

NIMBIN COMMUNITY CENTRE PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2019

David Hallett

The Nimbin Community Centre (NCC) has had another busy year. During the past 12 months the NCC has managed several community projects for the village as well as projects contributing to the Centre itself. The Centre has liaised and advocated on behalf of the community with Lismore City Council (LCC), the traffic advisory committee and state and federal representatives. The centre has also completed a five yearly review of its aims and objectives.

The Light-up Nimbin under-awning and mural installation (funded by the NSW Community Safety Fund from the Department of Justice) has just been completed. The solar power and battery installation was provided by Nimbin's own Rainbow Power Company and the lighting installation by Fogg Productions (headed by the iconic Roger Foley-Fogg). This project was managed by NCC in partnership with Nimbin Chamber of Commerce, which contributed half of the funds from the special business rate levy. The Centre has received positive feedback since the lights were switched on, and we are currently discussing extending the project to cover both sides of Cullen St. The Centre has assisted two major mural projects in the village. The mural above Nimbin Visitor Information Centre and the recent mural above Lifestyle Real Estate, both completed by local artists Elspeth Jones and Julie De Lorenzo. Project funds were contributed by the Chamber of Commerce, Nimbin Advisory Group (NAG) and the building owners. The overall management was handled by the Community Centre. NCC is continuing to work with the Chamber on further mural projects.

In 2018 the Centre managed the repainting of the Allsopp Park mural by local Indigenous artists Gilbert Laurie, Lewis Walker and Oral Roberts with funds from LCC. Following discussions with the artists, the Centre applied for funds to create a dual languages sign to accompany the mural explaining the important dream time story represented in the mural. The Centre obtained funds via the Indigenous Arts and Languages program from the Commonwealth Department of Communication and the Arts. The grand unveiling of the mural during Nimbin's NAIDOC day celebrations in July was accompanied by moving speeches from Mayor Isaac Smith and the artists.

Also in 2018 the Centre received funds from Lismore Club Grants to create a terraced area outside the Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Service (NACRS) and to install a table and bench for both clients and community use. As the funds were not sufficient to complete the project, a widespread appeal resulted in kind generosity from the community, and the work can now be completed. The NCC continues to be grateful for the generosity and volunteer spirit of the Nimbin community and the Centre continues to thrive in spite of considerable government funding cuts which have seriously affected the Centre's budget in the past two years. The Centre cannot survive without the support of the community.

The Centre has made applications for an Aged Care car drop off platform for the NACRS service via the NSW Stronger Communities fund. This is a necessary and important improvement and the result of this application will be known in the new year.

The Centre continues to support cultural activities such as the Nimbin Flix film society as well as sponsoring the annual Nimbin Roots festival and the staging of the second annual Sticks and Stones sculptural exhibition. Moreover, the Centre grounds are available for casual hire for events, workshops, projects and classes that enrich and benefit the community.

The Centre's Management Committee met in September for its five yearly review of aims and objectives and to focus on the plans for the next five years. As well as management of tenancy and maintenance and improvement of buildings and grounds, the Committee has determined three major priorities. The first is to future proof the Centre against climate chaos. This includes increased water storage, alternative energy production and storage, insulating buildings, landscaping gardens to reduce water use, reducing the carbon footprint through improving management practices and engaging with the wider community regarding climate chaos and community action. The second priority is to support youth lead initiatives and projects such as the Nimbin Youth Film Festival, and enabling Centre facilities and grounds to be available for youth projects and events. The third priority is to support the Aboriginal Cultural centre to promote and facilitate cultural events and practices. This includes facilitating an indigenous music stage for the Nimbin Roots Festival, supporting the NAIDOC celebration and developing a reconciliation action plan for the Centre.

Under the guidance of the Centre's gardener, Robyn Berry, I would like to give sincere thanks to all who contribute to the centre, notably our NCC volunteers, Paul Simms, James Gardener and Donato Rosella. The Centre's gardens and grounds are currently looking great in spite of the ongoing harsh and dry weather and that is a testament to their good work. I would especially thank the staff of the NCC, our office coordinators and bookkeeper, Teresa Biscoe and Helen Lynne, maintenance coordinator Sam Herren and markets coordinator Steph Seckold. These people work tirelessly for the benefit for the NCC, and we are thankful to have such dedicated staff. I'd especially like to thank the diverse tenants and many hirers of the Centre for the widespread services they offer to the community and for their support of Centre projects. I also give special thanks to the Management Committee members who continue to participate in committee meetings and in the overall management of the Centre. The Committee continues to manage the NCC on behalf of Nimbin's community and is determined to manage and improve the centre for the benefit of the community into the future.