left us for the big smoke, the Right Honourable or should that be the Left Honourable Jan Barham MLC, reluctantly did the naming honours, expressing her disdain at naming the community gallery after a pest. "Stop the goats!" she cried. The naming and opening done, we drank and made merry to what was left of Wategoat's health.

So while Ballina's born-again Big Prawn refries in the outdoor heat, and well after Wategoat's last glorious sunrise, Australia's most easterly goat will endure in this cosy, indoor retreat – The Lone Goat Gallery, a befitting legacy to one of Byron Bay's legendary artists, albeit an escape artist. You've got to feel for an escape goat.

It was suggested that Wategoat should have been stuffed and be an installation art in her final resting place. Hmm... stuffed goat? I think she might be that already – way past a meaningful visit to a taxidermist. Besides, they had to catch her first. It's just as well she was not required to cut off an ear to prove her artistry. Mind you, Winnie Van Goat has a lovely ring to it. There should be a documentary about her – Free Winnie with theme music to Lou Reed's version of Wild Thing...you pull our heartstrings.

In fact, we should have our own regional anthem...

Byronians all, let us rejoice,
We're (mostly) young and free,
We've golden soil and wealth for toil,
Our home is goat by sea.
Goat speed old girl, Goat speed!

Indian born to real Indians, and not just to wannabe-Indian hippies, Sandy Gandhi is a stand-up comic aspiring to be a lie down one - she was lying down when she wrote this. www.sandygandhi.com.au

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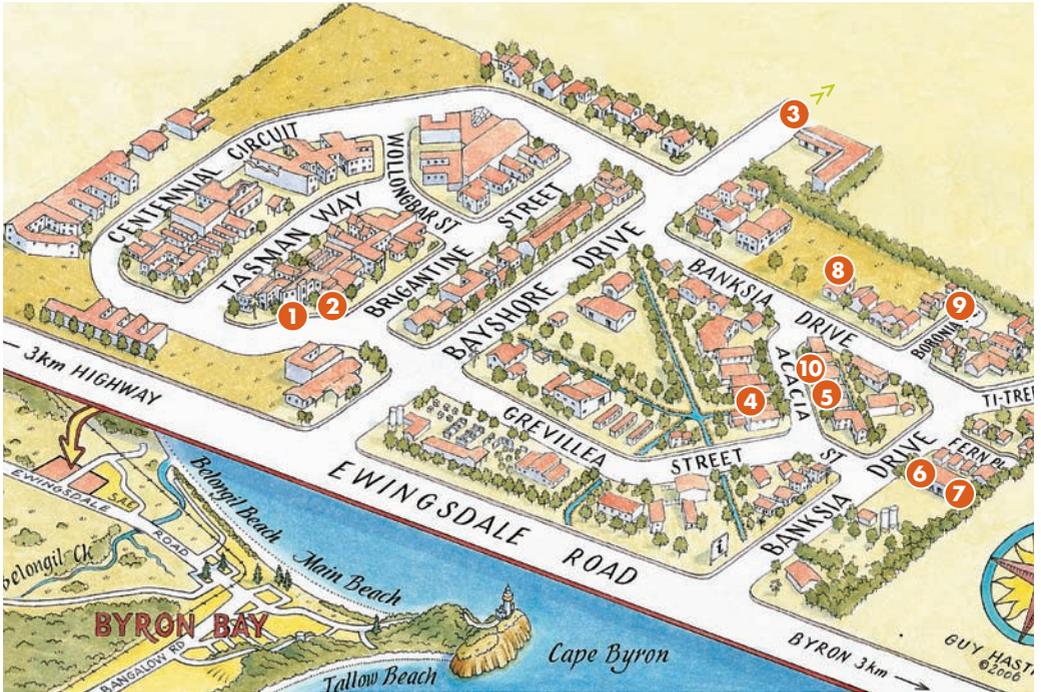
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Means of Dissent

Material suffering has become customised. People are up against a dizzying variety of problems. This person struggles under credit-card debt incurred from medical expenses, that person is sinking under student loans. This one's job has been outsourced, that one has been laid off because of her age. The endless list of economic burdens and barriers makes organizing a mass movement against rising inequality a daunting task. Perhaps the most painful social paradox of our time is that we are able to see through the lies and machinations of power as never before, yet the more we know about this increasingly sophisticated mendacity, the more abstract and diffuse it appears, and the less we seem able to act on what we know.

Lee Siegel. Harper's Magazine Oct 2015.



Photo: Nelly Le Comte

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going with the flow

ANDREW STOCKDALE

I heard this quote “work like you don’t need money.” To some this might seem a little unrealistic. Though in essence I get it, you’ve got to have your heart in it. I remember back when I was about 22 I moved down to Sydney and tried out a bit of busking at Central Station. I had lunch with my girlfriend Jude and she asked me what am I going to do and I remember saying, “This”. At the time it seemed like a bit of a smart arse comment, though in hindsight sometimes the brutal honest truth can seem a little ridiculous. I remember it got to a point where I wasn’t really looking for photography work or really taking it too seriously. I’d just find myself sitting on the couch playing guitar. From here on I sort of realised that if you keep doing something, instead of the thing that you’re supposed to be doing, then maybe that is the thing that you are supposed to be doing. I’ve always had a

guitar or a jam space of some description and it seemed like a habit I just couldn’t kick. Byron seems to attract a lot of free thinkers, free spirits and creative minds: essentially people who’ve made a conscious decision to sort of step out of another place or headspace and kind of contemplate what they really want from life. Personally, I think it takes a bit of independent thought to look around and realise that maybe the dream is here and the-one-size-fits-all module for life can change. Maybe you can wake up for a surf on a Monday, jam out in a studio for the rest of the day and fly out of Brisbane airport to tour all over the world ...sounds crazy but I can tell you first hand it does happen. There’s something energetically here that brings out a creative spirit in people. Last year I put out a Wolfmother record independently. I just uploaded it from my laptop and by the next day

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**TARMAC ADAM
(AUSTRALIAN BAND)**



it was in the top ten iTunes charts across the world. It was on about 300 blogs within two days; no publicist, no record label and no marketing. I just wanted to throw it out there and see how it would go. Maybe if I didn't live in such a relaxed environment I wouldn't be in the right headspace to take a chance like that. In Byron sometimes you feel like you can try out anything creatively speaking. This sometimes doesn't go down too well with the sticklers looking for something to complain about if anything challenges the norm. Packaging, presentation and crossing your t's and dotting your 'i's can be seen as the main thing, though I really think that the spirit of the creative venture is the main thing. These days it's nothing personal, it's the technology driving it. I remember thinking we were crazy just promoting a show through social media, now it's the way things are done. I mean the module for how everything is done is changing. I think artists should just embrace it. Attaching a dollar sign to everything is another thing. I remember at Uni,

I graduated from photography by doing a series of images using tin cans as cameras. I was this dude walking around with tin cans. I didn't even own a camera. Anyway, I won the national digital art awards and was interviewed on the triple j arts show about 10 years before Wolfmother started. Everything turned around in my course. I went from almost being kicked out to becoming a star student. You've got to have a sense of humour watching things turn around.

I remember thinking when I was eighteen I'd love to drop out and just hang in Byron and surf. Though somehow a lot of other things came up on the priority list. I studied photography in Melbourne, lived in Sydney for a while working as a photographer for about eight years, started the band Wolfmother, then pretty much toured off and on for ten years. Once the band took off we moved to Brisbane for a bit of family support just as our daughter was born, though after a few years the place just seemed a little limiting in some way. I can't quite put my finger

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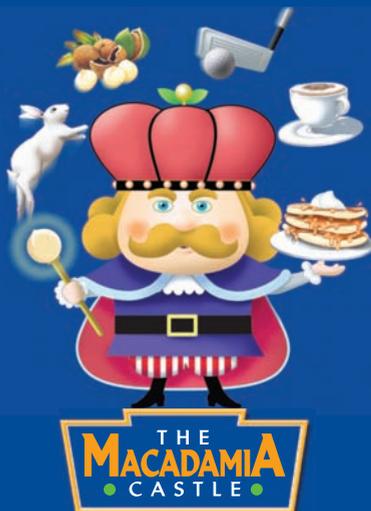
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on it, but I just found myself driving down to Byron all the time and at one point I sort of didn't drive back and then eventually everything else followed. The first six to eight months were a bit of an eye opener. There was a two week window where it seemed like all the regular faces moved elsewhere. We've been here for about four years and I have to say this is one of the most transient places I've lived in. The most consistent thing in Byron seems to be change, some for the better, some maybe not so much. I can see one consistency and that is the number of potholes seems to be increasing exponentially.

Andrew was born in Brisbane, studied Photography at RMIT, exhibited and worked as a photographer, started Wolfmother, won a Grammy, 3 Arias, Album of the year on Triple J, 7 songs charted in the hottest 100, toured around the world and made Byron Bay his home.



Photo: Nelly Le Comte

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Photo: Nelly Le Comte



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the worm is turning

HILARY BAIN

When we started out to make the documentary, *The Worm is Turning*, one of the first and most shocking discoveries we made was where pesticides and synthetic fertiliser come from. As Vandana Shiva (Indian scholar/activist), says "We're eating World War 2's leftovers!" The documentary reveals through historical archives how the industrial agribusiness system came about and how it was spread throughout the world.

India was one of the first countries via the Green Revolution in the '60s, to receive this 'new, modern agriculture', and it was "Green as opposed to red, India was not to go the way of China" according to Vandana Shiva. She claims every agency in India was against this, but it was nonetheless introduced, and Punjab, being the breadbasket of India, has been completely poisoned by this system. There's a train that leaves Punjab every evening nicknamed the 'cancer-train', because most of the people on the train have cancer and are going to Rajasthan to get treatment. As one organic farmer we interviewed said: "The soil is our mother, when our mother is ill we cannot maintain our health". We began to realise that the soil is key to everything regarding growing food - soil is the mother of nature.

We were happy to get out of Punjab and move on to a much more positive story further south in Andhra Pradesh. We arrived in Hyderabad, and made our way to a small village called Pastapur, to meet P.V. Satheesh, a founding member of the Deccan Development Society, an organisation that has helped thousands of poverty stricken Dalit women fertilise poor lands given to them by the government through land reform.

We arrived at the village, utterly exhausted and nutritionally deficient from being on the road in India for the previous two weeks, eating a diet of industrial dosas and idlis for fear of getting 'Delhi belly'. P.V. ushered us to chairs and asked

if we wanted lunch, and before we knew it, a tray full of millet and sorghum dishes were put onto our laps. This was our first taste of nutritionally dense and delicious food in India, and it was a lifesaver.

We were taken to fields outside the village where women were tending interspersed crops of millet, sorghum, sunflowers, pigeon peas and hibiscus. These women are completely independent from the market, as P.V. said: "You don't have to buy seed from the market, you don't have to buy fertiliser, and by and large these are pest-free crops so you don't have to use any pesticides. This is a farm-to-kitchen model, everything I need to eat I get from my farm, it gives you complete liberation from the market."

One of the women, Chandamma, a permaculture teacher and seedsaver, explained that they grow



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I am everything. Between these
two banks my life flows.*

NISAGADATTA BABA



a variety of millets, as some are medicinal, some do well with lots of rain and some do well with dry conditions, so no matter what weather they get, they'll always have something to harvest. Lesson one in food resilience.

This experience we had in Pastapur was so antithetical to everything that we understood about growing food. Most of what's available to eat, comes out of huge multinational supermarkets, attached to gigantic distributors, connected to huge factories packaging and bottling food and drink in mostly plastic, receiving their ingredients from giant corporate farms often in other countries.

Every step of the way, this centralised system requires fossil fuels. The pesticides and fertiliser are fossil fuel derivatives, and the huge trucks that transport all of this require fossil fuel, as do the container ships. How can this be the most productive and efficient way to grow and distribute food, as the big corporations involved in all of this, claim? How can they possibly be feeding the starving billions? Well these are the two pillars that the big agriculture corporations use as a justification for the deadly and centralized methods that they employ to grow food.

First and foremost, using the Pastapur women as an example, if they didn't have any land,

and a lot of the poor don't, (as many have been pushed off to create big corporate farms), they can't grow food. And, they certainly can't afford the corporate food. So they are not being fed by this big, centralised system. In fact this system is creating hunger. If we are to feed the starving and do it in a more productive and efficient way, then we need to localise agriculture and use ecological methods of growing food, as study after study from the UN has shown. You can't go against nature - eventually everyone will have to go organic!

If enough people around the world, who were able to make the choice, made the fundamental decision to change the way they eat; organic, nutritionally more dense food by supporting ecological farmers, we would not only be healthier ourselves, we would be contributing to a healthier environment. And as Byron resident, Helena Norberg-Hodge says in the film: "The entire military-industrial complex would change!"

Agriculture is the biggest activity on the planet, so when we choose where our food comes from, that choice goes a long way. Which system are you feeding when you feed yourself?

Hilary Bain was born in Zimbabwe, spent most of her life in California, watching and supporting the rise of one of the first organic farming movements. She's an artist concerned with the relationship between the powerful and the powerless, who lives in Byron Shire. thewormturning.com

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the power of story

JENNI CARGILL-STRONG

"The deepest crises experienced by any society are those moments of change when the story becomes inadequate for meeting the survival demands of a present situation." (Thomas Berry, 1988).

In 1962, Rachel Carson published her groundbreaking book, "Silent Spring", documenting the impact of insecticides like DDT, not only on the insects they were designed for, but on creatures higher up the food chain, like birds. It catalysed the birth of the environmental movement. Half a century later, people on a mass global scale are realising that we can no longer consume the bounty of nature without thought or consequence and that there is a fundamental flaw in the story of our dominant Western culture. Since the industrial revolution, we have been labouring under the belief that nature is a machine, which we are smart enough to control, outwit and constantly plunder. It is a suicidal story, because as we are discovering, nature is far more powerful than we imagined. Yet there is a silver lining of hope.

Naomi Klein, in her book and film, *This Changes Everything: Climate Change versus Capitalism*, argues that climate change may present "the catalyst to actually build the world that will keep us safe. The stakes are simply too high, and time too short, to settle for anything less." Klein documents a global "effervescence of rebellion."

Here in Byron Shire and in the wider Rainbow Region, that effervescence of rebellion has never been stronger. You may not see it as you wander through the main street of Byron, yet people here are doing much more than just rebelling: they are working on re-weaving the story of our culture and they have their shoulders to the wheels of change to build that world that will keep us safe.

Whenever major cultural shifts start fermenting, artists and creatives smooth the process by weaving the new story and projecting it

on the screen of the collective imagination with imagery, music and words. This helps us transition more confidently to that new way of being, because we have already seen it and rehearsed it in our imaginations.

A vivid demonstration of the spirit with which people in this region are building that world that will keep us safe developed when the NSW government allocated fracking licenses covering vast swathes of the state, including prime agricultural land. Mining company Metgasco gained an exploration licence on farming land in the heart of the Rainbow Region at a place called Bentley; fifty minutes from Byron Bay, ten minutes south of Lismore and not far from Terania Creek, where one of Australia's most successful environmental campaigns was fought and won back in 1979. It is greenie heartland. A camp was set up in February 2015 and grew in size until the license was temporarily revoked in that May. People from all over the Rainbow Region, including Byron Shire participated in and supported the blockade.

What unfolded in the successful four month campaign became referred to as 'The Bentley Effect', because anti-fracking campaigners around the world began taking notice of the smart, holistic strategies which were remarkably effective. The campaigners didn't just rebel, they told a new story and then they set about demonstrating that it was possible to live that story.

The storytellers of Bentley were a team of volunteer media people who worked around the clock creating a constant stream of press releases, stills and high quality, poignant short films. The clips were not only effective in educating locals to join the ranks of peaceful protectors, but also went viral on social media and began attracting global attention. The story they told was not just the impact on their own

It will pass whatever it is
GLORIA STEINEM



land and community, but the wider global story of a need for a different set of priorities and not just a different way of thinking but a different way of being.

Then the campaigners at Bentley set about living that story, demonstrating that it is possible to collaborate with people on a common cause even when your worldview differs. Green campaigners actively welcomed participation and guidance from Aboriginal elders and worked alongside farmers who were lifetime members of the conservative National party. Eventually, the local and national mainstream media stopped parroting the 'extremists' label given by the then NSW Energy Minister, and began using the name the activists had chosen, 'protectors' and created more balanced reports.

Elegant ideas brewed while people waited month after month for the police and the riot squad to try to break the blockade. One of those great ideas was to make our region energy self-sufficient. Two inspiring initiatives have already launched to this

end: a social enterprise called ENOVA Energy, a community owned retailing and installation business and a new Community-Owned Renewable Energy initiative in Mullumbimby (COREM). Both groups are working in cooperation and draw on successful models from other regions of the world. The Bentley protectors of this Rainbow Region, didn't just want to stop things, they wanted to create that world that will keep us safe.

This is what I love about living within the Rainbow Region. Not only is it filled with artists, creatives, healers and intellectuals, but also change-makers, visionaries and activists. In this region, if you are re-weaving the story of our culture or have your shoulder to the wheel of change, you feel that you not only have good company, you feel supported and encouraged.

Jenni Cargill-Strong is an award-winning storyteller. She teaches storytelling, runs various local story events, initiated Byron Bay on Foot: Stories of the Rainbow Region, participated in the Bentley Blockade and has lived in Mullumbimby for 15 years. www.storytree.com.au

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millennials' comment

DAVID KRIPPNER/CAITLIN ESPOSITO

It's easy to forget that Byron Bay's only a small town when we're swamped with tourists year-round. However, it's also hard to complain when Byron is the heart of our culture. Who doesn't love a Saturday at the beach, with families on the shore, and the quintessential surfers crowding the breaks at the Pass? Running off the beach, overloaded on vitamin D and making your way to the juice bar is an emblematic Byron experience.

The community spirit in Byron is second to none, as witnessed when we come together to object to proposals that threaten our unique way of life – the West Byron over-development, KFC and the rock wall, just to name a few. These may not be a concern for tourists, (they should be) but as young people, it is just as important to us as it was to previous generations to keep Byron the way it's famous for. We need progression without losing what we love.

We constantly see the great community attitude of young people through many organisations, least of which are our local schools that actively participate in events such as Clean Up Australia Day and Dunecare, looking after our environment, as well as a host of other community activities.

Byron is going through changes, and some of them are by people who do not give any thought to what young people think, when we are the very ones who are most affected by their decisions

on our future. For instance, many young locals love the beach, whether it's for surfing, bodyboarding, swimming, or just socially. It's also the main reason tourists visit, which provides vital income for our town. When our beaches are threatened by development we, being the main inheritors, must be involved and be a part of the process. Young people want to help make a difference. We must enhance the level of our political engagement.

It's a reality that many local kids are happy to move away to study at university and to start the rest of their lives somewhere else. Of course, it is inevitable that some will have to move away for travel, new experiences, jobs or further study. But after all of that, we need to ensure that young people in this town want to and are proud to call it home and come home one day.

The proposed West Byron development will rapidly increase the town's population. As we all know, services and activities for young people are stretched already, with schools awaiting much-anticipated funding to provide programs for students. What will be put in place to assist, or compensate, for the extra people, and how is it not going to change our town forever?

Being involved in the political scene is a responsibility and a privilege we enjoy in our country and young people must be involved to help shape their future.



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Culture is the
cement of democracy



Photo: Rusty Miller

We love the Bay, and we will be persistent in ensuring that young people will always be able to enjoy a sunset on the beach, without the shadow of a high rise behind our backs.

David Krippner has grown up in Byron Bay, and attended Byron Bay High School. He is involved in local community

and political groups and is back working in education at Byron Bay High School. He is studying for a Bachelor of Languages and Linguistics at Griffith University.

Caitlin Esposito was born and bred in Byron Bay and now studies a Bachelor of Laws/Legal and Justice Studies at Southern Cross University. Throughout her education she has actively participated in community activities and volunteering.



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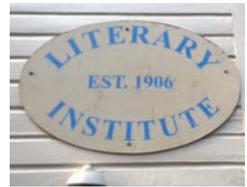
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BUILDING / DENTAL / SOLICITOR



heart of the bay

JANI COLLINS



The survey of the proposed village of Cavvanbah in 1884 by surveyor Poate, and the first official sale of town lots in 1886, followed by the opening of the jetty in 1888, saw the emergence of the village of Byron Bay. "As early as 1892 a group of concerned villagers and farmers set about the creation of a lifestyle that removed the frontier element from their daily lives. Six years after the sale of town lots they were looking towards the civilising influences that a School of Arts would bring. It may have had an uplifting of spirits but as shown elsewhere in this book life in Byron Bay was raw and unrefined." (Time and Tide, 2001)". Some things don't change.

To go about this lifestyle creation, a building was rented from the village blacksmith, on the terrace, behind the Pier Hotel. With 40 pounds raised, a more suitable timber building was

erected near the present community centre on Jonson St. This proved to be too small and was sold in 1905, with a new building erected in 1907, which is the current Community Centre site. This makes the site the only, and our oldest, continuous community asset in Byron Bay. The School of Arts was the focal point of the town hosting various activities/services: roller skating, dances, meetings, balls, billiards, amateur theatre, music recitals, the library, a church and a polling booth for elections. In 1910 The Imperial Picture Company began showing silent films every Wednesday and talking pictures were shown from the '30s until the late '70s. In 1913, a public meeting changed the name from The School of Arts to the Literary Institute.

In 1980 the Literary Institute trustees had a choice to restore or rebuild as the building was found to be in an advanced state of disrepair. The driving force to save the building was dedicated resident Jan Dawkins. Her concern at the lack of facilities in our town, particularly for young people, motivated her towards establishing a Community Centre in the Literary Institute. At a public meeting with over 100 people attending Jan garnered strong support of local residents, many who also donated money to begin the restoration.

In 1982, though major repairs had been undertaken, it was evident there was an urgent need for a whole new building to accommodate

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*Time you enjoy wasting
was not wasted.*

JOHN LENNON



the expanding community activities. "If ever a building had served a community well it was this one." (Time and Tide, 2001). In May that year Council allocated \$200,000 towards the construction of a new building on the site. Following a design competition auspiced by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1983, Architect Ian McKay was selected. However, the development did not go ahead at that time.

In 1987 Byron Shire Council licensed the Centre to manage the Byron Community Market. This allowed the Centre to be mostly self-funding, along with grants as they receive no ongoing funding from Federal, State or Local Governments. The markets continue today to be a main source of income for its community development activities and services.

Redevelopment plans for the building were renewed in earnest in 1994. Byron has always had a spirit of getting together for the benefit of the town. "The early townfolk of Byron Bay

were quite civic-minded and they believed in a policy of self-help." (Time and Tide, 2001). After a particular fundraising activity in 1920, the local paper summed it up, "This (the money) is splendid and wisely expended should make our seaside resort more than ever attractive to our numerous summer and holiday visitors." (Time and Tide, 2001). This civic-mindedness continues to this day.

The new and beautiful multi-purpose building is a blend achieved by the Architect Ian McKay (who died in 2015), which also met the objections by some in the community who felt that the wooden Jonson Street facade should be retained. At that time the old building had no first floor balcony over the Jonson St. footpath, and Ian included this in the reworked design, much to the benefit of the streetscape. The building was opened in December, 2002. Today, the Centre continues to be the heart of the town, still hosting a range of services and functions. Over the past 30 or so years the Centre has played a key role in



In Those Days: Stories my father told me. By Jan Hackett. e: janluci4@hotmail.com

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establishing many local community services. These include: emergency relief, a homeless drop-in centre, homeless and community breakfast, a local food bank, financial counselling, budget counselling, tax assistance, breast cancer support group, harmony cultural group, and a No Interest Loans Scheme. Additionally, the Centre complex hosts local organisations and incorporated the word, cultural, into its title bringing it back to its roots as a “civilising influence” as it hosts regular events.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY CENTRE... Byron Bay was “Cavvanbah”, a meeting place, to the Bundjalung and Arakwal, the area’s 22,000 year old residents. Their greeting “Jingi Walla” (Welcome), posted at the entry, is a sign of respect and friendship to our local Indigenous peoples.

6am: volunteers arrive for Bay FM 99.9 to entertain and inform; also volunteers for Liberation Larder to provide food for up to 100 people in need.

9am: staff and volunteers arrive to open the main office at 10.00am. Phones ring, appointments made, information on activities and local services provided. Meetings commence in rooms and spaces; seniors choir; seniors drumming circle in the Theatre; inquiries for the markets; the Theatre Box Office opens. People seeking assistance arrive, Mums and kids without housing, the vulnerable, the hungry, the homeless; travelers seeking information.

1pm: School kids rehearse in the Theatre; clients for the No Interest Loans Scheme; Emergency Relief clients assisted with bills and referral; Counselling by Interrelate workers; people meeting and discussing in the foyer, the garden, or the first floor Jonson Street verandah.

After the office closes at 4pm, then the bands or theatre performers bump in; the Theatre Technicians check sound and lighting.

5:30pm: Duty Officer, ushers and bar staff begin work. Patrons arrive for their experience of culture, entertainment or escape. Entertainment varies from Latin Festivals to films & the Byron International film festival to musicians like Katie Noonan & Marlon Williams, to ex- politician, always musician Peter Garrett, Kerry O'Brien

talking with Barry Cassidy on former PM Paul Keating and the Arts Classic.

At 11.30 the empty building is locked and the alarms are set for the following day.

Jani Collins: Social Scientist (Counselling and Community Development) Singer, has volunteered at the BCC for 30 years, is a member of the Committee of Management, Byron Shire Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Committee, The Easter Arts Classic Committee.

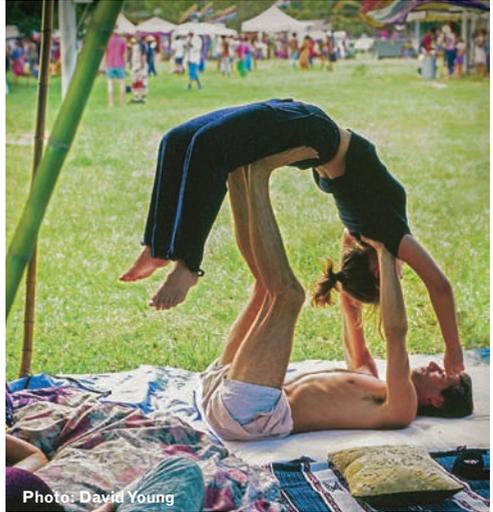


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evolveyogafestival.com.au

BRUNSWICK HEADS FISH AND CHIPS FESTIVAL - JANUARY

brunswickheads.org.au

BRUNSWICK HEADS KITES AND BIKES FESTIVAL - MARCH

brunswickheads.org.au

BLUESFEST - EASTER

bluesfest.com.au

BOOMERANG FESTIVAL BI-ANNUAL - EASTER

boomerangfestival.com.au

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bangalowbillycart.com.au

SPLENDOUR IN THE GRASS - JULY

splendourinthegrass.com

BYRON BAY WRITER'S FESTIVAL - AUGUST

byronbaywritersfestival.com.au

BANGALOW CLASSICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL - AUGUST

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byronbaysurffestival.com

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byronlatinfiesta.com.au

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mullummusicfestival.com

BANGALOW SHOW - NOVEMBER

bangalowshow.com.au

UPLIFT BYRON BAY - DECEMBER

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*The enemy is fear.
We think it is hate,
but it is fear.*

GHANDI



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Salumi Ocean Shores Quality Meats Rajah Rd. Ocean Shores www.salumi.com.au	6680 1577	24
Slice Pizzeria Shop 5 Cavanbah Arc beach end Jonson St www.slicepizzeria.com.au	6680 9357	34
Stone & Wood 4 Boronia Place Arts & Industry Estate www.stoneandwood.com.au	66855173	67
The Bread Social 11 Ewingsdale Road at The Farm www.thefarmbyronbay.com.au/community/the-bread-social	6684 7940	2
The Roadhouse cnr Bangalow & Cemetary Rds e: roadybookings@gmail.com		18
The Top Shop cnr Massinger & Carlyle Sts	6685 6495	19
Three Blue Ducks 11 Ewingsdale Rd. at The Farm www.threeblueducks.com/bronte/the-farm-byron-bay	6684 7795	2



GIFTS & SHOPPING

Bangalow Rug Shop 11 Byron St Bangalow www.orientalcarpets.com.au	6687 2424	39
Bay Gems Beach end Jonson St	6685 7437	47
Byron Photo Magic 4/108 Jonson St The Plaza www.photomagic.com.au	6685 5877	38
Eco Chopping Boards 14 Banksia Dr Arts & Ind Est www.ecochoppingboards.com.au	6680 8655	43
Eden at Byron Garden Centre 140 Bangalow Rd www.edenatbyron.com.au	6685 6874	48
Mary Ryan Books 27-31 Fletcher St. www.maryryan.com.au	6685 8183	33
Smith Optics / Scull Candy 1/56 Centennial Cct http://www.smithoptics.com.au/	6639 5555	28
Turning Point Books & Prints www.rustymillersurf.com	0428 847 390	17
Tequila Sunnies Byron Arcade 13 Lawson St www.tequilasunglasses.com	6685 6033	
Zentai Living 1/8 Banksia Dr Arts & Ind Est. www.zentai.com.au	6685 6722	51

HEALTH, BEAUTY & HOLISM

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Fusion Health www.fusionhealth.com.au	1800 550 103	3
Healthie Moves e: libbie@healthiemoves.com	0416 369 698	41
Kachina Hair 13 Lawson St, Byron Arcade	6685 5339	
Sanctum 5 - 9 Lucky Lane Billinudgel. www.sanctumaustralia.com	6680 3266	41
The Ginkgo Tree 503 Coolamon Scenic Dr Coorabell	6684 7910	32
The Spa & Wellness Centre Byron at Byron, 77-97 Broken Hd Rd www.thebyronatbyron.com.au	6639 2110	9

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Byron Bay Eyecare Stephen Brady 6 Lawson St www.byronbayeyecare.com.au	6685 7025	
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Ed Silk Byron Bay 2/6 Jonson St www.edsilkbyronbay.com.au	6680 8668	
Remax Coastal Real Estate	6685 3297	65

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not easily entered.

WILLIAM FINNEGAN



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Byron Community Centre 69 Jonson St www.byroncentre.com.au	6685 6807	
Byron Car Hire & Service Station NRMA @ the Railway crossing www.simmonsbyronbay.com.au	6685 6638	56
Fonebooth (mobile phone repairs) www.thefonebooth.com	6685 8727	26
Tricia Shantz TS Consultants Social Planning, Social Geographer / Planning / Research PO Box 851	0421 422 645	

SOLICITOR

BVK 8 Byron St www.bvk.com.au	6680 8522	53
Ramsey Moloney 1/6 Jonson St Fax: 6685 6516	6685 6400	18
Stuart Garrett 3/130 Jonson St www.splawyerssg.com.au	6639 1000	40

SURFING

C Skins 12/12 Lawson St www.c-skins.com.au	0412 081 546	30
Black Dog Surfing 4/5 11 Byron St. www.blackdogsurfing.com	6680 9828	38
Let's Go Surfing 84 Jonson St www.byronbay.letsgosurfing.com.au	6685 4878	54
Munro Surfboards 29 Acacia St, Arts & Ind Est www.munrosurfboards.com.au	6685 6211	7
North Coast Surfboards 1/29 Acacia St Arts & Ind Est www.vouchsurf.com & www.hawaiianprodesigns.com.au	6685 6896	6
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Byron Shire Council
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Byron Bay Visitor Centre
NRMA

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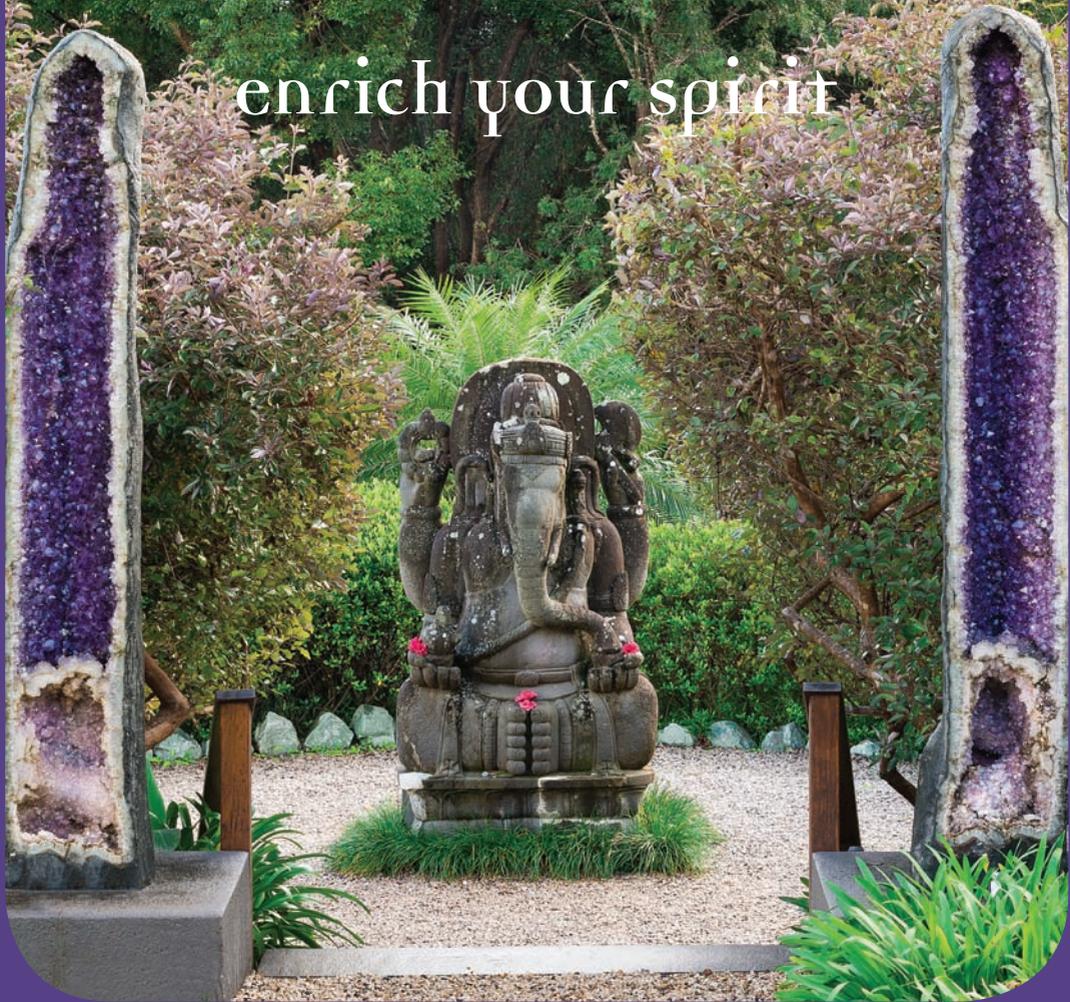
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