

The Small Footprint Initiative – The Mission

The Small Footprint Initiative is about the promotion of earth friendly lifestyles in the Pacific Palms and Great Lakes region.

We wish to:

- help the public develop an understanding of how to apply sustainable practices in everyday life;
- encourage environmental responsibility in the community;
- Encourage the reduction of impact on our local environment by adopting:
 - Healthy lifestyle practices,
 - Forward thinking landuse practices,
 - Low impact development and construction;
- support local industry and products.

The Small Footprint Initiative – The History

The SFI is an annual event held in the Great Lakes region on the mid north coast of New South Wales.

The impetus to host such an event came from the desire of some community to run a sustainable lifestyle weekend incorporating a variety of different topics. The weekend includes on Saturday a tour of homes that use energy efficient features and could basically demonstrate practical ways of living in a sustainable manner and a family festival on the Sunday.

In 2008...

Hundreds of people from the Pacific Palms district came to learn about and celebrate sustainable living by taking part in the Small Footprint Initiative 2008. The magic weather over the weekend saw locals taking part and the many interstate visitors getting to experience the area at it's Spring best!

The full house at the opening night dinner at Reef Bar + Grill sampled organic wine from Tamburlaine, viewed a variety of local artists works and danced until late to live music. The lucky draw prize of a weekend accommodation at Bombah Point Eco cottages was won by Chris Bowen.

On Saturday over 150 people took part in the Sustainable House Tour, visiting 5 homes and 2 gardens in the Forster – Pacific Palms area to learn about sustainable building solutions, energy efficient solutions, greywater use, solar power, solar hot water, recycling and native gardening.

Sunday was the main event with the Small Footprint Festival being held at the Pacific Palms Community Centre. Crowds were entertained by bands, the Gunnedah children's circus, the Pacific Palms bellydancing troupe and there was a wide variety of workshops and information stands from community groups and sustainable product suppliers. Enjoying the market stalls, great food and organic wine tasting was a fabulous end to such a successful weekend.

The raffle prizes were drawn on Sunday afternoon and the following people were lucky enough to take home some goodies:

The 1Kw grid interactive Solar power kit donated by STS services – Nicole Lemaitre of Bungwhal; the weekend at Nellies Beachhouse – Jacqui Keats; the weekend at Topdeck – Pat Powell; Give Organic Food hamper – Bob Gaden; Tri-nature hamper – Ian Rose; Enjo voucher – Vicki Kelly; Blue Healer voucher – Ian Winkley; Owner Builder / Palms pharmacy hamper – Terry from Smiths Lake.

WE THINK GLOBALLY AND ARE ACTING LOCALLY

Also the results of the kids colouring in competitions were announced as follows: Pacific Palms winners Molly Connon + Shannon Nottley; Bunghwal winners Kai Mahoney + Oliver Harding; Holy Name winners Benjamin Denniss + Karia bera; Tuncurry winners Joel (class KH) + Ashlyn Forsaith; Forster winners Emily Young + Jazmin (class 1P); St Josephs Bulahdelah winners Talib Matheson + Chloe Griffis.

The Small Footprint Initiative is an annual not for profit event run by the Pacific Palms Community Association to promote a positive community spirit and educate about sustainability issues. This year the event raised over \$10,000 which will go towards building a children's playground complete with native water wise garden at the Pacific Palms Community Centre.

Photos can be viewed at...

<http://gallery.mac.com/isarchitect#100268>

In 2007...

the weekend was kicked off with a great fundraising dinner on the Friday night which was opened in a truly moving way by one of the members of the local Aboriginal land council. The organic food was catered by a local couple, organic wines were available for tasting and sale, and our guest speaker was Greens MLC Dr John McKay. The night was a wonderful success, raising money for the community, boosted by donations from Tamburlaine wines and some great prizes from the local business community including the lucky door prize of accommodation at Bombah Point Eco-cottages (solar powered, self contained cabins at Myall Lakes).

The homes on display on the Saturday included an old relocated timber cottage which had been retrofitted with solar power, modern kitchen, wastewater reed bed, and other energy efficiency measures; a self sufficient owner built mudbrick home and a modern home near Forster featuring native gardens, water tanks and a light earth wall built in a reclaimed quarry.

The festival on the Sunday included organic food and drinks; sustainable and ethical products; council information about landcare, weeds, composting and recycling; kids activities and rides; building materials and suppliers with an environmental focus (solar power, solar hot water, energy and water efficiency) and the hall was full of natural therapists offering everything from organic skin products to massage and reflexology.

We raffled several great prizes thanks to generous donations from both local and larger businesses. The event raised over \$4,000 to build a play area and native garden adjacent to the hall at Pacific Palms.

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