

Village News




Village Well

The evolution of Placemaking...

Placemaking is increasingly becoming part of the lexicon for developers, councils, state and federal government. A tipping point was achieved in 2010 with the Melbourne Placemaking series, setting a benchmark in how Placemaking is understood as an integral process for enabling sustainable and resilient communities.

2010 also saw the birth of the Integral Design Commission in Adelaide through the leadership of Tim Horton, trailblazing an integrated design process with Place and Placemaking at its core. We see the increasing use of terms such as Place Activation, Place Engagement, Place Management and Place Leadership to describe strategies and bodies of work. Many briefs now ask for Placemaking and place-based outcomes.

One way to interpret these developments is the need for a new approach to, and narrative for our times- business as usual is no longer an option. The need to join the dots and to deliver real place outcomes through committed processes is essential. As with any new movement, the danger of 'place-washing' is never far removed. Words are easy, delivery takes hard work, authentic engagement, good design, patience, and collaborative effort amongst all involved. The loser of course is the community and the public realm.

On the flipside, the Placemaking movement has provided the opportunity for practitioners across all sectors to discover greater connections in their work, engagement with integrity, a holistic way of seeing how our communities can thrive and the understanding of how a Placemaking framework can provide a basis for comprehensive engagement, thinking, design and action.

Since my work with Al Gore and the Australian Conservation Foundation in 2007, I have been actively promoting Placemaking as 'The New Environmentalism'. The health of our communities depends on the health of the earth, and the sooner we can create communities that have deep place principles embedded, the better: a return to the local, valuing and creating food, energy and water security, providing ample and enjoyable opportunities for our communities to share and express their cultural richness- this is what builds resilience.

In what many are calling 'The Transition Decade', moving from an industrial growth society to a low carbon, life sustaining society, we collectively have a responsibility to be courageous and take leadership in whatever capacity we can to ensure we have the best places and communities now, and for the long-term future.

In this autumn newsletter we explore some of our recent work in South Australia, Torquay and Jan Juc and the launch of 'Future Stories'. We hope you'll be inspired and continue to do great work in your own communities.

- Gilbert Rochecouste
Managing Director

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Imagine Your Rural City, Murray Bridge 2020 - Brand Design

Village Well worked with Burke Urban and Rural City of Murray Bridge to develop the *Imagine Your Rural City, Murray Bridge 2020* brand.

Inspired by the image of the 'dandelion' blowing new seeds into the landscape, the brand captures the essence of an emerging community moving forward with a common vision.

The brand has been purposely designed to ensure the wide-ranging development projects in the Rural City of Murray Bridge are appropriately and effectively communicated to the community it impacts. It has already been rolled out on a large scale from flag pole banners to polo shirts for project ambassadors.

-Ching Ching Lee

Renewal and greenfield development integration - a Placemaking journey for Murray Bridge

Village Well have recently been spending a lot of time in South Australia thanks to Burke Urban and the Rural City of Murray Bridge (RCMB) who have truly made us feel at home.

Working closely with the RCMB, Burke Urban and Taylor Burrell Barnett (TBB), Village Well developed a renewal process for Murray Bridge including the project brand 'Imagine Your Rural City Murray Bridge 2020'.

The workshop series enabled engagement with hundreds of members of the Murray Bridge community focused on the Rural City of Murray Bridge, its town centre and its precincts including the new greenfield development Gifford Hill (currently in masterplanning stages), and the rural communities of Mypolonga, Monarto, Jervois, Woods Point, Wellington and Riverglens.

Village Well is currently collating and distilling the overwhelmingly positive community response. The many ideas and visions put forward by the community for the region, as well as for Gifford Hill will inform the ongoing masterplanning process and other future planning projects which aim to ensure Gifford Hill becomes truly integrated and part of the broader Murray Bridge place story.

-Jeanette Lambert



Stop Press!

On Friday 15 April, the Rural City of Murray Bridge was awarded the "2011 LGMA / SA Leadership Excellence Awards – Partnerships for Growth" for "Imagine your Rural City of Murray Bridge in 2020 – Our Place, Our Future".

Village Well is delighted to have been involved in the development and facilitation of such a successful and comprehensive community process to envision the future development of the area.

Future Stories: real good news!

Village Well is pleased to announce that as part of our advocacy arm, 'The Ministry of Positive Change', we are supporting an exciting new project – Future Stories: real good news! which was launched at the Sustainable Living Festival this February with Gilbert sharing his little-known personal story and what keeps him inspired and energised.

Initiated by Maya Ward and Hal Greenham, Future Stories aims to inspire, empower and activate communities and individuals to create a sustainable future... by sharing the ordinary and extraordinary stories of change agents working NOW to create that future. We are looking for vivid and memorable stories of people working to create more soulful and sustainable lives, local people who through their commitment are creating significant change in our communities.

The Future Stories vision has brought together a wide range of partners including environmental innovators such as the Sustainable Living Foundation, CERES (Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies), RMIT Globalism Research Institute, Moreland Energy Foundation and a number of others to form a not-for-profit association, Future Stories Incorporated. Future Stories have also partnered with the video production company Scout Films, in order to produce high-quality video of these stories. We plan to screen these on the web as well as in live settings and workshops, so keep a look out for Future Stories!

-Maya Ward



"Our Place, Our Future"
www.imagemurraybridge.com.au



www.villagewell.org



Brooklyn Grange, the world's largest urban rooftop farm in New York

If you live or work in the city a few floors up, you may have looked around and noticed a number of empty or neglected rooftops - a perfect opportunity for some urban gardening. Green roofs are gaining traction as people recognise the visual, environmental and economic benefits that plants on buildings provide. But how about looking out over an urban farm enterprise? Some clever people in New York City have done just that. With enormous vision and physical effort, and by developing partnerships with other businesses, government and the support of many community members they have succeeded in creating the world's largest urban roof-top farm, Brooklyn Grange in Long Island City.

The aim of Brooklyn Grange is to improve access to very good food, to connect city people more closely to farms and food production, and to make urban farming a viable enterprise and livelihood. In their first growing season, Brooklyn Grange cultivated thousands of plants including over 40 varieties of tomatoes, a dozen different types of capsicum and chillies, various radishes, carrots, beans, kale, okra, and salad greens amongst others. Produce is also sold direct to a number of local restaurants at weekly farmers markets as well as their own on-site market every Thursday. The farm also runs a Community Supported Agriculture Program (CSA). For more information on this great urban farming enterprise, visit www.brooklyngrangefarm.com.

-Amadis Lacheta



Changes at the Well

We would like to introduce you to a few new faces at Village Well:

- Kate McMahon, our new Director of Placemaking brings a wealth of urban design, project management and consulting experience across a range of sectors through work with CPG Global, AECOM, her own enterprise Sawhorse Consulting, the University of Melbourne and RMIT. Since 2003, she has also lectured at the VCA in sculpture and spatial practice and presents on creative process and innovation. She is currently completing her Masters of Urban Design at Melbourne University.
- Sunny Haynes, our new Principal Placemaker has ample project management experience within the regeneration, social & affordable housing and development sectors through her work in both the UK and Australia working with organisations including the Irwell Valley Housing Association, FSquared and VicUrban.
- Philippa Abbott, a welcome addition to our team of Placemakers has a background in Industrial Design and

experience across the arts, sustainability, business and community development sectors, working in conjunction with numerous groups including VEIL (Victorian Eco Innovation Lab), CineArt Studios and the Design Institute of Australia.

Some not so new but also very valued members of the Village Well team you may not know are:

- Jo Skladzien, who joined us initially as an intern in early 2010 and is now one of our senior Placemakers. Jo has a background in Architecture and Interior Design, and has been involved with a number of projects in the areas of tertiary education, adaptive re-use, masterplanning, retail design and brand development working for architecture firms in Adelaide and Melbourne including DesignInc.
- Cindy Plowman, who joined our team of Placemakers in mid 2010, has a background in business and event management and has worked with the strategic consulting firm Futureye in the areas of stakeholder engagement and corporate responsibility. She is currently completing her Masters in International Environment and Urban Management with RMIT.

Farewell to Jeanette

At the same time we would like to farewell a valued member of our team, Jeanette Lambert who has made a great contribution to our Placemaking work over the last four and a half years, and will be known to many of you. She has been involved in many of our significant Placemaking projects during this time, including the Creek Front Development project in Dubai in 2007-8. Her dedicated efforts will be missed, and we wish her a great break and wonderful opportunities for her future.

“Daydream. Scientists now say it's one of our most complicated activities, the way we shape ourselves and become aware of those things we have felt without thinking. The heart has a quiet voice. Allow thoughts to unfold. All those emptinesses that precede stumbling across the unexpected. The aching dullness that is so often the catalyst for better things, for breakthroughs. Being bored is important sometimes.”

- Ilse Crawford, from 'Home is where the heart is?'

Our Bees

In Spring last year, our friendly beekeeper Martin O'Callaghan organised for one of his Top Bar Bee Hives to find a home on our West-facing balcony at Village Well. Originally developed in Africa, these hives are very resource efficient and support healthy bee culture. We have a Top Bar hive at home, from which we've just harvested some delicious home-grown honey. Once our city bees have had more of a chance to establish a strong colony, we'll also be harvesting delicious city honey. The trend for urban beekeeping is on the up, and there are many great and important reasons to support this.

Martin O'Callaghan builds and sells top bar beehives and supplies beekeeping equipment that can be shipped Australia-wide through his enterprise 'The Urban Hive.' He also offers assistance with setting up and maintaining hives and capturing bee swarms. For more information you can email him at: m.c.ocallaghan@optusnet.com.au and follow his blog at <http://theurbanhive.blogspot.com>



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