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Pete Verson
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Pancom Community Council Newsletter, 19.4.2003

The "Re-imagining Utopia" Project

The ABC in conjunction with the Fiona Martin and Kath Duncan of the Media Programme within the Division of Arts, Southern Cross University are presenting a series of Radio National programmes during May 2003, featuring lifestyles in Intentional Communities in various places around Australia.

The following information is based on material supplied by Fiona Martin and Kath Duncan and edited by Peter Hamilton.

changes/deletions by Fiona

"Life Matters"... ABC-SCU, Programme "A".

ABC Radio National, every Monday at 10.30am from May 5th until June 9th.

There are now hundreds of such Intentional Communities in regional Australia. Places where people unite with a common vision, sharing their land, tools and their lives in pursuit of a better world.

Intentional Communities in Australia have a rich history that dates back to European settlement. No-one claims they have developed an ideal model for such communities. Rather these communities may be considered as social and environmental experiments in how people can better live together. Many such communities see themselves as providing a high quality of life for their members as an extended family. *they*

This series of *Life Matters* will explore contemporary dreams of fleeing the city and living communally in the rural areas of Australia. Kath Duncan and Fiona Martin will take us to land-sharing and spiritual communities, eco-villages, and artist colonies across the country - from the Top End to the West Australian coast, from Melbourne's rural fringes to Queensland's mountain rainforest.

Residents will describe how their community works and how they are changing over time. They'll describe the gap between their vision and their reality, and some of the practical challenges they face with self-governance, negotiating work, ethics and property rights, coping with ageing, isolation, tourists and feral animals.

It will also look at the economics of alternative lifestyles and how they are changing the regional landscape. There will be discussion on the practicalities of building a new Intentional Community along with the challenges, pitfalls and the great joys.

Over the six week period there will be an opportunity for listeners to try their hand at planning and participating in a "virtual" online community. Each week there'll be a new challenge for residents to tackle, where such actions could open up new lifestyle possibilities."

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The "*Life Matters*" programmes consist of:-

May 5th *This Land is Our Land*

"Shared ownership of land is at the heart of the social contract on many *Intentional Communities*, and in this program we visit three such places. Our journey starts on the NSW North Coast, home to over a hundred Intentional Communities and site of the 1973 counter-culture Aquarius Festival which inspired many to committing themselves to living out a social alternative. From there we go further north to *Manduka*, near Maleny on Queensland's Sunshine Coast and then across the country to visit *The Wolery Ecological Community*, in Denmark in West Australia."

May 12th *Making Your Natural Life Spiritual, and Your Spiritual Life Natural*

"Religion has historically provided the strongest of communal bonds. In this program we will visit three contemporary spiritual communities and find out how their interaction with 'place' and the natural environment impacts on the way their community works. We begin in the hills near Nambour in Queensland, at *Chenrezig Institute for Buddhist Studies*. We then head for the mulga scrub of Bourke, in far western NSW, to talk to residents of the *Cornerstone* Christian community. And we visit Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, to look at the life on the outstations, a 1970s initiative involving a return to the land, celebration of spiritual community, and a way for families to reconnect with traditional life."

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May 19th *(Title to be announced.)* ✓

"In this program we explore the concept of community design and the permaculture legacy through a journey to several eco-villages, each with its own processes for fostering the successful operation and growth of intentional communities - *Crystal Waters* in SE Queensland, one of Australia's oldest eco-villages and home of the *Global Eco-village Network*; *Jarlanbah*, a mature community development on the fringes of Nimbin in NSW, and *Rosneath Farm*, a new eco-village with shares still for sale, based near Dunsborough in South West Australia."

May 26th *A Life of Art*

"Australia's artist colonies have a fascinating, if ephemeral, history. In this program we talk to residents of three influential communities - *Monsalvat*, in Eltham Victoria, the vibrant community founded and run by Justus Jorgensen in the 1930s; *Bundanon*, artist Arthur Boyd's legacy to Australian cultural life - a 'living arts centre' in the Shoalhaven valley; and the *Maningrida Arts & Culture Centre*, home to one of Australia's largest community based Aboriginal arts Cooperatives, serving over 350 artists in the north of Arnhem Land."

June 2nd *Marketing an Alternative*

"The economics of establishing and maintaining social alternatives is often a topic of debate on communities. In this program we look at the issues which community residents face in establishing businesses, and more widely at the marketing of alternative lifestyles. We visit *Patanga*, near Bellingen NSW, where many of the residents are self-employed, running their own businesses. We then head for two towns where alternative living has changed the rural landscape and the pace of life - *Daylesford* in Victoria, and *Maleny* in SE Queensland."

June 9th *DIY (Do It Yourself) Community*

"New Intentional Communities are springing up all over Australia. How do you go about this adventure with the maximum chance of creating a happy, functional and stable outcome? We consult community enthusiasts with a range of skills - an understanding of history, of law, of social glue and cultural capital - and we return to the people we've visited on our travels to ask them what they'd change about their worlds if only they could."

"Sanctuary"... ABC-SCU, Programme, "B".

"Radio Eye", ABC Radio National, Saturday, May 10th 2003, 2pm.

"Ever dreamt of building a better world?" Or escaping the one you're in? Pack your *Gandhi* and *Thoreau*, *Lord of the Rings* and maybe a conflict resolution handbook for a trek around the Rainbow Region of the NSW North coast. This lush landscape is the hub of Australia's land-sharing movement since the 1970's. Here, idealism, sweat and compromise have spawned over a hundred intentional communities. Each has its own vision and ethos...but none is more than the sum of its residents. In *Radio Eye* this week Fiona Martin and Kath Duncan explore how people's ideas of community have changed over the last 30 years. They explore the desires behind the philosophies, the hard work and soul-searching behind the ethics. Pick up a brushcutter and join them for a journey into sanctuary."


"New World Coming"... ABC-SCU, Programme, "C".

ABC Triple J, "Out There", Morning Show with Steve Cannane,
from May 10th - 16th

"Profiles of young people who have grown up on, or live on, communities round the country. They talk about what they get out of living communally, what they want to change about their communities, how they think about 'the outside world', and what, if anything, would persuade them to leave."

ABC-SCU... Programme, "D".

"RE-IMAGINING UTOPIA" WEBSITE

 An invitation for listeners to participate in an interactive Website called **"Build Your Own"**.

Overview of the Website

The proposed site aims to engage users with a taste of what it's like to build an *Intentional Community* - before they buy a block in an eco-village or a share in a *Multiple Occupancy*.

An important feature of *Intentional Communities* is collaboration between participants to realise a shared vision. The aim is to give the audience a taste of what's it's like to build a community, and some of the social, economic and political issues that arise. These complex issues and processes will be tackled by engaging the audience interactively, using elements in the style of *"The Sims Online"* and the ABC's *"Grow your own"* cross-media projects.

We aim to create the structure of a hypothetical new community online - including a geographical site, vision, legal structure, covenants, resident profiles etc - and to invite ABC users to join in discussions about issues affecting this new community.

Through these 'council' meetings the audience will be able to get involved in critical debates over such issues as land and water sharing, dealing with anti-social behaviour and building in environmentally sensitive areas, and see something of the impact of their part in the process. The outcomes of the debates, will be recorded week by week by changes to the Homepage.

The site will also allow users to explore the practices and philosophies behind the growth of post-Aquarian *Intentional Communities*, and to reflect on the cultural impacts of these communities on regional Australia. The website is conceived as an ongoing public resource to be hosted by ABC Online.

Stage One of the Website

This Stage will accompany the 6 x 20min *Re-Imagining Utopia* documentaries to be broadcast on *Life Matters*, beginning Monday May 5, 2003, the *Sanctuaries* feature on *Radio Eye* and the *Out There* profiles on Triple J's *Morning Show* (12 - 16 May) during the 30th anniversary month of the Nimbin Aquarius Festival, May 2003.

The site will extend the life and conceptual scope of the radio works, involving audience interaction with community designers and residents in hypothetical, but everyday, debates about community building. The site will feature personal stories, and provide an educational resource on aspects of social, environmental and regional development. It will also showcase ongoing research work.

User experience

On visiting the site users will have access to a toolbox of resources (site resource area, including timeline, quiz etc), an interactive map of the community, and an explanation of the community's history, legal structure and aims. They will also have access to information on some of the key issues facing the community. Users would be encouraged to use the toolbox to access the resources so that they can effectively engage with the site forums. They will also be encouraged to play with the map and get acquainted with the lay of the land.

It is envisaged that by the 2nd week of the *Life Matters* radio series and with the available resources on the site, that the audience will have developed a level of understanding, confidence and opinion to engage each week, with other participants in a live *Online Forum*.

Each week from May 12, following the 2nd *Life Matters* program, and the *Sanctuary* program on *Radio Eye*, a one-two hour live *Online Forum* viz a "Chat Session", will be held to tackle specific community issues, with current residents of *Intentional Communities* aiding the ABC users to come to decisions on contentious issues relating to the construction of a hypothetical community called *Paradiso Falls* located in *Incognita Valley*.

*1 line off
The live *Online Forum* will be paneled by residents of *Intentional Communities* acting in the role of "elders" or "community leaders". They will be charged with making final decisions on tasks based on the strength of argument and discussion from the users partaking in the *Online Forum*.

A *Guest Book* will also be available for the audience to pose questions at any time, to both experts and other users interested in this form of lifestyle. The *Guest Book* will also enable comments to be made from the audience regarding their views or critique and the development of the hypothetical *Paradiso Falls* community.

Each week a graphic visualisation of the community's decisions and the effects of these decisions will be presented on an evolving map."

Stage Two of the Website

This Stage will involve maintenance and ongoing development of the site content beyond the radio programs air time, and the preparation of material for the staging of a *National Intentional Communities Conference* at the Southern Cross University, at a date to be confirmed.

Note: Details in the above programmes may be changed before going to air.

The 30th ANNIVERSARY of the NIMBIN 1973, "AQUARIUS" FESTIVAL.

Please note that the 30th Anniversary of the Aquarius Festival is being held at the same time as these programmes are going to air.

The Nimbin *Aquarius Festival* of May 12-23, 1973, was sponsored by the *Australian Union of Students* and stands as a monument to a major cultural shift in Northern NSW, with repercussions round the Nation. This festival is universally acknowledged as "Australia's Woodstock", but unlike Woodstock, it was the convergence of many people in search of a paradigm shift. People from around Australia travelled to Nimbin to share their ideas, lifestyles, art and passion, hoping to build a kinder, gentler, more sharing world. This journey, thirty years on, is as important now as it was then.

The *Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc.* is organising anniversary events between the 10th and 24th of May this year. They welcome the input of other community members, groups and communities to do the same. They are keen for people to get together, plan an event, exhibition, display, happening, and then get in touch with the facilitators so they can help with publicity etc. Be inspired, write a story or poem, create a work of art, make a garden....and celebrate. The donation or loan of any Aquarius memorabilia, posters, film, whatever, would be appreciated. The *Rainbow Archive Association* can arrange for copying of such material and return of the material. Such material will be treated as a national treasure.

Events include:-

- An *Intentional Communities Forum*, "Living the Dreams...Dealing with the Nightmares" will be held on Saturday 17th May, 9.30-5.0pm. at *Djaanbung Gardens Permaculture Centre, Nimbin* at which there will be a session on "Intentional Communities Public Liability Insurance". Enquiries and bookings: 02-6689-1755, P.O. Box 379, Nimbin, 2480.

For more information:-

- on the *Aquarius Anniversary* contact:-
Katie Cawcutt. Email: katielovesnimbin@yahoo.com.au
Phone (02) 66-891-938 or post PO Box 12, Nimbin, NSW, 2480.

A website at <http://www.30th-nimbin-aquarius-anniversary.netfirms.com/> is being created by Skye. As work is in progress, she welcomes input. Please send comments and suggestions to Skyles@nimbin-australia.com

- on the *Rainbow Archive Association* contact:-
Peter Hamilton: Email: peterh@nor.com.au
Phone (02) 66-858-648 or post PO Box 102, Nimbin, 2480. ~~<http://www.rainbowarchive.com>~~

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Fiona's Draft
This draft by - Fiona Version
DRAFT 4.

Pancom Community Council Newsletter, 19.4.2003

The "Re-imagining Utopia" Project

During May 2003 ABC Radio & Online in conjunction with Fiona Martin and Kath Duncan of Southern Cross University's media program, are presenting a series of radio features and a website featuring changing lifestyles and philosophies in Intentional Communities around Australia.

The following information is based on material supplied by Fiona Martin and Kath Duncan and edited by Peter Hamilton.

Life Matters: Re-imagining Utopia series

ABC Radio National, every Monday at 10.30am from May 5th until June 9th.

There are now hundreds of Intentional Communities in regional Australia. Places where people unite with a common vision, sharing their land, tools and their lives in pursuit of a better world.

Intentional Communities in Australia have a rich history that dates back to European settlement. No-one claims they have developed an ideal model for such communities. Rather they may be considered as social and environmental experiments in how people can better live together. Many such communities see themselves as providing a high quality of life for their members as an extended family.

This series of *Life Matters* will explore contemporary dreams of fleeing the city and living communally in the rural areas of Australia. Kath Duncan and Fiona Martin will take us to land-sharing and spiritual communities, eco-villages, and artist colonies across the country - from the Top End to the West Australian coast, from Melbourne's rural fringes to Queensland's mountain rainforest.

Residents will describe how their community works and how they are changing over time. They'll describe the gap between their vision and their reality, and some of the practical challenges they face with self-governance, negotiating work, ethics and property rights, coping with ageing, isolation, tourists and feral animals.

It will also look at the economics of alternative lifestyles and how they are changing the regional landscape. There will be discussion on the practicalities of building a new Intentional Community along with the challenges, pitfalls and the great joys.

Over the six week period there will be an opportunity for listeners to try their hand at planning and participating in a "virtual" online community. Each week there'll be a new challenge for residents to tackle, where such actions could open up new lifestyle possibilities.

Bold. The Life Matters broadcasts will be:

May 5th This Land is Our Land

Shared ownership of land is at the heart of the social contract on many Intentional Communities, and in this program we meet several land-sharing groups. Our journey starts on the NSW North Coast, home to over a hundred Intentional Communities and site of the 1973 counter-culture Aquarius Festival which inspired many to committing themselves to living out a social alternative. From there we go further north to Manduka, near Maleny on Queensland's Sunshine Coast and then across the country to visit The Wolery Ecological Community, in Denmark in West Australia. *X drop*

May 12th Making Your Natural Life Spiritual, and Your Spiritual Life Natural

Religion has historically provided the strongest of communal bonds. In this program we will visit three contemporary spiritual communities and find out how their interaction with 'place' and the natural environment impacts on the way their community works. We begin in the hills near Nambour in Queensland, at the Chenrezig Institute for Buddhist Studies. We then head for the mulga scrub of Bourke, in far western NSW, to talk to residents of the Cornerstone Christian community. And we visit Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, to look at the life on the outstations, a 1970s initiative involving a return to the land, celebration of spiritual community, and a way for families to reconnect with traditional life.

May 19th ... New World Design

In this program we explore the concept of community design and the permaculture legacy through a journey to several eco-villages. Each has its own approach to fostering the successful operation and growth of intentional communities. Crystal Waters in SE Queensland, is one of Australia's oldest eco-villages and home of the Global Eco-village Network; Jarlanbah, is a mature community title development on the fringes of Nimbin in NSW, and Rosneath Farm, a new eco-village with shares still for sale, based near Dunsborough in South West Australia.

May 26th A Life of Art

Australia's artist colonies have a fascinating, if ephemeral, history. In this program we talk to residents of three influential communities: Monsalvat, in Eltham Victoria, the vibrant community founded and run by Justus Jorgensen in the 1930s; The Dunmoochin Artists Society, a nearby community set up by Clifton Pugh which grew from 15 to 200 acres as other artists came to join him; and finally Bundanon, artist Arthur Boyd's legacy to Australian cultural life - a 'living arts centre' in the Shoalhaven valley. *Mal*

June 2nd Marketing an Alternative

The economics of establishing and maintaining social alternatives is often a topic of debate on communities. In this program we look at the issues which community residents face in establishing businesses, and more widely at the marketing of alternative lifestyles. We visit Patanga, near Bellingen NSW, where many of the residents are self-employed, running their own businesses. We then head for two towns where alternative living has changed the rural landscape and the pace of life - Daylesford in Victoria, and Maleny in SE Queensland.

June 9th ... (DIY) (Do It Yourself) Community

New Intentional Communities are springing up all over Australia. How do you go about this adventure with the maximum chance of creating a happy, functional and stable outcome? We consult community enthusiasts with a range of skills - an understanding of history, of law, of social glue and cultural capital - and we return to the people we've visited on our travels to ask them what they'd change about their worlds if only they could.

Radio Eye: Sanctuary

ABC Radio National, Saturday May 10th 2003, 2pm.

Ever dreamt of building a better world? Or escaping the one you're in? Pack your *Gandhi* and *Thoreau*, *Lord of the Rings* and maybe a conflict resolution handbook for a trek around the Rainbow Region of the NSW North coast. This lush landscape is the hub of Australia's land-sharing movement since the 1970's. Here, idealism, sweat and compromise have spawned over a hundred intentional communities. Each has its own vision and ethos...but none is more than the sum of its residents. In *Radio Eye* this week Fiona Martin and Kath Duncan explore how people's ideas of community have changed over the last 30 years. They explore the desires behind the philosophies, the hard work and soul-searching behind the ethics. Pick up a brushcutter and join them for a journey into sanctuary.

Triple J: New World Coming

ABC Triple J, Morning Show with Steve Cannane from May 10th - 16th

Profiles of young people who have grown up on, or live on, communities round the country. They talk about what they get out of living communally, what they want to change about their communities, how they think about 'the outside world', and what, if anything, would persuade them to leave.

Re-Imagining Utopia Website

www.abc.net.au/rn/utopias

An ABC-SCU Division of Arts co-production

And an invitation for listeners to participate in series of forums surrounding events and issues on a hypothetical community called Paradiso Falls

Overview of the Website

The proposed site aims to engage users with a taste of what it's like to build an *Intentional Community* - before they buy a block in an eco-village or a share in a *Multiple Occupancy*. An important feature of *Intentional Communities* is collaboration between participants to realise a shared vision. The aim is to give the audience a taste of what's it's like to build a community, and some of the social, economic and political issues that arise. These complex issues and processes will be tackled by engaging the audience interactively, using elements in the style of "*The Sims Online*" and the ABC's "*Grow your own*" cross-media projects.

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such issues as land and water sharing, dealing with anti-social behaviour and building in environmentally sensitive areas, and see something of the impact of their part in the process. The outcomes of the debates, will be recorded week by week by changes to the Homepage. The site will also allow users to explore the practices and philosophies behind the growth of post-Aquarian *Intentional Communities*, and to reflect on the cultural impacts of these communities on regional Australia. The website is conceived as an ongoing public resource to be hosted by ABC Online. *Staci Gold*

Stage One of the Website

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A *Guest Book* will also be available for the audience to pose questions at any time, to both experts and other users interested in this form of lifestyle. The *Guest Book* will also enable comments to be made from the audience regarding their views or critique and the development of the hypothetical *Paradiso Falls* community.

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For more information:-

- on the *Aquarius Anniversary* contact:-
Katie Cawcutt/Email: katielovesnimbin@yahoo.com.au
Phone (02) 66-891-938 or post PO Box 12, Nimbin, NSW, 2480.

A website at <http://www.30th-nimbin-aquarius-anniversary.netfirms.com/> is being created by Skye. As work is in progress, she welcomes input. Please send comments and suggestions to Skyes@nimbin-australia.com

- on the *Rainbow Archive Association* contact:-
Peter Hamilton: Email: peterh@nor.com.au
Phone (02) 66-858-648 or post PO Box 102, Nimbin, 2480.