

Labyrinths Matter - Newsletter

Spring Edition - Down Under 2009 Edition 1

Australian Region of The Labyrinth Society, Inc. (TLS) & Veriditas

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Print Date 6/9/09

Windana Moss Labyrinth - A place of welcome, reflection and tranquillity. The labyrinth has become an important part of the community.
By Wendy Bell

The plan for a labyrinth at Windana's Therapeutic Community was formed following a discussion with John and Paula McLeod at a Goldman Sachs JBWere and Community team work day in June 2008. John and Paula are long-time supporters of the community's Eco-Therapy program and their interest in labyrinths rekindled my own desire to see one built on the property.

Paula is a very experienced labyrinth facilitator and is aware of the positive benefits a labyrinth can bring to a community health facility engaged in counselling and healing.

At the time of these initial discussions with John and Paula, a site for the labyrinth was chosen. I was strongly drawn to a clearing in the property's natural bushland forest. This area had been cleared by sand mining in the past and had long been used as a place of reflection and peace by the community's residents and staff. On visiting this site, Paula agreed that it was perfect and the first plans were put in place.

Later that year, Paula suggested I attend a weekend of facilitators' training with world famous labyrinth maker Robert Ferré. This fantastic weekend not only gave me great inspiration, but also the skills to introduce the concept of the labyrinth to the staff and community.

When the time came to plan the next team work day, we chose to make the labyrinth on World Labyrinth Day – May the 2nd 2009. As it happened, very wet weather that week would mean that the building of the labyrinth would commence the following week.

A dowsing was carried out at the site to gain permission of the land to build the labyrinth. The dowsing indicated that there was a body of water present underneath the clearing, confirming our intuitive choice of this site of very special resonance and significance.

The design chosen was the Chartres Cathedral style and a total of 18 circuits, including the central petals, were mapped out in advance of the work team arriving. The site immediately demonstrated its unique nature by displaying some interesting idiosyncrasies



Expert mathematical plotting contributed by a member of staff was persistently foiled by discrepancies in measurement occurring in one particular area of the clearing. Likewise, the precise mathematical calculation of the centre proved to be impossible. Completion of the mapping required my return to the site alone, and in peaceful solitude I was able to complete the labyrinth layout guided by respectful contemplation and intuition.

On Saturday the 9th of May 2009, on a drizzly morning clearing to sunshine, GS JBWere volunteers, community residents and Windana staff commenced the build. The labyrinth was dug out of the clay of the site and defined by bush moss gathered from the forest surrounding the clearing. Tynong Quarry rock was used both as a fine gravel to surface its paths and as larger stones lining the moss. A circle of inlaid stone forms the centre of the labyrinth and at its heart is placed an urn filled with water to provide a reflective surface for contemplation.

The completed labyrinth spreads quietly and gracefully across the clearing, surrounded on all sides by its beautiful forest home.

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Windana Moss Labyrinth Completed. (cont'd)

Its impact of the labyrinth on visitors is quite extraordinary, as is illustrated by the following description:

First Visit

*"The journey to the labyrinth
commences on a narrow path
through the beautiful forest remnant
on the Therapeutic
Community property.*

*A few metres into the forest
a familiar tranquillity descends -
walking into the forest
is like stepping into another world,
a serene moment
suspended in time.*

*Gravel crunches softly under my feet
as I walk the stone lined path
leading to an opening
at the edge of the clearing.*

*And, there like a many petalled flower,
the labyrinth ripples
gently out across the forest floor.*

*Serenely beautiful,
the labyrinth is a living,
breathing organism - newly created,
yet somehow an ancient,
eternal presence
at the heart of the forest.*

*Sometime, soon,
I'll return to walk its path."*

Written by a member of Windana Staff

Earth sculptures of random figures, created by residents, are appearing around the edge of the clearing. Plans for the future include the marking out of both Koori and European seasons in ceramic mosaic and the placement of an affirmation stone.

Already the labyrinth has become a favourite place for residents. For our annual celebrations of the Winter Solstice, a group of residents delighted us with a play which included the labyrinth. A place of welcome, reflection and tranquillity, the labyrinth has become an important part of the community.

Guest House - Rumi



This being human is a guest house
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out for some new
delight.

The Door Is Round - Rumi



The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.
Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don't go back to sleep.
You must ask for what you really want.
Don't go back to sleep.
People are going back and forth across the
doorsill
where the two worlds touch.
The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep.