

The Tasmanian Raphael Foundation Inc. Initiative - May 2023 Newsletter

It has been a while since we communicated to our broader 'Friends of Raphael' community. Nonetheless it has been a productive time, as we continue to address the many issues that such an initiative demands in its infancy.

Toward the end of 2022, after a rigorous selection process, we engaged Uta Green as our Architect. As we left our recent meeting with her and Building Consultant – Forrest Whitten, we experienced a moment of 'look how far we have come'. We are now confident that our design for the construction of a multi use home, is well on its way. It is a design that will enable us to share spaces for cultural, spiritual and homely activities as well as provide each of the members with a private, sunny, contemporary eco living space. We are optimistic that we will have a development application to Council by Spring and that stage one of construction can begin in early 2024.

Living on the land will enable us to: further deepen our connection to nature, embed the celebration of the seasons into an annual cycle, enrich our cultural life and devote greater energy to garden development and food production.

PROGRESS ON THE LAND

The food production has begun with our first small harvest of fruit (mostly berries) from the orchard planted in July 2022. Greg planted potatoes in the orchard enclosure – and this month we have enjoyed sharing delicious Dutch Cream potatoes.

In July 2022 we planted Stage 1 of the orchard with 20 trees plus berries:



In March 2023 we enjoy the first fruits and crop of Dutch Cream potatoes:



Whilst wet weather has disrupted the completion of the water storage dam and the central wetland area, the main reservoir filled quickly last winter.



The reservoir dam (begun in autumn 2021) that was full before it is complete!

LAND MAINTENANCE

Thistle management has been our main challenge throughout 2021/22 and with regular 'Thistling' days the humans are slightly in front however there remains the promise of many good days of thistle eradication still to come.

We continue to stir 500 and apply it to the land each autumn and spring. The tractor is enabling regular slashing of the property and was vital to preparing the raised beds and drainage for the orchard.

Our composting procedures are now streamlined with a dunking pool for wetting the material. Marcus and Greg have been using the tractor to build some shared BD compost piles. The compost will be used to enhance the soil on the 'Little Farm' enterprise adjacent to the Raphael land, the Raphael orchard and vegies next season.



Greg on the tractor, building a compost heap.

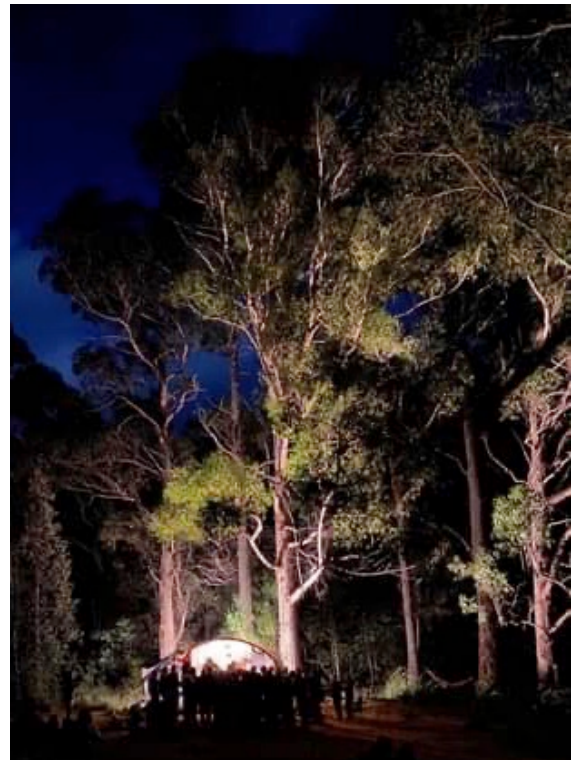
Our autumn harvest table: from the gathering on the 18th March



A festive gathering of friends and Neighbours.



A nighttime celebration by the Margate Rivulet.



STRATEGIC PLANNING

Now in our third year, we are well equipped to review our initial plans and procedures based on the actual gifts and challenges of this beautiful property and the diverse capacities of the members. This process, once complete will enable us to provide

greater clarity for those who will join our community in the future and to ensure the cultural, financial and legal functions remain healthy and sustainable. It has been rewarding to engage collectively in this review whilst maintaining the integrity of our goals and aspirations that inspired the inception of this project.

This continuing process has involved:

- ✚ The review of the Unit Trust Deed – our current ownership model
- ✚ The values statement
- ✚ How to maintain diversity and vibrancy in the community
- ✚ Defining the parameters of the built environment
- ✚ Ensuring the physical and economic sustainability of current & future members

The strategic planning review, together with the continual progress with the design of the built environment, has energized the current members and we look forward to welcoming visitors and potential members to visit us on the land. We endeavour to hold bi-monthly social working bees, so please contact if you are visiting Tasmania or if you are local and interested in this initiative. Phone Greg on 0437 515453 or Annie on 0417 362128

We have always known that the Raphael Land is very special. Today we discovered that the 'pot of gold' lies beneath that pile of rocks that were excavated in the process of building the reservoir dam.



Warm regards,

Greg Whitten, Roslyn Nixon, Karyn Marlow, Anna Carew, Marcus McKay & Annie Ball
Directors Raphael Foundation Ltd