

Peter Hamilton

Copy of this sent to Simon by

Fiona

From: "Fiona Martin" <fmartin@scu.edu.au>
 To: <peterh@nor.com.au>
 Sent: Tuesday, 12 November 2002 9:07 AM
 Subject: interview this week?

Hi Peter -

I tried to send this yesterday, with the rough brief for the docos Kath and I are making attached, but the email bounced back with a virus message...though the document is clean. Must be Norne's overzealous protection devices. Below is an early rundown of what the docos were supposed to be about (although the detail has become clearer over the past couple of months) and some of the ideas I'm interested in exploring.

I'd imagine our interview would have two aspects. The first would be about your personal journey into community and the changes you've undergone as a consequence of that choice. I'd also ask you here why you decided to move to the coast, even though you retain your membership of Bodhi Farm.

I'm particularly interested in any philosophers, writers or other thinkers who inspired you then and now. Also, any events on your place which shifted your ideas about communitarianism. I wonder too whether you see the post-Aquarian communities as a vibrant, sustainable venture or as Leigh Davison remarks in Bill Metcalf's book "a bunch of ageing, middle-class baby boomers with Buddhist tendencies trying to maintain a toehold on the 1960's"?

I'm also interested in teasing out the central philosophical struggles around intentional community which centre on the individual vs the communal, internal v external focus (and the permeability of boundaries), the ethical vs the prescriptive, and the tension between "being" and "doing".

The second aspect would be your ideas about the practical legacies of the post Aquarian communities in this region, and elsewhere if you feel you can comment. These may include things such as popularising/mainstreaming certain environmental concepts (eg. permaculture, LETs), or, as Carol Perry indicated yesterday, developing techniques for conflict resolution, ways of building 'community glue' (eg. through ritual). On the other hand you may think communitarianism has had little impact on the Australian culture, society, politics etc.

Talk to you tomorrow morning.

Fiona

Sanctuary

See Pncom 239
for this ↓

This series of radio programs for ABC Radio National's *Life Matters* and *Radio Eye*, and Triple J's *Morning Show* is looking at the breadth and scope of Australia's post Aquarius intentional communities - spiritual communities, artists colonies, counter-culture and land-sharing communes, permaculture collectives, and eco-villages.

The *Life Matters* series of 6 twenty minute programs looks at the pragmatics of building intentional communities in the new millennium, with an eye to the lessons of the past thirty years. The *Radio Eye* documentary is a philosophical journey into the changing nature of intentional communities in the Northern Rivers region of NSW, and the

(A) See my notes/comments re these numbers.

12/11/2002

feature for Triple J's *Morning Show* investigates young people's feelings about growing up on land-sharing communities. *who do they want. eg. Clay.*

Idealism, sweat and compromise have spawned dozens, perhaps hundreds of intentional communities in Australia. Some are vibrant, some are barely off the plan and others are winding down. Kath Duncan and Fiona Martin are looking to explore their utopian roots with those people who were prepared to bring their visions to a site and work together for common goals. We're interested in your journey into "sanctuary."

(8) The media has at least been partly responsible for portrayals of community living as only for ideological recluses, arty weirdos or dysfunctional types who can't handle 'the real world' - wherever that is! We want to do it differently. We want to explore why intentional communities are a vibrant, growing alternative, and why they tend to happen outside of cities. Lots of people living outside communities think they know all about what it must be like, when it's likely they've only heard fragments of myth. We understand that communities can be publicity shy. That's why we're getting in touch with you now, so that we can work with you to make this an informative and constructive radio series. This piece will ^{hopefully} explode the idea that alternative lifestyles are strange, dated or unsustainable. The irony is that many communitarians ^{have been} are tertiary educated, middle class professionals - exactly the people who (10) listen to Radio National and Triple-J.!

(11) For a start we'd like your permission for Kath, and/or Fiona to join you in your community for a few days and see what it's like to live the experience. We'd like to help out with cooking, working, whatever gets done in your neck of the woods to keep things running. While we're with you we'd like to find out how you organise yourselves with food, money, (12) sewerage, power, the laws, educating your kids and so forth - the practicalities of daily living. We want to make it clear that we're expecting individual stories; we're not into grand statements on behalf of communities. We're quite happy with opposing viewpoints to illustrate our different approach - we do not have to portray residents as all agreeing, as all having the same views: there is no correct line. In our research we've discovered that most media treatment of communities is fairly superficial but we're interested in depth, your personal philosophies and visions.

Kath has been a journalist, primarily in radio, for 20 years. She has lived on the far north coast of NSW for six years, after happily escaping Sydney at the age of 35. She has made programs looking at alternative lifestyles, women's issues, body issues and disabilities. Kath is considering buying into an intentional community herself, having keen interests in revegetation, and alternative sewerage, water and power systems.

Fiona teaches journalism and radio at Southern Cross University in Lismore, and before that worked with ABC Radio networks and community radio stations from Sydney to Bourke. She has lived near the village of Clunes on the NSW north coast for six years, where she and her partner are slowly trying to regenerate rainforest on 10 acres.

We are working with two researchers who live on community in Northern NSW. Lisa Yeates is a political activist, musician and an early member of Tuntale Falls community. Nell Cook is a writer and academic who has seen her children and now grandchildren grow upon community.

(2) We'd like to record the insights and experiences of key people involved in the set-up of your community, as well as those people who have grown up within the lifestyle, to create the fullest possible picture of what it's like to live this way. We'd like to record most conversations on location at your community, as fireside musings, on walks around the property or perhaps as part of councils or community meetings.

If you are willing to speak to us, we are looking at visiting your community in November and December. We'd like to know what you'd like from us to make this happen: more information, phone contact, whether we should bring our own camping gear, or food etc.

Our contacts:

Kath Duncan: ph: 02 6689 5136, mobile: 0414 399 800
email: kmd@ozemail.com.au

Fiona Martin: ph: 02 6620 3126 (WK) , 02 66 29 1122 (H)
email: fmartin@scu.edu.au

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Notes re Frana Winter 14/11/02 re questions re HC's

Q re being / joining / growing up in a HC

How did you come to be interested in communal life?

Why this particular place

Political, philosophical, economic, environmental etc ^{aspects?} attractions

Defining moments of dissatisfaction with prevailing lifestyle

What were you reading - re HC. etc

Was it what you expected

Biggest shock / disappointment

What considered negotiations

Have your values, attitudes or beliefs changed

Is this running away from reality

Why is community life portrayed as ^{being} utopian

How would you feel if it was decided to
debar the community

Is it hard to conform to community requirements
or expectations

Feelings re the future of HC

What does the future of community hold for
you by comparison to mainstream society

What would you change if you could & why

What would you like to pass on to your children

Do you have a vision of utopia if so what is it

If you could make a contribution ^{what place, what would} to world peace & it do

How do you consider you are making a contribution

Is making the world a better place?

What have you discovered in HC living
about yourself

Do your family or friends ask you what is special
about living in a MO? If so what is your reply

Have you experienced difficulties in living
in community which you ~~could~~ did not
or might not experience in urban society

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How would you reply if the question was put that
to you that living in UK is not a sustainable
life situation, is utopian. etc is a happy dream
Can you see yourself continuing to live this way
in 20-40 years time?

Define values, principle

Defining moments.

Major challenges.

Commitment to discipline / rules / decisions / values /
beliefs!

Are you financially better off in UK
Education!

What future do you look forward to

Having children.

Dealing with old age

" " death & dying - self & others

Where / how would you like to be buried /
cremated etc.

How would you describe the UK positively?

What was biggest shock in visiting / living in UK.

If you there is something you would like to
change or have (old etc) what would it be?

Would you be happy for your children to grow up in
this or such a country.

If you could make it better - what would the
be & entail.

Do you get into gossip? If so what sort of topics
get discussed / expressed.

I've checked list of fav^{or} in my file re "quotes"

get comment on these eg
It has been said "Have you experienced this?"

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Influence of other religious belief & customs?

What do you consider ~~the~~ is/are the essential component/
practice/beliefs/decisions etc that keep/bind/hold
the community together or what is the community
glue for you?

How is conflict avoided/dealt with/resolved?

What aspects of indigenous values/lifestyle

Political & philosophical ^{village} influences/~~thoughts~~?

autonomy v. social solidarity

consensus - v - charisma

anarchism - v - social structures

What do you see as a potential legacy/ies
that may flow from your community
endeavours..?

What SDE/social change/direction indicators
do you all suggest may reflect in the
success & failures of communal settlements
in the long term?

"Personal journey" into IC

- (1) War/Arch/Personal Growth/Radical SV fracturing/Film + Books Hunt
Folk songs/Anthropology/1 1/2 years in desert/Personal Growth
Aquarius Festival/Meditation/ICY HBA/RATP/PerCom/
(Bush) Lawyer. Bodhi Forum
- (2) Late 80's cancer diagnosis with medical prediction that if I agreed to
major surgery followed by intensive radio therapy I had
an 70% chance to be alive in 5 yrs time.
Declined & sought the help of a medical doctor (W. Matthews)
interested in pursuing an alternative therapy.
Part of this programme incl
what I can, my "beach retreat" from the forest located Forum.

- 3.1 (philosophers): Trotsky, Gandhi, ~~William~~ Erickson "Erickson Therapy"
- 3.2 Writers: Robert Ardrey "African Genesis", Arne Naess "Deep Ecology"
- 3.3 Others: Flannery "hardcore Conf 2001"
"Fundamental Questions Programme" of CRES-AND ^{Steph} People
Prof Benjamin Zablocki "Alienation + Chavismo"
Attended the ^{Annual} NVAUS Congress starting at "Jall Chavismo"
Cotton Festival / local Rep & Exec. calendar.
Aquarius Festival.

Western culture is a non sustainable culture.

First Indigenous people achieved sustainable lifestyle & occupied the
land within it forever & sustainability within the carrying capacity of the land until
The virus of western civilization took over in plague proportions.

"Wild Games"

(4) See Parson Ref back - for participants responses.

(5) Legacy of the post Aquaria communities
in Aust & elsewhere. Northern Rainbow Power
of Cal James attempts at "urban communities" in metrop
Spt.

(6) See Parson Draft manual (& books) data on "community shes"
see "Creating Harmony", Eco Villages - Haralaya

(7) Input on Aust culture, history, politics etc -
• working with/in prevailing culture. eg SGPP-15
• Cal James - the only model that has stood the time of
providing affordable housing for many of those who
would otherwise be relying on the state to provide
housing. Home birthing & burial. own midwives.

(8) See Metcalf paper on "Perceptions" Tintable Haven / res / dent for "crazies".
Preschool to then Coops Shop, school, B & B - Nighin
Zalany Corp. for video.
Raids on Tintable etc

(9) Publicity shy - why!! The farm is a theme not atomist destruction

(10) Have become (not a prenegate - if anything the opposite.)

(11) Could be arranged to stay over in Victoria's Quarter
(where is the counter part to be introduced into City life!)

(12) Solution to Education: Pre schools, Primary, Secondary - plays big part.
Many devoted (qualified) teachers. of Bodhi

(13) those people who "set up their community"

My questions - What of the future.
Society Sustainability is not faring to happen
of societies locked in a money culture

Writers/philosophers/"Thinkers" (in random order)

- Leon Trotsky
 - Mahatma Gandhi
 - Milton Erickson
 - Arne Naess
- Contemporary: Tim Flannery

Interview of Peter by Feara Morte 13-11-02 re HC's for
ABC Bodhi Network "Life Matters" programme
with Rhonda Ellis present.

- It is planned by the ABC to set up a web site on
data in this programme.

• Kath Duncan is a co-worker with Feara in this regard.

- List of docs - copy given to Feara and Rhonda
 - # "Select Short Annotated Bibliography relating
to IC living, aspirations & Environment"
(Pancom 188)

- # "A Short Reading List of Books on Landskings
Communities in NSW" - (Pancom 214)

- # Background to MO Communities in NSW (Pancom 180)

- "Brief Background Inf on Bodhi Town: an intentional
community in NSW - Paper 1-4, (Bodhi 14)

- # "Objective of the Bodhi Church" (Bodhi 25)

See File "Pancom - Assorted papers".

f. Selection of Photo Albums re "Life Matters" Interviews.

(These folders scanned very briefly by Fiona)

- Life and times of Peter
- Desert Study - see folder
- Bedhi Farm
 - Background Information on Bedhi Farm, "Description" and "Objectives"
 - Assorted folders on Farm life & activities

• "Home Builders Association" - Period

• "Rural Resettlement Task Force" - Period

• "Pan Community Council" - Period

• "Eco-Village" Development - Haraley tour of Europe

• Bibliographies - assorted.

• Reference Books etc

Comments/notes by Denise re this interview

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Negatives

- Land poor agricultural quality
- heavily indebted

Positives

Presence of international visitors

eg Gary Schneider
Anne Naess

Fran Plavy

Jeanne Wacey

Christopher Titmus

Kamanada

etc