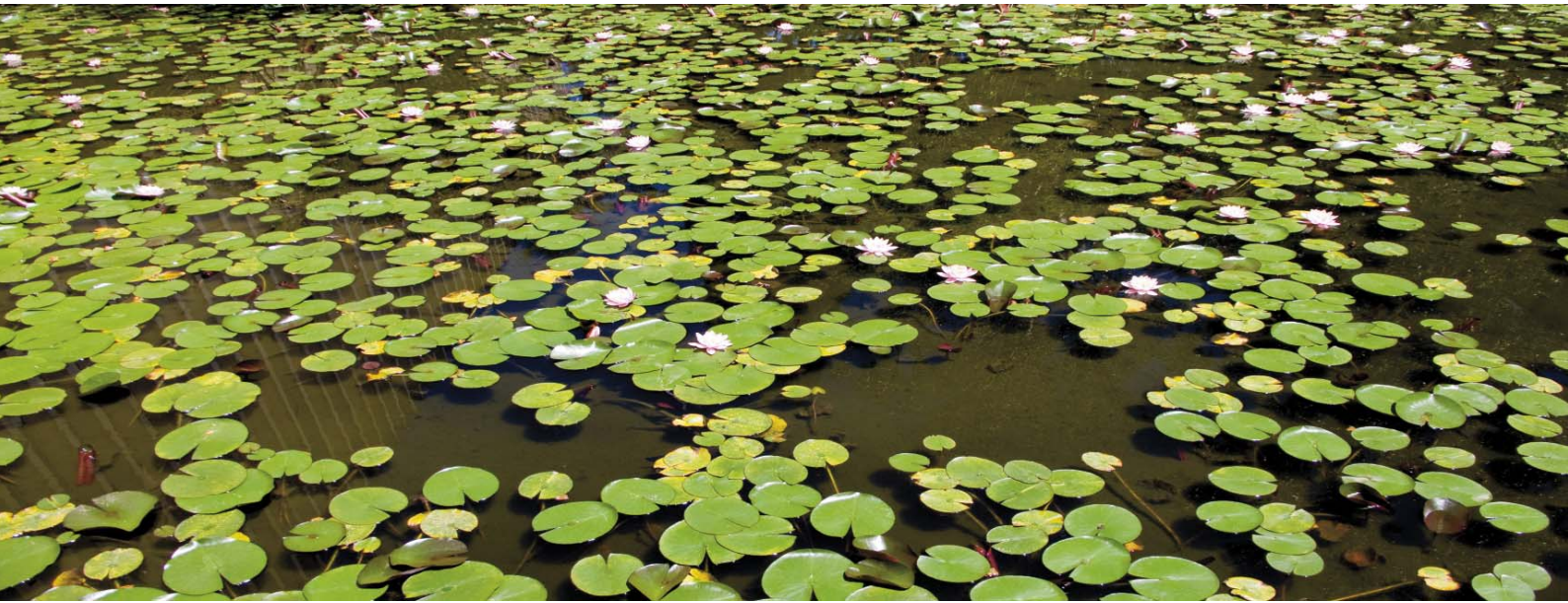


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LAND MARK



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www.aila.org.au

From the President Mandy Rounsefell AILA National President

As the National President it is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to bring the membership up to date with one of the important initiatives currently underway through the National Office—the Climate Assessment Tools for Sustainable Settlement (CATSS) Project. Funded through the Department of Climate Change, the CATSS Project aims to identify a range of climate adaptation tools currently in use or under development within Australia and overseas. We will examine their scope of influence and potential applicability within the context of national and international initiatives to foster climate-adapted and sustainable human settlement.

Our national team has been making visits to the National Parliament in Canberra to alert politicians to the full complexity of the issues in relation to Sustainable Settlement.

The AILA is now putting in place a national advocacy strategy that recognises climate change presents multiple challenges to planning and retrofitting of sustainable settlements. Our profession along with its collaborators and partners, needs to ensure our national and local decision makers choose long term, comprehensive policy directions for these challenges.

As you would have noticed through announcements from all levels of government, much attention has been paid in recent years to issues such as improving energy, water and transport efficiency within the built environment. While acknowledging the value of these issue-specific initiatives, the AILA is

advocating there are more comprehensive and inter-linked sustainability factors that require thorough consideration when it comes to defining 'best practice' climate adaptation tools—and in seeking out solutions for the future.

Following is an overview of the CATSS project aims, and an outline of the structure being implemented to inform the outcomes. I ask all members to regularly look out for communiqués on the AILA web site www.aila.org.au/climate that will provide opportunities for you to feedback and input into this and other advocacy initiatives.

Besides the AILA's national efforts and just as importantly, the AILA's advocacy requires all members to consider what they can do and who they should be talking to. If any member wants more information or copies of the current pamphlets on Landscape Principles, Green Infrastructure or on Landscape Architecture and the AILA—please contact Petra at the National Office who will mail them out to you.

Also check out this link:
www.aila.org.au/advocacy

I hope you all have a safe and relaxing Christmas break so you can look forward to the new year with renewed energy and focus.

Kind regards

Mandy

National project update Catherine Neilson, National Project Manager

Climate Adaptation Tools for Sustainable Settlements (CATSS)

In consultation with the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA), and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia.

Overview

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) is undertaking a one year project, reporting in June 2010, to conduct a preliminary review of Australian and international examples of climate adaptation tools and strategies for responding to the impacts of climate change in the context of cities and their urban environments.

For the purpose of this project, a 'Climate Adaptation Tool' (CAT) is defined as:

...a described set of methods applied within the context of urban planning, design and management processes to enable the formulation, application and evaluation of adaptive responses to the impacts of climate change within human settlements, as part of a broader integrated sustainability approach.

The project aims to identify a range of climate adaptation tools (CATs) that are currently in use or under development within Australia and overseas, and to examine their scope of influence and potential applicability within the context of national and international initiatives to foster climate-adapted and sustainable human settlements.

Project Advisory Group and Organizational Goals

The project is being led by AILA with funding from the Australian Commonwealth Department of Climate Change. Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) will contribute scientific advice and the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) will provide global reach and awareness.

Common organisational goals for the project are:

To examine the potential role of climate adaptation tools within the urban environment to assist progress towards broader sustainability objectives.

1. To identify the 'value-add' potential of integrated urban landscape planning, design and management strategies to support broader, collaboratively-based responses to the many challenges of climate change and urban sustainability.

2. To promote understanding of natural and urban ecosystem processes and their relevance to people, using this knowledge to improve climate adaptation responses across a range of urban settlement types and landscape scales.
3. To explore the socio-cultural, economic and ecosystem context within which urban landscape planning, design and management decisions are made, and to identify barriers and opportunities for progress towards climate adaptation.
4. To critically review and identify best practice exemplars of climate adaptation tools as options for future support and adoption by government and industry.
5. A reference group representing key research, industry and professional stakeholder groups within the urban environment in Australia and overseas has also been developed.

This group will provide a conduit for collation of broad stakeholder input and review.

For more information—www.aila.org.au/climate

The Climate Adaptation Tools for Sustainable Settlements (CATSS) program (2009–2010) has been assisted by the Australian Government through The Commonwealth Department of Climate Change.

that post-graduate study in landscape architecture should be compulsory—the inaugural GraduAILA debate

Report by Geoff Keech and Jennifer Witheridge

The inaugural GraduAILA debate was held on 19th October, drawing a crowd of around 30 landscape architects, mostly students and recent graduates. Four speakers divided into teams of two with Neil Hobbs and Anthony Hosking arguing the affirmative, while Francis Dickinson and Darcy Ginty opposed the topic 'that post-graduate study in landscape architecture should be compulsory.' GraduAILA are a group of self-directed graduates in the ACT, meeting monthly to discuss landscape architecture with a focus on professional development towards AILA registration. The debate was a major event for the group, and gave an opportunity for students and graduates to discuss current issues with professionals outside of their workplace.

The chosen topic was pertinent to the GraduAILA group—the concept of what forms 'study' and whether it should be compulsory or not is particularly relevant in a culture where multiple extra-curricula activities vie for limited time outside of work and completing projects takes precedence over furthering one's education during work hours. A variety of methods of learning were discussed—particularly the difference between formal study to achieve a higher degree and the skills and knowledge gained through industry experience. A few of the key points from each speaker are presented here:

1st speaker Affirmative—Neil Hobbs

The affirmative team defined post-graduate study in the context of, 'a landscape architecture graduate moving through the AILA registration process, from initial graduation, to a mentoring role with a registered landscape architect, through to successful registration and maintenance of registration', arguing that it should be compulsory. There are many pathways to registration however. AILA recognises five—Design/Construct, Urban Design, Landscape Planning, Landscape Management and Academia. Neil's experience of the landscape architecture profession for graduates has been that degrees programs are incapable of providing more than the basics through the sheer volume of material to be covered, and found that many graduates over the past 30 years have immediately signed up to further study to extend that knowledge. Post graduate study is necessary for a landscape architect to become well-rounded professional and the AILA registration and CPD processes recognise and promote this.



2nd speaker Negative—Francis Dickinson

The negative team defined the topic as 'Post-graduate study in Landscape Architecture is study by coursework in an AILA accredited program'. 5 years plus of study is a daunting undertaking from the perspective of a person wishing to become a landscape architect, and this may discourage potential students at a time where the industry is looking to produce more graduates. The bachelor degree should be the primary qualification for becoming a landscape architect, while, 'a Masters in Landscape Architecture should be about the freedom, drive and application to choose your area of specialisation and how this will contribute to the intellectual growth of the profession.' By making a higher degree compulsory, it is likely to cause the program to become more generalised to accommodate the greater number of students, losing the rigour and focus that characterises the intent of a masters program. 'Academic qualifications should strive to respond to the current and future demands of the profession, driven by the industry and membership' maintaining the flexibility, inclusiveness and diversity of the bachelor degree and the rigour and individual excellence of the masters.

3rd speaker Affirmative—Anthony Hosking

Study is 'the putting of mind to gaining knowledge by reading, searching and thinking.' In this context, all research—even though it may be as simple as learning how to use the most recent edition of a common computer program—is study. Keeping abreast of the changes in society, their expectations, the body of knowledge of the profession and the skills found in new graduates is essential to the success of yourself as a professional landscape architect. Stagnation in continuing to broaden your knowledge in this way will only lead to a dead end job or worse. For those who are AILA members, the broadening of knowledge through the process of CPD is compulsory 'study'. Anthony summed up with '.... in an ideal world of the nobler virtues, post graduate study should be compulsory because we should realise that without it we are not going to attain any fulfilment in our careers. In our inner core we should know that post graduate study is required to enable us to be proud of ourselves, our work and our existence.'



4th speaker Negative—Darcy Ginty

Having recently taken a year deferral of his own degree to undertake a full-time cadetship, Darcy stated the need for better integration from study to work. The experience gained from working in a design office included client and supplier contact, knowledge of how a firm functions and a better understanding of the design development process—all items which are difficult or impossible to replicate in the classroom setting. Speaking from the context of post graduate study being the attainment of a higher qualification, Darcy questioned whether the additional Masters and Doctorate degrees would add significantly to the profession, in comparison to the experience gained in a workplace situation and the process of self-directed betterment achieved through the CPD program. A compulsory higher degree will undoubtedly add to the overall cost of qualification and delay the process of graduates entering the workforce, when he argues that 'a more appropriate alternative [is] the introduction of more undergraduate experience or internships and recognition for internships and partnering between education and industry.'

It is clear from the presentations that on its own, an entry level degree in landscape architecture is not sufficient knowledge to be a successful practitioner. Knowledge must be built on through a process of study and experience, currently recognised by the AILA in the form of the registration process and Continuing Professional Development program. The debate focussed on whether CPD activities constitute 'post-graduate study' or are inclusive in the body of knowledge gained through industry experience, while recognising both the benefit of continued learning and the current compulsory nature of CPD for AILA members. The main arguments against compulsory higher degrees lay in the cost, duration and potential for lack of focus and true mastery of landscape architecture that may result from requiring all students to further study. The affirmative team argued that additional formal qualifications were both desirable and essential knowledge to extend the basic level of qualification provided by the bachelor degree. At the end of the night an audience poll fell in favour of non-compulsory post-graduate study.



Adapting to climate change—green infrastructure—adding value to landscape planning or can landscape architects save the world?

Paul Harding

I first visited Perth when, as a young man, I left the bank for wild horizons and rode my motorcycle across the Nullarbor Plain into the setting sun of the Wild West. I have been back to Western Australia a number of times since then; drilling holes in the desert, a student conference on Rottnest Island, touring a gold mine a thousand metres under a salt lake out of Kalgoorlie, celebrating my daughter's wedding on an island near Esperance, marvelling at the towering Kauri forests and wild flowers of the south west, sipping banana smoothies in Kununurra and kicking back on Cable Beach.

Landscape architects follow their profession for a wide range of reasons and I do it because I love to travel the enormous variety of landscapes that exist in the Land of Oz. So when I read that a one day seminar on Green Infrastructure was to be held in Kings Park in WA, I leapt at the opportunity of a tax deductible trip to the fair city of Perth.

As we gathered at Frasers' Function Centre overlooking the Swan River, Greg Grabasch set the scene with the philosophical question from a zen master—'how can you learn when your cup is full?'

As I emptied my mind of accumulated workplace trivia Antony Swain, a British expat, now living in South Africa embarked on an inspiring journey of his work in exotic destinations such as restoring a waterfront meeting place in Zanzibar, reclaiming a city park in Tajikistan, redeveloping contested open space in the Old City of Lahore and examining the inappropriate use of municipal space by the Taliban in Kabul. His often humorous style was peppered with a dry wit, pragmatic approach and gems of wisdom.

His observation that slum dwellings are not without character and 'other peoples misery can be very photogenic' was illustrated with an image of brightly coloured shanty dwellings which by no means trivialised the plight of the urban poor and, in fact, highlighted their unique understanding of town planning and their ability to adapt and reuse the flotsam and jetsam of the city.

Antony stressed the importance of addressing the financial aspect of what we do and spoke of the 'poetry and finance of landscape' and the need to develop 'public/private partnerships' to ensure the longevity of constructed and natural landscapes. Describing himself as a 'facilitator in the landscape' he attributed his professional survival to the ability to be 'resourceful in low tech situations' and to seek and cultivate allies and like minds at every opportunity.

Doctor Olga Barron of the CSIRO brought some science and figures to the table and alerted us to the fact that nearly 40% of urban water use is for the irrigation of open space including residential gardens and as such, does not need to be of a potable quality. However the quality of the water is still important and needs scientific analysis and monitoring. Dr Barron also made the observation that as urban development increases, the role of stormwater runoff in recharging groundwater becomes even more significant. Natural wetlands, urban lakes and compensating or retention basins all have a role to play in the development and maintenance of open space under this scenario and decision support frameworks in the form of Urban Water Management Tools are vital to the success in achieving this balance.

Dr. Jane Tarran then took to the podium and focussed the proceedings squarely on Green Infrastructure as she drew attention to the importance of 'integrating vegetation into planning for human settlement' and the need to prioritise Green Infrastructure in strategic planning. Backing up her findings with empirical evidence, Dr Tarran explained that trees and urban landscapes have value far beyond that of visual amenity including reducing temperatures and increasing property values in our cities and suburbs, although I suspect this is something that was no surprise to most of us.

Dr Tarran pointed out that, although the restorative power of nature in contributing to the mental & physical well being of patients, prisoners, workers, drivers and children is well documented, much of the research has been undertaken overseas. Statistics such as; a mature tree using free energy from the sun is able to reduce the temperature by 8°C in an urban environment or that the presence of trees can increase the value of real estate by 7–10% are excellent ammunition to have when making a case to the bean counters and decision makers for integrating green places into the urban fabric. Jane will be overseeing Stage 2 of the Climate Change Adaptation Skills for Professionals Program and I look forward to seeing the results of her work.

However, there is still a long way to go, as Mandy Rounsefell pointed out in an honest examination of a wide range of projects and her appraisal of some successes and failures. Of particular interest, perhaps disappointingly, was the failure of the *Greenstar* Rating for buildings in a Government funded schools project to address the value of the existing landscape resulting in the compromising of a wetland habitat on the site to achieve a 'sustainable' building. Something that I imagine some of us are, unfortunately, familiar with.

Mandy's presentation was not all doom and gloom though, and restoring a section of the beach along the Brisbane River including recovering the original sand beneath the dilapidated port infrastructure was a success story. The message was; that it is essential to consider the landscape at the beginning of the master planning process.



Catherine Nielson then gave an update on the findings and progress of the Climate Change Adaptation Skills for Professionals Program project in a concise and relevant presentation and posed some challenges for the profession. If Australian Registered Landscape Architects are to adopt the *Landscape* Charter and actively apply the Landscape Principles, we need work at the focal point of the impacts of climate change and decision making. However, as Catherine pointed out: are we equipped to act, are we positioned to act, are we willing to act and most importantly, how do we act effectively?

A round table discussion ensued and a number of views and questions were posed, including:

- we need to search for strategic alliances, as engineers, for instance love challenges
- does the western world have the necessary governance to achieve good environmental outcomes?
- perhaps life in Australia is too easy, impending doom is a great motivator for change
- there is a need to motivate communities to motivate Government
- legal conditions are effective enforcers of change.

During question time it became apparent that there was some confusion from the floor over who was to advocate for the promotion of green infrastructure, the role of landscape architecture in developing sustainable settlements and other issues in addressing climate change.

I believe that our profession is positioning itself very well to be able to act effectively on these issues, primarily because of the work being done by the National Office on the Australian Landscape Charter, Landscape Principles and Commonwealth funded projects, including the Climate Change Adaptation Skills for Professionals Program and the Climate Adaptation Tools for Sustainable Settlements. (reference www.aiala.org.au/climate/).

However, it is up to Registered Landscape Architects and the AILA membership, as individuals, to take ownership of the information and research being generated by our colleagues in Canberra and to use these tools to enhance and generate alliances and identify champions for the global challenges we all face.

I and other National Councillors and members of the AILA National Office welcomed the opportunity to present this One Day Seminar to the receptive gathering of our West Australian colleagues and others and I understand the event was a financial and social success. It was a privilege to observe the rain and sunshine play cat and mouse across the skies during the day over the water and the city below and the full rainbow across the Swan River that greeted us as we emerged from the day's proceedings was awe inspiring.

In summary, can landscape architects save the world? Not on our own and not if the world doesn't want to be saved.



Where the bloody hell are we going?

Niall Simpson

This is a random set of thinking's with a loose connection of climate change.

Not so much a postcard, as a collection of jottings, cause if I was trendy I suppose this would be a twittering, I think but that may just confirm my heritage.

Probably largely prompted by a quick 6 hour drive for a 2 hour event. Then a random visit to the local camera shop with a hypothetical question about changing (deliberately haven't referred to it as an upgrade) from film to digital format.

Then the news that one side of Parliament House is openly confessing to the fact that humans aren't the cause. Although I am not sure the other side has the mandate either.

My normal drive to work. (Why my very astute 3 year old asks), to which I don't yet have a satisfactory answer.

And a bored brain.

What has really changed, apart from the climate, to which apparently no-one is to blame, (why we always have to worry about blame is curios, as if any one is going to own up and do some community service to offset this sin).

We have seminars, (very good seminars, Perth was excellent), conferences, international speakers, dramatic weather events, facts and figures.

I still see the equivalent amount of cars of the same size on the road with the same number of occupants (1.5).

I see a sickening increase in the size of the average affordable house with an ever increasing entry level of must haves, and a footprint bigger than a Yeti.

I have run out of garden to mulch with the plague of advertising with their endless list of mutant disposable necessities.

And people are still watering their drives in a vain hope they'll grow clean.

Now I realise that I don't live in the centre of the universe (Sydney) but I think these observations are still a representative snapshot of the real world. (perhaps the last one is a bit stretched—they have to pay for it now. Dollar not drought has been the impact which supports the news that the global financial downturn actually has an upside, it reduced greenhouse gas emission)

I feel that the basic principles of life seem to have been hijacked by a binary based smoke screen.

The trip to Hobart, I am too scared to calculate the carbon cost.

I drove, I presented, I mingled, I redrove.

Could this have been done sustainably, or digitally, would the benefits have been the same?

Yes, I could have driven a more fuel efficient vehicle or electric (if I could hire one) or even caught a bus, (no trains).

Outcome—less carbon and more time. Social benefits the same, plus a warm and fuzzy feeling and still enjoyed the scenery.

Or

If I was famous, not gone at all and done it all by video conferencing.

Outcome—far less carbon, embodied energy should be much lower, maybe, maybe not. Social benefits, not much chance for networking, no yummy finger food, no scenery but a very warm glow.

For us regionites it's very nice to press the flesh every once in a while.

The camera conversation went through the mega pixel race and the sensor size and the pixel pitch and who could process what upside down and back to front to the micro three fourths format and ended up with a D5, and that's a Canon not a Cat. There was also talk about mirrors and archiving. Now funnily enough this little black box seemed to share all the form and functionality of my existing film body. And as Rod said who has a D5 it still takes crappy photos when I get it wrong but when I nail it, wow. Now I am a bloke and I love gadgets. But why would I spend a lot of money to replace old with new, just to say I have gone digital.

Interesting thinks me, like back to the future like cool man.

The drive to work, my 12 year old car (it's a small truck) potters down the two wheel ruts that are my version of Green Infrastructure and the connection to the local councils not so green infrastructure. The roads table drains have just been recently serviced. An excavator comes along and removes all the vegetation (all native plus the weeds) from

the invert and the swales and the odd bump and carts it away to leave a very nice bare earth ditch to erode like buggery with the next rain event. I have yet to ask why. I am feeling devious and might let Fergus ask that one, should be easy enough to explain to a 3 year old, he will after all inherit the earth. The rest of the drive is equally contradictory, many people in many cars for only one reason, to work in town.

Yep, I can catch a bus, (private quazi public transport) and often do, not exactly from my front door its 10 k to the bus stop.

Or

I could work from home, online I think is the jargon. Whilst broadband is a non event I do have a dish—satellite type—so in theory I can, I only need very limited interaction with the public and I know my colleagues well enough to do it by phone or even sms or face to face at scheduled times.

The real stumbling block would be the Company, it would be a gigantic leap for many managers to actually display the trust in their staff to work this way. Despite the fact that for many of us we work unsupervised anyway. I know there are studies that look at this non traditional model.

Or

I could relocate to town, nar don't like people.

Now some of you readers will probably dismiss all this as space filling rambles of an odd fellow and very low brow, but answer these questions, (to your self, you're the one's who have to live with the answers).

Forget the easy ones like do you have a worm farm (thanks Mark F) or print with vegetable dyes on post consumer paper. They are no brainers,

but

Do you consciously choose materials for your projects because of their low E (embodied energy), or they are local (lower transport miles oops kilometres)?

Do you design; reduce reuse recycle, (if you want to know how watch a 'Bob the Builder' DVD)?

Do you decline commissions because of their unsustainability or conflict with the Landscape Charter and the Landscape Principles?

So what I think I am saying in my usual obtuse analogue way is three things;

1. Underneath all the heat haze of green loans and sequestering and offsets are we actually achieving anything to mitigate the impacts of climate change? Are we really addressing the demands and impacts of the burgeoning number of feet pounding the infrastructure?
2. The problems that confront us aren't uniquely digital. Whilst they can be described as a modern phenomenon, the causes have been around for awhile. It's just that it has all accumulated and escalated to a very urgent and dangerous point.
The basic skills we acquired as Landscape Architects are still relevant today, perhaps the language has changed and the tools but not the guts of the job. Most of us already have the skills and the nous to create sustainable settlements.
3. There is actually nothing new about some of the methods that are required to address the current situation. Proficient stewardship will always be best practice. Sound old land management practices will achieve the outcomes to mitigate the impacts of Climate Change and form resilient landscapes. Good design will always be responsive design.

Yes there are additional tools required to fully appreciate the potential value of the landscape. We really aren't capitalising on the technological age, computers are not the be all and end all, but they are very powerful tools, vehicles for the solution not the solution.

So lets not wait for the next up-grade the version we have will implement change. Lets all do what we do best with the means we do best.

Well I think I'll go and offset my assets to utilise the local green infrastructure and partake in some sequestration spotting with a bit of counselling to boot.

That's modern speak for sticking the stock in the long paddock, go to yon hill, watch the grass grow and do a bit of navel gazing.

Cheers

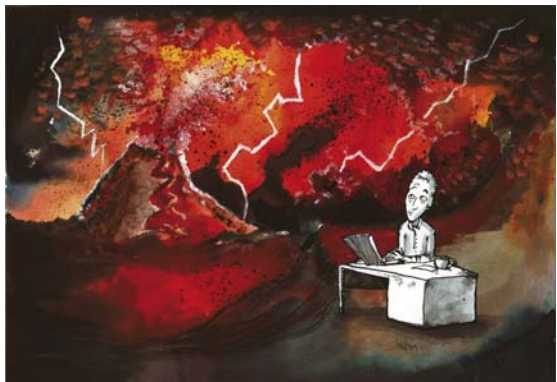
Niall

Roaming through 2009 Keeping Focus on the Big Picture

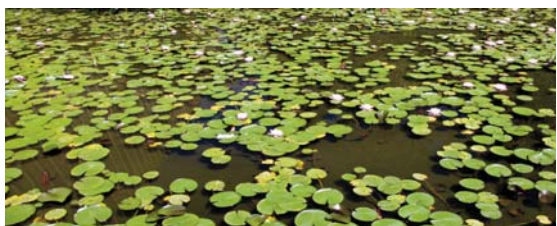
Mornings on the way into the office this year offered a range of seducing hues that often bathed the path ahead—but we did notice that certain omens were dancing around the edges. There were indeed a couple of major topics to be dealt with during 2009.



No matter how many keys were pressed and how many communications were sent out—disturbances just kept popping up on the horizon. But despite all the noise, we were able to maintain our usual calm. Storms do pass and we returned to contemplate the realities of the questions being raised—and meanwhile we also kept attention on the complex issues ahead of us all.



There is a notice on our walls that reminds us that change is often accompanied by pronouncements of doom and despair. No matter how big the disturbance across the pond, the lilies eventually adjust themselves, fill the space of those departed and much calm and welcomed peace returns.



Merry Christmas to all.

Paul Costigan

www.aila.org.au/roamings
cartoon by Stephen Harrison

From Wien to Kawa Kawa Neil Hobbs

The culmination of Friedensreich Hundertwasser's architectural career was a toilet in Northland, New Zealand. It was his one and only realised project in New Zealand. While this may not seem a particularly significant project, it has had ramifications wider than could be expected. His architectural models of the 1970's had predicted villages and towns under green roofs. A prophecy now beginning to be fulfilled.

For the story behind these three and loads more images—by Neil Hobbs—go online:

www.aila.org.au/roamings



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07



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