

Policy likely to set multiple-living standard

The State Government has agreed to consider establishing a State-wide policy which would permit multiple occupancy of rural land.

The Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Sheahan, announced this when he opened the Planning and Development Conference at Valla Park yesterday morning.

This was good news for multiple occupancy groups who have been pressing the Government to introduce a State-wide policy to overcome problems caused when individual councils prepare their own.

The Minister, who arrived by helicopter from Grafton, met a delegation from the Rural Resettlement Task Force, which is a non-profit group based at Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre.

They gave him papers on building standards, council ratings and a draft outline of a possible State-wide policy.

The members of the group who met Mr Sheahan were generally pleased with his response.

Opening the conference, Mr Sheahan said a State-wide policy would allow multiple occupancy in suitable areas, prohibit it in environmentally sensitive coastal areas and national parks and provide clear criteria for councils to ensure multiple occupancy had no adverse impact on the environment.

He said the proposals would be exhibited before a final policy was decided.

Cr Jim Lissaman, of Coffs Harbour Shire

Council, said that unless multiple occupancies "paid their way" on rates, councils would face an extra drain on their resources.

Cr Lissaman said it might be possible to base ratings on family groups rather than land.

In reply, Mr Sheahan said the Minister for Local Government, Mr Stewart, was examining the rating question.

"Planners have to recognise that multiple occupancy is here to stay and it has to be administered and regulated like other developments," Mr Sheahan said.

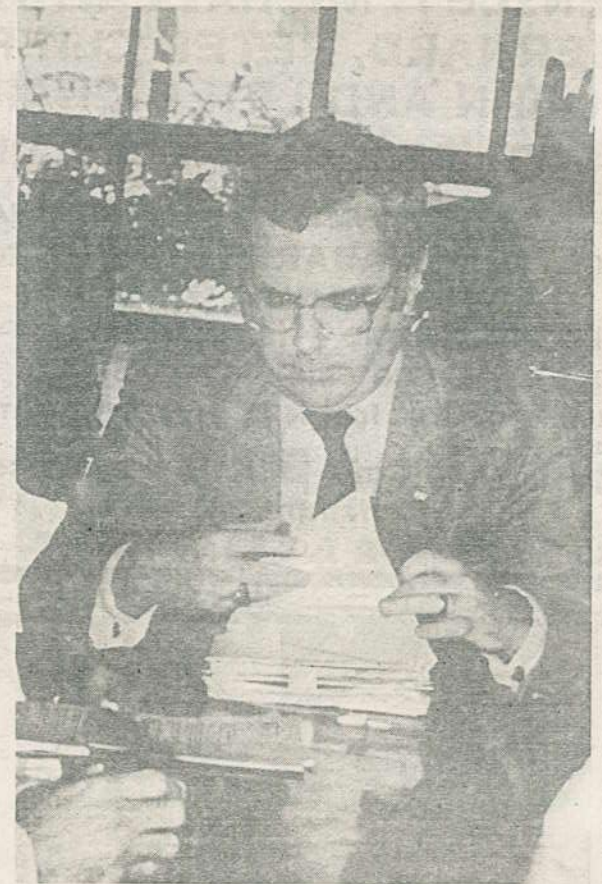
The Nambucca Shire President, Cr John Davies, welcomed Mr Sheahan to the shire and outlined some problems he believed had to be overcome in the planning field.

He said these included delays in having plans prepared; the cost of those plans and the time involved; the requirements that they be publicly exhibited twice and the volume of paperwork.

Cr Davies was also concerned that a departmental review of planning processes was happening without much consultation with local government, but, he said that in the past six months, there had been some improvement in the way the system worked.

Mr Sheahan, noting that he had been the minister for six months today, said the review had addressed the problems mentioned, and there had been discussion with the Local Government Association.

He said he hoped a draft of the proposal for amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act soon would be available for public comment.



COFFS
ADVOCATE

FRIDAY

10/8/84

N.S. 19 July 1985

Multiple-occupancy study 'chance to clear the air'

Multiple-occupancy residents in the Lismore City Council area would view with interest the public inquiry into multiple-occupancy developments in the Tweed Shire, the secretary of the Rural Resettlement Task Force, Mr Dave Lambert, said yesterday.

The task force is a 'think tank' representing multiple-occupancy interests.

It is actively involved in trying to interest the Government in promoting and assisting the growth of sustainable rural communities.

Although the Tweed inquiry stemmed from specific concerns about commercially-orientated developments, the terms of reference would affect all multiple occupancies, Mr Lambert said.

The inquiry was announced this week by the NSW Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Carr.

The inquiry had been requested by the Tweed Shire Council.

The Shire President, Cr Max Boyd, had said that speculators were cashing in on commune-style developments and 'undermining the concept of hamlet-style development which was intended for low-income people seeking an alternative lifestyle'.

Mr Lambert said that the Rural Resettlement Task Force welcomed the inquiry as a chance to 'clear the air'. His organisation would seek leave to appear before the inquiry.

"It's true that on the Tweed there have been more commercial-type developments, differing in style from those in the Lismore area," Mr Lambert said.

"Around Lismore, the multiple-occupancies have provided small living lots, with a large proportion retained for common usage.

"On the Tweed, some developers are wanting to take a block of land and just carve it all up."

He said that many

long-established multiple-occupancies were upset by this commercial-style development because it altered the nature of multiple-occupancies, pushed up land prices and caused increasing council demands on residents.

Mr Lambert brought attention to an incorrect statement in the Australian Associated Press report announcing the Tweed inquiry.

The report said that 'State legislation providing for communal-type development eliminates the need to comply with conditions normally imposed on rural subdivisions, such as building codes and provision of services'.

"There are no exemptions for multiple-occupancies. The same building code — Ordinance 70 — applies to all developments in New South Wales, and local councils have a big say in the provision of services," Mr Lambert said.

The development control planner for the Tweed Shire

Council, Mr Jim Glazebrook, said that the council had called for the inquiry because it was 'anxious for better guidelines on multiple-occupancy developments'.

'Misleading, immoral'

"Controls are inadequate and we feel our hands are tied," Mr Glazebrook said.

Some developers had given prospective buyers 'misleading and immoral' advice.

Examples were developers accepting money before approval was granted, sites sold off the plan, sites sold even before a development application was made, and buyers being told that developments were 'ready to go' when they were not.

Mr Glazebrook said that the Tweed Shire Council was not opposed to multiple-occupancies.

"We just want everyone to know where they stand," he

said.

The town planner for the Lismore City Council, Mr Peter Reynders, said that his council was involved in continuing discussions with multiple-occupancy representatives and the Rural Resettlement Task Force.

"We are looking at friction points and have made certain progress in understanding the problems. But we have a long way to go," Mr Reynders said.

He said that multiple-occupancies could differ greatly on scale: "They may be from four homesites to 120. And when you realise that a village such as Nimbin has slightly more than 100 houses, you can appreciate the planning problems," he said.

There were advantages and disadvantages in a strict code and the council dealt with development applications on merit, within statutory frameworks.

MULTIPLE-OCCUPANCY INQUIRY BEGINS

The Tweed Shire Council was the first party to present a submission to the Commission of Inquiry into multiple-occupancy which opened yesterday at Murwillumbah.

The Commission is being chaired by Mr John Woodward, who was appointed by the NSW Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Carr, to inquire into all aspects of multiple-occupancy.

The Tweed Shire Council submission was presented by the shire clerk, Mr Jim Nixon, the shire engineer and town planner, Mr Peter Border,

the deputy town planner, Mr Gary Smith, and the council's chief health and building surveyor, Mr Ken Forster.

Mr Smith dealt with road improvements and de facto subdivisions which he said could be sold by developers, with the result that the system could be abused.

Mr Border said the Tweed Shire Council had sought a road contribution of \$2500 for each additional dwelling on a multiple-occupancy development.

He said the council required payment before any building plans were approved.

The council was continuing discussions with those applications approved in the shire, and the question of a road contribution had not been resolved.

Mr Border said the council did not accept that multiple-occupancy was only for low-cost housing or alternative lifestyle living.

There was a demand on

services.

He told Mr Woodward that the collection of the \$2500 contribution had created a difficult situation.

The council had arrived at that figure through a series of exercises, and it was considered an average figure.

Replying to Mr Woodward, Mr Border said none of the developments so far approved in the shire had been connected to water or sewerage services, nor were they within a reasonable distance of those services.

But for approval, they had to comply with the council's rules regarding those types of services.

Mr Nixon dealt with

the rating aspects of multiple-occupancy contained in the submission, and Mr Forster told of the number of so-called illegal dwellings, estimated at 150, in the shire.

Blanket approval

He said any order to demolish the 'illegal buildings' would cause hardship, and any blanket approval for 'illegal buildings' would have to apply to the whole shire — not just those in multiple-occupancy situations.

Anything less than blanket approval could lead to claims of discrimination, he said.

Mr Forster said some forms of building were not

covered by the Act, and there was a review needed of that.

He said the disposal of siltage and night soil in water catchment areas caused problems, and there had been outbreaks of giardia.

Mr Woodward also was told in the submission of the effect of multiple-occupancy on surrounding residents, claims of discolouration of water supplies because of road works, and land clearing by bulldozers.

There also was increased traffic on shire roads which existing residents claimed was a danger.

Mr Woodward asked the council representatives

if it was a fact that there could be siltation problems of water courses through normal rural activity.

Mr Nixon said inspection would show a different problem in this case.

The Northern Rivers County Council's submission was presented by its deputy chief engineer, Mr R Stillman, and Mr Trevor Gilson of the council's Murwillumbah office.

They said that significant implications could come about with multiple-occupancy development and that would involve access to powerlines for maintenance or extensions.

He said the county council should control the extension of electricity supply despite the alternative power sources used in some developments.

Mr Woodward was told that if the power supply was not made available initially, it would become much dearer to extend the supply later.

Replying to Mr Woodward, Mr Stillman said none of the five multiple-occupancy developments approved in the Tweed Shire were connected to the power supply.

He said major augmentation work was required for planned major strata title development at Mebbin Springs, near Uki, where there were to be 99 potential home sites.

While there was no demand for power services yet, there could be in the future, he said.

The Department of Planning and Environment's submission was introduced by Ms Jane Stanley, who said the department would be making an additional submission during the inquiry.

She dealt with the background of the State Government's draft policy for multiple-occupancy which was under public review.

She told of the department's involvement with multiple-occupancy applications before the Tweed Shire Council and how it had requested the inquiry.

Commissioner wants to inspect hamlet sites

Commissioner John Woodward has expressed a desire to inspect so-called illegal dwellings associated with multiple-occupancy and hamlet developments in Tweed Shire.

He is presiding at a Commission of Inquiry into multiple-occupancy which opened yesterday in the Murwillumbah Civic Centre.

The inquiry is expected to last a week, with more than 40 submissions to be dealt with.

The Lismore City Council, Kyogle Shire Council and the Northern Rivers County Council are among those with submissions to be presented to the inquiry.

Ald Mac Nicolson (Lismore City Council) also will present a private submission.

State Government instrumentalities to make submissions will include the Department of Planning and Environment (two), the Soil Conservation Service, the Department of Local Government, and the Department of Agriculture.

Wide terms

Commissioner Woodward said yesterday that because the terms of reference were so wide, it could be the end of the year before his report was ready for submission to the Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Carr, who ordered the inquiry at the request of the Tweed Shire Council.

Mr Woodward said arrangements for inspections of approved hamlet developments, those not approved and some pending also would be arranged during the week.

He said the first of these might be today, with others tomorrow.

Mr Woodward said that he had no connection with any government department nor with councils, nor with any other party seeking to make a submission.

Name released

Police yesterday released the name of a medical student who was killed in a head-on collision near Lismore on Monday.

He was Glen Alan Pearson, 23, of the Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick, Sydney, died when the car he was driving was involved in the collision in Wyrallah Road, near Monaltrie Hill.

'Scarecrow' makers confident

By Staff Reporter RUSSELL ELDRIDGE

The manufacturers of the electronic scarecrow pest deterrent are confident that their product will prove itself in the coming flying fox season, despite continued lack of official recommendation and questions in Federal Parliament about the device.

In addition, the manufacturers, Hi-Tec Control Systems of Goonellabah, still await the outcome of police investigations into the activities of an alleged international con-man who reportedly defrauded the company of \$100,000.

The Member for Richmond, Mr Blunt, has been pursuing the fraud matter with the Minister for Immigration, Mr Hurford, because the alleged con-man was deported while under police investigation.

Mr Blunt also has raised with the Minister for Tourism, Mr Brown, the circumstances under which the scarecrow was displayed at the Australian pavilion at Expo 85 in Japan.

Mr Blunt drew his attention to a magazine article which doubted the technical ability of the scarecrow.

Meanwhile, the general manager of Hi-Tec, Mr Ken Hudson, said yesterday that his company was co-operating with the NSW Department of Agriculture for a full season of evaluation trials in the Lismore and Coffs Harbour districts.

It has been a rough run for the company which started production in a glow of confident publicity less than two years ago.

The device had caught the imagination of the Federal Minister for Science, Mr Jones, and the NSW Minister for Industry and Decentralisation, Mr Bedford.

The device attracted \$200,000 loan from Mr Bedford's department, and the scarecrow subsequently was chosen for display at Expo 85.

But since then, Hi-Tec has had to weather the incident involving the alleged fraud, disputed claims about the scarecrow's technology, and some grower resistance.

The Department of Agriculture has

not recommended the device, but Hi-Tec is hoping to convince its officials this growing season.

The latest Department of Agriculture Press release on flying foxes concentrates on wire barriers and complete orchard netting.

"While orchardists throughout the coastal belt of New South Wales once more brace themselves against the onslaught of the flying fox, we might take a moment to consider the effectiveness of last season's tactics," the Livestock Research Officer (vertebrate pests), Mr David Robinson, said.

"As usual, the stonefruit growers used every available weapon, from fishing nets to flashing lights, from the ancient ruse of burning sulphur to the latest technology in ultrasonics.

"The philosophy behind these strategies is that once the bats have landed in the fruit trees, nothing will shift them.

"There seems to be a degree of truth in this, but the theory is not helped much by the observation that nothing is very effective at stopping them landing in the trees either."

Mr Robinson then listed the success of overhead wires and netting and detailed new netting materials available.

He ended by saying: "The chances of bats getting through these nets would appear to be remote. But they are such cunning creatures that doubts must remain in the minds of those with experience of these marauders."

Mr Hudson said yesterday he was 'very happy' with sales of the scarecrow.

"If it was not commercially viable, we wouldn't be in business," he said.

Asked about the problems in establishing the device's credibility, he said: "That's all history now."

"Obviously we would have liked more ready market acceptance, but it's a new product and you have to expect slow acceptance."

"We're convinced of its effectiveness."

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COMMISSIONER OPENS INQUIRY



● Commissioner John Woodward during yesterday's first day of hearings in the inquiry into multiple occupancy.

Inspection of sites arranged

Commissioner John Woodward has expressed a desire to inspect so-called illegal dwellings associated with multiple occupancy and hamlet developments in Tweed Shire.

He is presiding at a Commission of Inquiry into multiple occupancy which opened at Murwillumbah Civic Centre yesterday.

The inquiry is expected to last for the week with more than 40 submissions to be dealt with.

Commissioner Woodward said that because the terms of reference were so wide it could be the end of the year before his report was ready for submission to the Minister for Environment and Planning, Bob Carr, who ordered the inquiry at the request of Tweed Shire Council.

Mr Woodward said arrangements for inspections of approved hamlet developments, those not approved and some pending would also be arranged during the week.

He said the first of these might be today with others on Thursday however, this would be organised through the

council who made the first submission to the inquiry yesterday.

Mr Woodward said that he had no connection with any government department or with council or with any other party seeking to make a submission.

After reporting his findings to Mr Carr his report would be publicly released and a copy forwarded to all parties who have made submissions.

After outlining the terms of reference Mr Woodward said in proposing to make the inspection in company with the parties concerned any member of the public who wants to be present would be welcome.

He said all proceedings of the inquiry would be open to the public.

The downstairs meeting room of the Murwillumbah Civic Centre was filled to capacity for the opening session of the inquiry.

Some representatives of the 41 submissions were present.

Mr Woodward said the inquiry was to be conducted in four sessions with preliminary matters and applications by parties followed by primary submissions.

Each party could read its submission and unless excused should be in attendance.

He said because of the wide terms of reference there could be gaps of information or additional information required.

He proposed at the conclusion of the hearing this week to adjourn for a month or so, make a preliminary assessment of the submissions and then reconvene to hear submission in reply or obtain any additional information needed.

Mr Woodward said departmental or council representatives could make submissions and be excused provided

they left a telephone number where they could be contacted.

He said questions relating to any of the submissions would be accepted in written form.

Answers should also be in writing and handed to the relevant party and a copy to the registrar.

Mr Woodward said opportunity would be offered all parties to seek clarification of submissions.

Mr Woodward said all relevant materials for the inquiry were to be in writing and documents were available for public viewing by arrangement with the registrar during the inquiry.

The inquiry will open each day at 9.30 am.

Mr Woodward said all parties, whether they were legally represented or not would be treated on an equal footing.

All parties would be afforded the opportunity of presenting their submissions and putting their views and of replying to the submissions made by others.

Council presents views

Tweed Shire Council was the first party to make a submission to the Commission of Inquiry into multiple occupancy which opened at Murwillumbah yesterday.

The submission was put by shire clerk Jim Nixon, engineer and town planner

Peter Border, deputy town planner Gary Smith and chief health and building surveyor, Ken Forster.

Mr Smith dealt with road upgradings and de facto subdivisions which he said could be sold off by developers and this could lend the system to abuse.

Mr Border said Tweed

Shire Council had sought a road contribution of \$2500 for each additional dwelling on a multiple occupancy development.

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approved in the shire and the question of a road contribution hadn't been resolved.

Mr Border said council didn't accept that multiple occupancy was only for low cost housing or alternative lifestyle living.

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that the collection of the \$2500 contribution had created a very difficult situation.

Replying to Mr Woodward, Mr Border said none of the developments so far approved in the shire had been connected to water or sewerage services nor were they within a reasonable distance of those services.

However, for approval they had to comply with council's rules regarding those type of services.

Mr Nixon dealt with the rating aspects of multiple occupancy contained in the submission and Mr Forster told of the number of so-called illegal dwellings and said there was an estimated 150 of these in the shire.

He said any order to demolish the "illegal buildings" would obviously cause hardship and any blanket approval for "illegal buildings" would have to apply to the whole shire not just those in multiple occupancy situations.

Mr Woodward was also told in the submission of the affect of multiple occupancy on surrounding residents, claims of discoloration of water supplies because of road works and land clearing by bulldozers.

Mr Woodward asked the council representatives wasn't it a fact that there could be siltation problems of water courses through normal rural activity.

Mr Nixon said inspection would show a different problem in this case.

The Northern Rivers County Council's submission was presented by its deputy chief engineer Mr R. Stillman and Trevor Gilson of the Murwillumbah office.

Woodward suggests shire land survey

Commissioner John Woodward has suggested that the Department of Environment and Planning and Tweed Shire Council make a survey of land available in the shire suitable for multiple occupancy.

He made the comment when winding up the first day of the Commission of Inquiry into multiple occupancy which is being held at Murwillumbah.

Mr Woodward said that a list of areas he intended to visit would be prepared and these would most likely be made tomorrow.

Nine of the 41 submissions before the inquiry were put to Mr Woodward yesterday.

These were by:

- Tweed Shire Council.
- Department of Environment and Planning.
- Northern Rivers County Council.
- Kyogle Shire Council.
- Barbara Downs, Viridian, Urliup.
- John Weller, solicitor.
- Nullum Co-operative Society Ltd.
- Brown and Pluthero, Jim Whitton Ducat Park.
- Couchy Creek Co-operative.

Mr Weller said in his official capacity in the past four years he would have had 750 people making

inquiries, complaints, or asking questions about multiple occupancy in Tweed Shire.

He said he represented the five that were approved and knew there were about 500 people in the shire living "illegally" with development applications prepared and not yet lodged with the council.

In about 80 percent of the cases the aims of these people was quite clear.

They wanted:

- a) To live in harmony with the environment.
- b) They wanted to obtain legal building permits and they found communication with the council to be difficult.
- c) There was a growing trend to want proprietorship within the land.
- d) They wanted to be able to upgrade their temporary dwellings or "illegal" dwellings within their limited finances without contributing greatly to the council such as through the proposed road levy.

He told Mr Woodward that conditions for multiple occupancy were far more stringent in the shire than for rural subdivision.

He claimed the council hadn't recognised the need for low cost housing and continually chopped and changed its requirements.

Mr Weller said there should be greater injection of government funds into road improvements.

Mary Lee Connery for the Nullum Co-operative, Fernvale, said it had been formed eight years ago and she had lived there for four

There were nine dwellings on the property.

It felt that council hadn't fully implemented the spirit of the low cost housing act.

She said multiple occupancy had been of benefit to the Tweed Valley and hopefully the inquiry would re-open the lines of communication.

Jim Whitton of Ducat Park agreed there had to be some contribution to services and its application was one of those pending.

He said Ducat Park appeared to lend itself to be ideal for that type of development and could grow "anything" in its red soil.

There were no objections to the proposal when it was advertised and he would welcome an inspection of the property by Mr Woodward.

Couchy Creek Co-operative in its submission said that the property had five houses but the owners had no title to the land because it was caught up in a probate situation and therefore couldn't get a development application from council.

There was no subdivision of the property for financial gains and the residents were also worried about land tax because of the tremendous increase in land values.

Commission
of Inquiry

DAY 1

Survey
gauged
work
level

The first one of the services provided retail and commercial businesses in the Tweed area today, as parties are handed information and paper by Promotions Association Limited.

During the first all Tweed Heads, Tweed, West Tweed, Banora Point will be asked to enter for a directory being funded by the Heads Promotions Corporation.

An employment survey will also be conducted to estimate number of people employed in various categories.

The Coolangatta/Tweed Promotions Association's secretaries will be delivering questionnaires and collecting them the following day.

Although all businesses are expected to receive the business directory application proprietors are asked to contact the committee the Coolangatta/Tweed Promotions Association if they don't receive one.

Once published the directory will be distributed to households in the area as a first step in the corporation's ongoing promotion of the local shop locally.

It will also be distributed to tourist places such as motels and hotels so local business names and phone numbers are at the fingertips of holidaymakers.

Promotions Corporation committee member Bill Brown said the project is giving business people of the area the opportunity to promote their businesses through this unique form of localised directory.

He urged proprietors to decide which business category they wish to be placed under and promptly fill out the form ready for collection by the committee.

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DAILY NEWS, Wednesday, October 2, 1980

Action group puts case to inquiry

Commission of Inquiry

DAY 2

The Commission of Inquiry into Multiple Occupancy at Murwillumbah yesterday was told that proposed developments on the Urliup Road were considered to be de facto rural subdivision applications.

The claim was by the Bilambil, Urliup and Carool Residents Action Group which presented a submission to the inquiry.

It was given by Kevin Tasker who told Commissioner John Woodward that the group had been formed this year after three MO proposals based on Urliup Road raised the ire of residents.

One was for 15 homesites which was twice refused by Tweed Shire Council.

Another was for 31 homesites and the reasons for refusal were the condition of the road.

The second was now subject of an appeal and the third application was for 16 homesites and council had deferred a decision on it pending the outcome of the inquiry.

The group supported its submission with a video movie viewed by Mr Woodward yesterday afternoon.

He said the developments had

caused siltation of Bilambil Creek and council had placed stop-work notices on them.

The residents were most concerned that any increased traffic would place a great burden on what was already a narrow winding road.

He said while the video was being taken this aspect was emphasised when there was almost an accident.

Mr Tasker told Mr Woodward that most people involved with the group lived on farming properties.

Their major concern has been the bulldozing of rainforests for de facto developments.

He also referred to a development at Tomewin which council had reported had destroyed valuable stands of trees.

Mr Tasker said little notice has been taken of accepted guidelines in steep country, causing water purity problems among other things.

He said speculators were moving in on MOs and said it had earlier been stated at the inquiry that prices of blocks in MO developments had gone up to \$15,000 or \$20,000.

It was well known those in the Urliup area were as high as \$45,000.

One had been sold to a well known Australian who was probably a millionaire for that amount, taking the blocks right out of the low cost housing structure.

Mr Tasker said the group believed that the draft policy for MO didn't have enough controls written into it to stop rural land abuse.

He said the council had difficulty in assessing MO applications and before any were processed, State organisations with expertise should consider them and cover all aspects.

At the moment the council had to take at face value what was put before it and this had created many problems.

The possible solution to the road contribution debate would be zoning of areas where MO could be developed and zoning by-laws applied in many other parts of the shire.

He said if the three had gone ahead there would be an additional 46 families living in the area.

This would place a burden on the schools as well as the road and a larger school bus would be required.

The council had estimated to upgrade the road would cost \$783,000 to accommodate one of the proposed developments.

Rating was also considered inequitable for MO.

The group asked that remedial measures be undertaken to protect any environmental action.

Task force warns of rating problems

The Commission of Inquiry into Multiple Occupancy being held at Murwillumbah was told yesterday that any legislation to change the basis of rating to one of a user pay principle would be a Pandora's box of monumental proportions.

This was claimed in a submission to Commissioner John Woodward put forward by the Rural Settlement Task Force.

The submission asked what rate would users of heavy vehicles pay on other rural properties?

Will clubs and hotels be rated differently from other commercial business because they generated a greater usage of roads and need more community services such as police and medical facilities to cope with the side effects of their activity.

The submission put forward by Peter Hamilton and Dave Lambert said that the task force was a non profit community-based association seeking to promote the interests of rural resettlement in the form of MO.

It understood that the findings and recommendations by the Commissioner were likely to be reflected in the final wording of the State policy and also in rating.

It was the task force's view that there frequently appeared to be basic differences in planners' expectations, values and attitudes re the expected and/or desirable development in the long term and those of new settlers.

Frequently planners appeared to take the worst scenario as the basis for justifying heavy road upgrading conditions.

Alternatives that might be considered in the regard are:

- That where upgradings is borne by the development the repayment be made on a proportional basis if and when other development occurs which uses the same road.

- Making that as a condition of DA approval that no upgrading will take place at council cost unless and until there are a stipulated number of actual or proposed road users.

The task force was opposed to any open ended situation which may have the result of an MO

application double paying for services or facilities simply because there are these two avenues under which council may seek a contribution.

The association can see no reason why people living in a hamlet development should be treated differently from people living in a block of flats or units, people living in granny flats, even perhaps a substantial number of people, whether related or not, living in a single dwelling.

It opposed at this time any proposal to amend the existing legislation with a view to introducing either a head tax, dwelling tax or separate tax on improved valuations with respect to MO.

The only equitable and realistic method to make the user pay for road use was through petrol tax.

Short of this it is approved the present situation where the Grants Commission was making funds available to those councils who have a population increase due in part to MO settlement.

The association was of the view that:

- Existing illegal developments should be afforded the opportunity of legalising their situation subject to the provisions of the draft State Environmental Planning Policy.

- Speeding the implementation of alleged pending amendments to a section of the Local Government Act to provide recognition of buildings constructed without prior approval.

- Supporting the introduction of licensing of caravan parks and camping grounds as announced by the Minister for Local Government Kevin Stewart in August this year.

- Supporting the views that an owner, or part-owner of a property when residing on the property is not required to obtain a moveable dwelling licence.

The submission also stated that the potential adverse impact on other residents in the area could be diminished by:

- The planting of trees, shrubs, barner grass, etc.
- Effective and sensitive siting of buildings and other development.

- Council acting in the role of a friendly adviser in the formulation of proposals.

- The quick implementation of the Draft SEPP which would have the effect of allowing such development to be spread out into suitable areas of the State as opposed to being restricted to a very small and sometimes unsuitable locality.

Hamlet sites concern Soil Conservation

The Soil Conservation Service of NSW is concerned about the site of any proposed multiple occupancy development.

This was stated at yesterday's hearing of the Commission of Inquiry into multiple occupancy at Murwillumbah by Bruce Hungerford who was presenting the service's submission to the inquiry.

He said it was concerned with:

- Action that anticipates development approval by works such as clearing land; road building and the construction of buildings.

- Adverse impacts of individual MO proposals on other residents in the vicinity.

- To suggest means to overcome the problems and any others that might be identified by the commission.

All these were terms of reference.

He said the service was concerned that the Tweed Valley, being a high rainfall area, had a high erosion problem on the steeper slopes and they were mainly the proposed site for MO.

There should be measures to protect soil erosion and he referred to the affects of a development at Tomewin.

The service believed land should be used to its capabilities and MO should be on land which was regarded as the lower range for agricultural use.

Any MO should have appropriate soil erosion measures taken.

The rural capabilities of the shire had been mapped and this should be in conjunction with MO applications.

Erosion worries service

He said the service had provided information for two MO developments and also on road construction for a Tomewin development.

The effect on tree removal in catchment areas and along water courses was also referred to in the submission and he told Mr Woodward that there had been several actions taken regarding breaches.

This had included court action and the requirement for remedial action to be taken.

The service believed that all agricultural areas classed 1, 2 and 3 should be retained for permanent agricultural use.

Land use principles should be applied to any MO application.

The advice of the service should be obtained by applicants.

He said MO did have less impact on the land than other forms of development and this had been his experience at Lismore, Kyogle and now the Tweed.

But they were frequently located on steep slopes which had been previously well timbered or used as low grazing areas.

Internal roading also created problems for potential soil erosion.

He said the council did apply standard but there was scope for further control as far as

soil erosion was concerned.

Solicitor John Weller told Mr Woodward that with the approval of five multiple occupancy developments the flood-gates virtually opened for this type of development in Tweed Shire in 1984-85.

He said a lot of people had been sitting in the wings waiting for something to happen.

Mr Weller said that some had been living as permanent residents in caravan parks.

Some people had spent more money on their temporary dwellings because they couldn't get any leadership on what was required for an MO application.

There now appeared to be a compromising attitude towards council contributions.

A rural road levy would be more appropriate for subdividers and a minimum rate levy for MO.

Mr Weller said in 1984-85 new applicants were faced with the prospect of upgrading council's roads and one has been asked to upgrade a tourist road.

He said he personally wasn't against de facto subdivisions, provided they were environmentally sound.

Mr Weller said he could understand the need to upgrade Urliup Road, but if the NSW Government supported low cost housing he would like to see it join with the council to see if there were any other grants available for the upgrading of roads to serve those low cost housing areas.



● Work continues on the huge catamaran.

Launch approaches for catamaran

Last-minute fitting out is being undertaken on this 25-metre steel-hulled catamaran before its scheduled launching in Currumbin Creek later this month.

The catamaran is the first of several Currumbin Engineering is hopeful of building to secure the future of the firm. The firm will construct a special ramp

in Winders Park to launch the Southport-designed vessel in about three weeks time.

Currumbin Engineering has been commissioned to build trawlers in the past but this is its first catamaran.

Catamarans have been built to the same design in overseas and other Australian boatyards.



96th YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Daily News

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SIR JOH SNUBS SUGAR DEAL

BRISBANE: The Federal and State aid for the NSW sugar industry would not put pressure on Queensland's position, Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen said yesterday.

Sir Joh said the NSW Government was putting in only \$4 million over three years while Queensland was sticking to its position that the Federal Government should be providing all the aid the industry needs.

"The sugar industry in New South Wales is only the tail end of the industry, the main part of course is in Queensland," Sir Joh said.

On Tuesday NSW Premier Neville Wran announced agreement to a package put together by Federal Primary Industry Minister John Kerin, which included price support, rural adjustment and research.

Sir Joh said yesterday there would be no change to the Queensland attitude that Canberra would have to pay the lot.

"The Commonwealth Government are an outrageous Government," Sir Joh said.

"They gave the Labor States hundreds of millions of dollars at the last Premiers' conference and took it off us.

"It's nothing short of scandal.

"We are supporting very heavily the Labor States, but that's something that will be changed at the next Federal election, if I'm still alive."

Sir Joh said Mr Kerin could 'jump in the lake' again with his stand on aid.

"He can jump in two lakes or even three lakes if he likes, his threatening won't make any difference," he said.

"They've got to play their part and

Queensland won't pay half costs

they can't get out of it," the Premier said.

Sugar farmers from Mossman to Beenleigh will gather in Townsville next week to determine what amount of change they will accept for their industry.

Queensland Canegrowers' Council spokesman Bill Kerr said 30 representatives would discuss industry deregulation at the meeting on Wednesday.

The meeting's decision would be reported to State Primary Industry Minister Neil Turner on October 14, the deadline set at talks between the Government and cane industry representatives.

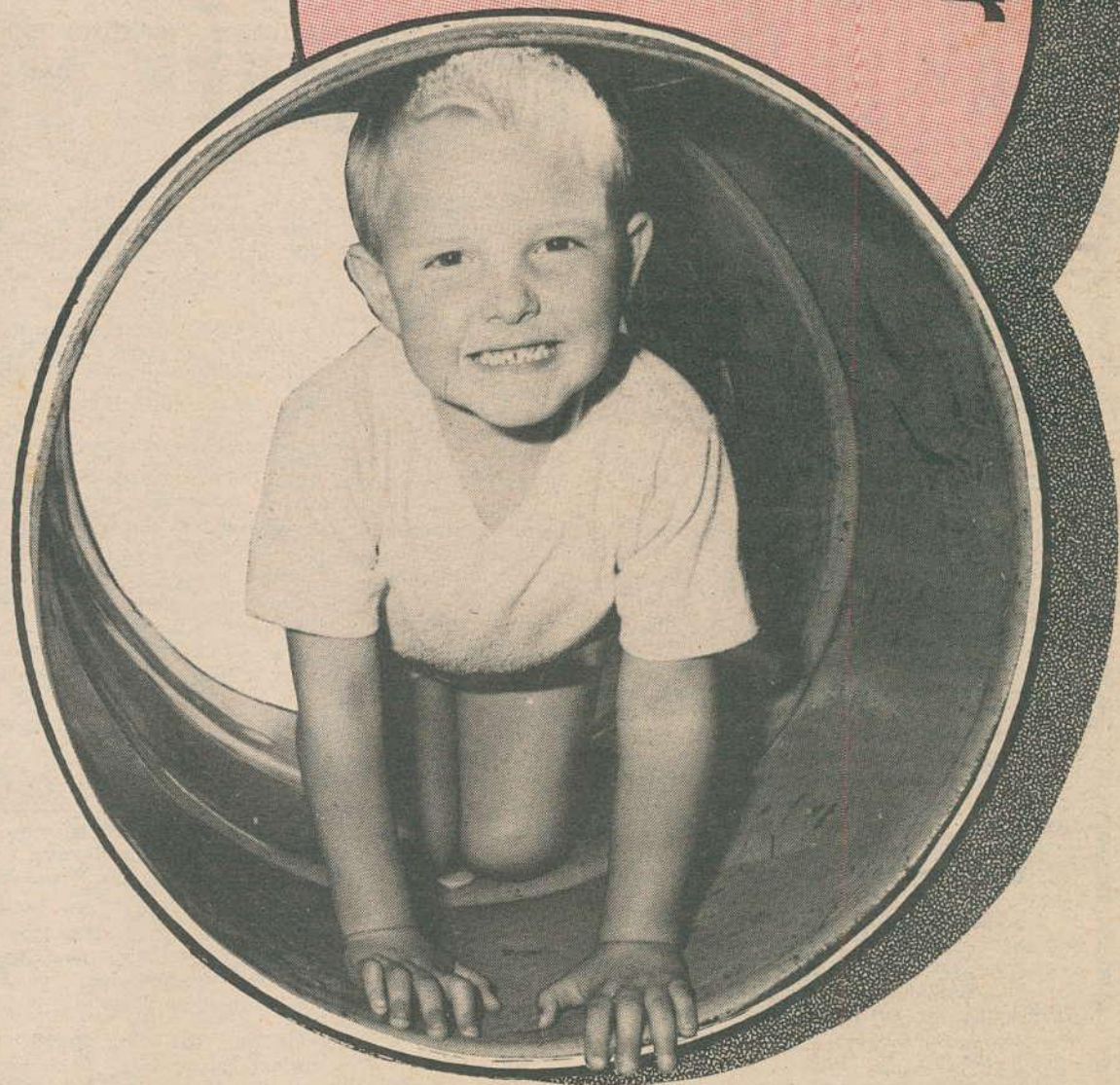
The new round of discussions is aimed at reaching a joint industry position on the amount of deregulation it will accept before the State Government has talks with the Federal Government on an aid package for the ailing industry.

It follows an outcry last week from cane growers who said the State Government had sold them out by accepting substantial deregulation of the industry in talks with the Federal Government.

Mr Kerr said the Federal Government required some degree of deregulation before it proceeded with a price support package.

He said cane growers were disappointed the Queensland Government was continuing to refuse to consider a joint Federal-State aid deal.

"We've never said the Queensland Government should go 50-50, but we feel they should put something in. The actual amount would be something for the two governments to decide," he said.



Welcome to my lair

● THE imagination knows no bounds, especially for the young who manage to spend endless hours lost in their own fantasy worlds. A 44 gallon drum at the Uniting Church Kindergarten in Murwillumbah was the ideal thing for young Nathan Knight to crawl into and lose himself in his own little world of heroes and villains.

Hamlet inquiry head arranges inspections

Commissioner John Woodward will be inspecting a number of existing and proposed multiple occupancy sites in Tweed Shire today.

He announced details of the proposed inspections at the conclusion of yesterday's sitting of the Inquiry into Multiple Occupancy being held at Murwillumbah.

An additional 16 submissions of the total of 41 were presented to the inquiry yesterday.

On Monday nine submissions were heard.

Mr Woodward said that he would get around as many of the sites as possible today and if that was not possible might consider another inspection tomorrow.

A decision would be made today whether or not to re-open the inquiry tomorrow.

All who were present to make their submissions were heard at yesterday's sitting.

The areas to be inspected today are:

- Mt Warning Hamlet.
- Woodhelven, Rolands Creek Road.
- Coal Creek Hamlet.
- The Big Terragon, Kyogle Road.
- Byrill Creek Hamlet.
- Pretty Gully Hamlet.
- Sainty and Asbeck, Tomewin Road.
- Martin, Uriup Road.

- Bruce Lang, Uriup Road.
- Ducat Park.
- Crystal Vale.
- Tarcoola Uki, Kyogle Road.

Submissions to the inquiry yesterday were presented by Rural Settlement Task Force; Department of Agriculture; Soil Conservation Service; Bilambil, Uriup and Carol Residents Action Group; Lismore City Council; Ald Mac-Nicolson, Lismore; Ray Woolams; Wollumbin Homebuilders Association; Coal Creek Community; Mt Warning Co-operative; Doug Davidson; Wollumbin Wildlife Reserve; Tweed Valley Conservation Trust; Byrill Creek Hamlet Pty Ltd; Tony Huxley, Uki; Pretty Gully Co-operative and John Morgan Lowe, Hidden Valley.

Mr Woodward said that all submissions would be left with the Tweed Shire Council until Friday week, October 11, so that any of the parties can pursue them.

He said that there were some from departments to come forward yet.

He said if any party wanted to raise any objections of another they should be submitted in writing to the party concerned by October 18 and answers should be

made by Friday, November 1 back to the party who asked the question.

Mr Woodward said that questions needed to be directed to the actual party concerned.

He said when the inquiry was re-convened at a later date he would collect all the questions and answers.

"I'm proposing to ask a number of questions of parties myself and these and the answers will be

put before the inquiry," he said.

Mr Woodward said he proposed to ask further questions of Tweed Shire Council, the Department of Environment and Planning, Department of Local Government, Lismore City Council and the Lands Tax Office to name some of the parties.

Today's inspections will start from the Murwillumbah Civic Centre at 9am and are open to the public.

Ombudsman's staff visit Murwillumbah

Members of the staff of the NSW Ombudsman will be at Murwillumbah tomorrow.

They will be at the Murwillumbah Community Aid Council in the railway barracks on the Pacific Highway.

The two representatives will be there between 9 am and 3 pm and appointments to see them can be made by phoning 723003.

The Ombudsman investigates complaints about NSW Government departments, councils and members of the police force.

The representatives have been making a tour of the Far North Coast and the Murwillumbah visit is part of that tour.

A spokesman for the Ombudsman's office said yesterday that complaints varied and last year more than 6000 were received in NSW.

About one quarter were about the police force and the remainder about local councils.

He said with complaints about councils they were looked at as a body, not as individuals.

Farmers made up a number of people who made complaints and this was usually against local and government authorities such as county councils and water supply authorities.

**Brereton
meets
Pie
Page 3**

**Hinze
denies
claims
Page 5**

INDEX

Editorial	p4
Off the Beaten Track	p6
Coasting Around	p37-42
Dingbats	p50
Church Notices	p54
Motoring	p57-59
Sport	p72-76

WEATHER IN A WORD: MILD (details P4), TV, CROSSWORD, P56

Task force warns of rating problems

The Commission of Inquiry into Multiple Occupancy being held at Murwillumbah was told yesterday that any legislation to change the basis of rating to one of a user pay principle would be a Pandora's box of monumental proportions.

This was claimed in a submission to Commissioner John Woodward put forward by the Rural Settlement Task Force.

The submission asked what rate would users of heavy vehicles pay on other rural properties?

Will clubs and hotels be rated differently from other commercial business because they generated a greater usage of roads and need more community services such as police and medical facilities to cope with the side effects of their activity.

The submission put forward by Peter Hamilton and Dave Lambert said that the task force was a non profit community-based association seeking to promote the interests of rural resettlement in the form of MO.

It understood that the findings and recommendations by the Commissioner were likely to be reflected in the final wording of the State policy and also in rating.

It was the task force's view that there frequently appeared to be basic differences in planners' expectations, values and attitudes re the expected and/or desirable development in the long term and those of new settlers.

Frequently planners appeared to take the worst scenario as the basis for justifying heavy road upgrading conditions.

Alternatives that might be considered in the regard are:

- That where upgradings is borne by the development the repayment be made on a proportional basis if and when other development occurs which uses the same road.

- Making that as a condition of DA approval that no upgrading will take place at council cost unless and until there are a stipulated number of actual or proposed road users.

The task force was opposed to any open ended situation which may have the result of an MO

application double paying for services or facilities simply because there are these two avenues under which council may seek a contribution.

The association can see no reason why people living in a hamlet development should be treated differently from people living in a block of flats or units, people living in granny flats, even perhaps a substantial number of people, whether related or not, living in a single dwelling.

It opposed at this time any proposal to amend the existing legislation with a view to introducing either a head tax, dwelling tax or separate tax on improved valuations with respect to MO.

The only equitable and realistic method to make the user pay for road use was through petrol tax.

Short of this it is approved the present situation where the Grants Commission was making funds available to those councils who have a population increase due in part to MO settlement.

The association was of the view that:

- Existing illegal developments should be afforded the opportunity of legalising their situation subject to the provisions of the draft State Environmental Planning Policy.

- Speeding the implementation of alleged pending amendments to a section of the Local Government Act to provide recognition of buildings constructed without prior approval.

- Supporting the introduction of licensing of caravan parks and camping grounds as announced by the Minister for Local Government Kevin Stewart in August this year.

- Supporting the views that an owner, or part-owner of a property when residing on the property is not required to obtain a moveable dwelling licence.

The submission also stated that the potential adverse impact on other residents in the area could be diminished by:

- The planting of trees, shrubs, barrier grass, etc.

- Effective and sensitive siting of buildings and other development.

- Council acting in the role of a friendly adviser in the formulation of proposals.

- The quick implementation of the Draft SEPP which would have the effect of allowing such development to be spread out into suitable areas of the State as opposed to being restricted to a very small and sometimes unsuitable locality.

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Multiple occupancy inquiry

Submission outlines problems

The submission by the Rural Resettlement Task Force to the Commission of Inquiry into multiple occupancy in Tweed Shire covered almost 70 foolscap pages.

It had five separate sections and 28 appendices.

The submission also contained comments and recommendations arising from primary submissions by several organisations.

These were Tweed Shire Council, Lismore City Council, Kyogle Shire Council, Land Commission, Northern Rivers County Council, Department of Agriculture, Department of Local Government, Soil Conservation Service, Johnson Farm Management and the Department of Planning and Environment.

The Task Force in its summary of recommendations dealt with eight separate sections.

These were:

- Problems encountered by the council in applying the present provisions of LEP No. 6 Shire of Tweed.

- The determination of an equitable formula for arriving at contributions under Section 94 towards council provided services and facilities.

- The implications of MO development for the provision of other services and facilities.

- The need for an equitable system to rate properties with MO

approval commensurate with the actual residential occupation of the land.

- Schemes in conflict with MO objectives which involve small areas of common land and large areas effectively alienated to individual management or residential subdivision.

- Action that anticipates development approval such as clearing land, road building and the construction of buildings.

- Adverse impacts on individual MO proposals on other residents in the vicinity.

- Means suggested to overcome these problems and any others that might be identified by the commission.

Some of the recommendations under the various sections were:

- "That the commission recommend that the SEPP 15 provide there be no minimum lot size for MO development (i.e. that the present 40 ha minimum be deleted and that council consider each case on its merits).

- "That clause 12A (2) (b) be retained to give effect to the provision that MO be owned in its entirety in common by at least two thirds of all adults residing on the land, or is otherwise owned on behalf of those persons".

- "That council does have adequate jurisdiction to assess and determine the nature of internal roads".

- That the vast number of complaints ... caused ... by the construction of

internal roads' appears primarily to be related to non bona-fide MO development".

- "That the attention of the Minister for Planning and Environment be drawn to the immunity with which trees of significance may be, and it appears recently have been, destroyed in the Tweed Shire area and that if immediate rectification by council is not forthcoming that consideration be given by the Minister to issuing an appropriate directive, or if necessary relieving the council of its planning jurisdiction".

- "That if a breach of the Tree Preservation Order occurs council automatically take action to seek redress as provided by the:

1. Imposition of a fine up to \$20,000 and

2. The replanting of nominated trees and their maintenance to maturity and

3. Provision of security to cover default".

- "That a uniform standard of construction for internal roads should not be adopted and that construction need not be supervised by a qualified engineer".

- "That where a Section 94 contribution is applicable to a MO development:—

- (a) an option always be provided for a time payment arrangement;

- (b) no payment need commence prior to the first building application approval; and

- (c) an option always be provided for 'in kind' payments".

- "That subject to preceding recommendation the following maximum contributions are recommended:—

- (a) Roads and bridges — maximum of \$1500 per dwelling.

- (b) Community facilities — maximum of \$150 per dwelling.

- (c) Open space — maximum of \$150 per dwelling.

- (d) Bush fire fighting facilities — maximum of \$150 per dwelling".

- "That it be recommended to the Minister for Natural Resources Janice Crosio that local electricity authorities be advised of the Government's policy in support of the use of renewable energy resources; and to take appropriate steps to ensure that such authorities do not lend weight to local government councils by recommending the supply of mains power, as a condition of MO development approval".

- "That MO communities pose no unusual specific 'threat' to traditional non-intensive rural agricultural development".

- "That the use of 'buffer zoning' not be required between MO communities and non-intensive rural agricultural development".

- "That MO development be permissible with council approval on prime agricultural land developed in pursuant to

the draft SEPP and in particular the clause which provides that land on which the dwellings are situated is not prime crop and pasture land".

- "That the present options open to council for rating should not be changed".

- "That the council may opt, where appropriate, to require as a condition of approval, that the approval will lapse if at the expiration of a specified period, specific conditions have not been fulfilled, or development as applied for has not occurred".

- "That where the council considers a MO application is questionable, due to its size or bona-fides etc., council recommends that the application be withdrawn and re-submitted for re-zoning as a 'rural residential' area".

- "That in respect of construction carried out without council consent, a section of the Act gives

council discretion in that it 'may' order demolition, or it 'may' order the doing of "such work as is necessary to make the building comply with the Act" or it 'may' choose to take no action. The issuing of a demolition should be an action of last resort only and that in the first instance rectification of the situation be sought by council on as co-operative a basis with the owners as practical".

- "That as far as is practicable the application of building regulations be based upon the 'performance criteria' and that, where possible there be 'deregulation' of buildings codes in accordance with

objections of the Australia Uniform Building Regulations Co-ordinating Council".

- "That existing illegal MO development be afforded the opportunity of legalisation as provided, if this is considered to be not technically possible then adopting a policy such as to give effect to the spirit of this policy".

- "That the proposed licensing of caravan parks and camping grounds be introduced as a matter of urgency and that when introduced, this provision be used by applicants as one option to facilitate non share holders residing on MO land or potential MO land".

Woodward ends inquiry

The public hearing of submissions into the Commission of Inquiry into multiple occupancy in Tweed Shire was concluded at



● Commissioner
John Woodward

Murwillumbah yesterday.

Commissioner John Woodward will now consider all the 51 submissions and additional information before preparing a report some time in the new year.

The report will then go to the NSW Minister for Planning and Environment Bob Carr before being made public.

It is expected that this will not be until around March next year.

The Commission of Inquiry was ordered by Mr Carr at the request of Tweed Shire Council.

It began at Murwillumbah early in October and was re-convened again on Tuesday and concluded yesterday.

Most of the two days' sitting was taken up with a detailed and comprehensive submission from the Rural Settlement Task Force based at Nimbin.

Tweed Shire Council in part of its submission told Commissioner Woodward that it had received about 300 submissions following the public exhibition of its draft Local

Environmental Plan and it was hoping Commissioner Woodward's report would be available before it finalised that plan.

(The draft LEP was dealt with at a special town planning committee meeting of the council yesterday which was in committee.

Earlier the council had carried out a number of inspections throughout the shire).

Also this week it was stated that a firm NSW Government policy on multiple occupancy development was expected early next year.

Mr Carr said that a draft State environmental planning policy on multiple occupancy had generated a significant response.

He said that more than 60 local government councils as well as individuals and community groups had provided comments on the draft policy.

At Tuesday's sitting of the Commission of Inquiry, Commissioner Woodward said he had made arrangements for those submissions

from the State-wide plan to be made available to him so that he could take them into consideration when compiling his report.

Commenting on the State-wide plan, Mr Carr said "Multiple occupancy involves building dwellings on a single parcel of rural land which is to be jointly owned, managed or occupied".

"The draft policy reflects the Government's continued support for multiple occupancy of rural land, but this support is based on the strong belief that most multiple occupancies wish to co-operate and conform with the law.

"Present planning law does not make adequate provision for such development.

"Under the proposed policy, multiple occupancy developments would be permitted with council consent in rural zones outside the major metropolitan areas of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong," he said.

"Such consent would be subject to the protection of environmentally

sensitive areas and prime crop and pasture land and would take into account the capability of the land for the proposed use," said Mr Carr.

"The Department of Environment and Planning is now reviewing the submissions and the issues raised will be taken into account before a decision on the policy is taken in the new year."

The Minister said that he expected existing illegal multiple occupancies to submit development applications to the relevant councils.

"Councils then will have a responsibility to administer the multiple occupancy policy when it is made, in a humane and sensitive way," he said.

"Any further multiple occupancy development which occurs outside the requirements of the policy will be reviewed with concern."

● See story on Task Force submission

UNIVERSITY ENTERS INQUIRY

The University of NSW became the 51st organisation to make a submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Multiple Occupancy which was reconvened at Murwillumbah yesterday.

In its submission it stated that it had been carrying out field work during the past two months starting in the southern part of the State working north.

It would be looking at Tweed Shire soon and hoped to have its draft findings on multiple occupancy with a study of land use and management in particular available in January 1986.

They would be made available to Commissioner Woodward.

The submission said that the university was trying to get some measure of use and the productivity of multiple occupancies which it tended to refer to as rural sharing communities.

It was looking at self-servicing and self-providing and had discovered a number of outside activities generated within a multiple occupancy.

There had also been a high degree of land rehabilitation especially through re-forestation.

In general there was a large scale undertaking of biological agricultural activities.

It had found that in several communities they were 90 percent self-sufficient and many virtually 100 percent self-serviced.

Roading was possibly the most contentious issue.

Two things stood out.

One was that all communities had a high degree of bookkeeping and it was admitted that had been a surprise.

They had set aside some gross income for reserve funds and this was contrary to some previous survey findings.

Some were in financial stress and desperately short of capital but only one had been found to be actually in debt.

The second finding was that they were short of labor.

One basic test in making the survey was that the land was owned in common.

Another submission was put forward by Byrill Creek and it endorsed that of the Rural Resettlement Task Force and called for the publication of a handbook as a guide to setting up a multiple occupancy.

Commissioner Woodward said that was being looked at now by the NSW Government.

The submission also asked that they be treated equally with all other residents, by service authorities and also to be eligible for first home grants.

The Wollumbin Home Builders' Association in an additional submission also endorsed that the Task Force and the need for a good advice book.

It also claimed the Tweed Shire's tree preservation order didn't protect trees across the whole shire.

Commissioner Woodward said that in relation to making information available maybe councils could become the contact point.

Council seeks early finding

Yesterday's sitting of the Commission of Inquiry into Multiple Occupancy at Murwillumbah, was told that Tweed Shire Council was hoping its findings would be available when it was making a final decision on the Local Environmental Plan for the shire.

Council's deputy town planner, Gary Smith, was making the council's final submission to the inquiry.

Mr Smith said it was a brief submission and council felt that with what it had put forward previously and inspections carried out by Commissioner Woodward he would be able to make a decision.

He said the public exhibition of the council's draft LEP had concluded and a special town planning committee meeting today was to decide whether there would be a formal inquiry into the plan or not or how it should be dealt with now.

Asked by Commissioner Woodward if it had been a contentious issue, Mr Smith said there had been in excess of 300 submissions but he would have

expected more for a shire-wide plan.

He said he hadn't gone through the submissions in detail and there were very few relating to multiple occupancy in particular.

"Those we have could be made available to you," he told Commissioner Woodward.

He also told Commissioner Woodward in response to a question that council could make available to him details of any application council might make for grants or if it could seek funding on the basis of multiple occupancy.

Asked about road contributions, Mr Smith said council had made a decision in 1982 that they could be paid off over five years with the same amount of interest as that charged for overdue rates.

This hadn't been brought out in council's previous submission but no-one had taken that offer up and the formal details hadn't been worked out yet.

Commissioner Woodward said during his inspections of Tweed and other areas the issue had arisen regarding road standards and councils

have been accused of over-design standards.

Questions were asked if a road could be developed to a certain standard over a particular time to take away the initial high cost of contribution.

Commissioner Woodward said it seemed to be a fairly sound method.

Mr Smith said Tweed council's approach had been to look at the traffic count, the likely increase in traffic and Australian road standards.

Commissioner Woodward said perhaps this could be discussed with council and the views referred back to him.



OPEN ALL DAY SAT, BOXING & NEW YEARS DAY

MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY INQUIRY RESUMES

Commissioner John Woodward expects to have his report into multiple occupancy completed early in the new year.

He said this yesterday at the re-convened Commission of Inquiry into multiple occupancy which was heard in the Murwillumbah Court House.

The inquiry had been adjourned part-heard from the first week in October.

Commissioner Woodward was appointed to chair the inquiry by the NSW Minister for Planning and Environment, Bob Carr at the request of Tweed Shire Council.

The final submissions were made to the inquiry yesterday.

In those, Tweed Shire Council's proposed tree preservation order came under fire and it was claimed that it was making a mockery out of environmental planning legislation.

The order was described as being grossly inadequate and that Mr Carr's attention should be drawn to the trees that had already been destroyed in the shire and consideration should be given by the Minister to relieving council of its planning jurisdiction.

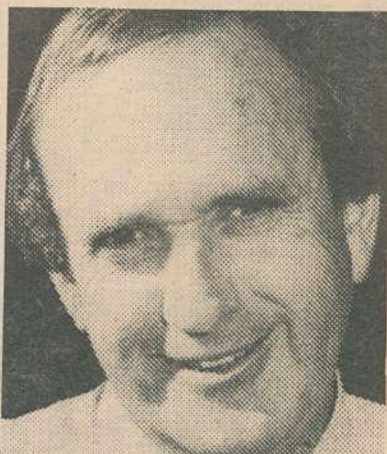
The submission, which was one of 51, came from the Rural Re-settlement Task Force and it also called for the appointment of a full-time environmental officer in the shire.

The submission also claimed that three proposed multiple occupancies in the Urliup Road and Tomewin areas were not bona fide and that the tree preservation order had been ignored with the clearing of the properties concerned.

The submission claimed that the applications were for speculative purposes.

In its comprehensive submission the Task Force dealt with all aspects of multiple occupancy and claimed there was a need for guidelines to be set down and published and also for Tweed Shire Council to publicly state from time to time that permission was required for road developments and

More
stories P3



● Commissioner
John Woodward

land clearing similar to that which had occurred in relation to the three applications.

Opening the re-convened inquiry Commissioner Woodward said he had made arrangements for all submissions made in response to the State-wide draft environmental plan to be made available to him.

He said he would be also taking into account the various submissions made to it across the State.

Commissioner Woodward had said all submissions to the inquiry were available to the public.

He said: "I was proposing, depending on the number of parties, to take any further submissions in the next day or so and then take submission in reply and that would conclude the public hearing of the inquiry."

Commissioner Woodward said: "I would then propose to spend January and February sifting through all the submissions and documents to prepare my report as soon as possible in the new year".

The Rural Re-settlement Task Force will complete its final submission at today's sitting of the Commission of Inquiry at 9.30 am.

Daily News - 11 Dec 1985

and had direct implications, for the North Coast.

The Ombudsman received a complaint from a civil rights association in a country town about low-flying by a police helicopter searching for Indian hemp plantations on the North Coast.

Mr Masterman, reporting on the complaint by 45 people, said:

One couple said they were naked and asleep in bed with their skylight window open when the noise of a police helicopter woke them. They saw two people in the helicopter, one with a pair of binoculars, peering into the room. The helicopter was so close that its down-draft blew debris into the house.

The police officer who was said that it flew as low as 10 metres above the undergrowth, and occasionally as low as 15 to 20 metres above the ground while photographs were taken. He denied that there had been any peering into a bedroom.

There was evidence, supported by a Forestry Commission employee, that the helicopter flew close to children playing in an open field, about 10 to 12 metres above their heads. It then landed only 30 to 40 metres away from the children.

A child became frightened by the helicopter's noise and started to scream.

Officers of the Forestry Commission and the Far North Coast County Council told the Ombudsman they had seen and been in the police helicopter while it flew close to houses.

They thought that it was unnecessary to fly in certain areas, particularly where there were people on the ground, and houses. On one occasion, the helicopter flew so low that the down-draft blew down papaw trees.

The Ombudsman, in a draft report, last year made recommendations on drug searches by police helicopters to the former Minister for Police, Mr Anderson.

They were: That the Police Department should not give approval for police helicopters to search private properties (except for search and rescue operations) at altitudes below 500 metres in cities, towns and populous areas, or 160 metres in other areas, unless authorised by warrant. Helicopters should not fly below these altitudes for any purpose not stated in the warrant.

A spokesman for Mr Anderson's successor, Mr Paciullo, said that the Minister had not seen the recommendations, but would consider them 'in due course'.

Speaking from Los Angeles last week, Mr Paciullo said that the NSW Police Force would get a \$9 million air division of fixed wing planes and helicopters to help catch speeding motorists.

He said the division, operational by the end of this year, also would be used for rescue and criminal detection work.

But others have a different view: "George Orwell's novel 1984 was not far wrong: Helicopters flush out the small-time dope growers who make police statistics look good."

This is the opinion of John, a local professional man in his 30s who has been breaking the law by smoking Indian hemp since he was 17.

*Part of Northern Star
article 13 June 86*



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

ILLEGAL BUILDINGS AMNESTY

There has been quite a good response to the Council's decision to give people who have constructed buildings anywhere in the city area without prior approval an opportunity to legalise them without penalty.

Several have come before the Council recently and every effort is being made to accommodate them. To do so is not always easy, especially where the zoning of the area prohibits a particular type of building. Some of these might need substantial alteration to gain compliance.

The important thing is, however, that where the owner comes forward before the end of June, and brings his problem to the Council to try to get a solution, there will be no prosecution for illegal building per se. Those who do NOT come forward, however, will not be protected after June 30. The Council has adopted a policy that they be prosecuted without fear or favour whenever they are detected. And of course it has several inspectors in the field all the time.

The amnesty applies to all illegal buildings, whether in town or in the country. The policy about subsequent prosecution also applies equally to both.

It is in everybody's interests, both the owner or occupier and the community at large, that buildings comply with the standards laid down. Those standards are there to protect your health and your safety.

Anyone who is aware of an illegal building on his or her property is urged to come forward and get it rectified NOW. It could prove very costly if you don't act before June 30.

V.S. 10 May 86

Regards,
BOB SCULLIN,
MAYOR

**Rural Resettlement Task Force,
P.O. Box 62
Nimbin. N.S.W. 2480**

*We are always on the lookout
for new listings for our Bibliog-
raphy or short news items for
this Newsheet. In general, we
are only looking for material of
direct relevance to Multiple Occupancy
David*

*Subscriptions to the AASC Newsletter "News From
Home" - only \$12. from Beth Penin, 42 South St, Fremantle
W.A. 6160*

Illegal buildings amnesty is extended

NS 17/7/86

The Lismore City Council has extended its amnesty deadline on illegal buildings.

The amnesty was to have ended on June 30, but has been extended to the end of this month.

Since March 4, the amnesty has guaranteed that people who register any illegal structures with the council will not be prosecuted.

The Rural Resettlement Task Force had asked that the initial four-month period be extended until new planning guidelines for multiple and dual occupancy came into force.

Until late last week, the council had received 221 applications under the amnesty — 134 rural and 87 urban.

Dwelling additions (39) topped urban applications, followed by sheds (20), pergolas (14), and carports/garages (14).

Rural applications included farm sheds (46), dwellings (32), dwelling additions (18), and carports/garages (13).

In a report to the council, the town clerk, Mr B C Stevens, recommended that such an indefinite extension was not possible.

But Mr Stevens said that giving people an additional month's grace was more than reasonable considering the extensive publicity given to the amnesty.

He said owners who failed to register illegal buildings under the amnesty, if caught, would face prosecution.

The chief town planner, Mr P Reynders, said the objective of the exercise was to give people the opportunity to legalise their dwellings.

"Many of these dwellings cannot be legalised because they are not in multiple occupancy or dual occupancy zones," he said.

"The amnesty allows the council to defer development applications until the new planning guidelines are announced.

"But there still would be a residue of people who would not qualify under the new guidelines.

"The council could send a list of these buildings to the Department of Environment and Planning, suggesting collective spot rezonings to clean up the problem."

Mr Reynders said he had no idea when the new planning guidelines might be gazetted.



MR REYNDERS

R.R.T.F.

RURAL RESETTLEMENT TASK FORCE
P.O. BOX 62 NIMBIN 2480 N.S.W.



Kyogle Council Demo Orders Demolition Orders have been served on some 12 buildings for which the owners did not put in a Development and/or Building application after they were found out by Council inspectors. It is understood that these Demo Orders will be withdrawn if the owner does something to legalise them within 90 days. A Court appeal is possible.

Community Titles Act As with all government initiatives, this one has become bogged down on its so-called 'fast track'. Ministerial responsibility got shifted from Lands to Attorney General & it now looks like a couple months to go before Cabinet and 1987 to reach Parliament. Also the Dept of Environment & Planning which says where and under what conditions it will be permitted looks like possibly taking years to decide something. That's assuming various lobby groups don't succeed in speeding things up!

Lismore Council Amnesty The RRTF requested an extension of it until the new M.O. State Policy was released. Council refused this request but extended it another month. At least a couple more M.O. communities put in for the amnesty during the extension. Those with Development Approval problems will no doubt be watching and supporting the results of the M.O. Legal Aid Fund and Stoney Chute court appeal!

FHOS Home Grants A recommendation and suggested legislation in the form of a regulation has gone to Minister Stewart West and the RRTF is very hopeful that it will be accepted. This would grant sufficient legal interest for applicants from Council approved communities to qualify for the grants. Our fingers are crossed!

Our Supporters Some 28 M.O. communities have now supported our financial appeal which has now topped the \$2600 mark! Communities which support us, support the movement generally and in return receive a short newsletter and updated list of written Resource Material. For more information contact the Neighbourhood Centre on Wednesdays.

20/8/86.

LETTERS

10 Florence 12.8.86

Dear Nimbin's Friends,
I've got some news for you all, after I went through all the discriminations in the community Zappatori senza Padroni, I went in several government bodies, offices & politicians plus the Italian Parliament & to the Human Rights Comm. in Geneva; I decided to raise only enough money to get back home to Australia with or without politicians permission I will get back to Nimbin to such projects that desperately need some economical support to get the airplane tickets together. 1986 is the International Year for Peace & my own stand would be a International Action formy own Human Rights for the Environment & for the Alternative Lifestyle. If you wish to help me please send in one way or the other some money to: CASSA DI RISPARMIO DI FIRENZE FILIALE DI SAN GIMIGNANO (SIENA) addressed to: ALFREDO BONANNO, c/o Community Aquarius POGGIO ALLE FONTI, 10000 UCIANO 53037 SAN GIMIGNANO (SIENA) ITALY.

If you are going to send money, please keep record of them & try to notify myself too. Honesty is hard to come by in Italy & some politicians are pretty nasty too! The Community Zappatori senza Padroni

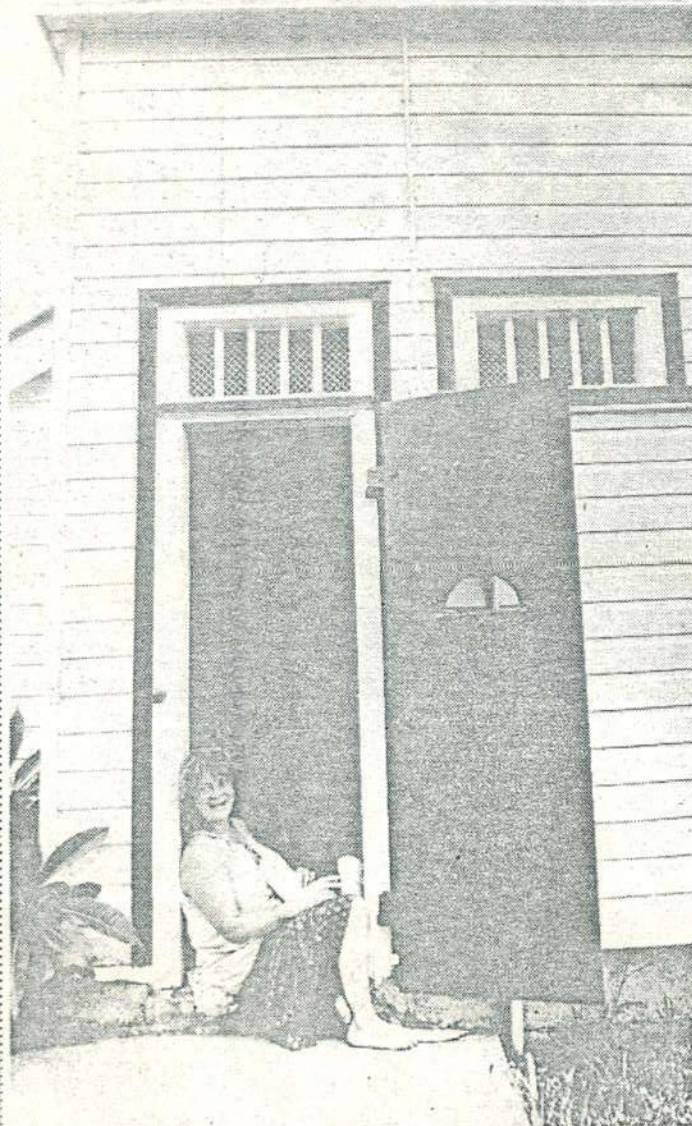
The Destruction of the Daintree Continues.

The Douglas Shire Council has just released plans for further road excavation & Real Estate subdivision in hitherto wilderness areas of the Greater Daintree Region. The plans include: \$ Road widening part of Alexander Range by dynamite blasting. \$ Shaving the peak off Donovans Range on the controversial Cape Tribulation to Bloomfield Road. \$ Converting Emmagen Creek into a gravel quarry for Road Maintenance. \$ Opening up substantial subdivisions near Wujal Wujal Mission at Bloomfield. \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

The Greater Daintree Action Centre based at the Original Blockade Site at Cape Tribulation is the only environmental group taking a direct role in fighting the local councils latest moves. The Centre is a grass roots organization consisting of a dedicated group of live-in activists. It is not funded by any State or national conservation bodies, all of its funding comes from the people involved & from you. The fight to save the Daintree will be a difficult & costly one, & we need all the help we can get. Anyone interested in becoming directly involved is welcome to join us on site.

If you can't come in person but still wish to assist in rescuing this unique area, we require urgent financial assistance to pay for high cost of running such a campaign. Please give

Without drugs, the town could collapse



MARG BURTON does time in Nimbin lock-up for unlicensed driving. "Why run away," she says. "He'd only come down to the pub and catch me."

Henry Heroin is lying low. Marg Burton smokes in the open doorway of Nimbin police station's only cell.

At the Neighborhood Centre, Katie Love fights disillusionment by reminding herself that Jupiter will soon align with Mars . . . well, almost.

It's 11am and Nimbin's Freeman's Hotel is jumping. Segregation is voluntary and without rancor. Straights in the front bar. Freaks in the back.

Gordon Poole paid \$850,000 for the place just a week ago. He smiles the smile of a man onto a good thing.

It's a curious prosperity. Officially, the town admits to a population of 700. Unofficially, the number stands closer to 20,000 — an outlaw society of idealists, dreamers, dropouts, crackpots, eccentrics and scam artists.

They appear from the hills, whoop it up, disappear again. This once derelict dairy town booms and bustles on the profits from marijuana plots sprinkled amid a thousand hilltop holdouts.

"Without drugs — and the dole — the town could collapse," says Senior Sergeant Col Wheatley, one of Nimbin's two policemen.

"You have to draw the line. If you attacked everyone, you'd need 20 police."

Nimbin's communes support a constantly shifting population.

Real names have long since been jettisoned. How, with a straight face, do you write a warrant for Peter Pussy Cat or Skinny John?

Even the police have nicknames. Col and partner Senior Constable Chris Stuart are known, not without affection, as The Terrible Twins.

They're hoping for reinforcements. No one wants the job. Nimbin is a policeman's nightmare. Of their predecessors, one became a Jehovah's Witness, the other a Christadelphian.

Col and Chris make plenty of arrests. More arrests, they say, than nearby stations with three and four times their strength. About once a month, someone will attempt to beat them up.

"You name it, Nimbin's got it," says Col. "There are communes for transvestites, lesbians, homosex-

THE NIMBIN

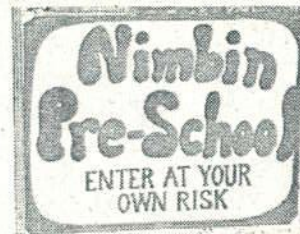
● In 1973, hippies from all over Australia descended on the northern NSW township of Nimbin for the Festival Of Aquarius. Hundreds bought shares in communes. Last week, writer DAVID BENTLEY and photographer MIKE LARDER returned to Nimbin to see how the experiment went.

uals and every religion known to man. There are dome people, pyramid people, droog people . . ."

And they tell of finding tunnels through the lantana, low and narrow so that a man must pull himself along the ground on his elbows to reach the lushly irrigated plantation of weed beyond.

"You see how much work and ingenuity has gone into what they've done and you think: if that man had put as much effort into doing something within the law, he'd have been a big success," Col says.

There are tales of hippy houses with well-used airstrips, of raggedy longhairs who buy expensive farm machinery for cash. Chris, raised in the area, once had the experience of busting his old schoolteacher.



For people in this northern New South Wales town, marijuana is no longer an issue, just a fact of life.

Nimbin's outspoken visionary, barrister David Spain, sees laws banning marijuana as self-defeating.

A Geelong Grammar old boy and former army officer, David says 90 per cent of the ills surrounding marijuana stem from criminalisation.

"It's a waste of court and police time," he says. "It creates black markets, unearned profits, rip-offs."

"If decriminalised, that plant would be a wonderful source of revenue, not so much for its drug as its fibre content — paper, cloth, rope."

"Bigger the drug. It's the fibre content that's important. All our

currency notes are made out of marijuana paper.

"If people want to smoke it, it's up to them. It's not for the State to interfere."

Rightly or wrongly, many hippies date Nimbin's heroin problems from the big drug raid on Mullumbimby some years ago.

With their crops confiscated or burned, growers began dabbling in heroin as a stopgap.

A junkie population sprang up where none had been before. Marijuana plantings increased to finance heroin addicts' \$1000 to \$2000 a week habits.

The new arrivals, themselves young, arrived just as the children of the Aquarius people were entering their teenage years. They introduced the needle.

The pioneers of peace, harmony and self-sufficiency have become that most everyday thing — worried parents.

Vigilante patrols drove the junkies out of established communes — in one instance, violently with pitchforks.

The Rainbow Cafe, social focal point of the town, gave junkies the cold shoulder. The pub refused to serve hard cases.

Outcasts have become known as Droogs (after the roughnecks in The Clockwork Orange) — sleeping under Nimbin's psychedelically adorned buildings by night, wandering the main street by day, semiferal and publicly self-destructive.

They are observed, with sadness, by Katie Love through the glass shopfront of the Neighborhood Centre, a sort of information exchange opposite the Rainbow Cafe.

Katie bought a share in Tuntable Commune back in 1973, when the alternative society first hit on the idea of turning the Aquarius Festival into an on-going celebration.

In Sydney, she had been a libertarian, a nihilist and finally a hippy. She thought that sharing and giving could change the world.

In Kathmandu, she had met poor

EXPERIMENT

How do you arrest Peter Pussy Cat?



Cars line Nimbin's main street... the northern New South Wales town is booming on drugs and the dole.

people who were happy. She genuinely believed that the Aquarius people could create an Australian utopia.

Now she speaks with mingled hope and disillusionment: "Commercialism is taking over. We can't seem to help ourselves."

"There are heaps of people doing the fine, inspired work but they're going to get left behind."

"Me and my mates brought everyone here in the first place. We did all the pioneering. The others came in on the wave."

"The young people are in danger of being trampled underfoot. The others, the ones who put all their energy into their own areas and said blow everybody else, are suddenly Nimbin's shining examples."

"Land ownership has changed everything; now only the rich can come here," she says.

"The harsh reality is that there are people on the streets who only want to drink themselves to death; and there are others who only want to kick them out of the way."

"I'm not saying it's gone wrong. But people can't hang in. They run off and tell everyone it didn't work."

Until recently Katie and her teenage daughter lived in a tent at Tuntabla commune — saving to turn a pile of motley building materials into a dwelling.

Eventually she could stand it no longer (another tick bite and I'd have had a nervous breakdown).

She rented a house in Nimbin for \$70 a week. A decade ago, the same place would have cost \$5 or \$6.

"We made Nimbin popular and what do we get out of it? The council says it wants to make Nimbin an exemplary village. What for? They've put cement traffic markers all over the place but we still can't get a pedestrian crossing for the kids," she says.

Meanwhile, the tourist buses rumble in. The drivers let their engines idle. A few — the daring ones — buy hippy artifacts from the arts and crafts shop. The rest peer from the security of the bus.

They leave disappointed — their image of a palm-fringed rain forest hamlet, populated by gentle, white-robed hippies with flowers in their hair forever dashed.

Katie hates the tourists.

"The grossest of insults is that we are seen as attractions and, at the same time, dole bludgers," she says.

"The tourists haven't done a thing for us except drain us."

What do the tourists make of it? Their glimpse of Nirvana is so fleeting. They will never know that this dirty hippy was once a prominent psychiatrist, that one a top engi-

neer. They shake no work-calloused hippy hands.

Says David Spain: "At least one-third of the people are trying to achieve a sustainable lifestyle, another third are in the flow and not stuffing it up, another third are lazy and mixed up — and should be treated with compassion because they have no capital and no hopes."

David came to Nimbin via conscription to the Vietnam war and a successful legal practice in Sydney.

"Vietnam was 50 per cent responsible for me growing to hate the Establishment," he says.

"The other 50 was disgust with the way the legal system exploited the environment and the poorer classes in order to feather the nests of a few."

Articulate and intense, it is not hard to imagine him in the first lieutenant's tunic he wore so reluctantly in Vietnam or trussed up in the pinstripe uniform of the barrister.

A vestige of his privileged origins, a late model Range Rover, is parked outside. He sees no contradiction.

'Now only the rich can come up here'

He preaches the theory of site revenue — collection of the annual rental-value of all enclosed sites as the sole source of government revenue.

"A site revenue economy destroys the price of land and, as such, gives everyone access to the resources of nature, and, for other reasons I could go into, makes the welfare State unnecessary," he says.

David maintains that people would build their own houses, grow their own food. Police and the bureaucracy would become unnecessary.

"Unfortunately, no one in a position to do anything about it wants to know — because it makes their job insecure," he says.

Theories abound. Commune dwellers Mike Rider and Natalie Sommerville merely want the quiet life. Over the past 10 years their hippy shed at Tuntabla has evolved into a pleasant alternative-style house.

"There's freedom without ownership," says Mike. "The real wealth is experience."

So it goes. But at Lifestyle Real Estate in Nimbin, manager Adrian Williamson tells how hard it is to sell a house on collectively owned land.

"People overcapitalise," he says. "They buy a share for \$10,000, a house for \$40,000. When the time comes to quit, nobody will buy."

"For \$50,000 to \$60,000, it's possible to buy a house and land outright."

Neal Bishop and his wife Karen cruised in their yacht before deciding to settle in Nimbin.

For Neal, it's a return to the idealism of his youth. Karen wants to raise horses. Neither could be described as a hippy.

Back at the jail, Marg Burton settles herself comfortably on a pillow in the cell doorway and explains why she doesn't make a run for freedom: "What would be the point — he'd only go down the pub and catch me," she says, extracting a last puff from her cigarette.

● Editorial: Page 18



Former army officer and barrister DAVID SPAIN preaches the gospel of permaculture, site revenue and co-operative communities.



MIKE RIDER and NATALIE SOMMERVILLE found the quiet life in Tuntabla Commune a decade ago.

Two sides to Nimbin

Nimbin may be only a few kilometres across the border — but its laissez faire community is light years away from Queensland's paternalistic order.

It is not possible to approve everything that has happened since the Aquarius hippies moved in with such optimism 13 years ago.

High ideals have been diluted by human weakness; heroin has made its ugly impact; lawlessness has become a way of life.

Yet, there are lessons from the Nimbin experiment. For here exists a bunch of Australians who had a go. They were men and women who put their beliefs, however dubious, to the test by living them.

These people led campaigns for alternative energy; defended the environment and, when it came to cheap housing, demonstrated there were more ways than one to skin a cat.

If the experiment went disastrously wrong for some, there were others for whom commune life brought happiness and self-fulfilment.

Indeed, the establishment of co-operative communities to build their own housing and produce their own food, is not so foolish an idea.

The reluctantly unemployed could be given an opportunity to quit the dole queues while, at the same time, picking up essential skills such as carpentry and horticulture.

Nimbin is far from perfect. But it must not allow its tragedies to obscure its achievements.

N.S. 31/7/85

Multiple occupancies

IT IS with concern and a feeling of incredulous amazement that I read of the credibility afforded to the 'Rural Resettlement Task Force' in a consultancy capacity to Govern-

ment bodies relative to multiple occupancies (NS 18/7/85).

Mr Lambert and his friends should first of all endeavour to make their own multiple occupancies self-sustaining.

Tuntable Falls, (where Mr Lambert is one of the 'main actors') after 12 years and millions of Government dollars, still has a long way to go towards contributing anything 'sustainable', either conceptually or in actuality.

What we do not need is the further creation of more rural ghettos where the poor and the unemployed may be able to afford to exist, but where infrastructures are presently non-existent or increasingly unable to cope.

I've yet to hear any employment-generating activities mentioned, or anything remotely resembling a user-pays model.

But then the Rural Resettlement Task Force, and the dependent mentality, is probably so used to filling out grant applications that they possibly believe we do not need to generate anything ourselves anyway.

Think tank — indeed!

PETER J ALLEMAN,

Lillian Rock.

Steve Karadowne

R.R.T.F.

RURAL RESETTLEMENT TASK FORCE
P.O. BOX 62 NIMBIN 2480 N.S.W.



MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY NEWS

Glen Bin Community vs. Lismore Council This is a community of 10 shareholders on Stangers Road which submitted their DA to Council in Feb. After 'considering' their application for some 7 months Council recently approved it subject to 27 conditions! The most objectionable conditions include the payment of \$35,000 up front to upgrade Stangers Rd & its intersection with Stoney Chute Road. Another unacceptable condition requires the community not to object to giving up a right of carriageway through an adjoining property. Stangers Road is quite a good gravel road which Council agreed could be brought up to a "reasonable standard of safety" for between \$2300 & \$2800.

So it would appear that future M.O. applicants dealt with by this Council will have to pay between \$1500 & \$3500 per house-site & that's if their access road is good by comparative local standards! Some 5 more Development Applications have been (or are about to be) submitted to Council pursuant to their recent so-called "amnesty".

Because Council's actions threaten the very existence of communities with pending applications and the establishment of future M.O. communities in this Shire, it has been decided to make a public appeal for funds to assist this community to make a credible stand against the Council in the hope that a favourable court decision will result which might be regarded as a test precedent by Council (and the Court if another community is forced to appeal). The RRTF will sponsor the appeal and Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre which is now a Registered Charity will receive and act as Trustee for funds collected. Money can also be deposited direct with W.P. Walters & Co, Solicitors in Lismore.

This trust fund will only be used to pay the fees of legal or professional advisers; if all or none of the money is expended for this community, the money would be used for a similar purpose for another M.O. community.

SEPP #15 It looks like it is going to take at least a few more months for the bureaucracy to get its act together- staff cutbacks mean that everything is slowing down even more! It is still in the hands of the Grafton DEP office who are finalising it with the Legal Branch. The delay is partly due to their considering 'side' issues such as Land Tax and Owner Buildder Licenses.

FHOS Grants A Regulation is being drafted by the Attorney-General's Dept which should solve most of the problems which have prevented M.O. applicants from getting these grants. However, given the present rate of progress it looks like it will take some months before this matter is finally cleared up. In the meantime, we suggest homebuilders should apply to get their name in the system. Applications for the Home Deposit Grant Scheme (forerunner to FHOS) must be submitted **before** 31 Dec 1986- the house would have to be commenced before 18 March 1983 to qualify for this first scheme.

Our Supporters We have now received donations from 33 communities for a grand total of \$2800. Thanks a lot!!!! If any communities have any ideas what problems we should prioritise or research, please let us know. If you join our group of supporters, you will receive a short news sheet every few months and an updated listing of resource material that we have.

Photocopier The RRTF along with Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre purchased a 2nd hand photocopier- the only one in Nimbin with reduction capability! So if you have any copying to do, check it out- your use will help support both the Centre & the RRTF.

Dave

Lifestyle real estate

66 Cullen St, Nimbin.
for Land in the
RAINBOW REGION

please phone Nick Lofkin
(066) 891 377 (B.H.) 897 304 (A.H.)

Rainbow News Nov - Dec 1986

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5

SECRET SOCIETY'S FIRST TOUR or FEAR & LOATHING OF ANOTHER ROADSIDE ATTRACTION.

O.K!! The tour went O.K. Well...what do you expect me to say. We're not bloody Midnight Oil are we. We're just a relatively unknown band from Nimbin brandishing our own particular virtuosity & flamboyant nocturnal emissions. We had a really good time to tell the truth. And I don't want to seem big-headed or anything, but every- we went they loved us. Well, they liked us a lot anyway....I think.

All the way from the cultural centre of

We first knew we were in Qld. when driving through green pastures we spied those strange ferro object D'ART sticking out of yonder paddock. On closer inspection we were delighted forsooth to find a miniture replica of Mt Everest the leaning tower of Pizza & some other unexplained things. Rising monumental dreams of incredibly inspired Queens-lander with a vision quest to fill stark unimaginative landscapes of lush valleys & trees with something truly visual for the tourist. A great soul, perhaps even one of the great rescarces mactory.

BACKBURN: THE ATTITUDE THAT COST 1600 HECTARES

Bushfire season is a difficult concept for those of us to whom a bushfire is not an immediate threat; nothing more than a big headline in the city dailies. Usually the emergency unites and concentrates local effort in the burning areas. Recently in the Nimbin region we had a fortnight of firefighting that highlighted differences of opinion between fire brigades and residents of bush areas.

For the first time, the how and why of firefighting, the attitude to the land, is being seriously questioned.

All up, we all lost 1600 hectares, some of it grazing land, a lot of it re-afforested carefully by the communities. In the aftermath of a big burn people are scratching their heads and wondering how much of this was really necessary. "We could have saved it if...". Only accusations rage, and then quietly and privately.

None of the residents are keen to write the local brigade off completely. "The fire brigade do a lot of good, save a lot of houses..." is a stock phrase amongst the 'new' settlers. One local woman said, "I'm not knocking the brigades, they're well trained, they're efficient with fire." The word 'but' looms ominously in many cases as loss of forest land is considered. Regenerated over the years, the land is not a high priority on the fire brigades list. Local professional and volunteer brigades save lives houses and property. It's a job everyone admits they do well. However, in the past it appears a lot of forested areas have been sacrificed unnecessarily. Certainly it seems the brigades do not value re-forested areas in the same sense they view grazing land or orchards as resources. This conflict highlights the different attitudes to land use between the reforesters and the graziers and orchardists on the Far North Coast. And it always comes to a head during bushfire season.

It is this conflict that weakens communication between the two groups. Communication and co-ordination between firefighting groups is vital during a fire. When the brigades, comprised largely of 'old' residents, fight a fire that passes over land owned by a community, tempers sometimes flare and add to the fray. During a bushfire, brigades are empowered to backburn on an endangered property, whether the occupants like it or not. While saving property and resources is high on a brigades' list of priorities, the old notions of property do not extend to the reafforested areas, painstakingly regenerated by communities. Community volunteers and their friends (who at one community numbered sixty) view regenerated areas as a resource, and will plan their fighting strategies accordingly to save the maximum amount of tree cover, as well as lives and property. These methods often come into conflict with the brigades whose chain of command stretches all the way to state level, and whose methods encompass present day attitudes to land use.

Living amongst the trees is all very well, according to the locals, but who has to stick their bloody necks out when the trees burn. So they cut them all down. This is old dairy cattle country, the locals are remnants of old dairy farming clans. Trees are viewed as shade, housing, firewood and bloody dangerous things that burn a lot in bushfire season. Trees do that 'round here with startling regularity. In an area that would naturally catch alight every 150 - 450 years, October firefighting seems to have become a local past time. Which begs the question as to how the fires actually start. It is estimated that 95% of bushfires are started through careless burning off. Given the last two weeks, it's a figure I believe to be reasonably accurate.

Backburning and burning off have a long history in Australian fire control. Both the alternative community and the established locals agree to this. The question becomes when and how it is applicable. One ex- NSW fireman, recently moved to the community said, "I've never seen them (the brigade) fight a fire, I've only seen them backburn. It left an awful taste in my mouth." Another community member replied, "Backburning is a useful tool, it's not the first tool, it's an appropriate tool to use when you fight a fire." It should be lit "when you see the reds of it's eyes." Others commented, "They place a lot of emphasis on getting to dinner on time. They'd light a big fire and then say it'll all be over soon, mate, we'll be home in time for tea." One fire chief, talking over the CB emergency channel, allegedly said to another, "This backburn's looking bad." to which the other replied "I LIT that backburn." I was told it sounded as though he were protecting a work of art. And some backburning does appear indiscriminate. On Saturday I watched the brigade backburn from a friend's front gate, except that the fire was coming from the other side of the house, about a kilometre away (really too distant for safe burning). The fire was somehow expected to burn around the house and up the hill to be effective. Inevitably it caught in the long grass in the next paddock, and was last seen speeding north-east towards the Rocks where it put another eight houses in danger. The brigades do not seem at all adverse to creating wide fronts and new outbreaks of potentially dangerous burnoff. Oblivious to all peril, they feel it gives them a better chance to stop the fire completely, saving houses and land at the expense of a few trees. Sometimes it backfires, and the results are disastrous.

The communities are not without support. At most times during the fire at Mountaintop community there were sixty community firefighters and friends, ("We're going to be here whether they like it or not. We have a right to be.") These numbers don't include the brigades. Community firefighting teams generally organised in the traditional sense, but are able to co-operate and make effective decisions as opposed to the brigades chain-of-command mentality. One community Member said "Our story is getting it done by co-operation, theirs is by telling everyone what to do. The power for controlling bushfires should be localised and decentralised." At times the fire seems to be a forgotten third party in the dispute between the two groups. Complaints of spasmodic support and interference are rife from both sides. "They'd come in and say 'You don't want to do it our way, we'll piss off.'" one of the community firefighters said. "At times they'd disrupt days of planned work. We had a fire break going, about 200m wide, the brigade came along and lit it into a 2km front, which was completely unnecessary."

"The established residents don't understand the alternatives romance with trees," one observer told me, "They think we're crazy, endangering our lives." Regenerating areas represents a lot of hard work. The fire that stripped Mountaintop lost an estimated 50%-60% of tree cover that was a potential source of capital through timber and firewood. It was also a work of loving dedication to community ideals, an attempt to redress what they feel to be irresponsible land use in our own society. Despite the losses, everyone feels they got off lightly, the fires killed no-one, only one dwelling was lost and a lot of that credit goes to the fire brigades. One community member said during this discussion that "we were not well prepared for this fire, but we'll be better prepared next time, we will protect the timbered acres."

On Saturday it rained heavily, briefly, then sent hail pelting till the ground was covered with white stones bouncing like ping-pong balls that put out most of the flames, hailstorms melting into smouldering embers. Posthumously we can wait and see if anything good will rise from these ashes.

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NS 17/7/86

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"Many of these dwellings cannot be legalised because they are not in multiple occupancy or dual occupancy zones," he said.

"The amnesty allows the council to defer development applications until the new planning guidelines are announced.

"But there still would be a residue of people who would not qualify under the new guidelines.

"The council could send a list of these buildings to the Department of Environment and Planning, suggesting collective spot rezonings to clean up the problem."

Mr Reynders said he had no idea when the new planning guidelines might be gazetted.



MR REYNDERS

Officers look at problem buildings

Last chance offered to illegal builders

THE NORTHERN STAR, FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1986

Two senior officers of the NSW Department of Local Government held talks in Lismore this week with the Lismore City Council on multiple-occupancy building standards.

They are the chairman of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee, Mr Lyall Dix, and the chief technical officer of the department's land and building development branch, Mr Trevor Howse.

Mr Dix and Mr Howse were sent to Lismore to resolve problems confronting the council in applying Ordinance 70 building standards to multiple-occupancy housing.

The former Minister for Local Government, Mr Stewart, offered to send the two officers to Lismore when responding last year to a letter from the council concerning the Bodhi Farm multiple-occupancy development at The Channon.

The council had written to the Minister after the NSW Land and Environment Court refused to uphold demolition orders issued on two residences at Bodhi Farm.

Mr Stewart was asked to provide local government with clearly-defined guidelines for applying Ordinance 70 building standards to multiple-occupancy.

While in Lismore, Mr Dix and Mr Howse had talks with senior council officers and visited multiple-occupancy developments, including Bodhi Farm.

They also attended a meeting of the Lismore City Council on Tuesday night.

Mr Dix told aldermen that local government could not issue retrospective building approvals for illegal buildings.

He said councils could issue Section 317A certificates of compliance for illegal buildings, but only if the owner requested one and the building complied with Ordinance 70 standards.

Any illegal builder requesting a certificate of compliance could be asked to supply the council with plans and specifications and any other information needed to ensure that the building complied with Ordinance 70.

Banks and building societies would not finance the purchase of any building which had not been issued with a certificate.

Mr Dix was asked if the council and individual aldermen could be held legally liable in the event of a certificate being issued for a building which was later found to be structurally unsound.

He warned that councils had to act with 'due care and diligence' in issuing the certificates.

Otherwise they could be found liable.

"Obviously, it is difficult to see into a concrete slab once it has been laid," he said.

"Council building inspectors must make an assessment based on experience and the facts before them."

Mr Dix said that a recent High Court decision had dramatically shifted the onus of liability from the council to the owners in cases of illegal buildings.

"The law is quite clear. People must get approval before constructing a building," he said.

"Councils should use demolition orders as a last resort."

• Continued Page 5

The Lismore City Council has announced plans for a stringent clampdown on illegal building work undertaken after next June 30.

Owners of illegal buildings in the City Council area will be granted an amnesty from prosecution if they apply for building approval before the June 30 deadline.

But anyone carrying out building work after that date without first obtaining council approval will be prosecuted under the New South Wales Local Government Act.

The council implemented the new policy this week after deciding to take tough action aimed at overcoming problems resulting from a rash of illegal building activity in its area.

The city health surveyor, Mr J Douglass, expressed alarm about the situation in a report recommending a set policy aimed at curbing 'unbridled illegal building work'.

Mr Douglass said that a disturbing increase in the incidence of illegal building during the past two years had to be checked if the council was to maintain reasonable control over buildings.

"Prosecution and demolition orders have been discussed, but there are problems associated with both," he said.

"The main problem with prosecution is that the legal costs incurred by the council usually exceed the fines and costs awarded by the court."

"And obtaining of a verdict against an illegal builder does not necessarily mean that the building, if sub-standard, will be brought up to a

standard acceptable to the council."

Mr Douglass accepted that demolition orders should be issued for illegal residences only as a last resort, and when all other avenues had been exhausted.

"As a general principle, it would be best — subject to development consent being available — to try to have all illegal buildings brought up to standard," he said.

"But there need not be the same reluctance to issue demolition orders on non-residential structures, if the co-operation of the owner cannot be secured to bring it up to standard."

"Nevertheless, there must be some deterrent if the council is to maintain any credibility in building controls."

Mr Douglass proposed a policy which, after a period of amnesty, would allow the owners of illegal buildings to apply to the council for development and building consent.

He said that when the amnesty expired, it should be council policy to prosecute illegal builders under sections 311 and 317 of the Local Government Act.

"While the amnesty is in force, extensive publicity should be given to the council's intentions," Mr Douglass said.

"Anyone found illegally constructing buildings during the amnesty should be treated in the same way as those covered by the amnesty — not prosecuted, but required to submit plans for specifications to the council."

If the council is satisfied, it can issue a Section 317A certificate of compliance indicating that, in the opinion of the

council, the building meets Ordinance 70 standards.

In the event of an illegal builder failing to submit this information, he may be required by the council to improve the structure, or demolish it.

4. THE NORTHERN STAR, SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1986.

Council to seek out illegal buildings

The legal options open to the Kyogle Shire Council in dealing with unauthorised buildings within the shire boundaries are to be investigated by a newly formed committee.

The committee's work will complement a survey being carried out by council staff to identify and map all illegal constructions in the shire.

During the first inspection of properties undertaken for the survey, 27 unauthorised buildings were identified in the Upper Horseshoe Creek area.

In a report to the council this week, the shire engineer, Mr P Knight, said that the survey would be a 'lengthy task'.

But he said it was the only way the council could determine the extent of the problem.

"The question of what action the council should take in these matters is not simple," he said.

"All unauthorised dwellings are an offence against the Local Government Act. Many, but not all, are an offence against the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act."

"There are differing legal approaches the council can take — through building laws, planning laws, or both."

Mr Knight recommended that the council write to landowners whose properties contained unauthorised

buildings informing them of the buildings which were illegal and advising them that the council would take legal action if the constructions were not regularised within three months.

He also advised the council to reconstitute the town planning committee to become the town planning and building committee and recommended that it be authorised to investigate the legal options open to the council in dealing with illegal dwellings and the appropriate action for the council to take in each case.

The council adopted the recommendations.

After the meeting, Mr Knight said that the council would prefer landholders with unauthorised buildings on their properties to approach the council rather than have staff go in search of them.

"Even if the buildings are illegal, the council is willing to discuss the matter and advise landholders on the steps to take to have the buildings legalised," he said.

Multiple occupancy inquiry

Submission outlines problems

The submission by the Rural Resettlement Task Force to the Commission of Inquiry into multiple occupancy in Tweed Shire covered almost 70 foolscap pages.

It had five separate sections and 28 appendices.

The submission also contained comments and recommendations arising from primary submissions by several organisations.

These were Tweed Shire Council, Lismore City Council, Kyogle Shire Council, Land Commission, Northern Rivers County Council, Department of Agriculture, Department of Local Government, Soil Conservation Service, Johnson Farm Management and the Department of Planning and Environment.

The Task Force in its summary of recommendations dealt with eight separate sections.

These were:

- Problems encountered by the council in applying the present provisions of LEP No. 6 Shire of Tweed.

- The determination of an equitable formula for arriving at contributions under Section 94 towards council provided services and facilities.

- The implications of MO development for the provision of other services and facilities.

- The need for an equitable system to rate properties with MO

approval commensurate with the actual residential occupation of the land.

- Schemes in conflict with MO objectives which involve small areas of common land and large areas effectively alienated to individual management or residential subdivision.

- Action that anticipates development approval such as clearing land, road building and the construction of buildings.

- Adverse impacts on individual MO proposals on other residents in the vicinity.

- Means suggested to overcome these problems and any others that might be identified by the commission.

Some of the recommendations under the various sections were:

- "That the commission recommend that the SEPP 15 provide there be no minimum lot size for MO development (i.e. that the present 40 ha minimum be deleted and that council consider each case on its merits).

- "That clause 12A (2) (b) be retained to give effect to the provision that MO be owned in its entirety in common by at least two thirds of all adults residing on the land, or is otherwise owned on behalf of those persons".

- "That council does have adequate jurisdiction to assess and determine the nature of internal roads".

- That the vast number of complaints ... caused ... by the construction of

internal roads' appears primarily to be related to non bona-fide MO development".

- "That the attention of the Minister for Planning and Environment be drawn to the immunity with which trees of significance may be, and it appears recently have been, destroyed in the Tweed Shire area and that if immediate rectification by council is not forthcoming that consideration be given by the Minister to issuing an appropriate directive, or if necessary relieving the council of its planning jurisdiction".

- "That if a breach of the Tree Preservation Order occurs council automatically take action to seek redress as provided by the:

1. Imposition of a fine up to \$20,000 and
2. The replanting of nominated trees and their maintenance to maturity and
3. Provision of security to cover default".

- "That a uniform standard of construction for internal roads should not be adopted and that construction need not be supervised by a qualified engineer".

- "That where a Section 94 contribution is applicable to a MO development:—

- (a) an option always be provided for a time payment arrangement;

- (b) no payment need commence prior to the first building application approval; and

- (c) an option always be provided for 'in kind' payments".

- "That subject to preceding recommendation the following maximum contributions are recommended:—

- (a) Roads and bridges — maximum of \$1500 per dwelling.

- (b) Community facilities — maximum of \$150 per dwelling.

- (c) Open space — maximum of \$150 per dwelling.

- (d) Bush fire fighting facilities — maximum of \$150 per dwelling".

- "That it be recommended to the Minister for Natural Resources Janice Crosio that local electricity authorities be advised of the Government's policy in support of the use of renewable energy resources; and to take appropriate steps to ensure that such authorities do not lend weight to local government councils by recommending the supply of mains power, as a condition of MO development approval".

- "That MO communities pose no unusual specific 'threat' to traditional non-intensive rural agricultural development".

- "That the use of 'buffer zoning' not be required between MO communities and non-intensive rural agricultural development".

- "That MO development be permissible with council approval on prime agricultural land developed in pursuant to

the draft SEPP and in particular the clause which provides that land on which the dwellings are situated is not prime crop and pasture land".

- "That the present options open to council for rating should not be changed".

- "That the council may opt, where appropriate, to require as a condition of approval, that the approval will lapse if at the expiration of a specified period, specific conditions have not been fulfilled, or development as applied for has not occurred".

- "That where the council considers a MO application is questionable, due to its size or bona-fides etc., council recommends that the application be withdrawn and re-submitted for re-zoning as a 'rural residential' area".

- "That in respect of construction carried out without council consent, a section of the Act gives

council discretion in that it 'may' order demolition, or it 'may' order the doing of "such work as is necessary to make the building comply with the Act" or it 'may' choose to take no action. The issuing of a demolition should be an action of last resort only and that in the first instance rectification of the situation be sought by council on as co-operative a basis with the owners as practical".

- "That as far as is practicable the application of building regulations be based upon the 'performance criteria' and that, where possible there be 'deregulation' of buildings codes in accordance with

objections of the Australia Uniform Building Regulations Co-ordinating Council".

- "That existing illegal MO development be afforded the opportunity of legalisation as provided, if this is considered to be not technically possible then adopting a policy such as to give effect to the spirit of this policy".

- "That the proposed licensing of caravan parks and camping grounds be introduced as a matter of urgency and that when introduced, this provision be used by applicants as one option to facilitate non share holders residing on MO land or potential MO land".

N.S. 16/2/87

Malaysia set to ban eat-driving

KUALA LUMPUR (AP). — Car drivers in Malaysia will be banned from smoking, eating or drinking any kind of beverage while driving under a proposed new law, a top official said.

Works Minister Mr S Samy Vellu said other actions for which motorists would be fined under the proposed law being worked out by his Ministry included throwing litter from cars and hanging an arm outside the car.

All these actions makes drivers pay less attention to driving and cause accidents, he told reporters.

He said the ban on drinking while driving would include all beverages, not just liquor.

Alderman hits out at building code

The Lismore City Council should protest over the Department of Local Government's interpretation of building code to not require external walls, Ald H Habib told the council's general purposes committee meeting.

The senior Lismore City Council health surveyor's report to the meeting said that the department had interpreted Ordinance 70 of the State Building Code to not require houses to have external walls.

The Department of Local Government's Building Advisory Section advised the council that under the Local Government Act, a council could require external walls as a condition of the building approval.

But any such conditions

would be subject to an appeal by the applicant to the Land and Environment Court.

Ald J Crowther said the council should formulate a policy on external walls.

"It will remain a matter of intimidation until it has gone to the Land and Environment Court for testing," he said.

Ald Habib said the council should inform the Minister for Local Government, Mrs Crosio, of its feelings about the department's interpretation of Ordinance 70.

He said that unless some action was taken, it would be just another example of the council accepting whatever the Government said.

"We should be protesting to show that we are not weak and will just accept anything," he said.

"The council should take up the matter with the Local Government Association."

The committee recommended that the council receive the information from the department, but take no further action.

It also adopted recommendations from the senior health surveyor that when considering a building application, the council use its general powers under the Local Government Act to require external walls; where a building application designated an area in a dwelling as a room, that such a room be required to be provided with external walls and that if no such room designation was assigned to an area, that it not be included in the floor area calculation.

WELLINGTON (AFP). — French undersea explorer and environmentalist Jacques Cousteau said he planned to make an unauthorised visit in the next few months to France's nuclear weapons test site in the South Pacific.

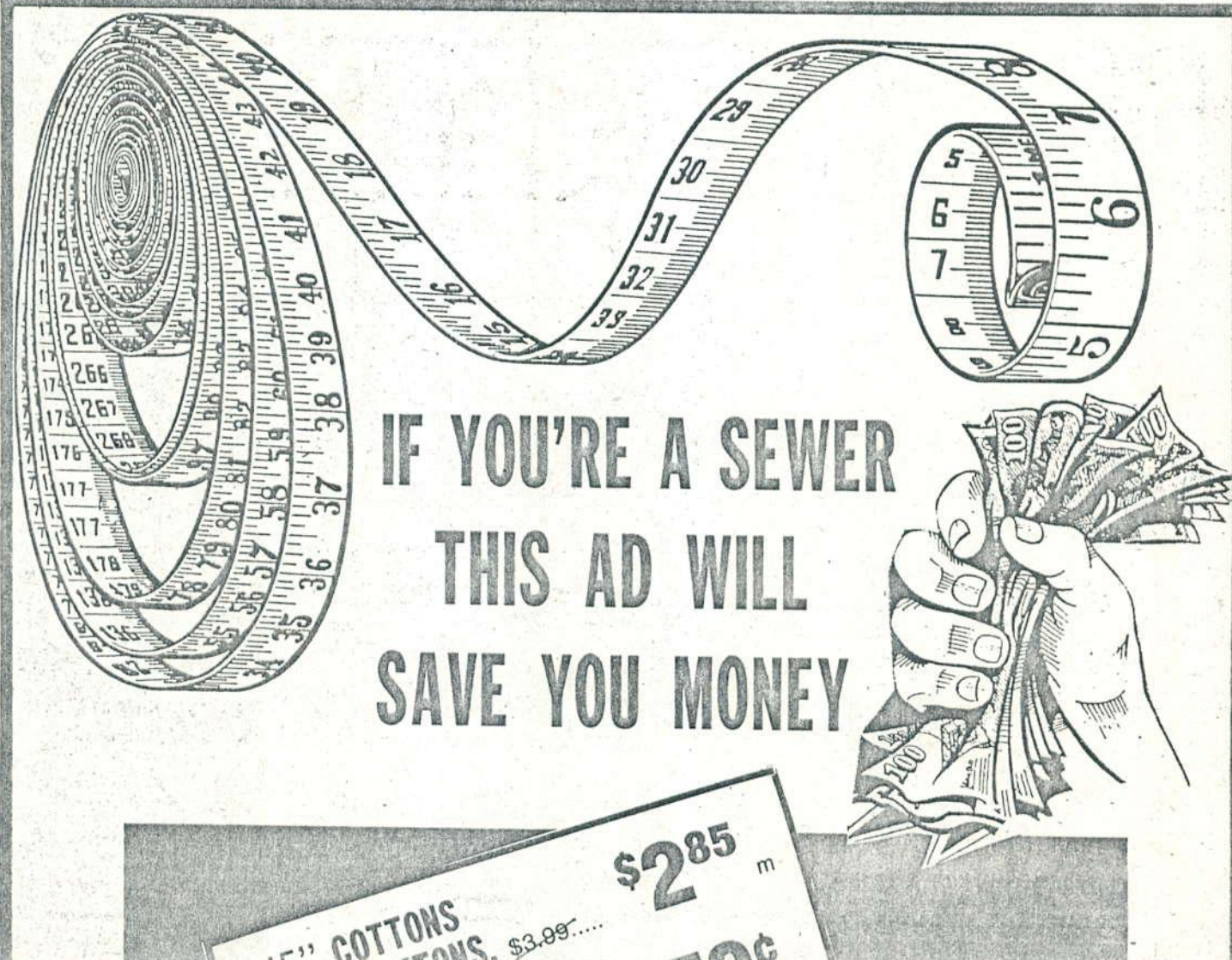
Cousteau, in New Zealand filming documentaries with his research ship Calypso, said he would make the trip to Mururoa Atoll in French Polynesia as an uninvited guest of his own Government.

But he said he did not expect a hostile reception.

"I think they will tolerate us because otherwise it would be bad for them," he said in a radio interview.

"But we are not invited and we have not the same aggressive position as Greenpeace."

"We do things quietly but we do them, and I think we will be more efficient than they have



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Words:

DAVID CONLEY

Pictures:

GRAHAME LONG



Nimbin remains a mirror to the '60s

AUSTRALIA'S flower power people came, saw and conquered Nimbin.

And they got stoned in it, thrived in it and magnetised it to attract seemingly everyone in Australia at a loose end or in the hunt for a new lifestyle.

Nimbin — the dairy town which became the commune capital of Australia — has changed its face since the heady days of 1973. It was then that 5000 'new age' people came to the mountain village 40km northeast of Byron Bay to celebrate the Aquarius Festival.

Tourists now roll in by the bus load to gawk at 'hippies', traffic markers dot the town and parking spots aren't easy to find. And an air of commercialism has filtered into the main street — just the kind of thing many residents came to the area to escape.

In 14 years Nimbin has made the journey from trendy to passe, but many of the original 'new settlers' have held on to prove people can live in harmony with each other and with nature.

Lifestyle

Nimbin — population about 400 — is the commercial and social hub for surrounding communes established in the wake of the Aquarius Festival. There are about 30 communes containing from a handful to a few hundred residents.

The largest is Tuntable, formed as a land-sharing co-operative in 1973. The co-op owns 564 hectares in the Tuntable Valley as well as Nimbin's Rainbow Restaurant and a share of the town's media centre.

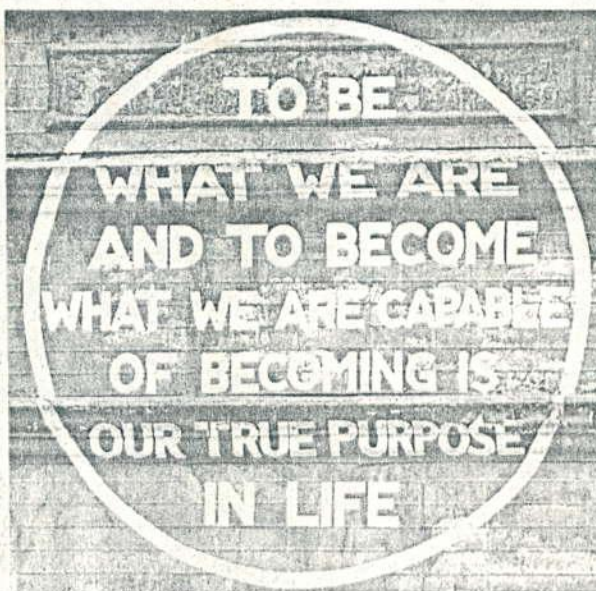
"People are attracted to Nimbin because of its lifestyle," says David Lambert, a Canadian-born 'new settler' who lives at Tuntable and is secretary of the Rural Resettlement Task Force.

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Many think communes are full of 'penniless dole bludgers'. But it costs from \$4000 to \$15,000 to buy into most Nimbin communes. Then the new settler has to build a house. And if a job is needed, there aren't many local openings.

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Guests can stay on the property if invited by a resident member but must leave if objected to by four or more members. And there's a joining fee of \$1000 — originally \$50 — and an annual levy of \$240, which is halved if the resident works five days a week on approved community tasks.

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ABOVE: Words atop the Neighbourhood Centre is the motto by which many of the towns people strive to live.



TOP: The centre of Nimbin. Some of the shops are owned by the 'new generation'.

The 'hills are alive with marihuana'

ONE suspects the Nimbin hills are alive with the silence of marihuana growing.

That's because the streets are alive with the odour of marihuana burning. At least that was the case during a 'Nimbin Revisited' visit to Nimbin.

We weren't out of our car two minutes when a disoriented young woman approached photographer Grahame Long and mumbled something about buying something from her. In so doing, she bumped into him and then into a footpath table, from which fell an item for sale.

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It's a place where anything goes and usually does. Heroin reportedly has done the rounds and young 'blow-ins' are likely to be found sleeping almost anywhere, including underneath the town's buildings.

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Clearly, intolerant people wouldn't be happy there. Local resident Gloria Constine writes in the booklet *Nimbin and Environs*:

"Nimbin is by no means a united community. There are many groupings of people who do or don't associate with each other, and it's not a simplistic 'straights or hippies' dichotomy either."

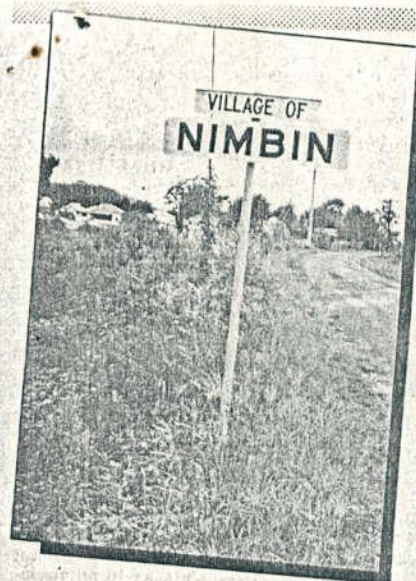
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And even the businesses seem laid-back about taking your money. Evidence: Lifestyle Real Estate (for land in the rainbow region) and the Nimbin Museum, which looks remarkably like a second-hand shop.

The *Nimbin News* also issues forth the flavour of the community. There are stories entitled *Toward the Untouched Inner Reality*, *New Age Civilisation*, *Earth Garden*, *The Big Leap*, or *Freakout and Nuclear News*.

Advertisements are equally intriguing. There's the *Anandamela Festival of Bliss*, a two-wheel tractor, Georgia Earth Bricks (made on the site), a radiation ready reckoner and snake stones, said to absorb venom from the bites of snakes and spiders.



Some of the signs of the times around Nimbin



The town's changed, but Jack's happy

RETIRED coal miner Jack Deulin, pictured, probably thought life was playing one of its devilish little tricks on him when he moved to Nimbin after the Aquarius festival in 1973.

Jack, 73, figured he was retiring to a quiet, ordinary rural community where men are men and cows are cows. What he got was a town which more than any other in Australia is synonymous with the counter-culture and all it's alleged to entail — communes, drugs, free sex and 'open plan' life-styles.

Hardly the stuff of a retirement village. But Jack isn't complaining. In fact he loves the place.

He and his family first came to NSW's northern hideaway 20 years ago for a holiday. It seemed the place to be. After all, Nimbin is an Aboriginal word which happens to mean little old wise man who dwells in the mountains.

"It was so quiet you could shoot a gun up the street and not hit anyone," said Jack, a shy but friendly man.

When the time came to retire from the Camden coal mine, his son and daughter had already moved to Nimbin and bought a farm. Jack and his wife followed them, buying a small house a stone's throw from the town centre for \$10,000.

He calculates it's worth \$20,000 today, rising real estate prices being one of the by-products of what some would call a 'hippie invasion'.

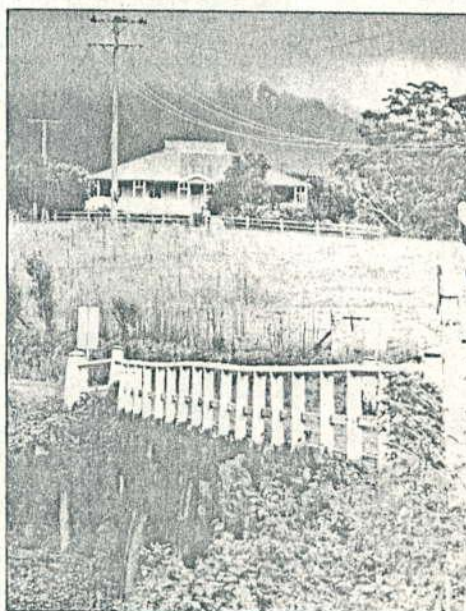
"We just thought it was a quiet little town," said Jack. "The climate was ideal and everything's handy."

Jack said the 'alternative society' has changed things but that's fine by him.

"They don't interfere with me and I don't interfere with them," he said.

"Sometimes drifters come through and spoil things. They camp anywhere and they're possibly on drugs. But the alternative society people who've settled here are decent people."

In 14 years Nimbin has made the journey from trendy to passe, but many of the original 'new settlers' have held on to prove people can live in harmony with each other and with nature



RIGHT: The entrance to Nimbin. A quiet country town?

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KENO

Keno continues on its way in the winning stakes with the punters, with over \$258,000 being paid out last week.

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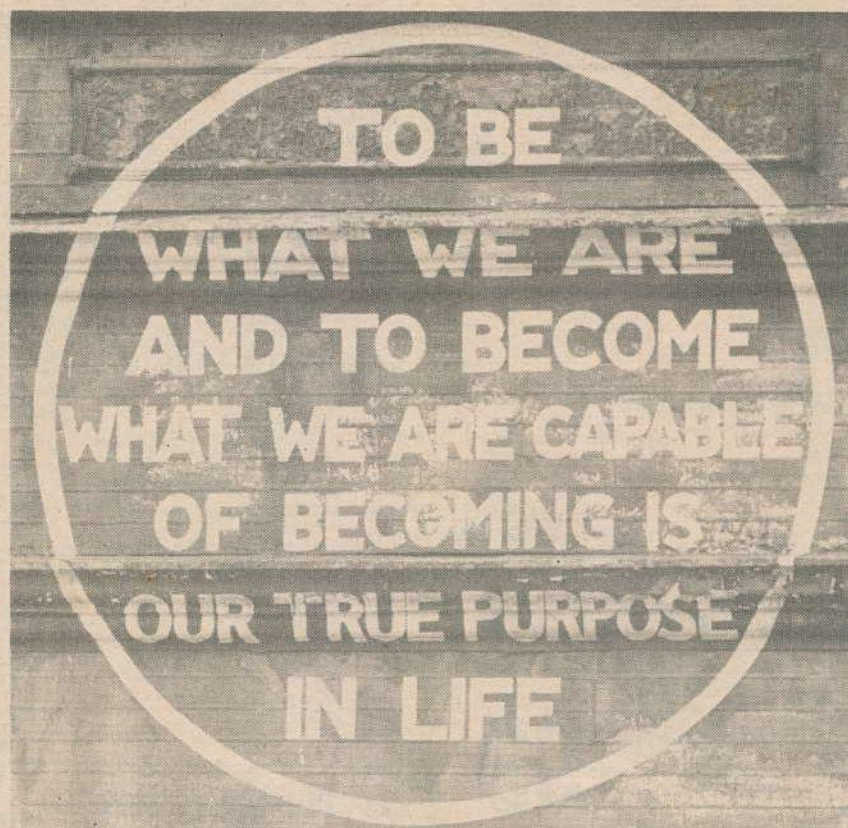
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And even the businesses seem laid-back about taking your money. Evidence: Lifestyle Real Estate (for land in the rainbow region) and the Nimbin Museum, which looks remarkably like a second-hand shop.

The *Nimbin News* also issues forth the flavour of the community. There are stories entitled *Toward the Untouched Inner Reality*, *New Age Civilisation*, *Earth Garden*, *The Big Leap*, or *Freakout and Nuclear News*.

Advertisements are equally intriguing. There's the *Anandamela Festival of Bliss*, a two-wheel tractor, *Georgica Earth Bricks* (made on the site), a radiation ready reckoner and snake stones, said to absorb venom from the bites of snakes and spiders.

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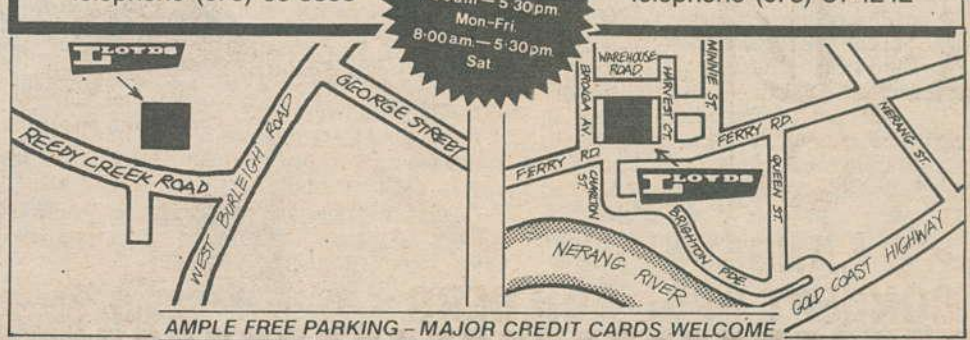
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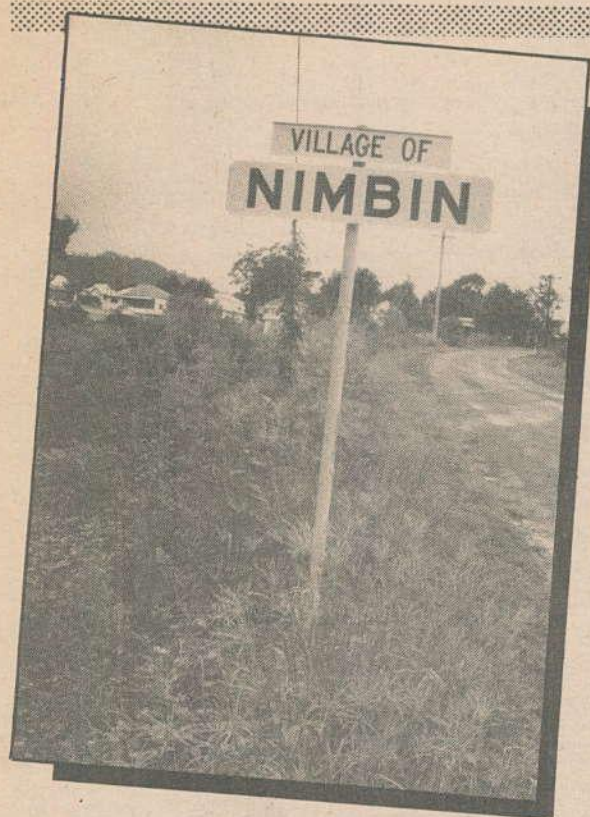
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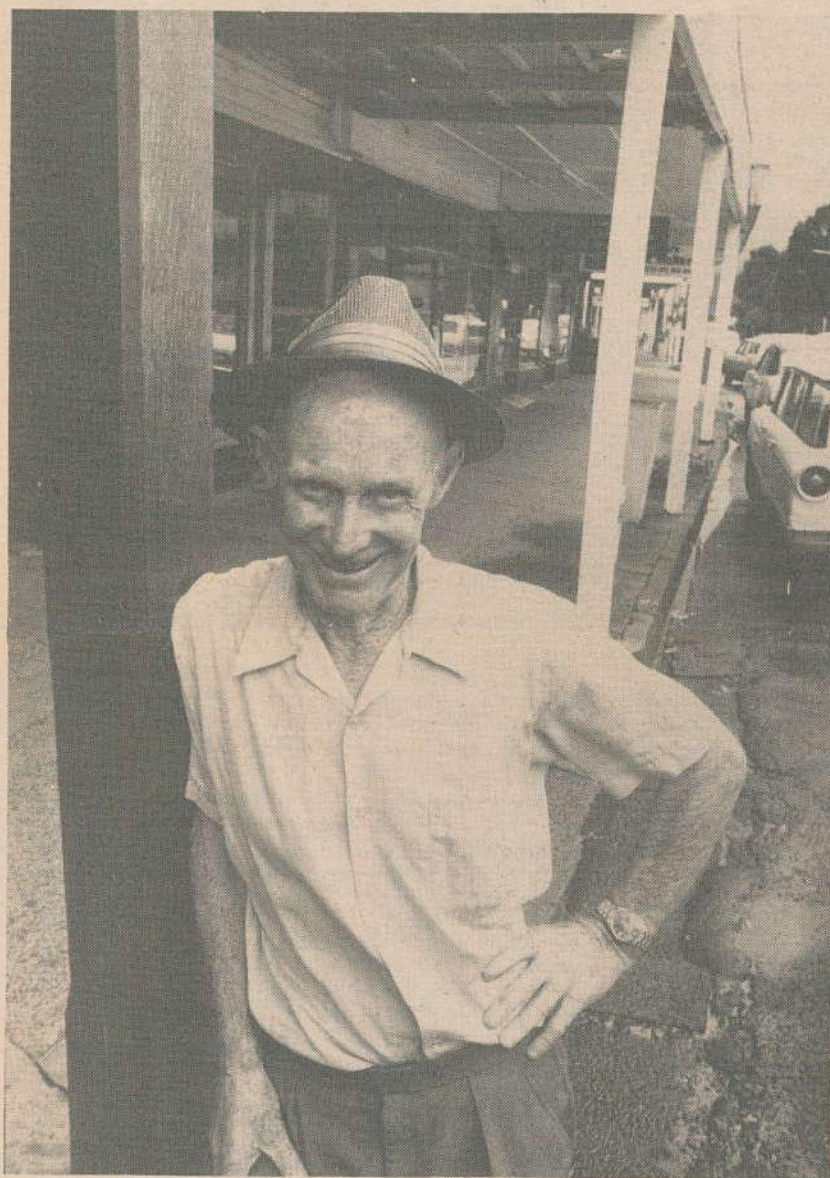
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Some of the signs of the times around Nimbin



The town's changed, but Jack's happy

RETIRED coal miner Jack Deulin, pictured, probably thought life was playing one of its devilish little tricks on him when he moved to Nimbin after the Aquarius festival in 1973.

Jack, 73, figured he was retiring to a quiet, ordinary rural community where men are men and cows are cows. What he got was a town which more than any other in Australia is synonymous with the counter-culture and all it's alleged to entail — communes, drugs, free sex and 'open plan' life-styles.

Hardly the stuff of a retirement village. But Jack isn't complaining. In fact he loves the place.

He and his family first came to NSW's northern hideaway 20 years ago for a holiday. It seemed the place to be. After all, Nimbin is an Aboriginal word which happens to mean little old wise man who dwells in the mountains.

"It was so quiet you could shoot a gun up the street and not hit anyone," said Jack, a shy but friendly man. □□□

When the time came to retire from the Camden coal mine, his son and daughter had already moved to Nimbin and bought a farm. Jack and his wife followed them, buying a small house a stone's throw from the town centre for \$10,000.

He calculates it's worth \$20,000 today, rising real estate prices being one of the by-products of what some would call a 'hippie invasion'.

"We just thought it was a quiet little town," said Jack. "The climate was ideal and everything's handy."

Jack said the 'alternative society' has changed things but that's fine by him.

"They don't interfere with me and I don't interfere with them," he said.

"Sometimes drifters come through and spoil things. They camp anywhere and they're possibly on drugs. But the alternative society people who've settled here are decent people."

In 14 years Nimbin has made the journey from trendy to passe, but many of the original 'new settlers' have held on to prove people can live in harmony with each other and with nature



RIGHT: The entrance to Nimbin. A quiet country town?

Jupiters
CASINO

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PROGRESSIVE
JACKPOTS ARE NOW
OVER:

\$752,000

February has been another record month for Video Game jackpots. In just 22 days, over \$883,000 worth of jackpots have been won and paying out big jackpots is part of our daily routine. A cool \$250,000 Blackjack jackpot is set to go off.

KENO

Keno continues on its way in the winning stakes with the punters, with over \$258,000 being paid out last week.

Our luckiest Keno player last week won \$7,500 by correctly selecting 7 out of 8 numbers on a \$5 jackpot ticket.

Nicholsons

For that special occasion you must try Nicholsons Restaurant. On the Lobby Level, away from the hustle and bustle, Nicholsons offers the ultimate in fine dining. Be sure to ring for reservations.

For that classic dining experience, may we suggest grilled John Dory served in a Mousseline of Pink Peppercorn.

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Role of small business so vital

THE Queensland Government's Small Business Development Corporation offers a wide range of support services to assist the small business community.

The SBDC provides counselling facilities, financial advice, training and education programmes, workshops and seminars. In addition, a permanent new Tech Expo has been established at the SBDC's Brisbane headquarters.

The State Government acknowledges the vital role of small business.

Queensland, with 16 per cent of Australia's population, has more than 20 per cent of the nation's small

ROB BORRIDGE
NP,
Surfers Paradise



businesses with more than 268,000 people working in the self-employed sector.

At present small business employs more than 50 per cent of Queensland's private sector workforce. While the self-employed sector in Australia grew by some 2.4 per cent in 1985-86, Queensland's self-employed sector

grew by 8.6 per cent during the same period, 250 per cent faster than the national average.

This is despite the general economic downturn and the high tax, high interest rate policies of the Federal Government.

The State Government has expanded the role of the SBDC to meet demand. We anticipate that of the 52,000 new jobs that will be created in the tourist industry alone in the next five years a large percentage will be in the small business sector.

I would urge local small business operators to take advantage of the many services and programmes operated by the SBDC. Last year 14.9 per cent of inquiries handled by the corporation emanated from the Gold Coast.



KATHY SULLIVAN
Lib, Moncrieff

places for only a third

MORE Gold Coast students would be able to undertake tertiary studies if Government obstacles to private investment in education could be removed.

Queensland Universities and CAEs were limited to offering places to only one third of 1560 graduating high school students from the Gold Coast and surrounding areas last year.

Not all seniors are interested in tertiary study, but as we become more of an information society higher education will grow increasingly important.

There are also many older people seeking to get tertiary qualifications to fit them for the challenges of the future.

With our changing economic and social structures becoming increasingly dependent to knowledge and skills, the demand for qualified employees will grow.

The Liberal and National Parties' Policy on Higher Education, which will be released early next month, will concentrate on injecting new life into the system.

The real challenge is to encourage the community to invest in the activities of universities and CAEs, and to give each institution the green light for growth and expansion.

There will never be enough places to meet demand whilst our tertiary institutions are dependent on the political and budgetary constraints facing every government.

Therefore, as well as encouraging competition between existing institutions, the development of new non-government universities and colleges is fundamental to the future of tertiary education in Australia.

And as we know, indications are that bank interest rates are set to rise by half a per cent in the very near future, putting a further financial burden on the house owner.

As a State Government we are doing everything possible to keep our housing industry going, by providing funds for building houses for rental and purchase for low-income earners as well as supporting private industry schemes such as I am announcing this weekend.

However, we are tied to national rates and in what may well be an election year it will give the people of Australia the chance to voice their anger at the ballot box.

Partyline



TOM HYND
NP, Nerang

Busy and exciting week

I AM pleased to report that my first week in parliament has been both busy and exciting.

The first major step as your parliamentary representative for the electorate of Nerang was to take the Oath of Allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

It is a pre-requisite that all members of the Legislative Assembly either take the oath or an affirmation of allegiance prior to sitting or voting in the House.

I was both delighted and proud when the Member for Fassifern, Kev Lingard, MLA, attained the position as Speaker of the House. Kevin is a member of strong character and will rule and control the house with dignity and decorum.

We, as members of the Parliament, had the privilege of presenting Mr Speaker to his Excellency the Governor at Government House on Tuesday, February 17.

You will have read by now that our Speaker moved straight into action with decisive control and made the balance of the week an exercise in Parliamentary discipline.

While Parliament is sitting I will only be in my electorate office on Mondays and Fridays. However, if any constituent is in Brisbane during the times parliament is sitting, please feel free to attend any part of the session as you are welcome in the gallery any time.

My electorate secretary will advise me of any matter of urgency and it may well be that I can assist with a number of our local problems between sessions of the house.

Blunder by minister will bury Hawke government

THIS week's political gaffe by Senator Ryan in saying in the Federal Parliament that interest rates will not fall is a bad blunder by a government minister.

In addition, she was forced to table a document given to her by a senior officer in which that advice was obtained.

Interest rates are high for several reasons.

But the two most important is that the government is borrowing and spending too much, and the government is deliberately keeping its own borrowing rates high to prevent a flight of capital from this country.

PETER WHITE
Liberal
McPherson



Everyone suffers from high interest rates.

When money becomes too expensive to borrow the economy starts to close down.

People buy fewer houses, fewer cars, they take less holidays, they buy less consumption goods and they buy less clothing.

Consequently there is little expansion in business,

unemployment remains high and inflation takes off.

High interest rates will be the death knell of this government.

Their confirmation that interest rates will remain high on top of their refusal to lower taxation rates will bury them.

Let them have an election whenever they like.

Tower planning to their credit

OVER recent months, since the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services Martin Tenni MLA, decided to build the Mal Taylor Gold Coast Seaway Control Tower, I have chaired a number of meetings attended by representatives of the Department of Maritime Services, Water Police, Gold Coast Waterways Authority, Southport/Surfers Paradise Air Sea Rescue and the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard.

During the course of the meetings there has been a completely co-operative approach from all concerned to ensure that it is a most efficient operation, and in this regard I should commend the principal officers of both the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard and the Southport/Surfers Paradise Air Sea Rescue.

Both of these organisations have provided a format of operation where they are able to operate all year round such an important facility by the use of dedicated volunteers who operate on a professionally trained basis is of great credit to both organisations and the community spirit which they demonstrate.

The input from the three governmental

groups, that is the Department of Maritime Services, Gold Coast Waterways Authority and the Queensland Water Police, has shown the considerable advantage of the Waterways Building and the three organisations working side-by-side.

□□□

The new proposed Southport Mall project is exciting. It has been talked about for years and Southport has become the major commercial centre of the Gold Coast and will continue to be so.

With the Gold Coast Hospital, District Court and the re-development of the Southport Primary School site in the future, the Mall project is appropriate and timely.

Another big advantage in the area in general is the new Regional Office which has been opened at Nerang by the Minister for Main Roads, Russ Hinze MLA.

It is so much better to have all the engineers and experts living in the area who have always provided us with good service from Brisbane. The new office is an acknowledgement of



DOUG JENNINGS
NP, Southport

the important growth area in the main road requirements in the future.

One side-line is that the Department had very little difficulty in getting their staff to move from Brisbane to the Gold Coast. We say welcome to them.

THE release of the confidential briefing paper on the continued high housing interest rates by Labor Senator Susan Ryan confirms the crisis in housing in Australia will continue.

There is not an area in Australia where people are not suffering from these rates and are not being stretched to the limit to meet their housing commitments.

Here on the Gold Coast there are many families, particularly those buying their own homes, who are getting into severe financial difficulties, and in some cases even having to put their homes on the market.

In fact, it may not be

INCREASINGLY, amid the turmoil in Federal politics over the push by Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen to force the Opposition Coalition parties to make a firm commitment to lower taxes, commentators are recognising that taxation will be the single biggest issue at the next Federal election.

Any political party which does not give the long-suffering Australian people categorical undertakings — as opposed to vague promises — to radically reduce taxes will be doomed to defeat at those elections.

The Federal taxation burden, and particularly the personal income tax burden, has gone beyond the point of any reasonable endurance.

No amount of public relations fairy-floss by the Labor Part will conceal the simple fact that the Hawke Federal Government is the highest taxing, biggest-spending Federal Governments in Australia's history.

Reflect for a moment on how the burden has grown.

Some 30 years ago, personal income tax contributed about 35 per cent of total federal budget revenue. Today it well exceeds 50 per cent.

In 1954-55, taxpayers with average earnings faced marginal and adverse tax rates of 19 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. Only one per cent of people employed full-time faced the marginal tax rate of 48 per cent or more.

Today, more than 2.1 million taxpayers, almost 40 per cent of full-time workers, face that marginal tax rate of 46 per cent.

In 1954-55 the top marginal tax rate of 66.7 per cent cut into incomes which were about 18 times average earnings. Now the top marginal rate of 60 per cent begins at \$35,000 a year or only 1.6 times average earnings.

Simply, over that period, middle-income earners have been forced to pay an ever increasing share of the total tax burden. They are the forgotten Australians.

Proof crisis will continue



IVAN GIBBS
NP,
Albert

generally known that in Australia last year the number of home loan borrowers who fell behind in their repayments by more than four months jumped by 50 per cent.

That gives some idea of the crisis facing the people of this nation, and all the assurances by the Prime Minister that things will get better have now gone

out the window with Senator Ryan's release of that document.

The brief, prepared by a senior officer in the Federal Department of Housing and Construction, stated quite clearly that it appeared unlikely that reductions in housing loan interest rates would occur until the first half of 1988 at the earliest.

Local government engineers should broaden their skills, says Minister

SYDNEY. — The 'build big at any cost' approach adopted by many engineers no longer was appropriate for the needs of local government, the NSW Minister for Local Government, Mr Crosio, said yesterday.

In her opening address to the Local Government Engineers' Association annual conference here, Mrs Crosio called on local government engineers to improve their knowledge of finance, law, economic and management theory, and personnel and communications skills.

The Minister stressed the need for government, community and environmental needs to be taken into account in engineering considerations.

"It is not manpower or cost efficient to leave the engineer in his traditional role," Mrs Crosio said.

"The engineer also must become a manager, taking into account such things as government, community and environmental needs, rather than simply

responding to a technical problem," she said.

Mrs Crosio told delegates that local councils were becoming more accountable to the public and had to ensure that they remained responsive to change.

"When deciding whether a road should be sealed, or a park provided in a particular location, it is necessary to look beyond the technical merits of the case and consider the needs of the local community," she said.



MRS CROSIO

'Utopia' resident angered by rules

Whether home-owners at Tuntable Falls should be allowed to sell their houses, and for how much, will be one of the issues raised on Saturday at the 15th annual meeting of the Co-ordination Co-operative, near Nimbin.

A motion on the agenda proposes that the co-operative be empowered to take 20 per cent of the price of any house sold by a departing settler.

Mr David Spain has been a shareholder of the Tuntable Falls co-operative for most of its 15 years.

Free enterprise 'squashed'

A qualified lawyer, Mr Spain believes that the current 'by-laws' concerning the sale of homes and land in the valley are effectively squashing free enterprise and initiative, and encouraging reliance on government welfare.

"When the intentional community at Tuntable Falls was first established, we made absolutely no rules about the disposal of homes and improved lands," he said.

"After all, it was going to be idealistic and utopian — a perfect community — and we were all going to live there forever.

"People could buy a share for \$200, choose a home site, build their homes and cultivate as much land as they liked.

"Ten years later, in 1983, at the annual meeting, there was an attempt to define shareholders' rights regarding valuation of the houses they had built and the land they had cultivated.

"Was a house to be valued simply at the cost of materials? Did labour costs count? What about views — and cultivated land?

"There were some who adhered to the belief from the early days that departing settlers should receive nothing when they left.

"The attitude was that people who chose to live there were getting a great place to live and a wonderful piece of land, for a minimal price, and that they were lucky to leave with a shirt on their back.

"Others felt that a house should be able to be sold for the cost of the materials and the labour, without taking into consideration land under cultivation and the value of orchards and gardens."

Gardens slashed, trees felled

Mr Spain said that some settlers had been so upset about this that they had slashed gardens and cut down trees when they left.

"It's a heavy disincentive to improvements," he said.

"Probably only 5 per cent of the arable land at Tuntable Falls is being used — much of the rest is weeds, or grazed pasture.

"Maybe 10 out of 150 resident adults might claim to be growing a substantial amount of their own food and, of those, maybe one or two are making a living.

"The current agreements create a crippling of the will to face up to economic realities. The majority of people are still receiving Social Security benefits.

"On the other hand, there is a lot of good feeling, and people are living harmless and pleasant lives — but by failing to define shareholders' rights, we are failing to encourage enterprise."

The secretary of the Co-ordination Co-operative, Mr Dave Lambert, said that the situation regarding house sales at Tuntable Falls was that they were allowed to be sold at replacement cost, or a 'fair price'.

"It is arguably true that charging a 20 per cent levy on house sales would discourage people from private enterprise," he said.

"As far as dependence on welfare is concerned, of course we would like to see more part-time jobs. "A lot of people would like to work a couple of days a week.

"There's not much money to be made in small-scale agriculture, and it's hard to make a living.

"Some people are getting into crafts, but there's not a very high potential in that."

Lismore building activity plummet

There has been a dramatic decline in building Lismore this year, according to the Lismore City Council health surveyor, Mr W Sherring.

A report presented to the council's general purpose committee on Tuesday night showed a sharp decline in building applications, for the first three months of the year, in comparison with the same period last year.

The total number of applications received by the council this year was 183, which is a drop of 51 on last year's first-quarter figure.

But the big decline was in the value of the buildings — from \$6.8 million to \$2.7 million.

The number of applications for dwellings (69) was almost halved, while their value dropped from \$3.4 million to \$1.67 million.

There have been no applications for flats this year. There were two in the same period last year.

Applications for commercial buildings dropped from nine, valued at \$2.05 million, to one, which was valued at \$41,391.

Meanwhile, applications for additions to commercial premises rose from six to 14, while the value rose from \$53,560 to \$421,429.

Applications to raise dwellings increased from one, valued at \$9000 last year, to four, valued at \$32,000.

Swimming pool applications fell from 18 to eight, and the associated value declined from \$166,640 to \$66,750.

The number of dwelling additions was similar to last year.

Mr Sherring said the number of dwelling additions was usually

maintained at a reasonable rate because people tended to add to existing dwellings instead of building new houses. He said that the drop in all applications received last January compared with January 1986 was

18 per cent. The figures showed a slump, 22 per cent previous



Wreath-laying ceremony to recall Battle of Kapyong

A wreath-laying ceremony will be held at Ballina on Sunday to commemorate the Battle of Kapyong — a chapter of the Korean War which involved units from Australia, Canada and the United States.

The battle was fought on April 23 and 24. To commemorate the battle, a memorial service will be held at the cenotaph at the entrance to the Ballina Memorial Olympic Swimming Pool.

The service will start at 10.30 am, and be followed by a barbecue lunch at the Ballina RSL Club from noon.

Tyre reef 'too expensive'

An artificial reef using old tyres would not be an economically viable

"Tyres would be suitable in bays and estuaries, but to put them in

Transport and the Maritime Services Board." Dr Kerkenezov said the next

NZ 14/4/87

Wadeville project 'siphoning welfare funds'

'HIPPIY RESORT' ATTACKED IN PARLI

id



his vote at the constituency, Cape Tuesday. The Botha right to vote in the Government (P Laserpic) — Page 5

SYDNEY. — The New South Wales Government was spending more than \$1 million of its welfare housing funds on building a small 'hippy resort' of 28 homes at Wadeville, near Lismore, the State Parliament was told yesterday.

The Opposition's Planning and Environment spokesman, Mr Moore, said the Government had overruled the Kyogle Shire Council's health and building requirements for the alternative lifestyle multiple occupancy at Wadeville.

As a result, up to six families were sharing one toilet on the estate, he said.

Mr Moore accused the Minister for Housing, Mr Walker, of siphoning \$1.28 million of funds intended for public housing to prop up the scheme.

The project had been used as a 'grave boat' for about 10 Housing Department consultants and employees who had spent the past few years travelling between Sydney and the Nimbin region to investigate multiple occupancy developments,

he said.

"Eventually, an ALP supporter in Lismore was found who would sell his Wadeville hobby farm to the Department of Housing for \$182,000 — a windfall profit of \$63,000 in under four years," he said.

Mr Moore called for an inquiry into the valuation on purchase, saying he had been advised that the amount represented a 50 per cent loading on current land prices in the area.

Mr Moore yesterday attempted to bring on a motion calling for the Government to cease funding multiple occupancies on the North Coast.

He accused Mr Walker and the Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Carr, of manipulating planning and funding to support

their 'experiment in social engineering'.

"While thousands queue for public housing in New South Wales, this Minister and his mates have set up a resort which involves the establishment of a hippy resort so they can live comfortably within the State Public Service ever after," he said.

In rejecting the motion, Mr Walker recalled Mr Moore's time as a student at Sydney University, when he had had long hair and 'dressed in drag'.

Mr Walker defended alternative lifestyles, saying Mr Moore obviously had become more conservative since his days as a left-wing radical Liberal.

The Wadeville development was a pilot project aimed at introducing standards for an estimated 20,000 people

who lived alternative lifestyles in New South Wales.

The program was aimed at setting standards in areas such as health, education and roads.

Mr Walker described it as a difficult task but said the Government was 'wrestling' to come up with a solution.

Inside

Letters.....	4
Lotto dividends.....	5
Jackpot 3017 majors.....	5
Jackpot 3017 minors.....	23
Comics, crossword.....	10
TV.....	10-11
Radio.....	11
Services.....	11
Finance.....	22
Property.....	23
Stars.....	25
Fishing.....	26
Sport.....	27-29, 32

Weather

A strong wind warning is current. Rain periods with some heavy falls. Cool south-east winds 20/30 knots at times on the coast. Moderate to rough seas. A moderate swell.

Outlook: Showers decreasing during the weekend.

Yesterday's Lismore maximum, 19.2; minimum 15.7.

Forecast maximum, 21.
● Weather details..... 22

Federal Govt over logging

National Parks and Wildlife Service — and Mr Robert Wallace — reader in economics at South Australia's Flinders University.

Mr Groom said the inquiry would be 'a stacked inquiry whatever happens' and noted that none of the members

injunction so the inquiry can go ahead in an atmosphere free of vitriol and antagonism," the society said.

Mr Cohen said the intransigence of the Tasmanian Government had left the Commonwealth no opt on but an inquiry through legislation.



to use it, Mr Unsworth said that if people waited for sufficient public funds to maintain and improve the Pacific Highway, they would die of old age or be killed on the roads.

That must rank with the most insensitive comments by a State leader in history.

He is saying that unless some profit-motivated private enterprise outlays the huge sums involved, and drivers pay it back through a toll, we have no chance of getting a decent road link with the State capital.

flow better on excellent roads in the heart of Sydney.

The Pacific Highway, of horse and buggy standard, is our means of travelling the State.

Mr Unsworth said that if a toll were placed on the highway, money collected would go towards making it better and safer.

What about the money that is already being collected in petrol taxes and other impositions on drivers?

many years.

And it w
Government
projects out

The Nor

Unsworth w

Perhaps i
potholes, he
service th
pay-for-it-y

PO BOX 423 LISMORE

Letters to the Editor

Wadeville project

YOUR lead article of May 8 prompted me to write an inquiry as to possible recent ownership changes at *The Northern Star*.

Has Rupert Murdoch added your newspaper to his stable of outlets?

'Hippy Resort' in banner headlines and a small adjacent photograph of Herr Botha and his 'Vote for Apartheid'.

Parochial to say the least.

Whatever happened to journalistic credibility?

Your article on the Wadeville project was misleading and inaccurate, and your

presentation of it obviously geared to evoke as much emotion as possible.

As an intending participant in the project, I can assure you that the conditions here are a far cry from those reported.

Many improvements have been made to the facilities on the property, not by the mythical 'six families sharing one toilet', but by a handful of dedicated supporters who have voluntarily supported the project for some years.

We have currently three toilets servicing six adults, two bathing and clothes washing rooms, hot and cold water supplied by a renovated hydraulic pump system.

These facilities are contained within the walls

of existing structures and all improvements have been carried out by the people here, at their own expense.

We've had nothing in the way of financial assistance to provide these facilities.

Many years of hard work have gone into this project.

Your publication does not assist the people who are up to their armpits with the workload.

It is exceedingly easy for politicians to sit comfortably in Sydney and criticise this particular project.

The realities are far from those reported on your front page.

The Wadeville project is indeed an 'experiment in social engineering', possibly one of the few such approaches to solving the acute shortage of housing in this State.

It is an innovative approach only if you have been sleeping for the past 15 years.

Multiple Occupancy has been proved to be a viable alternative to existing housing options, and nowadays, people from many varied backgrounds and lifestyles are finding it provides the answer to their housing needs.

Remember the 'good old days'? The times when your children could walk to school without fear of molestation; when your neighbours actually talked to you; when you could rely on the support of the community when times were hard; and when the world wasn't such a scary place?

The people who are working for this project are endeavouring to rebuild the kind of community most of your generation remember from times past.

HARRY NEVILLE,
Stony Chute Road,
via Nimbin.

The West has failed lamentably to effectively support this Liberation Movement, every Liberation Movement in Africa.

Not surprisingly such people eventually turn to the Communist countries for help.

We are to blame, sir.

I suggest Mr Johnston obtains a transcript of the ABC's Tuesday's Dispatch program (28/4/87) in which the former conservative PM, Malcolm Fraser, was interviewed.

His position on Southern Africa is identical to my own and to anyone who has studied this matter with an open mind.

The remark about the Looney Left is such cheap claptrap.

By Mr Johnston's standard, Mr Fraser would also qualify for that membership.

His political views have not progressed beyond the cold war paranoia of the 1950s.

KLAAS WOLDRING,
Richmond Hill.

School's newspaper

MY youngster arrived home after school this afternoon (7/5/87) with a copy of *The Southern Star* newspaper eager to show me his class efforts and pictures of his class friends.

I congratulate the South Public School on a fine effort on this their very first school 'newspaper'.

Much time and effort by teachers, pupils and members of the public had resulted in a 'super' first edition.

'Southie' mums, dads and the public can be justifiably proud.

Congratulations 'Souths' school; I look forward to your second edition.

The social implications of this gap have only scratched the surface but, as it further widens, the outcome could be as unpleasant and unpalatable as that which we have seen occur in a number of South American countries.

My question? In view of this country's financial dilemma, why should income tax be reduced?

Why a greater percentage reduction in the higher income group against the lowest one and how do giant companies get away with paying as low as five per cent, comparatively low rates of tax on massive income?

It would appear that the lower income earners are being required to finance income tax reductions for the more 'well-to-do' section of the community.

The present Government could be called Labor in name only.

SOME blokes need a room.

Mind you, it can be a bit confusing to wake up in the middle of the night and not know where you are.

All doors look the same, particularly if you've taken strong drink before going to bed.

A Lismore bowling club official on an out-of-town trip at the weekend found this out. Waking in the darkness with a desperate need, he headed for the dim outline of the door.

He was out in the multi-storey motel's main passageway before he realised he'd picked the wrong one.

It was a self-locking door, too.

There he was locked out in the main passageway of a swanky motel, clad only in his purple polka-dot shortie pyjamas.

At that stage, he thought

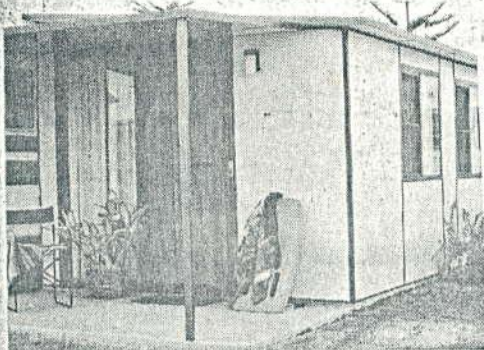
ATTENTION

CARAVAN & MOBILE HOME OWNERS

DID YOU KNOW THAT
SUMMERCRAFT
CAN MAKE YOUR LIVING AREA
LARGER?

KOOLANEX

THE IDEAL PERMANENT OR
DEMOUNTABLE ANNEXES FOR
CARAVAN AND MOBILE HOMES



A 'peaceful

Residents refuse to drive on road

Some Cawongla residents are keeping their children out of school rather than drive over a three-kilometre unsealed section of the Cawongla-Lismore road.

The wet conditions caught Kyogle Shire Council road workers by surprise this week when they were half-way through grading the road.

Workmen last Thursday and Friday had cleaned the table drains next to the road and used the material to resurface the road.

When the rain came on Monday, the new surface turned to slush, which residents said was up to 10 centimetres deep and made the road impassable.



MR BRIAN MILLER, Mrs Robyn Lattimer and her daughter, Sarah, inspecting the waterlogged Cawongla road yesterday.

The Kyogle Shire engineer, Mr P Knight, said it was an embarrassing situation, but nothing could be done.

"When the rain stops, the workmen will have another go at the road," he said.

"The equipment will not be moving because it is not much use anywhere else during the rain."

Mr Knight said that the council was aware of the problems, but did not have the money to seal the road.

"No more roads will be sealed in the Kyogle Shire, or in the State," he said.

"More money is being spent on welfare, health and education.

"Road funding is being squeezed out because of society's changing priorities. If people are on a gravel road, that is all they will have."

Vehicle wrecked

This week, a Cawongla resident wrecked his car, which he bought only last month, on the unsealed section of road.

He swerved to miss an oncoming car and went over a steep embankment. No one was injured, but the car was not insured.

Another car also was reported to have crashed on the unsealed section this week.

The operator of the Cawongla to Lismore bus service, Mr Graham Hall, said that the road was damaging his vehicle.

"Last month we replaced rivets in the bodywork to make the bus safe and to pass an inspection," he said.

"Yesterday I would not allow my relief driver to drive the bus because of the condition of the road."

Another resident, Mr Brian Miller, said that during the rain, two cars could not pass in places because of the soft edges.

"All the residents have complained to the council many times about the road, but nothing seems to be done," he said.

Mrs Robyn Lattimer said that a number of people along the road had refused to drive the unsealed section to take their children to school.

"On Tuesday I was able to drive only 500 metres before giving up and going home," she said.

"I just could not control the car."

Yesterday, Kyogle Council workmen were dumping loads of blue metal on the road.

'No need for house walls'

ruling angers council

N.S. 24/1/87

A State Department of Local Government interpretation of building ordinances as not requiring external walls has angered the Richmond River Shire Council.

The council, at a meeting this week, resolved to object to the department's interpretation of the ordinances.

An advisory note issued by the department stated that 'although clause 47.1 (2) of Ordinance 70 requires that external walls ... shall be constructed so as to prevent the penetration of rain and other waters to the inner parts of the building, it is the department's view that no mandatory requirement for the provision of external walls exists in the ordinance (for houses)'.

A council may require external walls for health or similar reasons, but such a condition would be subject to appeal.

The council's power to require external walls is contained in the Local Government Act.

A spokesman for the Department of Local Government's Building Branch in Sydney said that the

advisory note was issued as an official interpretation of the ordinance.

He said the department had received a number of inquiries about the ordinance, and that there had been a test case in the NSW Land and Environment Court involving a house with no walls.

Demolition order

The case involved the Lismore City Council and Bodhi Farm, at The Channon.

The council had issued a demolition order because the house did not meet its building requirements.

The court ruled that the building did not have to be demolished.

The department spokesman said the department's interpretation of the ordinance was the result of discussions with North Coast councils, the Rural Resettlement Task Force and members of alternative societies.

The Richmond River Shire Council's chief health surveyor, Mr Kelvin Frost, said his council strongly objected to Government

resources being wasted in an attempt to appease minority interests at the expense of the majority of taxpayers.

He said that external walls were necessary to stop water damage to the structure and contents because:

- The building was more likely to be unroofed during the common cyclonic North Coast conditions.

- Houses without walls provided inadequate security.

- It would be difficult to stop cockroaches, flies, mosquitoes, rats and mice from entering properties, and the entry of dust would be a health risk and householders would be unprotected during bushfires.

Mr Frost said the resources of the department would be better used protecting existing health and safety standards, drafting suitable amendments to inadequate legislation and encouraging sensible buildings at a reasonable cost rather than in encouraging the waste of labour and resources in the construction of sub-standard structures.

"The Government is receiving poor advice," he said.



CITY MAY MOVE ON ILLEGAL BUILDINGS

The Lismore City Council may seek the removal of some unauthorised building works which came to light as a result of its recent four-month amnesty on illegal buildings.

More than 270 building illegal residences and applications were received other structures built by the council during the without council consent. amnesty, which applied to

But the amnesty might

not be sufficient to safeguard the illegal structures reported by some property owners.

According to the council's senior health surveyor, Mr W Sherring, difficulties were being experienced with some people who had failed to provide sufficient information with their building applications.

He said this had prevented council officers from making a proper assessment of the illegal building works concerned.

"It would appear that if the applicants fail to provide the required information, or fail to rectify defects in a building, the council's only recourse is to decline to issue a Section 317A Certificate when or if it is applied for," he said.

"Similarly, where an application for an existing structure is refused on planning grounds, it would appear that under the terms of the amnesty, any action to have the building removed will have to be taken by the planning department."

Mr Sherring reported that another 57 building applications had been

received after the council granted a one-month extension to the three-month amnesty which expired last June 30.

He said 278 applications were received during the amnesty, including 170 from rural areas and 108 from the Lismore urban area.

A breakdown of the figures showed that applications were received for 77 building additions, 37 illegal rural residences,

54 farm sheds, 35 carports/garages, 11 converted residences, 34 backyard structures such as fern houses and garden sheds, 17 pergolas, two swimming pools and 11 other illegal structures.

Mr Sherring said the council also had been informed of the existence of several other illegal building works which went unreported during the amnesty.

He said that these were being followed up by officers of the building department.

Policy likely to set multiple-living standard

The State Government has agreed to consider establishing a State-wide policy which would permit multiple occupancy of rural land.

The Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Sheahan, announced this when he opened the Planning and Development Conference at Valla Park yesterday morning.

This was good news for multiple occupancy groups who have been pressing the Government to introduce a State-wide policy to overcome problems caused when individual councils prepare their own.

The Minister, who arrived by helicopter from Grafton, met a delegation from the Rural Resettlement Task Force, which is a non-profit group based at Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre.

They gave him papers on building standards, council ratings and a draft outline of a possible State-wide policy.

The members of the group who met Mr Sheahan were generally pleased with his response.

Opening the conference, Mr Sheahan said a State-wide policy would allow multiple occupancy in suitable areas, prohibit it in environmentally sensitive coastal areas and national parks and provide clear criteria for councils to ensure multiple occupancy had no adverse impact on the environment.

He said the proposals would be exhibited before a final policy was decided.

Cr Jim Lissaman, of Coffs Harbour Shire

Council, said that unless multiple occupancies "paid their way" on rates, councils would face an extra drain on their resources.

Cr Lissaman said it might be possible to base ratings on family groups rather than land.

In reply, Mr Sheahan said the Minister for Local Government, Mr Stewart, was examining the rating question.

"Planners have to recognise that multiple occupancy is here to stay and it has to be administered and regulated like other developments," Mr Sheahan said.

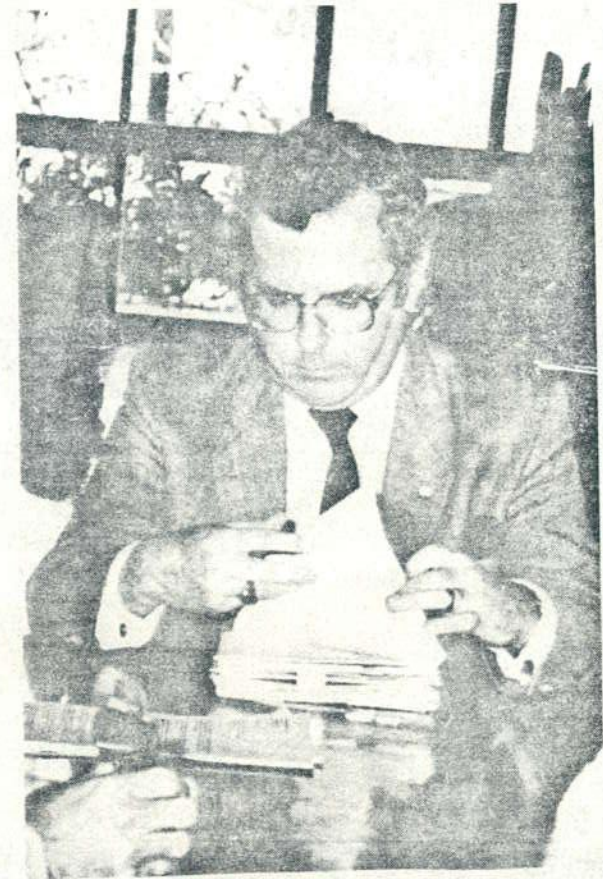
The Nambucca Shire President, Cr John Davies, welcomed Mr Sheahan to the shire and outlined some problems he believed had to be overcome in the planning field.

He said these included delays in having plans prepared; the cost of those plans and the time involved; the requirements that they be publicly exhibited twice and the volume of paperwork.

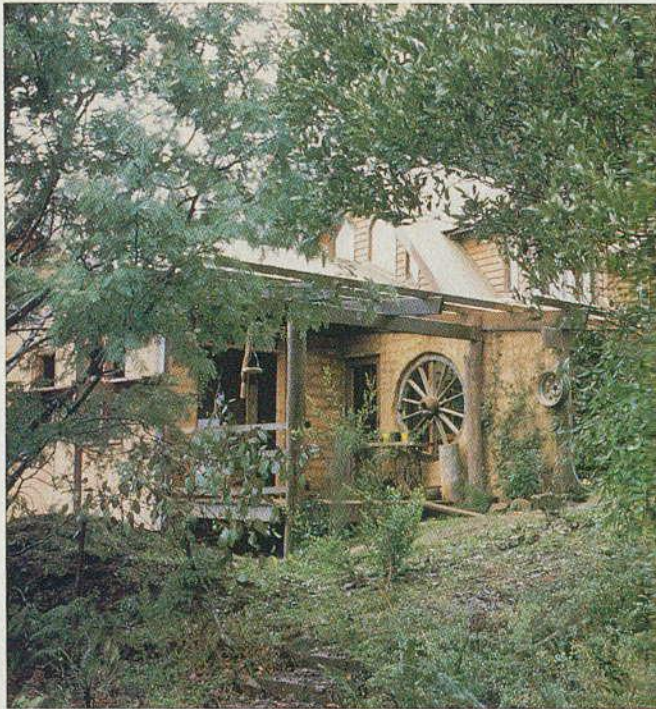
Cr Davies was also concerned that a departmental review of planning processes was happening without much consultation with local government, but, he said that in the past six months, there had been some improvement in the way the system worked.

Mr Sheahan, noting that he had been the minister for six months today, said the review had addressed the problems mentioned, and there had been discussion with the Local Government Association.

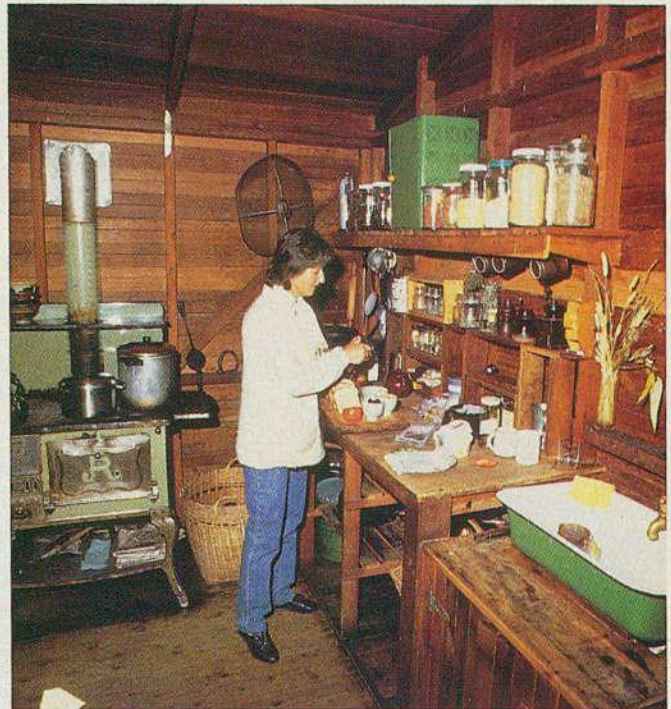
He said he hoped a draft of the proposal for amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act soon would be available for public comment.



Coffs Harbour Advocate, Friday, August 10, 1984



An "alternative" house at the Moora Moora community



Janet Smale in her kitchen at Mandala

LIFESTYLE

Dropping out — a serious business

TONY ABBOTT finds a powerful work ethic in Australia's alternative communities.

"DON'T COME on Friday", the commune leader said, "because everyone will be away at work." On Sunday, as it happened, most were out visiting friends and relatives.

According to a recent 81-page study by Dr Bill Metcalf and Frank Vanclay, of Griffith University, today's "alternative" is likely to be about 40 years old, in a stable, monogamous relationship and university educated. Uninhibited indulgence in drugs and alcohol and sexual experimentation are incompatible with a health-conscious middle age and even nude swimming is generally out because it embarrasses the kids.

But if the nation's estimated 60,000 "alternatives" are no longer very threatening they are also no longer very different. Anti-racism, non-sexism and environmental protection are no longer radical values. In 1987 men can be soft, women can be tough and children can be free yet society is little closer to that longed-for harmony. The one-time hippies and rebels are worried about their families and futures and even question the messianic attitudes with which they once assailed "straight" society. The beatniks have grown bourgeoisie; the counter-culture has become conservative and the greens are becoming grey.

Dr Peter Cock, a Monash University sociologist, says that the Moora Moora Co-operative Community which he helped to found in 1974 is "now more a reflection of society than an alternative to it". His radical thunder rolls somewhat incongruously round his architect-designed, rammed-earth house with views to Melbourne. Outside, wombats root in the garden and lyrebirds perch in the trees and shrubs. With voluntary labor, his mountain retreat cost \$40,000. Solar cells provide plenty of light and run a stereo system but have trouble, he admits, coping with a washing machine.

Alternative living has lost its grubby image. Bill and Janet Smale "dropped out" in the early 70s. Bill worked for a meat-packing company and announced at a staff meeting that he was becoming vegetarian. For 18 months they "lived on air" with a crowd of friends and itinerants in a large rented house in Brisbane's Highgate Hill. It didn't work, they say, because they "got sick of the bludgers".

The Mandala community, set in farmland and bush near the Cunningham Gap, 200km from Brisbane, was their attempt to combine their desire for a co-operative existence with a more settled life. In 1976, the Smales'

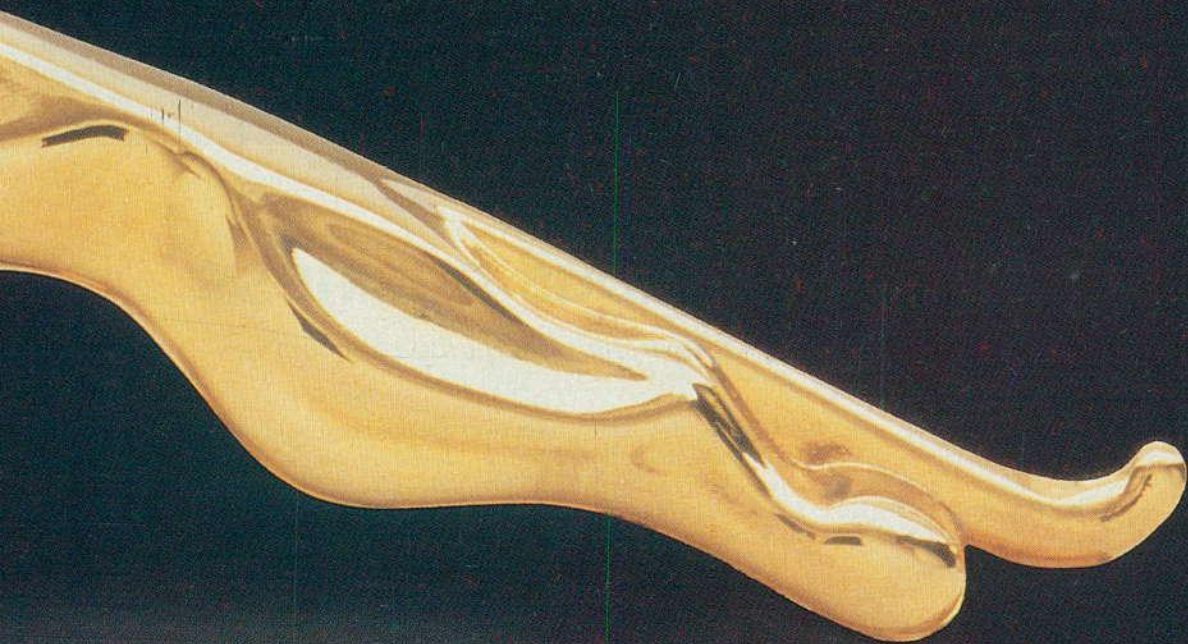
\$4000 investment bought a one-hectare building block plus an equal say — along with 14 other shareholders — in the running of a 140ha farm. Like Moora Moora, Mandala is a co-operative community, not a commune. Members have private houses and incomes.

In the beginning, say the Smales, there was much "Age of Aquarius" idealism. They rather regret that life in common never really took on and that the community is more like a close-knit rural subdivision than an extended family. Not everyone attends the monthly community meetings or participates in community work projects. Only two work full-time on the community and no one makes a living from the land. A few treat it as a cheap rural life-style.

After approval by existing members, buying-in still costs \$4000. But an existing residence typically costs up to \$30,000. Buying into Moora Moora now costs about \$16,000 before housing. Dave Lambert, secretary of the Nimbin-based Rural Re-settlement Task Force, estimates that taking up residence in a community today costs about \$20,000.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the "dole bludger" tag needs to be heavily

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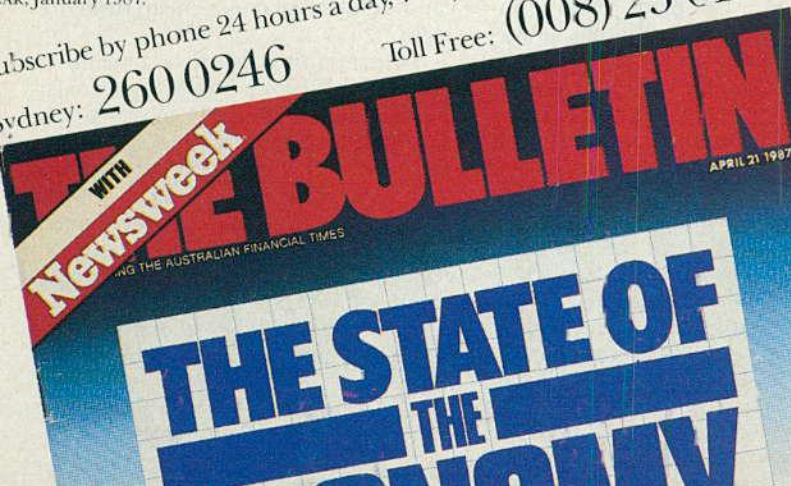
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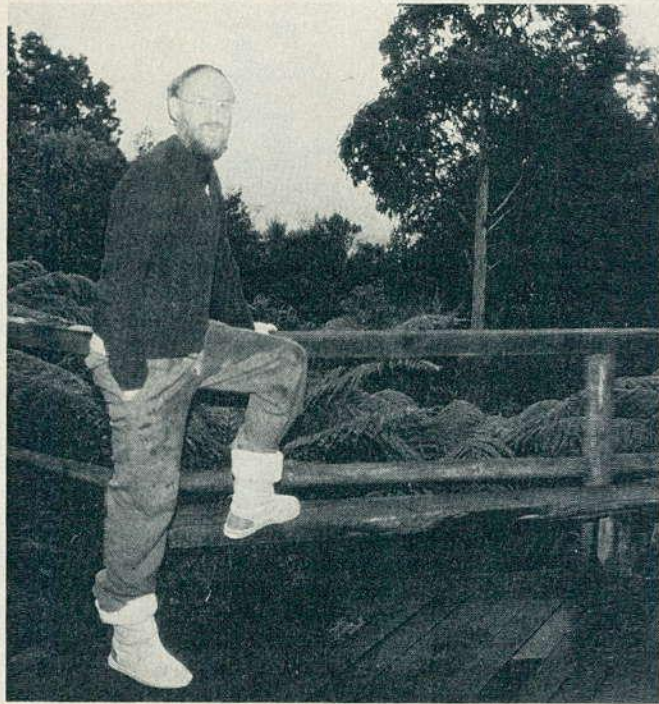
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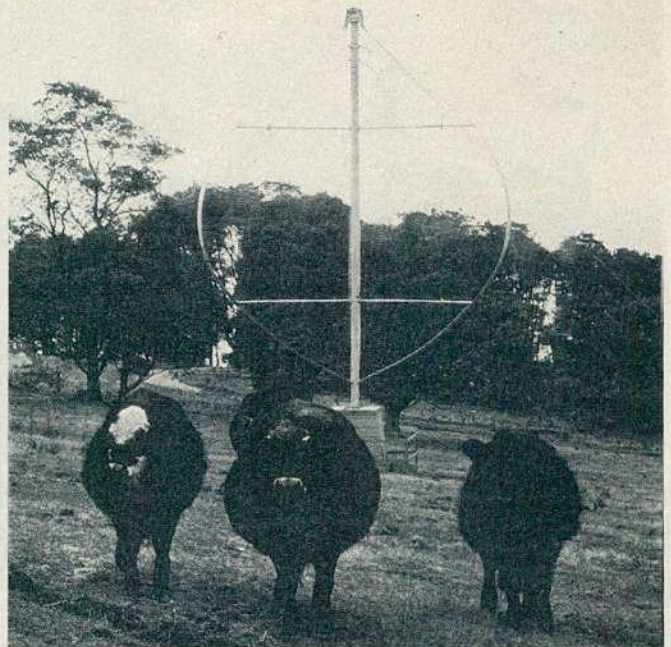


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Cock: "If I were doing it again I'd set up a religious community"



An experimental wind generator at Moora Moora

qualified. According to Metcalf and Vancly, only 17 percent of "alternatives" are unemployed while 20 percent are engaged in professional work. Many "alternatives" do, however, regard the dole as the right of those who choose to do their own thing rather than as a safety net for those who are actively but unsuccessfully looking for work.

The residents of Mandala include a university lecturer, a woodworker who has carved crests for the state government and a "couple" who are unemployed. Moora Moora boasts a doctor, two PhD's and a former lawyer as well as "three or four" who are unemployed. However, they are not quite middle-class neighborhoods.

For one thing, says Metcalf, rural "alternatives" average income is a lowly \$5000 a year because many of the highly qualified professionals work part-time or have reverted to a subsistence existence. Ian Currie, for instance, a former forester, is now one of Australia's leading experimental potters. His book, *Stoneware Glazes*, has sold 1500 copies. He works one day a week at South Brisbane TAFE and produces pots at Mandala to satisfy the community and his own curiosity.

For another, there is still considerable personal inter-

involvement. Gaye Samson, a single mother who teaches handicapped infants at nearby Warwick and who last year won a Northern Territory literary award for short story, says that Mandala offers a caring and sharing environment and, for her daughter Freya, the reassuring presence and example of mature men.

At Mandala, there is even something of a work ethic. Currie is teaching his children wood and metal working as well as pottery because he wants them to be able "to survive on their wits and

talents". But does he want them to live an alternative lifestyle? Not really. The children, in any event, are going their own way.

Smale reckons that his son John, a jackaroo in western Queensland, probably votes for the National Party and thinks that the community's land is disgracefully under-used. An 18 year old at Moora Moora said that he liked country life but did not want that to be a political statement.

At Mandala and Moora Moora the former hippies have developed lifestyles of idyllic agreeability in settings of outstanding beauty. Yet when asked what it's all about Cock replies that his own community "provides an alternative model for how the rural-urban fringe ought to be developed".

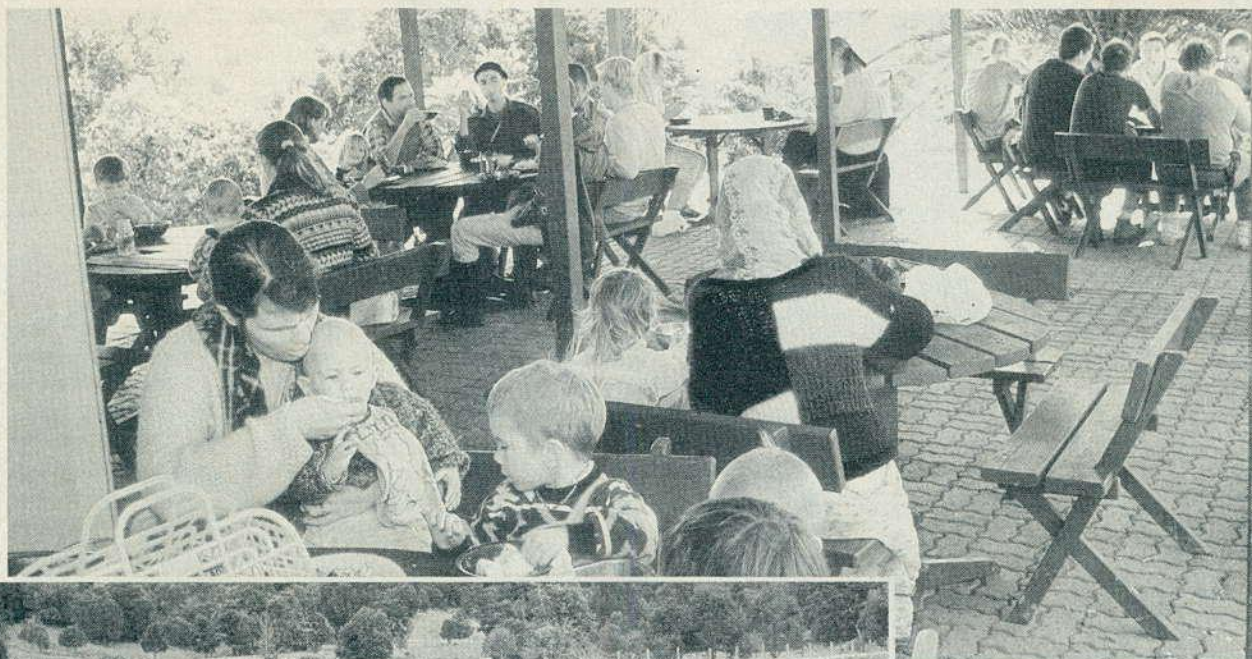
The same intelligence and sensitivity which caused them to question established society is now directed at themselves. They have taken stock. Do hand-made pots, rural theatre groups and experimental wind generators really make much difference?

"If I were doing it again" says Cock, "I'd set up a religious community." He says that Moora Moora's environmental ethic has not provided the "vision bigger than itself" necessary for a community's long-term survival.

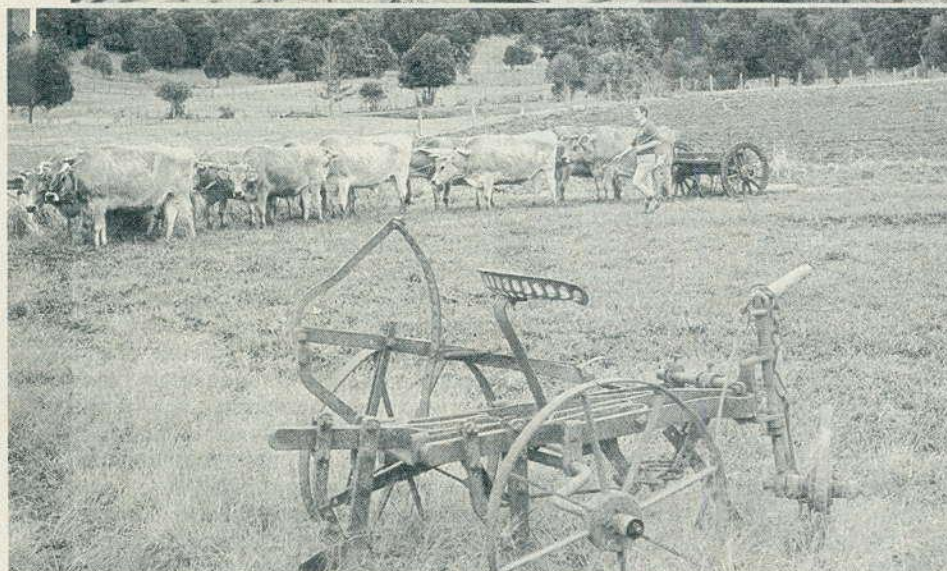
According to Metcalf the alternative communities of



Potter Ian Currie with his handiwork at Mandala



BRUCE DEVINE



The Krishna's New Govardhana farm near Murwillumbah, NSW, where bullock teams are the preferred method of locomotion

the future will be highly individualistic and unstructured or highly organised and religious like the New Govardhana farm operated, since 1977, by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness near Murwillumbah, in northern New South Wales.

The Krishna farm is no place for the languid or laid back. For 60 adults and 80 children the organised day starts at 4.30am with 45 minutes of singing and dancing, an hour and a half of meditation, 45 minutes study of the Bhagavad-Gita and, finally, 45 minutes of chanting. At 9am, when the average drop-out would surely drop back into bed, the Krishna devotees start a full day's work; for the children, school; for the adults, farming or a job in a nearby town. Evening chanting lasts a further 45 minutes. Understandably, most retire at 9pm as drugs, alcohol, gambling, and intercourse that does not have procreation as its aim are not permitted.

With the secular "alternatives", the devotees share the aspiration to a more

peaceful and simpler way of life in greater all-round harmony. But this is not possible, they believe, without the "God-consciousness" that is built on a strict spiritual discipline. For all their commitment, however, they are

capable of a broad-minded application of principles. Temple president Vrisha explains that they prefer traditional farming and, in particular, want to use the bullock teams that were such a part of early Australia. Nonetheless, he admits with a grin, they used a tractor recently because rain threatened and the ploughing needed to be done quickly.

Vrisha stoutly maintains that the self-indulgence of ordinary society lead inevitably to discontent, neurosis and even suicide. He embraced the Krishna movement, not by an act of will but by realising that nothing else worked — for him at least. A Christian monk could hardly have put it better.

It is surely ironic, therefore, if the alternative movement has ended up embracing much of traditional religious or family life. □

Five-minute Quiz 20

1. Name the three ships under the command of Christopher Columbus on his first voyage to the New World
2. What colour is the centre ring of an archery target?
3. Actors Mel Gibson, Marlon Brando, Clark Gable and Errol Flynn have all played which character on screen?
4. What is the world's largest carnivorous land animal?
5. The terms Saichow, Walley, Lutz and sit-spin are employed
6. in which sport?
6. What is the capital of Syria?
7. The girlfriend of cartoon character Popeye is named ...?
8. What name is given to the largest size of champagne bottle?
9. Which of Charles Dickens' novels begins, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times"?
10. In which year and in which city were the Olympic Games held in Australia?

Compiled by Kevin Schluter
Answers on page 44

Heady times for Sharon

LISMORE hairdresser Sharon Rayner was a cut above 50 of her contemporaries when she snipped her way to third place in the third-year and fourth-year apprentices' section of the Australian hair styling championships on the Gold Coast at the weekend. Her model, Michael Thorpe, of Alstonville, displays Sharon's style.



ILLEGAL BUILDINGS SPUR REQUEST FOR ACT CHANGE

Kyogle Shire Council has asked for the Local Government Act to be amended because of problems with illegal buildings in the shire.

The council has sent a letter to the Minister for Local Government, Mrs Crosio, explaining the dilemma caused by the Act, which makes retrospective building approvals illegal.

The council told Mrs

Crosio that the shire had become popular with alternative society settlements.

"During the past 10 years, many dwellings have been constructed without building approval, and in remote areas where they were not detected by the council's one-man health and building department," the letter said.

"The number of these

illegal dwellings has reached such proportions that the whole system of building regulation is in jeopardy in rural areas of the shire.

"During 1986, the council allocated extra staff to attempt to detect and map illegal dwellings, and this year engaged an extra part-time health and building surveyor in an attempt to clean up the situation."

The council told Mrs Crosio that despite this increased activity by council officers, many dwellings were still being started, and completed, without building approval.

As it was often some time later that they were detected, the council was unable to proceed under the penalty provisions of Section 317 of the Act.

The Shire Clerk, Mr P Thew, said that when such buildings eventually were detected, the Department of Local Government had advised that the situation should be made legal by issuing a certificate of compliance, costing \$20.

"Providing the certificate is issued, the owner then has a fully legalised dwelling for \$20, in contrast with the person who follows the proper path of obtaining the required State and local government approvals," he said.

"A person who intends to build a small rural dwelling worth \$20,000 would have a \$30 owner-builder fee (paid to the Builders Licensing Board); a \$100 long service levy (paid to the Building and Construction Industry Long Service Payments Corporation); and a \$70 building application fee to the council, a total of \$200.

"The council would



MR THEW

prefer to require owners of detected illegal buildings to submit full building applications and plans and pay all the fees that law-abiding builders pay, but the Department of Local Government has

advised that retrospective building fees are not lawful, and a certificate of compliance must be used to resolve the situation."

Mr Thew said that the attitude by the department was threatening the council's attempts to eliminate illegal dwellings; was giving financial encouragement to illegal builders; and denying State Government agencies and local councils the fees required to fund their activities.

He said that the council had called for the Act to be amended, either to permit retrospective building approvals with full cost of fees being paid by the builder; or those buildings erected without building approval should be subject to a fee equal to or exceeding the corresponding building fees, plus building licence and long service levy fees.

Seminar for council candidates

Candidates intending to seek election to the Lismore City Council in September, will be told about the duties of aldermen at a seminar at the Lismore City Hall next month.

The seminar, on August 14, will be attended by a number of speakers from within local government, including incumbent aldermen.

People eligible to vote in the council elections will be residents of the Lismore area and non-residents who own Lismore property.

People wanting more information should contact the Lismore City Council Chambers.



NS 29 July 87

THE Northern Star editorial

Out-of-date Act helps law-breakers

LOCAL government has major problems with illegal buildings, and none has more than the Kyogle Shire Council.

In a bid to have the Local Government Act amended to deal with the situation, the Kyogle council points out an anomaly that gives a financial advantage to those who break the building bylaws.

The council says that because of the remoteness of some of the areas in which illegal building takes place, detection of it often takes time.

Because the Act makes retrospective building approvals illegal, when the illegal building is found, the Department of Local Government advises the council that the building should be made legal by issuing a certificate of compliance, costing \$20.

When this is issued, an offender against the building code has a fully-legalised dwelling for a \$20 fee, whereas the person who follows the legal course of obtaining council permission to build, can pay \$200 in fees.

The Kyogle council says it wants owners of detected illegal buildings to submit full building applications and plans and pay the fees that law-abiding builders pay.

"But the Department of Local Government has advised that retrospective building fees are not lawful, and a certificate of compliance must be used to resolve the situation," says the Kyogle Shire Clerk, Mr P Thew.

No wonder the Kyogle council sees this as an anomaly.

Any parliamentary legislation that penalises the law-abider and makes illegality profitable for the law-breaker is bad and should be amended without delay.

The Kyogle council wants the Act changed to allow retrospective approvals to buildings with the full fees being paid; or to make buildings erected without approval subject to fees equal to or exceeding the normal amounts.

Something has to be done about illegal building before the situation becomes chaotic, with builders

ignoring the council building codes that are laid down for everyone's protection.

Councils themselves must be in a quandary to know which way to turn.

How many times have orders to demolish illegal buildings been given by them, and no action taken?

There are people who are treating the councils' building bylaws as a joke.

And rather than be penalised for doing so, they are being given a financial advantage by an Act that is sadly out of date.

This ignoring of building standards and requirements has not reached into the cities and towns yet, but it can't be far away.

At the moment, illegal builders appear to be in the protected category.

Not only are they not being penalised, they are actually being encouraged to break the law.

And that is a surefire way to break down any control that local government has.

P.O. BOX 423 LISMORE

Letters to the Editor

Cost of a new State

THOSE who advocate a new State in Northern New South Wales evidently give little thought to the tremendous cost burden that would be inflicted upon us should such a thing eventuate.

Unlike the gradual build-up of government departments and their housing space over the

definite link between the rise in child sexual assault and pornography as well.

A recent example was the abduction and sexual assault of three children from Sydney.

Surely if we can put a stop to readily available pornography, we will be well on the way to making our country safer for our children.

Are readers prepared to sit back in true Aussie fashion and say 'she'll be right mate' or will you do

Before retiring in Ballina I spent 30 years in your kind of business as city editor, managing editor and associate editor of regional and metropolitan daily newspapers.

By all means continue with coverage of the South Ballina story. But do it fairly and unsensationally.

If you wish to conduct surveys, do so in depth.

Get all the facts about the proposal. Then interview.

by the imposition of such restrictions.

That statement was wide of the mark.

Let us be hypothetical: John Citizen on his way to work travels over a restricted piece of road in a manner dangerous to the public.

He is apprehended by a police officer who charges him with the offence.

A magistrate, in the interest of the whole community, relieves him of his licence for 12 months. Consequently

Industrial agreements

AS A member of the Swan Committee which developed Voluntary Employment Agreements, I am concerned that there has been a lot of inaccurate statements and scare-tactics produced by unions over the proposals to introduce VEA's as an alternative to industrial awards.

concerned, including the IR system itself.

However, the real issue the union movement is afraid of is not the existence of a VEA, but of the likely effect on union control and membership. They will no longer control the agenda.

Quite frankly, the sensible unions will have little to fear but the 'acid test' is now on the unions to react maturely and retain their membership.

They may have to sell themselves better. They

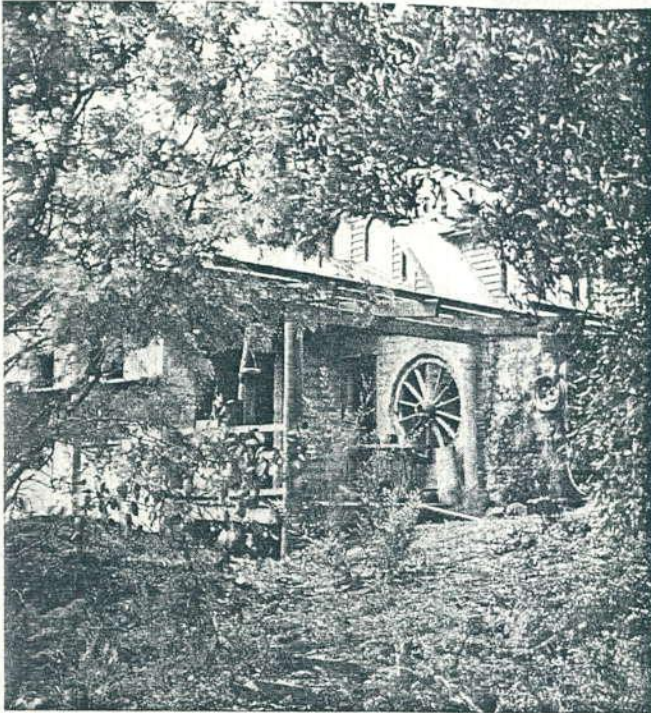
have to play their part in a proper manner.

In the final analysis, all Australians basically know 'what's fair and reasonable' — I am sure that VEA will find the right level of acceptance and standing, just the same as everyone knows who the good unions are and who the bad unions are.

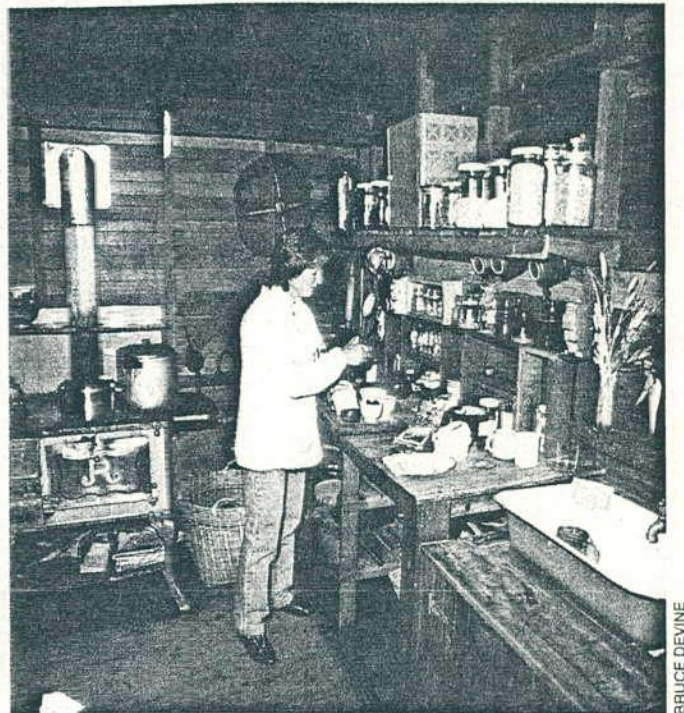
The test of time will

PSEUDONYMS are not acceptable on Letters to the Editor. Correct name, address and telephone number must be included. Full addresses are required, although street names and telephone numbers will not be published. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Preference will be given to shorter letters.

AUSTRALIA



An "alternative" house at the Moora Moora community



Janet Smale in her kitchen at Mandala

LIFESTYLE

Dropping out — a serious business

TONY ABBOTT finds a powerful work ethic in Australia's alternative communities.

"DON'T COME on Friday", the commune leader said, "because everyone will be away at work." On Sunday, as it happened, most were out visiting friends and relatives.

According to a recent 81-page study by Dr Bill Metcalf and Frank Varclay, of Griffith University, today's "alternative" is likely to be about 40 years old, in a stable, monogamous relationship and university educated. Uninhibited indulgence in drugs and alcohol and sexual experimentation are incompatible with a health-conscious middle age and even nude swimming is generally out because it embarrasses the kids.

But if the nation's estimated 60,000 "alternatives" are no longer very threatening they are also no longer very different. Anti-racism, non-sexism and environmental protection are no longer radical values. In 1987 men can be soft, women can be tough and children can be free yet society is little closer to that longed-for harmony. The one-time hippies and rebels are worried about their families and futures and even question the messianic attitudes with which they once assailed "straight" society. The beatniks have grown bourgeois; the counter-culture has become conservative and the greens are becoming grey.

Dr Peter Cock, a Monash University sociologist, says that the Moora Moora Co-operative Community which he helped to found in 1974 is "now more a reflection of society than an alternative to it". His radical thunder rolls somewhat incongruously round his architect-designed, rammed-earth house with views to Melbourne. Outside, wombats root in the garden and lyrebirds perch in the trees and shrubs. With voluntary labor, his mountain retreat cost \$40,000. Solar cells provide plenty of light and run a stereo system but have trouble, he admits, coping with a washing machine.

Alternative living has lost its grubby image. Bill and Janet Smale "dropped out" in the early 70s. Bill worked for a meat-packing company and announced at a staff meeting that he was becoming vegetarian. For 18 months they "lived on air" with a crowd of friends and itinerants in a large rented house in Brisbane's Highgate Hill. It didn't work, they say, because they "got sick of the bludgers".

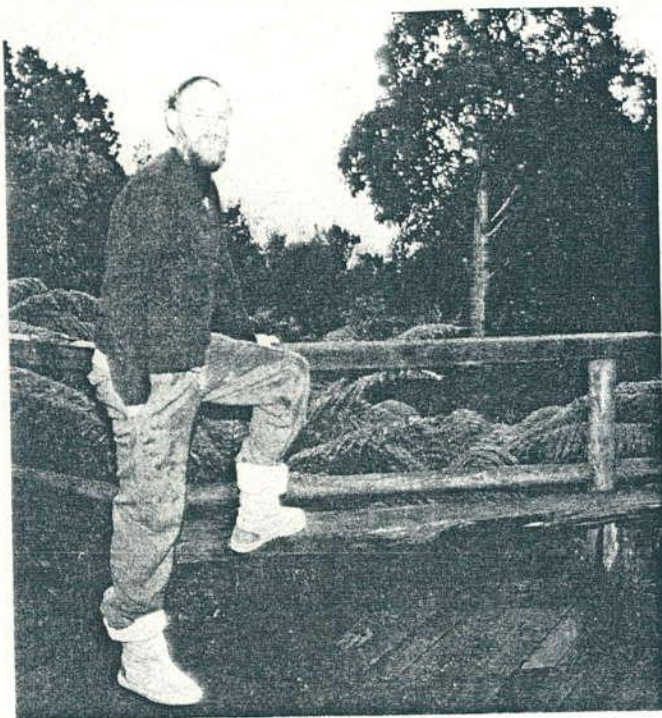
The Mandala community, set in farm and bush near the Cunningham Gap, 200km from Brisbane, was their attempt to combine their desire for a co-operative existence with a more settled life. In 1976, the Smales'

\$4000 investment bought a one-hectare building block plus an equal say — along with 14 other shareholders — in the running of a 140ha farm. Like Moora Moora, Mandala is a co-operative community, not a commune. Members have private houses and incomes.

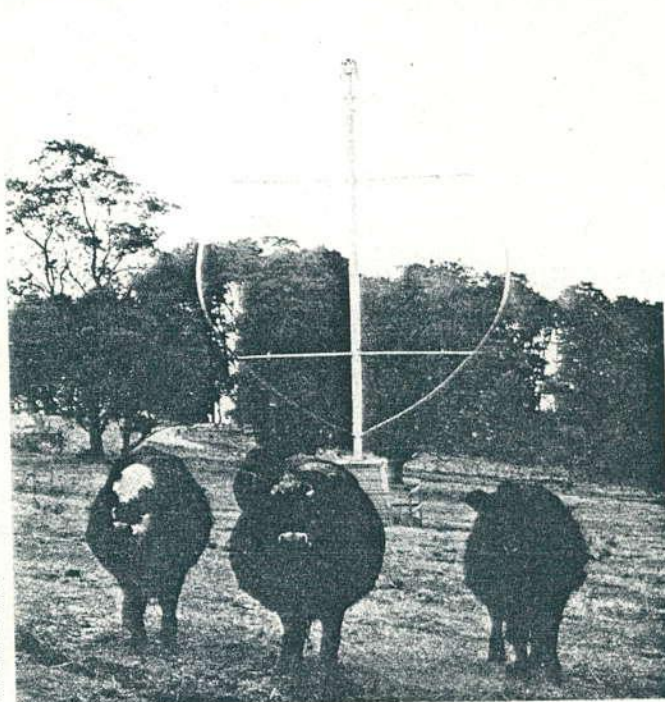
In the beginning, say the Smales, there was much "Age of Aquarius" idealism. They rather regret that life in common never really took on and that the community is more like a close-knit rural subdivision than an extended family. Not everyone attends the monthly community meetings or participates in community work projects. Only two work full-time on the community and no one makes a living from the land. A few treat it as a cheap rural lifestyle.

After approval by existing members, buying-in still costs \$4000. But an existing residence typically costs up to \$30,000. Buying into Moora Moora now costs about \$16,000 before housing. Dave Lambert, secretary of the Nimbin-based Rural Re-settlement Task Force, estimates that taking up residence in a community today costs about \$20,000.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the "dole bludger" tag needs to be heavily



Cock: "If I were doing it again I'd set up a religious community"



An experimental wind generator at Moora Moora

qualified. According to Metcalf and Vanclay, only 17 percent of "alternatives" are unemployed while 20 percent are engaged in professional work. Many "alternatives" do, however, regard the dole as the right of those who choose to do their own thing rather than as a safety net for those who are actively but unsuccessfully looking for work.

The residents of Mandala include a university lecturer, a woodworker who has carved crests for the state government and a "couple" who are unemployed. Moora Moora boasts a doctor, two PhD's and a former lawyer as well as "three or four" who are unemployed. However, they are not quite middle-class neighborhoods.

For one thing, says Metcalf, rural "alternatives" average income is a lowly \$5000 a year because many of the highly qualified professionals work part-time or have reverted to a subsistence existence. Ian Currie, for instance, a former forester, is now one of Australia's leading experimental potters. His book, *Stoneware Glazes*, has sold 1500 copies. He works one day a week at South Brisbane TAFE and produces pots at Mandala to satisfy the community and his own curiosity.

For another, there is still considerable personal inter-

involvement. Gaye Samson, a single mother who teaches handicapped infants at nearby Warwick and who last year won a Northern Territory literary award for short story, says that Mandala offers a caring and sharing environment and, for her daughter Freya, the reassuring presence and example of mature men.

At Mandala, there is even something of a work ethic. Currie is teaching his children wood and metal working as well as pottery because he wants them to be able "to survive on their wits and

talents". But does he want them to live an alternative lifestyle? Not really. The children, in any event, are going their own way.

Smale reckons that his son John, a jackaroo in western Queensland, probably votes for the National Party and thinks that the community's land is disgracefully under-used. An 18 year old at Moora Moora said that he liked country life but did not want that to be a political statement.

At Mandala and Moora Moora the former hippies have developed lifestyles of idyllic agreeability in settings of outstanding beauty. Yet when asked what it's all about Cock replies that his own community "provides an alternative model for how the rural-urban fringe ought to be developed".

The same intelligence and sensitivity which caused them to question established society is now directed at themselves. They have taken stock. Do hand-made pots, rural theatre groups and experimental wind generators really make much difference?

"If I were doing it again" says Cock, "I'd set up a religious community." He says that Moora Moora's environmental ethic has not provided the "vision bigger than itself" necessary for a community's long-term survival.

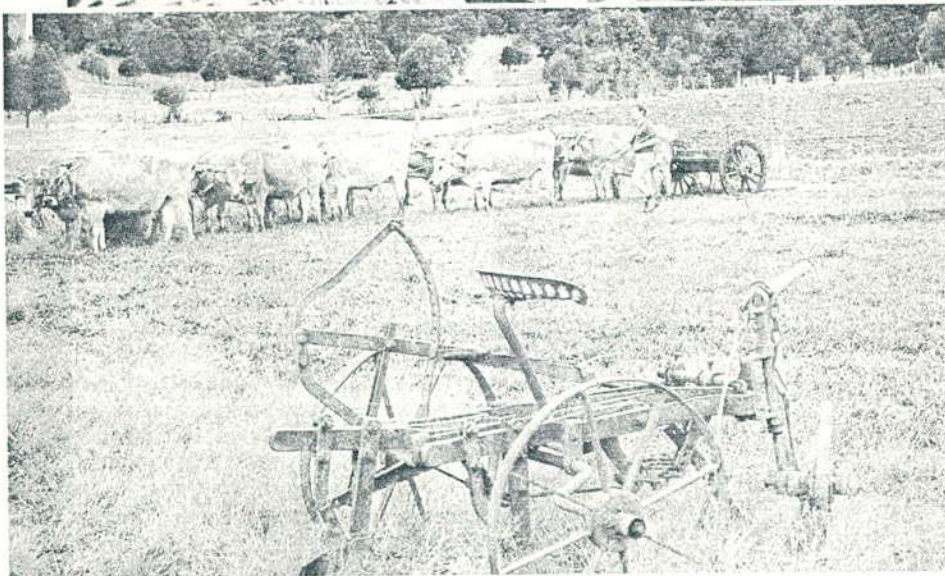
According to Metcalf the alternative communities of



Potter Ian Currie with his handiwork at Mandala



The Krishna's New Govardhana farm near Murwillumbah, NSW, where bullock teams are the preferred method of locomotion



the future will be highly individualistic and unstructured or highly organised and religious like the New Govardhana farm operated, since 1977, by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness near Murwillumbah, in northern New South Wales.

The Krishna farm is no place for the languid or laid back. For 60 adults and 80 children the organised day starts at 4.30am with 45 minutes of singing and dancing, an hour and a half of meditation, 45 minutes study of the Bhagavad-Gita and, finally, 45 minutes of chanting. At 9am, when the average drop-out would surely drop back into bed, the Krishna devotees start a full day's work; for the children, school; for the adults, farming or a job in a nearby town. Evening chanting lasts a further 45 minutes. Understandably, most retire at 9pm as drugs, alcohol, gambling, and intercourse that does not have procreation as its aim are not permitted.

With the secular "alternatives", the devotees share the aspiration to a more

peaceful and simpler way of life in greater all-round harmony. But this is not possible, they believe, without the "God-consciousness" that is built on a strict spiritual discipline. For all their commitment, however, they are

capable of a broad-minded application of principles. Temple president Vrisha explains that they prefer traditional farming and, in particular, want to use the bullock teams that were such a part of early Australia. Nonetheless, he admits with a grin, they used a tractor recently because rain threatened and the ploughing needed to be done quickly.

Vrisha stoutly maintains that the self-indulgence of ordinary society lead inevitably to discontent, neurosis and even suicide. He embraced the Krishna movement, not by an act of will but by realising that nothing else worked — for him at least. A Christian monk could hardly have put it better.

It is surely ironic, therefore, if the alternative movement has ended up embracing much of traditional religious or family life. □

Five-minute Quiz 20

1. Name the three ships under the command of Christopher Columbus on his first voyage to the New World.
2. What colour is the centre ring of an archery target?
3. Actors Mel Gibson, Marlon Brando, Clark Gable and Errol Flynn have all played which character on screen?
4. What is the world's largest carnivorous land animal?
5. The terms Salchow, Walley, Lutz and sit-spin are employed

in which sport?

6. What is the capital of Syria?
7. The girlfriend of cartoon character Popeye is named ...?
8. What name is given to the largest size of champagne bottle?
9. Which of Charles Dickens' novels begins, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times"?
10. In which year and in which city were the Olympic Games held in Australia?

Compiled by Kevin Schluter
Answers on page 44

Meeting with Department of Local Government, Land & Building Development Branch (represented by Mr Kerry Callaghan) with Mid North Coast multiple occupancy groups - organised by Bellingen Multiple Occupancy Action Group (MOAG) Tuesday 7th July 2.000 - 4.00pm Chrysalis Community, Kalang.

(note: this is the third of such meetings)

AGENDA

- Apologies from: Mr Lyall Dir, Chief of the Land and Building Dev Branch
Mr Peter Hamilton, Bodhi Farm, RRTF
- Introduction - including brief report from each m.o. present
- Report from RRTF - news from Kyogle, Tweed, Byron Lismore
- 1. Any new information from the Land & B/D Branch
- 2. State of the Draft Australian Building Code
- 3. BRAN No 102 (copy on back of meeting invitation) - Lismore Council's response to it, and our concern
- 4. RETROSPECTIVITY - the exact position on legalising existing houses
 - explanation of the new 317A certificate
 - draft of new 317B notice (progress on) (= demolition notice)
 - any way of legalising existing building other than thro' Part 11 of Local Government Act (Cr Kevin Childs)
 - any alternative to Engineer's certificate? (Bundagen)
 - is there minimum level of building inspection? (MOAG)
- 5. EXPANDED HOUSES - general discussion on the possibilities
 - Lismore suggesting limit of 60m between units of E/H
 - various queries from Bundagen
 - information from RRTF (submission on Aboriginal Housing)
- 6. OWNER BUILDER PERMITS FOR MOs - info from Bundagen
- 7. WHITE ANT TREATMENT
 - queries from Homeland
 - request to CSIRO from RRTF
- 8. COMPOSTING TOILETS - any progress with NSW Dept of Health tests?
- 9. HOUSE SITING (retrospective approval) - does building inspector have powers to require site to be changed? (Homeland)

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NS 13 Aug 87

Sporting bodies hit by environmental impact

BOGGED DOWN BY THE LAW

By RUSSELL ELDRIDGE

The Lismore City Council is to seek an urgent amendment to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act because of a critical shortage of available topsoil for the district's sports fields and parks and gardens.

Under the Act, an environmental impact statement has to accompany any application to remove topsoil. The council is seeking the support of the Local Government Association to have this requirement waived and allow councils to assume responsibility for small soil extraction operations.

Lismore District Sports Association has drawn on a stockpile of topsoil. But the stockpile is nearly depleted and the association says it cannot afford the cost and time delay involved in preparing an environmental impact statement.

The statements can cost several thousand dollars and take about three months to process.

In many cases, the process of gaining approval takes longer than the job itself and outweighs the value of the venture.

The association says that this has made the cost of acquiring topsoil from private contractors prohibitive.

The secretary of the association, Mr Peter

that many of the association's 70 sports fields required maintenance and improvements. But they had been 'put on the back-burner' because of the looming soil shortage.

"Some fields, for example, are built on old garbage tips, and over time they subside and need topping up," Mr Ashley said.

"Others have taken a lot of hard wear and need to be ripped and regraded.

"We've had to turn down a number of clubs asking for topdressing, so we are feeling the effects."

Lismore aldermen last week spoke out angrily against the restrictions of the Act.



THE foreman of the Lismore District Sports Association, Mr Laurie Cooper, inspects the quality of topsoil at Oakes Oval.

motions which called for:

- Support from the Local Government Association conference later this month at Port Macquarie to request the Act be amended so councils may obtain 'materials to improve sporting fields and other areas' without having to produce an environmental impact statement.

- The Local Government Association to establish a committee to look into ways in which the Act 'conflicts with what local government is trying to achieve and what the people really want'.

use by the council for several years, to substantiate the costs involved in preparing an impact statement.

- The town planning department to prepare a submission to the Department of Environment and Planning to establish the size of a development for which the council might assume responsibility.

Aldermen R Hepburn and H Habib led the attack on the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

Ald Hepburn said that there would be a public backlash against certain

provisions of the Act, which he said were becoming a farce.

"Something has to happen," he said.

"This Government is hell-bent on destroying itself. No one will open a quarry and all development will stop.

"The whole State will grind to a halt."

Ald Habib moved that the Local Government Association be approached for support.

The Lismore chief planner, Mr P Reynders, said that the legislation should be amended to give local government more

responsibility.

"There is a big difference between developing a coalmine and extracting soil for a sports field, but you need an environmental impact statement for both," he said.

"The Act should make an exception for operations of a certain limited size and time period. This could extend to the private sector."

Mr Reynders said that his office previously had made a submission along these lines to the Department of Environment and Planning, but it had been turned down.

● An investigation to

THE
WORD
TODAY

Officers look at problem buildings

Last chance offered to illegal builders

THE NORTHERN STAR, FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1986

Two senior officers of the NSW Department of Local Government held talks in Lismore this week with the Lismore City Council on multiple-occupancy building standards.

They are the chairman of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee, Mr Lyall Dix, and the chief technical officer of the department's land and building development branch, Mr Trevor Howse.

Mr Dix and Mr Howse were sent to Lismore to resolve problems confronting the council in applying Ordinance 70 building standards to multiple-occupancy housing.

The former Minister for Local Government, Mr Stewart, offered to send the two officers to Lismore when responding last year to a letter from the council concerning the Bodhi Farm multiple-occupancy development at The Channon.

The council had written to the Minister after the NSW Land and Environment Court refused to uphold demolition orders issued on two residences at Bodhi Farm.

Mr Stewart was asked to provide local government with clearly-defined guidelines for applying Ordinance 70 building standards to multiple-occupancy.

While in Lismore, Mr Dix and Mr Howse had talks with senior council officers and visited multiple-occupancy developments, including Bodhi Farm.

They also attended a meeting of the Lismore City Council on Tuesday night.

Mr Dix told aldermen that local government could not issue retrospective building approvals for illegal buildings.

He said councils could issue Section 317A certificates of compliance for illegal buildings, but only if the owner requested one and the building complied with Ordinance 70 standards.

Any illegal builder requesting a certificate of compliance could be asked to supply the council with plans and specifications and any other information needed to ensure that the building complied with Ordinance 70.

Banks and building societies would not finance the purchase of any building which had not been issued with a certificate.

Mr Dix was asked if the council and individual aldermen could be held legally liable in the event of a certificate being issued for a building which was later found to be structurally unsound.

He warned that councils had to act with 'due care and diligence' in issuing the certificates.

Otherwise they could be found liable.

"Obviously, it is difficult to see into a concrete slab once it has been laid," he said.

"Council building inspectors must make an assessment based on experience and the facts before them."

Mr Dix said that a recent High Court decision had dramatically shifted the onus of liability from the council to the owners in cases of illegal buildings.

"The law is quite clear. People must get approval before constructing a building," he said.

"Councils should use demolition orders as a last resort."

• Continued Page 5

The Lismore City Council has announced plans for a stringent clampdown on illegal building work undertaken after next June 30.

Owners of illegal buildings in the City Council area will be granted an amnesty from prosecution if they apply for building approval before the June 30 deadline.

But anyone carrying out building work after that date without first obtaining council approval will be prosecuted under the New South Wales Local Government Act.

The council implemented the new policy this week after deciding to take tough action aimed at overcoming problems resulting from a rash of illegal building activity in its area.

The city health surveyor, Mr J Douglass, expressed alarm about the situation in a report recommending a set policy aimed at curbing 'unbridled illegal building work'.

Mr Douglass said that a disturbing increase in the incidence of illegal building during the past two years had to be checked if the council was to maintain reasonable control over buildings.

"Prosecution and demolition orders have been discussed, but there are problems associated with both," he said.

"The main problem with prosecution is that the legal costs incurred by the council usually exceed the fines and costs awarded by the court."

"And obtaining of a verdict against an illegal builder does not necessarily mean that the building, if sub-standard, will be brought up to a

standard acceptable to the council."

Mr Douglass accepted that demolition orders should be issued for illegal residences only as a last resort, and when all other avenues had been exhausted.

"As a general principle, it would be best — subject to development consent being available — to try to have all illegal buildings brought up to standard," he said.

"But there need not be the same reluctance to issue demolition orders on non-residential structures, if the co-operation of the owner cannot be secured to bring it up to standard."

"Nevertheless, there must be some deterrent if the council is to maintain any credibility in building controls."

Mr Douglass proposed a policy which, after a period of amnesty, would allow the owners of illegal buildings to apply to the council for development and building consent.

He said that when the amnesty expired, it should be council policy to prosecute illegal builders under sections 311 and 317 of the Local Government Act.

"While the amnesty is in force, extensive publicity should be given to the council's intentions," Mr Douglass said.

"Anyone found illegally constructing buildings during the amnesty should be treated in the same way as those covered by the amnesty — not prosecuted, but required to submit plans for specifications to the council."

If the council is satisfied, it can issue a Section 317A certificate of compliance indicating that, in the opinion of the

council, the building meets Ordinance 70 standards.

In the event of an illegal builder failing to submit this information, he may be required by the council to improve the structure, or demolish it.

4. THE NORTHERN STAR, SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1986.

Council to seek out illegal buildings

The legal options open to the Kyogle Shire Council in dealing with unauthorised buildings within the shire boundaries are to be investigated by a newly formed committee.

The committee's work will complement a survey being carried out by council staff to identify and map all illegal constructions in the shire.

During the first inspection of properties undertaken for the survey, 27 unauthorised buildings were identified in the Upper Horseshoe Creek area.

In a report to the council this week, the shire engineer, Mr P Knight, said that the survey would be a 'lengthy task'.

But he said it was the only way the council could determine the extent of the problem.

"The question of what action the council should take in these matters is not simple," he said.

"All unauthorised dwellings are an offence against the Local Government Act. Many, but not all, are an offence against the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act."

"There are differing legal approaches the council can take — through building laws, planning laws, or both."

Mr Knight recommended that the council write to landowners whose properties contained unauthorised

buildings informing them of the buildings which were illegal and advising them that the council would take legal action if the constructions were not regularised within three months.

He also advised the council to reconstitute the town planning committee to become the town planning and building committee and recommended that it be authorised to investigate the legal options open to the council in dealing with illegal dwellings and the appropriate action for the council to take in each case.

The council adopted the recommendations.

After the meeting, Mr Knight said that the council would prefer landholders with unauthorised buildings on their properties to approach the council rather than have staff go in search of them.

"Even if the buildings are illegal, the council is willing to discuss the matter and advise landholders on the steps to take to have the buildings legalised," he said.

Multiple occupancy inquiry

Submission outlines problems

The submission by the Rural Resettlement Task Force to the Commission of Inquiry into multiple occupancy in Tweed Shire covered almost 70 foolscap pages.

It had five separate sections and 28 appendices.

The submission also contained comments and recommendations arising from primary submissions by several organisations.

These were Tweed Shire Council, Lismore City Council, Kyogle Shire Council, Land Commission, Northern Rivers County Council, Department of Agriculture, Department of Local Government, Soil Conservation Service, Johnson Farm Management and the Department of Planning and Environment.

The Task Force in its summary of recommendations dealt with eight separate sections.

These were:

- Problems encountered by the council in applying the present provisions of LEP No. 6 Shire of Tweed.

- The determination of an equitable formula for arriving at contributions under Section 94 towards council provided services and facilities.

- The implications of MO development for the provision of other services and facilities.

- The need for an equitable system to rate properties with MO

approval commensurate with the actual residential occupation of the land.

- Schemes in conflict with MO objectives which involve small areas of common land and large areas effectively alienated to individual management or residential subdivision.

- Action that anticipates development approval such as clearing land, road building and the construction of buildings.

- Adverse impacts on individual MO proposals on other residents in the vicinity.

- Means suggested to overcome these problems and any others that might be identified by the commission.

Some of the recommendations under the various sections were:

- "That the commission recommend that the SEPP 15 provide there be no minimum lot size for MO development (i.e. that the present 40 ha minimum be deleted and that council consider each case on its merits).

- "That clause 12A (2) (b) be retained to give effect to the provision that MO be owned in its entirety in common by at least two thirds of all adults residing on the land, or is otherwise owned on behalf of those persons".

- "That council does have adequate jurisdiction to assess and determine the nature of internal roads".

- That the 'vast number of complaints ... caused ... by the construction of

internal roads' appears primarily to be related to non bona-fide MO development".

- "That the attention of the Minister for Planning and Environment be drawn to the immunity with which trees of significance may be, and it appears recently have been, destroyed in the Tweed Shire area and that if immediate rectification by council is not forthcoming that consideration be given by the Minister to issuing an appropriate directive, or if necessary relieving the council of its planning jurisdiction".

- "That if a breach of the Tree Preservation Order occurs council automatically take action to seek redress as provided by the:

1. Imposition of a fine up to \$20,000 and

2. The replanting of nominated trees and their maintenance to maturity and

3. Provision of security to cover default".

- "That a uniform standard of construction for internal roads should not be adopted and that construction need not be supervised by a qualified engineer".

- "That where a Section 94 contribution is applicable to a MO development:—

- (a) an option always be provided for a time payment arrangement;

- (b) no payment need commence prior to the first building application approval; and

- (c) an option always be provided for 'in kind' payments".

- "That subject to preceding recommendation the following maximum contributions are recommended:—

- (a) Roads and bridges — maximum of \$1500 per dwelling.

- (b) Community facilities — maximum of \$150 per dwelling.

- (c) Open space — maximum of \$150 per dwelling.

- (d) Bush fire fighting facilities — maximum of \$150 per dwelling".

- "That it be recommended to the Minister for Natural Resources Janice Crosio that local electricity authorities be advised of the Government's policy in support of the use of renewable energy resources; and to take appropriate steps to ensure that such authorities do not lend weight to local government councils by recommending the supply of mains power, as a condition of MO development approval".

- "That MO communities pose no unusual specific 'threat' to traditional non-intensive rural agricultural development".

- "That the use of 'buffer zoning' not be required between MO communities and non-intensive rural agricultural development".

- "That MO development be permissible with council approval on prime agricultural land developed in pursuant to

the draft SEPP and in particular the clause which provides that land on which the dwellings are situated is not prime crop and pasture land".

- "That the present options open to council for rating should not be changed".

- "That the council may opt, where appropriate, to require as a condition of approval, that the approval will lapse if at the expiration of a specified period, specific conditions have not been fulfilled, or development as applied for has not occurred".

- "That where the council considers a MO application is questionable, due to its size or bona-fides etc., council recommends that the application be withdrawn and re-submitted for re-zoning as a 'rural residential' area".

- "That in respect of construction carried out without council consent, a section of the Act gives

council discretion in that it 'may' order demolition, or it 'may' order the doing of "such work as is necessary to make the building comply with the Act" or it 'may' choose to take no action. The issuing of a demolition should be an action of last resort only and that in the first instance rectification of the situation be sought by council on a co-operative basis with the owners as practical".

- "That as far as is practicable the application of building regulations be based upon the 'performance criteria' and that, where possible there be 'deregulation' of buildings codes in accordance with

objections of the Australia Uniform Building Regulations Co-ordinating Council".

- "That existing illegal MO development be afforded the opportunity of legalisation as provided, if this is considered to be not technically possible then adopting a policy such as to give effect to the spirit of this policy".

- "That the proposed licensing of caravan parks and camping grounds be introduced as a matter of urgency and that when introduced, this provision be used by applicants as one option to facilitate non share holders residing on MO land or potential MO land".

New industry in the offing?

Dear Editor,

I am writing to inform readers of a potential new industry for our region that could well grow into a major national export industry, that being paper pulp cropping and paper manufacture.

Extensive tests at both levels in the United States have shown the substance "Kenaf" to be a very satisfactory substitute for traditional timber pulping material. This hardy disease resistant crop grows well in subtropical areas and is an ideal replacement for sugar cane - harvestable in 150 days by modified cane equipment.

Proximity to a pulp and paper mill is essential and the site required for such a venture would have adequate water and power. Transport access by road and rail and of course sufficient area.

Readers may wish to refer to a June Australian Geographic #6 (Dick Smith's Journal) for an article about newsprint manufacture.

Such an industry would be a major employer and an opportunity for smaller farmers with paddocks available to co-operate in growing/harvesting.

The vast undrained areas around Casino could be put to good use as well as cane growing areas.

All is theory at present, however all indications are positive to date and information is being fed to key people in this area as it is received from USA and Sydney. A more detailed article is in preparation for general publication.

David Lake
Kyogle

Treeworks criticism

Dear Sir/Ms,

I write concerning your recent feature on Nimbin and in particular the section on 'Treeworks'.

Personally I would be loath to seek advice in anything remotely connected with this 'voluntary organisation' simply because they and their connected 'organisations' such as the RRTF can be shown to be a bunch of irrelevant, impractical, unprofessional incompetents.

Now don't get me wrong. I know Martha Patison to be a lovely sincere person, BUT after watching the debacle last fire season at her place of residence, where basic fire consciousness is nonexistent, you may be able to understand why I am more than a little reticent to take her self appointed specialist role seriously.

Some examples are:- water supply mains are unburied plastic pipes, (one looks rather sill trying to put out a fire when the supply line is burnt through), no firebreaks, no regrowth control, houses in the middle of blady grass paddocks, the list goes on. As for the RRTF to which Martha and Mr Dixon belong, people locally are starting to have to pay the price (Council Legal Proceedings) after acting on their misinformation and 'advice'.

I have spent the last six years studying for my Bachelor degree in Urban and Regional Planning, a very complex and interactive discipline indeed. These other self appointed experts are doing nobody a service at all and in fact they are doing the people they purport to represent a distinct disservice.

This can be readily ascertained by the increasing amount of bureaucratic intervention at all levels of the planning process. On one hand we have council trying to cope with people acting on bad information (prosecution, demolition) and on the other hand lobbying provided by these 'experts' to various statutory authorities has seen the current manifestation (in its most extreme form) of things like the current contempt and confusion in

the general population for planning and the planning process.

In conclusion, the much vaunted NIMPLAN only has ONE actual active Nimbin Town member and he belongs to RRTF.

Peter J Alleman
Nimbin

Bi-Centennial farce

Sir,

We challenge the decision of the Federal and State governments to spend two hundred million dollars for the bi-centenary celebrations and we ask "at what cost?"

So far we have seen cuts to pre-school child care, hospitals, education and other essential services. Unemployment benefits to under eighteens have been stopped.

Cuts to the State Government Housing Commission scheme has caused the list of people seeking assistance to soar from 40,000 to 70,000 in twelve months. Home care subsidy could be next on the growing list of "has beens". The State Government very recently withdrew funding to a very successful scheme which was assisting first offender delinquent boys to get back on the right track. At the same time they also announced further funds will be available for the Darling Harbour development and tunnel scheme.

It seems to us that the government's present attitude is penalising the underprivileged (white as well as black) and those not yet old enough to vote.

Their call for us to "Come Together As A Nation" sounds extremely patriotic but what is there to celebrate? In our two hundred years what have we actually achieved?... As a nation we have more millionaires and politicians, more farmers leaving their properties, there are more families living below the poverty line, and more money available for projects which we don't need.

There is more crime on the streets, more violence in the home. More Australians are out of work and there are more small businesses being swallowed up by powerful "multi-nationals", and yes, we do have more National Parks (but fewer trees). After two hundred years we have not yet learned to live in harmony with our environment or our neighbours.

We are not against Australians celebrating, but this goes far beyond the realm of commonsense and good governing, - especially when the government makes a practice of cutting essential services. We object strongly to this double-standard and will avoid the celebrations as a sign of our protest. We ask others who may feel as we do to resist the temptation of being swept along on the tide of hysteria which is inevitable (traditionally called "nationalism") in '88.

Instead, remember those who are less fortunate, who have been disadvantaged and disillusioned by politicians who call for patriots whilst depriving these same people of their basic, biological right to adequate food, clothing and shelter. If ALL Australians had these needs fulfilled then, yes, we would have something to celebrate.

The many millions of dollars being spent on projects such as the Bi-Centennial, Darling Harbour, the Mono-Rail and the new Parliament House are a means to the same end... "kingdoms" for those in power, not just in Parliament but for the "string pullers" also, sadly at the expense of ordinary Australians.

As far as we are concerned, the Bi-Centennial is the ultimate "Aussie Rip-Off".

Mary and Barrie Brown
Iluka

The North Coast - Sept 87

BIG HASSLE FOR HOMELESS

by Gaye Cronin

In this, the Year of Shelter for the Homeless, the problem is actually being exacerbated by local Building Inspector, Kieran Wade's search and destroy mission along the roads and tracks, (we can hardly say highways and byways) of the Nimbin area, sniffing out, so far, fifty illegal dwellings. Mr Wade is undaunted in his quest for these dwellings, and cannot be turned from his purpose by appeals of poverty, age or need.

It is alleged that a seventy-six year old lady in the Stoney Chute area was threatened with having her walls pulled down around her. Fortunately, this lady's son is a magistrate in Brisbane, and was able to take action on her behalf, preventing the threatened eviction.

Not everybody is so fortunate, and the next few weeks will see many more people thrown onto the already glutted rental market.

Ordinance 70

One contributing factor appears to be Ordinance 70, which relies heavily on individual interpretation. A spokesman for the Department of Town Planning tells of a recent case where the Lismore City Council prosecuted a person who had built a house without walls. The owner/builder had interpreted the ordinance to mean a house did not have to have walls. The council's interpretation was that it did.

The court agreed with the owner and the council lost its case.

While situations such as this offer a certain amount of amusement, the confusion caused is far from funny. At a recent public meeting in Nimbin, Alderman Mac Nicholson said, "In my view anything can be brought up to Ordinance 70."

Hands tied

When approached Mr Wade first claimed he was not prepared to comment as he "doesn't

like newspapers". Upon being asked about evictions in the Nimbin area he denied there were any; he did admit to notices to quit having been served, but, as the people concerned could appeal, did not feel these constituted evictions. Mr Wade also admitted that eleven of the eighteen people already served with notices would appeal in vain, "My hands are tied," he said.

Mr John Douglas, Lismore City Health Surveyor, claims there are still avenues open to those who have been served with notices. For some, the buildings can be brought up to standard. Mr Douglas is concerned that only five people have been in touch with the council.

"We are being classed as the big bad wolf," he said, "if people would come and see us, we may be able to work something out."

In many cases the problem is illegal dual occupancy. Under new guide-lines being considered by the State Department of Environment and Planning a property must be ten hectares to qualify for dual occupancy and have sealed road access to Lismore.

In an area where the roads are among the worst in the State, and mostly unsealed, this is almost laughable. Almost, until you take into consideration the human suffering involved.

What next?

When all the avenues of appeal have been covered, what resources are available to those who have to move? Apparently pitifully few.

One real estate agent in Nimbin said, "We have people coming in all the time, and there would be many more we don't even see because they can't afford to pay bonds and rent. Even those who can, and who would be acceptable tenants to owners, cannot be accommodated. As for the homelessness, we have the situation where peo-

ple are sleeping on verandahs, under buildings, anywhere. This cannot be resolved in the private sector. There is simply a chronic shortage of housing in the Nimbin area."

Refuge closed

Katie Love, of the Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre, tells a heartbreaking story of hopefuls coming in to ask about housing and put their names on a list merely to become statistics.

"A few are lucky enough to find something fairly quickly," she told me, "but they are the exception, most wait about eleven months. Many more give up and move on."

"There was a refuge in Nimbin a couple of years ago but it closed down."

Katie feels that a negative attitude on the part of the townspeople, with comments of "Not wanting to provide mansions for droogs" was a contributing factor.

"At the moment," she continued, "the Caravan Park is the shelter for homeless in Nimbin, if there is a van available, and if they can afford the rent."

Katie would like to see a shelter in Nimbin, to provide urgent, short-term accommodation, but finds it difficult to get people prepared to commit themselves to the time and effort involved in setting one up.

In Lismore there is the Women's Refuge, which can provide short term accommodation for women and children in a crisis situation. Unfortunately their resources are stretched to the limit, they accommodate between two hundred and two hundred and fifty women and children a year. Owing to lack of space, the refuge has turned away nine homeless women in the past three weeks as they were not victims of domestic violence.

Housing collective

Women Up North housing collective has six houses, all in Lismore. They will provide accommodation for women and their children for three to twelve months, but they already have ninety-six women on their waiting list.

The Department of Housing has a four to five year waiting list, but do offer immediate accommodation for those with absolutely no other resource. There is also a priority list for the most needy, who cannot be classed as in a crisis situation.

Julie Webb, of the North Coast Housing Cooperative, believes the problem is simply, or not so simply, that there are approximately three million more people, state wide, needing accommodation and there are no houses available. For many the dream of home ownership is just that, a dream that will probably never be realised.

For each divorce, and divorce is sky-rocketing, one more house is needed. The traditional old farmhouse is being bought up by trendy hobby farmers, and, with the exception of highrise developers and the Department of Housing, nobody builds rental accommodation. It is inevitably the second house that is rented out.

Vendetta worsens bad situation

At the risk of stating the obvious, we do not need Kieran Wade's vendetta straining the pitifully inadequate resources any further. While we recognise that some controls are necessary for the health and well-being of the general public, there are sound and safe buildings in this area that may not meet all of the council's requirements, but be perfectly habitable just the same.

Mass prosecutions and evocation of the Health Act, with daily fines, are NOT the way to solve the problem. These actions are ludicrous in the Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

BIG BROTHER IS GETTING CLOSER

by Fiona Clarke

Many people believe that the ID card will not be introduced because of the obvious threat to privacy.

An informal street survey I conducted recently discovered that the general population are under the impression that the proposal has already been abandoned because it was blocked in the Senate.

Not so. Janine Haines, Senator for SA, explains in a letter dated August 14, "Since the Australia Card was the Bill used by the Government to call the double dissolution, it has the right under the Constitution to call a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament. In other words, the Senators and Members vote on the Bill at the same time in the same chamber. Since the Government's new majority exceeds the numbers against it in the Senate, the Bill will pass — unamended."

Savage fines

Examine the provisional fines (see box) to be introduced with the Australia Card. Fines range from \$500 to \$20,000 for anyone guilty of losing their card or of hiring a cardless person.

"Necessary," the Government tells us, "to stop tax and welfare fraud."

No-one can deny there is a large amount of revenue lost because of these problems but is that enough reason to penalise the vast majority of honest citizens? It is the ordinary Australians whose freedom and privacy are most at risk, the rich and powerful will still be protected and the criminals will do a roaring trade in fake cards.

Guilty until proven innocent

When speaking to the Senate Select Committee on the ID card Mr Frank Costigan

The Australia card is crammed with provisions for fining, gaoling and regimenting ordinary non-criminal citizens.

1. A fine of \$5,000 or two years imprisonment — or both — if a card is destroyed for any reason that cannot be proven to be accidental.
2. A fine of \$500 for losing a card and failing to notify the government within 21 days.
3. A fine of \$20,000 for failing to produce the card on demand of the Taxation Office.
4. A fine of \$1,000 and/or six months gaol for failing to attend a compulsory conference if ordered by the ID Card agency.
5. A fine of \$5,000 and/or two years gaol for businessmen failing to submit a customer's card number to the government.
6. A fine of \$20,000 for businessmen employing casual staff and not submitting their card number.
7. A fine of \$5,000 for selling a block of land without submitting the purchaser's card number to the registrar of land titles.

What happens if you refuse to hold a card or if you have lost your card?

1. If you are employed in a job and you don't have a card, you may be dismissed or forced to resign as it is an offence for your employer to pay you. (C1 49.2) Penalty \$20,000
2. You cannot get a new job as it is an offence for an employer to hire a cardless person. (C1 49.1) Penalty \$20,000
3. A person without a card will be denied access to pre-existing bank accounts (C1 40.2), and cannot cash in investments (C1 41.2c) and cannot give or receive money to or from a solicitor (C1 41.7d) or cannot receive money invested in unit, property, or cash management trusts, (C1 42.2c) Penalty \$20,000
4. Benefits will not be paid to the unemployed, widows, supporting parents, aged, invalid, sick, without a card (C1 54.7) Penalty — Nil. (This area is administered by public servants).
5. Farmers without a card will not be able to receive payments from marketing boards for their produce. (C1 43.2) Penalty \$20,000. (Nice little round figure isn't it?)
6. A cardless person cannot sell (C1 45.2), or rent (C1 43.4) their own home or land. Penalty \$5,000
7. A Hospital may refuse entry to a cardless person (C1 53.1). A cardless person cannot claim Medicare benefits and is not eligible for bulk billing (C1 53.3).

Source material courtesy of Australian Small Business

regarding the privacy issue, claiming that there will be no link-up between existing data-base records.

Blewett confirms link-up

Dr Blewett, Minister for Health, speaking for the ID card suggests otherwise:

"The key to the system is not the card itself but the generation of one number which will act as a linkage number, between for example, social security and tax records."

He also admits that "it is true that it makes it somewhat easier to do cross checking within the system..."

Mr D Fisher, (Director, Australia Card Secretariat, Department of Health) blandly told the Committee in relation to some current programs:

"That linkage, or the matching, in whatever form it is done, is legitimate; it is not actually subject to direct external scrutiny at present, and many individuals probably do not even know that it is going on and would want to complain about it — if they did know."

ASBA protest group unconvinced

The Australian Small Business Association is far from convinced that the ID card will help their members or the community. So concerned are they that they are supporting a protest group, the Coalition Against the ID-Database. The coalition is asking that people write to Bob Hawke and Senator Susan Ryan expressing their opposition to the card.

The ALP has long been the "working man's" party. If they continue to expect the Australian people to accept such extreme controls over their lives, they may well see a swing back to the con-

No money for repairs so bitumen may go

What can a shire council do when it just doesn't have enough money to keep its few kilometres of bitumen-sealed local roads in good order?

One option is to keep plugging the holes with bitumen and hoping that one day enough funds will be available to do a major repair job on the roads.

But, according to Mr Graeme Miles, secretary of the Shires' Association of NSW, some shires are looking closely at another option — digging up the bitumen and reverting to a gravel surface.

Mr Miles said three main factors were causing shires great concern:

- The declining level, in real terms, of financial assistance from the Federal Government.

- The sky-rocketing cost of bitumen and other materials, influenced by the increases in crude oil prices since the mid 1970s.

- The increase in size, number and travel speeds of heavy trucks on country roads — particularly when the traffic volume and weight of trucks were not anticipated when the roads were constructed many years ago.

The problem was highlighted in the 1980-81 annual report of the Commissioner for Main Roads, Mr B. N. Loder.

Mr Loder said the greatest demand in rural areas was for sealed roads, providing all-weather and safe access to facilities in the larger country areas.

However, the higher the standard to which the road system was raised, the higher was the cost of maintaining it.

Mr Loder said the cost of plant, labour and material used in road works was rising at 15 per cent a year. But the Commonwealth road grants for 1981-82 were only nine per cent higher than for the previous year.

In 1972-73, for every dollar spent on road construction, 30 cents was spent on maintenance. By 1980-81 the maintenance expenditure had risen to 50 cents for each construction dollar, he said.

In many shires the picture is grim.

Corowa Shire, which covers wheat country in the Riverina, is one of those shires which is considering the ultimate option for a deteriorating local bitumen road because of the financial difficulty in maintaining it.

The shire engineer, Mr John Babbs, said he had recommended that the council dig up the Hopefield Road, a route

used by wheat trucks, and convert it to a gravel road — because it would be cheaper to maintain.

"The council is now spending more on maintenance than it is on road building," he said. "Last year we spent \$130,000 on road construction, and between \$300,000 and \$400,000 on maintenance."

"The few kilometres of bitumen local roads we have in the shire are falling apart. Most of them should have been resealed completely about 10 years ago but, with present money allocations and the cost of maintenance, there's no chance of that happening in the foreseeable future."

Lismore City Council, which has a large rural area within its boundaries, is spending the equivalent of 12 per cent of its rate revenue on maintaining bitumen roads.

"To do this, we're having to raise loan funds," the Town Clerk, Mr Byron Stevens, said. "This is contrary to basic accounting principles, but it's the only way out. Even now we're going backwards. It's one of our greatest problems."

"We calculate that our roads need resealed every six to eight years, and the interest rate on loans for that sort of period is about 16 per cent a year."

"Having to raise loans for road maintenance is fundamentally wrong, and the Federal and State Governments are just going to have to come to the party."

"Their attitude towards what is essentially a basic national resource is irrational."

At Urana Shire, also in the Riverina, the Shire Clerk, Mr Harry Hutton, said: "We've got roads that haven't been resealed for 20 years. We're just doing patchwork maintenance — a Band Aid here and there."

"The Federal Government will have to take the lead and release more funds to the States, but the question which must be asked is whether the State Government is putting a fair share of its funding into roads."

Bland Shire, based at West Wyalong, doesn't have many sealed local roads.

"Our big problem is finding funds to stop our gravel roads from going backwards, and we're looking towards ways of using about 15 per cent of our road grant for this," said the shire clerk, Mr Spencer Dunstall.

The soaring cost of maintaining the bitumen roads in Gligandra Shire is having a great influence on the construction programme.

"If we can't afford to maintain new bitumen roads, what's the point in building them?" said the shire engineer, Mr Noel Edgell.

"It costs us between \$6000 and \$7000 a kilometre to reseat a bitumen road, and there are 130 km of sealed rural roads in the shire. We're looking to resealing between 10 and 12 km a year, so we have about a 10-year cycle. This is all we can afford to maintain."

"A few years ago the average life expectancy of a bitumen road was 12 years, but we're lucky if they last 10 years now."

"Many of the roads were built on light foundations, partly because of subsurface conditions, and partly because the weight and speed of the heavy truck traffic wasn't anticipated."

The sheer old age of some of the bitumen local roads is a major problem in Forbes Shire.

The shire clerk, Mr Peter Huthnance, said that, in addition to huge increases in bitumen prices and in contract prices for labour, rural councils had to bear the burden of the soaring cost of transporting bitumen and other road-making materials to their districts.

Moree Plains, an amalgamated shire in the north-west of the State, has a problem of a slightly different nature — finding funds to keep its gravel and black soil roads in good order.

The shire engineer, Mr Tom Nugent, said the shire had about 197 km of sealed local roads, 1955 km of gravel, and 550 km of formed black soil roads.

"Because of the harsh climatic conditions in the district and heavy truck traffic we lose a considerable amount of gravel road surface. Replacing this each year over the full 1955 km would cost the council \$3.2 million for gravel alone. It also costs about \$200 each kilometre to maintain the 550 km of black soil roads."

"The best the council could do for 1982 was to allocate \$600,000 for maintenance and \$200,000 for bitumen sheeting. This means that we're falling short of our road maintenance requirements by nearly \$3 million a year."

"The Federal Government tells us there just isn't any more money to be spread about on roads. What must happen is that fuel taxes must be allocated where it's fair and equitable — to road construction and maintenance."



Maintaining bitumen roads is a costly business, in labour and raw materials. Here a DMR team works on the road through the grand arch at Jenolan Caves, in the Blue Mountains region.

—Photo by Department of Main Roads.

Anatomy of a rural commune

University researchers have analysed Australian rural communities and come up with some thought-provoking information on "alternative lifestyles and their practitioners." **BRUCE JUDDERY** examines the situation.

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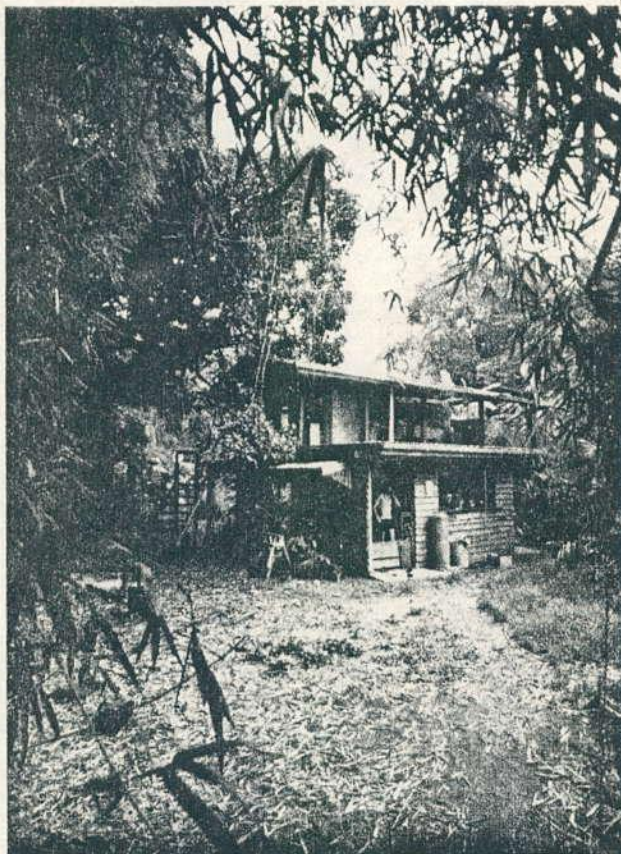
THE PEOPLE who live in Australia's rural communes are really not so very different from the rest of the community. Oh, they are much better educated and probably better able to find work in the "conventional" economy. They include very few youngsters in the jobless 16 to 19 years age group. And they are much more dependent on social welfare payments for their money needs — 46 percent of the total.

They live, mostly, in family groups typical of the Australian experience — mum, dad, one or two kids, perhaps another adult, but a perfectly recognisable family group, rather than the hippie stereotype. And, like the rest of Australia, they are heavily into home ownership (although the house itself is likely to have cost less than \$10,000 and be built of mud bricks or bush timber).

If the experience of a score of New South Wales "rural land sharing communities" described in statistical detail by a team of Australian National University scholars for the Bureau of Labor Market Research is to be heeded, they offer little prospect of providing the "supply-side strategy" for the reduction of unemployment advocated by Prime Minister Bob Hawke. Their experience may even raise again the "dole-bludger" rhetoric of the 1970s, as the degree to which many of these residents of rural communes have voluntarily withdrawn from a conventional economy in which they are well able to find work — to subsidise their other pursuits (including full-time work in the "informal" or non-monetary economy) — is recognised.

It is one thing to recognise the dole as a compensation to those whom the system has rejected. It may be seen as something else in the case of people who have rejected the system tacitly.

If the bureau's paper does stir up this sort of questioning, its target will not be the stereotyped blond surfer — yesterday's "dole-bludger" — for the



Rosebud Farm, a rural retreat near Cairns, northern Queensland

evidence is that the rural community (the authors shy away from the term "commune," with its implication of common ownership of all property) has very little attraction for his (and her) age group.

The encouragement of such rural communities, based in part on Israel's kibbutzim, has been one of the individual "ideological" contributions of the Prime Minister. In his 1979 Boyer Lectures on "The Resolution of Conflict," he advocated their development as an alternative to "negative expenditure on unemployment benefits." Four years later, as Prime Minister (when, as the authors of the report point out, he could have shelved the proposal by pleading pressure of business), he floated it again at an International Labor Organisation meeting in Geneva.

At a subsequent press conference, Hawke revealed that the emphasis of his thinking was on rural communities where younger members would draw

benefit from the skills and experience of their elders.

As it has proceeded, to a mixed reception (the NSW and Victorian governments are interested in the cheap-housing potential of the communities; local government and unions distrust the whole idea), one of the biggest gaps has been any real knowledge of existing communities — the sorts of people who live on them and how they support themselves.

The ANU academics — Dr Liz Sommerlad and Peta Dawson of the university's Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies and Dr Jon Altman of the Department of Social and Political Change — have gone a long way to filling in this gap.

They admit that their survey is not encyclopaedic but think that the variety in the 20 land-sharing communities they have studied makes their findings generally applicable.

Six of their communities were found in the "Rainbow Region" around Nimbin, NSW, and another nine between Taree and Bellingen on the state's mid-north coast. A further four were found on the NSW south coast and one in bushland north of Sydney. They had been established for from three to 12 years, an average of seven, were occupied by between four and 50 adults — with a mean of 11 — and occupied between 40 and 706 hectares with a mean size of about 175.

Population density ranged from one inhabitant (including children) per 2 ha to a high of about 54 a person. The average was one person to 9.7 ha. The researchers found a total of 229 adults — 117 men and 112 women.

In terms of the ANU team's age distribution, the communities were not at all typical — an important detail if governments come seriously to consider promoting such communities as an anti-unemployment specific. The 229 adults were accompanied by 136 children — 37 percent of the communities' total

PETER CRAWFORD

populations — all of them under 16 years of age. No members were in the 16-to-20 age group and only nine (2.5 percent) in the 21-to-25 years bracket.

The vast majority of the adults were crowded into the 26-to-30 group (66 — 18 percent) and 31-to-35 years (81 — 22.1 percent). Most of the 21 over-50s surveyed belonged to a community of retirees that was falling apart even as the researchers asked their questions.

Nearly half the total were from "an Australian urban background, confirming other findings ... that the rural resettlement movement is part of an urban-rural drift, reflecting a high level of dissatisfaction with urban lifestyles."

But not with all aspects of it. Of the

Most of them — 64 percent — had been employed up to the time of moving to their settlement, the majority in the service sector (as teachers, nurses, public servants and in a few professions). Practically none, however, had managerial or entrepreneurial backgrounds — a detail, the writers speculate, which might be reflected in the slowness with which most communities seem to be moving toward any kind of self-sufficiency.

Altogether, only 80 of the adults surveyed (37 percent) worked for cash and only 17 of those on a full-time basis. The others worked part-time or — the majority — occasionally.

That "working population" was

good many, however, are reported as resentful of their dependence upon it.

Whatever dilemma the residents might face, the survey points to an equally large social dilemma: "There is an important policy implication here: if rural land-sharing communities are intended as supply-sided solutions to unemployment, then, there is an implicit assumption that members will withdraw from the labor market. Given the educational status and investment in human capital evidences at these communities, it is questionable whether these people, with valuable skills, should be encouraged to withdraw from the labor market."

The researchers also wonder at the ethical implications of rural communities' welfare dependence. Victorian and NSW state ventures in promoting communes, they point out, implicitly regard continued payment of the dole as a minimum income. Similarly, the payment of other benefits such as supporting parents, invalid and sickness benefits assumes that recipients are not only unemployed but also incapable of employment, due either to child-minding commitments or to disabilities.

"The important point ... is that most (rural community) people receiving these payments are 'employed.' However, their employment is not as part of the conventional labor market and is not for cash; rather it is in the informal sector of the economy."

It is not as if the land-sharers are work dodgers. According to the survey, 86 of the adults (40 percent) work full-time on their properties, building houses, producing food, doing maintenance and the like. Another 56 (26 percent) put in more than a half-week's effort on a regular basis.

There is, the researchers point out, nothing illegal about eking out the dole by gardening or fishing. In fact, the social security system forces people into the "informal" economy as it penalises them for earning more than \$12 cash a week. But they have chosen this "alternative" voluntarily.

"These people are intentionally unemployed in many cases," they conclude. "Their past employment status and occupational status is high. Hence, the surveyed population of land-sharers must be carefully distinguished from structurally unemployed people who are frequently unskilled and have either been laid off or unable to find employment since completing schooling." □



LEE PEARCE

Creativity manifested at Byron Bay in northern NSW

140 households surveyed, 17 consisted of a couple without offspring — at 12 percent, half the Australian average. But the 45 couples with children, at 32.5 percent, was not far down on the 40 percent community norm. There were, however, 23 single parents — more than six times the national average.

Only five households contained more than one unrelated family. On the other hand, 45 people — or 32.5 percent (against an average of 19.5 percent) — were living alone.

Where they did differ markedly from the population as a whole was in the question of education. Only 3.7 percent of Australians hold a bachelor's degree (as their highest qualification); 27.3 percent of the land-sharers had them. The 5.1 percent who held higher degrees was just 10 times the national average. Altogether, 64.6 percent held qualifications of some sort — trade and technical, as well as tertiary — against a national average of 25.1 percent.

responsible last year for bringing just \$613,470, into the 20 communities surveyed. That was 42.1 percent of their total cash. Another \$170,340 (11.7 percent) came from "other" sources, such as nest-eggs or the occasional legacy.

But the greatest contribution — 46.2 percent, \$613,470 — came from social security payments and 60 percent of that from unemployment benefits.

No community in the survey was financially self-sufficient. More than half the 157 "economic units" in the survey — a breadwinner (from whatever source), with or without dependants — were, in terms of cash income, below the recognised poverty line.

The attitude of the communities to their dependants is a bit ambivalent. "For members of land-sharing communities," write the authors, "the dole acts more as a source of minimum cash income than as an expedient until work turns up. To some extent, it is regarded as a non-discretionary or civil right." A

Northern Star - 7 April 1987

Local government engineers should broaden their skills, says Minister

SYDNEY. — The 'build big at any cost' approach adopted by many engineers no longer was appropriate for the needs of local government, the NSW Minister for Local Government, Mr Crosio, said yesterday.

In her opening address to the Local Government Engineers' Association annual conference here, Mrs Crosio called on local government engineers to improve their knowledge of finance, law, economic and management theory, and personnel and communications skills.

The Minister stressed the need for government, community and environmental needs to be taken into account in engineering considerations.

"It is not manpower or cost efficient to leave the engineer in his traditional role," Mrs Crosio said.

"The engineer also must become a manager, taking into account such things as government, community and environmental needs, rather than simply

responding to a technical problem," she said.

Mrs Crosio told delegates that local councils were becoming more accountable to the public and had to ensure that they remained responsive to change.

"When deciding whether a road should be sealed, or a park provided in a particular location, it is necessary to look beyond the technical merits of the case and consider the needs of the local community," she said.



MRS CROSIO

Narrow street lethal, say residents

By Staff Reporter **RUSSELL ELDRIDGE**

After witnessing the umpteenth close call on the road outside her house in Esmonde Street, Lismore, Dawn Horsley decided it was time the city council did something about the condition of the road.

She and several of her neighbours joined forces to ask the council as a matter of urgency to widen the steep, narrow road, and to provide guttering and footpaths.

The council has responded by saying that it has insufficient funds.

"Your request will be further considered when the council reviews its four-year capital works program in August," a letter this month from the town clerk's office said.

Mrs Horsley said yesterday that if funds were not made available, she would approach local politicians and make a complaint at State level.

The residents are concerned that it will take a road death to force the council to act.

Elderly residents say that in some places they have to reverse their cars to allow oncoming vehicles to pass, and some parents of young children walk their children to and from school bus stops because of the lack of footpaths in the upper end of the road.

Mrs Deirdre Paillas and her young daughter have to cut through a neighbour's yard to avoid one of the most dangerous sections.

In a letter to the council, Mrs Paillas described one section between her house and Cathcart Street as 'potentially lethal' for pedestrians.

To make matters worse, Esmonde Street is a council-promoted tourist route to Robinsons Lookout on Robinsons Road.

The turn-off to Robinsons Road is a hairpin intersection at the blind-rise crest of Esmonde Street.

Mrs Horsley said that

the junction should be re-aligned as a Y-intersection.

At night the lookout is popular with young people, a carload of whom recently overturned as they tried to negotiate the awkward re-entry into Esmonde Street.

As if that is not enough, Esmonde Street is a recognised alternative route for people wanting to avoid busy Ballina Street, particularly drink-drivers trying to evade random breath-testing patrols.

A resident near the crest of the hill told how, as he was reversing from his driveway, a car smashed into his vehicle.

"The other driver said that his brakes weren't effective because his front wheels were off the road as he came over the rise," the resident said.

"But I was the one who copped the fine, for backing on to the road."

"Also, a lot of young fellows are testing their bikes up the hill, trying to get into orbit as they hit the top."

A woman resident said she had only recently bought a house in the street. Even before she moved in, a car smashed into her front fence, and her garage was used to park a damaged motorcycle belonging to a young rider who had crashed up the road.

Mr Barney McDermott has lived in Esmonde Street for 36 years. He has watched the traffic increase and he has helped pull out the cars that have slipped off the crumbling road edges into the weed-choked drains.

He said that he had been trying for years to make the council act.

"We raised a petition once and I've been down there in person, but your requests just fall on deaf ears," he said.

"The road must be widened and footpaths built."

The ultimate irony for residents was when a city council tractor, engaged in mowing, slipped off the verge and became bogged.

Two other concerns for residents are the absence of roadside parking and the effect of the road's condition on property values.

Mrs Horsley said that widening the road would lessen the danger of a serious natural problem: The blinding effect of the early or late sun on motorists approaching either side of the crest of the hill.

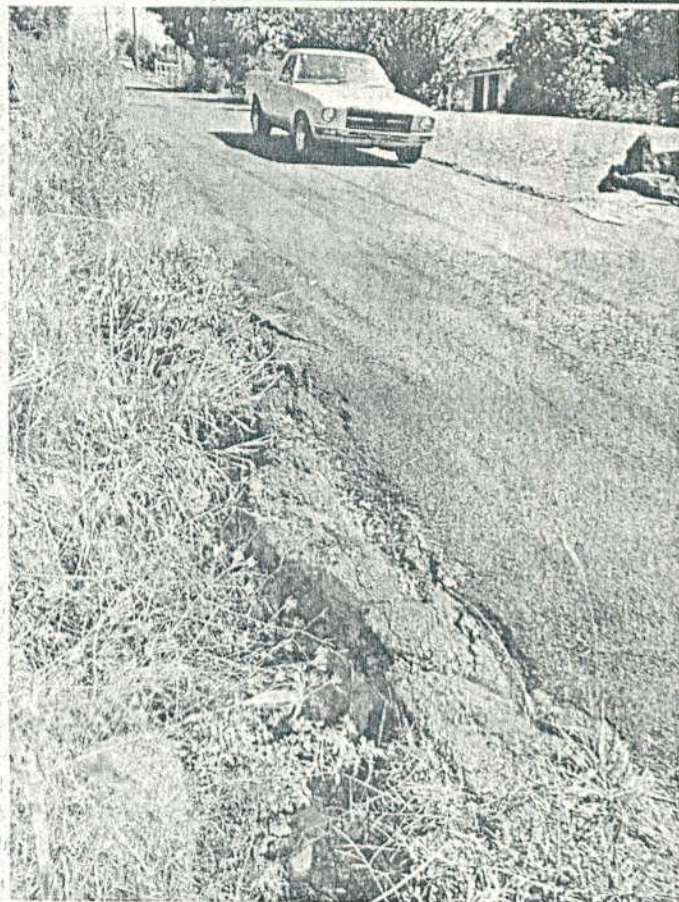
"They say you've got to live in Lismore for 10 years before you're entitled to a say," Mrs Horsley said.

"Well, I'm having my say now."

"I'm sick of watching my rates go up and up — I'm paying more than \$900 now — and in return, there's this disgrace of a road."

● **RIGHT:** The road shoulder is non-existent at this section of Esmonde Street.

● **BELOW:** There's little room to spare as two cars approach each other in Esmonde Street.



owner of the vehicle recognised it and had contacted the police.

When approached by police, Shick had admitted stealing it and was arrested.

He was sentenced to three months' jail on each charge, to be served concurrently.

Couple remanded on fraud, drug charges

A woman who yesterday appeared in the Byron Bay Local Court on 15 charges of passing false cheques worth \$4292.87 was bailed to appear in the same court on October 15.

Police allege that Lisa McGill, 25, of Possum Creek, used the cheques to buy household goods and clothing from shops in Lismore.

She yesterday appeared unrepresented before magistrate Mr B Bright.

Appearing with McGill was her husband, John William McGill, 37, of Possum Creek.

He was charged with cultivating 11 cannabis plants, and possessing of equipment to administer cannabis.

Mr Bright adjourned the cases to allow the couple to obtain legal representation.

Solicitor fined for breaching trust practice

SYDNEY. — A Stokers Siding solicitor was fined \$2000 yesterday for trust account breaches.

The Solicitors' Statutory Committee imposed the fine on John Donald Weller.

The committee said no misappropriation of clients' funds was involved.

It said Mr Weller had had no formal training in NSW trust accounting procedures.

Irregularities in his trust account had been discovered during a routine investigation by a Law Society inspector.

Mr Weller had taken steps to improve his procedures.

He had practised in Victoria about seven years before being admitted as a solicitor in New South Wales in January, 1982.

Under arrangements between the two States, Mr Weller had not been required to undergo any further training or qualification in NSW trust accounting procedures.

corporate major augmentation works which have extended the Rous bulk supply to parts of the Ballina Shire.

Other areas to be included in the county district for the first time are the former Terania and Gundurimba shire areas, which amalgamated with the Lismore City Council in the late 1970s.

The Lismore town clerk, Mr B Stevens, told aldermen this week that existing boundaries were being altered to include the whole of the Lismore City area, except that part serviced by the Nimbin water supply.

He said the Rous County Council would assume control of all bulk water supplies inside the city council boundaries, with the city council retaining responsibility for water reticulation.

Mr Stevens said the changes would have little impact on the existing bulk supply situation in the former Terania and Gundurimba areas, which already was controlled by the Rous County Council.

Significant change

He said the most significant change which could occur would be the transfer of rural consumers in those two areas from the Rous supply system to the Lismore reticulation system.

"At present, because these areas are not part of the county district, consumers receive their water direct from the Rous County Council," he said.

"If they become part of the county district, Rous will lose any reticulation rights to supply these people, who will become the responsibility of the Lismore City Council.

"If the Rous County Council wishes to

exemption at the council chambers at the request of the Department of Local Government.

But aldermen are concerned that the department has called for submissions only from the Rous County Council and its constituent councils — Lismore, Byron, Ballina and Richmond River.

Public submissions

Mr Stevens said it appeared the department was not interested in receiving public submissions on the proposed changes.

"Presumably, any public objections can be lodged only with the city council," he said.

"While I can see no reason for opposing the changes, the council should be given an opportunity to assess public reaction, if any, before passing on its views to the department," he said.

The council adopted recommendations from Mr Stevens that:

- The proposals be placed on public exhibition for two weeks.

- Public submissions be sought.

- The department be asked to extend the closing date for council submissions by one month to November 5.

The Rous county clerk, Mr P O'Sullivan, confirmed yesterday that the proposed boundary changes were concerned mainly with incorporating a portion of the Ballina Shire into the county district.

"We are using this opportunity to request that the department also include those Lismore City Council areas not previously declared as part of the district," he

FUNERALS

ABERNETHY, F M
CLAYDON, L E
REEVES, K M
KELLY, J A
McKEE, W J

DEATHS

MOBBS, L A

• Details — Page 31

Carpet laying and repairs
Upholstery cleaned
David Agnew, 283072

ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES

A public seminar to introduce a new accredited course in Alternative Lifestyles will be held at the Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education on—

Tuesday November 10,
1987 starting 1.00 p.m.
Room 4A23, City Campus
(Keen Street)

Speakers: Dr. Ted Trainer,
University of N.S.W.;
Dr. Bill Metcals, Griffith
University, Brisbane; Dr.
Leigh Davison, of Centre
for Alternative Lifestyle
Studies.

For further information
Phone 230808, 886307 or
886269.

Public welcome

AQUAFITNESS classes,
commencing Alstonville
November

Received on: *Wed. 4 Nov.*
Read by: Comments:

() Peter

() Sandor *& agree with Daryl!*

() Jack

() Dave L *The Postards didn't mention us
unless they do a special on us next Wednesday.*

() Dave C

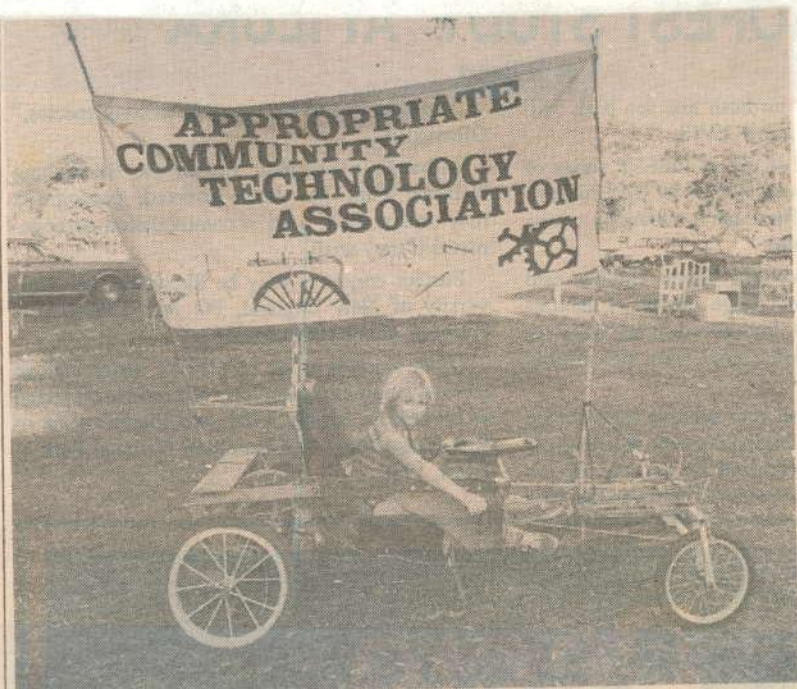
() Karl

Proposed action:

() Discard

() File under

()



Racin' Jason

7 Nov 87

'Alternative' theme for NRCAE course

A new accredited course on alternative lifestyles will be taught next year at the Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education.

A public seminar will be held at the college's Keen Street campus on Tuesday to give a preview of the course.

Two of Australia's most noted observers of 'alternative lifestyles', Dr Ted Trainer, of the University of New South Wales, and Dr Bill Metcalf, of Brisbane's Griffith University, will speak at the seminar.

Dr Trainer is the author of the widely-acclaimed book, *Abandon Affluence*, and is regarded as one of the leading interpreters of alternative economics.

Dr Metcalf was responsible for a recently-completed four-year study of the alternative lifestyle movement in Australia.

His research revealed that most alternative lifestyle participants were in their late 30s or older, were highly educated and less than one-quarter received unemployment benefits.

The seminar is being

jointly sponsored by the Northern Rivers college and the independent Centre for Alternative Lifestyle Studies (CALS).

A spokesman for CALS, Dr Leigh Davison, said the new course would not be a skills-based 'how to' course.

He said it would involve the students in the academically

rigorous examination of the social history, underlying principles and practice of the alternative lifestyle movement.

Dr Davison said the course would help foster a greater understanding of this rapidly growing sector of society.

The course will also be offered at the Armidale College of Advanced Education.

Four extra police for Byron Bay

Four extra police will be allocated to the Byron Bay police station during the next nine months.

A total of 12 extra police will be appointed in the North Coast police district during the same period.

Five officers will go to Tweed Heads, while Kingscliff, Mullumbimby and Murwillumbah each will receive one extra officer.

This is the second year of a program to place 2000 police on New South Wales streets by 1989.

In all, 730 additional police will be deployed throughout New South Wales by next July.

The additional officers will be used to increase police presence on the streets.

More than 1000 police have been deployed in the scheme since July 1986.

The 2000 additional police on the streets is to be made up of 1250 new recruits and nearly 800 fully-trained police being released from administrative duties.

NS 29/1/88

ty water Ballina

Mr Woods said the new supply would service only Lennox Head and Ballina, but he said the Department of Public Works was undertaking a study for future expansion to other parts of the shire.

This should mean the end of water restrictions in the shire," Mr Woods

But from now on, the council is being charged for the water being used.

The council has formed a water conservation committee, aimed at educating consumers to ways of saving water.

The water allowance for ratepayers in the shire is 400 kilolitres at a maximum rate of \$240.

— By NICK VAN KEMPEN
of our Coastal Bureau

Road funding ceiling set

NSW Govt limits commune costs

The NSW Government this week limited the amounts that commune-style multiple occupancy developments have to contribute towards local public roads and other works.

Under Section 94A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act,

the Minister for Environmental and Planning, Mr Carr, has limited such contributions to a maximum of \$1950 for each dwelling on the developments.

Mr Carr said that the amount charged would be determined by local councils, with regard to

the characteristics and location of the proposed multiple occupancy.

The secretary of the Rural Resettlement Task Force, Mr Dave Lambert, of Nimbin, said yesterday that local councils had been charged maximum amounts of between \$1800 (Kyogle Shire Council), \$2500 (Tweed Shire Council) and \$3500 (Lismore City Council) for each dwelling in a multiple occupancy.

councils may opt for the money up-front when the development is approved, even if individual dwellings are not built for some years."

Mr Lambert said that State Environmental Planning Policy 15 — Multiple Occupancy of Rural Land, announced this week by Mr Carr would not make much difference in the Lismore City area, but would have some impact in the Kyogle Shire and Richmond River Shire.

"Kyogle Shire had permitted such developments on only 4 percent of its area, but this will be enlarged to more than 80 percent.

"The Richmond River Shire had not allowed multiple occupancies, but the shire is included in the local government areas to which the policy applies," he said.

The planning policy states that the land in question must be a single allotment and not subdivided; with an area of not less than 10 hectares; the height of any building there must not be more than eight metres; and not

● Continued Page 5

th probe resumes

administered by the Department of Industrial Relations.

Other groups to give addresses in reply yesterday were The Channon Progress Association, the Coraki branch of the NSW Dairy Farmers' Association, the residents of Tuncester, and Dr D McConkie, of the Centre for Coastal Management at the Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education.

Dr McConkie restated his belief that the establishment of a rare earth plant at Tuncester was environmentally acceptable, provided that continuing independent monitoring was undertaken and that an additional water treatment plant now being proposed by Deckhand was provided.

"In acknowledging these limitations, Deckhand has agreed to assist with monitoring, and to undertake any corrective action which may be necessary," he said.

"On this basis, I can see no environmental reason why the proposed rare earth plant should not be permitted.

"But there remains the problem of rectifying the damage already done by adverse publicity, and I do not know how this problem can be tackled."

Dr McConkie said that the radiation risks linked to the plant by many groups were not sub-

stantiated by scientific fact as he knew them.

"Their submissions appear to assume that there will be a substantial danger, and in some instances, compare this danger to the disaster at Chernobyl," he said.

He said there was no justification for comparing the Tuncester proposal with Chernobyl.

The residents of Tuncester told the inquiry they remained unconvinced that the rare earth plant posed no danger of their lifestyle and livelihoods, despite assurances from the developer and the Department of Health.

Potential risks

A member of the group, Mr G Bartrim, said that given the potential risks of such a plant, assurances that an undisclosed monitoring program would safeguard the situation and that wastes would be disposed of properly were insufficient.

"The proposed plant, with no buffer zone, should not be located in the prime agricultural district of Tuncester," he said.

"In fact, we do not wish to see the proposal as described on any other community."

Another group spokesman, Mr K Somerville, expressed concern that Lismore City Council aldermen were not attending the hearings.

"They are the ones who

will decide the acceptance or rejection of this proposal," he said.

"How, may I ask, can they make a balanced or rational decision on such a complex issue without gaining first-hand the fullest knowledge and appreciation of the facts presented for or against the proposal?"

The inquiry will resume this morning at 9.30 with an address-in-reply from a member of Citizens Against Rare Earth (CARE), Mr John Corkill.

Other groups still to appear during the current session include Norco, the Department of Health, the Department of Mineral Resources and Deckhand.

Good
cooks prefer
Gas!

NOW IT'S EVEN BETTER



Dover's cliffs a bit cold for Burnum the Conqueror

By MIKE HEDGE of AAP

FOLKESTONE, England, Wednesday. — With the Aboriginal flag draped around his shoulders, his face daubed in the authentic ceremonial paint of his tribe and blue trousers neatly pressed, Burnum Burnum, pictured, yesterday tossed up whether to take possession of England or seek political asylum here.

In the end, the winter wind whipping in off the English Channel decided the issue: "Not a bad place to be in charge of, but the weather ..."

Burnum Burnum, Aboriginal activist, actor, author and self-confessed eccentric, was unopposed as he stood on the beach at Folkestone and claimed England for the Aboriginal people.

And although he said the Queen and her family now were his subjects, the Royal standard still flew above Buckingham Palace and Prince Charles was expected to keep his old job when he returned from Australia next month.

The ceremony on the Kentish coast was intended as a mockery of Captain Cook's claiming of Australia as a British possession in 1770, but it also had its serious side as a mockery of Australia Day and the Bicentennial celebrations.

"My declaration here today was an absurdity, but it is only as absurd as Captain Cook's was 200 years ago," Burnum Burnum said.

"Aboriginal people should again be allowed to walk tall as regal landlords in their own country.

"And it is my job as a regal lord of my country to regain the land stolen from the Aborigines."

The only witnesses to Burnum Burnum's declaration were an assortment of journalists and photographers, although several more may have been on hand but for a late change of venue from the top of the White Cliffs of Dover to the sand below.

Having explained that his declaration presented no serious threat to the English, the 52-year-old elder of the Wurundjeri tribe said he had considered seeking political asylum in England or Austria.

The grounds on which he would make such an appeal were unclear, but the prospect of living in England seemed less appealing after an hour-and-a-half in control of the country.

As well as risking exposure in the icy sea air, England's new custodian found himself stranded on the beach and had to ask a journalist for a lift back to his hotel.

estranged wife Lady Susan — would replace disconnected telephone lines, Sir Frank's solicitor, Mr Paul McCann, said last night.

It was the second time in three days police had been called to the property, which is

Eight burly guards — half hired by Sir Frank; the other by Lady Susan — have been screening anyone and anything being brought to the home.

"Sir Francis doesn't want portable phones on the premises," security guard Mr

invariably it was bus Mr McCann said needed access to the conduct business.

"We are not run for her," he said.

Mr McCann al reports that Lady

Govt limits road fees

• From Page 3

more than 25 percent of the land should consist of prime crop and pasture land.

Land on which any dwelling is situated must not be prime crop and pasture land, and the development must not be carried out for a motel, hotel, caravan park, or any other kind of holiday, tourist or weekend residential accommodation.

Steep land

The policy stipulates that development may be approved by the council as long as slopes of more than 18 degrees do not occur on more than 80 per cent of the land.

Mr Lambert said that the provision about such steep land could pose a difficulty for some applicants.

But he said that the Rural Resettlement Task Force generally was pleased with the release of the policy after lobbying for its introduction for some years.

The policy sets out a long list of matters to be considered by local councils before they approve applications for multiple-occupancy developments.

This includes areas proposed for buildings and community use, availability and standard of public road access to the land, availability of a water supply, provision for waste disposal, and the effect of the proposed development on the agricultural use of land and water resources in the vicinity.

Union ba work o timed local cal

MELBOURNE. — Telecom's largest union has associated directly with introducing timed local phone

The 28,000-member Australian Telecommunications Employees' Association (ATEA), believed there should be full consultation between Telecom and its customers before any changes to timed calls, the union's Federal secretary, Mr Mick Musumeci, said yesterday.

The ATEA also banned removal of 'C' rate pip tone signals on a new Telecom network charging 20 cents for 180 seconds, and called for their replacement where they had already been deleted.

"Our worry is that people will be talking without hearing the 'pips' and imagine they are not being charged, when in fact they are," Mr

Musumeci said.

He said the removal of the three-minute signal was a prelude to the introduction of zonal charging rates.

"Our decision was that Telecom should not introduce zonal re-arrangements which disadvantage customers until after consultations," he said.

"So we placed a ban on any work directly associated with the introduction of timed local calls until discussions between the Federal Government and Telecom have concluded."

Mr Musumeci said there were several Government committees studying aspects of timed local calls.

Jackpot Lottery number 3197

Major prizes

FIRST: \$60,000, No 89175, NFP, Lismore.
SECOND: \$12,000, No 98422, NFP, Mannering Park.

THIRD: \$6000, No 64062, NFP, Condell Park.
Consolation prizes of \$1000 each to No 89174 and No 89176.

The Jackpot prize of \$960,000 was not won. The Jackpot now stands at \$968,000 in Jackpot Lottery 3198.

Half Million Dollar lottery 223 will be drawn today.

Boozing parents attacked

SYDNEY. — Parents must provide the first example if they want their children to stop drinking, according to the 17-year-old organiser of Nocahols, Michelle Ring.

formals and parties and their excuse is that 'my kid's drink was spiked because my kid wouldn't do something like that,' Michelle said.

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lers turn gly mob

More than 1000 Christmas
outside a Sydney hotel early
and hitting police and passing
bottles.
said the trouble started after
crowd, many of whom were
of the Caringbah Hotel, in
man said officers were attacked
cks when they tried to control
of those throwing rocks were
licemen had been injured and
ut were released after treatment
g.
arrested on assault charges and
charged with drunkenness.
arkers several hours to clean the
s and rubbish.

Rural multiple occupancies are recognised GOVT MOVE ON LAND SHARING

Tapping into a good time



JACINTA Bailey, 12 months, of Lismore, finds the Lennox Head surf club tap is just the spot for a splash after a dip. Her father, Mr Reg Bailey, superintends proceedings. Picture: TOM O'CONNOR.

The State Government has approved a new State policy to permit multiple occupancy of communes on rural land.

In announcing the new policy, the Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Carr, said it was a major new housing initiative for the State.

"The policy will allow groups of people to live in separate dwellings while collectively sharing ownership, establishment and management of rural lands," Mr Carr said.

Mr Carr said that most councils did not have provision for multiple occupancy in their local planning instruments.

"Because communal developments still are a relatively new form of rural lifestyle, many councils are hesitant to introduce multiple-occupancy provisions," Mr Carr said.

"As a result, the majority of communes do not have planning permission."

Mr Carr said that under the old system, owners could not gain building approvals, gain access to housing finance or appeal to the Land and Environment Court to resolve neighbouring land-use conflicts, to fight legal action by councils or to remove illegal developments.

He said that the new policy now gave recognition to multiple-occupancy developments as a legitimate form of rural lifestyle.

"Communes occur right across local government boundaries so this new policy will apply to the areas of greatest demand, particularly the north and south coasts," Mr Carr said.

"It will solve the inequities being experienced by rural communes and give them legal standing in the planning system."

The density of development is limited under the policy by a

formula allowing no more than four dwellings on 10 hectares, which is the minimum area for multiple occupancy under the policy.

On 200 hectares, 51 dwellings would be possible and a maximum of 80 dwellings would be allowed on blocks greater than 360 hectares.

"Rural resettlement groups have been lobbying for some time for a policy on multiple occupancy," Mr Carr said.

Mr Carr said that multiple occupancies would now be permissible with council consent on land zoned non-urban or rural along most of the New South Wales Coast and into the tableland areas.

It would not be permitted around Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong and the ACT, or in the western part of the State.

"Multiple occupancy

also will not be permitted on land which is a national park, State forest, State recreation area, Crown reserve, water catchment area, environmental protection area or other similarly zoned land, or on land protected under the Coastal Lands Protection Scheme," Mr Carr said.

"Strata titling or subdivision of the land is not permitted under the policy."

Mr Carr said that in considering the applications, councils would be required to assess matters including the tenure structure, road access, water supply, bushfire protection, waste disposal, potential hazards, vegetation conservation, visual impact, community facilities and the proposed siting of buildings.

● Rights protected P3

Inside

Letters.....	4	TV.....	15
Notebook.....	5	Radio.....	15
Jackpot 3175 majors.....	6	Garden.....	16
Jackpot 3175 minors.....	16	Travel.....	17
Weekender.....	13-18	Stars.....	18
Services.....	14	Race guide.....	19-23
Comics, crossword.....	14	Sport.....	24-28, 40

Weather

Isolated coastal showers, chiefly night and morning. Mild to warm day. Light to moderate south to south-east winds.

Outlook: Warmer. Unsettled about Moncay with local thundery showers.

Yesterday's Lismore maximum, 30.3; minimum 19.7.

Forecast maximum, 30.

Coastal waters: South-east winds to 15 knots. Seas to one metre and a swell of three metres.

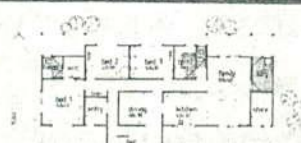
● Weather map — Page 28.

Tides

At Ballina Bar:

TODAY: High, 1.46 am, 1.3m; 1.47 pm, 1.7m.
Low, 7.27 am, 0.5m; 8.35 pm, 0.3m.
Sun rise 5.43, sets 8.08.

TOMORROW: High, 2.44 am, 1.4m; 2.47 pm, 1.5m.
Low, 8.34 am, 0.5m; 9.26 pm, 0.3m.
Sun rise 5.44, sets 8.08.



ning

NSW multiple occupancy move

Rights protected, says city planner

"We can expect that people travelling through Ballina will be on their way to Expo."

Mrs Skimmings said that the one-and-a-half-hour program would give an insight into Expo '88 and the services and facilities which would be available at the site.

People interested in attending the session can contact Mrs Skimmings at the Ballina tourist office.

MARTHA JANE BEASLEY



applications. "It is going to be a lot of fun," she said. "Although I think it will be very hard, because I have never been in anything that rough

before." Martha Jane, who is spending the summer holidays in Byron Bay, is planning a career in commercial art when she leaves school next year.

businessmen
ke study tour
nited States

The new State initiative on multiple-occupancy developments gave potential owners the basic right to appeal, the Lismore City Council's chief planner, Mr P Reynders, said yesterday.

He said the main advantage of the new State policy was that it offered a degree of legal protection to people wanting to establish multiple occupancies in areas which had made no provision for such developments.

In areas which had no policy governing multiple-occupancy developments, applicants had not been in a position to appeal to the Land and Environment Court if their application was refused because, legally speaking, multiple occupancy did not exist.

"Now, if a council refuses an application, people at least have the right of appeal, and that is the basic change," Mr Reynders said.

"The State policy also sets down guidelines and standards to be applied by

local government to multiple-occupancy developments, and how councils should go about considering them."

Mr Reynders said that the new policy would allow councils to approve multiple occupancies, except in areas where they were specifically excluded.

Mr Reynders said people would still have to submit a development application to the local council, and the application would be considered in light of the new policy.

Pioneer council

He said councils also would consider each application on its merits and impose conditions if necessary.

The Lismore City Council had helped to pioneer procedures for considering multiple-occupancy developments and did not really need the new State policy, Mr Reynders said.

The Lismore council, with the Kyogle, Tweed and Bellingen shires, had already made provision in its planning instruments

to approve multiple occupancies.

"The new policy will not dramatically change what has been occurring in Lismore since 1980, because we already have avenues available to us for considering multiple-occupancy applications," he said.

In August 1980, the council adopted a multiple occupancy building code for considering applications for new and existing communes on 23 parcels of specially-gazetted land in the former Terania Shire area, north of Lismore.

The gazettal notice, issued in controversial circumstances by the then Minister for Planning and Environment, the late Paul Landa, amended the council's existing planning instruments to permit multiple-occupancy communities on not less than 40 ha in the approved area.

All Departments of The Northern Star can be contacted on 24 4000

One of Australia's best land deals is in one of Australia's most beautiful places.



Sunrise Beach Estate
Byron Bay.

Shire go-ahead for multiple development

A MULTIPLE occupancy development of five houses on a 40ha Winegrove property has been set in motion by Copmanhurst Shire Council.

Council has agreed to develop a Draft Local Environment Plan of the proposal which will be publicly exhibited before council considers final rezoning of the land for multiple occupancy purposes.

Deputy president Cr Frank Clark said the shire council must become involved in new development concepts such as multiple occupancy to assess the viability of further developments of this type.

"We must become involved in this type of development anyway, if for no other reason than to assess the need for them," he said.

Cr Clark said council wanted the shire to progress and so these developments, which were growing in popularity, had to be addressed.

Council also discussed the possibility of differential rating on multiply occupied land parcels if this development goes ahead.

Shire clerk Mr Ian Preston told council multiple occupancy developments introduced a new concept in land rating and it was possible a differential rate could be charged.

"A higher rate in the dollar could be applied than that for surrounding rural land," Mr Preston said.

This could ensure multiple occupancy landholdings paid rates equivalent to the ordinary minimum general rate multiplied by the number of dwellings on the property.

However Mr Clark said it was possible the land value determined by the valuer general on which rates were based might rise following the multiple occupancy development.

This would increase the rate revenue from the land parcel regardless of council's rating structure on multiple occupancies.

The land under consideration is owned jointly by five people who propose to build five dwellings on 40.47ha.

The shire engineer said it was possible under existing council ordinances to create three small lots on the land which would permit four dwellings to be built.

However under existing council ordinances it was not possible to allow five dwellings or multiple occupancy as a land use.

"At the moment the Environment and Planning Department has no multiple occupancy policy," Mr Andrews said.

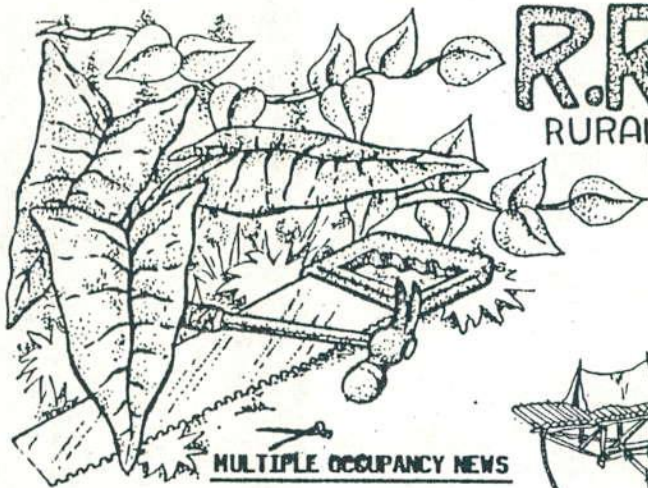
"It's up to each individual council to deal with applications as they come up. This proposal will require a rezoning."

He said the draft plan will be publicly exhibited so adjoining land owners may comment on the proposal. Then the matter would come back to council for final resolution.

"The proposal has merit due to the features of available services and the class of the land upon which it is proposed," Mr Andrews said.

The land is not prime agricultural land and fronts Wares Creek on Tabulam Rd.

Council was told one part owner could sell the part ownership and in the case of an owner being unable to sell the share, and so leaving, the other owners would still be responsible for rate payment.



R.R.T.F.

RURAL RESETTLEMENT TASK FORCE
P.O. BOX 62 NIMBIN 2480 N.S.W.



MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY NEWS

There has been some movement on a number of issues of relevance to Multiple Occupancy (M.O.) communities, some good and some bad. First the bad news!

FHOS Grants: The plans of the Aust. Dept of Housing & Construction to make these grants available to M.O. by making a Regulation to the Act have come unstuck because of advice from the Attorney General's Dept that the Regulation would be next to impossible to draft and that a long term lease or agreement would still be needed to guarantee a right of occupancy. However, 3 Queen's Counsel have advised that such a long term agreement would breach the Local Government Act in creating 'defacto' subdivisions. The Federal Gov't is trying to convince the DEP and Bob Carr to permit long term leases in the new M.O. State policy (SEPP) soon to be released. So it looks like a long wait for the bureaucrats etc to sort this one out! In the meantime, it is still suggested that potential recipients of the grant should still apply for the grant in the hope that one day the mess will be sorted out.

New State M.O. Policy (SEPP): The final draft has been prepared by the Dept and it is sitting on Minister Bob Carr's desk to be signed. It is expected that it will be signed within a couple weeks unless last minute representations about the FHOS grant situation convince him to send the draft back to the department for further amendment. Besides the 'defacto' subdivision question, perhaps the next most interesting thing to find out will be the minimum size for M.O. This is currently 40 ha but there is widespread support to lower this to 10 ha. The SEPP is not expected to set upper limits on s.94 levies to upgrade roads etc. However, the Minister has the power under s.94A to set such upper limits outside of the SEPP & this will be the focus of our lobbying efforts in 1987.

Land Tax An amendment has been made to the Land Tax Management Act to exempt M.O.'s who are legal under existing or future Council Planning Instruments. We haven't yet seen the exact wording, but it is understood that the exemption will apply to all communities which will give M.O. homeowners the same exemption enjoyed by other homeowners.

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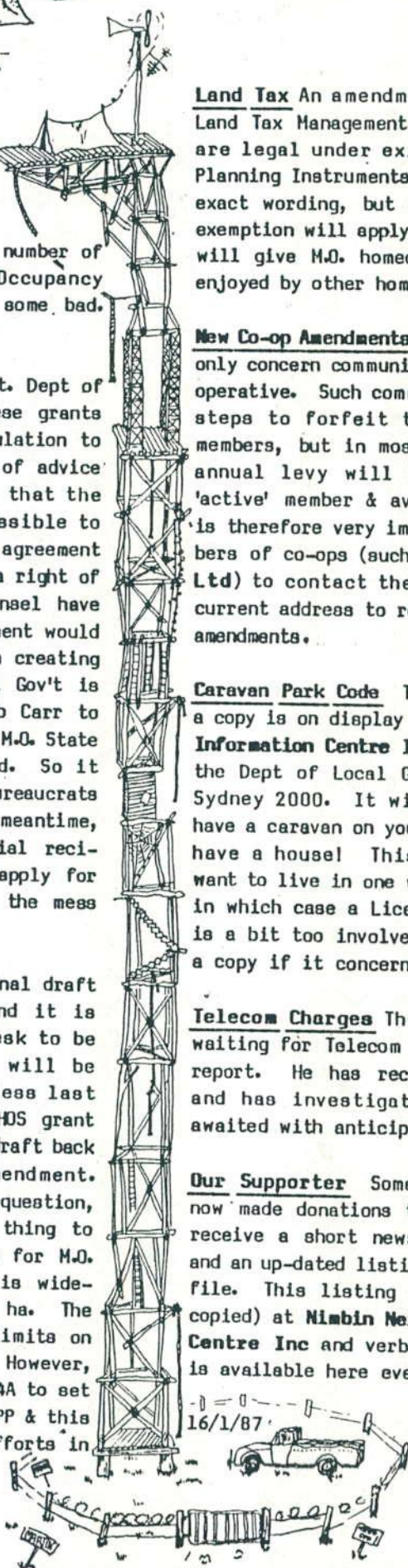
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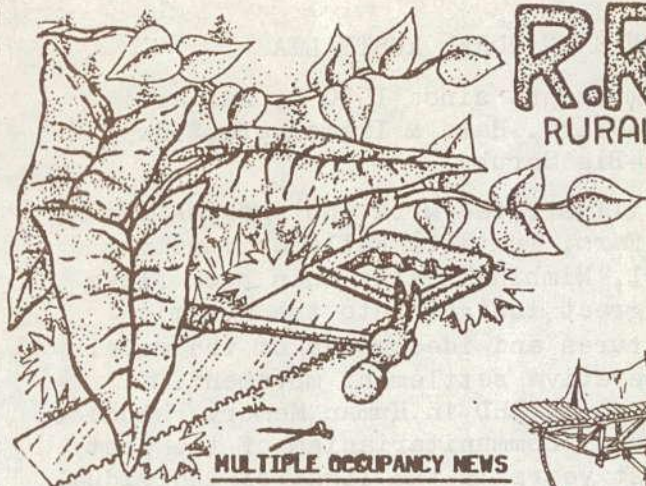
16/1/87

Dave L



R.R.T.F.

RURAL RESETTLEMENT TASK FORCE
P.O. BOX 62 NIMBIN 2480 N.S.W.



MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY NEWS

There has been some movement on a number of issues of relevance to Multiple Occupancy (M.O.) communities, some good and some bad. First the bad news!

FHOS Grants: The plans of the Aust. Dept of Housing & Construction to make these grants available to M.O. by making a Regulation to the Act have come unstuck because of advice from the Attorney General's Dept that the Regulation would be next to impossible to draft and that a long term lease or agreement would still be needed to guarantee a right of occupancy. However, 3 Queen's Counsel have advised that such a long term agreement would breach the Local Government Act in creating 'defacto' subdivisions. The Federal Gov't is trying to convince the DEP and Bob Carr to permit long term leases in the new M.O. State policy (SEPP) soon to be released. So it looks like a long wait for the bureaucrats etc to sort this one out! In the meantime, it is still suggested that potential recipients of the grant should still apply for the grant in the hope that one day the mess will be sorted out.

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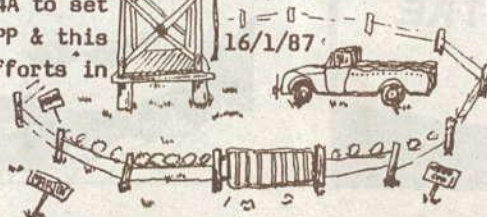
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16/1/87

Dave L



Well illustrated with photographs from Bodi Farm, Tuntabale Falls Community and School, Nimbin Murals; this book flows with great insight into the dynamic structures and ideologies of the rural co-operative settlement movement. Margaret, a PHD in Human Memory, studies the rural communitarianism of the post protest years in the light of individual autonomy away from conformist over stressed society. The surveys of 36 new NSW communities annotated in appendix B show there are eight registered Co-ops, and provides legal guidelines for establishing communities. A history of the evolution of Nimbin, with maps of settlements in the Rainbow Region, and interesting socio-philosophical analyses of the trends provide fascinating reading.

SQUASH • CENTRE

All competitions are resuming in February. Interdistrict squash on Thursday 5th at Brunswick Heads; Volleyball on Sunday 8th; "A" division on Monday 9th; "C" division on Tuesday 10th; "D" & "E" division on Wed. 11th. Juniors on Thursday 12th (after school), & volleyball in the evening; "B" division on Friday 13th.

Fing Squash Centre, 891 327 for times.....

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ON OUR KIPS, WILL TAKE
A STEP BACK AND SAY...

LET IT GO

HI-HO... HI-HO...
IT'S OFF TO BURN WE GO...
WE'LL DROP OUR MATCH
AND THEN STEP BACK...
HI-HO... HI-HO... HI-HO... HI-HO...
LET IT GO...

N.S.W. GOVMT SUPPORTS CO+OP LAND SETTLEMENT PROJECT

The Rural Resettlement Task Force (RRTF) of Nthn. NSW, and the NSW Dept of Housing's pilot Co-op land settlement project goes ahead.

More than two years of endeavor, study & setbacks have resulted in agreement on a structure, process & property for a co-op land settlement project. This will be the first in NSW to be provided with financial assistance from government.

The purpose of the project is to pilot the way for helping low income people, to form co-operatives, develop land in accordance with the Multiple Occupancy planning code & construct housing thereon according to their needs.

An eighty six hectare, ex dairy property situated between Nimbin & Kyogle in Nthn NSW has been carefully selected & following a detailed feasibility study funds have been approved. The property has now been purchased & a development application to provide for twenty eight households has been approved by Kyogle Council.

The funds available will provide for community & land development costs plus house building materials as required. Legal, management, land development & house construction advice is included and an information & skills aquisition programme will also be provided.

The community will be formed as a common equity co-op, manages its own affairs & take liability for mortgage repayments. Each applicant household will require \$500 cash & commit themselves to repayments at usually 27% of household income. The average household income will need to exceed \$190 PW to cover the projected loan.

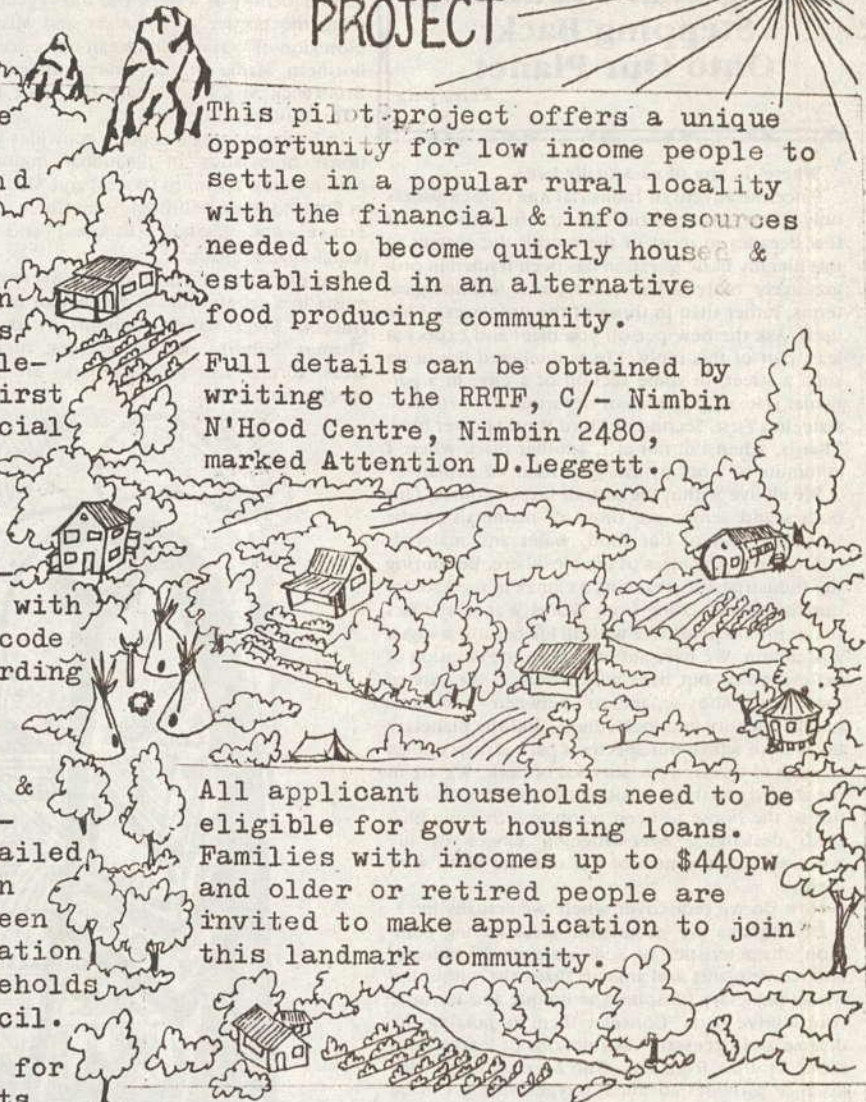
It is planned to temporarily accomodate up to 50% of the households on the land by late February '87 to begin a three months trial "live together" period before self selection of the co-op begins. The remainder of the co-op will be selected following completion of similar "live in" periods.

Environmental sensitivity, personal & community growth & self reliance will be fundamental aims in the co-ops constitution.

This pilot project offers a unique opportunity for low income people to settle in a popular rural locality with the financial & info resources needed to become quickly housed & established in an alternative food producing community.

Full details can be obtained by writing to the RRTF, C/- Nimbin N'Hood Centre, Nimbin 2480, marked Attention D.Leggett.

All applicant households need to be eligible for govt housing loans. Families with incomes up to \$440pw and older or retired people are invited to make application to join this landmark community.





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Bioregional Grounding: Stepping Back Onto Our Planet

Peter Berg

Where do any of us actually live?

Since the advent of Industrial Age consciousness only about two centuries ago (and for only the last few decades in most of the world) the answer to this literally basic question has been framed in progressively more urban, statist and technological terms, rather than in those of the processes of life itself. Ask the new person you meet and expect at least part of this reply, "In a numbered house on such a street, in some section of a city, in a particular state or province or department, of ?nation-state, in a First, Second or Third World power-bloc. That is, when I'm not at ?, another place where I commute to work by car, bus, train, or airplane."

We all live within the web-of-life, of course. Our bodies and senses are those of mammals in the biosphere. All of our food, water and materials comes from processes of the biosphere. But during the Industrial Age, reaching a climax in the Late Industrial period dating from World War II, the fact of our interdependence with all life became a vague abstraction. We have suffered from the delusion of believing that our lives were safely in the care of machines. The separation between conscious human identity and locatedness, and the planetary life-web of which our species is part, is now critical enough to threaten the survival of both. We are in the absurd and tragic position of someone who sets fire to the house to keep warm in a freezing blizzard, destroying ever-widening ranges of life without consciousness of our ultimate bond with them.

How do we rediscover where we actually live?

Bioregions are geographic areas having common characteristics of soil, watersheds, climate, and native plants and animals that exist within the whole planetary biosphere as unique and intrinsic contributive parts. Consider them as possessing the diverse and necessary distinctions of leaves from roots, or arms from legs. The Amazon jungle, for instance provides so much oxygen that it can be counted as a lung of the biosphere. The Nile delta is a kidney for the Mediterranean Sea. Underneath and around the industrial grids of row-houses and factories, streets and sewers, highways and railways, oil and gas pipelines, legal jurisdictions and political boundaries, the natural geography of life continues to endure.

Everyone lives in some bioregion or other. Prior to industrialism the reality of inhabitation in a unique life-place was reflected in adaptive cultures that reciprocated with cycles and conditions of that place. Some strong examples still remain such as the Hopi's deeply sacred involvement with arid cultivation of corn, rain, mesas, and respectful grace in the American Southwest. Some vestiges continue to haunt the designs of nation-states such as the heroic persistence (after eight centuries' domination) of Welsh language and culture on the western side of England's principal topographical divide. Thoroughly adaptive cultures are native human mammal interactions, as natural as any other aspect of the life of a bioregion.

For most people, however, inhabitation of a unique bioregion has lost pre-eminence as a fact of survival. While this condition prevails no bioregion is secure from the threat of being crippled in its ability to nurture life. "Cut down the Amazon jungle for newspaper pulp, we need to read about fluctuations in oil prices." "Level the Hopi's Black Mesa, we need coal to produce electricity so Los Angeles' lights can burn all night." There is no way to ensure the survival of the biosphere without saving each bioregion, and it is especially important for anyone living within industrial society to begin cultivating bioregional consciousness.

Reinhabitation is a term for undertaking the practices of living-in-place, becoming part of a bioregion again. A first step is to become familiar with the specific characteristics of the place where one lives. Wet and green northern California, for example, isn't continuous with the dry desert por-

tion of the state. Northern California is a separate natural country, "Shasta." The Ozark Mountains are a distinct raised lime-stone formation with a unique natural identity of watersheds and vegetation straddling the border of Arkansas and Missouri, the bioregion of "Ozarkia." Ocean-influenced areas of northern Maine in the United States and New Brunswick in Canada share the same bioregion, "The Gulf of Maine."

In Europe bioregions often coincide with traditional homelands of "national minorities" of nation-states: Cymru (Wales) and Alba (Scotland) in England; Breizh (Brittany) and Corsu (Corsica) in France; and Euskadi (Basques) and Catalune (Catalonia) in Spain.

Any place is within a bioregion. Every metropolis exists in a natural locale: Manhattan in the lower Hudson River valley; London in that of the Thames. Suburbs, towns, villages, rural farming areas, forests and national parks are all within specific bioregions.



AKWESASNE NOTES/SPRING 1984

mediate political issues for emphasis. In Shasta, for example, the Frisco Bay Mussel Group evolved into an adamant voice for opposing interbasin transfers of northern California water to the south and Los Angeles, and in the 1982 election was active in defeating what up until now was a common practice (over 90% of Shasta voters opposed the latest diversion scheme; the largest single-side vote in California history). Bioregional approaches to natural resources activities are perhaps the most directly obvious and in Shasta they are currently employed by groups working to restore native salmon runs in rivers and reforest logged-over areas with indigenous trees.

In the Sonoran Desert bioregion which overlaps the United States-Mexico border on the Rio Grande River reinhabitants are introducing "new crops" for agriculture that are, in fact, native plants.

Renewable energy designs for communities founded on bioregional considerations are being proposed for areas as dissimilar as the Connecticut River valley in New England and the Willamette River valley in Oregon. The difference between bioregional renewable energy designs and those of alternative energy schemes in general is that they are based on naturally native watershed, biomass and materials considerations rather than imported solar hardware.

Bioregional celebrations of equinox and solstice days is becoming widespread. These usually begin with sunrise observance and can include crafts or barter fairs, homegrown foods and music, nature walks, and bioregional educational or political talks.

Bioregional political groups including Ozarks Area Community Congress, Kansas Area Watershed Council, Reinhabiting New Jersey, and High Plains Alliance (Wyoming) have formed to develop platforms based on restoring and maintaining their life-places. They place characteristics of the bioregion—soil, watersheds, native plants and animals, and adaptive culture — beside political issues such as community development, energy, waste disposal, resources utilization, agricultural policies, and employment. Positions are taken in terms of which outcomes are most beneficial for the continued life of the bioregion. (In 1984 there will be a North American Bioregional Congress to consolidate common considerations for these groups.)

The reinhabitory bioregional movement is still emerging and will eventually generate many more place-located groups and influence more areas of post-industrial concern such as alternative economics, permaculture, alternative technology, renewable energy, and design of new communities. For decentralists in general the concept of a bioregion answers the question, "Decentralize the where?" Anti-nuclear activists are becoming pro-bioregionalist. Local food cooperatives and local natural resources defense groups are finding that organizing along watershed and bioregional lines makes them more effective.

Bioregionalism is a significant step beyond either conservationist or environmentalist thinking. It is directly addressed to the fate of the earth, not as merely an "ecological" issue, but as the central issue that human civilization must address.

(SOURCE: Planet Drum Foundation, P.O. Box 31251, San Francisco, CA. 94131)

NEW RELEASE

GEORGE

AT LAST

GEORGE SCOTT

Recorded: BUSH TRAKS AVAILABLE LOCALLY

13

Once the extent and character of a life-place is determined, reinhabitory approaches can be taken to an impressively large number of activities and problem areas. Education and awareness have a special priority at present, and bioregional study groups have already emerged in over fifty areas of the United States and Canada. They produce newsletters and information "bundles" on their bioregions, and often choose particularly im-

REVIEW OF CANBERRA'S REPORT ON TELECOM RURAL CHARGES

'POLES APART'

(Report from the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Expenditure)

I was the only Nimbin resident to make a submission up the right channels concerning the discriminatory treatment that M.O.'s are getting from Telecom. The only reaction from the standing committee (all M.P.s) in 187 pages of report was to list my name at the end as the origin of correspondence 217!

If M.O. residents had performed like a few of the other pressure groups (CWA, Isolated childrens parents association, Catholic Women's League, etc.) we might have scored a recommendation to throw back at Telecom.

The basis of my submission was the unfairness of treating M.O.s as one corporate body and thus denying rural cross subsidy, while allowing Strata Title properties retirement villages, and hobby farm subdivisions to all get the cheap connection. It seems that QANGOs and local governments recognise bodies like Co-operatives when it suits them, & ignore them when convenient. For example NRCC will only connect power to a person while police refuse to evict Co-op tenants who have private rental agreements.

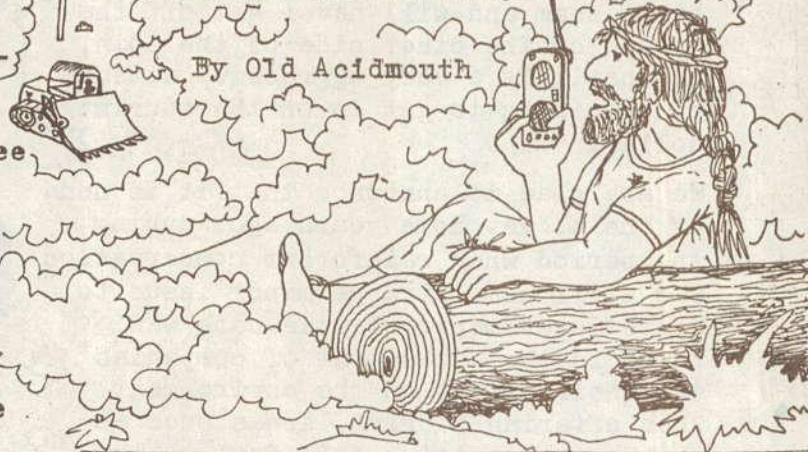
Another bad aspect of Telecom's M.O. policy is that it suddenly changed without warning. If Telecom had said from the start that all numbers after the first would cost \$X, we could have built cost effective internal systems with our own exchange so as to fully utilise those numbers. Instead Telecom dealt privately with individuals as if the corporate body did not exist and then changed the policy when halfway through the job.

Probably some of the connections were not justifying their existence. Certainly, I have heard of one connection (hobby farm) which must have cost \$20,000 for a radio link to the top of Mt Boogarem and which rarely worked because the resident pinched too much power from the solar panel on the installation!

This is not a trivial issue as

without the subsidy the consumer feels the full brunt of Telecom's costing of field work. Dishonesty, inefficiency and excessive capitalisation mean that it costs \$1000 to run 100 metres of wire across a flat clear paddock, so effectively denying communication to many consumers. It is probably even costing Telecom money pursuing this unfair policy. Time to stoke up the old C.B. radios!

By Old Acidmouth



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PINDARI WALKABOUT

Some folks may have wondered what it's really all about. Some have suggested it means bus loads of Japanese tourists, Boy Scout Groups and Elderly Pensioners invading Nimbin. Others speculate on how it will stuff up the rainforests and bring in the multinational interests. A small rumour around town is that it's just another hippy scam and will never get off the ground or the other side of the coin, in that it's a very aggressive attempt by outsiders to get in on the tourist dollar.

We are glad to announce that it is none of the above. Some years ago, during the period when rainforest conservation was still some strange minor issue to State Governments, little care was taken in the assessment of companies and their affect on the environment when offering tourism. Areas such as the Snowy Mountains, fell fowl to the Packers and the reef to Club Med., etc. Tourism, it was said by the small but evergrowing ban of Rainforest Conservationists, was to provide the lost revenue and jobs once logging ceased.

The National Parks & Wildlife Service found themselves in a very difficult position, having to decide the future of recreation in the very sensitive areas now in their care. Policies & Management plans required intense research but still rainforests had to provide some sort of recreation to the general public. Pindari Walkabout is about recreation and conservation. It is a small business and will remain so, but will expand out of the District, not in. Walks, day and o'nite, give the general public a view of our heritage not normally available and those tracks and routes are rotated, assessed and reported on. Every safety factor has to be taken into consideration, our guides must be highly skilled in both interpretation, search and rescue. A \$5 million Public Liability is the minimum requirement before any company operates and one must be licensed by the Director of the N.P.W.S..

Our resource information comes from N.P.W.S. and the Environment Centre. Our equipment is outfitted and designed specifically for us by Paddy Pallin, the limit to go out per guide is 10 kilo, and we assess their gear and fitness before we go out. We will be operating in the Border Nightcap &

Bunjulung National Parks exclusively, not in State Forests. We use no four wheel drives and write environmental assessment reports so as not to create damage or erosion. We will be offering some white water and climbing expeditions later in the year, but for the moment we are offering interpretation-al walks dealing with specific topics. You can come out overnight, (4days/3 nights) all gear and food provided and stay the last night in a motel, with a meal at the restaurant for \$250 all inclusive. Or, you can join us on a day walk \$25 (4to6hrs) including gear and lunch and walk in some areas you normally wouldn't get to but more importantly have explained. You can walk with us from the mountains to the sea and understand how it all fits together. There are some who don't need to know. There are some who would never go on a walk with us in their own local area. But there are thousands of Australians and Overseas visitors who need to know and understand how our complex forest systems work or simply need a Wilderness Experience.

We hope to encourage more interest in Rainforest Conservation and to act as a service distributing information on more relevant issues. Our market, for those still worried about buses full of Japanese tourists, is back packers, walkers, conservationists and members of the scientific community, itinerant tourists in small numbers and family groups. We are not interested in the great almighty Nimbin tourist dollar, we are interested in Environmental Education, Conservation and getting by somehow financially.

We are not burdened down by committees, action groups or internal politics as so many groups attempting to do so in the past have been. We are a small business and have a clear and concise policy. Nimbin is a growing community. Negative newspaper articles and television coverage, regardless of the coffee table talk, does have an adverse affect on business in the town. The fact is that Nimbin isn't and shouldn't be a town whose economy is dependant on Government Welfare. Those who have made an attempt to reverse the situation and enter the business community, whether selling candles, painting, banana smoothies or rainforest and coastal expeditions, have the belief that we have something to be proud of in Nimbin. We are still

AUSSIE BATTLERS NOT WANTED IN CORAKI

A TALE OF COUNCILS AND WOE

by Gaye Cronin

For John and Rhonda Whitehouse, and their four children, the dream of building their own home has become a nightmare of unbelievable proportions.

From the day they purchased their Coraki property, in May 1986, there has been a series of problems, raised by the Richmond River Shire Council. Rhonda has kept a record of all communications with the council, verbal and written, and there is now a file several inches thick.

The main problem appears to be that they want to build an 'expanded house', a central block consisting of kitchen, bathroom and laundry facilities, with bedrooms separate. This concept is not uncommon, and is acceptable to most council building departments. In fact, according to Rhonda's records, the Whitehouses were told by Mr Frost, Richmond River's Health and Building Inspector, that it would meet council requirements, as long as the bedrooms were no more than 25 metres from the central building.

Rhonda's records show: September '86 - The Whitehouses were informed they could have only one caravan and one tent. Later that month they were told their married daughter was not immediate family, she had to move off the property.

October '86 - John and Rhonda spoke to Building Inspector, Mr Tyrrell concerning their house plans and were told they were a multiple occupancy, therefore no house plans would ever be passed by that council.

February '87 - A friend offered to come and help build. The Whitehouses went back to council in March and spoke to Mr. Tyrrell. He told them to draw up a ground plan and take it to his office. On the same day Mr Frost went to the property and recorded number plates of cars. A few days later John and Rhonda took the plans in. According to Rhonda, Mr Tyrrell refused to look at them!

April '87 - A letter from council threatens the Whitehouses with legal action for not complying with the terms of the movable dwelling license, which had been retained by Mr Tyrrell in August '86 and, at this point, still not returned. One of the conditions not met was failure to submit a building application, apparently unsuccessful attempts to do so don't count. Another was that they had put up a rough shelter to protect their belongings during the March flood, when the waterlogged tent was no longer waterproof. Surely an understandable emergency measure?

There was also the accusation of a large number of people living on the property and the assumption

of a multiple occupancy. The grounds? There were five cars there. These were the Whitehouses' own car, one belonging to the friends who were trying to get permission to stay and help, one was John and Rhonda's sons' car and the other two weren't even registered, they were for spare parts.

Rhonda wrote an indignant letter back concerning these unsubstantiated claims and invasion of privacy. She also pointed out the difficulty of complying with the license, of which she did not even have a copy.

May '87 - John and Rhonda went to Sydney and received written confirmation from the Department of Local Government that 'An expanded house is a single dwelling house, ie class 1, and should not be construed as a multiple occupancy'.

They sent a copy of this letter to council and resubmitted their plans. The second flood hit.

Less than a week later Mr Tyrrell and Mr Frost went to the property and took photographs.

Council then received further advice from the Department of Environment and Planning regarding the Whitehouse property. The letter states; 'It does appear that the proposed structures could together be considered as one dwelling in that the central unit comprises the kitchen, bathroom and laundry facilities, and the adjoining units appear to be intended primarily for sleeping purposes. The distance between these structures also makes it feasible for them to function as a dwelling.'

Did this satisfy the council? No way!

In the next few weeks letters arrived, explanations were given and plans submitted with monotonous regularity.

September '87 - The exhausted and disillusioned Whitehouses put the matter in the hands of an agent.

The next shock was a letter from the Taxation Department, inquiring about income from the flats they were constructing. Apparently the expanded house was to be classed as everything and anything but a dwelling.

Since then their development application has been refused. So has renewal of their movable dwelling license. The Whitehouses have four appeals coming up.

We were informed that Richmond River Shire has a policy that only the Shire Clerk can talk to the media. He claims to either know nothing about it, with the occasional 'No comment' thrown in.

For a country which is justifiably proud of its pioneers, there doesn't seem to be much hope or support for a family of Aussie battlers trying to do for themselves these days.

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THE STORY OF LEON (TEX) KINCAID.

by Sandy Botfield

Tex's story is a long one but by no means uninteresting. As a young man he travelled the outback from one shearing shed to another, sometimes spending the night in a hollowed out log, eating over campfires, and generally roughing it.

Tex was a truck driver for ten years, a carpet manufacturer for three years, and a member of the professional Board of fire fighters in Sydney for ten years. He is still a member of the N.S.W. Fire Brigade Union.

Tex is now in his early sixties and lives in Casino with his wife. He has started another career, music. Tex is the sole composer, owner and manufacturer of Blue Wren Recording.

Tex has produced many records. His first was Stan Woods's song "The Old Cottage Home" from Stan's album "The Long Road To The River". This song was nominated for the "Best Composition Award" at the 81/82 Tamworth Country Music Festival, but was beaten by a small margin.

After this encouraging effort Tex created Blue Wren Recordings. He used artists not under contract to sing and record his songs. Tex has won several awards including three golden awards, two of them at Nashville Tennessee and one at Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival.

The Nashville songs were "Do We Care", and in the Gospel Section "Back To The Bible", which was recorded with Jerri Kelly, Dolly Parton's back-up singer.

At the 1984 Henry Lawson Festival Tex received a statuette and a cheque for \$200 for "The Old Swagman".

Tex also won The Telecom Advance Australia Award of Merit.

Tex has released an Album called "Leon (Tex) Kincaid". "The Christmas Tree Waltze" is one of the songs on this album.

Appearing on the album as special guest Artists are: Craig Thomas, Lindsay Butler, Norman Bodkin, Alan Walsh, Chris Jones and Geoff Clapson.



population by the town of Lismore ignored.

The first move in trying to have something done about this appalling state of affairs was the formation of a progress association in Goonellabah on June 30.

Many people at the public meeting that formed the association expressed the growing resentment at the way their suburb was bypassed for amenities.

Tomorrow night a second public meeting will hear the report of a steering committee appointed

Certainly one of subjects that should be given attention is the continued use of Goonellabah best residential land as a council industrial estate.

There are other areas of Lismore where industrial estates are unobtrusive and acceptable. But to use the city's highest and most attractive building sites for what could become an unsightly industrial blot on a beautiful landscape is not only unnecessary but a flagrant waste of valuable land.

The buildings there at the moment have

P.O. BOX 423 LISMORE

Letters to the Editor

House passed by council

I AM outraged over your attack on my home, the Glenbin community (NS 11/6/88).

My family has lived on Glenbin for three years after moving from Lismore where we paid rent which devoured our income.

To own our home, we bought into a multiple occupancy, an arrange-

ment that has other positive points.

My parents moved a house from Lismore and reassembled it on Glenbin. It was passed by the council.

How dare you imply that my home is a slum, or for that matter, the homes of my school friends and their parents.

We are honest Australians, not your so-called 'hippies'.

Our homes were passed by the council under an amnesty, something

necessary for local government to keep abreast of social realities.

Contemporary Australia sees one in five children living in poverty.

I am one of these and you advocate the demolition of my home?

Where is your sense of social justice?

Your Editorial contained points that leave me disgusted.

You are in a responsible position and your words shape your readers' minds, yet you print inaccuracies in your Editorial.

We did not go to court over the approval of dwellings as our homes were approved in 1987.

We appealed against the council's insistence that each family pay \$3500 road levy.

Our road is dirt. Why pay such an unjust fee.

Why attack Ald Mac Nicolson as 'the guardian of the communes'?

He has thrown away discriminating attitudes and works for a just equitable society, fighting to protect 'little people' against powerful discriminating powermongers.

He is sensible calling the council's appeal a waste of ratepayers' money.

Main roads should be higher priority than bulldozing homes of the poor.

You and some of the prejudiced bureaucrats who exercise so much power in our local area should listen to an outraged schoolgirl, aged 15.

TERRI COLEMAN,
Nimbin.

Need for skatebowl

THE following is a letter I sent to the Ballina Shire Council:

For some time, I have been concerned at the danger of skateboards being used in public

good sport and teach agility.

But the time has come because of the popularity of same, that some proper venue be provided.

It is only a matter of time before there is an accident.

There is very little offering in the way of recreation for young people, and the provision of a skatebowl would be of great benefit to the young people and remove the danger to them by cars, etcetera, and the danger by them to people who are not so young and agile and cannot sidestep quickly.

An excellent and safe area, would be in the environs of the Misingham Bridge where there is ample and suitable room off the roads. I would be most grateful, as I am sure many other people would be, if this convenience could be provided, however humble it might be.

Somebody might even be interested in a commercial venture along these lines.

The needs of young people are not really catered for in Ballina.

SHEILA DeBOOS,
East Ballina.

Booyong had biggest cedar

MR Duckering, a Lismore City Council health surveyor, was reported (NS 4/6/88) to have told the aldermen that Cedar Park would be a good name for the park that we now know as Victoria Park because the largest cedar tree felled on the Far North Coast was felled at Goolmangar.

This is not correct. This distinction goes to a tree felled at Booyong by a man named Larry Foley.

This tree, because it was buttressed, had to be felled from a springboard several metres from the

The Tree of he confirmed known all

WALTER

Conc band

I AM resident o ashamedl admit that until July has a conc

It was t of the ad members of Lismore with a v Plumas Thunder Band California I had listening

THE on lawn them t of spor There's He lets then c sidest adjoin rinks, occup The only is with or to green more He's m footw Ballet This t progr with gyra out-o If his b ditch need henni The Le starb mista been long helpi bowl The Ha grab part to tow He to

Are You Lismore's Best Cook?

Now you can prove it!

ENTER THE LISMORE FRUIT 'N' NUT FESTIVAL COOKING COMPETITION

GENERAL CATEGORIES: Entrees and Appetisers, Main Courses, Desserts, Cakes, Biscuits, Preserves.

OPEN TO ALL AMATEUR COOKS, INCLUDING SCHOOL STUDENTS AND TECH. OR COLLEGE STUDENTS (EVEN IF UNDERTAKING A FOOD OR CATERING COURSE).

RESTAURANT CATEGORY: A special award will be made to a local restaurant for the best 'MENU' presented.

Official 'entry forms' and details available from The Lismore Promotions Corporation, phone 21 8800, 113 Dawson Street, Lismore.

Lismore's FRUIT & NUT FESTIVAL

7th-13th Aug. '88

EDITORIAL

Should we thank our Masters for keeping us in the Dark Ages?

Lismore City Council just can't seem to stay out of trouble with its ratepayers. Rural ratepayers have been airing their complaints about the rating system for some time, but now another sector of the community is embroiled in a battle with Council.

Glenbin, a small community at Stoney Chute, near Nimbin, has been dragged into a fight against what its members believe to be unfair development conditions imposed only on Multiple Occupancy properties.

One of the conditions is that the community pay a road levy at a rate of \$3,500 for each dwelling on the property. No ordinary farm is ever asked for such a ridiculous fee and the only other developments which incur this kind of charge are those where the council is expected to build the roads within the development. M.O. communities usually build their own internal roads.

Other M.O. developments have been issued a similar ultimatum - pay up at a rate of \$3,500 per dwelling or no building approvals. This charge does

not replace the rates as paid by other rural properties but is levied in addition to them.

This means that if we were to consider two properties, one a farm with two or three teenage children living at home, the other a small M.O. of three families with very young children then we would see an additional \$10,500 being charged to the M.O. This has nothing to do with road use - this hypothetical situation could in fact see the farm being the heavier user of a road surface when the family's vehicles, trucks and other machinery are considered.

Alderman Mac Nicolson has risen once more as the champion of the M.O. in Council. I spoke to him on this very subject about three months ago and he heatedly defended the Council's position on road levies. The story is different now that it has become a public issue.

Rather than leave themselves in the hands of politicians in this battle, the Multiple Occupancy communities should be combining their resources, especially in the area of legal funding, to help

Glenbin with this battle.

Multiple Occupancy developments are a viable alternative for land management and rural living, not just for "new settlers" but also expanding country families. They are a relatively new social development, let's not have any obstructive precedents established before we have examined the possibilities fully.

Any precedents established by this case will effect Multiple Occupancy for many years to come. It is a style of development which has been in this area, officially, for over 15 years and the Mayor of Lismore, Alderman Harold Fredericks, tells us that

the Council is still in a 'trial and error' situation. Council seems to be waiting for the State Government to dictate some guidelines for handling M.O.'s. There is such a thing as initiative and the lack of it is one of the reasons why councils are losing power to state and federal bodies.

To make matters worse, in the *Northern Star* editorial of Saturday, June 11, the author agonised over this issue amid phrases referring to 'anarchy', 'society falling into chaos' and 'slums'. If this attitude to change and the challenge of existing regulations prevailed throughout our society, Australia would still be a penal colony.

LETTERS

Evils of Expo

The May edition of *The Northcoaster* devoted nearly two pages to glorifying that grotesque monument to high-tech consumerism, Expo '88.

Any of your readers who might be thinking of going to Brisbane to see Expo might first like to consider the following quotes from articles in the *Neighbourhood News*, a community newspaper from the West End area of Brisbane where Expo is situated.

"Expo's 'Leisure in the Age of Technology' presents us with a reality in which leisure is a compensation for the drudge of work. It presents us with a technology that is inaccessible and alienating to those without the capital and expertise to use it, to develop it. Perhaps with a technology geared to people's needs, rather than profits and power, we would have one of the material preconditions at this point in time, to make work meaningful and creative. The lines between work and leisure would be blurred, as they disintegrate into meaningful life processes.

"History and 'reality' will never be a living process in a society dependent on inertia. However, we can make assaults on the one-dimensionality of our lives. We can attempt to take part in history. This can take place through celebration, art, civil disobedience

(and the projected change of the Federal one next year) will not unduly affect the on-going neglect of the rural sections of the State as politicians, for all their protestations to the contrary, are not even slightly interested in true "democracy" or "just and fair" distribution of resources, or the "morality" of misappropriating rural funds for city benefits. Why? Because they are committed to "toeing the party line" as laid down by the Party Machine and in collecting Votes (for them votes aren't everything they are the ONLY thing).

Jon M. Axtens,
Lismore.

Trouble with Mum?

Did you know that the mother of the Minister responsible for axing the New Opportunities for Women (NOW) courses at TAFE colleges was involved in the introduction of the courses throughout N.S.W.

Apparently, she has also recently completed a study of the success of the program, which revealed the fact that a high percentage of the women who completed their studies, went on to satisfying employment or further study. Suspensions are that the ill-informed Minister is at present having his wrist slapped by his well-informed mother.

The Northcoaster

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AFFORDABLE HOME LOANS TO DOUBLE IN LISMORE

The number of Affordable Home Loans made available in Lismore this financial year is expected to double, following the addition of least \$200 million to the 1988/9 program.

The Member for Lismore, Mr Rixon, said that the injection of funds from the NSW Government would double the 1987/8 allocation.

He said that the Government expected the concessional interest rate of 13.5 percent to be maintained to help about 4000 families to buy their own homes during the year.

"The special 12.9 percent interest rate offered to public tenants to buy rather than rent will be

maintained," he said.

"These loans are designed for low income earners and are available for families earning up to \$26,000 a year, or \$15,000 for single people.

"There is normally at least a two-year waiting list for these loans but the increase in allocation is expected to provide enough loans immediately

to greatly reduce waiting times."

Mr Rixon said that about 40 loans were made available in Lismore last year, so more than 80 were expected to be made this year.

"The funds in Lismore are administered by the Northern Rivers Co-operative Housing Society," he said.

"The society will contact those people who have already applied, offering them loans after July 31, when the funds are expected to start being processed.

"As the loans are designed for people eligible for public housing, the savings for the Government and taxpayer are immense."

Scheme is open to communes

Many residents on multiple occupancies are now eligible for the First Home Owners' Assistance Scheme.

The Community Services Committee of Lismore City Council made representations to the State and Federal governments on behalf of residents living on multiple occupancies.

The committee has been advised that many of those residents are eligible for assistance.

The committee's chairman, Ald M Nicolson, said that low-income earners would be pleased to hear of the extension to the scheme as it would make a great deal of difference to the type of construction they would be able to afford.

He said that under the legislation covering the First Home Owners' Scheme, applicants must have an approved interest in the land on which their home is built, or is to be built, and also have an exclusive right of occupancy to their home.

F. H. O. S.

008:422.615.

Ruling 'may not set precedent'

The Land and Environment Court had not necessarily set a precedent by disallowing the development of an expanded house near Coraki, the regional manager of the Department of Planning, Mr David Hume, said recently.

But the court's decision has raised a number of questions for the Lismore City Council, which has an expanded house policy, allowing such development under certain circumstances.

The decision recently handed down by the Land and Environment Court related to the proposed construction of an expanded house on Ellangowan Road, outside Coraki.

Applicant John Whitehouse lodged an appeal to the court after his development application was refused by the Richmond River Shire Council.

The Richmond River Shire chief health and building surveyor, Mr Kelvin Frost, said the applicant had proposed to construct five 'buildings' joined by covered walkways.

Mr Frost said the walkways were to be about 16 to 20 metres long.

Mr Hume said the court's decision was fine, because the Richmond River Shire Council's planning controls did not allow the concept.

He said the department encouraged local governments to accept the expanded house concept for multiple occupancy and also to adopt the

concept in other appropriate circumstances.

"We don't insist they adopt them — it's a case for each local government," he said.

Mr Frost said the court's judgement was a fairly significant decision.

He said senior assessor Mr P Jensen accepted his arguments that the five buildings joined by covered walkways was a residential flat building, and the configuration of the units was capable of having a kitchen included by the introduction of a sink and portable stove.

"Senior assessor Jensen stated that the diagram of the five parts of the building made it clear that the parts were too far dispersed to be considered as a dwelling house," Mr Frost said.

"He said it was quite clear from the configuration of the elements of the building that they did have the capacity to be converted into discrete, self-contained units of accommodation."

Senior assessor Jensen said it was a disaggregation of dwelling units, connected together by breezeways to a central facilities unit.

"On this basis, undoubtedly what would result is a residential flat

building," he said.

"What is proposed by the applicant cannot be permissible and thus the respondent's position must be supported."

"I recommend that the judgement on the expanded house be drawn to the attention of the local government and shires associations so that member councils are aware of this decision."

Mr Frost said the decision would create an area of conflict for the Lismore City Council.

The Lismore City Council Chief Planner, Mr Peter Reynders, said the council had an expanded house policy. It was formed about a year ago and allowed the development of more than one 'building' within a 60 metre diameter.

Mr Reynders said a few expanded homes had been approved and some rejected by the council.

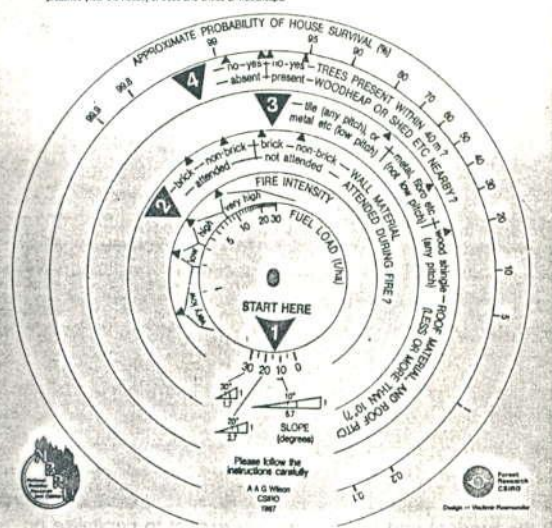
He said that following the Whitehouse appeal, he had identified a number of questions but so far had no answers.

"This was the first court case to look at the question of expanded houses."

"Basically, this court decision does not change the law. Each case is considered on its particular circumstances."

HOUSE SURVIVAL METER

- Set arrow 1 against the slope of the ground downhill of the house site. The fuel scale will now be in its correct position.
- Set arrow 2 against (not in between) one of the four A's for fire intensity. Your choice will depend on the fuel load near the house. Estimate the fuel load (see back of meter) and find the mark for that value on the fuel load scale. Against this mark is a fire intensity class (e.g. high) — choose the A for this class.
- Set arrow 3 against one of the four A's for wall material and house attendance during the fire.
- Set arrow 4 against one of the three A's for roof material and pitch.
- Without moving any dials, read off the approximate probability of house survival against one of the four A's for presence (near the house) of trees and shade or woodheaps.



The house survival meter. With the elimination of hazards, even an old wooden house can be made safe.

EASY PREDICTION OF BUSHFIRE SAFETY

A simple device for predicting the probability of house survival during bushfires has been released by the CSIRO.

A cardboard 'meter' with rotating dials, it predicts house survival chances based on six factors. These include slope of the house site, amount of dry fuel on surrounding land, house construction materials, and whether the house is attended or not during the fire.

The meter can be used to find out how survival chances can be improved and also to see which factors are the most important. Fire intensity, which in turn depends on slope and the amount of dead leaves and grass on the ground, has the greatest impact on survival chances. Building materials are less important.

Bushfire resistant houses are worthwhile, but reducing the amount of fuel around is the real key to bushfire safety because it reduces bushfire intensity.

Another strong point highlighted by the meter is that residents have a strong chance of saving their houses if they stay in them while the fire front passes.

The meter is based on the results of research by Melbourne University into 450 houses affected by the Ash Wednesday fire at Mount Macedon, Victoria, and design work at CSIRO's National Bushfire Research Unit in Canberra.

It will be particularly useful in planning new housing subdivisions, and for owners of established houses in fire risk areas, it will provide a valuable guide on how to upgrade safety measures.

The meters, priced at \$2.00 each, can be bought from: The National Bushfire Research Unit, Box 4008, Canberra 2600. Further information from Mr Jim Gould (062) 81 8379.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Paid</u> <u>Shares</u>	<u>On</u> <u>Loan</u>	<u>Deposit</u> <u>on Shares</u>	<u>Voluntary</u> <u>Work</u>
Atkinson, Kevin Michael	1	0	0	0
Atkinson, Peter	1	0	0	60
Atkinson, Sonia	1	\$3048.	0	0
Austin, Jesse Megan	1	0	0	0
Bisset, Ian & M Mullins	4	0	0	0
Bonanno, Alfredo	0	0	\$ 10	104
Burnett, Craig	0	0	0	18 ?
Bracegirdle, Karlin	2	0	0	0
Bradley, Jerry	0	0	0	?
Christmas, Dave	8	0	\$376	216.25
Collins, Geoffrey Alan	14	0	0	dis.
Chriton, Peter	0	0	0	?
Crawford, Max	0	0	0	0
Cripps-Clark, Simon	11	\$5035.	0	0
Darvill, Trevor	3	0	0	253
Dixon, Ian	1	0	0	0
Fischer, Angelika	1	0	0	0
Hamilton, Peter	1	0	0	0
Harper, Serena & Len	1	0	0	0
Harris, Belinda Fay	2	0	0	0
van Hest, Jack	1	0	\$272	206.25
Hutchison, John	1	0	0	147.25
Jeffreys, Peter	0	0	0	?
Jennings, Mark	0	0	0	16.5
von Kontz, Sandor (Trustee)	6	T\$22,703.	0	0
Lageman, Arie	0	0	0	40
Lambert, David George	5	\$3288.	\$146	78
Lenahan, Brad	0	0	443	0
MacKenzie, Barbara	2	0	0	0
McGovern, Terry	2	\$1005.	\$110	0
McLauchlan, Jennifer	4	0	0	0
McLaughlin, Karl	11	\$1002.	\$150	162
Moore, Sally	2	0	0	0
Munday, Stephen	1	0	0	0
Nadich, Paola	2	0	0	0
Ohlsen Sven-Eric	1	0	0	0
Paitson, Martha	0	0	0	66.75
Pierce, Nigel	1	0	0	0
Pimm, George	2	0	0	0
Ponza, Maurice	0	0	\$210	37
Stavrou, Kathy (Dylet P/L)	1	0	0	0
Stavrou, Robert	1	0	0	0
Stenbow, Peter	1	0	0	0
Tedder, J & M	1	0	0	0
Thomas, Alan & Camille	0	0	0	?
Tim somebody	1	0	0	0
Thomas, Terance	1	0	0	0
Walker, David Henry	1	0	0	0
Weaver, Murray Francis	1	\$3173.	0	0
van der Wyk, Peter	8	0	\$ 95	234
	108	\$39,256	\$1812	1652 Hours

HOLD:

Moxon, Geoff	0	0	0	13
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Full marks for council's appeal

SUBTLE changes to our language are occurring constantly.

The word 'bashing' has come to have a meaning far removed from its original connotation of physical assault.

It is now a label hung on anyone who expresses an opinion or takes action to which someone objects.

For instance, if strikes are criticised, it is union-bashing.

If your viewpoint happens to be that homosexuality is wrong and you say so, you are accused of homosexual-bashing.

That is why Lismore City Council aldermen should not be too worried about being accused by one of their number of 'hippy-bashing'.

Ald Mac Nicolson, whose main role on the council has long been guardian of the communes, used the term to describe the council's decision to

appeal against a Land Environment Court ruling on a Stoney Chute multiple occupancy.

The court ruled in favour of the multiple occupancy residents who had opposed some development conditions imposed on them by the council.

The council has appealed against the ruling on the grounds that the judge erred by appearing to condone the construction of dwellings without building permits.

That certainly is strong enough grounds for an appeal, and the council has acted wisely in taking the action.

If council building regulations are ignored; if people are allowed to build any sort of structure they want to, society would fall into chaos.

It would be a surefire recipe for slums.

The Lismore City Council over the years has been more than tolerant of breaches of its building

regulations, most of which have occurred in the communes.

The council, after all other avenues have been exhausted, often has reached such a level of frustration that it has had to act.

If it did not, its building rules — and all its other bylaws — would be useless.

In extreme cases it has taken the extreme measure of issuing demolition orders.

These have never been carried out. And this newspaper has been critical of that.

We have pointed out in the past that if people ignore the rules, they must pay the penalty.

Rather than 'hippy-bashing', the Lismore City Council could be accused of being too patient and inactive.

Claims that the court appeal is waste of ratepayers' funds do not stand up in view of the importance of the principle involved.

A society without rules would be anarchy.

ALD. BLASTS COUNCIL 'HIPPI-BASHING'

Appeal against multiple dwelling court ruling to go ahead

By GARY BUCHANAN

The Kyogle Shire Council has joined the Glenbin debate, strongly supporting the Lismore City Council in its decision to appeal against Justice Cripps' rulings in the case.

The Kyogle shire clerk, Mr P Thew, in a letter to the Lismore council, said his council was especially alarmed at the court's decision to reduce the road contributions from \$3500 to \$350.

precedent were allowed to stand because of a lack of legal representation to adequately put the case for road levies," he said.

Mr Thew said that multiple-occupancies contributed significantly to traffic growth in rural areas, where most roads were hard-pressed coping with traffic volumes.

"The imposition of road improvement contributions is the only practical means of ensuring that multiple-occupancies pay a

"This decision will be used by other multiple-occupancies in Lismore City and elsewhere as a precedent for further appeals which could lead to the demise of the road contribution policies that are common to most local government areas on the North Coast," he said.

Mr Thew said it appeared that Lismore did not have legal representation at the Land and Environment Court hearing.

"It would be a pity if this

fair share of road improvement costs," he said.

"The decision of Justice Cripps undermines the whole road contribution system, and throws the burden of road improvements on existing ratepayers."

Commenting on Mr Thew's letter at this week's Lismore council meeting, Ald M Nicolson said Kyogle should be told that the appeal had nothing to do with Justice Cripps' ruling on road levies.

By RORY MEDCALF and GARY BUCHANAN

The Lismore City Council was guilty of hypocrisy and 'hippy-bashing' in proceeding with an appeal against a Land and Environment Court ruling on a Stoney Chute multiple occupancy, Ald Mac Nicolson said yesterday.

Aldermen this week rejected overwhelmingly a motion moved by Ald Nicolson and seconded by Ald P Consalvo which sought to rescind the

decision to take the matter to the NSW Court of Appeals.

The Chief Justice of the Land and Environment Court, Mr Justice Cripps, last month ruled in favour of Glenbin Pty in appeals against some development conditions imposed by the council on its multiple-occupancy.

In handing down his decision, Justice Cripps ordered the council to reduce the community's road levy from \$3500 to \$350 for each unit.

He also ruled that the community could have a second access using a right of way through a neighbouring property.

The council has appealed on grounds that Justice Cripps had erred in that his judgment appeared to condone the construction of dwellings without building permits.

Last month *The Northern Star* reported that Glenbin residents would be forced to live in makeshift accommodation for two more years, and could be bankrupted if the appeal went ahead.

Residents of the tiny community have accused the council of victimising them for the past two years, and are angry at being kept out of a session of the council on Tuesday night.

Ald Nicolson said the council had voted for a closed session on the recission motion as there may have been a risk of subjudice if Glenbin residents had been

present.

Ald Nicolson and Ald Gallen described the appeal as a 'face-saving exercise' by the council, which merely would waste ratepayers' money on legal fees and make life hard for the Glenbin residents.

"The matter has degenerated into emotive and unfair hippy-bashing," Ald Nicolson said yesterday.

"The council has received three letters urging it to continue with the appeal. All these letters have shown a misunderstanding of what the appeal was about."

The deputy chief planner, Mr R Heap, said that the appeal had been lodged on the grounds that the judge had appeared to condone people constructing dwellings without building permits.

"It is sheer hypocrisy for the council to object on these grounds," Ald Nicolson said.

"I have known the council to approve building applications that have come in after construction work has begun."

"And I could cite at least one incident of the council approving building application after construction work had taken place which hadn't satisfied the conditions that the council had laid down."

"The chief planner, Mr Reynyders (who represented the council in the case) has implied that council lost the case because Glenbin had superior representation."

"In fact, neither side was represented by legal counsel."

"It was the council's poor preparation, and the absurd inconsistencies in that preparation, that lost it the case."

"For example, the original engineer's report quoted the cost of improving Stangers Road (the road on which the multiple occupancy is situated) was \$2800. But a later report quoted the figure at \$200,000."

Ald Nicolson said he supported the council on most matters, but that he drew the line at the Glenbin case.

"The council has been adversely influenced by misinformation pressure from sections of the community which are prejudiced against multiple-occupancy developments," he said.

A Glenbin resident, Mr Peter Marshall, yesterday said that representatives from the multiple occupancy had tried to reason with the council at the meeting on Tuesday night.

He said that Glenbin residents planned to circulate a petition and present it to the council.

In a verbal submission to the council on Tuesday night, another Glenbin spokesman, Mr Wayne Potocky, urged the council to reconsider its decision.

He said the appeal would cost tens of thousands of dollars and sour relations between existing and future communities.

'Hippy-bashing' claims denied

By GARY BUCHANAN

Allegations that the Lismore City Council was guilty of 'hypocrisy and hippy-bashing' were strenuously denied yesterday by the Mayor of Lismore, Ald H Fredericks.

He was responding to claims made by Ald M Nicolson in an angry outburst against the decision to proceed with an appeal against a Land and Environment Court ruling in the Glenbin multiple-occupancy case.

Ald Nicolson described the appeal as a 'face-saving exercise' which would waste ratepayers' money on legal fees and make life difficult for Glenbin residents.

He said it was 'sheer hypocrisy' for the council to appeal on the grounds being given, and that the matter had 'degenerated into emotive and unfair hippy-bashing'. According to Ald Fredericks, it was Ald Nicolson who was being too emotive on the issue.

"I don't even regard Ald

Nicolson's comments seriously regarding his allegations of hippy-bashing," he said.

Ald Fredericks said the appeal was lodged on the basis of preliminary legal advice from the council's solicitors that the presiding judge in the Glenbin case may have erred in his judgment.

"The issue here is that our legal advisers consider there was an incorrect statement made by the judge in part of his judgment," he said.

"That statement, if left unchallenged, could have ramifications on future decisions involving multiple-occupancies, not only for this council but many others where this form of development is occurring."

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"That will depend on the advice we receive from senior counsel, who may well advise the council against proceeding with the appeal."

Ald Fredericks said that for many years the council had been placed in a difficult 'trial and error' situation where multiple-occupancies were concerned.

He said the former Labor Government had approved the development of multiple-occupancies in selected areas of the State without formulating a policy to help local councils implement the decision.

Ald Fredericks said it was a great pity the former Government had not set up a model from which local government could work.

• Editorial — Page 4

Full marks for council's appeal

SUBTLE changes to our language are occurring constantly.

The word 'bashing' has come to have a meaning far removed from its original connotation of physical assault.

It is now a label hung on anyone who expresses an opinion or takes action to which someone objects.

For instance, if strikes are criticised, it is union-bashing.

If your viewpoint happens to be that homosexuality is wrong and you say so, you are accused of homosexual-bashing.

That is why Lismore City Council aldermen should not be too worried about being accused by one of their number of 'hippy-bashing'.

Ald Mac Nicolson, whose main role on the council has long been guardian of the communes, used the term to describe the council's decision to

appeal against a Land Environment Court ruling on a Stoney Chute multiple occupancy.

The court ruled in favour of the multiple occupancy residents who had opposed some development conditions imposed on them by the council.

The council has appealed against the ruling on the grounds that the judge erred by appearing to condone the construction of dwellings without building permits.

That certainly is strong enough grounds for an appeal, and the council has acted wisely in taking the action.

If council building regulations are ignored; if people are allowed to build any sort of structure they want to, society would fall into chaos.

It would be a surefire recipe for slums.

The Lismore City Council over the years has been more than tolerant of breaches of its building

regulations, most of which have occurred in the communes.

The council, after all other avenues have been exhausted, often has reached such a level of frustration that it has had to act.

If it did not, its building rules — and all its other bylaws — would be useless.

In extreme cases it has taken the extreme measure of issuing demolition orders.

These have never been carried out. And this newspaper has been critical of that.

We have pointed out in the past that if people ignore the rules, they must pay the penalty.

Rather than 'hippy-bashing', the Lismore City Council could be accused of being too patient and inactive.

Claims that the court appeal is waste of ratepayers' funds do not stand up in view of the importance of the principle involved.

A society without rules would be anarchy.

ALD. BLASTS COUNCIL 'HIPPI-BASHING'

Appeal against multiple dwelling court ruling to go ahead

By GARY BUCHANAN

The Kyogle Shire Council has joined the Glenbin debate, strongly supporting the Lismore City Council in its decision to appeal against Justice Cripps' rulings in the case.

The Kyogle shire clerk, Mr P Thew, in a letter to the Lismore council, said his council was especially alarmed at the court's decision to reduce the road contributions from \$3500 to \$350.

"This decision will be used by other multiple-occupancies in Lismore City and elsewhere as a precedent for further appeals which could lead to the demise of the road contribution policies that are common to most local government areas on the North Coast," he said.

Mr Thew said it appeared that Lismore did not have legal representation at the Land and Environment Court hearing.

"It would be a pity if this fair share of road improvement costs," he said.

"The decision of Justice Cripps undermines the whole road contribution system, and throws the burden of road improvements on existing ratepayers."

Commenting of Mr Thew's letter at this week's Lismore council meeting, Ald M Nicolson said Kyogle should be told that the appeal had nothing to do with Justice Cripps' ruling on road levies.

By RORY MEDCALF and GARY BUCHANAN

The Lismore City Council was guilty of hypocrisy and 'hippy-bashing' in proceeding with an appeal against a Land and Environment Court ruling on a Stoney Chute multiple occupancy, Ald Mac Nicolson said yesterday.

Aldermen this week rejected overwhelmingly a motion moved by Ald Nicolson and seconded by Ald P Consalvo which sought to rescind the

decision to take the matter to the NSW Court of Appeals.

The Chief Justice of the Land and Environment Court, Mr Justice Cripps, last month ruled in favour of Glenbin Pty in appeals against some development conditions imposed by the council on its multiple-occupancy.

In handing down his decision, Justice Cripps ordered the council to reduce the community's road levy from \$3500 to \$350 for each unit.

He also ruled that the community could have a second access using a right of way through a neighbouring property.

The council has appealed on grounds that Justice Cripps had erred in that his judgment appeared to condone the construction of dwellings without building permits.

Last month *The Northern Star* reported that Glenbin residents would be forced to live in makeshift accommodation for two more years, and could be bankrupted if the appeal went ahead.

Residents of the tiny community have accused the council of victimising them for the past two years, and are angry at being kept out of a session of the council on Tuesday night.

Ald Nicolson said the council had voted for a closed session on the recession motion as there may have been a risk of subjudice if Glenbin residents had been

present.

Ald Nicolson and Ald Gallen described the appeal as a 'face-saving exercise' by the council, which merely would waste ratepayers' money on legal fees and make life hard for the Glenbin residents.

"The matter has degenerated into emotive and unfair hippy-bashing," Ald Nicolson said yesterday.

"The council has received three letters urging it to continue with the appeal. All these letters have shown a misunderstanding of what the appeal was about."

The deputy chief planner, Mr R Heap, has said that the appeal had been lodged on the grounds that the judge had appeared to condone people constructing dwellings without building permits.

"It is sheer hypocrisy for the council to object on these grounds," Ald Nicolson said.

"I have known the council to approve building applications that have come in after construction work has begun."

"And I could cite at least one incident of the council approving building application after construction work had taken place which hadn't satisfied the conditions that the council had laid down."

"The chief planner, Mr Reyniers (who represented the council in the case) has implied that council lost the case because Glenbin had superior representation."

"In fact, neither side was represented by legal counsel."

"It was the council's poor preparation, and the absurd inconsistencies in that preparation, that lost it the case."

"For example, the original engineer's report quoted the cost of improving Stangers Road (the road on which the multiple occupancy is situated) was \$2800. But a later report quoted the figure at \$200,000."

Ald Nicolson said the supported the council on most matters, but that he drew the line on the Glenbin case.

"The council has been adversely influenced by misinformed pressure from sections of the community which are prejudiced against multiple-occupancy developments," he said.

A Glenbin resident, Mr Peter Marshall, yesterday said that representatives from the multiple occupancy had tried to reason with the council at the meeting on Tuesday night.

He said that Glenbin residents planned to circulate a petition and present it to the council.

In a verbal submission to the council on Tuesday night, another Glenbin spokesman, Mr Wayne Potocky, urged the council to reconsider its decision.

He said the appeal would cost tens of thousands of dollars and sour relations between existing and future communities.

'Hippy-bashing' claims denied

By GARY BUCHANAN

Allegations that the Lismore City Council was guilty of 'hypocrisy and hippy-bashing' were strenuously denied yesterday by the Mayor of Lismore, Ald H Fredericks.

He was responding to claims made by Ald M Nicolson in an angry outburst against the decision to proceed with an appeal against a Land and Environment Court ruling in the Glenbin multiple-occupancy case.

Ald Nicolson described the appeal as a 'face-saving exercise' which would waste ratepayers' money on legal fees and make life difficult for Glenbin residents.

He said it was 'sheer hypocrisy' for the council to appeal on the grounds being given, and that the matter had 'degenerated into emotive and unfair hippy-bashing'.

According to Ald Fredericks, it was Ald Nicolson who was being too emotive on the issue.

"I don't even regard Ald

Nicolson's comments seriously regarding his allegations of hippy-bashing," he said.

Ald Fredericks said the appeal was lodged on the basis of preliminary legal advice from the council's solicitors that the presiding judge in the Glenbin case may have erred in his judgment.

"The issue here is that our legal advisers consider there was an incorrect statement made by the judge in part of his judgment," he said.

"That statement, if left unchallenged, could have ramifications on future decisions involving multiple-occupancies, not only for this council but many others where this form of development is occurring."

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"That will depend on the advice we receive from senior counsel, who may well advise the council against proceeding with the appeal."

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Ald Fredericks said it was a great pity the former Government had not set up a model from which local government could work.

Northern Star 10+11 June 1988

Council to appeal over court commune ruling

The Lismore City Council is appealing to the NSW Court of Appeals against the decision handed down by the Land and Environment Court in the Glenbin multiple-occupancy case.

In a judgment earlier this month, Justice JS Cripps found in favour of Glenbin Pty Ltd in appeals against some of the council conditions imposed on the multiple-occupancy development at Stoney Chute.

His findings followed a four-day court hearing in March at which the council was represented by its chief planner, Mr P Reynders, and Glenbin by two members of the Rural Resettlement Task Force.

Although the development was approved by the council in 1986, Glenbin challenged some of the conditions of consent before the Chief Judge of the Land and Environment Court, Justice Cripps.

Two major points of

contention were the road contribution levy being sought by the council and the question of road access to the property.

In his judgment Justice Cripps upheld appeals in respect of these two matters, and ordered the council to reduce the road levy from a total of \$3500 for each dwelling unit to \$350.

He also ruled that the community could have a second access using a right of way through a neighbouring property, after the council imposed a condition restricting access to a single public road frontage.

Glenbin apparently did not proceed with an appeal against a condition that dams on the property comply with guidelines laid down by the NSW Soil Conservation Service.

The council resolved this week to appeal against Justice Cripps' decision after considering a report from the deputy

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chief planner, Mr R Heap.

Mr Heap said that, based on preliminary advice from its legal advisers, it appeared the council had no grounds to appeal against the decision to reduce the road levy to \$350.

But there did appear to be grounds for an appeal in that Justice Cripps had appeared to condone people constructing dwellings without building permits.

Mr Heap said the judge had used the words 'in the circumstances of the case' when considering that there had been dwellings erected on the property without consent which should be allowed to remain.

"Acceptance of this method of de facto approval could cause problems in future appeals and should be rectified," he said.

"Our legal advice is

that an appeal on this issue is desirable and should have a high degree of success."

The council's chief planner, Mr P Reynders, said yesterday that an unusual aspect of the Glenbin court case was that neither party was represented by legal counsel.

He said that Justice Cripps had expressed surprise at this lack of qualified legal representation at the March hearings.

Mr Reynders said that, out of fairness, the council had a policy of not employing legal counsel where the other party did not have any.

"In this particular case, we withdrew our legal representatives when Glenbin also removed their solicitors at the last moment," he said.

It was only after the hearing started that the council realised Glenbin

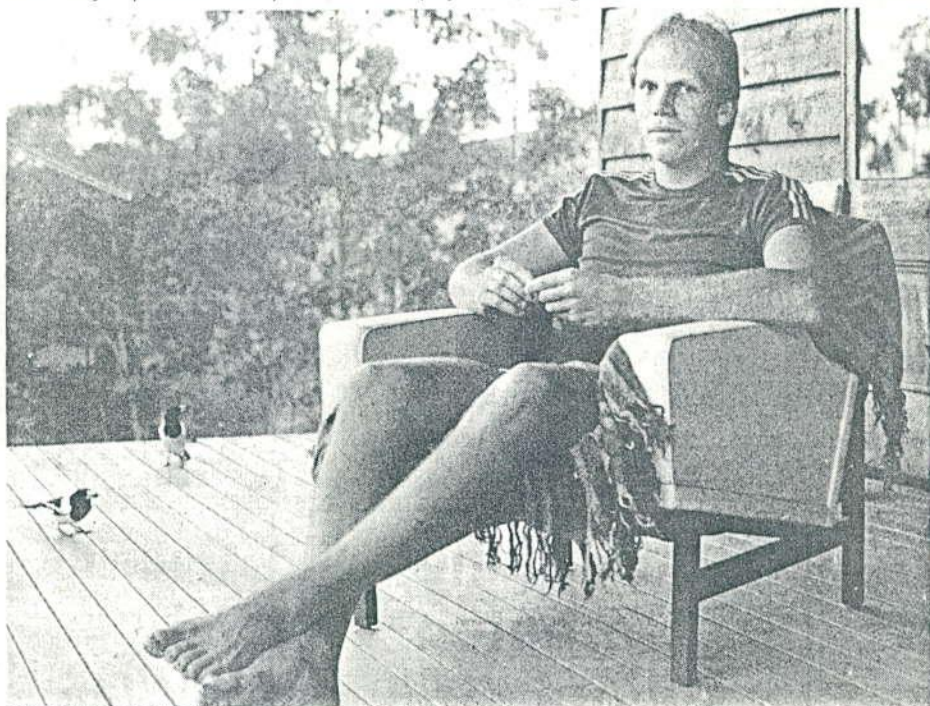
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Mr Reynders said that legal counsel would be engaged to represent the council before the Court of Appeals.

He said legal costs would be met from money allocated for the original court case, but which had not been used.

"Whether that will be enough to cover the costs of the appeal remains to be seen," he said.

"Depending on how long the case runs, the costs might have to be met from the 1989 budget."



MR PETER MARSHALL on the verandah of his Glenbin house. He says the Lismore City Council has victimised the Glenbin community for two years.

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● From Page 1

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"It's not their lives that

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"It's ours."

Ald Nicolson said he had spent years trying to reconcile the council and multiple-occupancy residents.

"I'm frustrated by the council's bloody-mindedness, and by the multiple-occupancy

residents' failure to accept reality," he said.

He said the council had been advised to lodge an appeal on Tuesday night, one day before the deadline.

"We were given no time to explore the matter in depth," he said.

"Many aldermen didn't

'Landmark decision' backs commune

The State Land and Environment Court has ordered the Lismore City Council to drastically cut the road levies of a multiple occupancy, in what has been hailed 'a landmark decision'.

The judgment by Justice

JS Cripps, the court's chief judge, follows a four-day hearing in March, which came after an appeal made in late 1986 by Glenbin Pty Ltd, the developer of the Glenbin multiple occupancy site at Stony Chute.

"It's a landmark, a precedent," Glenbin's advocate and the secretary of the Rural Resettlement Task Force, Mr David Lambert, said.

"The court's decision means that Glenbin's occupants will pay

one-tenth of the road levy which the council originally wanted from them.

"I hope all councils in the area now will use the court's findings to formulate a more reasonable approach to road levies on new multiple occupancy communities."

In his judgment, which was released to the parties this week, Justice Cripps said the council had claimed two contributions totalling \$3500 from each dwelling unit.

He said this exceeded a limit of \$1950 set by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

"The two contributions ... therefore cannot be imposed," he said.

Justice Cripps reduced the road levies to \$350 for each dwelling unit.

"Furthermore, I do not think the contribution need be paid before the release of the building approval for each dwelling," he said.

The council had wanted the levies to be paid before the first building approval was released.

The appeal was heard on the North Coast and in Sydney.

Mr Lambert said the significance of the case was reflected by the fact that it was heard by the Chief Judge of the Land and Environment Court.

The Lismore town clerk, Mr B Stevens, said the council could not dispute the court's decision.

"But I advise the council not to accept the case as a precedent because we did not have proper legal

representation," he said.

"Out of fairness, the council did not employ a solicitor or barrister because Glenbin had not done so, but it turned out that their advocate still had considerable legal experience."

The Lismore City Council was represented by its chief planner, Mr P Reynders.

The judge said the case

had become complicated when Mr Reynders had called himself to give evidence as an expert witness.

Justice Cripps said that this problem had been 'exacerbated' when Mr Reynders' views as an expert witness did not coincide with the submissions of the council.

But Justice Cripps said that Mr Reynders still had 'acquitted himself well'.

'INHUMANE' MOVE, COMMUNITY SAYS

By RORY MEDCALF

The tiny Glenbin community could be bankrupted and several families left homeless by a Lismore City Council decision to appeal against a Land and Environment Court ruling, according to Mr David Lambert, of the Rural Resettlement Task Force.

At best, it would force some families to live in sub-standard accommodation for up to three years before they knew if they would be allowed to build their homes, he said.

Residents of the Glenbin multiple occupancy at Stoney Chute, have accused the Lismore City Council of inhumane treatment.

Earlier this month, Justice JS Cripps, the Chief Judge of the State Land and Environment Court, ordered the Lismore City Council to reduce road levies on each dwelling unit of the Stoney Chute multiple occupancy from \$3500 to \$350.

His judgment was hailed as a landmark decision.

On Tuesday night the council decided to appeal against the court's ruling.

"Some people will have to go on living in sheds because the council's appeal will suspend the court's ruling that they could build their homes," Mr Lambert said.

Mr Lambert represented Glenbin in the court hearing in March.

A Glenbin resident, Mr Peter Marshall, yesterday said the council had victimised his community for two years.

"We're fed up," he said. "We finally beat the

council in court, but they (the council) can't accept losing.

"So the council plans to use a massive sum of ratepayers' money to employ a barrister in its appeal."

Ald Mac Nicolson said the council's legal costs in the appeal probably would be between \$60,000 and \$80,000.

"If the council loses the appeal, the expenses could blow its budget," he said.

Mr Lambert said the appeal probably would not be heard for up to three years.

"I'm worried by the council's decision to employ a barrister. We can't match that without legal aid," he said.

"And in a Supreme Court appeal, the loser pays the winner's legal expenses.

"If the people of Glenbin lost, this would bankrupt them."

Mr Marshall said the council had a disgraceful

record of treating multiple-occupancy applicants as second-class citizens.

"They're (the council) determined to block multiple-occupancy developments," he said.

His wife, Vicki, said that the council's actions had caused emotional trauma to many Glenbin residents.

She said that many of them had experienced two years of anxiety, not knowing whether they would be allowed to build

their homes.

"We're sick of it. And now it will continue for maybe three more years," she said.

"The people here simply want to build their homes and live their lives in peace. Is that too much to ask?"

She said her family had come to the North Coast seeking the quiet life, but council hostility had made their dream a nightmare.

"My teenage daughter couldn't take it," she said.

● Continued next page



MISS AMANDA CUNNINGHAM stands under the frame of a section of her living quarters at Glenbin. The garden shed behind her contains her bed. Glenbin residents fear that some of them cannot continue building projects until the Lismore City Council appeal is heard in a higher court.

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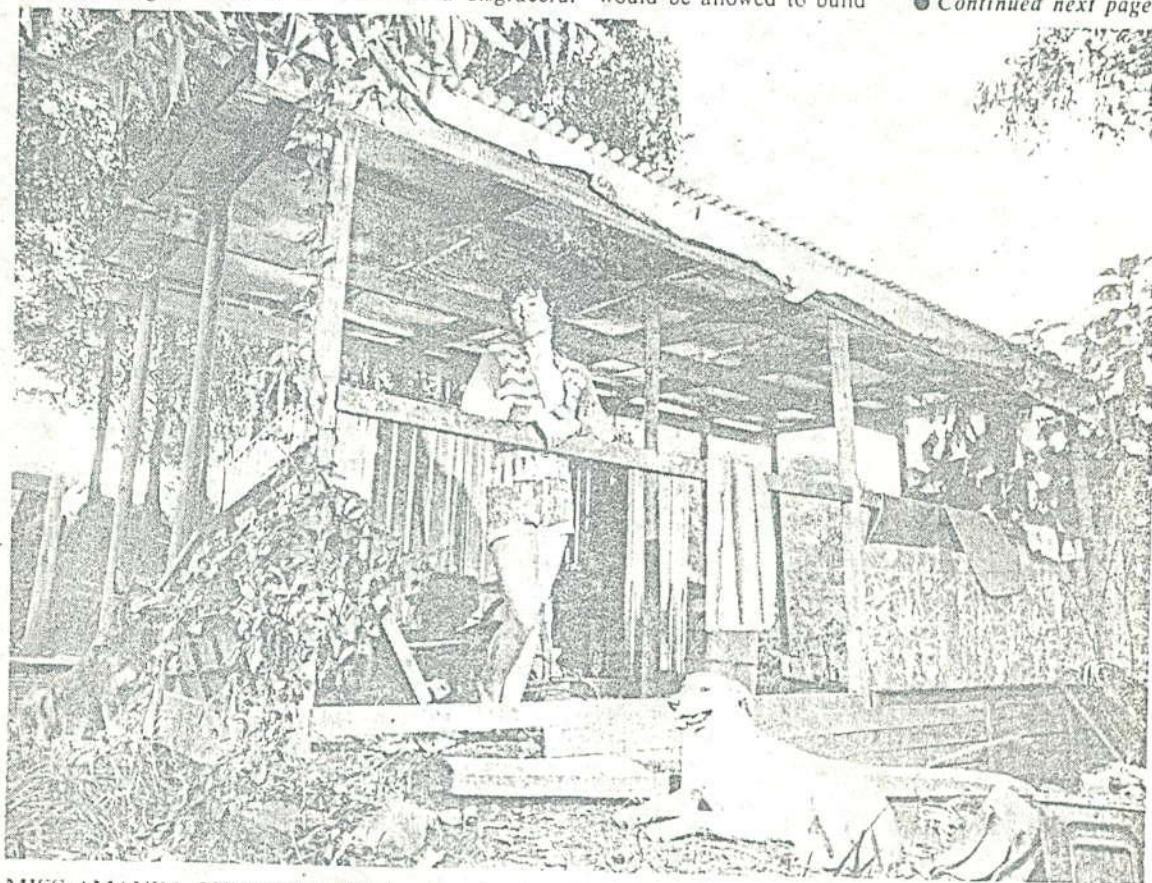
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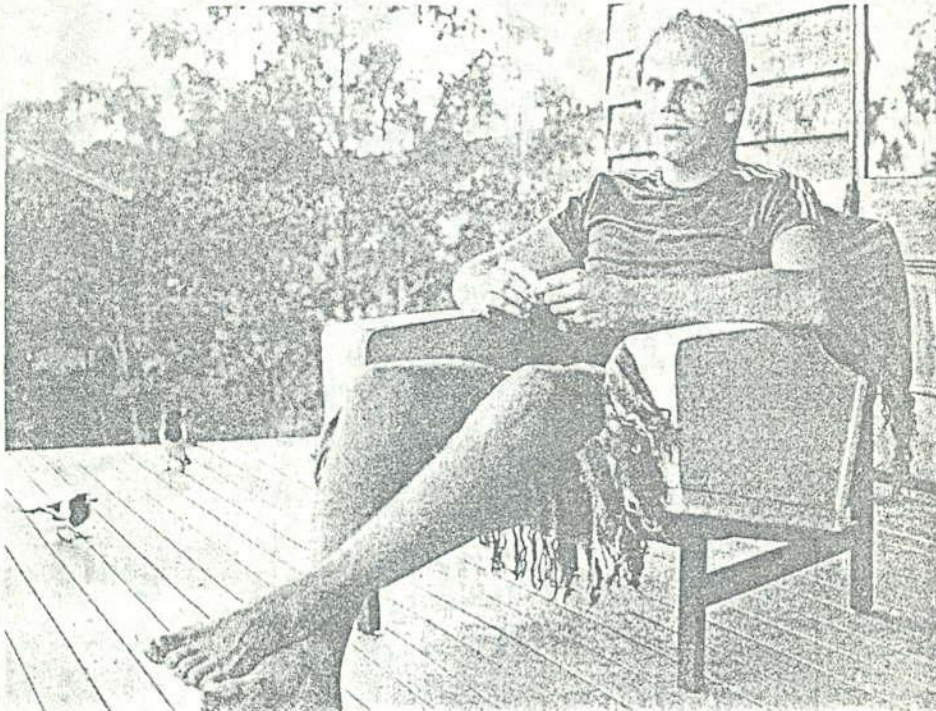
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Appeal against multiple dwelling court ruling to go ahead

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The Kyogle Shire Council has joined the Glenbin debate, strongly supporting the Lismore City Council in its decision to appeal against Justice Cripps' rulings in the case.

The Kyogle shire clerk, Mr P Thew, in a letter to the Lismore council, said his council was especially alarmed at the court's decision to reduce the road contributions from \$3500 to \$350.

precedent were allowed to stand because of a lack of legal representation to adequately put the case for road levies," he said. Mr Thew said that multiple-occupancies contributed significantly to traffic growth in rural areas, where most roads were hard-pressed coping with traffic volumes.

"The imposition of road improvement contributions is the only practical means of ensuring that multiple-occupancies pay a

"This decision will be used by other multiple-occupancies in Lismore City and elsewhere as a precedent for further appeals which could lead to the demise of the road contribution policies that are common to most local government areas on the North Coast," he said.

Mr Thew said it appeared that Lismore did not have legal representation at the Land and Environment Court hearing.

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The council has appealed on grounds that Justice Cripps had erred in that his judgment appeared to condone the construction of dwellings without building permits.

Last month *The Northern Star* reported that Glenbin residents would be forced to live in makeshift accommodation for two more years, and could be bankrupted if the appeal went ahead.

Residents of the tiny community have accused the council of victimising them for the past two years, and are angry at being kept out of a session of the council on Tuesday night.

Ald Nicolson said the council had voted for a closed session on the recission motion as there may have been a risk of subjudice if Glenbin residents had been

present.

Ald Nicolson and Ald Gallen described the appeal as a 'face-saving exercise' by the council, which merely would waste ratepayers' money on legal fees and make life hard for the Glenbin residents.

"The matter has degenerated into emotive and unfair hippy-bashing," Ald Nicolson said yesterday.

"The council has received three letters urging it to continue with the appeal. All these letters have shown a misunderstanding of what the appeal was about."

The deputy chief planner, Mr R Heap, said that the appeal had been lodged on the grounds that the judge had appeared to condone people constructing dwellings without building permits.

"It is sheer hypocrisy for the council to object on these grounds," Ald Nicolson said.

"I have known the council to approve building applications that have come in after construction work has begun."

"And I could cite at least one incident of the council approving building application after construction work had taken place which hadn't satisfied the conditions that the council had laid down."

The chief planner, Mr Reyniers (who represented the council in the case) has implied that council lost the case because Glenbin had superior representation.

"In fact, neither side was represented by legal counsel."

"It was the council's poor preparation, and the absurd inconsistencies in that preparation, that lost it the case."

"For example, the original engineer's report quoted the cost of improving Stangers Road (the road on which the multiple occupancy is situated) was \$2800. But a later report quoted the figure at \$200,000."

Ald Nicolson said he supported the council on most matters, but that he drew the line in the Glenbin case.

"The council has been adversely influenced by misinformed pressure from sections of the community which are prejudiced against multiple-occupancy developments," he said.

A Glenbin resident, Mr Peter Marshall, yesterday said that representatives from the multiple occupancy had tried to reason with the council at the meeting on Tuesday night.

He said that Glenbin residents planned to circulate a petition and present it to the council.

In a verbal submission to the council on Tuesday night, another Glenbin spokesman, Mr Wayne Potocky, urged the council to reconsider its decision.

He said the appeal would cost tens of thousands of dollars and sour relations between existing and future communities.

'Hippy-bashing' claims denied

By GARY BUCHANAN

Allegations that the Lismore City Council was guilty of 'hippy-bashing' were strenuously denied yesterday by the Mayor of Lismore, Ald H Fredericks.

He was responding to claims made by Ald M Nicolson in an angry outburst against the decision to proceed with an appeal against a Land and Environment Court ruling in the Glenbin multiple-occupancy case.

Ald Nicolson described the appeal as a 'face-saving exercise' which would waste ratepayers' money on legal fees and make life difficult for Glenbin residents.

He said it was 'sheer hypocrisy' for the council to appeal on the grounds being given, and that the matter had 'degenerated into emotive and unfair hippy-bashing'.

According to Ald Fredericks, it was Ald Nicolson who was being too emotive on the issue.

"I don't even regard Ald

Nicolson's comments seriously regarding his allegations of hippy-bashing," he said.

Ald Fredericks said the appeal was lodged on the basis of preliminary legal advice from the council's solicitors that the presiding judge in the Glenbin case may have erred in his judgment.

"The issue here is that our legal advisers consider there was an incorrect statement made by the judge in part of his judgment," he said.

"That statement, if left unchallenged, could have ramifications on future decisions involving multiple-occupancies, not only for this council but many others where this form of development is occurring."

The appeal has been lodged on grounds that the Chief Justice of the Land and Environment Court, Mr Justice Cripps, appeared in his judgment to condone people constructing dwellings without building approval.

Ald Fredericks said all the council had done at this stage was to refer the Glenbin brief to senior legal counsel for further advice.

"It is possible we might not even take the matter to the Court of Appeal," he said.

"That will depend on the advice we receive from senior counsel, who may well advise the council against proceeding with the appeal."

Ald Fredericks said that for many years the council had been placed in a difficult 'trial and error' situation where multiple-occupancies were concerned.

He said the former Labor Government had approved the development of multiple-occupancies in selected areas of the State without formulating a policy to help local councils implement the decision.

Ald Fredericks said it was a great pity the former Government had not set up a model from which local government could work.

Northern Star 10+11 June 1988

The future of 21 families is uncertain following the axing of State Government funding for an experimental multiple occupancy at Wadeville, north of Lismore.

A spokesman for the Minister for Housing, Mr Schipp, said the Department of Housing had recommended that the \$1-million project be stopped.

"The idea for the project had been approved by the previous Government, but no approvals for loans or building had been given," the spokesman said.

"The Minister felt it was not an appropriate development for the Government to be involved with.

"The people involved were splintering into different groups and could not get along."

He said said that the project would be wound up, but did not know what would happen to the \$180,000 property.

The spokesman was not aware that temporary building approvals had been granted for a number of sites on the property by the Kyogle Shire Council, and that building had started on a number of homes.

He said the department and the families would have to negotiate any compensation claims for any buildings.

"They are entitled to apply for housing loans from the Government. Some of them might group together and try to buy the property," he said.

Last year, while in

\$1m HOUSING EXPERIMENT AXED

Opposition, the Liberal Party branded the project as 'a \$1 million hippy resort' and accused the then Minister for Environment and Planning, Mr Carr, and the Minister for Housing, Mr Walker, of manipulating planning and funding to support their 'experiment in social engineering'.

Under the plan, the co-operative was to be in total control of the project and would apply to the Government for approvals.

The co-operative had not been formed because only 21 of the 28 families had moved on to the property.

The project was the first co-operative land settlement project in New South Wales with financial assistance from the Government.

It was established as a pilot scheme by the North Coast-based Rural Resettlement Task Force and

the Land Commission of New South Wales, which was the marketing arm of the Department of Housing.

The Commission has been absorbed into the Department of Housing.

The project was aimed at low-income families with an average weekly income of \$190 to form co-operative communities, to develop rural property and to construct housing according to their needs.

Funds for the development, including building materials for housing, were to be provided as soon as a

co-operative of 28 suitable households was formed.

A maximum of \$1 million was available, but funds would be drawn only as required.

Money has been spent buying the property, developing internal roads and the property's entrance on to Stoney Chute Road, and redeveloping the original farmhouse as a community centre.

The proposed co-operative was to apply for

● Continued Page 6

● Consultant tells of problems — Page 6

Housing project axed

● From Page 1

28 Government loans to build houses worth \$45,000 each, and to repay the money as a mortgage.

It was planned that repayments would have been generally limited to 27 per cent of household income.

A committee consisting of two representatives from the Department of Housing, an executive member of the Rural Resettlement Task Force, two members of the co-operative and a development officer was to be formed to administer the project.

A \$500 initial payment from each household was required as soon as they were accepted into the co-operative.

After three years of membership, anyone choosing to leave would have been entitled to receive payment for their shares in the co-operative.

The payment would cover any equity they had contributed through loan repayments and the value added to their dwellings by their labour.

Last year, the Liberal Party claimed in the Parliament that the ALP Government had bulldozed plans for the project through the

Kyogle council and had overturned many of the council-imposed development conditions.

It also claimed in the Parliament that the project had developed into a 'grave train' for department-paid consultants and that an ALP supporter had made a small fortune when the project bought a property in Stoney Chute Road, Wadeville.

Late last month, the Kyogle Shire Council wrote to the Department of Housing asking for urgent talks on the property because of concerns about health issues.

The council's chief

planner, Mr P Knight, said there was a lack of adequate personal washing, garbage and toilet facilities, and development had been haphazard and did not comply with detailed plans approved by the council.

Mr Knight said threats by the council to demolish the temporary structures was used to underline the seriousness of the issue, and to encourage some action from the department.

He said the temporary structures were becoming 'too permanent', and that the temporary phase of the development had been going on for too long.

Consultant tells of Wadeville problems

A consultant who helped set up the Wadeville multiple-occupancy project, Mr Dudley Leggett, is disappointed that the Government has stopped funding the project.

Mr Leggett said the families involved in the housing experiment had been anxious about the future of the project since the State elections which swept the Coalition to power this year.

"The Coalition has never been sympathetic to the multiple-occupancy concept," he said.

"There was mixed reaction to the decision. The members were disappointed that the Wadeville project has ended, but happy they still are going to be offered Affordable Housing loans."

Mr Leggett said that the project had been disrupted by some internal disputes.

"The biggest problem was partly because of the new Government policy that all the land was to be held in total by the co-operative," he said.

"If it had allowed people to start building when they first arrived, it would have eased the tensions."

"It was hard getting 28 families together for such a length of time, living in temporary dwellings without the security of knowing if the project would go ahead."

"By building in stages, some of the tensions and problems would not have happened."

Mr Leggett said it appeared the Government was trying to wash its hands of the project and place the burden back on the families.

"It is prepared to offer the Affordable Home Loans and negotiate with the families to take over the project and carry on without Government input," he said.

"It is certainly viable for the families to try to buy the property and carry on."

Mr Leggett said he had started negotiations with the Department of Housing to compensate the dispossessed families.

"The least we would want is access to the low-interest Government housing loans and the choice to pay for this property or an alternative property," he said.

Mr Leggett said that coverage of the project this week by a metropolitan television program had appalled the Wadeville community.

"It was a gross distortion and deliberately biased to create a bad image and has angered a large section of the community," he said.

"It was particularly unfair to me, and I am considering legal action."

*Anthony Star
11 June 1988*

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STAR
NORTHERN
9/8/88

PILOT SCHEME FACES AXE

The future of the Wadeville pilot multiple-occupancy development, north of Kyogle, appears to be in doubt.

Last June, a spokesman for the Minister for Housing, Mr Schipp, announced that the Department of Housing had recommended that the \$1-million project be stopped.

An announcement also was made on national television that the project would be axed.

But two months later, the Kyogle Shire Council has received no written information from the State Government informing it of the future of the project.

Now, the council has resolved to inform the Minister for Housing that it recommends that the development be stopped.

Mr Schipp also will receive a map of the on-site development, a letter from the Department of Health, the original development application and the conditions of consent.

A letter received by the council from the Department of Environment and Planning which omitted half of the conditions of consent also will be forwarded.

TV report

A national television report on the Wadeville development also will be sent to the Minister.

The report was shown on the Nine Network's Midday Show.

At the council's latest meeting, it received several items of correspondence relating to the development.

These included a letter from the Department of Health outlining inadequate sanitary and health

Local councils urged to relax building codes

A relaxation in local government standards would help ease the rental accommodation crisis in Northern New South Wales, according to a real estate industry leader.

The president of the Real Estate Institute of New South Wales, Mr Robert Bevan, said that a shortage of affordable rental accommodation was forcing local real estate agents to turn away large numbers of people looking for shelter.

"Municipal aldermen and shire councillors need to ignore the pressure groups and support urban consolidation," he said.

"This could be done by increasing the percentage of land zoned for medium-density housing and by reviewing current restrictive town planning standards applying to this type of development.

"We must get back to the basics of housing people in well-designed aesthetically-pleasing medium-density accommodation.

"We are not advocating the building of slums."

Mr Bevan said that the return on investment for developers of rental accommodation was lower, as tenants were unable to pay high rents.

"These people would be happy to share laundries and would settle for off-street parking rather than the more expensive alternative of undercover parking," he said.

Mr Bevan called for shire and councils to speed up the processing of certificates necessary for the buying and selling of property.

He said that Richmond River Shire Council and Byron Shire Council were taking 10 and 14 days respectively to supply the certificates.

"Long delays to supply these certificates are unacceptable and frustrate the smooth operation of the new conveyancing laws. Delays add to the cost of buying or selling a home and the consumer bears the cost," he said.

Multiple occupancy faces axe

● From Page 1

conditions and a letter from the Minister for Housing asking for a report on the divergences from the original development approval.

There also was a letter from a consultant for the project, Mr Dudley Leggett, countering assertions that unauthorised development had occurred.

A letter also was received from a young family which participated in the development and outlined its experiences.

There also was a request from a group of participants in the project wanting a meeting with the council to discuss the future of the development.

The Shire President, Cr David Lovell, said the council believed it was inappropriate that the project should continue.

Cr Lovell said the project had not developed as had been indicated in

the original development application and was unlikely to return to its original concept.

He said the development should cease.

"The kindest thing to say about the development is that it just did not work," Cr Lovell said.

The shire engineer, Mr Patrick Knight, said the development had not achieved its aims and objectives and appeared to be a failure.

Mr Knight said the development had a history dating back to 1984 when the representatives of the Land Commission came to Kyogle Shire to inspect land suitable for the development of a pilot multiple-occupancy project.

At that time, the Kyogle council was preparing a local environment plan to enable multiple occupancy within the shire.

The Land Commission found suitable land at

Unumgar and began negotiations for its purchase.

In the meantime, the Kyogle council held meetings throughout the shire to gauge public opinion on the approval of multiple occupancy throughout the shire.

Mr Knight said that following the public meetings, it was apparent that many people did not want multiple occupancy throughout the shire.

The council then prepared a plan that allowed multiple-occupancy development in a part of the shire that was in the former Terania Shire area.

The land at Unumgar was not in the area approved for multiple occupancy and the Land Commission then purchased 81 hectares at Wadeville.

Mr Knight said a development application was lodged in 1985 and when advertised by the

council, it received numerous objections.

He said development consent was given, with more than 30 conditions.

The consent then was sent to the then Minister for Housing and the number of conditions was halved.

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The co-operative was not formed because only 21 of the 28 families had moved on to the property.

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The multiple occupancy experiment

THE SEARCH FOR A BETTER WAY

The second in a weekly series by KEVIN CORCORAN on the bold social experiment of multiple occupancy living

One of the longest-running multiple occupancies in the area is an 'intentional' community near The Channon. (Intentional communities are close-knit, and operate along the lines of a traditional extended family.)

The community began about the time of the Aquarius Festival in 1973. The festival was a meeting place for young and old caught up by the fervor of the beginning of the alternative movement.

They wanted to escape the dehumanised cities to find a simpler, less-cluttered lifestyle closer to nature.

The euphoric atmosphere of the festival, which attracted about 10,000, was the birthplace of the modern multiple occupancies.

In the past 15 years multiple occupancies have changed from the 1960s-style commune.

The settlements today range from a group who want to form a community to people who want a place of their own at the lowest cost.

The members of the community near The Channon were willing to talk about their achievements, but did not want to be identified.

The eight adults on the abandoned 106 ha dairy farm came together in 1976.

It was started by three individuals as a social experiment that was to explore better ways of living together, and with the environment.

It was set up as a place that would be harmonious environmentally, and would create a sharing and caring community.

The focus of the property is a large farmhouse and community centre, built from recycled materials.

Most of the management and operational decisions are taken in the community centre.

Each family grouping has living quarters within easy reach of the centre so they can use the common facilities.

At the end of each day, all members meet at the farmhouse to share a meal, which they take turns in preparing.

The community is governed by consensus; a sort of mini-government involving all the members.

Once a week, after the communal meal, the members plan an agenda for the next week.

They organise work days, and each Saturday morning is devoted to working in the community gardens and orchards.

The meetings also are used to settle disputes set objectives, give support to each other, and keep the community together as a unit.

To help settle internal problems the members attend consciousness-raising and problem-solving courses.

Before a person can join they have to stay six months — to understand what they are getting involved in and how it operates.

If they like what they see, and are prepared to meet the requirements of the community, they can buy shares in the community.

A portion of the money paid for the shares repays the original cost of the property and any development that has been

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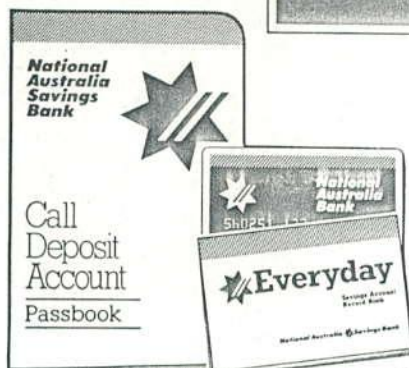
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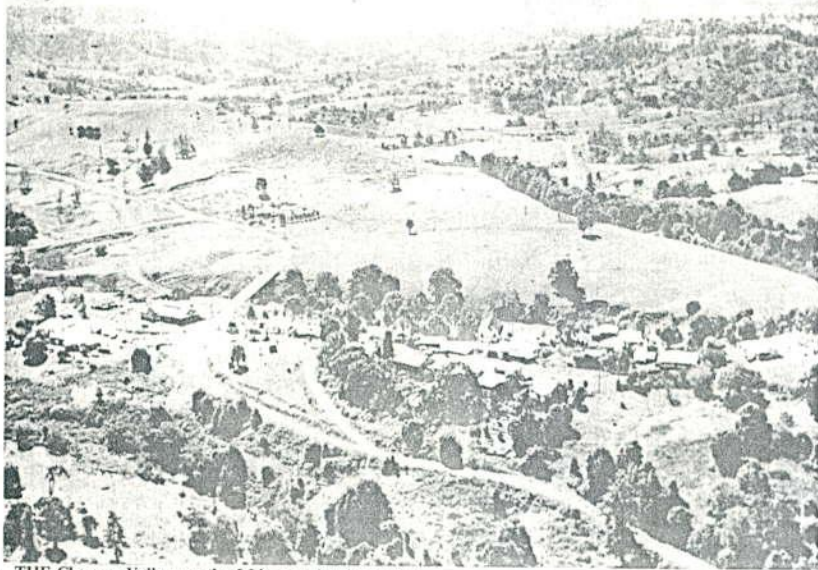


TOGETHER

National Australia Bank



THE Aquarius Festival in Nimbin in 1973 was a meeting place for young and old caught up by the fervor of the alternative movement. About 10,000 attended the festival in search of a simpler, less-cluttered lifestyle closer to nature. The festival is regarded as the birthplace of the modern multiple



THE Channon Valley, north of Lismore, has become a focal point for the new wave of settlers who are turning to multiple occupancies. Many of the area's farms have been bought by the new settlers and redeveloped to establish a lifestyle environmentally harmonious.

From the beginning there has been a principle that no permanent resident is on the dole

done. The rest goes towards future developments.

If a person leaves they are not paid for their buildings or their share in the trust.

An exchange of cash for assets may take place should this occur.

The community feels that, because members cannot sell their shares there is an incentive to make the community work.

There is an incentive for members to confront and work through problems, and join in the running of the community.

The property is held in a trust on behalf of all members, and the management is shared equally by all members.

A member may choose a site for a house, but the community must agree on this before building can start.

The sites must be within council-approved zones, and all buildings must meet council standards.

Individuals do not have a separate hold or legal title over the land.

People certainly would not join this type of community to get cheap housing.

The commitment to sharing — in the experiment and lifestyle — is more important.

In a step towards self-reliance the community has developed orchards and gardens, and a pure-bred Jersey herd for dairy products.

It originally was intended to use the property to provide employment for all members.

They moved away from this because people chose not to be so isolated, and to interact with the larger community.

A number of members have part-time employment, mainly in the service areas and in education.

The members scoff at claims that they are locking up the land, a claim that has been

levelled at multiple occupancies by the traditional farming community.

There is a move to start more income-generating activities on the property, and their work has paid off.

By living on the produce from the vegetable gardens, orchards and dairy herd they have reduced their living costs to about \$25 a week for each adult.

From the beginning there has been a principle that no one be reliant on unemployment benefits, and no permanent resident is on the dole.

Members of the community can work in the gardens, orchards, or with the dairy herd to get money through a voluntary purse system.

The system operates so that people who work outside the community compensate members contributing more work on the property.

They feel that those who work off the property do not put as much effort into projects, so money is put aside by them for the use of the others — almost like a wage.

In theory, a member could use the land to try to make a living, a form of privatisation of the land.

With the permission of other members they could start a vegetable garden and sell the produce to get an income.

This has not happened, mainly because the amount of work involved does not make the operation viable.

The community is not a retreat from technology.

They are blending the benefits of technology, such as computers and solar panels with hydro-electricity and composting toilets.

Two houses are powered by hydro-electricity.

This community, and Lillfield, are run by all the members being involved in making decisions — government by consensus.

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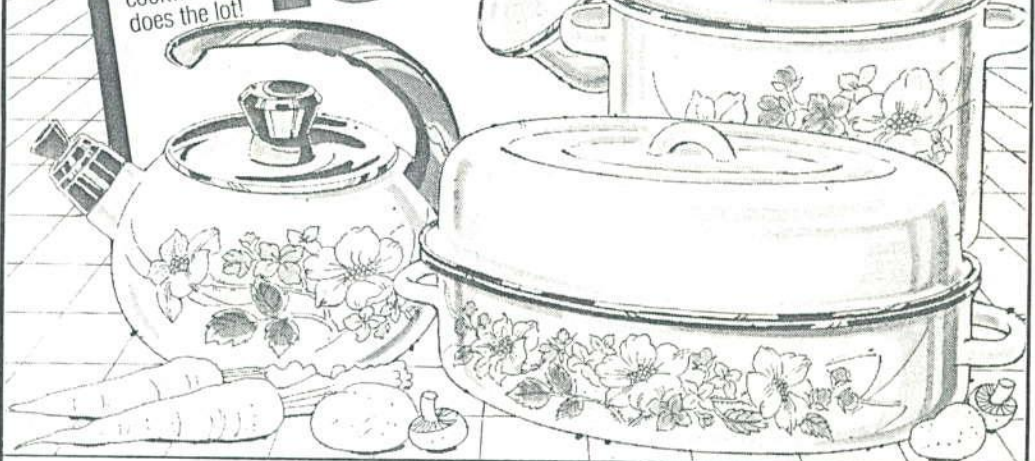
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WOOLWORTHS Variety

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ESCAPE FROM THE

The third in a weekly series by KEVIN CORCORAN on a bold social experiment. This week: Lillifield

Lillifield multiple occupancy members were so enthused about what they were doing that they were prepared to gamble everything.

They stopped building their homes to develop 40 hectares of scrub for smallcropping — to help the community pay its way.

In developing their community north of Nimbin they have created a different economic and value system.

"There is a different perception about money," said Marian Woodford.

"Because people cannot see money changing hands they do not see any wealth.

"We consider that building your own house and growing your own food is an income.

"You still have to pay for it, but you pay with labour instead of money."

Her husband, Rex, chimed in: "Instead of paying a builder \$400 a week to build a house you are paying yourself.

"The money saved by not paying a builder is used to buy other goods and services from the larger community."

They also hope their community ventures — such as smallcropping and a general store-cafe-craft shop — will create jobs and pay for equipment and stock.

The income from the ventures will be used to pay community members for work such as slashing and fencing.

In this way they hope to reduce running costs and dependency on outside forces, and provide limited employment for the community.

And they hope the community will be able to offer financial help when members need it.

"There is plenty of land to go into whatever agricultural pursuits we want," Dave Moyes said.

"We are not going to lock up the land and take it out of production.

"We can share the costs of establishing and maintaining a farm and share the profits.

"But our farming will be more labour-intensive. We don't see ourselves as different from the rest of Australia; we attend progress association meetings to take part in developing the area.

"We are thinking 20 to 30 years ahead, and planting trees that can be harvested in the future."

His wife, Val, said: "It is so far away from employment that we had to



VAL Moyes, and daughters Culley and Lauren outside their partially-built house on the Lillifield Community.

create our own jobs, either servicing the growing communities or as a community in an agricultural venture."

The community's hopes to sell its arts and crafts, and surplus produce through the general store.

It also would serve as a coffee shop and information centre for tourists.

Other surplus produce will be sold through outlets such as the Kyogle Organic Growers, and they also hope to tap into the expanding naturopath industry in Australia.

A part of the long-term plan is to develop walking tracks linked to neighbouring communities, and a guesthouse to be used by the community and visitors.

Lillifield is about halfway along the multiple oc-

I feel quite missionary about this way of life . . . a lot of our members were materially comfortable with good jobs, but chose a better lifestyle where they felt more in control

— founder Andrew Buchanan

cupancy spectrum.

When a person buys shares in it they are entitled to a pre-determined, two-hectare house site. All the sites were surveyed when the property was developed as a multiple occupancy by its founder, Andrew Buchanan.

The member is free to build anywhere on the land with whatever mate-

rials they choose, and to plant gardens and orchards.

But they must conform to a group philosophy, which includes organic farming (no chemicals) and land use.

They have the exclusive use of the house site, but cannot fence the area to keep others out.

They are trying to ad-

here to the objective of multiple occupancies: To be economically viable.

While the members do not believe they ever will be totally self-sufficient, they hope to reduce their living costs by growing vegetables, farming and through craft works.

They include electricians, builders, a doctor, an accountant, dairy farmer, director of an Australian fashion company, and the director of an Australian and New Zealand development company.

They hope to trade these skills with others.

The members at Lillifield attend problem-solving courses and meet regularly. In this way they hope to be able to discuss and solve any internal problems.

Continued — Next page

MORTGAGE BELT

From previous page

It is run by all the members being involved in the decision-making: Government by consensus.

The community makes decisions in much the same way as an intentional community, except it holds monthly meetings.

Most of the matters discussed would have been discussed already during work or socially.

They plan common ventures, workdays, maintenance working bees, and individual ideas for development.

The meetings are formal with an elected chairman and secretary.

The community, near Lillian Rock, was established as a new wave village.

The 128 ha former dairy farm will support 40 families. So far there are 20.

About 80 ha has been divided into 2 ha home sites, and there is also 40 ha of community agricultural land.

The community's major ideals are to create an ecologically harmonious lifestyle, reforestation, and the selective use of technology.

"I feel quite missionary about this way of life," said Andrew Buchanan.

"Australia should be promoting a sharing place to live.

"We are developing in a planned way, because we thought it would be easier to have most of the infrastructure in place before settlement started.

"And it was easier for a dairy farm to get loans to pay for the initial development than for members of a multiple occupancy."

Mr Buchanan said the type of person attracted by multiple occupancies



SABINA Baltruweit surveys the ground prepared for smallcropping. The community started a joint venture to grow zucchinis to earn income. It plans to develop a farm and general store to provide employment, and income, for members

had changed.

"We are attracting a more experienced type," he said.

"A lot of our members were materially comfortable with good jobs, but chose a better lifestyle where they felt more in control."

None of the members was looking for such a

community; they just wanted to live an alternative lifestyle and were looking for a place in a price bracket.

They did not expect to become active members in a community co-operative.

The youngest shareholder is Scott Cater, 21, an electrician, who originally was put off by the

idea of a community.

"I thought a community was a commune, like something out of the 1960s as seen on television," he said.

"Communes were a reaction to the times, but communities will last into the future."

Mr Buchanan likens it to a traditional European village.

"Each member has their own home and exclusive use of their land, but they all run a larger enterprise which provides the economic stability for the village.

New members are introduced during a visit, and then during a six-month stay can get the feel of what it is trying to achieve.

"There is no compunction on people to fit in. Members do not have to play god and select or screen new members.

"Those out of step with the ideals do not join, or usually leave."

So far three members have left, and offered the community first option on their shares.

If the community does not want to take up the option the members are free to offer the shares on the open market.

All members who are leaving have been able to sell their shares on the market, and have even been rewarded for the improvements made.

"People want to join.

They would not be here unless they wanted this way of life," Mr Buchanan said.

"They can live here and still have a job in town; they do not have to devote all their time to the community or being self-sufficient.

"They would take other responsibilities such as maintaining roads and common areas, or reforestation or developing other community ideals.

"But these people would not expect to receive anything from the other ventures.

"If we can achieve financial stability then there will be employment and we again reduce our dependency on society for jobs."

David Moyes left his Victorian home because he was dissatisfied with the lifestyle.

"We wanted to get away from having no control over our environment and pursue our own lifestyle," he said.

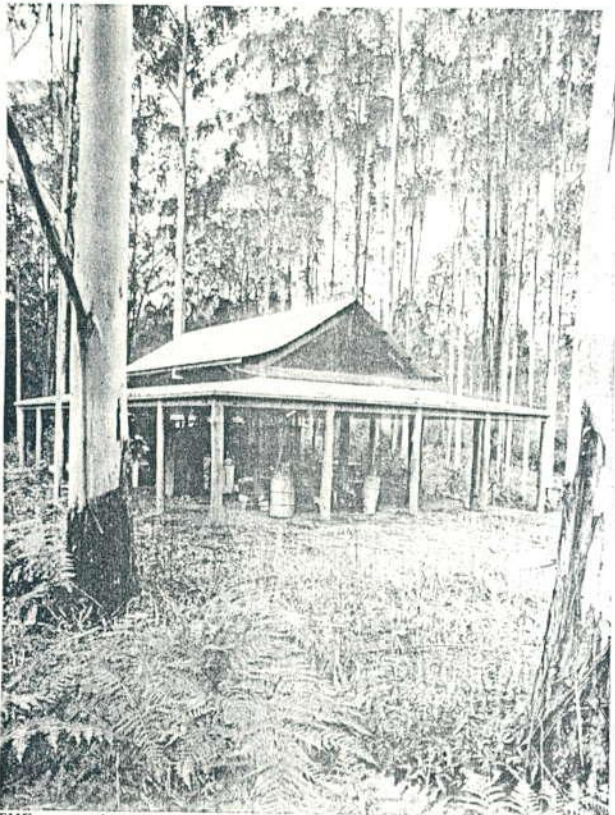
"Here we can get away from the mortgage belt, and the trap of keeping up with the next family.

"The concept of a multiple occupancy is that people desire to live in a rural area. These are a low-cost alternative to a subdivision.

"There is plenty of land to go into what ever agricultural pursuits we want, and there are enough people to help make it work."



THE view from the Moyes house looking over the Lillfield Community towards Blue Knob. Most of the community land is a reforested dairy farm.



THE community centre and storehouse was the first building on the property. It houses the community tractor and members' possessions while they build their houses.

EARNING A LIVING ON

"We can all be hippies, no matter how old we are. But we don't have to live in a humpy or on a river bank. We have done that."

"Our attitudes to the land have not changed, but the way we go about achieving our ideals have," said Mr John Garbutt, spokesman for Billen Cliffs, 30 kilometres north-west of Lismore.

The families in the Billen Cliffs multiple occupancy are a cross-section of the community in general.

There are eight families with jobs in Lismore, three families on the age pension, and between 10 and 15 families are on some other pensions, but very few on the dole.

"The dole is not good enough," Mr Garbutt said.

"People here want something better, and all realise that the only way to do that is to create a job for themselves."

"I really think that is the essence of the alternative society — creating a situation where you can generate money from your home."

"We do not want to lock ourselves away from mainstream society."

"We want commerce and interaction, and we need a place to sell our produce."

"To that end the community has built a shop which is the only one for a radius of 45 kilometres."

The Billen Cliffs community is broken up into areas.

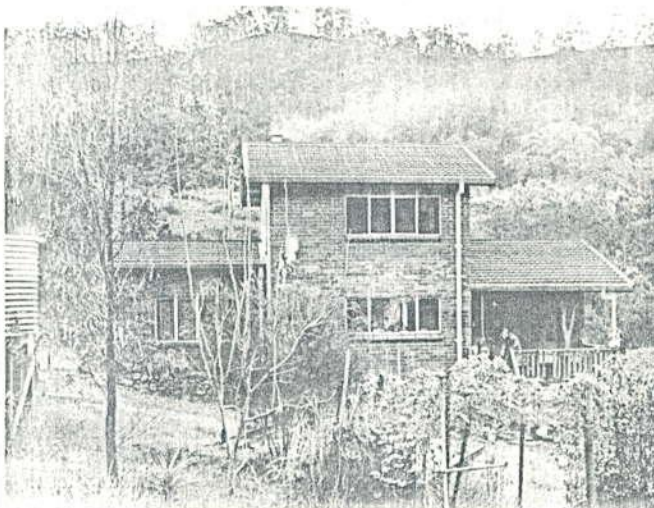
The 114 shareholders live in one of three valleys, which are divided into smaller hamlet groupings of between three and seven households.

The hamlets elect members to represent their valley on the board of directors of the Billen Cliffs Company, and everyone can attend the monthly resident's meeting.

In the valleys a number of hamlets band together to control the living area and the hamlet common.

Hamlet meetings deal with all issues involving household groups. If a person wants to put in an orchard or build a dam on

The fourth in a weekly series by KEVIN CORCORAN on a bold social experiment. This week: Billen Cliffs



TWO sides to Billen Cliffs: A modern-designed two-bedroom red-brick house, left, built by Angelika Fischer; and, right, Jane Stoll sits on the verandah a stone and hush-pole house she built with her husband, Rolf.

the hamlet common then they have to get the permission of a majority of the hamlet's residents.

Other members of the community would not be involved in that decision.

The land is broken up into three groupings: Living; hamlet common and company common.

The company common is the roads and a few areas set aside for industrial use.

The whole community will decide what happens to this land.

Members are also controlled by company by-laws.

Someone breaking the by-laws is warned a number of times, and if they continue to do so they go before a peace tribunal made up of volunteers.

If no answer can be found, or the member continues to break the by-laws, the company has the power to resume the land.

Billen Cliffs is different from other multiple occupancies because its members have been granted strata title.

This is a one-off development granted by the New South Wales Government to overcome legal problems that developed between the multiple occupancy and the Lismore City Council.

The idea for the community was floated in 1978, just as multiple occupancies were beginning to be brought to the attention of the State Government which was drafting legislation to deal with their development.

In the first draft of the MO code the Government said 20 per cent of the land could be subdivided for exclusive use and would give members all the benefits of land ownership, such as access to the first home buyers' scheme and other loans.

The 340 hectares at

Larnook were bought in 1980 and a company formed. Shares gave the right for exclusive use to 0.8 ha lots.

The body corporate was given council development approval in 1982 with a list of conditions.

When the final draft of the NSW Multiple Occupancy Code was delivered by the Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Landa, it stated that the total land in the multiple occupancy had to belong to all the members.

Because of the internal subdivision Billen Cliffs did not exactly fit the description of a multiple occupancy, and problems arose.

After several months of negotiations between the council and Billen Cliffs legal advice was sought.

The opinion was that Billen Cliffs was an illegal subdivision.

"We were left with two options: We could revert to a true commune (where

there is no exclusive land use or boundaries), which we would not have minded, but it was not the reason we bought into Billen Cliffs," said Mr Garbutt.

The only way they could become legal, in the existing format, was to apply to be rezoned as allowing strata title.

"The State Government's multiple occupancy code had been changed by others because they could not see that Billen Cliffs was a legitimate form of multiple occupancy."

"We did not want strata title. It was forced on us when the changes were made to the original Government code. It cost Billen Cliffs \$45,000 and we would rather have spent that money internally."

"But we did not want to be shuffled into the dead-end existence of a commune type multiple occupancy."

"They felt that multiple occupancies were trapped

into economic dependence on the land, and that members were trapped financially because they could not sell their house and were entitled only to the price of the original shares."

Billen Cliffs is divided into 114 share units. (A share unit entitles a member to the exclusive use of 0.8 ha.)

Sixty shareholders have built houses on the property, and the styles range from a \$50,000 brick veneer to those made from recycled materials and natural materials found on the property.

A number of the Billen Cliffs community still work in Lismore, while others have developed cottage industries, such as tank building, cobbling, signwriting, nursing, and three plant nurseries.

Four community gardens are selling produce on the Brisbane market through the Kyogle Or-



RETIRED Queenslander Ray Williams and his wife, Joy, have started knitting jumpers and track suits.

Continued — Next page



FARMER CHARLIE'S MARKETS

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WYRALLAH ROAD

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● LISMORE

CRUNCHY GRANNY SMITH APPLES

BROWN ONIONS

CRISP LETTUCE

SUGARLOAF CABBAGES

49¢ EACH

The multiple occupancy experiment

THE DOORSTEP

From previous page

ganic Growers Group (KOG).

The KOG estimates it could cope with weekly loads worth \$15000.

"There is a list of people waiting to get on with cottage industries — once they have finished with building and establishing gardens," Mr Garbutt said.

"We bought the land, a failing cattle property which was lying idle.

"We would like to see every cattle farm within 50 km revert to this.

"The land is beautiful and too fragile for cattle. "There are better places for grazing. This land is perfect for reafforestation and selective logging."

Mr Garbutt estimated that in four years members of Billen Cliffs have spent \$3.5 million in the Lismore community.

"They have bought building materials, goods and services and are generating jobs for teachers, doctors and others," he said.

Mr Garbutt did not think commercial-style developers had a place in establishing multiple occupancies.

Even though developers may have had access to loan funds to build roads and dams, a mixture of two things would stop them, he said.

"They may have done the work, but the people who move on to these types of developments want to do that work for themselves, and in the process develop the community spirit," he said.

"Secondly, the cost of establishment would be added to the price of the shares, which would put them out of the reach of the people who want to live this way.

"It would be just like moving back into suburbia. You would not know your neighbours and they would not have played a part in your decision to want to live there.

"It would be impossible to move into an area designated for multiple occupancy.

"The council designation would give the farmer a chance to realise a far

greater price for his land than if he was selling to another farmer.

"But there needs to be some clarification. Farmers need to be given the chance to sell out to people who want to live on multiple occupancies."

This could be achieved by zoning the land suitable for that type of development.

"I believe that people are going to settle on the land irrespective of authority.

"Therefore the authorities have got to come to terms with the fact that there are half-a-million people living on the scrap heap in cities with a sense of hopelessness.

"We say that moving groups of people into the country in small groups, and gradually building up communities, would be therapeutic and economically sound."

"People are looking for a less complicated life.

"We love our technology, but only if it is appropriate. There are a number of people here who have computers, televisions and sound systems, but they are powered by solar energy.

"I would think there is room for all sorts of multiple occupancies.

"There are going to be groups of people with common ideas who want to live communally, there are other groups who would rather be tenants in common, who don't want to live communally but who don't want the trouble and expense attached to subdivisions.

"There is room within the alternative society for those people who want to keep their traditional values of land ownership," said Mr John Garbutt.

"This lifestyle on multiple occupancies is not being explored enough by the Government or institutions to find alternatives to the chronic housing shortage.

"There are many people, not just the unemployed, who will never be able to afford a home, let alone a piece of land that would allow them to be self-sufficient or give them some self-esteem."



ABOVE: Mrs Renae Cormack (left) and her daughter-in-law, Julie, in the general store.

BELOW: Mr John Garbutt.



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HOUSES to suit the owners: The view of one of the three valleys that make up Billen Cliffs, where new builders and established families establish their lives in a rural atmosphere.

Learning to come to terms with a different lifestyle

The multiple occupancy question split the Lismore community and threatened to become violent in the late 1970s.

Public reaction reached its highest when the city council held a referendum in 1979 to let the people decide their future.

The residents voted 'no', but the State Government intervened and introduced its Multiple Occupancy Code, overriding the council's ban.

In December 1979 the Minister for the Environment and Planning, Mr Paul Landa, introduced a multiple occupancy policy governing the establishment of future developments.

In 1980 the Lismore City Council introduced its multiple occupancy code.

The issue of logging, meanwhile, had also helped inflame the tension and underlying violence towards those living in multiple occupancies.

Those trying to stop the logging of North Coast rainforests mainly came from the multiple occupancies which were regarded as havens for hippies, the unemployed, and professional protesters.

In the sometimes violent battles between the environmentalists and logging companies the loggers and many residents resented the interference and threat of job losses.

Regulations

Members of the farming community joined the loggers because they felt multiple occupancies got preferential treatment.

Farmers thought it unfair that a number of dwellings could be built on a multiple occupancy while farmers were restricted by council regulations.

Under these restrictions a farmer could not subdivide a section of his land and get a separate title to build homes or cottages for their children, or for rent to help reduce their dependence on a failing rural economy.

In 1979 the council accepted the rural community's arguments and decided to stop further developments at multiple occupancies.

From then on the communities had to lodge development applications, and also bring up to council standards those already built.

They also had to contribute to providing services such as roads. Many in the farming community thought the council had not gone far enough. They wanted the same rules applied across the board, which would have involved the demolishing of illegal buildings.

The debate settled down after the intervention of the State Government. The threatened demolitions stopped and the council and the communities sat down to work out their problems.

The debate now centred on three issues: The standard of the roads and services provided to the multiple occupancies by the council (and roads provided by the multiple occupancy for the council), the housing standards, and the rating assessments on multiple occupancies.

The council set about applying zoning regulations and building standards.

But some communities want a more flexible interpretation of the rules. The rules were set up to protect home buyers from shoddy builders, a spokesman for one of the communities said.

The Lismore City Council recently lost a court case involving a multiple occupancy and building standards. The builder did not want to have internal walls, and the court sided with him.

The final article in the series by KEVIN CORCORAN on a bold social revolution

Since that decision the State Government has amended its building code to allow buildings without walls where a council feels they are appropriate.

Lismore City Council's chief town planner, Mr P Reynders, said most of the multiple occupancies had been ad hoc ribbon developments along country roads, but there was now a growing trend towards the release of estates to cater for the market.

He said that services such as roads, water supply, and communications, soon dropped below acceptable levels with ad hoc, thinly dispersed rural subdivision.

And the increased costs in servicing rural communities were a heavy burden on other sections of the community.

"When an area was a farm, there were few demands for better roads, and roads did not need to be maintained as frequently.

"As the population has increased the demands on infrastructure have increased, and so have the demands by residents to maintain the infrastructure.

"Once the multiple occupancy is finished, the road works become the property of the council.

"But the council cannot generate enough funds to maintain the roads from rates of the property."

Mr Gary Williams, a resident of the Robb Farm multiple occupancy (near Lillian Rock), said the councils and government had to finalise their codes, especially the rating structure.

"Councils must strike a rate that generates enough money to maintain roads used by people from multiple occupancies," he said.

"But most importantly the State Government has to decide whether or not we exist," he said.

Last February the ALP State Government gazetted State Planning Control SEPP 15 Multiple Occupancy of Rural Land which introduced multiple occupancy provisions into all North Coast local government areas.

Subsequently Mr David Hay, the Minister for Planning in the Greiner Government, has indicated that any council wishing to prepare its own multiple occupancy plan may be exempt from the State policy.

He also indicated the Government policy on multiple occupancies is under review.

After the Government introduced its code in 1979 it changed its minds twice, and took away access to low interest loans for home buyers.

Until the State and Federal Government makes up their mind the lending agencies will not provide funds.

Mr Williams said: "We are not trying to create rural ghettos; we want houses and should be allowed access to loans like everyone else in the community."

Mr Dave Lambert, a spokesman for the Rural Resettlement Taskforce, said multiple occupancies would remain a part of the North Coast lifestyle.

"There always will be a variety of multiple occupancies, from religious communes to those started purely by developers," he said.

"Commercial-style developments probably will not have a big future. Once share prices rise to \$20,000 they are competing with freehold land."

"Freehold land owners have security of tenure and access to mort-

gages and low interest loans that are not available to multiple occupants.

"Some of the locals thought multiple occupancies would not last.

"The membership changes, but they are all there and growing slowly.

"There probably would be a 5 per cent turnover of people; about the same for all types of housing, including rental accommodation."

At Billen Cliffs the main concern is the battle to get strata titles.

This is a one-off development granted to overcome legal problems between it and the Lismore City Council.

The idea for the multiple occupancy was floated in 1978, just as the State Government was drafting legislation to deal with them.

Billen Cliffs sought to give exclusive use over the land, or some of it, so that all the benefits of ownership — such as access to the first home builders' scheme and other loans — would still apply.

The final draft of the Multiple Occupancy Code in 1979 stated that the land in the multiple occupancy had to belong to all the members.

Because land was divided among the members Billen Cliffs did not fit the description of a multiple occupancy, and was classified as a de facto subdivision.

After several months of negotiations legal advice was sought, which said Billen Cliffs was an illegal subdivision.

A spokesman for Billen Cliffs, Mr John Garbutt, said: "We were left with two options — we could have reverted to a true commune where there is no exclusive use or boundaries, or push for strata titles."

"We would not have minded becoming a commune, but that was not why we had bought into Billen Cliffs."

"The only way we could become legal without changing was to apply for strata titles."

He said the State Government's multiple occupancy code had been changed because of the pressure from others in the debate who would not accept the argument of Billen Cliffs.

Pilot scheme

The ALP Government embraced multiple occupancy, and put aside about \$1 million to establish the Wadeville project as a pilot scheme for the Department of Housing.

The funds were administered by the department, and the people who were attracted to the project would have access to low interest government loans.

The project's co-ordinators saw Wadeville as an alternative example of low cost government housing that was more satisfying for its occupants than traditional housing commission homes.

But the Liberal Government decided to wind up the project because it was not appropriate for it to be involved and will sell the land.

Multiple occupancies have become a way of life on the North Coast, and at least 62 of them exist, with more development applications before councils.

No two are alike, and the constant change in people who are looking to rural Australia as a place to settle will ensure that the spectrum of multiple occupancies continues to expand.

The North Coast community has accepted the multiple occupants through contact with builders, plumbers, doctors and lawyers, in schools, shops and sport.

The barriers have been dismantled.



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Return to Dore

They're far from

The first in a weekly series of articles by Northern Star reporter KEVIN CORCORAN on the bold social experiment of multiple occupancy living.

My preconceived ideas were shattered. I had spent two weeks searching for proof that the 1960s-style commune still existed.

I had been looking for a dilapidated farmhouse crammed with people debating the evils of modern society, talking about restoring world peace and planning campaigns to save the forests.

The debate remains, but the dilapidated farmhouse communes have been replaced with anything from a \$50,000 red-brick house to the most environmentally-sensitive stone and wood cottages.

The commune is dead, and has been replaced with the multiple occupancy.

The first thing that strikes you when visiting a multiple occupancy is the enthusiasm of the people.

They enjoy showing visitors around their homes and projects.

They have the same ideals as other Australians: To own a house and a piece of land for a vegetable garden.

Only they want to get away from the rat race of the city.

They resent being labelled as hippies and dole bludgers and the claims that they are locking up the land.

They are no wealthier or poorer than most, but are dedicated to a way of life that sets them apart from society's mainstream.

The communes of the 1960s gave way to multiple occupancy, and these became new wave villages as the people banded together to create an environmentally-sensitive lifestyle.

During the search I found a spectrum of multiple occupancies, tailored to suit the needs and aspirations of the individuals.

They were divided by how the people worked with each other, and how they divided up the land.

At one end of the spectrum all the people decided on what would happen to the land, met daily and shared at least one meal together, which the members took turns to cook.

Once a week, after the meal, they plan their work for the next week, set objectives for the property, plan buildings, plant orchards and gardens, and decide who will do what.

At the other end of the spectrum were a group who just wanted to live in the country and saw the multiple occupancy as a way of being able to afford that block of land.

This series examines the multiple occupancy spectrum, and the people who are making it work.

They have not given up the 20th Century to live in poverty. They are trying to make the land create jobs.

They have not wholeheartedly rejected technology, but want more control over what technology is around them.

Many are living in tents and caravans while they build their houses.

Yet nowhere was there

evidence of dole bludgers living off the fat of society. The signs of industry are most evident.

The industries that have been created in their quest for jobs range from pure-bred dairy herds to market gardens and cottage industries, such as painters, cobblers, tank makers and sign writers.

They don't want to live in zoos and guard their privacy, but they feel no different, and in a lot of cases are trying to promote the area and make it economically viable.

The multiple occupancies were once regarded as oddities, and with some animosity after the logging debate escalated into violence.

The protestors who wanted to stop the logging of North Coast rainforests came mainly from the multiple occupancies, so they were regarded as havens for the hippies and professional protestors.

Their different ideas on land use, housing styles, family groups, dress set the multiple occupants apart.

But the North Coast community has, by and large, accepted the multiple occupants through contact with builders, plumbers, in schools, shops, and on the sporting field.

The barriers have been dismantled.

The birth of the multiple occupancy came about during the 10-day Aquarius Festival in Nimbin in 1973. More than 10,000 people descended on the area.

One of the strongest ideals to come out of the festival was the creation and survival of a self-sufficient sharing and caring community.

Many people wanted to establish a North Coast base as a working model for those who wanted to stay after the festival and practise the alternative life-style. What was known then as the commune has been replaced by the multiple occupancy.

There are 62 multiple

occupancies in the Tweed, Lismore and Kyogle areas, and an estimated 20,000 live in alternative lifestyles across New South Wales.

Now a second wave of settlers is leaving the cities to live on multiple occupancies.

They are bringing with them new ideas on the use of technology, farming, housing, employment, education, land use and ownership.

This wave has embraced the original concepts of communal living: Building houses made from recycled and natural materials, sharing the land to provide food, reforestation and rejecting technology.

They have adapted and moulded the ideals to suit their changing priorities, and as a result we have a broad spectrum of multiple occupancies.

This spectrum covers what are termed 'intentional communities' — formed by a group of people with a common bond who want to live together — to those formed by people who merely want access to cheap land and a rural lifestyle while not surrendering traditional rights of privacy and land use.

In the process new systems of government, employment and land use have been established.

The State Government legislated in 1980 to allow

for multiple occupancies.

It is now developing standards in areas such as health, education and roads.

The former ALP Government started a pilot program spending nearly \$1.28 million to investigate multiple occupancies as public housing through a development at Wadeville, north of Lismore.

The Greiner Government in June decided to wind-up the project and sell the land.

A multiple occupancy is loosely defined as a group of people living on a property, and with equal rights to that property.

The members buy shares in a multiple occupancy company which give them the right to use the property, or company facilities.

But the definition changes to fit the priorities of the people on various types of multiple occupancies.

● In some the individual chooses a house site, which is approved by the other members. The site does not entitle them to exclusive use of any of the land. The land is held in common trust.

Most of the activities on these properties, such as farming, are the result of a common interest.

● In others, house sites are preselected. The boundaries of the house site are not fenced.

A shareholder may have exclusive use of a portion of the land to build on and to use for their own pursuits. Much of the land remains in



A MEMBER of the Billen Cliffs multiple occupancy, German migrant Hajo Kremser, has started a cobbler's shop. All the equipment he uses was found rusting in old saddleries or on garbage dumps.

ADVERTISER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

On the Back Page of our Catalogue in this issue of The Northern Star the phone numbers for Lismore are incorrect.

The BBC Hardware phone numbers for Lismore and South Lismore stores are

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common trust for the economic benefit of the community.

● In yet others the shareholder has exclusive use of a clearly-defined, fenced block. Little common land may be retained. Any industry that develops is at the instigation of individual members.

A side effect has been the development of new wave villages, an Australian version of the traditional European village which has a high degree of community input for its economic standing.

The Dharmananda multiple occupancy, near The Channon, is one of the oldest in the area. It began in 1972, six months before Aquarius, and the community has been established since 1976.

Dharmananda would be at one end of the multiple occupancy spectrum.

It is an intentional community which has as its objectives being environmentally sound and ecologically harmonious, creating a sharing and caring community, and has a greater commitment to a spiritual lifestyle than most.

Members of the community have demonstrated that a close, communal lifestyle can be successful.

The 106 ha property supports 12 adults and three children.

Although started in the expectant atmosphere of the festival, Dhar-

mananda has changed.

Spokesman Mr Dudley Leggett said there had been some movement away from the original because of practicality.

Mr Andrew Buchanan, the founder of the 128 ha Lillifield multiple occupancy near Lillian Rock, said a lot of its members had been materially comfortable but had opted for a better lifestyle where they felt more in control.

"They decide what happens on the land around them, whether it will be a farm or a block of flats."

Each family grouping at Lillifield is responsible for two hectares. While there are no fences the land has been defined on a map.

All the members are developing gardens and industries to decrease living costs and gain employment. They also are farming 40 ha of common ground to provide the multiple occupancy with an income.

Lillifield would be in the middle of the multiple occupancy spectrum.

At the far end from Dharmananda are Billen Cliffs and Robb Farm.

There the land has been almost subdivided. Each person knows their boundaries and there is no attempt to form common industries.

There is room in the alternative society for those who want to keep their traditional values of land ownership.

The development was established in 1978 to give people access to cheap land in a rural setting.

They bought shares that would entitle them to the exclusive use of their land, without having to meet the demands of those around them.

They were not looking for a community, but a nice place to live.

The same could be said for the Robb Road community near Nimbin, except that all the land is fenced and the occupants have little to do with each other apart from being neighbours.

The demand for multiple occupancies seems to be levelling out, according to Mr Dave Lambert, the secretary of the Rural Resettlement Task Force.

The task force represents 36 of the 62 multiple occupancies.

"Reasons for this slowdown are the collapse of the agricultural sector and the rising price of land which is passed on in the price of shares," said Mr Lambert.

Ten years ago a person could buy shares for a couple of hundred dollars.

Today shares are around \$12,000.

People had high hopes of making a living from the land.

"But this has bottomed out. To make a living requires large-scale, commercial-type agriculture, the use of equipment, chemical sprays, time and labour," Mr Lambert said.

"Many still grow their own food to keep costs down, but the dream of self-sufficiency has not been realised.

"Councils also have attached expensive conditions to multiple occupancies.

"The big debate is over roads. The council wants all-weather access roads while the people would not mind being cut off during the wet and may not want a road to their front door."

The downturn in the rural economy changed the type of people attracted to multiple occupancies.

"The trend is towards middle-aged people who have saved a nest egg," Mr Lambert said.

"When the shares were \$200 it was an affordable lifestyle. People could write off that amount on a chance, or an experiment."

They have evolved into a family-type lifestyle where people tend to have their own homes and live separate lives.

The ideal of looking after the land remains, and the environmental concerns are still the same.

The change in the type of people has changed the public perception of people on multiple occupancies.

"The biggest change is that they don't just call everyone a hippy and leave it at that."

NEXT WEEK: Dharmananda, the pace-setter.



ELECTRICIAN Rex Woodford, of Lillifield, uses solar panels to power his building tools and caravan as he builds his house.

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