



Annual General Meeting

21 October 2015

President's Report

Carol Ride

Our group PSC formed about the end of 2010 - at the time of us recognizing of the limitations and even futility of telling people more and more about climate science. It was apparent we needed to understand people, not science, and this is where we came in.

Many in the climate movement at the time were asking 'how come people don't get it'.

So we formed to contribute what we knew from our own experience as psychologists and psychotherapists to people understanding themselves and others, particularly focusing on the many faces of denial – not just the organized denial of the fossil fuel lobby- but the everyday denial of people in our own lives. This of course involved helping people understand their emotional response to climate change and what helps and what hinders people engaging with the problem, and what helps them move further in to taking action.

Paradoxically while our work began with reflecting on those who found difficulty engaging, it then shifted to include helping those who did engage– the climate activists. We became increasingly aware of the burden many climate activists were carrying and how this was affecting them. We began finding ways to help these climate activists have a safe space to express how they were feeling, and to reflect on how to care for themselves without burning out out, or backing off in despair.

Sadly this is our main area of focus at the moment, especially in the lead up to and following the Paris climate talks – focusing on the emotional investment in those talks and the possible aftermath.

Bron Wauchope will tell you more in detail about our actual activities.

This group has been a blessing to work with – they are so committed and thoughtful, hard working and extremely talented. For me to work with them has been ever so fulfilling and rewarding. The key people: Sue Pratt VP, Rosemary Crettenden Tr, Bron Wauchope Sec, Julie James, Charles LeFeuvre, Andrea Bunting and Libby Skeels and Ben Nisenbaum. I thank you all.

We know that to build resilience for the future we need to build our connection with others and this group has certainly reinforced the merit and wonder of that process.

They remind me of truth of the statement by Margaret Mead: Never doubting what a small group of thoughtful committed people can achieve. It's the only thing that has ever changed things in the world. (Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.)