

Mount Alexander Sustainability Group

Member Newsletter, Thursday June 17th 2010

Key Dates

- *Saturday July 17th Noon for lunch-4.45pm @ Uniting Church. MASG membership future focus review*
- *Saturday July 17th 8pm, Rod Quantock @ Maldon Community Centre*
- *Saturday July 17th Replace Hazelwood day of action*
- *Saturday July 24th: State of Design House Tours with ATA, Castlemaine*

MASG membership news and events

Bigger the polar bears, this is serious: Rod Quantock Fundraiser

Saturday 17th July 8pm Maldon Community Centre

"Changing the world is never so much fun as when you do it in the company of Rod Quantock."

Susan Provan, Director, Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

\$25 - \$20 conc. (% of proceeds to local community group including MASG) Supper provided and bookings essential. Tickets available at: Leckie Gallery, Maldon Gallery, Goldfields Provender and Maldon Neighbourhood Centre. Mount Alexander Sustainability Group. Inquiries: 5475 1067

Future Focus Review of MASG underway

As part of the future focus review we want you to come to the Community Consultation Workshop for MASG Members on Saturday 17th July. The review will start with a light lunch at noon to 4.45pm at the Uniting Church Hall in Castlemaine. Invitations will be sent out next week to all members and those unable to attend will be invited to complete a survey.

GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO VOLUNTEER for THE STATE OF DESIGN FESTIVAL

MASG is very excited to be partnering with the Alternative Technology Association for this fabulous event in Castlemaine on 24th July.

MASG volunteers will be rostered with a volunteer from the ATA, so this is a great opportunity to share your stories and experiences with other likeminded people culminating in a thankyou dinner for ATA volunteers, presenters and house owners for dinner at 7pm.

There will be four open sustainable houses during the day and in the evening a Q&A session with a panel of sustainability experts.

Full details of the event will be out soon, but we need get our volunteers organised NOW. So if on the Saturday the 24th of July we need:

- 1 person to assist with setting up the registration centre (11am to 12 noon)
- 1 person to assist with registration centre (noon till 3 pm)
- 1 person to assist with registration centre (3pm till 6pm)
- 4 people to assist at open houses (11.30am to 4pm in shifts tbc)
- 3 people to drive mini buses (up to 12 seater 12.30 -4.30 in shifts tbc)
- 2 people to make tea and coffee and assist with catering (3.30pm till 5pm)

Prior to the event help will also be needed to distribute flyers and posters to Castlemaine and surrounds so please contact Helena at MASG on 5470 6978 or come and see her between 10am-3pm Monday to Thursday.

Are YOU Flying the Flag for Sustainability?

Does your community group walk the walk on sustainability? Do you have a corporate policy on climate change? Ever wondered what the reference to Triple Bottom Line on your company website really means? MASG would like to hear from you to be involved in a creative, flag-flying activity where your organisation and it's sustainability action will be lifted in a celebration of colour and fanfare. Be one of 10-12 organisations involved. Contact Deanna with expressions of interest ASAP on 0428 751 090 or deanna@focusoncommunity.org or call MASG on 5470 6978

MASG Advocacy News

MASG meeting with Federal member for Bendigo Mr. Steve Gibbons

Neriman Kemal, Steve Breheny, Jim Norris and Dean Bridgfoot met with Steve Gibbons on Monday July 7th. We asked Mr. Gibbons a series of questions around the Science of climate change and the need for urgent action, his willingness to support a National Gross Feed in Tariff for renewable energy, his willingness to support a Carbon Tax and his position on the plans to build 12 new coal fired power stations in Australia.

- WE WANT YOU TO -let him Mr Gibbons know you want action on climate change by ringing him on 54439055 or email: Steve.Gibbons.MP@aph.gov.au

Renewable Energy survey

Over the last few weeks MASG volunteers Ian and Naomi have been staffing an information stall on Saturday mornings in front of Stoneman's Book room distributing the Beyond Zero Emission(BZE) report on a 100% renewable energy powered Australia by 2020 (<http://www.beyondzeroemissions.org/zero-carbon-australia-2020>) and using the 100 % Renewable Energy survey to talk to people about climate change and renewable energy. Also as part of a national weekend of action Barbara was surveying people at the farmers market on Sunday the 6th of June.

To date people have been very happy to answer the questions and the feedback is enormously favourable.....but the real payoff is the goodwill generated to our group and the awareness created around how we can move to 100% renewable energy. Loads of people are GRATEFUL that we are out keeping climate change and renewable energy in the public spotlight and find the information from BZE and our survey INSPIRING and exciting. We will be continuing with the survey all this month, and are planning a **doorknock day** later in the year.

- WE WANT YOU TO- help for 1 hour every few weeks or months. Contact Dean on 0448 327 791 or dc@masg.org.au

MASG joins the Replace Hazelwood campaign

MASG has joined with BREAZE in Ballarat and Environment Victoria along with hundreds of other groups calling for the replacement by 2012 of Australia's dirtiest power station, Hazelwood, with renewable energy and energy efficiency.

For a great video explaining the whys and hows of this national call to replace Hazelwood power station by 2012 go to

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9obNn8ulBg8&feature=player_embedded

For more information see the website <http://www.replacehazelwood.org.au/>.

- WE WANT YOU- we need 2 people to help on Friday July 16th for 1 hour (noon to 1pm) to hand out information in Castlemaine CBD. Contact Dean on 0448 327 791 or dc@masg.org.au

Spend a second and sign the online Petition to change our old power hungry streetlights

The Municipal Association of Victoria wants to get government support to replace old street lights with new energy-efficient technology. This would save the equivalent greenhouse gas emissions of taking more than 340,000 cars off the road for a year and reduce the drain on our local council rates.

- WE WANT YOU TO- spend a minute and sign the online petition <http://www.greenlightourstreets.org.au/>

Events organised by other groups

Changing the Dream Symposium, Castlemaine: 19th June, 10am-4pm@ Castlemaine Community House

Transition Mount Alexander have organized a 'changing the dream' with Deane Belfield. It is a profound inquiry into our purpose for being on the earth at this time and how a deeper understanding of this purpose can help us to create an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling, and socially just human presence on our planet. Suggested Donation - \$50 (lunch provided). Bookings essential with Jacinta Walsh 0412 759942 or Janet Phillips 0400050399 or: www.bethechange.org.au and www.transitionma.org.au

'Coming Home - Changing the World Around Us', Friday July 23

Discover how we learn and why we change, think deeply on sustainability and learn how take your workplace or community on a cost positive journey into the fast approaching future. Think meaningful, fun and inspiring! Visit the new website for more information www.liveecological.com.au or contact Ian McBurney on 0408 512 234

Latest science and news:

Marrickville Council supports 100% Renewable Energy campaign

Inner Sydney local council, [Marrickville Council](#), has just passed a motion to support the 100% renewable energy campaign including having a link on their website, writing about it in the Council column in the local paper and they are going to hang a campaign banner on the Newtown town hall. The Newtown Climate Action group asked a local councillor to put forward the motion and they encourage other groups to approach a friendly local councillor and get a wave of councils behind the 100% Renewables campaign!

Legal challenges to massive NSW coal expansion.

Court papers were served on Delta Energy Macquarie Generation and Minister of Planning Tony Kelly in relation to cases lodged in the NSW Land and Environment Court challenging the concept approval of the Mount Piper and Bayswater B power station expansions. Applicant Ned Haughton, an activist working with Rising Tide Newcastle, will argue that the Minister's approvals are invalid through a failure to consider ecologically sustainable development in the decision. If the power stations are they will add another 20 million tonnes of greenhouse pollution spewing into the atmosphere each year-more than the entire NSW transport sector – every train, plane and car in the state.

Huge coal export project factors in sea-level rise (Irony is not dead !!)

A massive 12-berth harbour development at Queensland's Abbot Point designed partly to accommodate a boom in coal exports has allowed for a 0.35 metre rise in sea levels over 50 years, says the draft environmental impact statement for the project, released yesterday. It has also allowed for sea level rise of 0.84 metres over 100 years. "The impacts of climate change are likely to affect many infrastructure projects with a projected lifespan greater than 30 years and therefore an assessment of this project's vulnerabilities to climate change is included in this report," says the draft EIS issued by the [North Queensland Bulk Ports Corp.](#) NOW are they taking the PISS or what !!

Interesting Information and Links

When politicians fail, people do it for themselves

As legislation falters and programs end, the community is stepping up. An inspiring opinion piece from the Age highlighting the work of community groups like MASG, BREAZE and others. See <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/politics/when-politicians-fail-people-do-it-for-themselves-20100612-y4m9.html>

The return of Dr Strangelove..... or, how I learned to stop worrying and love climate change...

This paper explores the strange politics of geoengineering and is a scary exposition of some very dodgy (and quite mad) schemes including transforming the chemical composition of the Earth's atmosphere by injecting sulphur particles into the upper atmosphere. There is now a powerful alliance of scientists, venture capitalists and climate deniers in conservative think tanks backing the idea.

http://www.clivehamilton.net.au/cms/media/documents/articles/dr_strangeloves_return.pdf

Chinese provinces agree to dirty coal power plant shut-downs

Twenty-six Chinese provinces have agreed to close down outdated coal-fired power stations which will cut CO2 emissions by 164 million tonnes annually, about 3.2 per cent of 2005 level. The strategy aims to help China complete its plan to close at least 10,000 MW of outdated and inefficient thermal power capacity before October this year. China's plan is to close 70,000 MW of outdated thermal power station capacity over the 2006-2010 period, *equal to the total capacity of British power stations*. For more see <http://www.pointcarbon.com/news/1.1446331>

Flannery blasts Victoria's 'green' claim

Former Australian of the Year Tim Flannery has attacked the Victorian government for failing on the environment, saying it is "taking no meaningful steps" to address climate change. See <http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/flannery-blasts-victorias-green-claim-20100606-xmvj.html>

Quote

And while the coal exports barons in the Australian Government and Industry factor in climate change induced sea level rises in planning for more capacity to export more coal to create more climate change all the while they claim they are serious about tackling climate change one the cynic in me has to pay attention to Mr Carnegie...

"As I grow older I pay less attention to what men say. I just watch what they do"
~ Andrew Carnegie

MASG enews is put together by Dean with volunteer help. To advertise an event or comment on any items, please send to: e-news@masg.org.au or phone 5470 6978.