

UN World Environment Day observed in Australia

Several BK Centres in Australia observed the UN World Environment Day on Thursday 5 June 2014.

Blue Mountains, Sydney

Fifteen people participated in a workshop at Blue Mountains Retreat Centre called *The joys of living ASAP*. ASAP (as sustainably as possible) is a campaign run by Shirley Lewis, who runs a local community radio program each week based on the concept. It encourages people to commit to doing one positive action for the environment whilst giving up a bad habit.



Shirley's 'respect arc' focused the group's attention on the four elements of earth, air, fire and water and how our actions affect all of them. BK Greg

Welham facilitated a session on how our thoughts affect how we feel which then impacts on nature and other people. The day was very thought-provoking and joyous because of the opportunities the workshop gave for sharing the good things each of us are currently doing to bring about a more sustainable world.



Ashfield, Sydney

There was an evening talk on 'The State of the Environment': BK Linda started by briefly talking about the history of phenomenal detrimental environment changes which started because of the industrial revolution, around 1750. She then narrowed down some of the significant environmental areas of concern including: water, climate change, energy, coal, biodiversity oceans, population, sustainable cities, transport and people.

As a case study, she spoke about a large oil and gas company and their 1/2 page advertisement in the newspaper. They were saying they were committed to environmental preservation which she didn't believe and after a brief search she found a trail of destruction they left behind in mainly developing nations.

Finally, Linda spoke about different ways of thinking, which in itself will improve the wellness of our environment by creating positive ways to look at our environment. This included economic versus social benefits, composting, thinking globally and acting locally, planting trees and getting involved with community gardens.

Gold Coast, Queensland

'Meditation for the Environment' was held at the Peace Pavilion from 12.30pm to 1.30pm. A small group of people attended.

Perth, Western Australia

BKs went to clean up a local park, however some magic earth angels had already done a thorough job of it as there was no rubbish to be found. So they returned to the centre for meditation which created a powerful vibration to shower our world with TLC.

They then shared their thoughts on why it is so important to keep the balance between our inner matters and external matter and how our external world is coloured by our internal wellbeing.

They made environmentally-friendly toothpaste whilst talking about simplicity, economy, awareness as in regards to waste (mental and physical), and how vital it is to check what kind of thoughts we are spreading throughout the day and what type of vibrations we are carrying with us into the world.

They watched a video clip called "we need to wake up" for the betterment of our world.

After that they planted some organic seeds with love and yoga and shared thoughts on good wishes and pure feelings.

The program finished with a peaceful meditation, a poem from Sr Carolyn Minter dedicated to trees called "Dance of the trees" and the song "Heal the World" by Michael Jackson.

Hobart, Tasmania

On the Queen's Birthday holiday, the local branch of Religions for Peace, as part of our shared spiritual journey to honour the elements - earth, water, fire, air and ether - visited a place sacred to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people where they honoured fire at Mt Amos, as viewed from Dolphin Sands. The recently published book *The Cotton Papers*, originally written by a Quaker pioneer in the area, documents that the place was the pathway to the Land of the Sleeping Gods and the place of special ceremonies to honour fire.

The group was led by Kris, an Aboriginal artist and horticulturalist who has made a special study of the Cotton Papers and is especially interested in the spiritual process of 'singing up country'.