**Back to the 50s for Coorabell**

Step back to the 1950s for the first ever Coorabell Public School fete at Coorabell Hall on Saturday May 29, 10am-2pm. Students, parents and staff are buzzing with excitement as they plan performances, competitions, stalls, and activities for the big day.

‘Get in the mood, wear a fab 50s outfit,’ says Magira Holmes of the P&C, ‘There’s amazing activities for the big day.

Inspired by the Bangalow CWA ladies we are running a cupcake competition, says judge Leah Roland of ‘Kids in the Kitchen’ fame. ‘We want preschoolers, grandparents, professional bakers and keen home cooks to enter. Look for entry forms around town, or on the Coorabell Public School website. Think novelty or traditional, 50s or now, this is all about get up to your elbows in icing and having a go!’

Leah will be joined on the judging panel by Charlotte Clark, our resident glamour girl from the Bangalow CWA, and Trace Gordon, founder of WildBite biscuits and cakes. The overall cupcake winner receives the Royal Cupcake Trophy by O Books and distributed worldwide, Aphrodite’s Magic will be exclusively launched in Mary Ryan’s Books, Byron Bay.

There will be white elephant stall, retro clothes for sale, as well as plants, books and toys. There’s an art auction featuring works from some of the region’s finest artists.

Women’s sexuality explored in new book

‘Not for the cynical or the close-minded’ concludes Annie Sprinkle’s endorsement of local writer Jane Meredith’s book, Aphrodite’s Magic: Celebrate and Heal Your Sexuality. Published by O Books and distributed worldwide, Aphrodite’s Magic will be exclusively launched in Byron Bay on Friday May 21 at 5:30pm.

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Food lovers, don’t eat before-hand. There will be delicious curries for sale – undoubtedly the Coorabell Public School signature dish – as well as a sausage sizzle, chicken satay and vegie burgers.

An attempt by Byron Shire councillor Tom Tabart to stage a probe into Council’s finances failed to get the numbers last Thursday.

At Council’s ordinary meeting Cr Tabart moved that Council engage a firm of forensic accountants with local government expertise to assess the present Council financial system against best practice in comparison with other local government models to advise on possible improvements and/or changes. He also moved for advice on a system of investment practice and protection for the current and future investment portfolio.

Cr Tabart suggested that the resignation of Council’s longstanding finance manager Jim Bolger created the opportunity for a new look at systems and practices, with the possibility that Council might benefit from reassessment by independent professionals.

‘In any organisation, no matter how well served by its management, practices and systems will develop over time that may benefit from scrutiny by a fresh set of eyes,’ he said.

Cr Tabart said that in the course of the meeting, Council general manager Graeme Bolger created the opportunity to look at council’s systems after about 20 years of ‘between a rock and hard place’ when answering such questions, but still managed to observe that as far as he was concerned nothing was amiss in the workings of the finance department but that the motion could well raise the suspicion that some people thought there was, and this was unfortunate. In that case, concrete examples would be needed.

When Cr Tabart spoke to The Echo he said there was opposition to the motion. ‘In reply to the motion, Cr Tucker made much of the assumption that this was an inference that although he had been at pains to point out that his motion was purely to afford the opportunity to look at council’s systems after about 20 years of one-man operation, everyone seemed to jump to the conclusion that he was on some sort of witch hunt.

During the meeting the motion was amended to include that the Local Government Association be consulted regarding suitable consultants and ‘that terms of reference be developed by the Strategic Development Committee of Council, but the motion was lost. Voting for it were Crs Tabart, Heessen, Barham and Richardson and against were Tucker, Woods, Cameron, Morrissey and Staples.

‘On the matter of rocks and hard places and “concrete examples” of wrongdoing,’ Cr Tabart told The Echo, ‘I mentioned that as a councillor I was constrained by the code of conduct from actually talking to employees and that getting anyone to come forward publicly was almost impossible in the current climate.’