

**TASMANIAN ENVIRONMENT CENTRE INC.**



# **SUSTAINABLE LIVING TASMANIA**

**PRACTICAL PATHWAYS TO  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2008-2009**



# President's Report 2008-2009

Last year I reported to members on our move from 102 Bathurst Street to the premises at 191 Liverpool Street. We regarded this as 'a temporary situation' - I remarked that we were still 'on the lookout for larger and more accessible premises; those two flights of stairs are difficult for elderly legs and for babies and children'.

Well, those larger and more accessible premises turned up early this year. Thanks too to the Board for their support for the recommendation to move, not an easy decision to make so soon after the previous move! With the usual generous assistance from members and volunteers in giving the new premises a facelift, and packing up the library, etc., we moved to the first floor at 71 Murray Street. We are all very happy with the present home for Sustainable Living Tasmania. And staff have noticed that community members are accessing the premises in increasing numbers.

As always, funding for the Centre is an ongoing issue. Project funds from various sources provide for specific activities, but funding for necessities such as electricity bills, telephone, etc. is sometimes hard to find. We appealed to members to donate to the Centre on an ongoing basis and this has assisted in some ways. However, tax-deductible donations, while welcome, are limited in where they can be spent; running costs such as electricity bills aren't covered by these donations. It would be really helpful if members and supporters could consider, when committing to making ongoing donations, supporting the non-tax-deductible account. This would provide greater flexibility in where such funds are spent.

This year Board members have spent considerable effort in developing a strategic plan for Sustainable Living Tasmania, with the assistance of Rare Consulting and funding from the Tasmanian Climate Change Office. Thanks to all, but especially to Aidan Davison, Corey Peterson, and Andrew Doube for their hard work and preparedness to discuss important points via email (often in the middle of the night!) until the draft plan reflects our opinions and hopes for the organisation. We expect that copies of the final plan will be available soon, and that the plan will support applications for grants and the development of partnerships in the future.

Bicycle Tasmania, recognizing the value of our online library, has initiated a partnership with us; there is now a small but growing collection of books focused on cycling shelved in the library. This will no doubt bring more people into the Centre to use the library. Thanks to Bicycle Tasmania, and to the volunteers who support the library so well.

Our newsletter and website continue to provide an attractive access point for community members who are interested in our work on energy management, sustainability, resilience and transition planning in the community.

In closing, my thanks go to our members who support the organisation, the Board members who give up their time each month to oversee the activities of the organization, all our volunteers, and to our staff. Lissa, Helen and Beth have worked really hard in their areas of responsibility; and Janine has maintained the high quality of her work as our finance officer. And our Executive Officer, Margaret Steadman, continues to be the 'public face' of Sustainable Living Tasmania as well as being the glue that holds us all together.

Thanks to you all.

Patsy Jones  
President

# Sustainable Living Tasmania Personnel 2008-2009

(Tasmanian Environment Centre Inc.)

**Patron** Duncan Kerr MHR

## Board of Management

### Board Members

Philip Anstie  
Barrie Dallas  
Aidan Davison  
Andrew Doube  
Lynne Forster  
Patsy Jones  
John Green  
Anni McCuaig  
Corey Peterson  
Eric Stadler  
Liz Smith

### Office Bearers

President: Patsy Jones  
Vice President: Eric Stadler  
Vice President: Corey Peterson  
Secretary: John Green  
Treasurer: Philip Anstie

### Finance Committee

Patsy Jones  
John Green  
Philip Anstie  
Margaret Steadman

The Board of Management meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month 6pm in the Centre.

## Salaried Staff

Margaret Steadman	Executive Officer and Public Officer
Janine Cooke	Bookkeeper
Lissa Villeneuve	Sustainability Project and Admin Support Officer
Helen Pryor	Project manager
Beth Chamberlain	Project Officer - Sustainable Living Expo
John Forsyth	Cleaner

## Contract Staff

Tony Weaver	Chris Harries
Maria Grist	John Todd

## Voluntary Staff (other volunteers listed in the Library report)

Barrie Dallas	community displays
John Grist	library, computing and technical assistance
Anne Bliss	administrative support, community events
Richard Witherwick	administrative support
David Stephen	Community Garden management
Penny O'Brien	newsletter
Don Maisch	research and general assistance
Rebecca Boyle	research

## Members

The Tasmanian Environment Centre had 311 financial members in 2008-2009.

## Projects Grants and Consultancies:

Tasmanian Climate Change Office: ClimateConnect grant 'Energy for Change'  
Tasmanian Climate Change Office/Housing Tasmania : Home Energy train the trainer  
Multicultural Tasmania: Migrant Winter Warmer workshops  
Women Tasmania: Tasmanian Women Cooling It  
Tasmanian Fire Services: Audit of premises and staff workshops  
Kingborough Council: Assistance with Green Precinct submission  
Dept of Health and Human Services: Walking School Bus

### **Committees and Organisational Memberships:**

Australian Association for Environmental Education  
Australian Conservation Foundation  
NRM South Association  
Richard Jones Memorial Lecture Committee  
Eat Well Tasmania  
Source Community Wholefoods Project Management Committee  
Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative - Tasmanian Steering Committee  
Mountain Festival Board  
Climate Action Network Australia  
Environment Industry Council  
Shelter Tasmania  
Southern Coastcare Association Tasmania

### **Funding**

After the end of the Living Environment Program of the State Government we have been able to develop a partnership agreement with the Tasmanian Climate Change Office because our work on community climate change action strongly supports the State Framework on Climate Change. The partnership is for three years negotiated annually and commenced in December 2008. The first 6 months provided \$15000 of core funding as well as funding support for strategic planning through Rare Consulting and contribution to Home Sustainability Assessment training for 12 staff and volunteers.

The federal Grants to Environment and Heritage Organisations (GVEHO) has provided \$10000 annually in recent years and we were hopeful that the scope of eligible activities and the overall funding would be expanded in the 2008-09 round. Disappointingly we received only \$5000 in that round. We are lobbying for changes to the guidelines to recognise our important sustainability role in Tasmania.

### **New Premises**

Moving offices twice in ten months is a very tall order but we have been fortunate to gain an 18 month lease on most of the first floor of 71 Murray St. where we have plenty of space for community meetings, library/bookshop and work space for staff. The location is central and we have sympathetic co-tenants on the ground floor so we hope that we will be able to extend the lease.



March 2009 was a very busy month with lots of cleaning and painting required before we moved in.

## Services

The Liverpool St premises did not allow for the community resource centre role of SLT but the new premises in Murray Street are encouraging community groups to again use our space for meetings.

Community Groups who held meetings at the Centre in 2008-09 included:

Australian Association for Environmental Education	
Against Animal Cruelty Tasmania	Bicycle Tasmania
Threatened Plant Network	Walk Against Warming
Greenpeace	Oxfam CAA
Climate Action Hobart	Lake Pedder Restoration Group
Richard Jones Memorial Lecture Committee	Society of Editors
Tasmanian National Parks Association	Southern Coastcare Association Tasmania
Still Wild Still Threatened	Source Community Wholefoods

We host the Waterwatch water testing kit and two Coastcare Treasure Chests which are borrowed regularly by schools and other organisations. An EMF meter and Powermate are regularly hired by people wanting to assess their homes or workplaces.

We hosted Tasmanian Community Fund Grants for Source Community Wholefoods, Taroona Neighbourhood Garden and the Cygnet Community Garden and also hosted the Waterworks Community Harvest Festival. Current hosted projects include Rural Rides for Cool Pool Tas (ClimateConnect) and South Hobart Mural Project for the South Hobart Sustainable Community (TCF).

## Community Environmental Information and Education

The core role of the Tasmanian Environment Centre Inc. (Sustainable Living Tasmania) is to provide up-to-date and appropriate information to Tasmanians and to support and catalyse action to improve the sustainability of our homes, communities and businesses and to maintain and enhance our local natural environment.

### Information Service

#### Environment Resource Library

The work of re-cataloguing and digitising the library is close to finished. The Library catalogue is now substantially on-line and provides a unique resource of information on sustainable living and the Tasmanian natural environment. Moving has again been a huge task but the library now has a spacious and appropriate setting and usage has increased significantly. Loans are predominantly in the home sustainability domain. The dedicated volunteer help of Patsy Jones, John Grist and James Anderson (who keeps the library management software functioning) has been crucial.



Volunteer library coordinator John Grist at work in our new library

### Websites

Lissa Villeneuve keeps our website up-to-date with technical help from Maria Grist and it is used frequently and widely. The Sustainable Living Expo now has its own site.

## Sustainable Living Guides

We continue to add titles to the guides, which are a really valuable basic information source on sustainable living. This year we added a TV Buying Guide, Low Energy Lighting, Your Car and Your Carbon Emissions and a flyer encouraging people accessing the \$8000 photovoltaic rebate to 'Make it Count' and seriously undertake energy conservation measures in their homes. All are available on the website and in hard-copy.

## Inquiries

Staff have responded to hundreds of email, phone and in-person requests for sustainable living information - solar hot water options, how to insulate under the floor, rebates, biofuels etc. In the first half of 2009 we have received some 300 inquiries by phone, email or in person from Tasmanians wanting to talk through whether to take part in the PV rebate scheme, seeking help with a ClimateConnect application, wanting to know how to access the insulation and solar hot water rebates, wanting help to find insulation installers (pensioners for example often have no internet access) or wanting resources to plan their home renovations or new house.

## Community Activities

### Community Gardens

Community gardens are one aspect of the renewed interest in local foods and local food production. As ever, the community garden in Creek Road Lenah Valley is a continuing community service, enabling and promoting organic gardening in the city. David Stephen continues as the site manager and gardening support person. Plots are always fully allocated with a waiting list. The Taroona Neighbourhood Garden goes from strength to strength and we continue to support it and the community garden in Cygnet.

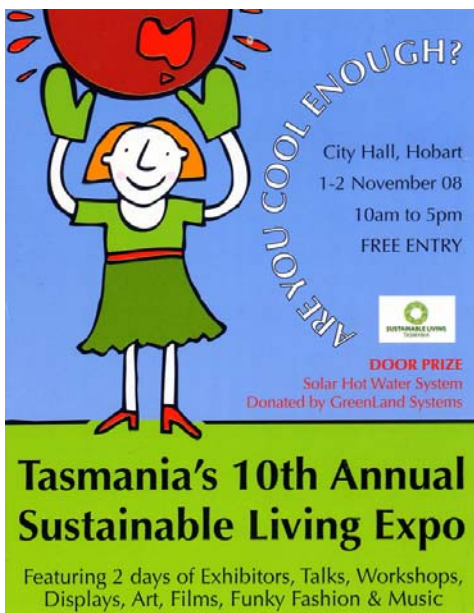
We have supported the Seed to Plate workshops for schools, promoting school food gardens with Jean Gray from the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens and school garden champion Nel Smit.

### Growing Communities Conference - December 2008

The Growing Communities conference, convened by Sustainable Living Tasmania, was a state-wide community and school garden gathering to build networks and develop capacity throughout Tasmania by connecting people with the tangible, real skills of growing food and community development. Throughout the weekend around 70 people united to take part in panel discussions, hands on workshops, kids activities, films, field trips and group reflections. The theme of the conference was 'Seeds of Change'. We took a lead role in guiding individuals and community groups in being positive change agents in their own communities by using organic gardening as a tool for social and environmental change.



## Sustainable Living Expo



The Sustainable Living Expo broke the records again with more exhibitors than ever. For the first time, part of Market Place was closed and stalls and music moved into the street.

While there are now more events with a similar theme (RTBG's June Treadlightly Festival and a commercial sustainable living expo in Launceston and Hobart in March and April '09) our original Expo still inspires and informs the community in quite unique ways.

This year we collaborated with the Future Tasmania Showcase in the new Baha'i Centre of Learning and shared the launch event. Rob Adams from Melbourne City Council and Giselle Wilkinson from the Sustainable Living Foundation were the inspiring speakers.

### **Community Native Plant Nursery and Demonstration Garden**

SLT continues its involvement with this project located at the top of Tolosa Park in Glenorchy, in partnership with the principal participants the Understorey Network and Life without Barriers. The nursery is now a viable base for the propagation activities of the Understorey Network and has been used for a number of community workshops.

### **Winter Warmer Workshops**

Lissa ran 3 workshops with recent migrants to Tasmania in April and May 2009. Funding was secured through a small Multicultural Tasmania Grant and the workshops were organised through the Centacare Settlements Project. Each of the groups was shown how to keep themselves and their homes warm during the cold Tasmanian winter. All of the groups were engaged and learned many small things that they could do in their homes to save money, reduce energy consumption and improve their health and comfort levels.

### **ClimateConnect ‘Local Energy for Change’ Project**

We were successful in receiving funding from the Tasmanian Climate Change Office’s ClimateConnect program for our Local Energy for Change Project to work with Kingborough and Brighton Councils and residents to deliver free home energy assessments and rebates for recommended home energy efficiency improvements. Initial planning began in June 2009 with the main roll-out to happen in 2009-2010. Helen Pryor is the project’s manager.

We are also hosting an additional ClimateConnect project, ‘Rural Rides’ in partnership with CoolPoolTas, which will assist rural communities to develop viable and active car-pooling networks

### **Beat Winter Chills and Bills Q&A Forums**

In partnership with the Hobart City Council, we held 6 community question and answer forums across the municipality during the winter of 2008 to discuss some of the barriers and solutions to keeping warm, being more energy efficient and saving on energy bills in the home. The panel of Katrina Graham, Peter Boyer, Chris Harries, Tony Weaver, Helen Pryor and Margaret Steadman gave short presentations and answered questions from interested residents. Over 220 residents attended these forums and at each, we set up a mini energy efficiency display demonstrating some of the available products to help people improve their homes’ energy performance. Adding value to the forums was a display of energy efficiency products at the Hobart City Council atrium supported by Bunnings Warehouse, Insulate Tasmania, Eco Tasmania, Jessups Retravisation, Solahart, Cool or Cosy and Robin Cameron Curtains and Blinds. To increase the awareness of the Hobart City Council policy-makers, we conducted a forum targeting the planning committee, at which Clive Attwater presented his findings from research conducted on climate change impacts in the Clarence Municipality.



Volunteer Anne Bliss facilitating the Lenah Valley community Q&A forum.

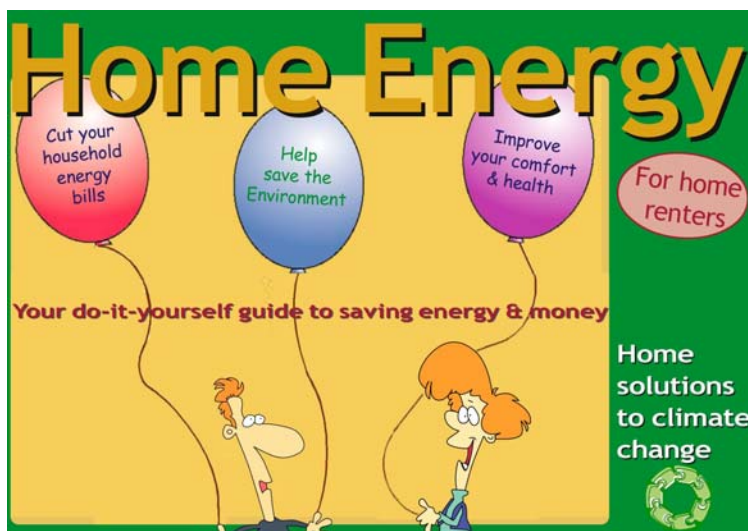
## Climate Change and Sustainable Living Presentations:

The huge increase in community and householder engagement in climate change action and personal change which we saw in 2007-08 has continued. We have responded to many requests for talks and workshops. Here is a sample

- lecture Cygnet U3A
- 4 x Friends School Grade 11 presentations -
- presentations and workshops for students on energy efficiency at four schools - Mt Faulkner, Brighton, Gagebrook, and Albuera Street.
- 2 x Green Cleaning workshops, Gagebrook and Lachlan
- 4 x home energy efficiency/conservation presentations with Solar Squad (PV and Solar Hot Water retailer)
- 1x lecture series Term 1, Hobart University of the Third Age, including home energy efficiency, CPRS, community actions
- Sustainable Living presentation at 'Weathering the Storm' workshop in Exeter 28 Mar
- Home Energy efficiency presentation Southern Midlands community 30 March
- Winter Warmer workshop for Speak Out Advocacy group
- Sustainable living lecture to post-graduate students, Faculty of Geography and Environmental Studies
- Participation in South Hobart Sustainable Community solar project public meeting - presenting energy conservation position
- 4 x workplace 'climate change action' presentations (for DIER, Treasury, DPIW and the Tasmanian Training Consortium)

## Save Energy Save Money Program

In partnership with Housing Tasmania and the Tasmanian Climate Change Office, Sustainable Living Tasmania's Helen Pryor with Tony Weaver and Shona Prior organised and gave 4 presentations in Glenorchy, Launceston and Burnie to Housing Tasmanian tenancy officers and community housing providers on how they could help their tenants become more energy efficient in their homes, also helping them save on their energy costs. Over hundred people attended the workshops representing 31 community housing providers. Bunnings Warehouse and Decorama Curtains and Blinds supported this project with discounts. Two flow-on workshops were held with UnitingCare at Gagebrook (7 support workers) and with Family Based Care in Launceston (21 support workers).



As part of this project, Chris Harries redesigned the DIY Home Energy Guide to be relevant for home renters and over 5000 copies were disseminated through Housing Tasmania and the community housing sector.

### **Home Sustainability Assessment Training**

Twelve Sustainable Living Tasmania personnel (paid staff and volunteers) successfully completed the TAFE accredited Home Sustainability Assessment Course through Holmesglen TAFE in November 2008. We have since been conducting Home Assessments as part of our project work.

### **Walking Bus Project**

The Department of Health and Human Services has contracted SLT to support the establishment of Walking Buses throughout the State. Lissa Villeneuve is the project officer. Preliminary research was done to find out how Walking Buses are currently functioning in Tasmania and compare that to programs nationally and internationally. Lissa is currently running a pilot project with 3 schools: Scottsdale Primary, Illawarra Primary and Kingston Primary. Each of these schools is at various stages of developing a WB, with two of them set to launch at the start of term 3. Several other schools have expressed interest in starting WBs at the start of next school year. The aim is to get 15 schools committed to establishing walking buses by July 2010.

### **Teacher and Student Support**

Sustainable Living Tasmania participated in the Tasmanian branch of the Australian Association of Environmental Education. Helen Pryor continues as a member of the Steering Committee of the federally funded Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative Tasmania (AuSSI). She also presented workshops on energy efficiency at the RuMAD Youth Action Conference.

### **Newsletter**

A new look 'Link-Up' was published bi-monthly and edited by Lissa Villeneuve.

### **Richard Jones Memorials**

TCE Environmental Science Award winner 2008 TCE examinations: Sonya Wellby, Friends School

Richard Jones Memorial Lecture: No lecture during 2008-09

Richard Jones Memorial Media Award: No award in 2008-09

### **The Up2Me Environment Challenge Websites**

Both up2me and up2meforkids websites were part of the State Government Living Environment Program funding. At the end of the triennium of Living Environment Program funding, the websites were transferred to Sustainable Living Tasmania. The sites are still live but limited resources, both money and staff, mean that they are not regularly updated. We look to volunteer input to help.

### **Natural Resource Management Support**

Sustainable Living Tasmania is a member of the NRM South Association and the Southern Coastcare Association Tasmania (SCAT). The executive officer is a member of the committee to appoint new committee members of NRM South, 2008-09.

We have hosted a Threatened Species Network Community Grant project 'Enhancement of Forty-spotted Pardelote Habitat on Bruny Island' which has involved extensive plantings to restore habitat on a number of Bruny Island farms. This project was now completed during 2008-09.

### **Walk Against Warming**

We were actively involved in the organisation of the 2008 WAW in Cornelian Bay. Executive Officer Margaret Steadman was one of the speakers. We also helped convene a workshop to discuss the Green Paper on Carbon Trading. We continue to be involved in Walk Against Warming planning and in support for Climate Action Hobart.

### **Building Community Resilience**

Sustainable Living Tasmania has been significantly involved over the last two years in facilitating the emergence of community groups working to take local action to respond to the challenges of climate change and peak oil. Direct facilitation was provided to the South Channel, South

Hobart, Tasman Peninsula and West Hobart groups during 2008. During the first six months of 2009, assistance has been provided to new groups forming in Fern Tree and Richmond.

### **Transition Initiatives**

Two staff members (Margaret Steadman and Lissa Villeneuve) and two SLT members (Nick Towle and Peter Stronach) attended a Transition Towns workshop in February in Daylesford. They have identified this model as a very useful one for Tasmania in its combination of nurturing community resilience and taking action on climate change.

Sustainable Living Tasmania organised a Transition Initiatives weekend workshop in Hobart June 27-28 which was attended by 40 community activists from around the state, with an equal number of people who are on a 'waiting list'. We perceive a substantial community desire for collaborative, transformational action. We are now developing a website, planning additional workshops and support activities.

The Transition Initiatives participants June 2009, at Friends School where the training weekend was held.



### **Consultancy Work**

We have worked with Tasmanian Fire Services to assist them in making their head office more energy efficient, in collaboration with Dr John Todd.

Helen Pryor with John Todd supported the Kingborough Council's bid for Commonwealth funding for Green Precinct funding involving the new Kingston High School and adjacent recreational facilities by providing technical and community engagement advice. (Unfortunately, the bid was not successful.)

### **Community Events:**

We participated in or collaborated in a range of expos and events:

- Displays at Climate Change Festival, Launceston 1 Mar, and the Sustainable Building and Lifestyle Expo Launceston 14-15 Mar and Hobart 25-26 April and Treadlightly Festival June 6. Presentation of talks on federal rebates at these events
- In conjunction with the Tasmanian Climate Change Office and Department of Premier and Cabinet, organised and staffed displays showcasing Sustainable Living Tasmania's key messages at the Burnie, Launceston and Hobart Shows.
- Participation in the Tasmanian Chamber and Commerce and Industry Conference, on a Speakers' Panel.
- Display at the Tourism Conference in Launceston in July 2008
- Co-organisers of the Climate Emergency Rally, Hobart June 13
- Host organisation for the Waterworks Valley Community Harvest Festival
- Co-convenors of forum on Sustainable Population and Climate Change, UTAS 6 April
- Co-organisers of Local Living Economies series presented by US economist Michael Shuman, Baha'i Centre of Learning, June 29 - 30

### **Waste Management Project**

SLT received a grant through the Living Environment Program in 2007 to produce an information brochure on e-waste. This was commenced by Caitlin Carew and has been completed during 2008-09 by Lissa Villeneuve.

### **Aurora Energy Sponsorship**

Aurora Energy has continued its support for our home energy program with funding to print new editions of the Home Energy Booklet specifically for tenants.

**Edward Hall Award:** Sustainable Living Tasmania won the 2008 Community Award for our community climate change work. This award is offered annually by Hobart City Council.



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