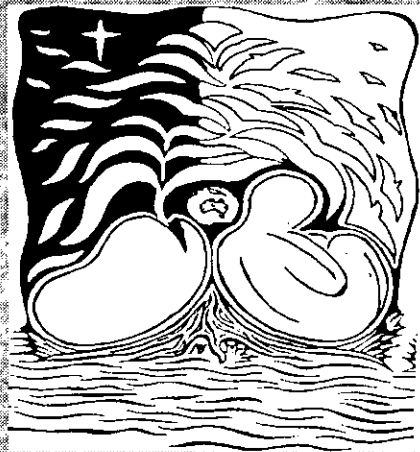


# Community Interlink

VOLUME 1 No. 2 May 1999 \$2



Celebrating  
Intentional  
Community



Most of the participants at the last gathering

A journal of, for & by people who  
presently live on a Community or  
those who aspire to do so.

# Introduction

**It's now 6 months since the 2nd National Intentional Communities Conference!**

I was talking to Maggie one of the organisers yesterday and she was saying how strongly the conference has stayed in her mind especially the Heart Sharing Circle and what a source of inspiration it was to her to remember the strength and commitment from all who contributed to the circle and the conference generally.

I was particularly inspired by the contribution of young people to the conference.

This inspiration is behind the 'Heart Head and Hands' 10 day workshop for creating and maintaining intentional community that will be taking place at Dharmananda community (see ad) from 30th September to 10th October.

In my work I am often coming into contact with people in their 20's who are committed to social and environmental sustainability. Many have been involved in front line action on blockades and see social change as an on-going part of their lives; inevitably they come up against the question. "How are we going to live in a way that is in line with our values?" Many see intentional community as the way ahead, but are very unsure about how to create or contribute to such a community. To my mind this is an ideal opportunity for established communities who are concerned about continuity to encourage these young people into their community or at least to create the opportunity for the young people to check out their community.

It's been vastly encouraging to see the reports of gatherings for Victoria and Western Australia. This was a dream of ours from the first conference that regional groups would act autonomously, creating their own gatherings and agendas.

The 'Communities, 'How to do it Manual' is moving slowly. Interestingly the Commonground gathering confirmed that the participants saw the manual as a top priority. We are at a stage with the manual where we need those who have offered to write or find particular aspects of the manual, to be sending their material to the sector coordinators, electronically or by post. We need the material from all contributors by May 31st. It is hoped to have the first copies of the manual available for the Heart, Head and Hands workshop.

There has been much talk about the millennium computer bug or Y2K, with scenarios ranging from the end of the world as we know it to very little disruption at all. As John Croft from WA points out, this situation does create a great opportunity for people to examine their communities, intentional and otherwise, to see how viable they are economically, socially and environmentally. My sense is that intentional communities could survive a greater degree of disruption than suburban neighbourhoods.

There is certainly a great opportunity for those with skills and abilities from intentional communities to assist the wider society in areas that could be affected by Y2K.

Love and best wishes to all fellow communards,

*Simon Clough*

Please remember that you can contact the whole list of participants on email from the 2nd conference in one go by contacting [anica@bayweb.com.au](mailto:anica@bayweb.com.au).

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**SUBSCRIPTION: Communities - \$10 For multiples of five, x number of editions. (3 EDITIONS = \$30). For individuals, \$2 x number of editions. Sponsorship: \$30 for a 6cm x 6cm space. Send to: Community Interlink, P.O. Box 209, Nimbin 2480,**

**Please put this journal on your community noticeboard for all your members to see.**

This journal has been put together by Gloria Constine, with help from Linda Seaborn, Len Harper & Peter Chaplin - who worked on the front cover.

I haven't minded doing this Interlink, but if there are other, competent people out there, who would like to do it next time - get in touch on **02 6689 1184** Tues or Fri or P.O. Box 209, Nimbin 2480. Email: [Gloriaconstine@hotmail.com](mailto:Gloriaconstine@hotmail.com).

Thanks go to **Pan Community Council** for financial support, and if you see something resembling an advert for you in here, please send a donation to offset costs.

**May your world be creatively satisfying.**

**Gloria xx**

# INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES MANUAL - BECOMING A REALITY

It was great to go to the National Intentional Communities Conference and as well as the bonding, singing of songs and the creation of friendships, it was extremely exciting to walk away with a few outcomes. Two outcomes from the 'Networking Workshop' was the creation of a regular flow of information between communities and the production of a 'Manual on Intentional Communities'. The manual, when finished, is to assist others to start new communities and it will be a fairly comprehensive book that can assist those already living on communities.

Thanks to all those people that put their names down to assist with the production of the manual. We are now writing to inform you of what it is you said you would commit to. Below is a list with peoples names.

There are two ways people have said they would assist. Either by being the coordinator for a 'Sector' or to be responsible for a 'Topic'. What's the difference? Let me explain!

## Responsibilities of the 'Sector' Coordinators

### They are to do the following:

1) Coordinate topics within their sector and make sure that each topic is addressed and think of other topics. They don't have to write each topic. They can coordinate other people to write the topics. **They do, however, have the responsibility to:**

2) Summarise the 'Sector'. A summary of the 'Sector', one A4 page, is preferred as soon as possible so that a basic web page can be produced within the near future, and,

3) When topics come in from people the topic coordinator should edit the topics if they think that it needs it, or they can simply post it to the webpage (that will be produced in the near future) and leave the editing up to the collective response of the network.

### They also have to:

4) Name and Qualify the Source

5) Having done the summary ASAP or having received any topic issue they can either send the information to the e-mail address: [anica@bayweb.com.au](mailto:anica@bayweb.com.au) or if they are not able to forward material by email post the collection, preferably a soft copy on a computer disk and if not possible a hard copy to: **Intentional Community Manual, c/- Robert Tap, MS 16, 59 Crystal Waters**

## Permaculture Village, Queensland 4552, Australia.

There are seven sectors: 1) Legalities 2) Planning and Design, 3) Group Formation and Maintenance 4) Environment 5) Spirituality 6) Financial 7) Other.

**People who said they would coordinate these 'Sectors' are:**

1) Legalities: Mitra and Simon, Enid WA only.

2) Planning and Design: Peter C, Rob, Jiri.

3) Group Formation and Maintenance: Dan, Simon, Ed, Ian McPherson, Carolyn Shurey, Exo.

4) Environment: Daniel Beaver, Kiri, Tim.

5) Spirituality: Bridget, Catheren, Lusy, Janaki.

6) Financial: Simon

7) Other: Eric, Mari, Amanda, Munji

With some of these there are a list of names, ie Group Formation and Maintenance. I would suggest that those people communicate with each other to try and coordinate the coordination of their sector.

## Responsibility of the 'Topic' researchers:

The people who put their names to help with a certain topics will be responsible for:

1) Finding out whatever they can about the particular topic and either writing or gathering the material together in a comprehensive manner, and,

2) Any non-original material will need copyright checking

3) Sending it to the "Sector" coordinator.

The list on the back page is a list of the 'Topics' in each 'Sector'. The names of people who committed themselves to assist are in brackets after their nominated 'Topic': Not all the 'Topics' have names after them.

Hopefully with this and the graphic on the other page it is all understandable. We are about to embark on a project that involves over thirty people from various parts of Australia in pulling together a National Intentional Communities Manual. This is very exciting and we need to each one of us work on it so it can become a reality.

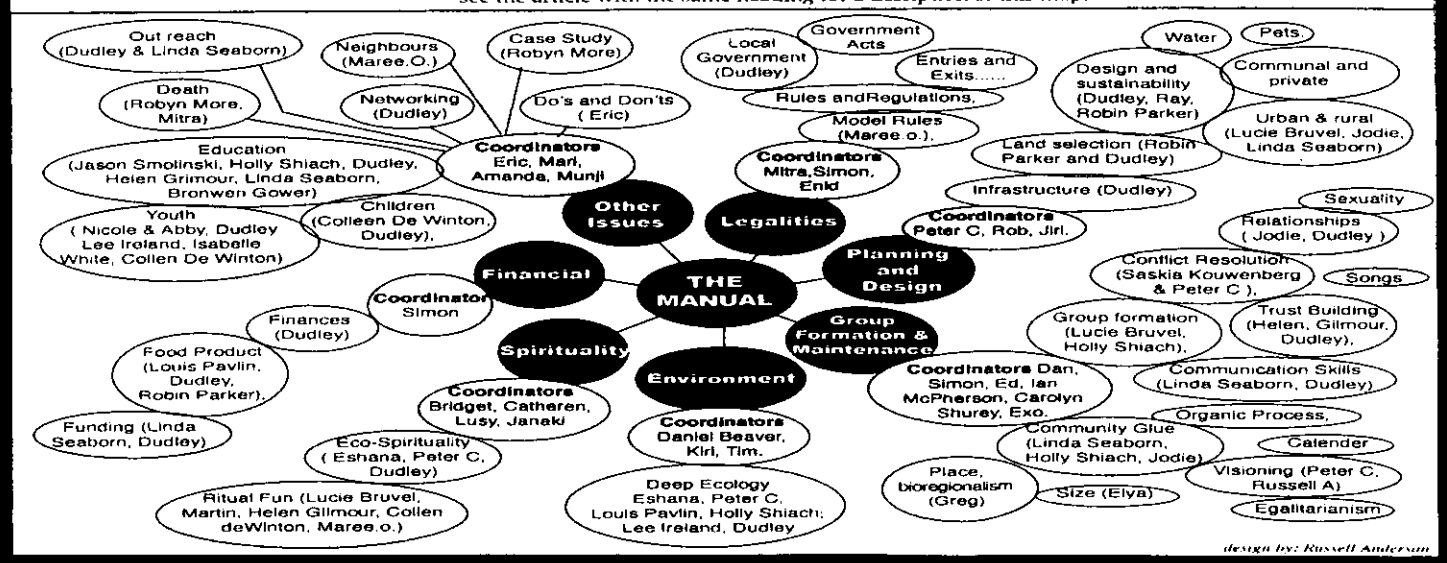
Good luck researching and writing.

*All the best - Russell Anderson*

*There has been much work done on an Intentional Communities Webpage - check it out on: <http://oceania.ecovillages.org/ic.net.au/discussion/discuss.html>*

## Intentional Communities Manual - Becoming a Reality

see the article with the same heading for a description of this map.



design by: Russell Anderson

## Some Information from the Intentional Communities Gathering 25th - 30th Sept '98

### WHAT TO DO, WHAT NOT TO DO when living on a community

Ian, from the Wolery (WA) lived in a share house of several families before the Wolery. Although this was a good experience, what didn't work was the communal-private balance. Only the bedrooms were private, and this was not enough.

In establishing the Wolery they were aware of the 'tyranny of structurelessness' and thus motivated to be a structured community. Present members now appreciate this structuredness, which includes things such as minute-taking at meetings and regular auditing.

Lisa, from Tumble Falls, described Tumble as the 'mistake-maker' for other communities. Most significant mistakes being: the community is too big, too open in selection of new members and loss of consensus due to lack of structure. What, in reflection, they did well was to create good communal spaces. Her advice is:

- to pass on the initial mission statement of the land to new members, and for all new members to read and agree to the premises/constitution of a community before joining..
- An important part of that is for all members to have a commitment to the community decision-making process.
- eat together, whether it's daily, weekly or monthly
- have less than 30 people for effective decision-making
- involve the young people all the way, have expectations of them. We're doing them no favours handing them everything on a plate.
- factor in flexibility in siting yourself - allow for life cycle changes in your self and the community.

Greta Seed, from Bodhi Farm, said that having a shared commitment to an ideal or non-personal value was very important. That we need to be open to fresh organisational forms in order to keep the energy moving. That we need to have the courage to be wrong, have patience, listen and look at ourselves.. Common space and shared cultural activities are important. We need to be willing to be 'cheerleaders' for the ideals & values on which the community was founded.

Robin, from Rob Road, spoke of things which have helped her community. They were:

- the emphasis on interpersonal relationships, to work things out directly with the person involved.

- the change from single ownership to shared ownership.

- not having financial pressure at the beginning.

Janaki, of Pretty Gully, spoke with the wisdom of hindsight and gave the following advice:

- share visions about planning for the land before doing anything.

- make the commonspace (laundry, kitchen, floor space, drying space) a first priority.

- build individual houses later - after establishing community centre and getting to know the land.

- keep best places for communal use.

- if you build anything in tall forest, be prepared to let it rot back into the ground rather than maintain it because tall trees only grow taller - you lose your light.

Bridget, from Holy Goat Ranch, stressed that good process for leaving the community is important.

Dudley, Dharmananda, (SRI) talked about the importance of:

- clarity of vision and clear agreement about a strategic plan in the beginning.

- to develop the community glue - the relationships and bonding - before moving onto the land.

- to be mindful of stability & balance by thinking of opposites and finding a way to include them (eg structure and freedom).

- fundamental to consensus is the understanding that the solidarity of the group is more important than finding the 'right' answer

- choosing appropriate legal structure.

- choosing suitable property being mindful of water, soil, location.

- addressing socioeconomic, environmental and political aspects.

- ongoing financial planning, beyond initial set up.

- don't ignore the transgressions of agreements.

- group ownership of infrastructure.

- set & clear agreements, keep building them.

People joining need to be aware of them.

- have a process for people joining, at least six months.

- rituals are important.

Mitra, from Mevlana, had a list of do's:

- do positive things together rather than just talk

- balance decision-making with accountability

- have the ability to make mistakes

- have easy processes for getting in and out, good and clear, legally & emotionally

- have a balance of private and community.

Two outcomes from the Networking Workshop at the gathering, was the creation of a regular flow of information between communities and the production of a 'manual of Intentional Communities. The manual is to assist others to start new communities. It will be a fairly comprehensive book that can also assist those already living on communities.

## COHOUSING

Michael & Simone (Byron Cohousing)

Linda Seaborn (Cohousing Co-op)

From this talk it was apparent that a cohousing project is a more urban community than most of the more rural communities represented at this conference.

Distinctive features of a cohousing project are a common house where community members can gather and share meals, fully independent houses and no requirement of a specific philosophical commonality. As such, they are a middle way between more usual suburban living and more intense community. With the commonhouse and common meals though, a very significant aspect of community is inherent in cohousing.

A cohousing project faces a lot of the same issues as other communities in getting off the ground. It will sometimes need more money because of the expense of the land and sometimes have planning difficulties due to council zoning and scrutiny in a densely populated area.

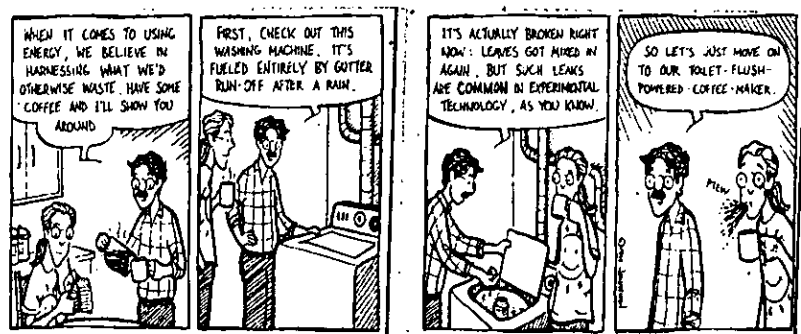
### BYRON COHOUSING

The Byron cohousing group have 17 members. At present they are having a break. It was noted that it has been a long process, and that it has been difficult to hold the group together without the land as a focus. A divisive issue, named very succinctly, was that for some people the concept is more important than the land, and for others the land is more important than the concept. The workshop participants found the talk interesting, inspiring, honest & useful.

### COHOUSING CO-OP

Set in the foothills of Mt Wellington in Tasmania (Palawa Nala - Aboriginal Land) it has a membership of 13 households (48 people). Building is due to begin in October, after many years of negotiating and planning with funding bodies and local government.

For more information see the book: *Cohousing, A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves*





# Sharing Circle

## Intentional Communities Conference

*"Keeping the Torch Burning", September, 1998*

The Sharing Circle is a form that has been adapted from the Maori heart talk circles, or to use the Maori term, "whaikorero". It is a form that is used by many other cultures to create a space in which all voices in a community can be heard.

Conferences and gatherings usually provide a range of ways in which people can communicate: presentations, story-telling, speakers, displays, workshops, performance, networking sessions, campfires and song, to name a few. Sharing circles offer a valuable addition to the ways in which people can work, learn and grow both personally and as a group.

A sharing circle is an open forum for speaking, where the power of the presence and focussed listening of all the participants can allow individuals to connect with and explore issues or deeper layers of themselves. By observing, some simple ground-rules, the circle sharing format of group communication can become a unique opportunity for personal and group transformation. There is usually one or two facilitators who introduce the ground-rules and who stay for the duration of the circle. The ground rules do not, on their own create a transformative environment. This is created when the participants listen with open hearts, speak about their own experiences, or from their heart and actively avoid using communication methods such as, lecturing, promoting a point of view, performing, dominating the time or showing disrespect for other people.

Ground-rules that have worked well in many sharing circles are:

- You only speak once. A second contribution can only be offered after every one has had a chance to speak.
- You stand to speak, so that you can be both heard and seen. You can move about in the centre of the circle if you wish.
- The participants listen without interruption, response or questioning.

• Each sharing is finished with either a song or a poem or another form of creative expression.

• There are no time limits on how long you speak and you take the time that you need. However you are responsible for sharing the time available and not dominating the circle in any way.

• You can leave and return to the circle between speakers, sleep or move to another part of the circle. This must be done quietly and with minimum interruption.

• Trust that what needs to be said, will be said. It may not be you that has to say it. And trust that what **you** need to say will emerge as the circle progresses. What you thought you had to say at the start of the circle may change as the alchemy of the process works on you. You will know when it is your turn to speak, one often experienced signal is a pounding heart.

Sharings at the Intentional Communities Conference followed the theme of living and working to create and sustain community in its very broadest interpretation. There was a goosebump-raising story of how a large country town showed its community spirit by responding supportively & creatively to the crisis of a missing child. There were deeply moving stories of death and the ways in which communities re-discover themselves through loss & grief, and how death can re-connect us to our deepest values and aspirations. There were stories told of indecision, humour, successes, despair, personal transformation, challenges, joys and much affirmation of the compassion and strength of the human spirit.

Sharing circles are an adaptable tool for community building. Communities can be strengthened and transformed by bringing out into the open what is happening for individuals and for the group. Our Community has used the sharing circles on a number of occasions. We had a circle to share our feelings and experiences of the loss of a friend who committed suicide recently. We have also had circles on conflict situations and the loss of a member who moved on to a different life situation.

*Carol Perry, Dharmananda. 12th January 1999 Refs: Vivian Hutchinson, 1993 "What are Heart Circle Sharings?"*

## How I came to intentional community

I grew up as a poor boy in a small country town, did high school in the suburbs. Luckily I grew up in a large, not too dysfunctional family with plenty of freedom, and was strong, smart, painfully honest, and responsive to others. Unfortunately I learned the negative aspects of family and school and so emerged as a sarcastic and controlling youth. My sister told me repeatedly that I needed to be more considerate - tough, as I felt little consideration from others, and to see the larger picture.

In late teens I realised that I alienated more than I befriended and I didn't like it. Assuming all guilt, I accepted that any remark was worthy of consideration, even from a 'doubtful' stranger.

I settled some in marriage and good jobs, learning from the odd honest criticism and the rare modelling of caring. Then divorced, I set out to understand why people enjoyed studio wrestling.

Overseas, others insisted on their rights and so I learned that I had rights and could insist on mine. Most importantly I learned to respect other's preferences, to the point where I'd ask my best friend and adopted brother so far 'do you want space or company?' not just bowl up and assume that I was welcome.

Feeling that I'd done half an apprenticeship, I returned to change my country. I decided that the communes were brilliant and that I'd reform my city. A few years ago I learned that the cities were too dominant for me and that communities weren't working well, that too few were resolving 'people problems'. I changed tack, decided to change individuals rather than the system, and came east to find a supportive community.

I rarely drop in on people now, but rather wait for invitations. Also, one of my ideals is that I don't have to do anything alone. Neither strategy works well in a dominant and 'self-dependent' culture. I seem to have painted myself into a corner: I'm still learning.

I've lived with others mostly harmoniously for 25 years, and adopted family and been adopted wherever I've been. I avoid acting in self-interest, and value participation and co-operation. I see myself as a social animal, that life without the respect of other people is not human, and that life without many social roles is mere survival. I have a clear intention for, and still seek, community.

Yours optimistically, exo (exo@omcs.com.au)

# HEART. HEAD AND HANDS - CREATING AND MAINTAINING INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY

**30th September-10th October 1999**

An experiential 10 day training for people starting or moving to an intentional community. The training will take place at the 'Terania Learning Centre', Dharmananda venue of the 1998 'National Intentional Communities Conference'.

In the training you will learn about:

- leadership/followership,
- meeting facilitation,
- creating harmonious relationships/conflict resolution,
- consensus decision making,
- legal structures,
- the do's and don'ts of community,
- planning issues, macro & micro,
- visioning.

As well as a host of 'hands-on' skills such as: dairying - milking, cheeses, yoghurt, gardening - organic, bio-dynamic, orchards, maintenance, home building, composting toilets, cooking and food.

The training will be self catering; vegetarian food and cooking equipment provided. Participants will need to bring their own tents.

Trainers for 'Heart, Head and Hands' will be mainly from Dharmananda Community, each with 20 years or more experience in communal living.

Training numbers will be strictly limited (15). People under 30 will be given priority.

Please book and pay your \$50 deposit early. Cost of the training will be from \$285 to \$350 depending on ability to pay.

**For further details contact - Maggie Ritchie 02 6688 6126**

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....

Amount I will pay is \$.....

Please enclose \$50 deposit and mail to Heart, Head and Hand, Dharmananda, Ross Road The Channon 2480.

## LIVING IN SINCERITY

Members were asked: What the one thing that can assure sincerity will thrive as a unique community for another 25 years?



The cartoons in this mag and the article 'Admission Standards for Communities' are gratefully taken from: Communities - Journal of Cooperative Living, P.O. Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541; ph: 970-593-5615; email communities@ic.org.

# IN PRAISE OF WWOOF AND WWOOFERS

It's hard for our community to remember a time before WWOOFers. It seems almost in the mythical past when the decision was made and the ad was finally written - by consensus of course. What a wise move it was to become part of a low key, effective organisation that is slowly changing the world.

Our community must have hosted hundreds of WWOOFers over the years. Almost without exception they have been wonderful people who have made a worthwhile contribution to our community. Some WWOOFers have not been too bright, but have contributed to the legends of the community, prompting conversations like, "Remember the WWOOFer who burnt out the element in the electric jug three times!", or "the WWOOFer who picked our whole orange crop for jam and burnt the lot". What salutary tales they have become for new members or WWOOFers following in their footsteps.

WWOOFers and TWEETERS as (female WWOOFers are sometimes called), have come from all over the world - Ireland (Nth & Sth), UK, France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Canada, USA, Israel, Korea, Taiwan and Japan. We have never had to ask a WWOOFer to leave our community, never had a case of stealing or violence - a very impressive record.

In return for our board we have had racial stereotypes torn down, received up to the minute information about important world events, laughed and played with some fabulous people. WWOOFers have also been extremely effective at holding up a mirror so that we can see our own reflection, which can be a mixed blessing. We have heaps of comments in our visitors book thanking us for showing people that communal living can be such a wonderful experience eg: "Thanks for giving me a generous glimpse into a healthy balanced, conscious way of living on this precious planet ...the learning's and impressions I carry will help nourish the seeds of my future community" WWOOFer from California.

Of course we also get other feedback which helps us see problems we are creating for ourselves and others.

WWOOFers have contributed enormously physically to our community helping with building, road repairs, gardening, milking and cooking etc. Our community would have difficulty maintaining itself without the generosity of WWOOFers.

There is a sense of spreading the word about sustainability and community. Having WWOOFers, especially younger people, observe how we are able to produce most of our food organically is a great way to show the 'hands on' reality of sustainability.

Perhaps more importantly WWOOFers are able to see how members of the community relate to each other and maintain harmonious relationships, even after 27 years.

Communities can join WWOOF by registering with Lionel Pollard WWOOF founder (!) at WWOOF, Mt Murrindal Co-op. W. Tree via Buchan, 3885

## Alternatives Festival

On the 14th March, a city community (Seli Hoo) and rural community (Eden Park) got together to provide an Intentional Community Stall at an excellent festival in the Adelaide Parklands called 'What is your alternative? - A Festival of Opportunities.' We guess this is the first time, in recent S. A. history, that different communities have jointly set up a stall to promote I C's in general. The stall was very popular, especially with young people keen to find out more about Co-operative living options.



*Saul (from Eden Pk) and Annie (from Seli Hoo) about to pack up the I.C. stall after a great day at 'What is your alternative? A Festival of Opportunities'.*

*Ashley Camp, Seli Hoo Community.*

## ECO-VILLAGE EXPO

The village of Crystal Waters, near Maleny in the beautiful Sunshine Coast hinterland is hosting its second Eco-village Expo, on Sunday May 23rd, 9am-5pm. If you are interested in living more in harmony with nature, then come along and see inspiring examples of organic gardens and ecological homes, listen to informative talks and learn from hands-on demonstrations, enjoy talented local entertainers, or simply browse among the myriad of stalls.

Entrance fee to the Expo site is \$5 for adults, \$2 for teenagers, under 12s free. Tours of private homes and gardens are an additional \$7 per person.

The Expo site will contain stalls which are in tune with ecological living; including rammed earth builders, farm forestry, organic gardening supplies, permaculture books and consultants, plants, natural cosmetics, and lots of fabulous home-made food. As part of the entrance fee there will be a continuous programme of free talks and hands-on demonstrations, music and entertainment.

Tours will take you into the private areas of Crystal Waters. Each 1 1/2 hour tour will visit three private dwellings where you will see a wide range of building materials including straw bale and rammed earth homes, innovative designs, permaculture principles and organic gardens. You will also learn about the Crystal Waters community structure and why this village recently won a UN Habitat Award. Advance bookings for tours are recommended, as last year these sold out quickly.

As Crystal Waters is a wildlife haven for more than 160 species of birds, many families of kangaroos and red-backed wallabies and many other native animals, please leave your dogs and cats at home!

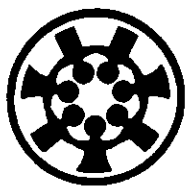
For more information, or to book a tour, contact the Crystal Waters Co-op on (07) 5494 4620, email [cwcoop@ozemail.com.au](mailto:cwcoop@ozemail.com.au), fax (07) 5494 4653.

CONTACT: Phil Hatch, Crystal Waters Co-op, Crystal Waters, MS 16, Conondale Qld 4552.









# COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY — 2000 EDITION

138 Twin Oaks Road, Louisa VA 23093-6337 USA

Email: [dir2000@ic.org](mailto:dir2000@ic.org)

Tel/Fax: 011-734-629-0384

A publication of the Fellowship for Intentional Community

February 25, 1999

Dear community friends,

I am writing to invite you to participate in a worldwide guide to community, a book called the *Communities Directory*. It is published by a nonprofit organization, the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC), and this will be the third edition. Between the first and second editions, there are 32,000 copies of the book in print and being circulated.

We see intentional community as an inclusive term for ecovillages, cohousing, residential land trusts, communes, student cooperatives, ashrams, monasteries, urban housing cooperatives, enlightened neighborhoods, and other related projects and dreams. We are excited to include this diversity in the *Directory*.

The 1996 edition was a huge success & listed over 600 communities. In the next edition, due for release in spring 2000, we hope to have even more communities wanting to stand up and be counted, and a brand new selection of articles, plenty of photographs, a resource listing, a bibliography of books on community, complete indexing, and more.

The first step in making all this happen, however, is your participation. We would like your community to be listed, and hope that you will please take the time to: 1. fill out the enclosed survey as thoroughly as you can (**It's OK to skip questions that are too difficult!**), 2. write your community listing (**this is the most important part**), and 3. return both to us in the envelope provided, or fax it to us.

If you have access to email, please write to us at [dir2000@ic.org](mailto:dir2000@ic.org). We can then email you a shorter version of the questionnaire, in English, French, German, or Spanish, and once you fill it in you can email it back to us, fax it to us, or send it via regular mail.

Being listed in the *Directory* is free. If you do not want to have your address or other contact information printed, we will honor that request — a policy that we have honored in all previous editions.

Please fill out the survey and consider participating in the *Directory* even if you do not want people to know where you are. What's important is to have your community's information included in the mix, so the *Directory* accurately reflects what the communities movement is today. Your information is vital.

Your description of your community needs to be 1260 characters or less (approximately 250 words). We are hoping to receive the surveys back within a month or so, but if you pass the deadline we certainly still want your information. Please send it as soon as you can.

We do ask, however, that communities only submit a listing if they do not advocate violent practices or interfere with members' freedom to leave the community.

If you have any questions or leads, please contact us by email at [dir2000@ic.org](mailto:dir2000@ic.org) (which we check every day), by phone or fax at 011-734-629-0384, or by regular mail, at: Communities Directory — 2000 Edition, 138 Twin Oaks Road, Louisa VA 23093 USA.

Please also let us know if you don't wish to be listed, or if you are no longer a community. We will correct our database, and save time and resources.

Thanks so much for your participation. We look forward to hearing from you.

In community, Jillian Downey & Elph Morgan

Co-managers, Communities Directory — 2000 Edition  
Fellowship for Intentional Community

## Some Letters of support:

### "Community Interlink"

I am writing to you in response to a letter by G.Constine in Grass Roots magazine (No.127)

After reading through your letter which expressed the aims of your magazine as providing a place for expression and the sharing of information, I find myself thinking "Thank God someone has finally done it."

It sounds like a great idea to provide a magazine that will act as a connecting link between persons, and I hope you are successful.

I have often observed that although many magazines offer a space for publishing letters, there seems to be an overwhelming need for much more space available for people to communicate, discuss & interact.

I would be interested in receiving your magazine regularly & would be happy to contribute & support in any way that you may require. Could you send me some further information or sample etc.

Looking forward to hearing from you...

Kelia

### Dear G. Constine

Your article in Grass Roots, Feedback, #127 regarding a magazine called Community Interlink caught my attention, as at present I am involved in a group in East Gippsland looking at very similar subjects as indicated in your article.

We are using a study group kit entitled "Building Rural Futures Through Co-operation" which comes from the Centre for Rural Communities, Monash University, Melbourne.

Our group is a farming district, sheep, cattle and a small group like myself who are organically inclined. Bairnsdale being our nearest town, 25kms away to the East. The years of drought and then floods, the decline of commodities etc. And all the unseen problems have taken its toll on our community with family breakdowns and a high rate of suicide being some of our problems.

Our group consists of twelve women, with input from spouses and partners. As yet we are only in the early stages of laying down the foundations and developing trust among ourselves, and we feel we are not ready to open the discussion up to the wider community just yet.

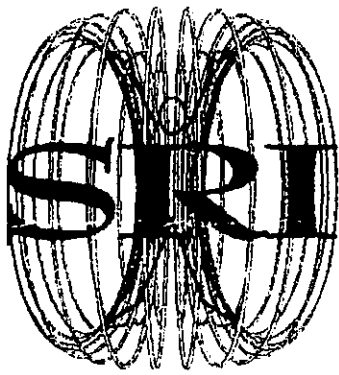
I would very much appreciate receiving details of your magazine.

Yours etc. Janis J.

Responses to this, our latest edition are welcomed. Please send to:

P.O. Box 209, Nimbin 2480.

Don't forget - this is your mag, so take this opportunity to speak to like-minded people, who just happen to be doing similar things to you.



## Sustainability Research Institute (SRI) News

**Mission Statement:** To establish a process of social & environmental regeneration through understanding of whole living systems and the

interconnectedness of all life. Promoting a transformation of life support & recreation activities, to practices that are ethical, sustainable and restore nature's ecosystems.

**The purpose of the SRI centre is to:**

- research and develop solutions to the many problems of modern life,
- demonstrate how sustainable ways of living are attainable,
- integrate economic, environmental and social strategies,
- explore individual human well-being from cradle to grave,
- research & promote advanced environmental & social technologies,
- develop & apply appropriate information technology to enhance data collection,
- Improve communication and the sharing of knowledge using digital networks,
- co-ordinate a wide network from different sectors of society so as to provide a regional, national and global meeting point,
- nourish diverse cultural and artistic activities that contribute to create visions of a harmonious and abundant future,
- provide courses, workshops and conferences ranging from understanding natural systems & technology, to personal growth and cultural advancement.

*"Just as the key to a species survival in the natural world is its ability to adapt to a local habitat, so the key to human survival will probably be the local community. If we can create vibrant, increasingly autonomous and self reliant local groupings of people that emphasise sharing, cooperation and living lightly on the Earth, we can avoid the fate warned of by Rachel Carson and the world scientists and restore the sacred balance of life."*

This quote from *"The Sacred Balance of Life"* sub titled *"Re-discovering our Place in Nature"* by David Suzuki with Amanda McConnell, succinctly states the reasoning behind SRI's strategic plan for healing our society.

## Community Lands Access Network Inc.

**"Linking people & groups interested in investing in or living ecologically on the land by offering admin assistance, legal & financial advice, plus a network for land scouting & fundraising..."**

CLAN's strengths are that it: \* connects disparate industries & people. \* is non-profit, with an open & stable financial base. \* is open to any person who agrees with the Aims & Charter. \* operates as a network for people & groups to realise their dreams.

**How to work with CLAN**

\* **Library:** Books, mags, articles, clippings, surveys, info sheets... on all essential subjects.

\* **Network:** Legal, financial, environmental & indigenous people, landowners, organic growers, media...

\* **Internet/Email:** Access info on land groups, real estate or other contacts.

\* **Land Searches:** Connect land needs (soils, usage, acreage, employment...) by interested parties to communities or land listed on our database.

\* **Purchases:** Mags, newspapers, books, texts & other info from CLAN's proposed Mail Order List.

Use CLAN to purchase land - pay service fees in LETS, money, time &/or energy...

Purchase Kits - Steps to acquiring land in areas you aim for. Available on disk, the internet or booklet form.

What to do next? 1) Ring the CLAN recorded infoline on 03 9513 1000 & leave your details.

## Admissions Standards for Communities

**Should communities not turn anyone down? Shouldn't we be open to anybody who needs us? Shouldn't we offer a more accepting, inclusive culture than mainstream society?**

Irwin Wolfe Zucker, a psychiatric Social worker says that if a community doesn't establish criteria for new members - "admissions standards" - the walking wounded arrive.

Which is fine, if your community has a therapeutic mission and experienced, healthy members available for mentoring needy, emotionally immature people.

Here are admissions criteria from two communities that may help you think through your own needs in this area. First, an Arizona community seeking interns:

*We're looking for people who feel confident and good about themselves, who have achieved a degree of emotional maturity, and who can get along with others in a group situation.*

*We're interested in people who don't feel that they've been harmed or taken advantage of by others. Who don't frequently feel angry with or blame others for hurting them. People who don't get feedback that they are moody or touchy. People who are willing to say what they want & need, what they don't like, and what, ideally, they'd like changed.*

*In our experience, what works well in a community are people who feel good, ask for what they want, and don't often feel victimised by others.*

The 31 year old Findhorn Foundation says this in its brochure: *Our aim is to embody, demonstrate and teach aspects of personal & world service. The demands and challenges of living in this community require emotional maturity and spiritual awareness.*

*We are looking for those who have moved beyond a sole concern for their own growth and are ready to live, act and work in a collective environment, making a difference in the world. Before you commit for one year...we require that you participate in the Experience week and ... complete three months in the Living in Community Programme.*

*You will either leave at the end of the year with a toolbox for personal & spiritual growth and deep understanding of service, or agree to stay for another year and join our staff training. It is necessary that all concerned feel a mutual sense of rightness.*

**If your community front door is difficult to enter, healthy people will strive to get in.**

# SUSTAINABILITY SOCIAL JUSTICE

**"Sustain" is a verb meaning "to keep up or keep going as an action or process". "Sustainable" is an adjective which describes an action or process that can be kept up or kept going ad infinitum.**

For a way of life to be called 'sustainable' it needs to: 1) be within reach of everybody on the planet; 2) be so that if everyone on the planet were doing it, the earth would not be harmed; and 3) address the current situation of inequality which has 1/5th of the world's population consuming 4/5th of the world's resources

Sustainability needs to be in terms, not only of our own needs, but also the needs and rights of other people, other species and future generations.

Each of these points recognises the global tensions which are created and aggravated by social injustice. If the solutions to addressing our social and environmental problems are simply not possible for the majority of the world's population (because they require money or capital which most people don't have and can't get) then what long term positive effect can these solutions have?

Social Injustice, which maintains the advantage of an elite (by continuing to exploit resources needed by the disadvantaged majority), will lead to the violence and devastation which occurs when people are desperate to survive. For true sustainability to be achieved 'social justice' is a fundamental component.

## HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE?

The Caretakers Project suggests that if we use access to public land as a way of providing for such basic needs as food and shelter, then we will have a sustainable/socially just starting point in creating a sustainable/socially just way of life.

Wisely regulated use of public land can become an option which is available to everyone on the planet. People will be able to work together on the land to provide for their own basic needs in a way which is responsible to other people and helpful to the planet. They will not need to be involved in the competitive struggle for land ownership or the unsustainable activities this struggle invariably leads to.

On two suburban acres a community of between ten and forty people can build housing, grow food, and develop and promote sustainable living practices. Communal Living will provide the key to maintaining a high standard of living and quality of life, without needing a high income or the material affluence such an income allows. Caretakers will still have access to a wide range of different resources and materials because there will be many people sharing together.

There are many other aspects to a sustainable lifestyle which can be developed and explored once human energy is released from the momentous struggle for land ownership as part of survival. The Caretakers option will allow us to satisfy our own needs without having to continue on the treadmill of over-production and over-consumption, - without having to win or profit at somebody else's expense. It also allows hope for a future which is secure and happy for all.

**For more information about Caretakers:**

**<http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/Canopy/1864/> or call: 02 4782 9693**

# WHAT HELPS COMMUNITIES BECOME SUCCESSFUL

**I am adding, for completeness, a number of the human qualities that if developed by the participants will greatly assist in the success of building community.**

Honesty -- Non-violence -- Love/Compassion -- Calmness/Unhurried -- Open-mindedness/Non-dogmatic -- Patience -- Tolerance and Voluntary Responsibility.

## Clarity and consensus of Vision

Deliberate community development -- consensus understanding and skills, Appropriate legal structure -- interpersonal bonding practices.

## Financial structure and plan

Provision of inclusive processes for the -- need to avoid excessive financial pressure younger members.

Income plan, Shared ownership of process, -- needs to suit the perk (play/work) aspirations, design and agreements of members -includes shared management of all essential infrastructure

Integrated living and perkling -- clear and transparent agreements/arrangements.

## Natural/organic process for bringing in new members

Appropriate land -- consensus

Land assessment and infrastructure design -- sufficient time-- includes up to 12 months for assessment.

-- design to incorporate ESD Principles, Compassionate process for moving on those who don't fit in

## Rituals -

-- First priority being the personal and spiritual development of each member.

-- Second priority being the support of each for the above by everyone in every group process and activity.

-- Each member being present in the moment as they move towards the common vision, following a strategic plan.

## MY SONGS - MY LIFE

Ian Conochie, one time opera bass-baritone, now folk singer, presents an album of 17 of his songs with backing by his family in the group, *Shiralee*. Ian co-founded the Wolery Community in WA in 1976 and his songs of nature and humanist lifestyle have an appeal for people living in intentional communities.

Two of the songs, "Magic Mountain" and "In a Hand-held Circle" were warmly received at the Communities Conference in January 1997 at Commonground.

CD \$20 or Cassette \$15 (includes postage)  
Cheques to Ian Conochie, RMB 1050  
Denmark, Western Australia. 6333

# Intergenerational Sustainability

## 1998 Intentional Communities Gathering.

The forum was organised by Ken and Li from Bodhi Farm. There were about 30 people attending. (The workshop was based around their experience of Intergenerational Sustainability at Bodhi Farm)



Ken, a man of about 40, started by explaining a little about Bodhi Farm Community.

Bodhi Farm is about 20 years old and at present about 40 people live there with ages ranging from 5 months to 70 years.

They use consensus decision making and are bound together by what he called a spiritual glue, an agreement on a basic adherence to the Buddhist principles of No killing, lying, sexual misconduct, stealing or intoxicants. They do a mini-

mum of farming due to the land being perched on the edge of a mountain with quite a lot of forest.

He said things never stay the same. With young people growing up things are always changing. Then Ken introduced Li.

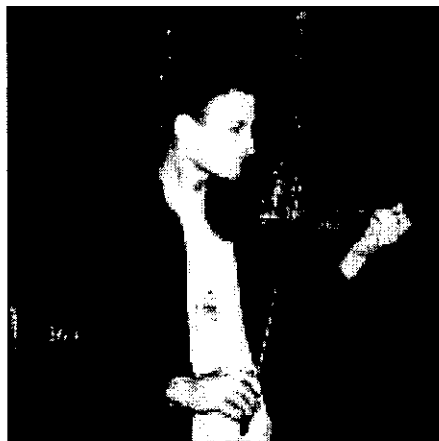
Li is a young man of about 18 and was keen to share his experience of growing up on Bodhi Farm.

Li thought it was great to grow up with other young people (about 10) and always felt safe as there were always lots of carers around.

He spoke about the strong connection to the bush he had developed whilst growing up there, and of his experiences of growing up with wonderful, inspirational adults whom he feels have supported him in developing a good sense of who he is. He feels imbued with positive things from Buddhism and has learnt the benefits of living and working co-operatively and realises daily what a benefit this is and how lucky he really is.

He spoke about young people leaving the community, or "being taken away" by their parents as he put it and the sadness that this caused him and his friends.

Going to school at Lismore was a shock, but in retrospect he was glad that he went as it was an opportunity for him to learn more about the outside world and



meet new people.

Now grown up, Li spoke about the difficulties for the younger generation who want to carry on Bodhi Farm. As young people they are not quite sure what they want to do with their lives, in terms of staying on in the community or doing other things (this is also confusing for adults and parents). There are also legal problems with the community growing in size, with the council not allowing new dwellings and the fact that the land can only have so many residents before becoming over-populated.

Li has now decided to build his own small house in the bush. This was quite an issue for the community to work through, because of concern for population size.

Having now found approval from the community he is enjoying heaps of infrastructure support in terms of tools, chainsaws etc. and is finding the large skill base within the community to be invaluable. The community has supported Li in his passion for music through building a place for him and his friends to play and enjoy themselves.

Li also spoke about his desire to create, sometimes he feels he wants to start a new community and be one of the pioneers. At times he struggles with this, living in an already established community.

It is a tradition at Bodhi Farm to have rituals at the coming of age of their young men and women.

Every year they all have time away together down at the beach, here they have their AGM and can relax together and talk through the issues without any of the every day stresses. They felt this was a major strength for the community.

The majority of this workshop was orientated around Li and Ken's experiences. A number of people were keen to discuss it further.

Lisa said that young people were not coming to meetings unless they had to.

Generally it was felt that while it had been very valuable to hear about Li and Ken's experience, there were a lot of people at the workshop who were keen to talk about the issue as a group, so we agreed to have another open space later to talk it through more.

**All in all I thought it was a very interesting presentation and gained some valuable insights.**





# South East Australian Intentional Communities Gathering Report

## January 1999

### Greeting from Ed!

This was a great gathering!

Fifty-six adults and fifteen young 'uns gathered on 22-24 January 1999 for two days of celebration, networking and the development of our communal skills.

Two years ago, The Fruitsalad Network hosted the first National Intentional Communities Gathering (four days) at Commonground, near Seymour, Vic.

Fruitsalad is a loose gaggle of intentional communities who have been enjoying each others company these last five years. Its aim is to promote intentional community as a serious choice in our society.

Based on the success of this event, Dharmanada Community in Northern NSW took the baton and hosted the second National Conference (five days) in September last year. There were a remarkable number of people from SE Australia present. Fancy having to go that far north to meet such kindred spirits!

Now, with the momentum from this second conference, there was a real opportunity to bring new and old campaigners together. What started out as an informal gathering of those who 'went north,' and the Fruitsalad mob grew into something rather more conference like.

In addition to the established rural communities, there was a groundswell of people involved in urban communities, those readying communities to fly or were 'getting serious'! The diversity of communities and ages present provided an inspiring slice of communal possibilities in SE Australia. The 'adventurous' award goes to the Eden Park mob from the Adelaide Hills.

We gathered topics of mutual interest and then settled on the following six areas - legal entities, conflict resolution, emotional 'stuff', social action in communities, types of communities with an emphasis on physical layout and the experiences of existing communities with an emphasis on the old making way for the new. The workshops were a mixture of people sharing experiences through to facilitators providing skills based presentations.

In our 'back together' sessions (what professionals call plenary sessions) people called out the 'gems of wisdom' gleaned from their workshops. There were aplenty. We were clearly reminded of the need for a How-to-do-it manual for intentional communities. There is such a need to gather together the incredible wealth of experiences that go into sustaining an intentional community.

Fortunately, there is one in the pipeline! A commitment was forged at Dharmanada to produce such a creature. Talk to Simon Clough at Dharmanada (Ph 02 6688 6217), Robert Tap at Crystal Waters Qld (Ph 0418786143) or Ed McKinley at Commonground if you want to know how it is coming along or to help give birth to this manual.

In between all this, delicious tucker was produced by a dedicated team in the kitchen, we played community games, were really cool at the dam and talked the leg off a chair or two.

In fact such a good time was had that we want to do it all again next year - but for three days this time. Again at Commonground from Thursday evening, 20th to Sun arvo 23rd Jan 2000.

If you want to follow up anything from this SE Australian gathering or even start thinking about next year, contact Ed McKinley at Commonground by mail: P O Box 474, Seymour 3661; by phone (03) 57938 257 or email: cgsey@mcmedia.net.au

### Cowsnest Community Farm Vacancy

Our community is seeking two or more people to join us in living a rural lifestyle with an emphasis on working together as a team four days per week. Current projects include establishing a large Bio-Dynamic vegetable garden, preparing for commercial production of goat's milk products & the management of a jersey cow herd for our own milk supply.

The house is very secluded & has two detached bedrooms with a very large verandah over looking a treed gully. The house is available for rent for a two year trial period, with a view to buying.

Phone: (02) 6493 2262 between 7am & 8pm.

### Newly forming Multiple Occupancy seeks successfully formed or forming M.O's for friendship, fun, companionship and ...advice!!

I'm involved with an MO here on the SE coast of NSW. 15 people looking for around 100 acres (bush & part cleared), 10 dwellings & commonhouse/learning centre, consensus based with a joint venture.

We seek the experienced guidance of other communities out there who have/or are, dealing with the application process. Legal, conflict resolution, council application/approach etc. For that matter anyone interested in joining...Any info please be in touch.

Dan Bakker: Tassiedan@hotmail.com C/- Candelo P.O. NSW 2550.

### Dead Gum Revival at GABALAH

Fresh air to breathe, clean water to drink, good food to eat - a place to call home - for every living creature!

Are you into working together towards SUSTAINABILITY in sub tropical NSW? Seek out D.G.R at P.O. Box eight, Chillingham 2484.

#### Can you be part of the evolution?

**D.G.R needs:** Builders, designers, gardeners, ecologists, farmers, herbalists, architects, lawyers, cooks, artists.

**Donations of:** Plants, timber, building stuff, knowledge, time, money, tools.

**Would you like:** Fresh air, clean water, good food, a home & a healthy community.

#### What we're doing right now:

**Organic market garden** - food & income for the community.

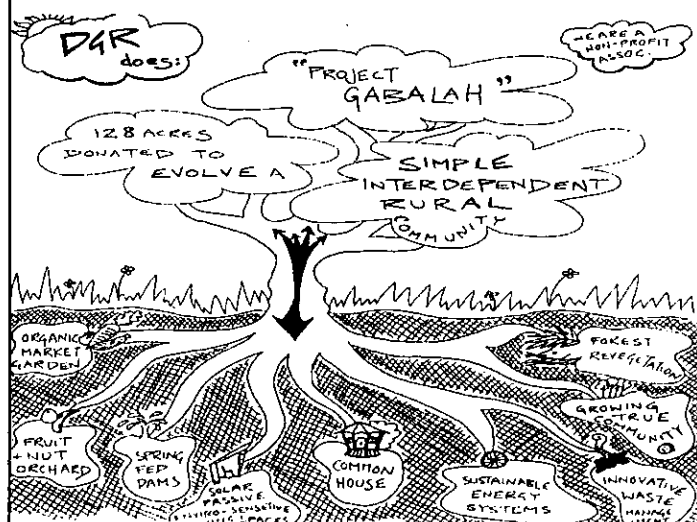
**Rainforest nursery** - landcare for our catchment.

**Planting trees** - Fruit, forest, bushucker.

**Common House** - Planning, approval, then building

**Co-networking** - with kindred spirits & communities near & far.

**Celebrating** - The good life!



# CO-OPERATIVES

This is written in response to my surprise at finding how little people in the intentional community scene know about co-operatives, from two points - the history, which is significant to the social justice movement; and the opportunities for government funding assistance to low income people.

## WHAT IS A CO-OPERATIVE?

Co-ops are different from other types of organisations since they abide by three main rules:

- Co-ops treat people fairly and respectfully;
- Co-ops encourage people to work together towards solving their mutual problems;
- Co-ops provide products and services to meet people's needs rather than solely for the purpose of making money.

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

## OURSTORY/HERSTORY/HISTORY:

Co-operatives began in England and France as a socially just answer to the horrific working conditions of the industrial revolution factories. The first co-operatives were worker co-operatives, distributing the profits back to the workers and into the development of the co-op, rather than to the pocket of an 'owner of the business'. The movement has grown to include producer co-ops (eg Norco), financial co-ops (eg Credit Unions), consumer co-ops (eg food co-ops) and others, including housing co-ops.

Co-operatives exist all over the world and are linked by national & international bodies. All co-operatives subscribe to the Seven International Principles of Co-operation, which cover issues such as: inclusiveness, democracy, fairness, co-operation with other co-ops, education, outreach & sustainability. (Not all co-operatives adhere to these principles - but the more people who know about these principles and remind them/hold them accountable, the better!)

## FUNDING

Most State governments have processes for funding housing co-operatives for low income people. Most housing co-ops to date purchase individual houses for their members and manage them co-operatively. Some create intentional geographic communities, and the potential is there to continue doing this. In NSW the body to approach is ARCH (Association to Resource Co-operative Housing) - ph 1800 066 834 or 02 9361 6834. In other states, talk to your Housing Department.

## CO-OPS AS A STRUCTURE

Other forms of legal structures for intentional communities (eg company) can incorporate the Principles of Co-operation, the ourstory of the co-op movement, and the present global network of co-ops working for justice and sustainability. therefore, communities do not necessarily need to register under the Co-operatives Act (in their state) if another structure is a better vehicle for their community. Check your state legislation (which is rapidly becoming nationalised) and talk to other co-op communities.

In the words of David Spain (in his "Legal Structures of Intentional Communities" document) - "It is important for the spirit and unison of the 'sustainable lifestyle' movement that the co-operative structure, with its democratic idealism, potentials for formal federation and international fraternity, be fostered."

Source: ICA (International Co-operative Association) News, No. 5/6, 1995.

## Seven International Principals of Co-operation:

### 1. VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Co-operatives 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.

### 2. DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote), and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

### 3. MEMBER ECONOMIC CONTROL

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least a part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

### 4. AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

### 5. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

### 6. CO-OPERATION AMONG CO-OPERATIVES

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

### 7. CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

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## New Intentional Community in the Adelaide Hills

There are very few rural IC's in South Australia.

One reason has been a long history of set backs for communities trying to get planning permission for multiple occupancy. Many people have 'headed east' to join existing communities rather than put lots of energy into initiating a community here which may fold because of planning approval problems.

We are therefore excited to see a new community, 'Eden Park,' starting up near Mt Barker. Work is currently under way to establish a Community Title at Eden Park allowing for 16 home sites (there are some houses there already) and shared ownership of a 17 room heritage mansion and agricultural land (about 50 ha.) Permaculture plans include substantial revegetation mixed bio-dynamic food production, timber crops and use of the mansion for conferences and courses. Eden Park, PO Box 1508, Mt Barker SA.5251. (08) 83982890 Fax (08) 83984324

# INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE, WA.

February 25 to March 1, 1999

The conference, the first of its kind in WA, was held at Tone River, a former mill town which is now a Dept. of Sport & amp; Recreation Camp near Manjimup, Western Australia.

Initiated by John Croft and organised, over several months, by Gaia Foundation volunteers, this conference was rated by all participants as a great success.

Despite hot and humid weather, about a hundred people gathered for the long weekend. As we arrived, we were allocated to specific cottages, each of which housed 8-10 people who shared food and cooking. The whole group gathered for the plenary sessions in the well equipped hall.

Workshops were run concurrently with each other, but all were repeated so that any one person could get to most of them. Workshop venues ranged from a cottage to a shady tree or even the nearby swimming hole in the Tone River.

At our first combined gathering, we individually told a bit of our backgrounds and expressed what we hoped to gain from the conference. The few who came from existing communities were, of course, valuable as resource persons, but they were also there to gather new ideas and inspiration. The vast majority of those attending, however, came from all sorts of backgrounds, mostly urban, and hoped to learn about community, to join with others to form communities or to share their own land with others. Some had lived in communities previously and were keen to join again.

John Croft set the tone of our thinking with an excellent, illustrated talk on the general history and characteristics of authentic community.

Space does not permit a full coverage of John's talk but the gist of it was that by establishing sustainable communities today, people are empowering themselves to meet the very real challenges of possible environmental and social collapse due to our species having over-exploited the earth's resources. He saw, as a matter of urgency, the formation of sustainable communities ranging from the usual small rural and urban communities to developing whole towns as integrated, sustainable communities.

Those already living in intentional communities had ample opportunity to give details of their communities' philosophy, social life, organization, finances and legal structures, while those endeavouring to start communities were presented with a wide range of practical possibilities from which to choose. The weather was extremely hot and humid during the whole conference so that, on the day that John Croft was to present his workshop on prob-

lems that might arise from computer breakdowns in the Year 2000, he announced that the venue was moved to the river. When someone asked him, "Do you mean, at the swimming hole?" John answered, "No, I mean in the swimming hole!" True to his word, he led us down to the pool where we all stripped off and revelled in the coolness of the large pool. In these very unusual but delightful circumstances, John delivered his very detailed address on Y2K while standing in the water with the rest of us draped along the river bank and taking occasional quiet dip.

John stressed that Y2K is a "wake up call". Business cycles that used to occur every seven years are now only three and a half years apart; the El Nino effect was once every nine years but now it comes around each four years. Human society is thus very finely balanced and chaos could result if the world's computers are not made Y2K compliant by the end of this year. Intentional rural and urban communities are the way to go, but we need to hurry. He suggested the following points for action:-

1. Get to know your neighbours really well, and build community everywhere.

2. Look at your own groups and intentional communities to set up fail-safe systems in case society's usual complex systems break down.

3. Become social innovators - become creative in ways we haven't yet thought of - build up and share skills in our communities - become LETS dependent.

In the early mornings and evenings of the conference we participated in community-building songs and circle dances and, for our last evening meal, we took the tables and chairs from our cottages and set them around on the lawn in a large circle for a wonderful shared buffet meal under a full moon.

During those few days of the conference we all felt that a real feeling of community had developed among us, with a happy reminder for three participants, Ian and Enid Conochie and Tim Lang, of the Dharmananda Gathering which they had also attended.

An important result was that specific meetings were planned to bring together those with land and those wanting to move onto land. It seems that new groups may well result from this.

*Best wishes, Enid and Ian Conochie*

## CAROL PERRY AND SIMON CLOUGH

**Are available to assist communities with the following issues: \* forming a community, \* meeting facilitation, \* conflict resolution and \* communication workshops.**

**Simon and Carol have over 50 years of communal living experience between them as well as being highly skilled in all aspects of communication and mediation**

*Community Interlink would like to thank the Nimbin News Magazine for the generous use of their office & equipment.*

**Nimbin News Magazine** is a co-operatively run, community access journal, with articles & information from Nimbin & other areas. We cover concerns relevant to alternative lifestyles and those looking for the most sustainable way.

**Nimbin News Magazine** is one of the longest running alternative journals and the Nimbin bio-region is at the forefront in the development of sustainable systems.

As networkers **Nimbin News Magazine** scans many mags from Australia and overseas for suitable and scarce information for our readers; including new ideas on animals, health, the environment, technology & much more. We look for & expose some of the more unsavoury power games perpetrated by those who would pillage the earth.

**Nimbin News Magazine, P.O. Box 209 Nimbin. Phone: 6689 1184.**

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