



Newsletter

Transition The Grove

...to a low carbon, low oil future
for Ferny Grove, Upper Kedron, Woolshed Grove,
and the mountain catchments of Cedar Creek and Kedron Brook

#4 - November 2009

Greetings,

In the back of my mind I like to keep the thought:

“When you’re up to your armpits in alligators it’s difficult to remember that your original objective was to drain the swamp.”

So, after a busy November, it’s probably wise to re-focus on the main aim of the Transition Towns movement, which is: *“...to respond to the challenges of Climate Change and Peak Oil by developing resilient local communities with a greatly reduced carbon footprint.”*

The movement was founded in the UK by Rob Hopkins and a talk by Rob was presented on the TED web-site this month. There's link on the Making a Difference section of the Transition The Grove web site. If you're not familiar with TED it stand for **T**echnology, **E**ntertainment, **D**esign – ideas worth spreading. It's a site worth monitoring.

The introduction to Rob's talk reads -

Rob Hopkins leads a vibrant new movement of towns and cities that utilize local cooperation and interdependence to shrink their ecological footprints. In the face of climate change he developed the concept of Transition Initiatives -- communities that produce their own goods and services, curb the need for transportation and take other measures to prepare for a post-oil future. While Transition shares certain principles with greenness and sustainability, it is a deeper vision concerned with re-imagining our future in resilient local communities with a greatly reduced carbon footprint.

Rob Hopkins says: “My own thoughts led me to develop an approach I call ‘Energy Descent Action Planning (EDAP)’, which works with a community to vision how they see their town 20 years in the future, in a positive way, and then backcast from then to now. It was developed in Kinsale (Ireland), and continues to grow in other, safe, hands. I am now looking at the wider question of how the EDAP process can evolve

and be refined, as well as drawing on the experience of other communities doing similar things. It is work I feel to be of the utmost importance.”

One reason for the busy-ness in November has been the build-up to the UN Climate Change summit in Copenhagen from 7th to 18th December. Widely regarded as the most important conference in history, this has generated a great deal of discussion, activism and political turmoil.

Public awareness and concern about climate change has been growing steadily and Copenhagen seems to have pushed it to centre-stage. Just ask Malcolm Turnbull!

It is one thing to be concerned and quite another to actually decide what to do about it. For our political leaders there are no easy choices or quick fixes and their struggle to find solutions may go on for an unacceptable and dangerously long time.

However, individual and community action is well under way and the Transition Towns movement provides opportunities for us all to start contributing to the solution – **right now!**

Chris Wright who heads up Transition Initiative The Gap recently spent a couple of months in the UK and had the opportunity to make contact with a lot of Transition people there and observe the rapidly expanding Transition network in action. We hope Chris will deliver a talk and share his experiences early next year. We'll publish the dates as soon as we know them.

One consequence of increasing public concern has been an increase in the opportunities for education, discussion and engagement at many levels. There are a lot of informal gatherings and discussion groups in peoples homes and other venues around the suburbs and in the city. Some spontaneous, some regular. Check out the Transition The Grove web-site for these meetings, or join our email list for updates.

Some of the more formally organised events in November included -

Shape your City Heart

From November 2 to 10 some of Brisbane's leading creative minds joined with a youth panel and city residents in the Shape Your City Heart series, hosted by The Brisbane Institute at the Ithaca Auditorium, City Hall.

Organic gardening workshops - mid week

From October 21 to December 2 at Peter Kearney's gardens at Samford. This workshop series will teach you how to create and manage a healthy, productive organic food garden growing your own vegetables and herbs.

Climate Change and Jobs

November 4 - TLC Building South Brisbane Organised by Who on Earth Cares and ACF

- Sharan Burrow – ACTU President. One million new jobs in the energy revolution
- Don Henry – Aust Conservation Foundation. Strengthening the economy and cleaning up the planet
- Clare Martin – Aust Council of Social Services. A clean energy future can create opportunities for low income and long-term unemployed Australians

Climate Change, Renewable Energy Targets and Energy Efficiency. November 5, Eco Centre

- Griffith University - What is happening in the Energy Sector to combat climate change. The General Manager of Energy Generation at Origin, Peter Israel spoke on Australia's renewable energy targets.

Brisbane Organic Growers regular monthly meeting on 1st Tuesday. These meetings always have interesting speakers and the generous suppers show just how abundant life can be when you grow your own organic food.

Kurilpa Development Info Session

November 7 Souths Leagues Club - Davies Park. Not local, but Brisbane City Council is seeking nominations for a Community Reference Group for the Davies Park (West End) development. We need more of this kind of consultation in The Grove.

Beyond Copenhagen - positive steps for change

November 7 Yeronga Bowls Club Community Q&A on climate. The hopes of many people lie with the UN climate negotiations in Copenhagen this December - Organized by Friends of the Earth and Solidarity An example of events we could organise in The Grove

National Recycling Week 2009

9 - 15 November The NRW09 focused on three campaign streams:

1. Promoting community re-use and recycling initiatives, particularly through promotion of council, school and workplace-based Swap Parties as part of the Big Aussie Swap.
2. Increasing the number of businesses and workplaces involved in recycling, principally through the promotion of the Friday File Fling.
3. Improving the understanding of kerbside recycling, principally through an educative Recycle Right Quiz hosted on RecyclingWeek. PlanetArk.org

NRW also aims to increase access to accurate recycling information through the RecyclingNearYou Website and Hotline (1300 733 712), as well as the NRW website.

Green Heart Fair

November 8 - Mt Gravatt Showgrounds. Would you like to see Brisbane become Australia's most sustainable city? Green Heart Fair heard about Brisbane City's plan to become carbon neutral by 2026, by reducing energy consumption and planting trees for biosequestration.

How Long Must We Be Sustainable?

November 10 Gondwana Rainforest Room, Level 3, 400 George St,. What is your timeframe when thinking about climate change, sustainability and future society? What does 'long term' mean to you? A look at primary schooling and the education of our future. Exploring the sustainability narrative as told (or sold) to primary school children. Peter Churchward is the principal of Oakleigh State School, a primary school in Brisbane's western suburbs. The community of this school, and his previous school, Kenmore South, have not only embraced sustainability as a school priority, but have undertaken a raft of measures to enact this value.

Run for a Safe Climate Arrived in Brisbane November 10th. Throughout November 2009, a group of Australian emergency service workers are running 6000 km from Cooktown to Melbourne, stopping along the way to share experiences and insights into climate change. Along their journey, the runners will draw attention to natural and agricultural assets under threat, while also bearing witness to some of the solutions to this crisis.

Awakening The Dreamer - The Symposium

November 14 – Bardon Counseling Centre Where on Earth are we and what are we going to do about it? An exploration into the state of the planet, how we got here, and where to go from here.

Engineering the Sustainable Pathway

November 17 – Hawken Auditorium, Engineering House. Challenges and Opportunities for Australian Engineers in the Sustainability Era Speaker: Hugh Grant, GHD. Organized by SSEE Qld Committee.

PLUGGING INTO OUR FUTURE: THE RESEARCH POWERING THE ENERGY DEBATE

November 17 - State Library Qld BrisScience in partnership with the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) on the occasion of ATSE's 32nd National Symposium - Future-proofing Australia

Climate Change Seminar - Dr Andrew Ash - CSIRO

November 17 – Arana Leagues Club Global Warming and Climate Change and the effectiveness of proposed emissions trading legislation. A series of 15 to 20 minute presentations by Doctor Andrew Ash, each addressing a separate aspect of Climate Change. Organized by Samford Valley Rotary Club

Transition Kenmore meeting - Rebutting the skeptics: Climate change Q&A

November 18 Uniting Church Hall, Kenmore Rebutting the skeptics: Climate change Q&A Everything you ever wanted to know about climate change but were to afraid to ask (before now).

Urban Agriculture. From the rural sphere to the city square.

November 24 ARUP boardroom. Can significant food production really occur within cities? Might it be enough to address global food shortages? What potential might exist in South East Queensland? Organized by Environment Institute of Australia

So you can see that November has been a busy month. We haven't been to everything and sometimes we have had to go in different directions when two interesting events were on at the same time. Our aims in all this are -

- To keep informed and educated on issues relevant to Transition The Grove.
- To plan similar events locally as much as

possible.

- To keep The Grove community up to date with information on events, meetings, news and publications through the Transition The Grove web-site.

Throughout November we have been making good progress with establishing a more visible identity for Transition The Grove.

The first step is to let people know about the initiative and to invite them to participate. Through letterbox-dropping, door-knocking and chatting with friends and neighbours we have increased our local network of people who share our interest in building local resilience. It's a long term task and we are looking forward to sharing it with other active members in the community. This is the 'viral' process by which the Transition Network continues to spread around the world. We have appreciated the support of **Councillor Andrew Wines** who has referred people to us in response to inquiries about community gardens.

Next, we continue to develop the Transition The Grove web site to be a hub of information about community resources and activities. We have been researching the local area and gathered a wealth of information on local demographics, history, services, and what's on in The Grove. This site is now becoming our first source for local information, ideas and contact details.

Check it out on our interim site URL of http://www.tennock.com/j_data/TTFG

Thirdly, we are well advanced in the process of becoming incorporated as a not-for-profit association. This is necessary so that we can register a (more intelligible) domain name, open a bank account for donations and fund raising, apply for government grants and so on.

Watch this space!



In the many meetings and discussions we have engaged in, both on and off-line, there is a growing moral and ethical thread concerned with our responsibility to protect the environment, to care for the poor and to pass on a habitable world to future generations.

This suggested to me a possible basis for introducing the Transition Towns concept to local churches in the hope that some of them might join with us in *"Responding to the challenges of Climate Change and Peak Oil by developing resilient local communities with a greatly reduced carbon footprint."*

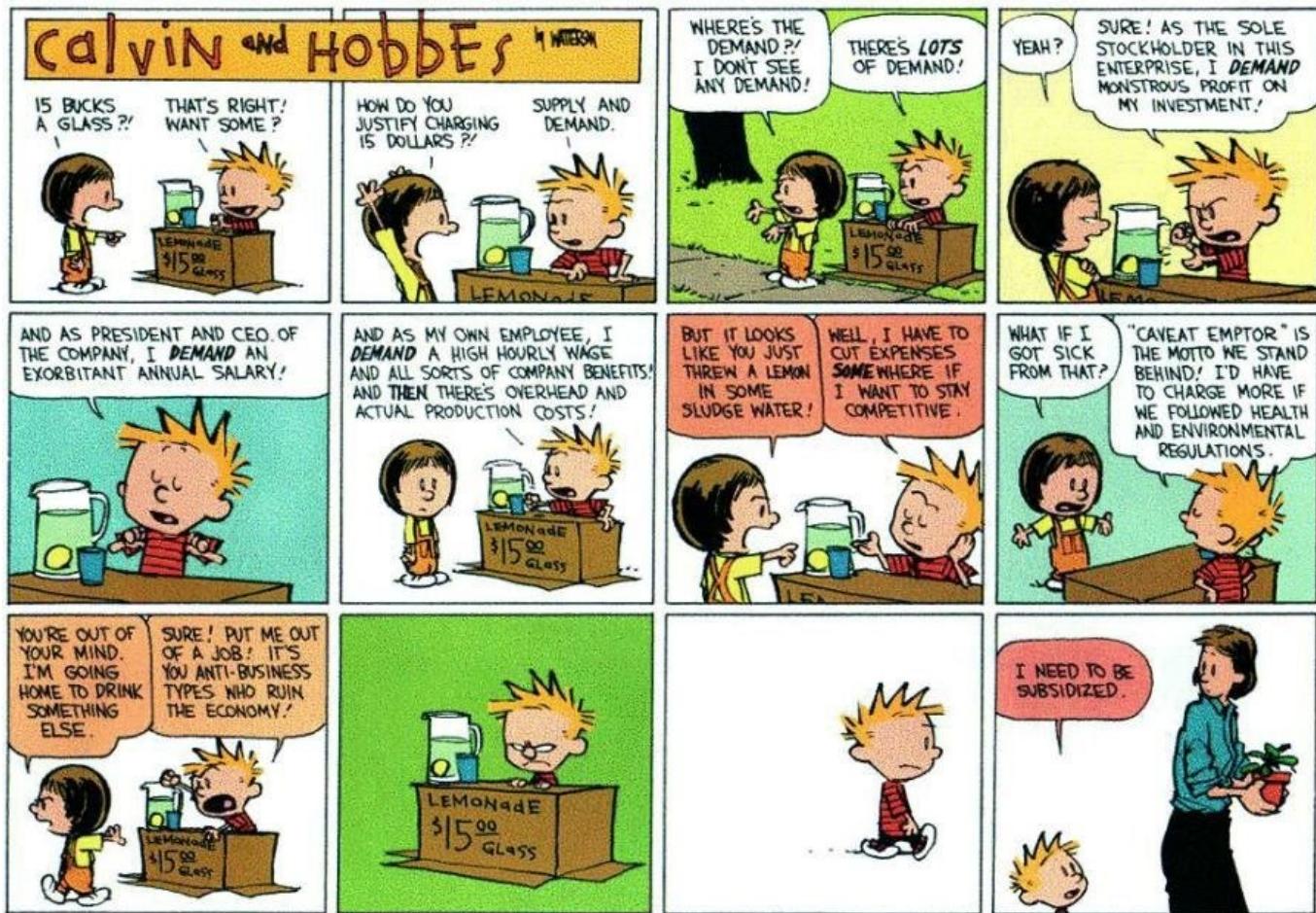
The Grove has a notable lack of churches except for the Grove Community Church which meets at the Ralph Took auditorium at the Ferny Grove State High School. However there are many churches in the surrounding suburbs and their congregations are well represented in The Grove.

To facilitate this discussion we have prepared a resource kit on CD including a range of informative and motivational material. Copies of this CD will be sent to all local churches in the next week or so. Please let us know if you would like a copy.

Similar resource kit CDs could be developed for

We are always on the lookout for effective ways to get the message across, and humour is always a great way to communicate unpalatable truths. We are including topical jokes, poems and other inspirational material on the web-site under Making a Difference. We invite your creative input. I came across a great web-site 'The Grinning Planet' with lots of jokes and cartoons aimed at 'saving the planet – one joke at a time'.

Here's a great Calvin and Hobbes example.



That's it for November.

Please check out our web-site at http://www.tennock.com/j_data/TTFG/

For more information please contact us on
Tel: (07) 3851 1016 or Email: johntennock@optusnet.com.au

other community groups, sporting clubs etc. Please let us know if you have any connections or ideas on this.



We welcome contributions and suggestions from local residents to this newsletter, and to the Transition The Grove web-site. At this stage, the cut-off for the newsletter is the last day of the month.

If there is some information that you think should be included or changed on the web-site, or deleted, please contact us by phone or email.

Don't miss 'Walk Against Warming', King George Square, 10:00am Saturday 12 December!