



**Aldinga**  
Arts EcoVillage

*live. create. evolve.*

# Community

FREE ONLINE EDITION  
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*Life*

*the official magazine of the Aldinga Arts Eco Village, South Australia*

**AUTUMN 2009**

## Painter's Progress

Heidi Karo graduates  
& explores her roots

### INSIDE:

- \* Your Autumn veggie garden
- \* Jacqui Yard's building yarn
- \* Green vs Greed on the home front
- \* Village playground or interactive art adventure

ENVIRONMENT

ARTS

COMMUNITY

## FROM THE EDITORS DESK

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Greetings,

Autumn is here and what an abundant harvest of huge pomegranates and tamarillos I've had this season; half a pomegranate in the lunch box, what a perfect kids snack!

How refreshing the rain feels after the long dry summer and how invigorating to get back out into the garden again! I'm excited about the Goji Berry bush I just planted, what an exotic treat to find at the local hardware store!

I've been busy scooping out the enriched soil out of the chook shed and creating new beds in the back court yard. There is nothing quite as therapeutic and satisfying as a garden – see below for the list of autumn veggies to plant each month.

This edition of Community Life features an artist's profile on Heidi Karo who recently finished her eleven-year study in painting and is now a fully qualified artiste in our midst.

Another Hakean, Jacqui Yard also shares the inspiring tale of a single mum's triumphs and challenges owner-building a straw bale home. Go Jacqui!

Happy harvesting,  
Julia

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# Autumn!

Autumn.

We give thanks for the harvest of the heart's work;  
Seeds of faith planted with faith;  
Love nurtured by love;  
Courage strengthened by courage.  
We give thanks for the fruits of the struggling soul,  
The bitter and the sweet;  
For that which has grown in adversity  
And for that which has flourished in warmth and grace;  
For the radiance of the spirit in autumn  
And for that which must now fade and die.  
We are blessed and give thanks.  
Amen.

-Michael Leunig  
The Prayer Tree

## April

### March

Broad Beans  
Beetroot  
Broccoli  
Cabbage  
Carrot  
Cauliflower  
Lettuce  
Onion  
Parsnip  
Peas  
Silver Beet  
Turnip

Artichoke  
Beetroot  
Broccoli  
Cabbage  
Carrot  
Cauliflower  
Cress  
Eggplant  
Garlic Bulbs  
Leek  
Green Beans  
Lettuce  
Onion  
Parsley  
Parsnips  
Peas  
Radish  
Rhubarb Crowns  
Sage  
Shallots  
Silver Beet  
Spinach  
Turnips

### May

Artichoke  
Beetroot  
Cabbage  
Carrot  
Cauliflower  
Cress  
Eggplant  
Garlic  
Lettuce  
Onion  
Peas  
Sage  
Radish  
Rhubarb Crowns  
Shallot Bulbs  
Silver Beet  
Turnip

## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDING OFFICER

# Richards Ramblings...

The Sharing Shed will have a sign soon! Named by Violet Carpenter, the sign will be constructed by her husband Charlie. Wonderful what Yorkshiremen can do, but let's not dwell on it or we'll hear about their cricket heroes!!

Bridget O'Donnell is organising the artistic side of things and I believe mosaics are going to be well represented. We have to wait for the details, but it will be well worth a visit when it's in place on the Shed, probably before you read this.

***“As I go to various activities outside the Village, locally and in Adelaide I am finding that a significant number of people have heard about our Village and are interested, even curious, about it/us.”***

Talking about the Sharing Shed, the Friday evening gatherings are a great place to meet and where children are welcome – Runi seems to be the most regular participant – any other red heads to join him? There were a few youngsters sporting extraordinarily red hair a week ago, but I was told (very firmly, and not by a parent) it was a stunt for charity.

Grownups are beginning to

appreciate (with some old grumps feeling a bit shown up by) Michael O'Connell's superb Friday night cooking skills – although he's only marginally better than Maggie Beer (not much more than 250% really, and he's another Yorkshireman!)

Kat Worth has, justifiably, chipped me for not giving the arts and culture group a fair amount of coverage. SO HERE WE GO!!

Amongst other things, Kat's group has been developing plans for the Village playgrounds which is a project we would all

like to see get off the ground. Her survey of established southern districts playgrounds, assisted by the Onka Council through expert Wendy Greenslade (and the bus she brought with her), allowed a group which included Village children, parents and one grandmother to garner detail of some exciting ideas by looking at selected sites south of

Adelaide.

Our equipment must be safe, yet not so entirely sanitised that it lacks interest or challenge – both features to be regarded highly. Another aspect is that playgrounds should “grow” with the children, and Kat uses the phrase from “sandpit to flying fox”.

As I go to various activities outside the Village, locally and in Adelaide I am finding that a significant number of people have heard about our Village and are interested, even curious, about it/us.

The Cottages development has been the focus in the local area, and shows what a “front” can do so quickly, whilst the majority of progress has been “out of view and out of mind”.

The townies seem more interested in water, power and design aspects, coupled with the permaculture principles. It seems we are gaining a wider reputation and larger degree of empathetic interest than many of us may realise – it's good to be part of it.

# Heidi Karo

## *mixes it up*



### ***What is your artistic background?***

I have always enjoyed expressing myself with pictures and creating things. My earliest memory of figuring something out in a drawing was in my parent's car as a child. They were house hunting...again. I was sick of it and opted to stay in the car alone with my drawing. I was trying to sort out the differences between males and females and which was more important...I have never figured that one out! It felt nourishing and still gives me that same feeling. In High School I realised that I could actually become an artist and I have been working toward that goal ever since.

### ***Describe your achievements and interests***

I have finally completed a degree in Visual Art and Applied Design at O'Halloran Hill Tafe, majoring in painting. The three-year course took me eleven years (with children and breaks in between) and it feels so good to be finished! I have been exhibiting during my studies and have worked on a number of community art projects. I have an interest in art as a tool for healing, especially in the area of mental health. Last year I was a runner up in the SALA Advertiser Contemporary Art Award, which was really exciting!



**'YES', A MIXED MEDIA WORK ON CANVAS THAT WAS DISPLAYED AT FIRST BREATH.**

### ***Describe your recent work and style***

My most recent works are a direct response to 'stuff' particularly my Estonian grandmother's stuff. I recently received some boxes of my deceased grandmother's most precious belongings. They are dear to me as they represent my family history and Estonian culture and the need for healing from the destruction of World War II that killed my grandfather, who fought in the SS.

## ***What are your artistic influences?***

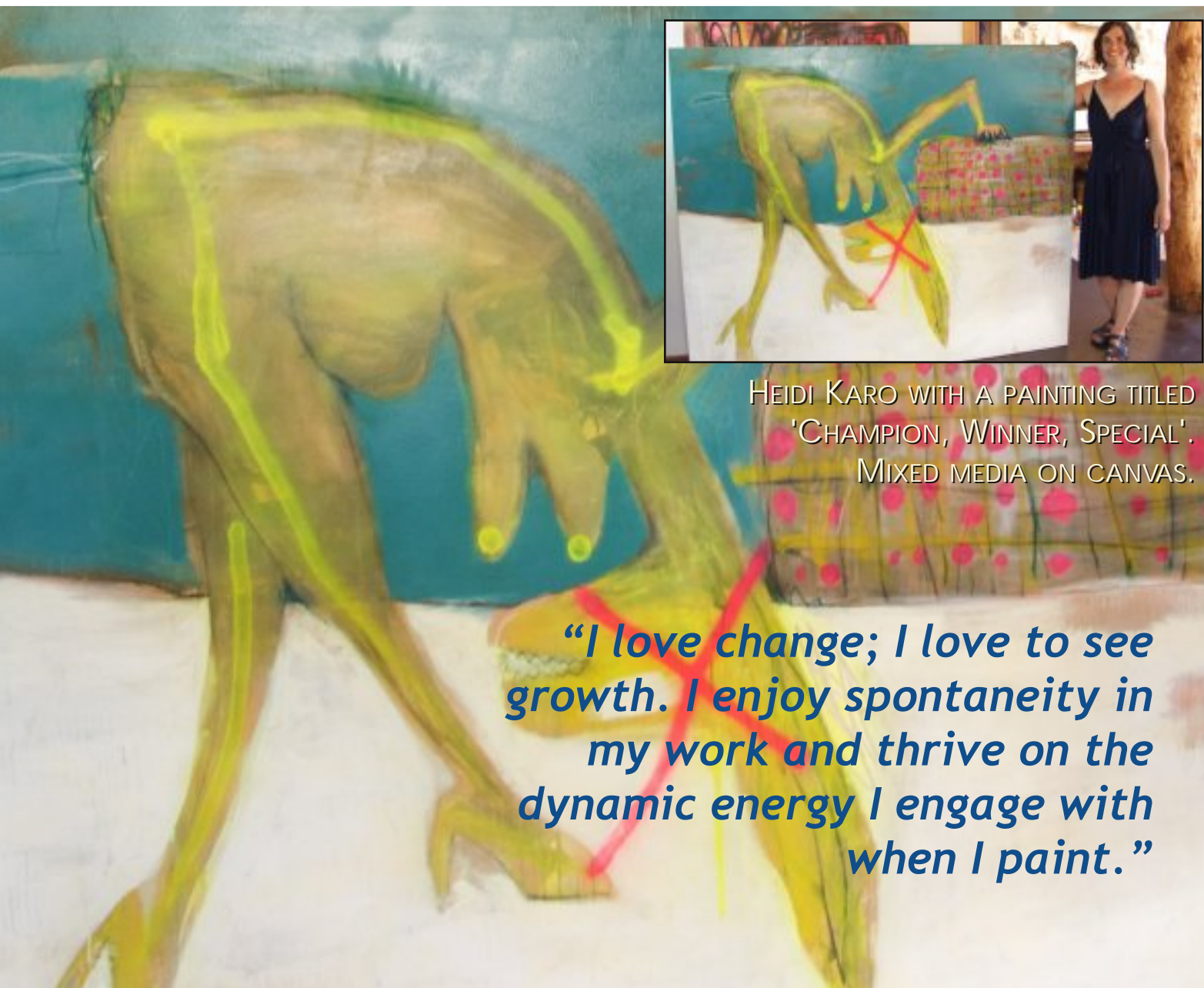
I am influenced by the German Expressionists. Like them I seek a true and honest response with lively line work and a dynamic palette that can be read openly.

## ***What medium do you work with?***

A combination of materials- acrylic, oil, enamel, spray paint, charcoal and oil pastel. I have been using my grandmother's shawls and tablecloths as stencils to create patterns on the canvas, which has been fun and I love the reference to handicrafts, history and memory. I really like to mix it up, whatever is at hand I will use.

## ***Your paintings can be seen as quite confronting or even provocative, is that your intention?***

I guess so. Some part of me intends to confront when it comes to my work, although, the most important thing to me is authenticity. While a bit of a stir is important at times, I aim to find the light of a situation. Painting is about problem solving for me, I pull out the junk. Once it is out and painted, displayed and judged if need be, I can look at it, over there, not in me, and have a giggle.



HEIDI KARO WITH A PAINTING TITLED  
'CHAMPION, WINNER, SPECIAL'.  
MIXED MEDIA ON CANVAS.

***“I love change; I love to see growth. I enjoy spontaneity in my work and thrive on the dynamic energy I engage with when I paint.”***



THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF FIRST BREATH AT GALLERY M. HEIDI IS INTRODUCING THE GUEST SPEAKER, ANTHONY STEEL.

### ***What inspires you?***

I am totally inspired by the idea of interconnectedness, that there are no physical boundaries. I love that we are made of mostly water and our skin is permeable. I love change; I love to see growth. I enjoy spontaneity in my work and thrive on the dynamic energy I engage with when I paint. Painting and drawing allow me to reflect on and share something of myself, say something with a different spin on it, with unique experience.

### ***What inspires you about village life?***

I really enjoy the connection with the earth and the connections with people. We are working together here, and working through challenges. We are learning to hear each other and to speak our needs. I think that we are pioneering a new way of being here on our planet and with the universe, I guess! By living in this way, so connected and with my roots

growing down I remember to be grateful for what we have here. This is a really special place and I am so happy to see my children living in such a supportive community, they feel free here and learn about caring for the earth and our neighbours.

### ***What next? What are your goals for the future?***

I want to keep evolving as an artist and supporting myself with my work so I can do that. I am also working towards a residency in Estonia in the next few years but for now, on the 11th of April I will be starting a stall at the Willunga Artisans Market held the second Saturday of each month at the Willunga Institute Hall.



# *single mother/ owner builder*

## *Jacqui Yard's gutsy adventure*

This journey started back in October 2006 when I visited the eco village market to look into the intentional community, close to one of two Waldorf schools in the state, that I had heard about. Having returned to live in Adelaide after a 20-year absence, I needed a community open to newcomers and having lived 15 years in London, a happening community, not suburbia.

I did the village tour and noticed quite a few blocks for sale. Looking around

Peter Morrison's straw bale shell I thought I'd like to build one of those. Two weeks later I owned Lot 55! Two days after that I was attending a straw bale building workshop with Lance Kairl at The Food Forest. My bedside reading changed from Notebook to Owner Builder and novels were replaced by Build Like a Woman by Sandra Broman!

I sold my house in Adelaide and initially resolved to build within an \$180,000 building budget. My best friend's sister, Melanie Ford, an architect with children

the same age as mine (then 1.5 and 2.5), was happy to take me through the concept and design process for a very reasonable fee to help her return to work.

My first hurdle was finding a draftsman willing to draw up my straw bale design. Jack Metcalf who specialises in 'frugal designs' took one look and said I would never build it on my budget; I'd have to take out all of the 'wow' elements of the design. He was right, it did cost a lot more to build, but I didn't want to sacrifice those elements so I chose to do very basic second fix to make it possible.

I enjoyed the planning process, scouring salvage yards throughout the state in search of windows and doors. It was a thrill to find a complete set of north facing windows to the exact size specified by the architect and the hundreds of wall panels stripped from the old Adelaide Railway Station that would make fantastic large doors throughout.

I was keen to do what work I could on the house to save money and as I was time rich this made sense. The first task was to make 2900 compressed earth bricks, which my father and two laborers helped me achieve in 11 days. This was an excellent exercise to build physical strength for the rest of the build, in particular the building of the shed out of the bricks, the curved wall and ultimately the straw bale walls for which I was responsible.

The quote for the straw bale walls to be done professionally was around \$30,000, so I decided I would spend half of that. I



CHRISTMAS EVE 2008

worked out the material costs and how much professional help I could afford. In the end I employed Lance and his team to run the bale-raising over three days, and do the first two coats outside to seal the building before the rains came.

***“Now my boys and I are like the three little pigs happily occupying a bespoke building that combines all the materials the three little pigs used - straw, sticks and bricks.”***

Lance's team plus a team of mostly village volunteers got most of the walls up in the first two days. I was then left to complete the walls with the odd helper.

Then the unthinkable happened. As I approached the end of bale wall preparation, I nearly severed a finger with an angle grinder. Hospital, hand surgery involving pins and wire and



THUMPING BALES INTO PLACE WITH THE PERSUDER



INTERIOR FEATURING CURVED BRICK WALL

then a splint for six weeks... As it happens it wasn't a bad time for such an injury, other trades could come in a do their bit while I mended.

Slowly my fitness deteriorated, all those muscles gone. How on earth was I going to find the strength to do all that rendering... three coats inside and the finishing coat outside of 180 m2 of walls? My saviors were Rick Davies and Tricia O'Donovan who own the block next door. They had already built a straw bale in the village, were planning to build another and were keen to try out render sprayer they'd bought. So with another bunch of trusty volunteers we managed to get the first two coats on in three days over two weekends. It was cold, heavy, hard yakka.

Now my boys and I are like the three little pigs happily occupying a bespoke building that combines all the materials the three little pigs used - straw, sticks and bricks. We have stunning lofty ceilings, beautiful curved walls, hardwood and polished concrete floors. The space is designed around our needs and passive solar principles. We have been in the house six months now, and have already experienced several hot spells. The ceiling fans keep us comfortable by day and the combination of louver and casement windows allow for catching cooling evening breezes.

I don't think I appreciated the enormity of the task of building a house until I was in the thick of it. I am indebted to three people in particular who helped me through the process. My dad, John Yard who showed up day after day supporting me from start to finish, he was my rock. Phil Ballard, who drew up the plans then helped me make material decisions and listened to my troubles and Hugh Griffith, carpenter extraordinaire, who is worth his weight in gold for his diligence and desire to help this single mum build a lovely home.

Life has a very different feel to it now we are settled, hopefully for the next 20 years or so. It truly is a blessing to own and live in a beautiful home in an interesting and forward thinking community. I bought a Notebook magazine for the first time again the other day but I think I'm more of an Earth Garden kind of woman now.



SAMSON, THOMAS AND BENNY DURING STRAW BALING

## Necessary Games

# *Kat - Dancer & Director*

*Our multi-talented dance artist Kat Worth wins awards with a film exploring teenage angst.*

**Necessary Games**, a dance film triptych about our human need to connect and the urgent games we play was created in collaboration with Adelaide's acclaimed Restless Dance Theatre, which works with young dancers with and without a disability.

The second film, **Sixteen** was co-directed and choreographed by village resident Kat Worth. It explores a coming of age game about the joy, nervousness, desire

and intimacy of the different kinds of connections a young woman will, did or might have in her life.

The film premiered at the Adelaide Film Festival on Feb 22nd and went on to win Best Short Film at the SA Screen Awards and took out 3 additional awards as well!

Well done, Kat!



# 'green' culture clash at home ...

CSIRO REPORT ADAPTED BY ELIZABETH HEIJ

Who would have anticipated that adoption of voluntary simplicity and low-impact living could have such an impact on hospitality in the home! We are learning the hard way that rejection of consumerism can produce major stress among family members and friends, particularly at birthdays and Christmas, which seem to have become over-the-top festivals of commercial consumption.

We feel 'put-down' when family houseguests shower each other with expensive commercial presents, rave about them in ways that clearly equate expenditure with love, and then look down on the different way we attempt to express our giving in practical, non-consumerist ways.

It is hard not to resent having houseguests daily luxuriate, without a thought, in 10-minute hot showers, when we have carefully limited our water use to a tiny fraction of theirs in order to live on rainwater and solar heating alone. We have to bite our tongues to avoid lecturing them about the need to not flush the toilet after 'minor' visits, even though it is explained very politely by the little sign on the toilet tank.

Mindful of our own actions to stay within the energy budget of the solar PV cells on our roof, we fret about lights, fans, radios, computers and television left on when not in use, and at the frivolous overuse of electrical appliances – like kettlefuls of water boiled for a single

cup of tea, the oven heated full-bore just to "touch up" a couple of bread rolls, and the refrigerator door left hanging open until the temperature sensor beeps in outrage.

It's annoying to have a guest look into the fridge at a stack of fresh home-grown, fresh-picked veggies and say in an incredulous voice "Have you got anything nice to eat, like a frozen pizza or chips or something?"

And we dread the sort of conversation that starts out "Let's go for a drive" or "Let's go to ... .. (fifty-plus km away). When trying to limit our transport emissions to just the essential minimum, we feel stressed by the use of our car simply for amusement, to relieve boredom, or just to drive around with the air-conditioner on to get away from a hot day!

Did I hear you say, "Well – explain the 'rules' of the house!"? We do try to explain the principles we live by and the reasons for them. This tactic, however, seems simply to divide guests into two camps. On the one hand, are those who say "Oh – that makes a lot of sense", and then give it their best shot; on the other, are those who look at us in disbelief and give us various versions of "Well, I don't believe in all that silly green stuff. You can stick to your own weirdo values but just leave me to get on with it the way I'm used to."

# ***“We are hopeless hosts for those who would rather tool around the district in cars, ‘shop till they drop’ at the local mall, or eat junk food at every meal!”***

We have no problem with the first group. They are welcome in our home at any time. But, needless to say, having members of the latter camp in the house is a stressful experience, even when we try to be hospitable. They put us in mind of the old proverb – ‘Fish and houseguests go off after three days.’ Ultimately, of course, what sends houseguests ‘off’ is a refusal to quietly and gently adapt to the customs of the house they are visiting – whether it is ‘green’ or not. Considerate, adaptable houseguests don’t go “off”.

We love houseguests who visit us to enjoy meaningful conversations, the ‘little stuff’ of living together, and the interspersed quiet spaces of silent, easy companionship. We are hopeless hosts for those who would rather tool around the district in cars, ‘shop till they drop’ at the local mall, or eat junk food at every meal!

Sadly enough, family and friendships, like society, can experience the great, green, cultural divide.

When ‘green’ penetrates the inner core of your being, a gulf opens to divide you from those who live comfortably and enthusiastically in the current status-quo. That this can separate family and friends is the sad part of choosing low-impact living. Hopefully, as realisation grows of the challenges ahead, we’ll find more of our family members and long-time friends over on the green side of the divide. It has been good to see more coming over even within the last year.

Adapted from the original featured in the CSIRO Sustainability Network Newsletter No. 63  
15 December 2006

<b>Peter Chapman</b> <i>A Green Living Master Builder</i>	<b>Project</b> BLD216392	
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# let the fun begin...

## village playground design workshop

A large group of village parents and children gathered in the Sharing Shed in November last year to be inspired and guided by gardening artist extraordinaire, Evette Sunset. We enjoyed the visual presentation of her portfolio of work on playgrounds, parks, schools and installations as well as photos of creative and organic play spaces from around the world.

Evette's approach to playground development is from physical exploration before structural equipment and we explored being children again and recognised what activities we liked doing, sharing our experiences of climbing, splashing, hiding, swinging and make believe.

A site walk over the village to explore potential sites resulted in two main areas recognised to be particularly good for playground development:



1. The orchard and open space corner of Clematis Walk and Dianella Way, which links to the open space behind Ken and Francois.

- Ⓢ Large, flat open area that has high visibility
- Ⓢ Orchard provides natural sheltered play space
- Ⓢ Cubbies and/or domes between trees with plantings that can be changed on structures

## 2. The board walk-entrance to the amphitheatre, opposite Amy and Paul

- Ⓢ Sheltered serpentine space
- Ⓢ Great for a linear concept like tyre, pole or rock walk
- Ⓢ Tight rope rig between two poles

A group discussion then yielded some important matters to consider:

- Ⓢ The need to be sensitive to neighbours around all sites
- Ⓢ Paths in and out of play spaces need to be clarified and become a part of the design
- Ⓢ Concept of creative interactive arts project and an environmental, educational play space, not just a playground
- Ⓢ Create a linear playground that incorporates many different play spaces, a journey that needs a name
- Ⓢ Keep thinking in kids scale
- Ⓢ Include local people in process
- Ⓢ Need a maintenance plan with ongoing reports kept on file

The practical side of the project was discussed with the next step to make a plan that includes risk assessment, a 3D model, community approval and employment of a playground assessor and project manager.

A Mandate Group of creative individuals was then formed to work on the design, with Evette offering to help; while another enthusiastic group offered their time and practical skills.

