



The Tunable Handbook

(everything you always wanted to know
but didn't know who to ask...)

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pages 19-22 are a lift-out map of the valley and fire-break diagram

Jingi Wala! Welcome to our community and to this beautiful valley!

Co-ordination Co-operative is the largest multiple occupancy intentional community in Australia, and one of the first. Our main landholdings total 1700 acres and we have about 280 shareholders. Resident adult shareholders total about 120 and there are about 50 resident children who are shareholders. There are also about 20 resident non-shareholders and another 50 resident children. There are about 110 non-resident shareholders, some of whom hold or rent sites in the valley and some who are original members from the early days. We began in late 1973, from the visions of young people who came to Nimbin for the Aquarius Festival and wanted to stay and live in this beautiful area. Here are our stated aims, from the original charter of the Co-op:

"The objects of the society shall be to help set up and co-ordinate a new community of persons living and working together on common property in a total creation environment of discovering, learning and perfecting modes of living, works of art, forms of communication, methods of awareness and skills of cultivation, craft and construction and sharing responsibility for the quality of all life."

As a venture born of youthful 1970's idealism, we have forged many new practices which are now emulated by mainstream society. We have also found our own unique problems, and our own unique solutions to them! From a bare paddock with a few old farm buildings and a lot of naked hippies running around, the valley has grown into an extensively-planted established community with over eighty council-approved houses, a pre-school, primary school and our own community centre, hall and fire shed. Our lands are held in common by our shareholders and there is no subdivision or individual lots, although we do recognise individual rights to occupy house-sites and harvest fruit and gardens. Our shareholders and guest residents have a diversity of interests and occupations. Some are students, some unemployed or on pensions, some employed outside the valley and a few employed within the valley, many of our members are artists and craftspeople.

View from Hilltop 1974

Many residents have at least a small vegie garden and fruit trees to maintain and some have income from the sale of produce.

The valley has an abundance of wildlife, both flora and fauna, including birds, frogs, lizards, snakes, marsupials, ferns, mosses and trees and we give consideration to the needs of the wildlife in all activities,

such as transport (including bushwalking) and noise (including music). Our lands are a declared Flora and Fauna Reserve and adjoin the Nightcap National Park which is a World Heritage Area.

Tuntable valley, being part of the ancient volcano of Wollumbin (Mt Warning) is also part of the proposed Wollumbin Biosphere Reserve. Biosphere Reserves are places established in conjunction with the UNESCO-MAB Programme which seek to reconcile economic development, social development and environmental protection through partnerships between people and nature. They are ideal to test and demonstrate approaches to sustainable development at a regional scale.

We operate as a co-operative under the N.S.W. Co-operative Act and are governed by rules which we decide, but which must also be approved by the Registrar of Co-ops. Since 1973 we have developed a comprehensive set of our own by-laws which encompass our philosophies on social and environmental issues.

As a co-operative, each shareholder/member has equal rights and responsibilities. Many of the responsibilities also apply to visitors and guests and you are urged to become familiar with the relevant sections in this handbook and with the Co-op Rules and By-Laws.

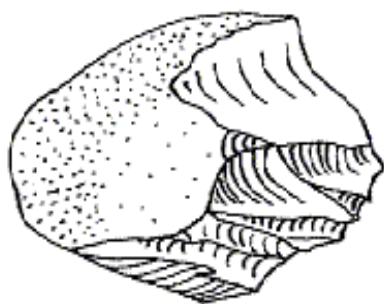


ABORIGINAL HISTORY

There are fourteen language groups which make up the Bundjalung Nation, caring for country which extends from Grafton to Tweed Heads and west to Wood- enbong. Tuntable Falls lies within the area of the Bundjalung Nation

which was traditionally cared for by the Wiyabal language group, or clan for many thousands of years. White settlers have been in the area for less than 150 years. The mountain areas are sacred and were once the domain of the Nmbynge, the little hairy people. The clever-men of the Bundjalung also stayed in caves in the mountains and were said to be able to fly, as well as being knowledgeable about the many healing rainforest plants. We don't know much about this valley except that it was not used for permanent habitation. However, a grinding stone and various other tools have been found, indicating that the people did camp here occasionally. Any such artefacts belong to the Bundjalung people and should be returned to them.

Initiation ceremonies were held in adjacent valleys, at Terania and Gungas, and there is a stone tool making site at Protestor's Falls. The materials (often chalcedony) used for tools were traded from far away, so they can often be recognised because of their difference from local stone. Special ochres from



the mountain were mined, and probably also traded, for use in ceremony. Messages were sent across the land by way of tapping on the buttress roots of the big rainforest trees and there were walking tracks leading across the mountains which were used in the seasonal migrations to and from the coast.

There are many rainforest plants and trees which were used as food and medicine by the people. These include the macadamia nut, riberry and davidson plum which are native to this area and now commercially grown.

The valley and the rainforest was and is a vast and precious spiritual and economic resource to the Bundjalung people and we respect and value it as such also. Bundjalung is a living language and Cecil Roberts, Gilbert Laurie, Mark Roberts and other residents of the Nimbin Rocks and the Nimbin Bundjalung community are open to sharing what they know of their ancient history. Ngulingah Land Council can be reached on 02 6621 5541.



... with respect and acknowledgement to the elders and the people of the Bundjalung Nation.

ANNUAL LEVY

The Co-op relies largely on annual levy contributions from members to pay its ongoing expenses, such as council rates and administration costs, as well as to fund the maintenance of our various assets (including roads and community buildings) and to finance new projects.

All community endeavours from which members benefit, such as the schools, the community centre, the Hall, the fire truck and the tractors have been established through the money raised by the annual levy.

The levy is a compulsory payment and is the legal requirement for active membership. Changes to the Co-op Act about twenty years ago mean that a member who is regarded as not financially active must lose their share once their debt has exceeded the value of two years levy payments. Members owing any portion of their levy may not vote at meetings, nor become a co-ordinator (although they may still speak at meetings). A host is also liable for any of their guest's unpaid levy. So paying the levy is essential in order to retain your share, membership and rights in the Co-op.

The **LEVY** is due at the beginning of the financial year, immediately following the Annual General Meeting. Cash Levy may be paid as **DIRECT DEBIT** from your bank account to the Co-op Summerland Bank account. Always put your name with each payment.

Our financial year starts in April - Work levy records must be received by the 31st of March or they are converted to cash owing.

Account Name: Co-ordination Co-op (SB asks for 1st 3 letters: Co-)

BSB Number: 728-728

Account Number: 22203893

Make sure you use your name as a reference - and make sure you also let the treasurer know if you are planning to use this system,





The annual levy is reducible by up to 50% by doing **WORK LEVY** (at least 40 hours) on designated community projects (see Work Levy section). These hours may be worked at any time over the year. Any work levy hours not worked by the end of the financial year are converted to cash owing, and this amount must be paid in full in order to retain active membership.

Any disputes or requests regarding work levy must be directed to the Board by February (before the end of the financial year), as once it is converted to cash owing it becomes part of the treasury books which are sent to the accountant for the annual audit in March. Work levy hours should be recorded on the forms available from the Office and the community centre. There are also special work levy books for community centre and office volunteers.

There are reductions in levy payments for students and non-resident members, as well as for those not resident for the full year. Non-resident members with houses must pay the full levy (AGM 2014). The amount of the levy is set at the AGM each year and is currently \$1800 (2021), of which up to 50% may be discounted through the work levy system.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Co-op is administered by a Board of nine Directors (also called Co-ordinators), elected each year at the Annual General Meeting. Their portfolios are ", 'People' and 'Place'

Process - Convenor, Treasurer and Secretary Coordinators

People - Community Engagement, Occupancy, Members &

Guests/Visitors Coordinators

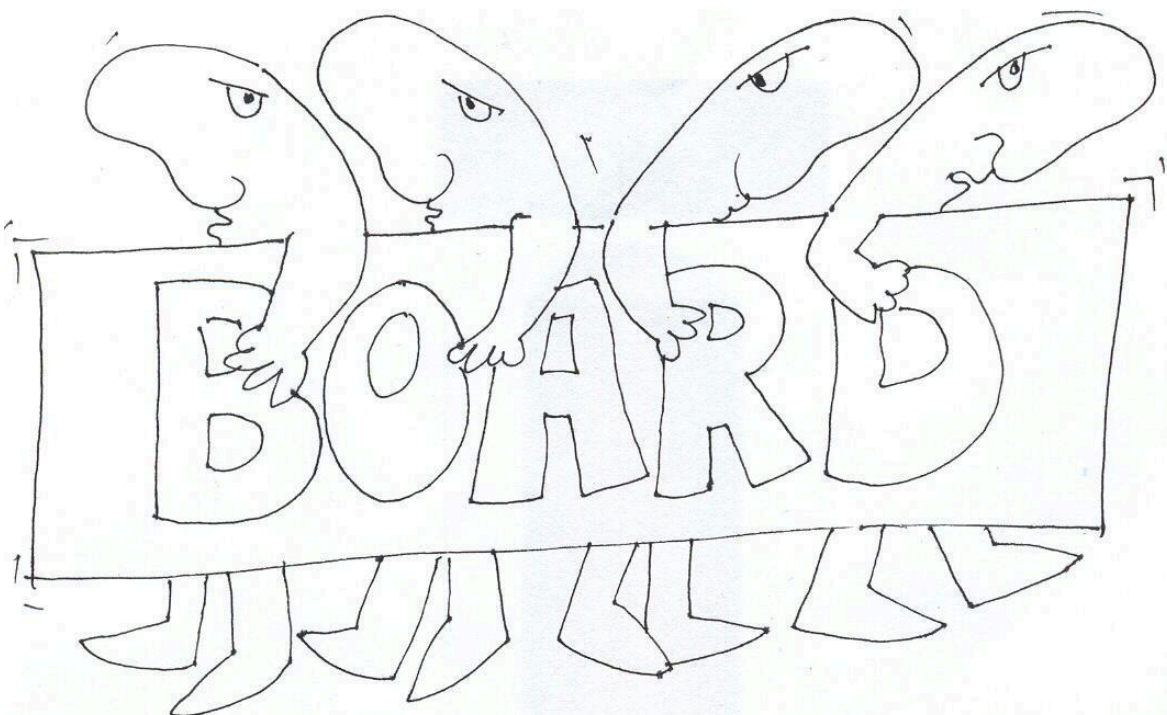
Place - Common Buildings, Environment, and Commons Lands.

Co-ordinators are not paid, and are the backbone of our Co-op. A good Board makes for a happy and thriving community.

Being on the Board is a great way to learn new skills (as well as how the Co-op works) and to be part of a dynamic and committed small group.

A book-keeper is paid to assist the Treasurer, but most other administration is done by voluntary labour. Due to the current litigious and over-regulated political climate, some of our Board members have to put in many tedious hours on administrative paperwork, and they are grateful for any assistance in this regard. Typists and mail-out collators are particularly appreciated, so if you have any talents or desire to help, please let them know.

The Co-op Office is currently located at the back of the Hall and is staffed Mon-Tues-Wed mornings by the Co-ordinators and/or the bookkeeper and office worker. The treasurer is usually available on Wednesdays.



**Early
days...
working
together
1974**

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

The Co-op lands were bought as existing farms,



and consequently there are buildings which were part of these farms which are now community assets. These include Davies Bails (West Side - Davies), the Garden House, the Brown House and Sam's House (at the North End); the White House, the Tea-Bails, Bosel's Bails, the Tin Shed and Waterpark House (at the Centre). Uses for these buildings have changed over the years and they are occasionally available for rental by members. Some buildings have been designated for specific purposes.

The White House was converted into the Pre-School in 1979, and Sam's House has been set up for use by members with health needs for 240v power and good access. The Tea-Bales was used by the school as a music room until recently, its new purpose is yet to be decided. Bosel's Bails is periodically used for car wrecking and repair and will soon be redeveloped to store the Striker (Fire Vehicle), Tractor and Farm Equipment. The Brown House is the headquarters of Flowtrack, an electronics business. Waterpark is rented as a residence. There is a car/machinery pit at the North End for use by members, with a maximum 48 hour stay by vehicles there.

The Primary School (built and opened in 1981), the Hall (started in 1982 and still building), the Community Centre (1983) and the Fire Shed (1994) buildings were built and are owned by the Co-op, and we are very proud of them. The Rainbow Café at 64 Cullen St Nimbin is an asset of the Co-op which is now being rebuilt. There are Guidelines for the use of Community Buildings (available at the Office).

CO-OP STRUCTURE

Co-operatives are people-centred businesses which are member-owned, member-controlled and member-used. They are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. Their members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Co-ops are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination. Co-ops are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Persons serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. Members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote). Co-ops provide education and training for their members/elected reps/ managers/employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co- ops. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. Co-ops strengthen the co-op movement by networking through related structures.

COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Community Centre has a Council- approved Commercial Kitchen available for hire at \$5 per hour for gas/electricity plus \$30 per half day/night for share holders or \$50 for full day/all night, \$50 half day/night for non shareholders, \$100 for full day/all night. A bond/cleaning deposit of \$100 is also required. These fees may change. There is a booking process.

Monday, Wednesday and/or Fridays. Working in the Community Centre can go towards your levy hours if you wish, but remember there is a lot more involved than simply just being there. Cleaning the fridges, shelves and floors regularly (including the verandah) are also essential - as is cleaning any mess you may make!

The Community Centre is managed by several extra-hard-working volunteers in a small group, which meets regularly on the last Monday morning of each month and is always open to new members. Ask them for guidance or for what needs doing.

COMMUNICATION

We rely on **NOTICE BOARDS** for much of our communication. There are several notice boards at the Community Centre for community information. Feel free to use them. There is also a large blackboard near the Centre Bus Stop for

community events and another at the top of the hill on Newton Drive. Several hamlet areas also have noticeboards, and this could be extended to all hamlets. Many houses have the telephone connected and there is a comprehensive Tuntable Phone list now available from the Community Centre and the Office for 50c, or by email. CB radio has been used for cheap and effective communication in the past and may yet be revived :)

The Co-op email address is: info@coco.org.au.

There is a Tuntable Hook-ups page on Facebook for current issues.

TUNTABLE STUFF emails are circulated regularly to inform members of upcoming events, workdays and meetings. If you want to be on the list to receive these emails, or have a message to send out, please write to tuntablestuff@gmail.com

COMMUNITY CENTRE: (Bookings: 0412479222 (Kael)

BROWN HOUSE (Flowtrack) 66890408

FIRE: 000 (to report a fire)

FIRE PERMITS: 0493236911 (Rocky)

HALL COMMITTEE: Bookings: (0412479222) Kael

NATIONAL PARK GATE KEY: Office 66891005, Ian D (66891213) **OFFICE:** 66891005 (Phone) 66891804 (fax)

SAM'S HOUSE: 66890575; Christine 0427042217 for enquiries

PRE-SCHOOL: 6689117

PRIMARY SCHOOL: 66891423

PASTURE/STOCK: 66891719 (Meg) 66891060 (Mark J)

TRACTOR: 0490178927(Sean) 0416171017(Ben) 0488931727(Mike)

DOGS AND CATS

Dogs and cats are not allowed to be owned as pets by Co-op members or residents. This helps protect our wildlife and keeps the valley a peaceful place. Visiting dogs (day visits only) must be kept on a leash at all times.

DRUG DEALING

Sale of heroin shall be deemed to be conduct detrimental to the Co-op and thus grounds for expulsion at a General Meeting.

ECOLOGICAL ISSUES

We value our beautiful environment immensely and have devised by-laws to protect it. Many of these are also covered in other areas of this handbook and a summary of other relevant by-laws follows here:

Bright lights should be screened.

Concreting in the creek requires meeting approval.

Earthworks: All mechanised earthworks should adhere to guidelines in the ByLaws and require the approval of two meetings and the Environment Co-ordinator, who should inspect the site prior to the second meeting. The Co-ordinator or a delegate must be present when work is being done.

Exposed buildings should be screened with vegetation or painted with appropriate colours.

Generators must be sound-proofed, and may not be used after dark or on Sundays.

Herbicides/pesticides: Use is not allowed. If deemed absolutely necessary, approval must be sought from 2 consecutive tribal meetings before any chemical is used.

Koala corridor: The gully from Niall's through to Johnston's bridge and on up through Davies to Mt Nardi is a koala corridor.

Pollutants including soap and excrement are forbidden within 50 metres of any creek or watercourse.

Noise must be kept to a minimum (see specific section in this handbook)

Roads must be used sensibly and maintained (see specific section in this handbook)

Timber for fence posts, firewood or building may not be sold off the property

Tree-felling (of live trees) may only be done with the prior consent of the Environment Co-ordinator in consultation with the Forest Management Group and neighbours. Fallen timber may be used at any time for domestic purposes as long as it is not taken from the areas zoned as Wilderness or exclusion zone.

Toilets must be fly and rodent-proof and approved by Lismore Council.

FIRE PREVENTION

Fire prevention is essential. Fire is a very real danger in the valley and houses have burnt down in the past. In the 2019 bush fires a lightning bolt started a fire in the nightcap national park, which came down into our community, damaging several houses and infrastructure.

A bushfire could threaten everything and everyone here, including the wildlife. For this reason, residents are required to maintain an adequate firebreak of at least 15- 30 metres around all dwellings, fireplaces and sheds. There is a

lift-out centrefold in this booklet illustrating this. A tank or reliable water source for fire-fighting (with outlet for fire hose connection) and good road access, with turnaround area, for the fire truck is also essential.

During Bush Fire Danger season a permit is required for any fire. In the event of a fire, alerting all neighbours as well as the fire brigade is essential if there is to be any hope of extinguishing the flames. Making a big noise (banging metal on metal, tooting horn etc), yelling for help or calling on the CB radio will alert people to an emergency. There is a fire alarm in the shop's powerbox. There is also a comprehensive evacuation plan, please ask your hamlet warden for details.

FIREARMS

Firearms are not permitted on the property except with the Prior consent of a two-thirds majority of a meeting.

FLOOD

The North Coast area is periodically subject to periods of very heavy prolonged rainfall, resulting in flooding. This is particularly likely from December to May, in the traditional Wet Season, but due to changing weather patterns, can also occur at other times.

If flooded, the bridge at the Centre near the school may not be passable by car or even on foot. Fast-flowing water can be very dangerous and a resident drowned in an unexpected flash flood in 1991, while attempting to cross a creek which in dry weather has no water in it. Do not attempt to cross a creek if the water level is over your knees, and make sure there is someone else present if you are at all unsure. Joyrides on boogie-boards down flooding creeks can also be dangerous if there are submerged hazards, or fences across the creek.

Some houses here may also flood (or burn!) if the drains are not clear of leaves and debris, regular maintenance is a good idea.

FOREST

We have a vast area of forest (about a thousand acres) in our care. Some of this has been designated Wilderness area. There is occasionally a Forest camp held for two weeks in Sept/October to clear and maintain fire-trails - and to enjoy being in the forest. It is a great opportunity to be social and learn new

skills - kids also love it. Please volunteer if you would like to help continue this tradition :)

GUESTS and VISITORS

Visitors and guests may stay on the Co-op only at the invitation of a resident member. It is considered polite to inform the neighbours of guest or visitors staying, where possible.

As well as obey all our rules and by-laws they are required to pay levies if they are here for more than three months. We ask for consideration of the privacy, peace and safety of everyone here on the Co-op at all times.

Guests must leave if their presence is objected to by four or more members of the Co-op. Anyone who has been banned from the Co-op may not be invited back onto the property without prior written consent, decided at a meeting.

Anyone wishing to live for an extended time on our community must also fulfil the following requirements:

1. Be **HOSTED** by a resident active (financial) member. Your host will be responsible for any default by you of your obligations (financial or otherwise) while you are their guest.
2. Be **INTRODUCED** to your neighbours by your host, as soon as possible and introduced if staying to next TM.
3. Be **formally INTRODUCED** to other Co-op members at the next Tribal Meeting on the next first Sunday of the month. On introduction, give an outline of your special skills and interests which could be called upon by the Board or other members. (such as mediation skills, computer, typing, yoga teaching, vehicle maintenance, organic farming expertise, childcare, performance etc).
4. PAY at least **HALF ANNUAL LEVY** before taking up tenure of a site, and pay the remainder by fortnightly instalments. (The probation time for prospective shareholders begins only from the date when half of that year's financial levy is paid by them).
5. **COMPLETE WORK LEVY** obligations by the end of the financial year or earlier and complete WL forms

GUESTS WHO ARE PROSPECTIVE SHAREHOLDERS



Prospective shareholders need to live here as a hosted guest for at least one year following their initial introduction at a Tribal Meeting. Once the year has elapsed, and they have fulfilled all requirements, they must signify their intention to ask for approval as a shareholder by writing this on 2 consecutive Tribal Meeting agendas, which are posted at the Community Centre (at least four days before the meeting). If ten members will speak in favour of them and provide a written reference, and there is a majority vote supporting them, they can then be given member status on payment of the share and joining fees.

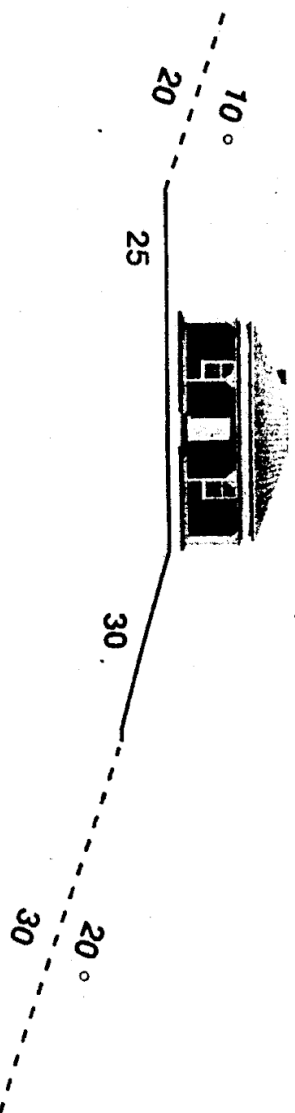
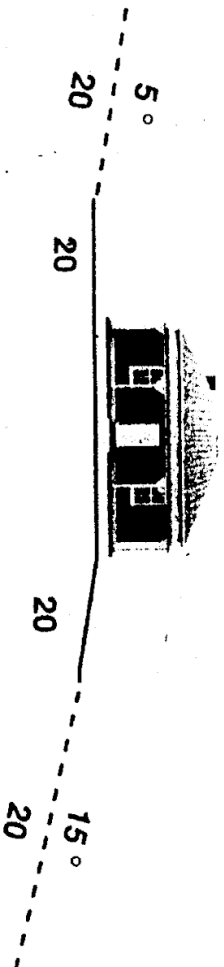
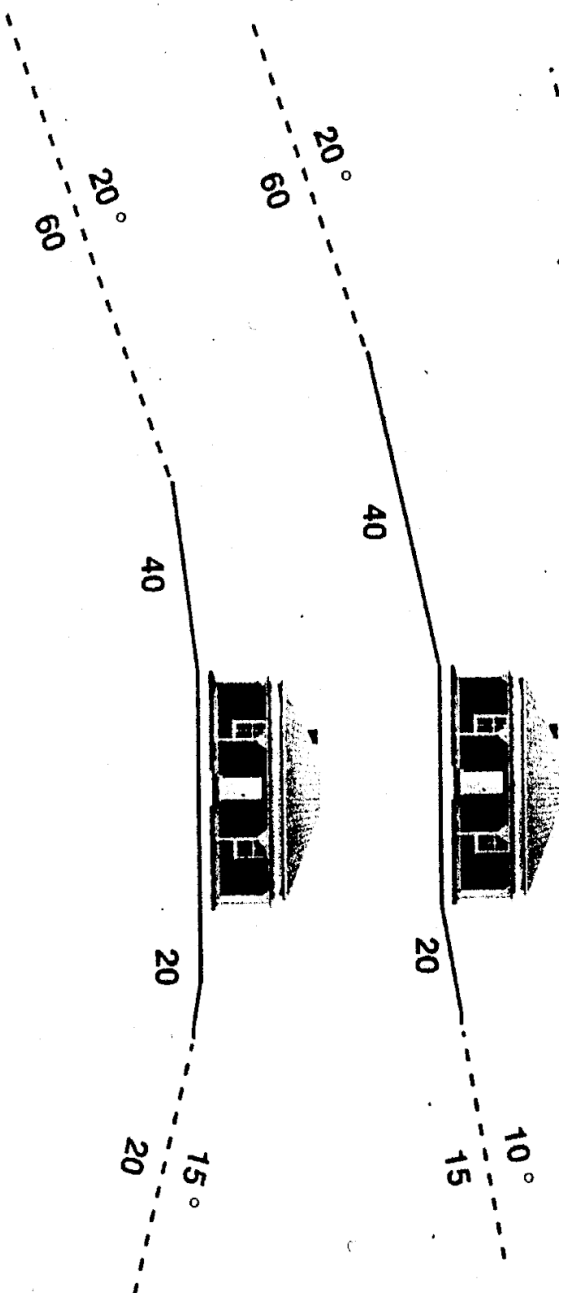
Prospective shareholders are required to attend six Tribal Meetings, or five TM's and an AGM during their probationary year (and stay for the duration of all of these whenever possible).

Prospective shareholders are given a special work levy sheet and are recommended to attend a number of workdays in their probationary year, working on each of the following:

1. The Road system that they use
2. Rivercare/Communal Orchard/Commons Fencing/Weed Eradication
3. Hall or other building projects
4. Social Events - cooking, serving, door or performing
5. Admin - help in the Office.

Hosts of prospective shareholders are required to show them how to maintain their water supply and any other aspects of their hamlet they should know, including weed identification and removal techniques, road maintenance and fire prevention and safety measures.

Fulfilment of all the above requirements is the full responsibility of the host, in consultation with neighbours, the Guests and Visitors Co-ordinator, other relevant co-ordinators and the Social Supports Group. Hosts are also encouraged to attend the workdays with their guest.



INNER ZONE (fuel free)

Free of vegetation or material likely to catch alight from flames, heat or sparks.

OUTER ZONE (fuel reduced)

Vegetation reduced to lessen the chance of flames and sparks reaching the inner zone.



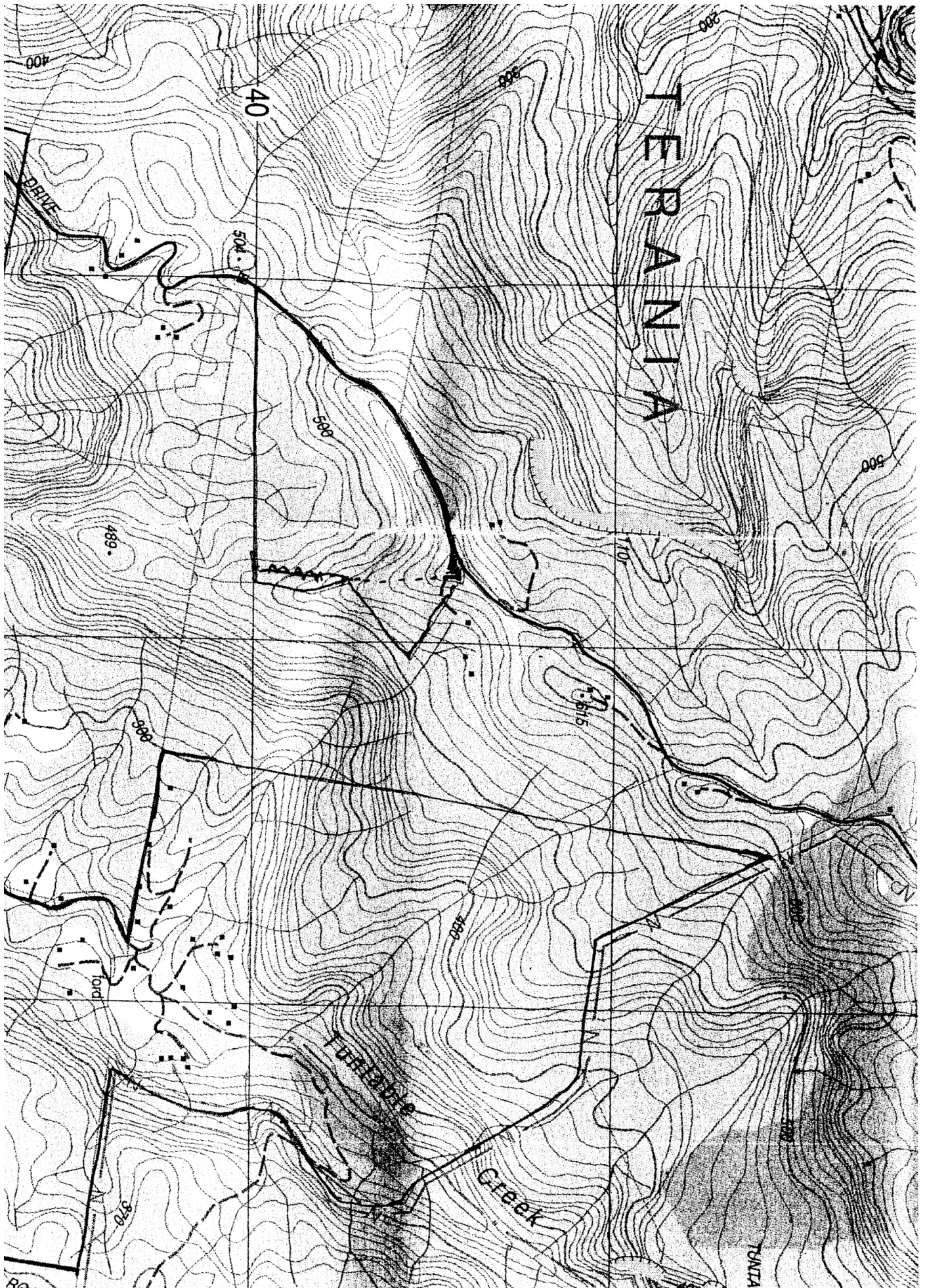


CHART GUIDE

FIRE BREAKS SURROUNDING YOUR HOME

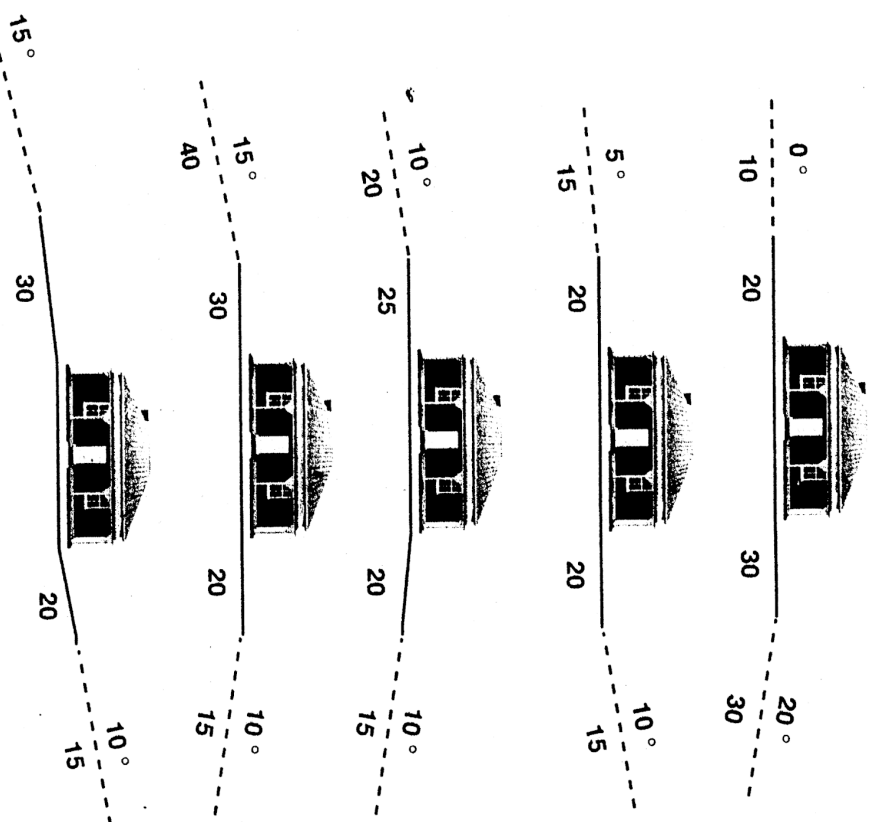
Diagram shows suggested minimum dimensions of inner (fuel free) and outer (fuel reduced) fire protection zones in metres.

* ASPECT:

N, NW, W, SW, S Slopes

NE, E, SE Slopes

* If aspect differences are minimal the dimensions on the left should be use.



HALL

Our beautiful community Hall building was begun in 1982, when we demolished an old church hall in Lismore. Since then, it has been an ongoing building project as well as a valuable community resource. Many social events take place in the Hall, including fundraisers, birthday parties, funerals, theatre productions, school classes, yoga and dance classes as well as our meetings and forums.

The Hall has two pianos and a small P.A. as well as a data projector. There are trapeze ropes and acrobatic mats. There are public toilets adjacent to the Hall and opposite the Community Centre, including a disabled toilet. These toilets are all composting toilets and users are asked to keep them clean and to read the sheet on their correct usage. People are encouraged to pee under a tree rather than in the toilets.

The Hall Committee has monthly meetings, administers the Hall and collects fees for Hall hire (currently \$5 for classes, \$15 for half-day use, \$30 for full day and \$50 for night use. A bond is also requested: \$50 for school or regular educational classes, \$100 for fundraising events and \$500 for parties. A cleaning fee or damages may be levied from this bond if necessary. (All events which include amplified music are also required to be OK'd by a tribal meeting, so organise well in advance.) The Hall key is available upon request. For bookings and enquiries, phone Biskit (0429891642) Kael (0412479222), or the Co-op office (66891005).



HOUSING/HAMLETS

All houses on the Co-op lie within a geographical group of neighbours known as a hamlet. The hamlet makes many of its own decisions regarding such things as water supply, road maintenance, communal orchards or gardens and other shared facilities. Neighbours here are much more than a TV show, they have considerable say over who can or can't move into or stay in the hamlet. In fact, they can veto someone moving in, as long as they have good reasons. Get to know your neighbours, and try to get along with them!

In the early days of the Co-op, permission was granted from the Council to develop what were known as 'exploded houses' with a communal kitchen, bathroom and laundry and separate bedroom buildings. Since we began to have children, this idea was abandoned by most in favour of more traditional family homes.

A member may be granted a license to occupy a site and erect a building, or a license to occupy a building that is for sale. All new buildings on the Co-op require a flag to be raised on the site, at the approximate height of the intended building. Neighbours must be informed and a notice of the flagraise must be taken to a Tribal Meeting. At the next Tribal Meeting, at least one month later, Council-approvable plans, including greywater and toilet plans, must then be submitted for the meeting's approval. Council regulations now require inspection, so see the Occupancy Co-ordinator for more details.

Every fixture on the land belongs to the Co-op, but we recognise the value of shareholders' investment in building or buying houses here. Our policy regarding house transfers is that only the replacement value of the building materials, and labour be considered. Any improvements such as landscaping, gardens and orchards are excluded from valuation, as the land is held and cared for in common rather than by individual land ownership. We do not allow property speculation and encourage a co-operative approach to housing.

House Sub-Licensing and Transfers are conducted with the assistance of the Occupancy Co-ordinator and must be first advertised to existing shareholders and residents. All sub-licensing and transfers must be approved by neighbours. There are by-laws and forms for rental and house transfers available from the Housing Co-ordinator at the Co-op

MAIL

There is a Tuntable Falls Community Mail Bag which is delivered to the Community Centre on Mondays Wednesdays and Fridays at around midday. Outgoing mail goes to the Post Office on these days also. Community Centre workers sort the incoming mail and put it in the pigeon-holes behind the

Community Centre counter. Please make sure mail goes in the right boxes, as we have a legal responsibility to provide this service reliably. This mail service is available to all residents - just give your address as 117 Upper Tunttable Falls Rd Nimbin 2480.

All mail for the Board is also collected from their pigeon-hole at the Community Centre.

MEDIA ACCESS/RESEARCH REQUESTS

Any contact with the Media on the property or on behalf of the Co-op requires Tribal or Board approval. Only the Secretary or a spokesperson nominated by the Board is authorised to speak officially for the Co-op (urgent requests may be given approval by at least five Board members including the executive) There are specific Guidelines for Research Requests available at the Office.

MEDIATION

Issues between residents may be brought to Tribal Meetings or to the Board and often this is sufficient for resolution of difficulties.

There is also a grievance procedure which may be followed in the event of serious disputes between individuals or between an individual and the Board. There are trained mediators in the Co-op and on the Grievance Committee, who can be approached for any assistance in regard to conflict resolution.

Conflict Resolution training for all members and residents is occasionally offered, teaching valuable personal and social skills.

MEETINGS:

TRIBAL MEETINGS are held on the first Sunday of every month at the Hall and are the main forum for discussion of community issues. Meetings start at 12 midday, except in Daylight Savings Time, when they start at 1pm. There is often a lunch provided by the cafe prior to meetings.

INTRODUCTIONS of new residents, guests and prospective shareholders are made at the Tribal Meeting. Intending shareholders are required to attend six meetings in their probationary year (and to stay for the duration whenever possible.)

FLAGRAISES and BUILDING APPROVALS are also brought to the Tribal Meeting.

MEETING AGENDAS are put in the glass-fronted notice-board at the Community Centre. All flagraises, share approvals and any other items for meeting discussion must be put on the agenda at least four days before the meeting. **Agenda closes midday Tuesday before meeting.**

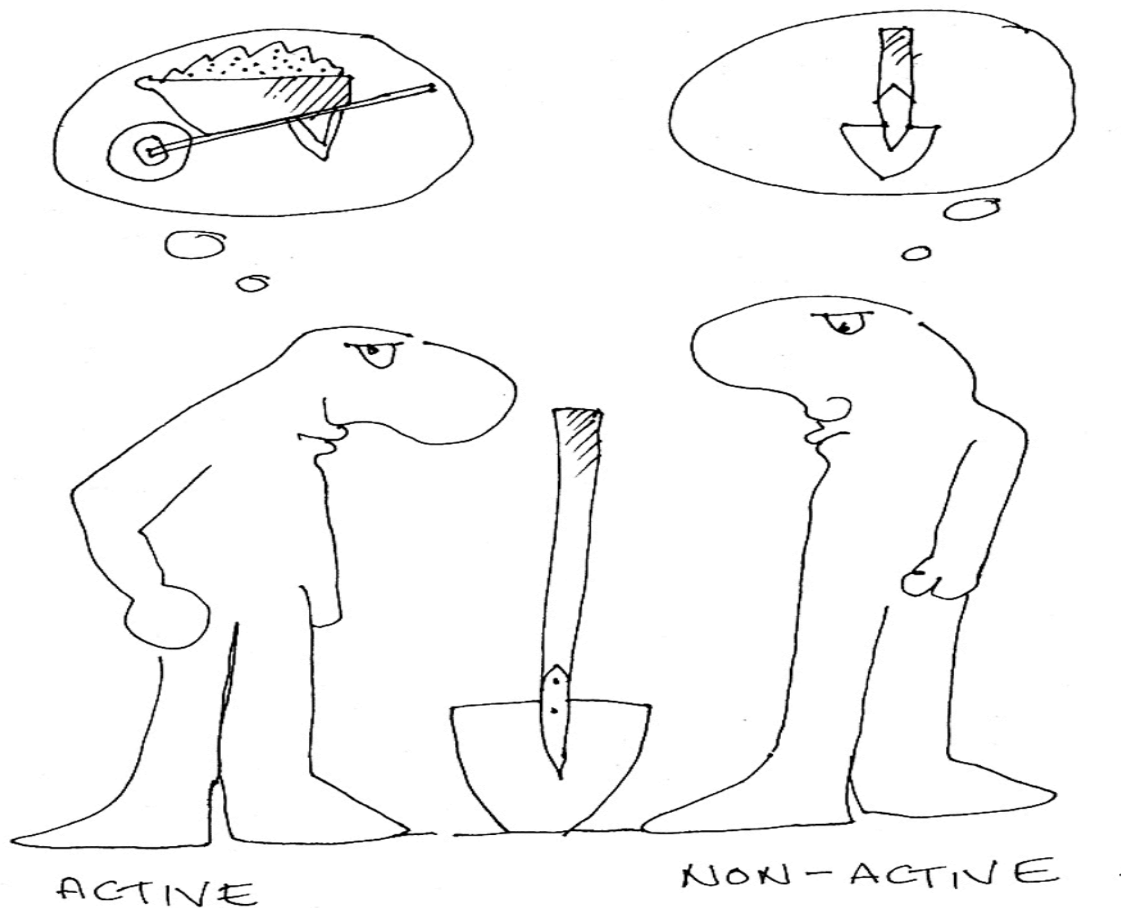
BOARD MEETINGS are held approximately every two weeks and are the forum for the Co-ordinators to give reports and discuss general Co-op business. Board Meetings are the only legally recognised meetings of the Co-op and must therefore ratify decisions made at Tribal Meetings. As we have always endeavoured to give a voice to all our members, they generally do, unless there is some good reason. All members may attend and speak at Board Meetings, but only the Board members (Co-ordinators) may vote.

INTEREST GROUPS such as Community Centre, Archives, Stock/Pasture Management, Hall, Social Support, Tractor etc also hold regular meetings and post minutes on the board. Interested people are encouraged to join these groups, they are the working backbone of our community.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS are held once a year, after the end of our financial year. This is an occasion to get a big picture of our finances, important issues and rule changes - as well as have a good social occasion and to elect new Co-ordinators. The AGM will often run for two days over a weekend. The AGM agenda needs to be sent to all shareholders, including those non-resident, and items need to be posted on it at least one month in advance of the meeting. A member must be fully financial to vote at the AGM, or to become a Co-ordinator.

FORUMS are held on occasion to discuss issues of importance **MINUTES** of all meetings are regularly posted on the glass-fronted noticeboard, and AGM minutes are also sent to all shareholders.

MEMBERSHIP



Membership in the Co-op does not automatically entitle a shareholder to occupy a site. It is not the purchase of sur-real estate - rather more like joining a club or society. (We were for many years actually a legal entity known as a rural society although changes to the Co-op Act mean that we are no longer referred to as such.)

Failure to remain an active member (by fulfilling all levy obligations and by keeping the Co-op informed of your contact details) will result in a loss of membership, as will breaking the Rules and By-Laws.

NEW SHAREHOLDERS

(See also the section on Guests and Visitors for information relating to prospective shareholders.)

New Shareholders are encouraged to ask questions and become involved. Take part in whichever areas of the Co-op you have the most to offer or to learn. We value your input, in fact we rely on it to keep from becoming too insular and set in our ways!

NIGHTCAP NATIONAL PARK

The Co-op adjoins the Nightcap National Park, for which many members fought successfully in direct actions in 1979 and 1982. There are many rare species in the rainforest of the Park, both flora and fauna. Vehicular access to the forest areas of our land is through the National Parks road which leads up to Wallace Rd on the eastern side of the valley. This road has two locked gates, the keys for which are available through the office (66891005) or Ian Dixon (66891213). The Falls are a sacred site to the Bundjalung people. Access to the Falls is currently discouraged by the National Parks, as there are endangered species (Fleay's Barred Frog) breeding at the top of the Falls. The track to the Falls takes several hours and is also exceedingly slippery where it involves rock-hopping along the creek.

NOISE

When noise is kept to a minimum, the valley is a peaceful place for all beings that live here. Vehicles must have effective silencers. Loud machinery noise is not permitted between sunset and sunrise (this includes generators) and Sunday is designated as a noise-free day (do your brushcutting and building on some other day).





PLAYGROUP

From time to time a playgroup is organised for very young kids and their mums at the Hall or Pre-School. Ask around for details!

POWER/ELECTRICITY

There are many houses here on solar power due to the cost of installing 240 mains, and the ethical/ecological problems around fossil fuel generators. As well, there are several micro-grid systems servicing different hamlets which convert 240v power from a mains supply to 12v battery storage. Users of these systems contribute to the electricity bill on a monthly basis (usually less than \$20 per month) and it is cheap and efficient, although the lines require periodic maintenance.

Maintenance of all 12v systems requires some education, as batteries will die if more power is used than is being supplied. During periods of cloudy or rainy weather it is advisable to minimise power usage if you are totally reliant on solar power. Batteries also require topping up with distilled water and connections may need to be cleaned regularly. 12v systems, although generally safer than 240v, still pose some fire risk so it is essential that they be fitted with fuses. All 240v cables and telephone cables must be legally installed underground.

ROADS

The Co-op has many kilometres of internal roads servicing residents.

Residents and visitors are expected to drive safely at speeds under 15 km/h. on all Co-op roads and to be aware that there are horses and children using the roads, as well as wildlife.

The maintenance of hamlet roads is the responsibility of those who use them. Anyone who damages the roads through neglect, abuse or mismanagement is liable for repair costs, and shareholders are responsible for the road use of their guests and people they employ. The Co-op will pay for arterial road erosion control design and materials in environmentally sensitive areas. All proposals for arterial roadwork must be brought for approval to at least one Tribal Meeting and have the approval of all neighbours and users, the road committee and the board. Regular road workdays, clearing drains and filling potholes, can ease the burden both on our backs, and on the creeks which otherwise end up carrying huge loads of silt away every time there is a heavy rain.

Gravel and roadbase may be purchased by the Co-op from time to time, and deposited in central locations for use by residents for road maintenance. Our roads are essential in the event of fire and houses are expected to provide a turning area or through road sufficient for fire- trucks ie turnarounds of 12 metres radius or better.

Dead cars will be taken away at no charge by any of several local operators, whose phone numbers are available at the shop or office. It is the responsibility of the car-owner (or their host) to ensure that dead vehicles are removed promptly.

RUBBISH AND RECYCLING

There are hamlet wheelie bins for depositing separated recyclable and non-recyclable material and bins need to be moved to the Centre carpark on Wednesday to be emptied on Thursday mornings. A noticeboard adjacent to the bins details what goes where. Please crush what can be crushed to save space, as we pay for the service. Don't overfill or leave anything beside the bins...it will not be picked up.

RULES AND BY-LAWS

Since 1973 we have invented, re-invented, revised and adapted various rules and by-laws to ensure the harmonious running of our community. While By-laws may be created or revised at a Tribal or Board Meeting, Rules may only be

created or altered at an AGM and are subject to approval by the Registrar of Co-ops. These Rules & By-Laws are our legal structure and it is essential that all members and residents know and respect them, as well as have a copy of them (available from the office for a cost of \$5). This booklet is only a rough guide and not intended to take their place. If you have serious questions, consult them.

Breaking the rules and by-laws may be regarded as conduct detrimental to our society, which is grounds for losing your share.

SCHOOLS

The Tuntable Falls Early Childhood Centre is a child-centred pre-school which has offered quality, innovative early education in idyllic surroundings for several generations of children. It grew from a playgroup and was opened in August 1979 after a lot of hard work by enthusiastic parents renovating the White House building and setting up the administrative structure which enabled government funding.

It still requires ongoing work in both of these areas by all parents, as well as a parent roster commitment. It is probably one of the cheapest and best pre-schools in the country, and relies on parent energy to make it so. It is open three days a week, currently Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

The Tuntable Falls Primary School grew from the wonderful experience we had with setting up the Pre-School and was opened in February 1981 within two months of commencing the building, a testament to the enthusiasm and commitment of all the parents involved. There are several classes catering for the needs of children from five to twelve and parents work on a roster to assist and teach as well as prepare lunch. Please contact the school on 66891423 or tuntableschool@gmail.com for current fee information. **School and Pre-School Parents are expected to park at the Centre Carpark whenever possible.**

SOCIAL SUPPORT

We have a Social Support Group which requires confidentiality of all its members. This group occasionally organises training days, fundraisers, working bees and support for ill or infirm members. They may also be asked to mediate in disputes if the Board, individuals or Tribal Meeting are not successful. Messages may be left in their tray at the office, or in the Co-op pigeon-hole in the mailbox. New members welcome.

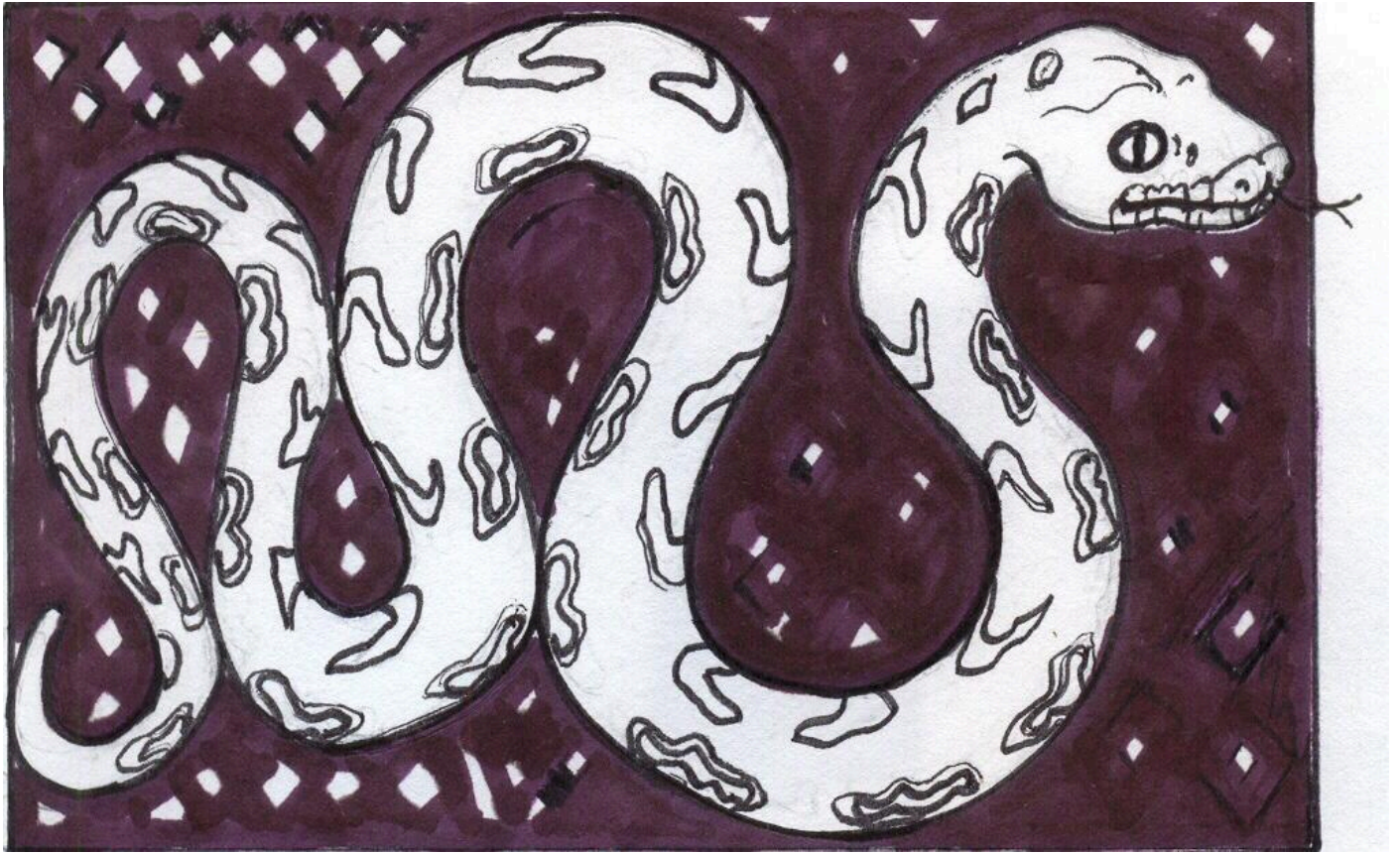
STOCK AND PASTURE

From being a dairy farm with grass everywhere in 1973, our pastures have shrunk considerably and need grazing or slashing to keep them in good condition as firebreaks, play areas & wallaby grazing as well as pasture for cows and horses. One animal per member allowed, although at different times this number has been exceeded with approval of a meeting. **Having stock requires a small fee and commitment to building and mending fences as well as maintaining pasture** and all such work is work-leviable. The Environment Co-ordinator, stock owners and Pasture Management Group need to meet regularly to oversee reclamation of pasture and maintenance of fences.

SNAKES

There are many varieties of snakes in the valley, including some which are extremely poisonous. These include the Brown, Black, Clarence River Roughscale and Taipan. Do not kill snakes indiscriminately as all fauna is protected here and also many snakebites occur through attempting to kill or move them. Rather, be aware and do not walk around at night or in the evening without a torch, particularly in the breeding season which is from January to May.

Having a compression bandage easily available in the house and when out in the bush (and knowing how to use it) is an essential safety measure. In the event of snakebite, keep the victim as still as possible, apply a compression bandage and get them to hospital immediately. Several people have died from snakebite in the valley. There are also many other non-poisonous snakes here, including some huge carpet snakes (lock up your guinea-pigs) and some beautiful tree-snakes.



SWIMMING

There are several good swimming holes in the valley, where everyone is allowed to swim naked if they choose. These include the Platypus Pool at the South End, the Amphitheatre Pool (look out for mean catfish in the breeding season), Pebble Pool (the North End Swimming Hole) and many other smaller pools.

The use of commercial sunscreens while swimming is discouraged - try grinding some ochre and applying it as a paste instead. It works and it stays on in the water for quite a long time!

All of our swimming holes have foot access only. Respect the wildlife and other swimmers - do not drive your car right up to the creek.



THEATRE CLUB/BUSH BAND/MUSICIANS & PERFORMERS

Tuntable has a proud dramatic tradition, which has been formalised by the creation of various groups performing to appreciative audiences. We have had (and may yet have again), a Theatre Club. There are trapeze, circus and gymnastic performers who use the Hall regularly and teach classes. We are blessed with a rich supply of local talent in just about every musical and artistic genre, most of whom lend their talents in the service of the Co-op by creating and playing at fundraising events.

TICKS

The valley is home to the shellback tick, which can cause great irritation and in some cases severe allergic reactions. Homeopathic ixodes can be helpful and can be bought at the apothecary in town. Tick season is from September to January, with grass or seed ticks hatching in the Wet Season. Many members also collect ticks for income (the vets make serum from them). Non-residents are not allowed to collect ticks here, and residents must ask permission before collecting near other people's houses or in hamlets other than their own.

There are also burrowing red itch/scrub mites that go for the armpits and crotch area and can be picked off with tweezers or treated with oil/ointments to smother them and soothe and heal the skin.



TOILETS THAT DON'T FLUSH

These are a unique attraction of the valley for many and the loo with a view is ubiquitous. Using them requires a little education:

1. Don't pee in them (they require to be moisture-free to work best)
2. Cover your deposit with sawdust, mulch or dry leaves (adds bulk and assists breakdown)
3. Adding lime kills the micro-organisms, but a little wood-ash or dolomite is OK.
4. Don't use them if you are on antibiotics (kills the micro-organisms)
5. Always close the lid after use (so flies don't move in)

TOOLS

A list of tools which are easy to use and fairly essential. Having the right tool for the job really helps: Hammer, Hand saw" Bush" Saw, Hacksaw, Pliers, Adjustable spanner, Vicegrips, Tin snips, Screwdrivers, Machete & sharpening stone/file, Shovel/ spade, Pick/Mattock, Crowbar, Chisel, Multimeter, Electric drill, McLeod Tool... *Best to buy good quality tools which will not wear out or

break easily. *If you don't have your own tools then you're unlikely to know how to look after them and should not be surprised at any reticence to lend them on the part of others. Some tools lend themselves to sharing more than others. Tools that depend on their sharpness to work are best kept for personal use. A successful tool-sharing arrangement depends on clear understandings about usage & return. *Tuntable Co-op is a member of the Northern Rivers Rural Buying Service and so shareholders get a discount as 'co-op workers'.

TRACTOR

The Co-op owns a tractor which may be hired (with operator) for use by residents. There is a small blade and a slasher. The tractor lives in the Fire Shed at the Community Centre and is run, maintained and operated by the tractor group which has regular meetings. Membership of the tractor group, and consequent license to drive the tractor requires supervised training.

Current hire charges are: \$35 per hour plus driver.

Contact **0490178927(Sean) 0416171017 (Ben) 0488931727**

TUNTABLE TIMES

We have our own little newspaper, the Tuntable Times, which is usually published yearly and contains a wealth of information and viewpoints on different topics, as well as excerpts from meeting minutes and other handy bits. All members and guests may contribute (you don't even have to be financial!). Nina is the current editor and she may be reached by email to **lotusstarwitch@yahoo.com.au** Collating and mailing out the Tuntable Times is a work-leivable task suitable for many who cannot do heavy work, usually done in a small and happy group.

WATER SUPPLY

Our drinking water comes from gravity fed pipes from the creeks, from rainwater tanks, and a 2-million-gallon dam at the south end. We also have land on the Mt. Nardi road, with the long-term intention of constructing a dam of greater than ten million gallons' storage.

All water sources are shared creeks, dams and springs. Although some systems involve shared waterlines while others have separate lines it is important to remember this: Water supply here is abundant for much of the year, but often very low in late Winter and Spring. At these times, use water sparingly or risk becoming involved in water wars with your neighbours...

All water systems here require maintenance and it is your responsibility to educate yourself about what is needed for your particular supply. There are no water bills to pay, but time and labour contribution is essential to ensure a hassle-free water supply.

WEED ERADICATION

Weeds are a major problem in the valley. We arrived here in 1973 to a big paddock infested around the edges with crofton weed, privet and lantana. We now have hundreds more weeds, most of which we have planted or brought ourselves. Every year brings a new weed. Don't be the one responsible. Research before you plant anything. Most exotic plants love it here and will thrive - many will take over and become an infestation before you realise and then it takes many, many hours of work to even attempt to keep them contained. It is vitally important that anything you plant just stays in the spot where you put it and doesn't take off.

There are many knowledgeable people in the valley who will help if you ask them for information on safe species. Don't rely on nurserymen, they just want to sell their stuff, much of which should be prohibited from planting.

Once you have a weed problem, and most places here do, you will need to put time into containment and eradication. Educate yourself about weeds! There is more information at the office and the lists on the next page may be a useful guide.

Information about weeds and eradication methods can be found on this website:
www.bigscrubrainforest.org.au/weedappendix.htm
or contact Sue at Tumble on 66891747.

DON'T PLANT!

(got plenty already!)

Running Bamboo

Jasmine

Elderflower

Singapore Daisy

Ochna (mickey mouse)

Dutchman's Pipe

Mother of Millions

Rhus Tree

Coral Tree

Mexican Tree-Fern

Slash Pine

Paulownia

Cadaghi

Cape Ivy

Canna edulis

Pink-spotted weed

Cocos Palm

Umbrella Tree

Morning Glory

Setaria

Most climbing vines...

BEWARE! TAKE CARE!

CONTROL 'EM!

Coffee
Ice-Cream Bean
Brazilian Cherry
Yellow-Flowered Ginger
Canna
Cardamom
Datura
Watsonia
Montbretia
Broadleaf Paspalum
Cats claw
Cathedral bells
Senna pendula/multijuga

WORST WEEDS

(search & destroy!)

Devil's Fig
Madeira Vine

Silver Desmodium
Cuphea
Groundsel
Cowcane
Billy-goat weed
Cestrum (Night-Jasmine)
Privet
Mysore thorn
Tropical soda apple
Blue thunbergia

CHRONIC WEEDS

(they're everywhere)

Lantana
Crofton
Ageratum
Wild Tobacco
Bindii
Broad-leafed Paspalum

WORK LEVY PROJECTS

Work levy projects are many and varied and if there is something that you want to see happen, then make it a work levy project - talk to the Co-ordinator.

Many projects are ongoing, such as the Community Centre (put your name on the roster on the door and arrange to be trained by an existing volunteer). Some ongoing projects have regular group workdays. There are Rivercare workdays and workdays at the Hall. Other projects, like working to turn Sam's house into a residence for the sick, have occasional workdays.

If you are not able to do heavy physical work, the Board often needs help in the office - this can range from filing and typing to cleaning and mailouts also need volunteers and are work-leviable. Group childcare for workdays and for the AGM is also work-leviable. A list of common work-leviable tasks:

Work done on hamlet roads (but not your driveway)

Some work done at Pre-School and Primary School workdays (but not parent roster days)

Work on fencing and pasture maintenance

Work at the Community Centre

Rivercare

Hall and Community Buildings

Fire prevention (but not around your house)

Fundraising events: Cooking, performing, door, cleaning

Office work

Mailouts/Tunable Times

Social Support

WILDLIFE

Tunable valley is rich in many diverse species and we treasure our wildlife. All wildlife in the valley (even snakes and bush turkeys) are protected as we are a flora and fauna reserve.

WIRES

Trains volunteers to rescue and care for injured, sick or orphaned wildlife until they can be released. Phone them on 66281898 if you find a wild creature in need of care. (www.wires.org.au) Many Co-op members are very knowledgeable about our wildlife and you can learn a lot by hanging out with them.

Cane toads should be killed humanely, by chilling till asleep then freezing for a day or two. Their eggs are readily recognisable as long strings of black eggs, which can be lifted out of the water and left to dry in the sun. Cane toad tadpoles tend to swarm together, unlike native frogs, and they can also be lifted out of the water and put in the sun to dry out. Dispose of dead toads where animals won't eat them. Some native frogs may be mistaken for cane toads, particularly the barred frogs, which can grow to quite a large size. If in doubt, don't kill it: capture it, take a photo or find someone to help you identify it.

WWOOFAS

Willing Workers on Organic Farms is an organisation which enlists organic farms to provide bed and board for travellers who are registered with WWOOF. Travellers (often young people from overseas) work up to four hours a day for their hosts. WWOOF provides insurance as part of their service and hosts pay \$35-\$60 annually for registration. Several members here share entries in the WWOOF handbook and find it is a great way to keep the weeds down as well as meet some interesting people. If you decide to join WWOOF, make sure you let your guests know to tell people who they are and where they are staying if they go walking around the property.

YOUTH

The valley is a great place to bring up kids and to share the experience with others. We have endeavoured over the years to provide a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people, whether they are our own or our neighbours. That we have the opportunity to do this here is one of the factors which make our community unique and valued by all those who have grown up here.

The Co-op also has a Community Engagement Co-ordinator who will organise special events for kids, as well as community facilities such as the Hall and the school playing fields which are available for kids' activities when there are committed adults ready to organise them. The Brown House at the North End functioned as a Youth Club for many years and the tea-bales at the Centre is Wi Bundjalung people on whose land we live.

This booklet was first prepared in 2004 as a rough guide to living on Tuntable and most recently updated in 2020. Please note that the exact wording of the RULES and BYLAWS may only be found in them, and that this booklet just gives you a working idea of their contents.

with thanks to:

Meg (for collation, words, photos and bits), Ewen, Christine and Franca (for drawings), Dave F. (for cartoons and old photos), Gloria, Ian, Karlin, Mike, Sue, Saras, Davo, James, Billie J, Lisa C & many others (for their ideas, words and photos) ...

and with grateful acknowledgement to the Widjibal Wai:bal people of the Bundjalung nation on whose land we live.

