

# TRANSITION SHIRE NEWS

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## BUILDING RESILIENCE

You can't travel far in transition circles without hearing the word *resilience*. So, what is it and how does it relate to us and our community?

Resilience is the ability to recover readily from, or resist being affected by, a setback, illness, etc+ (The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary).

According to *The Transition Handbook* (Rob Hopkins), there are three ingredients in a resilient system.

The first is **diversity**: the number of elements in a system and the number of connections between them. Diversity of functions or industry; diversity of land use- reversing the recent trend to monocultures.

The second is **modularity**: the way in which system components are linked. Our affair with globalization has linked systems too closely. A good example is the current shock waves across the world caused largely by the sub-prime debacle in the

US. A resilient system will have maximum local connections to protect it from shocks to the extended network.

The last is **tightness of feedbacks**: how quickly change in the system is felt and responded to in other parts. A local system will detect and respond to a change more quickly than a centralized system.

These three ingredients are all victims of modernity. We've had them before and it isn't completely awful. And it isn't all lost.

When we think of skills that we might need to reclaim some resilience, we think of old skills- food preserving, tinkering, kitchen gardening. We also think of local supplies of a vast range of things from food and plants to entertainment and clothing.

Resilience doesn't mean isolation or that every village and town should produce its own cutlery. On the other hand, we should be favouring Australian made cutlery over cheap imported offerings to

contribute to a wider resilience.

What is apparently good for the environment isn't necessarily good for resilience. For example, planting trees seems a good idea for carbon sequestration, but planting food-producing trees *locally* is a great idea for increasing resilience. Similarly, imported organic produce does nothing for local resilience; buying from a farm shop does a lot.

Joining local groups is good for resilience. The choir, the school p&f, the transition initiative. It all helps, so get joining and live more locally.

*The Transition Handbook* is available for loan from the Bowral Library.

*Joining local groups is good for resilience. The choir, the school p&f, the transition initiative. It all helps.*



*Resilience...break one strand and*

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## TRANSITION DIARY

Date	Location	Event
Sunday, 1st Feb, 3pm	Harmony Farm, Canyonleigh	Working bee. jilleroo53@hotmail.com
Tuesday, 3rd Feb 8am	Parliament House, Canberra	Climate Change call for action www.climatesummit.org.au
Sunday, 15 Feb, 8am	Harmony Farm, Canyonleigh	Working bee. jilleroo53@hotmail.com
Saturday, Sunday 14-15 Feb	Harmony Farm, Canyonleigh	Permaculture course. jilleroo53@hotmail.com
Sunday, 22 Feb, 2pm	Uniting Church, Bowral	Open space groups to discuss food security, local govt liaison, energy descent plan, car pooling etc gmbyrne@bigpond.net.au
Friday, 27 Feb, 7.30pm	Mittagong Playhouse	Paul Tranter talk: Coping with peak oil: a monster problem or child's play?

# TRANSITION SHIRE NEWS

## FEBRUARY IN THE FOOD GARDEN

Now is the time for applying liquid fertilizer to tomatoes, capsicums, lettuce, brassicas, sweetcorn, silverbeet and cucumbers.

Have patience if this unsettled weather has slowed your plants progress.

Take care with your tomatoes: they may develop blossom end rot if watered inconsistently (see picture, left). Dry soil followed by heavy watering retards the plants ability to use elements in the soil effectively and this is the result. Your best bet is to water well now and mulch heavily to retain the moisture.

Sow seed now for broccoli, carrot (don't let the soil dry

out before germination), cabbage, cauliflower, leek, sprouts, celery, radish, turnip, swede, endive, beetroot, kale, Chinese cabbage, kohlrabi, lettuce, spring onion, parsley, parsnip and silverbeet. Let long-keeping onions die back naturally before lifting them out of the soil to dry.

In the orchard, be sure to water fruit trees consistently to avoid splitting fruit. Mulch berry fruits and vines heavily. Remove and destroy any stonefruit showing signs of brown-rot (see picture, right) and make sure the ground is kept free of fallen fruit. Water citrus and then feed with blood and bone or old manure.



*Blossom end rot in tomatoes*



*Not pretty...the early stages of brown rot in peaches*

Do you know of a group practising Transition principles in the Southern Highlands?  
Do you have a Transition-friendly event that you would like to have listed in TSN?  
Would you like to subscribe to this newsletter?  
Contributions and comments welcome.  
Email the editor at [kathy\\_biddlecombe@acenet.com.au](mailto:kathy_biddlecombe@acenet.com.au)

## NEWS FROM 2019

Everyone was in Bowral last Saturday to celebrate the shire's success at the 4th annual National Sustainable Prosperity awards.

Wingecarribee was one of 547 entrants vying for recognition in lifestyle improvement and closed system waste management.

This award, Best Overall Community Initiative, is the culmination of many years' hard work and dedication from residents and leaders alike.

Judges were particularly impressed by the Wingecarribee's focus on sustained resilience, giving special mention to our network of community food gardens.

Celebrations included a feast of local produce followed by local entertainment.

Members from TSW Hearts and Minds and Waste Not groups were toasting with local sparkling wine late into the night, delighted with their task groups' contribution to this recognition.

TSW Feed the Shire member, Bill Hilton, said that the turning point for the Shire was the hard won victory in 2008 to keep green spaces in towns and villages, instead of liquidating to fund the ill-fated leisure centre. 'Once those parcels of land had been secured for the community, we could really start working on feeding the residents from within the shire' Bill explained.

'We all know how fuel prices went up from 2009. There is no way most residents could have continued to buy food trucked in from all over the

country, and all over the world.'

Another TSW member, from the About the Shire transport group praised the local Council for its foresight and enthusiasm. 'If our local government hadn't been so open to the transition initiative, life in the Wingecarribee could be very different,' Sue Jons said.

'They incorporated our transition vision in the LEP and we haven't looked back. Now people come from far and wide to see how we have reached a high level of resilience in such uncertain times.'

Over the past 10 years, local groups have formed from within the community to achieve amazing things:

- The shire is energy self-

sufficient, with several wind farms and many solar arrays

- A waste biodiesel bus service
- Every house and office has at least one rainwater tank and we are close to water self-sufficiency
- There is a wide network of reskilling instructors and students
- 5000 new food trees in public spaces

The last word goes to our Mayor, widely hailed as a visionary. 'I've worked hard and I'm as pleased as anyone with our progress and this award, but it's the residents themselves who have cemented a secure and prosperous shire for us all - and for generations to come.'

# TRANSITION SHIRE NEWS

## SHAMANISM AT GHUDARA SANCTURAY



Gudhara Wholistic Sanctuary in Wingello is holding a weekend eco-shamanism workshop in April.

This experiential based weekend will introduce different aspects of shamanism and sacred rituals to explore methods for creating a more holistic spiritual and ecological lifestyle.

Participants will explore techniques of traditional shamanism and modern eco-shamanism;

understand how ancient knowledge/wisdom can be applied to modern sustainability issues;

gain clarity, insight and understanding for both personal and bigger-picture

problems; and

Increase their awareness and understanding of their role in protecting and living more harmoniously with nature.

Friday 17. Sunday 19 April 2009. Contact Greg at Ghudara on 4884 446 or check out [www.ghudara.com.au](http://www.ghudara.com.au).

## PEAK OIL AND CHILDREN

The prospect of peak oil and climate change can seem overwhelming for some people, leading to a preference to remain ignorant about these issues.

CANWin's public talk this month shows how a popular children's movie can provide an entertaining introduction to the serious issues of peak oil, children's rights and climate-friendly energy policies.

The Pixar-animated Disney movie *Monsters, Inc.*, released in 2001, is popular with both adults and children. *Monsters, Inc.* can be seen as an allegory about changing conceptualisations of children, an

emerging energy crisis, and our responses to this energy crisis.

A simplistic interpretation of the movie suggests that a technological fix will be found for the world's looming energy crisis. A more detailed critical analysis of the movie suggests that there are far more important messages hidden beneath this humorous children's story.

The presentation explores the likely impact of peak oil on children's well-being, and argues that while peak oil may present a crisis for children's rights, it can also be seen as providing an opportunity, if we can

change our societies now to prepare for it.

A reflection on messages from *Monsters Inc.* suggests that coping with peak oil may require the sort of creativity and openness to new ways of thinking that children exhibit in their play. By taking a child's perspective, and by making our environments more child-friendly, we will also help prepare our societies for the challenges of peak oil and climate change.

Paul Tranter speaks at the Mittagong playhouse on Friday 27 February at 7.30pm. Tickets available at the door.



## ON THE INTERNET

**Future scenarios** David Holmgren's site, mapping the cultural implications of peak oil and climate change. [www.futurescenarios.org](http://www.futurescenarios.org)

**Rob Hopkins on youtube** Interview with Rob Hopkins (founder of transition concept) about what it all means. Recommended watching. <http://au.youtube.com/watch?v=rQF09NG00V8> Search on youtube for Rob Hopkins or transition town to see many more clips.

**Aussies Living Simply** a free Australian internet forum with a focus on sustainability, permaculture, organic gardening, backyard livestock, simple living and stepping lightly on the planet. [www.aussieslivingsimply.com.au/](http://www.aussieslivingsimply.com.au/)

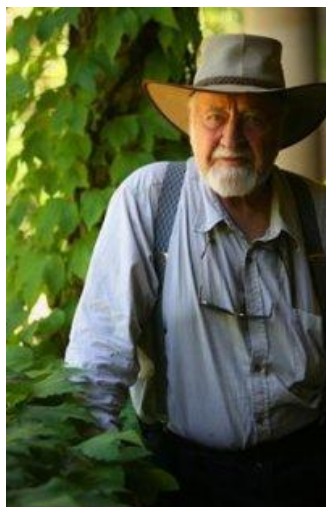
**Post Carbon Institute** supports networking, education, research and services. It helps communities implement proactive strategies to adapt to an energy constrained world by relocalizing. [www.postcarbon.org](http://www.postcarbon.org)

**Backyard Aquaponics** everything you need to know about combining fish and plants in a nutrient-rich closed system [www.backyardaquaponics.com.au](http://www.backyardaquaponics.com.au)



# TRANSITION SHIRE NEWS

## PERMACULTURE



*Permaculture legend, Bill Mollison*

The first Transition Initiative was launched by Rob Hopkins, a permaculture teacher. No wonder, then, that the guiding principles of Transition Shire Wingecarribee echo the principles of permaculture.

Permaculture is a collection of ancient ideas and modern science neatly packaged by Australians David Holmgren and Bill Mollison in the 1970s.

Permaculture is guided by three equal attitudinal principles: care for people, care for the Earth and redistribute surplus to one's needs.

If you would like to apply permaculture to your garden:

- Be observant. You will achieve more if you work with what you have, so take time to understand it across the seasons.
- Adopt a no-waste policy. Compost all organic waste, share you surplus.
- Focus on long-term sustainability
- Plan for water security- install a water tank, recycle water. Mulch, mulch, mulch.
- Establish your vegetable gardens close to your house, so you can do a little work often and observe it more easily.
- Introduce elements that have multiple uses. For

example, chickens produce eggs, manage pests and transform garden waste into manure.

- Preserve genetic diversity by growing heirloom varieties. Save the seeds from exceptional plants for next year.
- Feed the soil. Compost your chicken manure and the garden waste. Apply that to your garden beds to replenish what plants take out.
- Plant a nut tree or two for future harvests.

If that sounds interesting, see below for details on how to learn more and turn your garden into a haven of health and diversity.

## PERMACULTURE COURSE

Harmony Community Farm at Canyonleigh is hosting a weekend permaculture course 14-15 February.

At the end of the weekend, you will be equipped to:

- Re-design your yard for increased fruit & veg production using Permaculture principles/strategies;
- Create no-dig gardens .
- save your back and soil structure;
- Retrofit your house for a lower energy future;
- Understand & apply other soil improvement strategies;
- Grow a diverse range of food crops to suit our cool temperate region;
- Create an integrated

poultry/orchard system;

- Re-assess "garden problems" and create appropriate solutions using creative problem solving.

For further information, contact Jill Cockram 02 4883 4399 or jilleroo53@hotmail.com

Bookings close 12 February. Course numbers are limited to 25 people.



Join the TSW forum!  
[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/T\\_S\\_W/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/T_S_W/)

## SOLAR POWER OFFER

For anyone interested in converting to solar power, Mary Cawood has secured a great deal with Aussie Solar, a 100% Australian family owned company who will supply and install a 1kW

solar system for \$990 (after govt. rebate) if she can gather 30 participants. For more information or to register interest, Mary can be contacted on 0438 889 455.

### Five things you can do for Transition...

- Borrow books from the library or friends instead of buying them
- Be aware of what you put into your rubbish bins and try to reduce your waste
- Car pool—even if it's just to the shops
- Support local businesses
- Share excess produce with your neighbours