

The Urban Ecology NEWSLETTER

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#23 November 1997



CENTRE FOR URBAN ECOLOGY • HALIFAX STREET • TANDANYA BIOREGION

National Recognition for UEA

Urban Ecology Australia has been acknowledged by the Federal Government as the National Special Interest Group representing Urban Environmental Issues. This manifests itself through our membership of the National Environmental Consultative Forum (NECF).

This gives us an opportunity to spend one week in Canberra every six months to discuss issues of concern with federal ministers, their staff and Departments. The discussions are usually held specifically with the Minister of Environment and his Parliamentary Secretary. The Department pays the air fares and the groups have to pay for food and accommodation.

Cherie Hoyle & Michelle Grady (Executive Officer of the Conservation Council) went to Canberra on October 19 this year and returned on October 24 to arrive safely. Cherie was also able to get sponsorship to cover her costs in Canberra.

Twenty eight groups were present, and it therefore gave an opportunity for all groups to work together to set comprehensive targets for resolution and also to draft policies which have the support of large numbers of the Australian public.

Cherie and Michelle had the benefit of being able to use the office of Susan Jeanes MP for meetings such as an in-depth briefing on Re-

newable Energy policies and programs from Noshir Bharucha from the Dept of Primary Industry & Energy and Pat Davoren from Minister Parer's Office.

Major issues discussed with Minister Hill were: Marine & Coastal Issues; Greenhouse, Climate Change & Ozone; Natural Heritage Trust including Landclearing/bushcare & future processes; Commonwealth roles & responsibilities; Nuclear/uranium issues; World Heritage management; Forests; Water reform & rivers including Murray-Darling, Fitzroy & Snowy Rivers.

The importance of this visit was not just the discussions with Env. Minister, Sen. Robert Hill and his Parliamentary Secretary, Sen. Ian

**Do your Christmas
shopping at the Centre for
Urban Ecology!
Books, Posters,
Ecopolis Now! -CD!!
See pages 15,16, 3**

Macdonald, but in building up a good working relationship with policy makers from all appropriate Departments. It definitely wasn't a junket as meetings started at 8.30 am and sometimes finished after 11pm.

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Editorial Team: Joan Carlin, Cherie Hoyle & Pauline Green

The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the editorial team or Urban Ecology Australia Inc.

~ Calendar of Events ~

- Saturday November 22 1pm Urban Ecology Australia **Annual General Meeting** and the 2pm launch of Matt Fisher's book *'The Journey Home'*.
- Saturday November 22 **Animal Band-Aid Concert** Thebarton Theatre 7.30pm \$18/\$15
- Sunday November 30 **Global Warming** – National Day of Action – see enclosed flier
- Tuesday December 2 **Green Map Workshops** 2-3pm Exhibition Hall, Town Hall
5.30 -6.30pm Coghlan St Community Centre 23 Coghlan St Adelaide
- Tuesday February 10 7-9.30pm Adult Education **Organic Gardening 1998 Courses**. First class features Peter Bennett. Details from Sandra on 8379 7999.

~ Around the Centre ~

Visitors

Dr Suryami from Indonesia.
Michael Zarky and Jeff Schroeder from USA.
A group of United Nations Environment Program personel from Nepal, the Philippines and Zambia.
Jennifer Scott and Di Wilkins from Senator Robert Hill's Office (Federal Environment Minister).
Steven Pratt – Devon, England.
Jude Munro – new Chief Executive Officer and Ian Pascoe – Head of Urban Services, Adelaide City Council.

Comings and Goings!

Wilko Kannenberg studied at the University of Kaiserslautern (Germany) Department of Architecture, Town & Environmental Planning, Civil Engineering. He studied Town & Environmental Planning.

Wilko is working with Urban Ecology for four months (Nov 97 - Feb 98) on the Shadow Plans Project.

'My interests are volleyball, skiing, theatre going, painting (sometimes!). I am a member of Greenpeace. I am interested in ecological planning and building. I found Urban Ecology on the Internet and decided to come to the Centre for Urban Ecology even if it was a long (and not ecological!) flight. (To defend myself it's my first intercontinental flight ever).

'Normally I move by using my own feet or my bike or public transport. I don't own a car and if possible will never buy one.'

Introducing Marsha Lenore Monera - 24 years old.

Studied – Landscape Architecture
Graduated from the University of the Philippines
I have been in Australia since June 1997.

I joined UEA to learn more about Australian flora (indigenous), architectural practices and environmental issues of the country.

HOBBIES: *into oil painting and textile/fabric painting.*

Niels Laustsen has finished his time with us and is back in Denmark. We all miss his help & humour.

My name is Danuta Jarman, I was born in Poland and have 2 children.

In Poland I worked as a manual drafter in Mechanical Engineering & have lived in Australia for 9 years.

Last year I completed a Training Course in Advanced AutoCAD and after many months of searching for work, I finally found some.

I currently work here on ArchiCAD and I enjoy it very much as it is very challenging to me and I can apply my skills and knowledge.

CD LAUNCH

Many of you will have heard rumours that Paul Downton had written a song called 'Ecopolis Now! - Escape From the Cities of Boiling Frogs'.

Before Christmas you'll know it was true, as Jason Hoberg is releasing a CD with that as the title track. The CD cover is designed by Paul, and there are a total of 8 tracks, 7 being written by Jason.

Of course we'll be having a party to launch it, but if you're already thinking of buying some music as a Christmas present, please come in and listen to it, and buy it by the dozen.

Jason is donating the profit to Urban Ecology Australia.

Please watch out for the Party Invite for the Launch.

In the meantime you can buy a copy or copies – it will make a great Christmas present! Price \$20.

~ EcoCities update ~

The Halifax EcoCity Project and Bourne Court

The steering group set up to advance the Halifax EcoCity Project and Bourne Court is now meeting on a weekly basis. Members of the group are:

Albert Callegher (reformed racing driver!)	Woodward Investments
Paul Downton	Ecopolis P/L (Ecological Architects & Urban Designers)
Chérie Hoyle	Urban Ecology Australia Inc.
Michael Hughes	DHC Accounting
Robert Papilion & Terry O'Connor	Alpine Construction
John Sandland	John Sandland & Associates
Beverley ST Vaughan	Barrister

The steering group also co-opts (also known as coerces!) appropriately skilled people to work with us; eg Dr Mike Metcalfe ex Advisor to the Minister for Mines & Energy, Dept of Housing & Development & the Treasurer, to investigate specific grants and feasibilities.

Tenders for the clean-up of the site have now closed and the successful tenderer will be announced shortly.

On October 13 a meeting was held between representatives from Urban Ecology Australia and the Conservation Council with Jude Munro (Adelaide City Council CEO), Ian Pascoe (Head of Urban Services), and Graeme Jones (Head of Parks & Gardens). Later in the same week a discussion was held at the Centre for Urban Ecology with Jude Munro and Ian Pascoe specifically in regard to the Halifax EcoCity Project.

We are now confident that a start on the Project can be made before the clean-up is

completed. With this in mind, Ecopolis Pty Ltd is completing work on Stage 1 of the Project. This is the Symonds Place section which has little contamination. It is envisaged that Stage 1 will include a building to house an Ecology Centre; student accommodation; three penthouse apartments; 13 townhouses and 12 smaller dwellings (studio apartments etc). People who have indicated an interest in moving into the Project will soon be asked to make a deposit.

The Bourne Court development is still awaiting the EPA *definition of interim fill*, so that we can actually move the soil off the site to put the footings in!

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The Whyalla EcoCity Development

Joanne Waters, the volunteer coordinator of ALCUE, the Arid Lands Centre for Urban Ecology, is standing for a casual vacancy on the Whyalla City Council. Good luck, Joanne!

Ecopolis Pty Ltd have the contract to build the Buddhist Meditation Centre, EXCEL disabled facilities and the Anglican church.

See next page for straw-bale workshop in Whyalla.

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~ Straw-bale Workshop in Whyalla ~

report by Bruce Muhlhan

Grow your own house - straw bale technology

Whyalla EcoCity Progress

The EcoCity core site development in Whyalla has taken a further step towards becoming a practical reality, with the recent visit by Australia's first licensed straw bale builder, John Glassford of Huff 'N' Puff Constructions. The visit was jointly organised by the Whyalla City Council and the local Buddhist community, with the Council being a major sponsor. A highlight of the visit was a public talk, attended by nearly 70 people, some of whom had travelled as far away as Port Lincoln and Melrose.

Workshop

John explained some of the benefits of straw bale building technology which included its:

- sustainability, as a range of straws can be used which are annual, renewable and local, such as wheat, barley, oats, rice etc
- incredibly high resistance to heat flow, with a resistance factor almost 10 times greater than a double brick cavity wall, leading to substantial savings in energy costs for heating and cooling
- very high fire resistance if rendered or plastered properly, according to extensive tests done in the United States



John Glasford fine-tuning the straw bales

- ease of construction, which lends itself to community participation and involvement, with group "wall raisings"
- excellent sound-proofing qualities, making it suitable for medium density urban development
- potential cost savings in construction depending on design, the amount of owner/builder involvement and the use of recycled materials.

Interest

A great deal of interest was expressed at the public meeting by environmentalists, builders, constructors, engineers, trades people, inspectors, farmers and a wide range of people from the community who were just keen to find out how they can build themselves. There is no doubt that straw bale building will complement other sustainable building technologies that will be used on the EcoCity core site in Whyalla.

Straw Bale Building Workshop

A public six day modularised straw bale building workshop combining "hands on" building and theory will be held in Whyalla next February. The workshop will cover all aspects of straw bale building. It will be facilitated by John Glassford of Huff 'N' Puff Constructions. The building that will be used as the project for the workshop will be a multi-purpose building for the Whyalla Buddhist Meditation Centre, which will be built on the EcoCity core site in Whyalla. This building is a part of a larger complex that is being designed by Paul Downton, Ecopolis Pty Ltd. Already a number of people have expressed interest in attending the workshop.

Details

For more information about the workshop please contact:

John Glassford, Huff 'N' Puff Constructions,
Moss Vale Road, Kangaroo Valley, NSW 2577,
phone: (044) 651 865, Fax: (044) 651 865, Mobile:
0412 116157,

Email: huffnpuff@shoal.net.au

or Bruce Muhlhan, PO Box 658, Whyalla, SA 5600,
Phone/ Fax (08) 8645 4620,

Email: bmuhlhan@wh.camtech.net.au

*Photograph was taken by one of our members,
Bruce Muhlhan at a workshop in Victoria*

~Taking responsibility for your car's carbon dioxide emissions ~

Yes, we know you always avoid unnecessary travel and choose to walk or bike it where you can, or use public transport as next best, but what about those unavoidable times when you just have to use the family car.

Do you know how much carbon dioxide you are pumping into the atmosphere and do you know how you can painlessly neutralize it? If not, read on.

Firstly, each litre of petrol produces 2.5 kg of CO₂. The average family car uses 2000 litres and puts out 5 tonnes of CO₂. So — what can you do about it? SIMPLY PLANT TREES.

Each tree absorbs 20 kg. of CO₂ per year over its growing life, of say 50 years or 1 tonne of CO₂. To absorb your 5 tonnes of CO₂ per year you need to have 250 trees working for you.

But where are you going to plant 250 trees?

Well, you don't have to. TREES FOR LIFE will do it for you and you have a choice of two simple ways: one — cheap and painless, the other free and painless.

The cheap one: Join TREES FOR LIFE as a paying member for two years (@ \$25 per year) and they will plant 250 trees for you. Better still, join as a free member and make a tax deductible donation of \$75 (costs you \$50).

The (almost) free one. Get a TREES FOR LIFE visa card and buy all your petrol with it. The return from Adelaide Bank sponsors enough trees to service the petrol bought.

If you want to take responsibility for other sources of CO₂ in your life, increase your donation or pay more bills with your visa card. For example, your electricity consumption needs as many trees as the family car.

So why not make a tax deductible donation of \$150 now (or next June, but don't forget) and let TREES FOR LIFE's 750 trees take care of the CO₂ from your car AND your electricity for the next 50 years — \$2 per year.

For more information: Phone TREES FOR LIFE on 8207 8787.

~ Letters ~

Dear Chérie,

I enclose a photograph of yourself and Dorothy Jamieson taken on our recent holiday in Adelaide.

We all thank you for making us so welcome — the visit was by far the highlights of Dorothy's trip.

Good luck with all your future plans.

Your sincerely

Robin Jamieson-Hale

(Dorothy was actually born in 83 Halifax St when it was still a cottage)

Dear Halifax EcoCity Team,

On behalf of the RMIT Environmental Engineering students who attended the 1997 field trip on the 6th-13th July, we would like to relay our thanks for your time. We all found the presentation very informative and of great relevance to our course.

We apologise if our engineering questions were too demanding for Glenn and Peter, although they seemed to answer all our questions with ease. We wish you the best of luck in developing the Eco-City. We will all be following it's progress.

Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Clarkson, Natalie Funtera, Lisa Gogoll

RMIT City Campus MELBOURNE.

Re: BRIAN CALLEN BEQUEST

Dear Cherie and Paul

As Art Executor for the Estate of the late Brian Callen, and under the terms of his Will, I am writing to inform you that Brian has bequeathed to the Halifax Eco City Project a selection of his eco works. These are held at Brian's house in Netley. Brian Callen died on 9 December 1996. He was an active South Australian painter and printmaker and Manager of the Visual Arts Studio at Flinders University from 1979-1994. Brian was greatly concerned over the fate of Australian indigenous people and troubled by, and a strong advocate for conservation issues.

Thanking you.

Betty Snowden

Art Executor for the Estate of Brian Callen.

~ Linda's Tribute to Brian Callen ~

Those of you who have been receiving the Urban Ecology Newsletter for some time will remember the series of articles – *My Owner Builder Experience* – which were written by Brian Callen, & which we continued to publish after his death.. Brian was a life-long environmentalist – even before the term was popular; an artist and a man of great humility. We are pleased to print this tribute which Linda gave at Brian's funeral service last December.

I have been privileged to have been Brian's partner for the last eleven years and privileged to have been with him at his death early on Monday morning.

Those of us who had seen Brian in the last two years find it hard to remember the lean, lithe Brian who climbed trees, hacked up concrete, canoed, bush walked and back-packed for days. Life would never have been long enough for Brian – he had so much to do. Even when gravely ill and handicapped, he still wanted to go on. He kept saying "I'd like another two years". But I knew he'd want another two and then another two and so on. He belonged and contributed to so many organisations.

Those I can remember, and I do apologise if I miss any, are the Australian Conservation Foundation, of which he was a long time member; the *Conservation Council of SA*, to whom you are invited to make donations in Brian's memory; the *Cummins Society*, where he belonged for 11 years; the *Centre for Urban Ecology* in Halifax Street, where we had both planned to live later on; the *Flinders University Ilkari Conservation Group*, and he was also involved in the fight to save Laffers Triangle. Brian belonged to *Trees for Life* and in the past few years he had grown thousands of trees for the Flinders Ranges, the South-East, the Mallee, Eyre Peninsula and the Adelaide Hills. A few weeks ago he insisted on growing 20 boxes again – this task will be completed in his memory.

He believed that as a single man on a reasonable income it was his duty to contribute to charity. He had no children and I think he was glad that he had not added to this overpopulated world. He wrote letters to authorities on matters that concerned him, such as the pollution of the River Murray. He was a good cook and, of course, he loved collecting wines, not for snobbish reasons but for pure enjoyment and to share with others. He loved bush walking, camping, canoeing and much of this inspired his art. He enjoyed the company of others, but also enjoyed solitude.

He had renovated and added on to his own home, using recycled materials, It was really special to him and his ashes will be scattered in

the pond area of his front garden. In his garden he loved to grow fruit - mulberries, plums, peaches, nectarines, quinces, mandarins, oranges, limes, lemons and grapefruits. He believed in conserving water and used grey water for irrigation and rain water for the house and garden. He had a solar water heater for years.

I hope the picture I have given of Brian is of a gentle, generous and caring man who believed in a simple life style and who loved life and continued to work even when handicapped and ill. I should like to conclude by reading a piece from one of Brian's books - "*How are we to live*" by the Melbourne philosopher - Peter Singer.

'People who take on the point of view of the universe may be daunted by the immensity of the task that faces them; but they are not bored, and do not need psychotherapy to make their lives meaningful. There is a tragic irony in the fact that we can find our own fulfilment precisely because there is so much avoidable pain and suffering in the universe, but that is the way the world is. The task will not be completed until we can no longer find children stunted from malnutrition or dying from easily treatable infections; homeless people trying to keep warm with pieces of cardboard; political prisoners held without trial; nuclear weapons poised to destroy entire cities; refugees living for years in squalid camps; farm animals so closely confined that they cannot move around or stretch their limbs; fur-bearing animals held by a leg in a steel-jawed trap; people being killed, beaten or discriminated against because of their race, sex, religion, sexual preference or some irrelevant disability, rivers poisoned by pollution; ancient forests being cut to serve the trivial wants of the affluent, women forced to put up with domestic violence because there is nowhere else for them to go; and so on and so on'.

Peter Singer

In conclusion I will read a paragraph that Brian annotated himself :

"I have a very strong sense of being responsible to the world, that I can't just live for my enjoyment but just the fact of being in the world gives me an obligation to do what I can to make the world a better place to live in, no matter how small a scale that may be on".

~ Book Reviews ~

LCA- a tool for measuring environmental performance

Gunilla Jönson (1996)

Gunilla Jönson's book *Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)* published by Pira International provides a primer for the uninitiated and newly initiated to LCA in an environmental context, as LCA has been widely used in economic circles. The document provides a solid explanation of the concept and application of LCA as a tool for evaluating products / materials to environmental selection criteria. The relevance of LCA is discussed, highlighting that in itself LCA will not solve all environmental ills, rather it is a powerful tool to evaluate potential environmental impacts or effects caused by a given product or industry, prioritising when and how the impacts will be dealt with.

The concept of LCA is defined and enlarged upon. Importantly Gunilla Jönson states that LCA is valuable for those who are making the transition from market driven to an economy of conservation with incentives to integrate environmental values into business practices.

Jönson emphasises the importance of peer review for data transparency and reliability, additionally credibility of LCA as a tool requires cooperation across disciplinary boundaries as different parties have diverse environmental values and priorities. On the same note LCA is a continuously developing process that changes due to temporal and spatial variables including ever changing social values/ needs and associated attitudes to the environment.

The book discusses in brief a number of assessment methods developed by various institutions (Universities, Government Departments and Standards organisations), although adequate for an introductory text, I would have preferred greater detail of various assessment methods, understandably they were omitted as they would vastly expand this brief text and are not in the scope of this study.

The theoretical presentation of LCA is adequately balanced with two case studies from the paper and packaging industries providing an insight into how LCA methodology can be applied.

Gunilla Jönson provides a cogently presented text, efficiently delivering a holistic view of LCA and its application to business seeking to rebalance human and environmental needs. At the princely sum of £55, 190 hard covered pages seems a little excessive, but on reflection it is well researched and indicates that a large amount of time and energy has been invested in presenting the work. I personally recommend this text as a

window on LCA in an environmental context, especially when used in combination with industry specific LCA case studies relating to the product or industry being investigated by the reader.

Reviewer: Peter Farmer, Research Assistant/ France Urban Ecology Australia Inc.

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GREEN OR GONE - Health, ecology, plagues, greed and our future.

Prof. David Shearman (ex President of the Conservation Council of SA, and Chair of our EcoCity Foundation Fund) has compiled a book which covers the great issues facing humanity today. It shows the human race's changing health resulting from global warming, disruption of the ecology, economic globalisation and today's value systems. Explains how our health and that of our planet are interrelated.

One of the Essays is written by Paul Downton.

The book will be available before Christmas, it is published by our own Wakefield Press.

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ECONOMIC NATIVE TREES & SHRUBS for SOUTH AUSTRALIA

by Neville Bonney

A user-friendly guide to the establishment of some 300 trees and shrubs that provide economic benefit.

The book is a must for owners of small and large acreages, who want to diversify into tree related income opportunities. It's set out in an easy to read, user-friendly style and highlights the different soil zones of the State, as well as the rainfall, economic considerations and plant management techniques.

Although the area of the book covers S.A. adjoining States of N.S.W., Vic., and W.A. with similar latitudes, rainfall and soil types could also benefit from the publication.

Neville has written yet another essential book for people with an interest in the future of our rural land. The book has nearly 200 fully illustrated colour pages.

It can be ordered from :

GREENING AUSTRALIA (SA) INC.

StateTree Centre, Brookway Drive
Campbelltown SA 5074

Reviewer: Chérie Hoyle

~Smogbusters in Action~

The Smogbusters Program is funded by the Federal Dept. of Environment. Its aim is to work with the community to improve urban air quality and help Australia meet its greenhouse gas objectives, by increasing community understanding of and willingness to adopt better practices with respect to public transport and motor vehicle use.

Wednesday 5th November 1997, National Public Transport Day, saw Smogbusters working with Trans Adelaide to promote Public Transport. Dedicated volunteers were to be found on various intersections in Adelaide, dressed in the latest design white overalls with a fashionable mask attachment, distributing masks to car drivers in the peak hour rush. The masks were well received and each had a leaflet extolling problems of motor cars and urging people to catch public transport at least one day a week with sayings like "Join the pollution solution and travel with Trans Adelaide". We attracted considerable press coverage throughout the morning.

In the evening another group of enthusiastic volunteers gave out 2,000 trees as a "thank you" to people using public transport. This was also a huge success. Our volunteers enjoyed the challenge and also had fun.

Willing volunteers are always needed on the Smogbusters team. Contact Sheila Brown - Smogbusters Project Officer at the Conservation Council on 8223 5155.

AND!

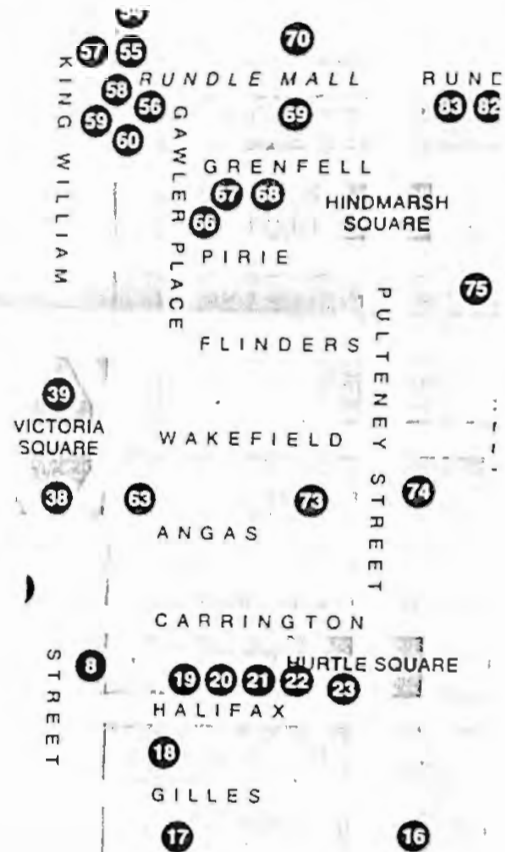
On the international front we have just read the latest New Internationalist (no.296) on **Globalization**. This month's editor, David Ransom took part in the national 'Leave-your-car-at-home' day. He now cycles one day a week a 100 km round trip to his job in Oxford, England.

He has made many friends in the process and chatted with people about the life cycle of the sparrow hawk and learnt about fly fishing!

To read more about this experience buy the New Internationalist: phone 8232 1563. And let us know if you'd like to tell us of your experience giving up the car!

~Green Mapping~

The draft Green Map has been prepared. If you'd like to have some input into the final design you can attend one of the workshops on December 2. (See details in the Calendar on page 2).



~ ADELAIDE CITY COUNCIL ~

Environment Advisory Committee

This committee is legally constituted under the regulations of the Council and has been brought about to support the implementation of the Councils' Local Agenda 21 Program.

Its first meeting was held on August 27th. and the second meeting on November 18th.

The chair of the committee is Deputy Lord Mayor Ald. Bob Angove. Cherie Hoyle represents Urban Ecology and Rhiannon Downton-Hoyle is the youth nominee of the Conservation Council of South Australia.

In our next Newsletter, Fiona Norman who is the Environment Plan Project Officer will explain the implications of this initiative and some of the outcomes from the preparation of ACCs' Local Agenda 21 Program.

~ Snippets ~

HERITAGE ACT 1993

PROVISIONAL ENTRY OF PLACES IN THE
STATE HERITAGE REGISTER

Pursuant to the provisions of the Heritage Act 1993, the State Heritage Authority hereby gives notice that the places described in The Schedule have been provisionally entered in the State Heritage Register....

THE SCHEDULE

includes

The Corporation of the City Of Adelaide

- Chimney stack and former Disinfector Building
- 41-81 Halifax Street, Adelaide

A Cleaner Engine

Recently Stephen Hardy was talking about a product he'd just investigated which made his car much more environmentally friendly (no, he didn't take the engine out!).

We will endeavour to have more on this subject in our next Newsletter.

For more information on this please contact Stephen on 08 8278 5121.

ANZAC PEACE PRIZE

The 1997 ANZAC Peace Prize has been awarded to Dr. Basil Hetzel AC, Chancellor of the University of South Australia and Lieutenant Governor of SA for life-long dedication to the prevention and control of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD), whose effects have caused a wide range of disabling conditions including: mental and physical disabilities, stillbirths and miscarriages, high rates of infant mortality, heart disorders, goitre, cretinism and lethargy in third world countries.

Dr. Hetzel has been a long-time supporter of Urban Ecology Australia.

We received the following email:

I am currently a graduate student in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, USA. Australia may be a little to far away from home, I figured I might as well let you know that I am interested in any openings you may have.

Do you get involved with Transportation Planning at all in any of your ecological design projects. Since the automobile is not a friend to the environment, as L.A. and Atlanta can attest to, alternative transportation sources need to be considered (walking, biking, mass transit). This can only be accomplished through changes in land-use patterns (maybe Australia has different development patterns than America - I hope so at least). Higher density residential areas near mass transit nodes will help in deterring people from driving (as will limited parking space).

Look forward to hearing from you

Ted Kitchens

Has anyone got any work opportunities? His email is: tkitchens@csrardc.org

~ Waffle Award ~

Adelaide City Council
Divisional Information Reort
Item No. 6.1 on Agenda Paper
To: Corporate Services Committee on 22/9/97
From: General Manager Corporate Services
Subject: Commonwealth General Purpose Grants for 1997/98

- A reduction of the general financial assistance grant allocation to the Corporation, continuing a trend over recent years. The

trend is a result of the Federal Government requiring each State Grants Commission to progressively move to a "full horizontal equalisation basis". This policy disadvantages inner metropolitan Councils, particularly Capital Cities, and is likely to result in the Corporation's grant changing to the per capita minimum.

I don't know who Adelaide City Council was quoting but I don't think I want to know either as they may be governing our country!

Adelaide and Whyalla: The Practice of Urban Ecology in Two Australian Eco-city Projects

Author: Paul F Downton, BSc(Hons) BArch(Wales) ARAMA

This Paper was presented by Prof Santosh Ghosh at Leipzig on behalf of Paul Downton

1. The Halifax EcoCity Project

In Adelaide, 1991, members of Urban Ecology Australia (UEA) got together to find an inner-city site for the development of 12 ecological dwellings. In 1993 the old Adelaide City Council (ACC) Depot was vacated and the 2.4 hectare site made available for redevelopment. With Ecopolis, UEA sought to both design *and* develop what they came to term a 'piece of eco-city' (Downton 1995).

Intended for 800 residents, their proposal for a car-free, mixed-use development contrasts with conventional Australian urban form. Innovative earth construction, renewable energy, water capture and re-use, and on-site sewage recycling are integral to this development. The goal of the project was not just to create an 'environmentally-friendly' development but to address numerous issues related to development processes and the impact of the city on its hinterland. These include:

- exploring 'community-driven' development & social equity in development;
- challenging status quo power relationships & questioning assumptions about the purpose & cost structures of the development industry;
- exploring various forms of tenure and community management structures;
- linking urban and rural development & advocating holistic urban planning.

The Project is about advocacy and promotion of change and is the 'flagship' for UEA. Achievements in the process of bringing the Project to fruition include:

- acceptance of 'community-driven' development paradigm for New York Ithaca EcoVillage, SA's Light Community & LA EcoVillage (Arkin et al 1992);
- more holistic approaches to planning in the Australian professional sector.
- co-operative and co-housing groups formed integral to the EcoCity Project;
- community action in local government - public filling the galleries of the council chambers in Adelaide (Roelofs 1996) & Whyalla for eco-city issues;
- discomfiting of conventional developer interests in the city;
- promotion of various forms of tenure and community management structures;
- community corporation (Bourne Court), non-profit developer (Wirranendi);
- financial models for eco-development with

minimal government subsidy;

- purchase of urban & rural land for Bourne Court/Monarto pilot project - Monarto is 60km from Adelaide where UEA members purchased 17 hectares of degraded agricultural land for ecological restoration & as a resource for urban development to provide earth for building, destination for composted material (subject to EPA approval) & source of produce for Bourne Court development - an erosion gully will be repaired, native vegetation & wildlife reinstated;
- the State Environment Minister supports UEA's work on the Project with an annual grant for running the Centre for Urban Ecology (CUE).

Large urban development takes years to realise. This project, based in community politics, has taken 6 years to reach its present state. Notable aspects include:

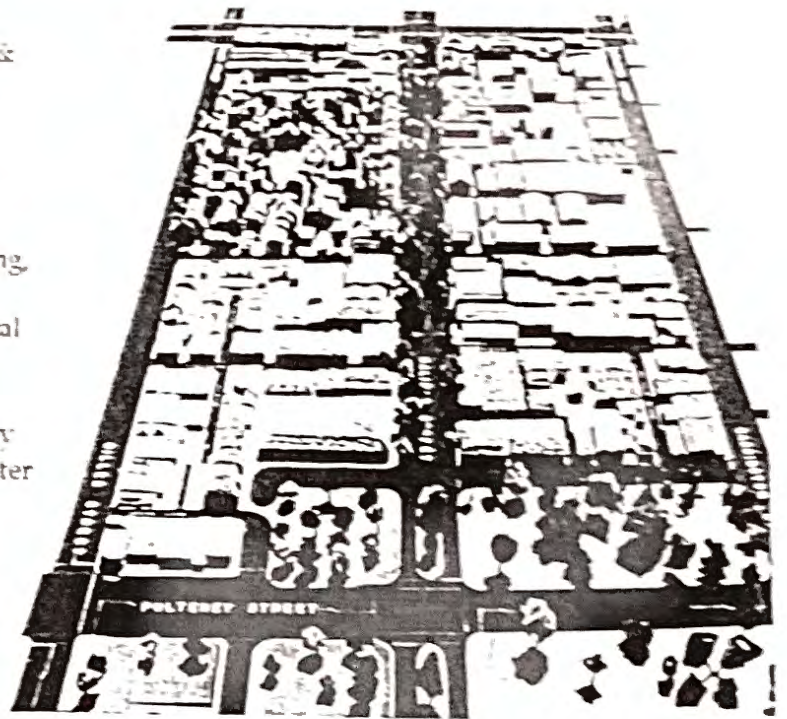
- formation of a management team representing business, trade union, community and environmental interests (October 1992);
- ACC agreeing in principle to offer UEA a one year option to purchase 'the Halifax' site (February 1994);
- ACC committed funds for site clean-up to residential standards (April 1997);
- ACC was threatened with dissolution by the State government until May 1997 when a new council was elected - the new 'Lord' Mayor Jane Lomax-Smith has been a consistent supporter of the EcoCity Project.

In December 1996, ACC commissioned a report detailing the Ecopolis/UEA decontamination/development program proposed for the EcoCity Project. ACC gave UEA a grant to produce a 'Green Map' of Adelaide, and voted for a UEA-inspired initiative for plastics recycling in the city. Foundations have been laid for a more positive ACC response to the Project - to be developed by a consortium involving industry partners, and including UEA, Ecopolis and Wirranendi.

UEA created a privately funded, non-profit co-operative 'Wirranendi' (meaning 'becoming bushland') to develop a pilot project in inner-city Adelaide, named 'Bourne Court' after benefactor Joan Bourne, a life-long social and environmental activist who was determined to facilitate construction of these first buildings. Joan died in October 1996 after battling cancer for 30 years. She claimed the EcoCity Project helped give her the will to live. 5 minutes' walk from the CUE, Bourne Court will consist of 5 townhouses on a 700 m² block and trial 90% of the technologies and techniques proposed for the Halifax site including:

- 3 of the main dwelling types proposed for the Halifax EcoCity Project;
- responsible, community financing with the Australian Central Credit Union;
- Community Title, combining freehold title with community ownership & management – introduced to S. Australia in 1996, The EcoCity Project was used as an example during drafting of the legislation;
- innovative construction technology developed with industry partners;
- on-site greywater re-use, stormwater & rainwater retention & use on-site;
- extensive use of grid-connected photovoltaic power generation;
- solar water heating, & passive solar heating & cooling of the dwellings;
- extensive application of recycled & re-used building materials;
- low total greenhouse gas emissions, allergy-neutral, non-toxic construction;
- minimal water use, low water use landscaping, min. 70% native vegetation;
- participatory design & community art integral to the construction program.

Part 2 of this article on The Whyalla EcoCity Development will be published in Newsletter #24.



Ecological Communities

54 Jetty Street

The old Grange Infant School, more recently a campus of the Port Adelaide College of TAFE, is to be developed as a set of four residential units on community title. The address of the property is 54 Jetty Street - and coincidentally(?) the name of the company from whom the school is being purchased. It's part of a whole-school property recently sold by the South Australian government, one of several school properties to have been 'released' to developers. This one has been subdivided into about fourteen titles.

As purchasers of the school buildings and the site on which they stand, we are not, however, developers in the way that term is generally understood. Rather, we wish to make the buildings suitable for us to live in and, because there's much more space than we need - and much more than we can afford by ourselves, we are working with some partners to set up a total of four units. 'We' are Richard Smith, sustainability educator and Urban Ecology supporter, and Marg Easson, art educator and practising artist. Our hope is that we can find partners for a project in the recycling of beautiful but otherwise disused buildings into residential use.

We particularly hope to establish the set of units on community title, and with a sense of community - and having as sustainable an array of structures and processes as the resources of ourselves and our partners will allow. It won't be an eco-city but hopefully it will make gradual moves towards being an eco community-titled set of units - albeit in what is a piece of suburbia probably not noted for its ecological sensitivity.

We shall be consulting a well-known local architect(!) - Paul Downton - about how best to proceed with this project. In the meantime we are seriously looking to talk to anyone interested in being involved. Involvement might mean having an interest in buying part of the property as it is at present - because we shall not be 'developing' it ourselves. Involvement might also mean being a supporter of the project in providing medium term - 1 to 2 year - low interest loans tied to ecological processes and structures being installed. It might also mean just being interested and supportive since some of the situations occurring even this early in the process have taken a little while to work through and having sympathetic ears around will help.

If you've time, pass by 54 Jetty Street, Grange - to get an idea of what the place is like. We intend to write a little more for this newsletter about what happens. But for something 'eco-city like' to happen we need partners. Benefactors would be delicious, too. So, if there's a possibility of your

being involved please call us or our answering machine and we'll be delighted to fill you in on latest details. Our number is 8352 1250. Alternatively, come to the 'open day' at the property on Sunday 30 November from 3.00pm to 4.00pm when we'll take you around and discuss plans and possibilities.

An Urban Village Community in Perth

CONNECTION, SOLITUDE AND REVERENCE:

On a recent visit to Perth, Joan Carlin & Scott Christie caught up with friends of theirs who are interested in setting up an Urban Village Community. Following is a reprint from their introductory document.

The Invitation

This project began with a vision - a way to let go of the illusion of security provided by the concept of ownership. By working towards this transformation we can nourish the human spirit in ways which our present social structures do not. We are seeking to be dreamers for rather than of the future, & to be both realists & idealists. We believe that this vision can become a reality.

We want to enable others to consider whether their dream of community is the same as ours. This is a very specific vision of one type of community. If your vision of community is different we encourage you to seek others who share your dream & join with them to realise it. We need diversity among communities as well as within communities.

Getting Serious About Community

As the environmental, social & economic cost of our lifestyle escalates, it is becoming clear that we need to change the ways in which we build, & live in, our cities.

Recognising this, David Nourish (medical specialist), Tim Muirhead (social planner) & Zdenka Underwood (architect & also a member of Urban Ecology Australia) have been working to realise their vision of an urban village community. Their efforts have so far attracted interest from a wide range of people, including potential residents and government planners. The Fini Group (urban developers) is prepared to take on the Project if enough people are committed to it.

Our vision is of people creating a built & social environment that promotes:

- personal & spiritual development;
- stronger, more sustaining relationships;

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Ecological Communities (cont)

- a sense of community;
- social responsibility;
- economic responsibility.

The physical environment that houses the community will:

- provide high quality affordable housing (with a proportion of housing available to low income individuals and families);
- integrate low cost and environmentally responsible infrastructure;
- incorporate design & technology that significantly reduces our impact on the environment;
- enable sharing of resources such as land, equipment, personal support, etc;
- provide spaces for solitude & interaction, including spaces for community celebrations;
- demonstrate an innovative approach to housing development that is financially viable in a market driven industry.

An integrated approach

Building such communities requires an integrated approach. Attractive design is not enough by itself. Therefore, our vision includes all of the following;

- building a village that pays close attention to the impact of the built form on people and on the dynamics of privacy & interaction, of contemplation & celebration, of inward focus & outward focus, of commonality & diversity, of independence & interdependence;
- bringing together a community of people who are committed to the concepts & practice of living in real community, before the village is built;
- using design principles & technology that reduce our consumption & pollution of natural resources, & that minimise the cost of energy, waste disposal & transport;
- using efficiencies of building design & construction, & sharing of resources & space that contribute to more affordable housing;
- designing & building housing that suits the varying needs of people at different life stages, with different family structures & lifestyles.

We believe it is necessary & possible to do this in a manner which is commercially viable & does not rely on government subsidy.

An Outline of the Vision

We will develop a community that seeks physical and environmental harmony, integrated with opportunities for social and spiritual growth.

This vision is about both principles and practicalities.

Guiding Principles

These are some of the principles which guide our vision. If you have any thought that you may wish

to join us, consider carefully if they resonate for you.

The fundamental belief behind this vision is that we need to give up our current cultural preoccupation with ownership. We need communities organised to serve moral and spiritual rather than purely economic ends. We believe that the project is economically viable and that everyone's capital will be secure, but it is not about speculation in real estate values.

This vision is one of community, not communal living. It is expected that there will be many communal activities, including the opportunity for shared meals, but participation will never be compulsory. It is a fundamental principle that everyone will have the maximum freedom compatible with the well-being of this community and the wider community. All members of the community, though, will have to accept the minor disruptions, including noise, which may be associated with ceremonies and celebrations.

- The population of this urban village will be as diverse as possible.
- The village community will actively relate to the wider community; we are not creating an elite enclave.
- The community will provide an environment that supports spiritual, emotional and moral growth.
- Villagers will value both privacy and interaction.
- The community will be committed to the well-being of all villagers. The young, the aged and the sick are the responsibility of all. Members of this diverse community can expect to be valued and respected, their actual and potential contributions acknowledged.
- Community decision making will be modelled on the notion of discernment. We see discernment as a process that seeks a deep listening that goes beyond consensus. This vision is about people, about relationship and process, not about particular outcomes, rules and regulations. This community has no authoritarian leaders, no bosses and no gurus, though it does not exclude the task of leadership. The relationships between the members of the group are more important than the decisions which are made. There is no place in this community for dogmatism. This flexibility and valuing of diversity must extend to our visions which must not become a tyranny. We must be sure to dream with an open-heartedness which will leave room for our children and grandchildren to dream their own dreams.

The Built Environment

Guided by these principles we envisage an environment that enhances values of solitude,

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connection (with self, others and the environment) and reverence (for self, others and the environment).

Size

The village will have 35 to 60 households.

Hierarchies of Space

The village will be designed around a hierarchy of space, from the public to the most private.

This progression will include:

- public space (open to anyone);
- private community space;
- small grouped household space;
- household space;
- personal space.

Public Space

- Coffee shop located near to the entrance of the community open to both community members and the public.
- 'Village Green' for community/public use.

Community Space

- Village/communal house where community functions/meals can be held
- Contemplation space, including a sacred garden with a sacred indoor space (unaligned to any particular religious belief).
- Office space from which community business will be carried out.
- Safe communal spaces for younger children.
- Guest accommodation (to replace private guest rooms or spare bedrooms).
- Communal sitting rooms.
- Picnic garden.
- Communal workshops (perhaps carpentry, crafts, mechanical).

Small Grouped Household Space

- Groups of dwellings will cluster around their own communal space.

Household Space

- Individual dwellings will include single person, "twin single" and family homes.
- All dwellings will have private outdoor space; e.g. private courtyard or balcony.

Personal Space

All dwellings will ensure that everyone has access to personal space, where they can know personal privacy. e.g. personal study, bedroom, balcony.

Awareness Thresholds

The "threshold" between the different types of space will be both a boundary and a place of

welcome, where both privacy and interaction can receive ceremonial recognition. The right to privacy is as important as the invitation for interaction.

Awareness of Place

Vernacular style housing - the design will be unique while honouring the architectural traditions of Western Australia. The design will relate respectfully to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Awareness of time

The sense of time and daily rhythms will be enhanced by design attention to light and the shadows created by the movement of the sun and moon.

Awareness of seasons

Experience of the seasons will be enriched by honouring natural rhythms and acknowledging the different ways in which we live at different times of the year.

Sharing

Where appropriate, sharing of resources, land and facilities will help make the housing more affordable, while maintaining a good quality of life.

Work Space

Joint office space will be available for lease, to create the option of working near home.

Cars

Common, unintrusive car parking with safe access into secure space will be provided. There will be no cars within the common spaces.

ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY

The design and technologies of the village will ensure a minimum of consumption and pollution. This will include:

- use of renewable energy & on-site sewerage management;
- energy efficient housing;
- strategies for maximum re-use of waste;
- optimum use of all water, including storm water and grey (used) water;
- maximum use of new energy technologies.

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