Lauren Artress
Walks and Talks, Workshops and Facilitator Training in 2011

In this edition of the newsletter participants have provided a glimpse of 2 wonderful weeks of celebration, connection, learning and many opportunities for going forward. Maybe these articles will inspire your participation during Lauren’s visit to Perth, Brisbane & New Zealand in mid to late October 2012.

During the fortnight 50 session hours were held over 14 separate events in 2 States and 8 different locations. e.g. Brisbane, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Dunkheld, Hawthorn, Kew, Healesville and Langwarrin.

There were over 500 participants. A number of people attended most events in Melbourne. There was a good balance between events held in capital cities, regional areas and in country towns.

- **Official Opening** Melbourne University’s Labyrinth at the Rural Academic Centre in Shepparton

- **Public Talks & Walks:** “Living a Healthy and Authentic Life” “Labyrinth: Its History, Mystery and Meaning” “The Healing Path of the Labyrinth” “An Ancient Tool for a Whole New Mind” “Stoking the Fires of Creativity”

- **Workshops:** “Walking the Sacred Path” “Walking your talk: Using the labyrinth to live an authentic life” “Broadening and deepening your work with the labyrinth”

Contents

2 Special Interest Groups, Email Tree Networking
Good Friday ABC interview with Lauren Artress

3 Walking the Sacred Path
Workshop St John’s Cathedral Brisbane

4 Shepparton Official Opening Rural Academic Centre Labyrinth Community Walks & Talks World Labyrinth Day

5 Dunkheld Community Talk
Little Miracles on the Path

6 The Healing Path
Olivia Newton John Talk & Walk Augustine Ctr Hawthorn

7/8 Facilitator Training Campion Kew Putting on the Cloak of Invisibility

8 Workshop: Broadening and Deepening Your Work With The Labyrinth.

9 Reconnecting - The Art of Labyrinth Facilitation

10/11 Reflections from a first timer

12/13 Healesville Labyrinth Opening

13/14 An Ancient Tool for a Whole New Mind &Candlelight Walk

15 McClelland Gallery “Stoking the Fires of Creativity”

16 A lesson on boundaries

17 Weeding & Wendy Ways

18/19 Paths on the Move

20/21 Labyrinth in playspaces

22/24 World Labyrinth Day

25/26 Important: Help is needed
Thank You

What a wonderful time we had during Lauren Artress’s visit this year. Geoff and I enjoyed all the lavish praise so much we are already planning Lauren’s next trip in October 2012.

Lauren’s Australian visit in 2012 will be limited to a National Facilitator Training in Brisbane and a Workshop and/or a public lecture in Perth. Discussions are being held to hold a facilitator training and workshop in Auckland in New Zealand.

Listen to Lauren’s Good Friday interview with David Busch’s ABC Encounter Program
Arranged by Rick Zweck, TLS RR in Queensland


Special Interest Areas

The Monday Workshop at Campion in Kew both showcased facilitators leadership and skills as well as highlighting special interest areas for networking. If you are interested in participating in these areas please contact the relevant person.

- **Corporate Matters**
  Contact person Lorraine Rodda
  lgrodda@iprimus.com.au
  - Develop an Incorporation model of a National Labyrinth Society with States and Territories under its umbrella.
  - Protocols for working with local governments
  - An Australian Labyrinth Website

- **Health**
  Contact person is Geoffrey Rodda
  groddabday@iprimus.com.au
  - Research (By REV. Dr. Helen Malcolm)
  - Labyrinth Resource Kit

- **Culture and Art Therapy**
  Convenor - Christina Rowntree
  chris.rowntree@optusnet.com.au

- **Eco Spiritual**
  Convenor - Robin Pryor
  robron@pyor.org.au

- **Children**
  Convenor - Jennifer Hindson
  jhindson@shtatura.catholic.edu.au

Networking: People are sharing their email addresses in the following areas.
For more information and to be involved please contact TLS Regional Representatives. See page 26 of the newsletter.

- Shepparton Region
- Metropolitan Melbourne
- New South Wales
- Western Australia
- Tasmania

To submit an article for the newsletter email lgrodda@iprimus.com.au
Workshop "Walking the Sacred Path
By Pastor Rick Zweck TLS RR Queensland

St John’s Anglican Cathedral in Brisbane looked very different on Thursday, March 10. Instead of the usual pews, two seven circuit Chartres labyrinths stretched the length of this beautiful church. The occasion was Lauren Artress’s first speaking engagement in Queensland. It was a resounding success with over 70 people attending the workshop.

The enthusiastic group listened attentively as Lauren explained the origins and meaning of the labyrinth. For many it was something entirely new while for others it put some flesh on the bones of the work they were already doing.

After the talk Lauren led the participants into the cathedral where many walked both labyrinths – some several times. In homage to walkers of an earlier age, one participant even did part of the labyrinth on his knees. He said later that it gave him great admiration for priests in the middle-ages!

Facilitator Training Brisbane October 2012?
By Lorraine Rodda

Due to the very successful Workshop held in Brisbane this year discussions are underway to hold a 2 day Facilitators Training there in 2012. We anticipate there will also be an optional Workshop entitled “Broadening and Deepening Your Work with the Labyrinth” This Workshop held in Melbourne was a very successful and a good way to round off your training.

It would be very helpful at this stage to know if you are interested in attending the facilitator training. Potential days are 26 to 28 October 2012. In the first instance please email your interest in attending lrodda@iprimus.com.au

The goal of this Veriditas Labyrinth Facilitator Training is to prepare people to introduce others to the labyrinth in an articulate, professional and effective way. The training addresses both meditative walking and ceremonial use. It is focused primarily on the Eleven Circuit Medieval Labyrinth but is inclusive of all forms.

Benefit from Lauren Artress’ extensive experience and knowledge, through 14 hours face to face that is a behind-the-scenes conversation about using these powerful archetypal patterns as blue prints for transformation.

For more information please go to this website. www.veriditas.org/programs/training.shtml
1st Labyrinth on an Australia University Campus
By Rev. Dr Helen Malcolm TLS RR Shepparton.

Labyrinth Opened.
A first in Australia, a new 11 circuit Chartres labyrinth was opened on 11th May 2011 at the University of Melbourne Rural Health Academic Centre (RHAC), in Shepparton, Victoria. Rev. Dr. Helen Malcolm, a GP and Senior lecturer at the RHAC was the driving force behind the construction of this labyrinth. Credit must be given to the RHAC executive for grasping the vision and to Mr. Gordon Dosser of the University who painstakingly laid the tiles to construct the spectacular labyrinth. The opening was performed by Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress on her recent visit Australia.

The occasion started with a Welcome to Country by a Yorta Yorta Peoples representative. Other speakers were Cr Geoff Dobson, Mayor of Greater Shepparton and Prof Dawn DeWitt, Head of the RHAC.

The labyrinth in a health setting.
The new labyrinth will be used for staff and students at the University campus, as well as staff and patients from the hospital across the road and community groups.

The labyrinth was presented at a Grand Round to hospital and University staff in June 11. There are plans to do further research into the benefits of the labyrinth for mental and physical wellbeing.

Commnity use of the labyrinth
Over the ensuing three days, the people of Shepparton had a unique opportunity to learn more about the labyrinth. Lauren Artress delivered talks and facilitated walks, preached at St Augustine’s Anglican church in Shepparton and also at Holy Trinity Anglican Cathedral in Wangaratta.

Although the labyrinth is not freely available to the public, regular workshops will be held for different groups and the community

Already there are bookings for workshops for a local Hand, Heart and Soul group and a professional development for staff at a nearby Roman Catholic school which is planning to install a labyrinth.

Through this exposure, a community group is being formed to lobby the council to have several labyrinths constructed in public spaces throughout Shepparton.

On World Labyrinth day on Saturday 7th May
The talk and walk was facilitated by Dr. Lisa Shortridge and Dr. Helen Malcolm, both Veriditas trained labyrinth facilitators and local representatives of The Labyrinth Society; about 35 people attended – mostly experienced labyrinth walkers but also some who had not walked a labyrinth before. Dr. Shortridge also laid out temporary labyrinths at several public sites in Shepparton and Mooroopna.

The journey continues . . .
Dunkeld Community Labyrinth Project
By Paul Sanders

The great expectation of having Lauren Artress open the Dunkeld arboretum labyrinth slowly fell through our collective hands and vanished over the two months before her arrival. Given the good grace, experience and wisdom of Lauren and coupled with the words of encouragement and experience from Lorraine Rodda, nothing was lost.

It became obvious that matters related to endangered grasses, indigenous involvement, DSE, and a community still learning about labyrinth’s resulted in slowing the building processes down. Do we cancel Lauren? How does this look considering so much planning? Well, actually ok, for it provided a deeper and more sophisticated appreciated of all the threads which go into undertaking a community project.

Lauren did come and in a beautiful setting of the Aquila Eco Lodges conference room, we ate, sipped on lovely wine, engaged with wonderful labyrinth audio visual and conversed with Lauren over the way forward. Lauren also enjoyed a nature wrapped restful couple of days in the tree top unit. The result, renewed enthusiasm, a decision to build the labyrinth from laid sandstone pavers instead on rocks placed on compacted sandstone dust. And an exploration for new ways we might involve the community in learning to lay sandstone from the local quarry.

The local paper, The Spectator has run two articles featuring the labyrinth, so the wider community are now more aware of the interest and commitment present in Dunkeld to build a labyrinth. When Lauren visits our shores again, she will be delighted to see how her visit and the support from Veriditas and the Labyrinth Society have contributed to the creation of a labyrinth in the beautiful and majestic setting of the Dunkeld - the foot of the Southern Grampians.

Little Miracles on the Path
April Story 2011
By Linda Mikell
Email: edlinmik@optonline.net

Welcome to Little Miracles on the Path. I have heard from many of you that you have a story to tell... Please help to keep our connection going by sending your story to me. This month’s story is one of my own. For twenty five years I was a Learning Disabilities Special Education teacher. I have been retired for seven years now. Recently I received an e-mail from my former principal. It lifted my spirits and I thought that it qualified for a “Little Miracle.” During this time of natural disasters and economic woes, this little story will make you smile a little and reinforce your belief in the power of the labyrinth. In gratitude for our connection, Linda Mikell

Email from a Principal
Dear Linda,
I hope all is well. I just had to tell you what happened with my granddaughter Peyton and the labyrinths you gave me. Peyton is a troubled almost six year old and she has gone through more in her life than many adults. She came to work with me on Election Day. She saw the labyrinths and I showed her how they were done. She took the pewter one with the stylus and sat on a “tuffet” for over an hour and worked on it. The remainder of the day she was calm, agreeable and happy. She did not seem troubled with her life situation. I would like to get her one and was wondering if there are special labyrinths for children.

Of course I sent her many websites where she could buy finger labyrinths for Peyton. I even suggested that Peyton begin collecting them. One never know where or when a Labyrinth Little Miracle will happen.

Do you have a Little Miracle on the Path to share? Then contact Linda Mikell she would love to hear from you.
The Reverend Dr. Lauren Artress began her week in Melbourne on 17th March, with a labyrinth walk and talk to raise funds for the Olivia Newton John Cancer and Wellness Centre. It was an inspiring evening in which she spoke of the labyrinth as a crucible of change which stabilizes our inner world enabling reflection on where we are in our journey. She described the labyrinth as a wonderful way to connect with people without using words…and we did, in the candlelit walk afterwards, accompanied by Cathy Connelly on her magical Celtic harp.

Lauren spoke of the healing nature of the labyrinth as a place to address critical inner voices. When they rear up in your mind, the labyrinth gives you the time and space to allow them to become conscious and therefore able to be managed more effectively. She encouraged us to try and become the hearer of our thoughts instead of the thinker of our thoughts, reclaiming some power over our choices.

Critical voices pop up whenever we step outside the box of our lives and risk taking genuine authentic action. The labyrinth is the perfect holding vessel in which to respond to this negative self talk – to go into enquiry and with calm and kindness, see what is real and what is not.

Walking the labyrinth can trigger memories that are ripe within you and ready to be released. She suggested that we ask ourselves what it is that we need to do to heal that particular memory and create some room in our being ... and then listen to that intuitive wisdom and trust it.

Listen to the talk
The following audio links, include music by Cath Connelly, were recorded by Lauren Artress at the Augustine Centre. The cover the introduction to the labyrinth, the role of critical voices in our lives, and the final link listening to the wisdom of our body.

- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9rt39ieP5E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9rt39ieP5E)
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4hGQv8EIIQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4hGQv8EIIQ)
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ITdC_eM3Nw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ITdC_eM3Nw)

Everyone stayed after the walk for a light supper, including Elizabeth Cerda Pavia’s incredible Chartres labyrinth shaped shortbread. Our appreciation to all who provided the delightful supper and to Arnie and Ani Wierenga for the loan of their beautiful 42 ft Chartres Labyrinth for the candlelight walk. A real sense of community was created and a great evening had by all.

“**A Celebration in Song**” A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this CD will be donated to the ONJWC. To purchase the CD, please visit [www.oliviappeal.com](http://www.oliviappeal.com).

$700 raised for Olivia Newton John Cancer and Wellness Centre.

**Cath Connelly’s Harp Music “Journey”**

We were so fortunate to have Cath playing her harp as it became part of the experience of the evening. Cath said that as a musician she was blown away by the correlation between the album and the journey of the labyrinth; a profound epiphany experience.

One track on the CD entitled ‘Veriditas’, is an original composition. The music is a reflection of a word invented by Hildegard of Bingen, a 12th century European nun, scholar and mystic who describes the magnificent ‘greening’ by which the world was created. To buy the CD please email Cathy [cathy@cathy.com.au](mailto:cathy@cathy.com.au).
Circles

The moon is most happy
When it is full

And the sun always looks
Like a perfectly minted gold coin

That was just Polished
And placed in flight
By God’s playful Kiss.

And so many varieties of fruit
Hang plump and round

From branches that seem like a
Sculptor’s hands.

I see the beautiful curve of a pregnant belly
Shaped by a soul within,

And the Earth itself,
And the planets and the Spheres –

I have gotten the hint:

There is something about circles
The Beloved likes

Hafiz,
Within the Circle of a Perfect One

There is an Infinite Community of Light.

Daniel Ladinsky

from I Heard God Laughing:
Renderings of Hafiz tr. Daniel Ladinsky

Putting on the Cloak of Invisibility
By Christina Rowntree

I’d signed up for Labyrinth Facilitator Training as a refresher, having begun my training in 2008. Now I was keen to complete the certification process and take seriously my commitment to the labyrinth as a spiritual discipline, aid to prayer, and ancient mystical artform.

As I entered the room, I was surprised to find rows of desks in the space for gathering at Campion Retreat Centre in Kew. So many had registered that desks formed in rows was the only way to set up the room. It was a beautiful March morning in Melbourne, and wearing my Labyrinth Society hat I was delighted to welcome Lauren and the 38 participants to two days of training. I began by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land we gathered upon. The high ground above the Yarra River was called Boorondara by the Wurundjeri people ~ a place for meeting, resting and ceremony. I spoke the poem Circles by Daniel Ladinsky, and to represent the infinite community of light, we lit candles as Lisa Shortridge sounded the singing bowl.

Our first task was to meet each other. Among the 38 participants from across Australia, New Zealand, and one from the US, were practitioners who build and make labyrinths, experienced facilitators working across many sectors and disciplines from schools, hospitals, churches and universities. We were people working in organisations, and individuals practising across a range of therapeutic and energetic modalities. We met each other with gratitude and grace, and stepped onto the outdoor labyrinth together.
Putting on the Cloak of Invisibility (Cont’d)
By Christina Rowntree TLS Member Facilitator Class of 2008

Lauren’s leadership ensured we soon moved into the facilitator training. Lauren spent time illustrating the diversity of labyrinth forms across history and place, explaining sacred geometry, labyrinth terminology and emphasising the differences and value of labyrinth forms. We learnt the history of the Chartres labyrinth, explored the definition of archetypal labyrinths and discussed how to determine whether a labyrinth is effective.

I found it helpful to revisit earlier teaching about holding the space with a non anxious presence, supporting people to walk the labyrinth. We were reminded that facilitating the labyrinth is a spiritual path and practice, that our task in holding the space is to create a container for people to complete the experience of the labyrinth. We dipped in and out of the helpful Veriditas Facilitator Training Manual which sets out the areas covered in training including the Basic Presentation and is a valuable resource for us. It was Lauren’s stories, told from her extensive experience, which provided laughter and depth to our learning.

I knew I was going deeper into my training when Lauren encouraged us to take on the Cloak of Invisibility. As facilitators gaining greater experience we were being initiated into greater mastery, where the facilitator needs to adopt the Cloak of Invisibility, responding to intuition, moving with subtlety to facilitate the experience for participants. I knew I was being taught by a master when Lauren adapted her teaching to include a demonstration of process in response to a participant’s question and allowed us to learn both by example and content.

Whereas in 2008 I learnt about the labyrinth, now I felt immersed in the mystery of the labyrinth. I sensed being guided by a wise woman to trust the growing and maturing facilitator within.

Sound and music delightfully entered the two days. Lisa opened each session and supported our labyrinth walks with a tuned singing bowl.

We were introduced to hand shakers, hand bells, hand chimes and given examples of how to use them.

A selection of music was presented and analysed for supporting labyrinth walks. Practical examples of rituals and liturgies were described, and helpful advice for creating and building labyrinths was given. We shared ideas of how to offer art based responses, journaling and dream work to give symbolic expression to labyrinth walkers.

This year’s gathering was characterised by shared leadership and greater confidence in the work. We spent significant time introducing ourselves and our work to each other because our ability to support each other depends upon knowing each other and each other’s work.

The two day labyrinth facilitator training was followed by a remarkable gathering of our labyrinth community on Monday. The networks between us were strengthened, interest groups formed, and a real sense of collegiality persists. My overwhelming impression of the gathering was that the labyrinth movement in Australasia has come of age.

About Christina Rowntree
An Artful Faith Coordinator at the Centre for Theology & Ministry, Uniting Church in Australia. In 2009 she facilitated a labyrinth walk to start the artistic development of Prophet and Loss, a play which honours the stories of those bereaved by workplace death, and set against the ancient Hebrew text of the prophet Isaiah. The labyrinth became a central motif for the play and a metaphor for the grief journey. Christina showed excerpts of the Prophet and Loss DVD during the two days and she can be contacted at chris.rowntree@ctm.uca.edu.au.
On Monday morning our group of 40 plus, packed the room by sitting in one large circle. The atmosphere was already charged with a sense of anticipation and energy. The final day focusing on broadening and deepening our work with the Labyrinth, was about to start.

The opening ritual meditation and the playing of the singing bowl quietened and focused us bringing us together as a group. I had the pleasure of introducing Lauren and as I did I delighted yet again in the passion, generosity, wisdom, and deep loving presence of this woman who has courageously put herself forward to spread this significant spiritual movement of peace and healing.

For the morning workshop, brainstorming soon developed a list of significant issues we wanted to focus on. From this list, 5 main areas of interest emerged: Culture and Art therapy, Eco Spiritual, Children, Mental Health, and Corporate Issues. We moved into our groups and sat around tables with paper. Each group chose their facilitator and off we galloped writing down ideas as they poured out.

I chose the corporate issues group and the skill and talent of the members soon became apparent. We discussed the running of public events, for example a labyrinth walk in a public park. This led to discussions about promotion, communication, web sites, an Australian labyrinth locator and networks. Conversation developed about making events safe and compliant with the guidelines of local councils for insurance and public liability purposes. Sub groups were established with follow up research to be done on protocols, incorporation and websites.

Other interest groups generated similar energy with follow up tasks. Together the Land and art group and Eco spirituality group - explored connection, theology, deep ecology work with the earth and how to engage art in our workshops.

The group discussing working with children looked at applications of labyrinths in schools and chaplaincy programs.

The health and hospital group discussed different styles of labyrinths and settings and also the place of Philanthropic organisations.

After lunch our whole focus shifted and we moved into story telling. This was amazingly powerful and significant. Lauren modelled the process she wanted us to use, telling the story of her first walk on the labyrinth at Chartres. After that others told their stories about a personal experience of working with the labyrinth. Each storyteller was heralded to the centre with a Native American style hoop drum, played at a heart beat pace; To begin each story teller shook the rattle and at the end of each story the rattle was used to contain the energy of each story. When they finished they were accompanied back to their seat with more drumming.

From the beginning our attention was captured and we remained captivated as one by one the storytellers, as if rehearsed, told their deeply moving stories. The group felt very connected and it was with obvious reluctance that the day was came to a close with an amazing offering by Jenni Olerhead’s “toning sound telling the story of receiving a personal power song.

Perhaps the real significance of the day was the strengthening and cementing of our growing Australian Labyrinth Community. This will encourage and support more gatherings, networking and the spread of the labyrinth movement in Australia. I came away with a sense of contentment and fulfilment re-inspired in my work as a labyrinth facilitator.

About Alison Meretini a Psychotherapist, Owner of Rachum Labyrinth Retreat Centre, NSW
Reconnecting: The art of Labyrinth Facilitation
By Dr. Angela McKenzie TLS Member Veriditas
Facilitator Class 2008

I have just attended the Veriditas labyrinth training as a refresher and loved every minute. My reservations about whether it would be too repetitive and my doubts about really needing to do it a second time were quickly dispelled. It is three years since my original training, when I simply wanted more exposure to the labyrinth and the wisdom of Dr. Lauren Artress. Deepening one’s knowledge is a good reason for doing the two day training and started me on a wonderful pilgrimage.

Over the next two years I participated in retreats at Grace and Chartres Cathedrals and organised my own tour of mainly turf labyrinths in the South of England. Back home in Melbourne, once or twice a week, I would carve a 7 circuit classical labyrinth in the mulch under the sanctuary of a grand Algerian oak in the Botanical Gardens, or visit the full sized Chartres labyrinth, watched over by a majestic lemon gum in the grounds of Campion spirituality centre. This was the venue for the training was held in March 2011.

It is fortunate that Lauren Artress was invited back to Australia because it gave me a chance to reconnect with the labyrinth and its possibilities for health and healing all over again. I had been distracted by a new job, and the labyrinth had faded into the background until a chance conversation with a friend set me back on the path! A dream of one day connecting children with chronic illness to the labyrinth had been rekindled, so this time around I was wearing my paediatrician doctor hat.

The group was large and diverse with a common commitment: to make the labyrinth available and accessible. The experience and enthusiasm in the room was evident from the beginning and made for a vibrant and nourishing two days. The Veriditas Manual was similar to before, but everything presented was fresh and interesting, with much of the material illustrated by stories, our own labyrinth walks, and role playing interviews with the media.

Lauren was as generous as ever in her sharing of many different situations she has encountered from the very awkward to the inspiring and the unexpected. She would also follow her intuition, telling us at one point “I don’t know why I am telling this story. I haven’t told it in 20 years.”

The training is a combination of the art and science of labyrinth design, walking and facilitating. There are helpful statistics such as how many people can walk a certain sized labyrinth in so many hours without gridlock. These facts don’t change and I remember thinking at the first training how useful they were.

What I valued most this time was the image of Lauren putting on her “Harry Potter invisibility cloak and going beneath the radar.” This is how she has come to describe her role as facilitator, to prevent a variety of disasters, or just keep a watchful eye, but without in any way disturbing the experience of pilgrims on the path. Second time around it was the art of labyrinth facilitation that stood out for me.

I may take a refresher facilitator training from time to time to enjoy the company of like minded people and avail myself of Lauren’s ever evolving wisdom and humour. Not to mention the gift of keeping up to date with the world of labyrinth facilitating for half the original cost.

The labyrinth weekend with Lauren continues to help my life move forward in surprising ways. I used to think I had to walk a labyrinth every day or there was no point ... how did I get that idea? and how liberating to let that go and relax into knowing that everything is just fine.
Reflections of a first-timer
By Rev John McCall New Zealand.

Arriving at the Campion Spirituality Centre to begin the four days of labyrinth training in March felt like a dream come true. But I must admit I did wonder which dream when the taxi brought me into the front entrance where the main building reminded me of Harry Potter’s Hogwarts School. However, I soon found the adjacent modern retreat centre, and this proved to be a very good venue - comfortable, and ideal for the numbers, and of course there was the labyrinth which I had been warned was overgrown with weeds! I found the whole experience of the four days something like a retreat.

I very quickly discovered several things – there was another New Zealander coming (Heather McLeod from Hanmer); there were very few males; and people came from all over Australia (Western Australia, Tasmania, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, Melbourne, and regional Victoria); one from the United States; and they were all very friendly! They were great people to spend the weekend with, generous with offers of transport in their cars, and friendship. And we all had one thing in common - the labyrinth - but it was important to be able to state what sort of labyrinth we were involved with, its pattern and circuits. I’m sure I left that part out of my introduction.

It was a great feeling to be part of the worldwide labyrinth movement, to exchange ideas, and share our common interest, and make new contacts and friends.

When I first became involved with the labyrinth, I soon learned the words Chartres Cathedral, Grace Cathedral San Francisco, the name Lauren Artress, and last year Veriditas and TLS. I looked forward to one day having the opportunity to meet Lauren, and when I heard of ‘labyrinth facilitator training’ I thought that was a ‘must’.

So it was a real gift to be able to come to Melbourne and sit at Lauren’s feet for a few days. Sponsorship helped with expenses of fares, accommodation, events and training. I am grateful, as were all participants, for the support of Lorraine and Geoff Rodda, and for all their organising work over many months.

Lauren is a delightful and engaging speaker, a teller of stories, and an encourager. It is obvious to me why the worldwide labyrinth movement is growing. After an already full programme, Lauren spoke on Thursday evening at the Augustine Centre, Hawthorn, on ‘The Healing Path of the Labyrinth’ on Friday at Campion on ‘Walking Your Talk: Using the labyrinth to lead an authentic life’ on Saturday evening at Healesville on ‘An Ancient Tool for a Whole New Mind’ I have read my notes and reflected on what she Thank you Lauren for all you gave and shared with us.

After the address on the first night, the venue was set up with an indoor labyrinth, which we walked. Dimmed lights, with tea-light candles, and a harpist providing music, created an atmosphere conducive to a deeply spiritual and meaningful walk, which I would call ‘magical.’ We wished we had taken some photographs. It was a very moving experience. The fact that we had to travel by car to this venue meant that four strangers all met for the first time, and we were able to share the rest of the weekend together, often eat together, and get to know one another. We discovered that Kew Junction has some great restaurants!

About 60 were present on Friday. While Friday was the qualifying day, the preliminary to what followed, Saturday and Sunday were the more formal training of facilitators. Lauren led us through a considerable amount of background material about the labyrinth, the tasks of a facilitator, suggestions, pitfalls, networking, and opportunities for further labyrinth training and experience. I learned that a number of those present had had the opportunity to assist with training and events in Chartres itself. How wonderful that would be! There were thirty eight present for the facilitator training.

Thanks to John for the candlelight photo see page 14
Reflections of a first-timer (cont'd)
By Rev John McCall New Zealand.

One room was set aside for displays - books, leaflets, pictures, sweat shirts, finger labyrinths - some of which were for sale or ordering. We had been encouraged beforehand to take display materials. It was encouraging and helpful to see and hear what other people and groups and centres are doing.

Yes, the labyrinth was covered with weeds. On our first morning Lauren had us as a group weeding it before our first walk. While the practical task was doing the weeding, we were really performing an opening ritual. The labyrinth was built over an old tennis court - both of these illustrated to me using what we have around us to the best advantage. We were very fortunate with the weather, and were able to walk the labyrinth each day; some also walked it in the early morning, others walked it in the evening. There was something special about walking the labyrinth after dinner and under the full moon of the autumn equinox.

There was a bonus in all of this, and we were blessed. On Saturday evening we travelled by car up to Healesville, very close to where the disastrous fires had been in February 2009. That day the Healesville community was holding an Autumnfest to celebrate community wellbeing and the 7th anniversary of their Farmers’ Market, a Music festival, and the opening of the community Labyrinth.

Enthusiasm for the project extended beyond the mental health service, when a perfect site presented itself in an empty space, not quite a parkland (yet), beside the heritage railway station and in an area already designated to be a gathering space for local people and visitors to this tourist destination. Many people joined in the consultation sessions for the design of the labyrinth garden and several hundred people contributed to the fund raising by painting a tile for the mosaic panels that would eventually surround the labyrinth.

Support for the project was evidence of the appeal of labyrinths, in the magic created by a simple pathway going into the centre and out again, of the visible reminder to take time to reflect and the added magic of people working together to achieve a goal which is inclusive, free, and offers something to everyone. As a health promotion project for the local community, this one ticked all the boxes.
Healesville Community Labyrinth (Cont’d) with wonderful festive atmosphere
By Merran Macs TLS Member

However this was a big project for what was essentially an almost exclusively voluntary team. The total budget in the end, including construction and associated design elements and costs came to $236,000.

This meant much submission writing, finding in-kind support and other means of fundraising – which of course followed masses of promotional activities to indicate to the community what a labyrinth actually was! The project over the time involved hundreds of volunteers who contributed more than 10,000 voluntary work hours.

Most of the funding was contributed by Department of Planning and Community Development as well as other philanthropic trusts and organisations.

The project was also well supported by the local Yarra Ranges Council in both funds and input of council officers’ time. We now have a beautiful labyrinth, 20 metres in diameter which is paved with porphyry cobblestones and castlemaine slate for the lines.

The official opening of the labyrinth at Autumnfest on March 19 was a joyful with a smoking ceremony at the entrance to the labyrinth as local children with silk scarves were the first to run into the labyrinth as Shane Charles, of the Kulin Nation, played the didgeredoo.

The labyrinth is flat so it can be used by people in wheelchairs as well as performances and as a community gathering space. It is surrounded by a largely indigenous garden, with bench seating, picnic tables and includes design elements such as the solstice gateways, mosaic panels and a sculptural installation which holds a poem written by a survivor of the 2009 bushfires which had an enormous impact on Healesville and surrounding areas.

Lauren Artress - A snap shot of the talk “An Ancient Tool for a Whole New Mind”
By Lorraine Rodda TLS Aust. Representative

It had been a very exciting and a long day for the people of Healesville and surrounding communities. Symbolic of the coming together to create the labyrinth there was a combining and celebration of the Harvest, Music and Labyrinth Festivals. The evening too was a very special part of the day. About 50 people came for this once in a lifetime opportunity to hear Lauren Artress share her experiences on how labyrinth walking can be beneficial for your health & wellbeing. The Community honoured their guests from the Veriditas Facilitator Training Course with traditional country hospitality.

The topic of Lauren’s talk “An Ancient Tool for a Whole New Mind” was blended into what was happening in this area and how important it was to take this into labyrinth walks. Lauren spoke about the time it takes for healing to take place and how it was time for the whole new mind to be there. There was a need for healing to take place. It was time for change.
Lauren posed the question about how long it takes to change peoples habits and ways. Highlighting the importance of giving forgiveness as well as the asking for forgiveness she said this takes a looking within and that does not happen easily; this is where the labyrinth can be helpful because in part it draws the community together in a non verbal way. It is easier to be together and not necessarily talk - it is the non verbal connection that invites a deeper connection. Lauren said that the key to change is when your inner world connects with your outer world and that change happens when you come to understand this as a metaphor for your life’s journey, and as you act on it; transformation can occur.

Lauren gave an example of how to discover connection of inner and outer world and its metaphor. She said that when you are walking the labyrinth you may have an image or a memory float to the surface of your mind. You can pay attention to it, or not. You can simply let it go, but, if you dismiss it without understanding or being fully aware, you might discount your experience. If you choose to explore it, it is like catching a butterfly. Hold it gently and explore it with “soft eyes” Is it a memory? If so, bring as much of it to consciousness as possible. To gain a deeper insight gently crack the image open by fully focussing on it.

In exploring this further Lauren recalled an experience of a mother struggling with her daughter going to China with a group from her school. Although good supervision would be provided, the mother was leaning toward keeping her daughter at home. She took her struggle concerning this into the labyrinth.

During her walk a dragonfly landed on her. She stood quietly, observing and reflecting upon it. Suddenly, the mother recalled as a child she had pulled the wings off a dragon fly so that it would not fly away. Standing in the labyrinth, recalling this memory, the mother gracefully understood: she must let her daughter go to China.

Like to know more about transformational practice of labyrinth walking then read Lauren’s book “The Sacred Path Companion” - A guide to walking the labyrinth to heal and transform. $US11.20 A copy can be ordered from www.veriditas.org/resources/

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After Lauren’s talk, at 9.00 pm - 12 hours after the festival began - we walked to the labyrinth and were amazed to find over 100 people gathered there keen to walk it by candlelight. Julia Peddie, from the Veriditas Class of 2008, was the walks facilitator.

The Healesville visit was one of the great highlights of the 4 days of workshops and training. This was not only from a community development perspective but also to observe how a Veriditas trained facilitator manages large numbers of people walking the labyrinth.

After the chatter from the talk the walk to the labyrinth in silence became an integral part of the walks preparation. Then, what seemed at first to be an impossible task, Julia’s training was quickly put into practice - the potential for a congested walk was quickly resolved. Another learning experience was the need to understand the context in which this community had created their labyrinth; the promotion of good mental health & wellbeing.

A potentially difficult issue arose during the walk was beautifully resolved by acceptance, support and encouragement.
Lauren Artress “Stoking the Fires of Creativity”
Talk and Walk at the McClelland Gallery & Sculpture Park. Langwarrin Victoria
By Lyn Johnson Deputy Director

A morning mist had descended upon the grounds at McClelland and with only half an hour to go before Lauren Artress was due to arrive, McClelland staff were anxious, none more so then myself. We had planned an outdoor presentation by Lauren and the mist was covering everything with a fine layer of dew, just enough to keep the chairs and lectern damp.

Just as Lauren arrived the mist lifted and a beautiful Autumnal morning lit the landscape. Lauren not only brought the clear weather that day, she brought an incredible energy to McClelland and captured the attention of the 120 attendees, many of whom had never visited McClelland before.

Lauren’s presentation “Stoking the Fires of Creativity” was inspirational to say the least. The Director of McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park, Robert Lindsay, welcomed Lauren and spoke about the labyrinth designed by Andrew Rogers, titled The Winding Path, the Search for Truth which had been presented to McClelland in 2010.

Andrew Rogers had said about the work “this is an open ended conversation in which everyone is invited to participate”. Robert Lindsay invited Lauren to continue the conversation with the participants at McClelland that day.

Lauren took us all on a journey that crossed history, religion, spirituality and human emotion. The most moving moments for me though were watching everyone physically walking the labyrinth and witnessing the outpouring of emotions as they left the sanctuary of the stone walls behind. I had walked the labyrinth many times before but had not let myself truly experience it until then. Needless to say many of the visitors that day expressed a keen desire to return and I sincerely hope to see them all at McClelland again. The photo of people walking the labyrinth was taken by Chris Read.

This was a special occasion for McClelland and we look forward to having the opportunity to host Lauren again to engage and inspire us all with the labyrinth, The Winding Path, the Search for Truth. My sincere thanks to The Labyrinth Society Inc - Australian Region for organising such a successful program.

Front row - Left to right is Lauren Artress, Lyn Johnson, Robert Hoskin. Back Row left is Robert Lindsay and Baillieu Myer. The photo was taken by Trish Delves.

Photo of Lauren Artress and Robert Lindsay was taken by Myron McMurray

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Labyrinth as a healer: A lesson in boundaries
By Dr Margaret Rainbird TLS Member RR NSW

During the workshop on the fourth day of Lauren’s visit she shared with me the perception that I have ‘porous boundaries’ at times and take on more than I need to or have to. This was on the basis of an experience that I had shared with her from the previous day.

She asked me if I had ever experienced burnout in my work (more than once) and we talked about the importance of my putting some support strategies in place given that I have recently returned to medical practice to work with people who are dying.

The next time I approached the labyrinth I asked it to help me understand my boundaries and how to strengthen them . . . .

I realised as I walked that it is a perfect example of what I was seeking: it has very clear boundaries and is a powerful healing space. It dawned on me that it could teach me how to do this. Below is what I wrote in my journal after that walk:

“It sets a clear path and boundary. It allows mystery in. It clears itself of crap. It doesn’t get personally involved, it just makes space available where people meet their Spirit and go through their healing process. It knows it’s not doing the work it is just a container for it.

It has no attachment to outcome. It doesn’t try to manipulate a person’s process; it merely allows it to unfold. It knows it can’t do the process for them. It doesn’t try to take away the pain; it allows the quiet and safety for it to come up.

It doesn’t have a set form. There is no ‘right’ labyrinth. It doesn’t care how many paths it has, what shape it is or what it’s made of.

It allows itself to be loved and tended and energised. It works better when it is replenished in this way.

It has been reviled, had accusations levelled against it. It remains unphased. It just shows up and allows the work. It knows the true purpose of its presence. It allows people to layer it with meanings, preferences and symbolism. It knows its essence.

It is indifferent and infinitely compassionate. It doesn’t judge. It allows all that needs to, to unfold. Whether that is received or not is not its concern. Each person brings their experience and takes it away. None of it belongs to the labyrinth.

It makes itself available to whatever is invoked. Projections occur on to it. It takes none of them on. It has its own mirror.

It is a friend, a companion, a mirror, a confounder, an illustrator, an orchestrator, a reuniter. It sets a clear path and boundary but it doesn’t impose a direction. It contains but it doesn’t restrict. There is nothing in another’s process that it is afraid of. It is infinitely trusting.

It knows the cycle of life. It is a portal. It mystifies, creates the unexpected, uses the body and senses as instruments of communication. It confounds the intellect and allows much more to come up.

• It is known by the Wise Ones.
• It is uncluttered and peaceful.
• May it guide me to be such a healer.

About Dr. Margaret Rainbird. Margaret, a GP, is working as a palliative care trainee at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney, NSW
The Weeding and Wendy Ways
By Robyn Reid TLS Member

I fell in love with labyrinths when I walked a labyrinth on New Year’s Eve two years ago. It was in a country town in a churchyard and shifting from one year to another and releasing the old and embracing the new seemed like a perfect use for a labyrinth walk. My husband travels overseas frequently and had been in San Francisco and walked the labyrinth at Grace Cathedral. He returned with a book that he thought I might be interested in—“Walking the sacred path” by Lauren Artress. I was enthralled with the possibilities of this special tool.

I then found the Labyrinth Society newsletter and made contact with Lorraine Rodda and the rest they say is history. I have completed the labyrinth facilitator’s training and two workshops and have grown in appreciation of how interesting and useful the labyrinth is as a tool for peace and growth not only for myself but for others.

I spent the whole four days walking a variety of labyrinths and each experience was unique. The moon was full and large and on that weekend the closest to earth in thirty-three years. The autumn equinox was near and the weather was mild and rain free. We were blessed.

Each day we listened to Lauren and we learnt from her wisdom and each other how the labyrinth had called us, how it was showing up in our lives and how we could manage to bring it into the world and conduct ceremony, ritual and community building.

As Lauren pointed out such things as, how to release too many people from the centre and how to time the walk with large numbers of people we were able to see it in practice on another labyrinth walk.

The first day we weeded the labyrinth and in true metaphoric style we weeded what we no longer desired out of our lives. Time and time again the “as within so without” showed up in the events and experiences of the labyrinth.

Slowly as we worked together and built relationships, the energy of the labyrinth seemed to grow with us and for us - each walk the energy in the labyrinth was building.

I walked in the daylight, I walked in the night when the moon was lighting the stones and the bats. (the size of small children) flew out of the dusk over the labyrinth.

The ancient gum tree spread its large branches around the outer curve of the labyrinth as if to hold the space and invite us to walk. The sound of our voices in the moonlight went out into the air and sounded truly other-worldly in the centre as we held hands and soaked in the energy and fellowship. The bat hangs upside-down and is emblematic of rebirth and initiation-usually through trials and tests. It seemed right and proper that they flew across the labyrinth to remind us that life is a forge for our character and that we can make meaning if we just open to what is happening in the present moment especially on the labyrinth.

Each day I came to appreciate the collective love and wisdom of the other participants who were drawn from many walks of life and different familiarity with the labyrinth. Some were healers, some were artists, some were spiritual directors, some were teachers – all drawn together for the love of this special and ancient tool to bring it into the world physically and spiritually.

We were able to touch on an Australian network of people that we hope in the future will create peace, growth and harmony for the planet and reclaim our relationship to the earth and sacred space.

About Robyn Reid.
Robyn works part time in palliative care and has a private practice as a counsellor and clinical hypnotherapist.
These are paths which are on the move - Creating an Australian Labyrinth Network
By Cedar Prest SA Veriditas Facilitator Class 2002 Contact person for SA

In 1992 I was delighted to receive a Churchill Fellowship to “do my dream” and move toward a more integrated body, mind and spirit way of becoming a crone.


I attended Matthew Fox’s University of Creation Spirituality in Oakland California to study and understand their concept of ‘Art a Meditation,’ I worked creatively with the Techno. Cosmic Mass team each month and went to the Friday evening labyrinth walks at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. I took the Facilitators Training course with Lauren Artress in November and in May 2003 made the pilgrimage to Chartres to take Andrew Harvey’s “Return of the Mother” workshop.

When I came home I wrote up my Churchill Fellowship report and thought about how to build an Australian Network to introduce people to the labyrinth and help them to find or make one.

First I made an explanatory Power point program and a 15ft diam. portable canvas Labyrinth to use in introductory workshops for those who asked like Care workers, hospitals schools and groups. It has 5, 18” paths to take walking frames and fits easily into a hall or nursing home. My own design it is painted with Australian ochres and a grey green line. Now after annual Women’s Initiation Ceremonies and other events it has a well worn and warm presence.

I thought about a website name. What would people Google? labyrinth and Australia? I registered Labyrinth link Australia and designed, stating my aim

“This is a voluntary organisation for Australians interested in spreading the calming and healing use of the Labyrinth throughout our great country. I wish to create both away for people to communicate their interest in this ancient meditational path. And a way for people to find a labyrinth to walk near home and its open hours.”

Obviously this involves building many more and training a network of willing facilitators.”I wanted a Locator which was an interactive Map of Australia. When a searcher clicked on their State it would open an alphabetical list of existing labyrinths with a description and opening times for each. This way the searcher could find the nearest and make contact. Now a photograph of each needs to be posted and your help is needed in notifying of any new sites so it remains as complete as possible.

www.labyrinthlinkaustralia.org

Other pages describe what a labyrinth is, with a brief history, a shop for products like finger labyrinths, books of reference, news of coming events.

Now that we have had our first National get togethers as a result of Lauren’s 1st National Facilitator Training Program I am suggesting that this website could become the Australian home. I set it up to promote the Labyrinth in Australia and I do not need to own or make it in future.

I believe that we are well served by strong links with the British and American Network sites but there needs to be an Australian base which can respond to our own specific needs. We are a very far-flung society and the internet is the perfect answer to “the tyranny of Distance” and isolation here.
These are paths which are on the move - Creating an Australian Labyrinth Network
By Cedar Prest, SA Veriditas Facilitator Class of 2002 Contact person from SA

We could have discussion sections and the News/Events page would list events you all have coming up! As an artist and carer I am not able to provide high maintenance and am happy to pass this over to anyone who is enthusiastic.

What other needs do you see for an Australian network?

Impressions from the Workshops/Training

Having taken Fr. Michael Hansen’s retreat her it was a real pleasure to come back to Campion for 4 days of refresher and revitalisation with Lauren. She is so much the right person for the job! Such skill in presenting, making fun of her slips, ability to hold an audience and deal with the potentially disruptive and longwinded!

Most of all I admire her gift for Ritual. How instinctive and inspired was weeding the labyrinth before our first group walk? Two of her Ritual at Grace Cathedral are my fondest memories. It takes the experience beyond the moment and makes the layers of meaning in our lives so clear!

What i gained second time around was attention to detail. Because you now have experience in the field you notice more and can understand how to improve practise and envision the next steps. AND what a group to be part of! Lots of quick minds.

The Australian network has such potential in its members. Knowledge in counselling of all types, faith, health and healing, creative play plus much humour.

I really enjoyed the break from caring and the chance to get to know others who are dedicated to the path. If we can build a network which acknowledges values and utilises all the individual skills we will be very strong indeed.

The first time I met people at the Augustine centre it was clear that we had a dispropor- tionate number of people in the health area and here again it was a major strength. The Australian Network has the opportunity to capitalise on this strength.

I have never doubted the healing potential of the labyrinth but the medical profession requires research and proof! This is why Dr. Helen Malcolm’s work at Shepparton will be so valuable but if the rest of us are not so qualified there is plenty for us to do.

I really want to see Labyrinths in all hospitals, hospices and nursing homes as a natural part of the surroundings. A place for people to step out into and find solace.

The idea of a presentation pack introducing the labyrinth to the medical profession is paramount. Only in Lauren’s video is there a small section where an administrator and Dr. speak in favour of their labyrinth at Pacific Medical Centre, San Francisco.

We need to combine experiences here in Australia to design introductory material which will help us get the concept past the sceptical committees and OUT there onto the ground!

Photo below from the left is Cedar Prest, Jan Aslett and Jo Elvin and right the Weeder.

Please feel free to express your views and needs by email to cedarprest@yahoo.com.au.

About Cedar Prest Cedar is a life committed stained glass artist and since 1993 a labyrinth facilitator, designer and maker. She lives and works from Maslin Beach, SA.
Amazing Labyrinths - The value of including a labyrinth in a playspace
By Kay Lockhart

My Experience
My first experience of the labyrinth occurred when I was working as an Early Childhood Educator in a children’s service. At the time, I was not aware of the significance or value of the labyrinth and how it assisted in the children’s development. The centre had a double finger labyrinth (see photo below). I recall it being a popular item and it was permanently located on the puzzle shelf. Photo is from Relax for Life. Go to the website for more information. www.relax4life.com

Dylan’s Story
Dylan commenced at the centre at 4½ years of age. His attention span was limited. He was not toilet trained and his vocabulary consisted of mostly swear words. He was a very aggressive little boy. The program we developed for him included a quiet area (one child activity) where Dylan could escape if he was feeling angry or anxious. Dylan often chose the finger labyrinth as his quiet activity.

Within weeks of starting at the centre, Dylan was more cooperative and social, his language had improved, and he wore spiderman undies with pride. He would still get angry at times but was able to deal with his emotions more readily. By the end of the year, Dylan was ready for school.

Twelve years on, Dylan is doing well at school, is involved with the local youth group and has a casual job at the local café. He often greets me with a warm smile and will have a chat (as best as a 17 year old can)! I now believe that the labyrinth assisted Dylan to find himself.

More Recently
In 2009, I attended an information session at The Children’s Hospital Westmead where Robert Ferré from Labyrinth Enterprises (USA) presented information on labyrinths. I immediately became intrigued! The labyrinth hunter in me emerged and my research began. Upon recalling the effects of the labyrinth on children from working in early childhood, I was excited to explore the value of the inclusion of a labyrinth in a playspace.

My work as a project officer with the Kidsafe NSW Playground Advisory Unit includes inspection of playspaces and playground design consultancy. I have discovered several labyrinths in playspaces although upon discussion with the playspace owners, it seems they have little knowledge of its value and the benefits to children.

Presentations
I was invited to submit an abstract to present at the 2009 The Nature of Play conference hosted in Perth by Kidsafe, WA. My manager encouraged me to present my findings on the labyrinth and so my presentation titled Labyrinth – not just a movie title was delivered! Following my presentation in Perth, I received positive feedback as well as requests for more information. Labyrinth – not just a movie title has also been presented at the 2010 Healthy Cities Conference (Brisbane) and Parks and Leisure (PLA) Australia 2010 Annual National Conference (Glenelg). In March 2011, I presented a workshop One path – Building a Labyrinth for the Community at the PLA NSW division Build It and They Will Come conference.

The workshop required the participants to draw a 7 circuit classical labyrinth. Together, the group worked to draw the labyrinth on the large timber floor whilst discussing the benefits, site location, design, size, methods, construction materials and community consultation process.
Amazing Labyrinths - The value of including a labyrinth in a playspace (cont’d)
By Kay Lockhart

Value for Children
On discovering a labyrinth for the first time children will often race around the circuits, take short cuts, jump from path to path and generally do their own thing in a rather more exuberant and energetic spirit than adult walkers.

It is perfectly ok for children and teens (or adults) to run the labyrinth. Let children play, skip, hop, or even dribble a soccer ball but encouraged not to disturb others using the labyrinth. A sense of fun can be reflected in the design of the labyrinth by use of bright elementary colours and exciting patterns that can be incorporated into a variety of shapes including animals. For those children who are unable to walk or run, the scale of the labyrinth is such that the whole pattern can be seen in its entirety and the different paths followed by eye.

Labyrinths provide a powerful means of introducing restful movement into children’s playspaces/playgrounds. Walking a labyrinth is a right brain activity requiring a passive and relaxing mindset. Labyrinths can be designed in many ways and with different materials as long as there is a single path to follow.

Benefits include calming, improved creativity, conflict resolution, problem solving, dealing with loss and life-limiting conditions. Labyrinths can be a lot of fun! Children naturally know how to use a labyrinth. We can learn from them that approaching a labyrinth is simple. Don’t have expectations.

Labyrinths in Playspaces
When designing a playspace for children, the following key design elements are considered:

- Active – walking, running, balancing
- Quiet - able to be alone, observing, reading
- Creative – inclusion of activity stations
- Social/Imaginary – walking or playing games with friends

Special features
Essentially, a labyrinth fits into each of these design elements and so consideration to include a labyrinth in playspace design is strongly recommended. Creating a labyrinth for children can optimise the value of creative, fun space for children of all ages and stages and encourages them to learn about themselves and their place in the world and may inspire and develop a life-long appreciation and interest of the labyrinth.

Ian Potter Children’s Garden – Botanical Gardens Melbourne

Labyrinth and Sandpit combination

Labyrinth adjacent to a playground
Amazing Labyrinths - The value of including a labyrinth in a playspace (cont’d)
By Kay Lockhart
Community Consultation
The workshop One Path – Building a Labyrinth for the Community focused on various designs and methods for building a labyrinth. The session includes the importance of community consultation. Community consultation is an important element in designing and building a playspace. The community can be given the opportunity to express their expectations and aspirations which may include the design of a labyrinth. To include a labyrinth in a playspace consultation may involve:

- Local Council
- Parents
- Children
- Church and spiritual groups
- Labyrinthians
- The wider community, and
- The designer

At the conference held in Dubbo, the majority of participants were representatives from Local Government with one participant from a regional Botanical Garden. It was exciting to learn of their experiences with labyrinths. It was equally exciting to witness the participants walking the labyrinth we had just “built” and discussing how it affected them. Certainly, I felt that I had delivered a strong message that labyrinths are valuable in playspaces and for the community. Participants stated they would encourage the inclusion of a labyrinth in their playgrounds.

Kay walking a labyrinth in a children’s playspace
A Final Note
My discovery of labyrinths has been extraordinary. Never having walked a labyrinth, I searched for a walking labyrinth in my area. The first walking labyrinth I found was sited in a carpark on the grounds of a church. Unfortunately, cars were parked at the time - I was disappointed not to be able to complete the walk. After some exploration, I found the Five Senses labyrinth on Mt Ainslie ACT. Upon walking the labyrinth I was elated and couldn’t wait to find the next labyrinth to walk...

WORLD LABYRINTH DAY
Saturday, May 7, 2011

- Yass River, NSW,
- Bulli NSW
- 9 Walks Shepparton, VIC
- Mooroolbark VIC
- Fairfied VIC
- Mirboo North VIC
- Perth, WA
- Mundaring WA
- Bellerive TAS
- Triabunna TAS
- Gap QLD
- Rachum NSW near ACT
- Shiraz Trail in McLaren Vale.SA
- Alice Springs NT
Come join the Friends of the Merri Creek Labyrinth: to honour its place in the old quarry site in Fairfield?

In between large trees and cliff face there is a classic blue stone labyrinth holding the space waiting for us to bring it to life.

Interestingly there is lush grass all around it but the location of the labyrinth itself the grass is less prolific.

Walking as ONE at 1pm was a bit of a hazard as some of the path was barely visable. Here I am lying in the grass, my sides aching - giving kookaburra’s some thing to laugh about.

We envisage a beautiful bush garden that embraces the blue stone labyrinth. We see signage, seating and as well as toilet facilities. Is this what you see too?

This is a great opportunity to have a labyrinth in a wonderful park setting in Melbourne. if you wish to become a Friend of the Merri Creek Labyrinth. Contact Lorraine Rodda lgrodda@iprimus.com.au

World Labyrinth Day New Zealand By John McCaul

After several days of cold, wet and windy weather, we had a beautiful afternoon on Sunday 1 May for our World Labyrinth Day celebration and walk on the Wallis Labyrinth in the grounds of Hutt Hospital, Lower Hutt, New Zealand. The sun rises each day first over New Zealand, but we kept WLD a week early because of the availability of key Labyrinth Committee members.

About 28 people attended including several hospital patients, the Men’s Group from a local parish, and others. Introductions were given by Martin de Jong (previously of the Frederic Wallis House Pilgrim Community, & Sr Marcellin Wilson RSM. Sr Marcellin showed and told the story of the portable ‘parachute labyrinth’ which partly inspired the original construction of the Wallis House Labyrinth in 1997. Following the walk, we adjourned to the adjacent Hospital Chapel for afternoon tea.

We also showed a video of an interview with Lyn Bavin (also a past member of the Pilgrim Community), and Max Christensen of the Hospital Building Services gave a powerpoint presentation of the building and shift of the labyrinth to Hutt Hospital in 2007. Labyrinth Committee Chair, Merran Fleming, rounded off the afternoon by leading a discussion with the walkers.

About The Rev. John McCaul  John is an Ecumenical Chaplain at Hutt Hospital New Zealand.

Contact Lorraine Rodda lgrodda@iprimus.com.au http://www.wendyrule.com
Labyrinth Walk in South Australia.
By Cedar Prest

Karon swan and my piece is in the works. Saturday the 7th of May was World Labyrinth Day and all over the world people walked the path - setting an intention to promote world peace.
A large group gathered at the Labyrinth along the Shiraz Trail in McLaren Vale. Labyrinth creator Cedar Prest gave an introduction to the use of the Labyrinth and then at 1pm, after personal reflection, people started to walk the path.

Flautist Stuart Haines and harpist Hillary O’Neill combined to create a calming atmosphere, as young and old followed the twisting path which finishes in a central area. There participants had a chance to sit upon local artist Robin Turner’s wooden stools and spend some time in quiet contemplation.

It was especially pleasing to have the company of Tatachilla College art teacher Rosemary Dare who worked with Cedar and the school’s students to create the engraved slates that border the path.

Afterwards individuals stayed for an al fresco lunch provided by the organisers. The event was sponsored by Onkaparinga Council who have erected informative signs at the site to help visitors make the most of the Labyrinth whenever they visit. Karon Swan Photography & Design 0458 195 880

Photo Right Jasmine (7), Sophie (4), Meredith & Rosemary Dare in the centre of the Labyrinth. Centre Cedar Prest. Left Jasmine and Sophie sitting on the wooden mushrooms Some of the group at the beginning of World Labyrinth Day

As the World Turns . . .
By Jo Cook, Tasmania Australia

I am so pleased that I have just finished constructing a chartres essence labyrinth on my lawn. Just in time to walk at one as 1pm that will be in 45 mins here in Tasmania. This is one of the most southerly labyrinths in the world.

I planned to mark out with temporary lawn paint but I made mistakes and the labyrinth ended up looking like a spider web.

I perserved and used foliage on the wall markings and it looks great. I will take a photo and post sometime . . . so let the walk begin . . .
Labyrinths Matter - Newsletter
Autumn Edition - Down Under 2011
Australian Region of The Labyrinth Society, Inc. & Veriditas

DVD Labyrinths for Our Time: Place of Refuge in a Hectic World has just been released.

Order your DVD by clicking the link above.
Price $US 24.95

About the DVD
A dynamic educational and marketing tool for any labyrinth enthusiast, this multi-faceted presentation features labyrinth experts from all over the world speaking about the value and benefit of labyrinths in public places including churches, prisons, hospitals, schools and universities, parks, private gardens and recreation areas.

Hear labyrinth historians, labyrinth builders, hospital administrators, counselors, religious officials, and teachers talk about labyrinths as the center point for many activities, including employee health, team building, curriculum development, creative problem resolution, ceremonies, spiritual care, and holistic healing within traditional medical settings.

Learn how to approach decision makers with the facts that will help facilitate acceptance of a labyrinth project. This DVD makes an effective case for the installation and use of labyrinths as peaceful havens where people can rest, relax, appreciate life, enjoy contemplation, relieve stress, and enhance creative pursuits.

See labyrinths from all over the globe being used by individuals and groups as a quiet oasis where people can pause, step out of the frenetic pace of life, and take time to rejuvenate. Labyrinths can be centerpieces which add unexpected beauty to any landscape or environment. Take a visual tour through labyrinths being used as: tools for outreach, gathering, and renewal; centerpieces for curriculum development; holistic complements to traditional and western healing; and therapeutic resources in educational and business settings.

Your Help Is Needed
Supporting International Organizations

Join The Labyrinth Society and get your DVD Free
The Labyrinth Society, Inc has now produced a DVD to help you promote your labyrinth projects. The money has been outlaid now marketing it has now started. Kick start your project by buying your copy of the DVD. As a small voice amongst the Labyrinth World we are indebted to our International Networks. This is a time where TLS can provide direct help to you in your labyrinth project. You can either buy the DVD through amazon.com or by paying a joining fee for membership of $US50 you will receive your DVD free.

Veriditas needs a regular income flow.
Veriditas, a not for profit community based organisation, does not have membership fees. You can help the most valuable work by contributing towards its unique healing and life-changing work that transforms the human capacity to live a life based in spirit. We know there are so many important causes you can contribute to in today's world, but partnership with Veriditas ensures that this transformative work will continue to heal and guide our world.

Veriditas invites you to join a community of people who believe in the work of Lauren Artress and the healing power of the labyrinth experience. When you dedicate your resources to what you value, you are weaving together an invisible web that connects individuals in service of the greater whole. Be a part of the web of transformation today! Veriditas is looking for a regular stream of donations e.g. even $10 or more per month would be a great help or a once a year donation. To donate please email: contact@veriditas.org

Come walk with us as we take the next steps in creating an Australian Labyrinth Network . . .

As a result of the Veriditas Workshop in Melbourne in March this year entitled “Broadening & Deepening our Labyrinth Work” a small group of people are now working on the Incorporation of a national body that links/supports state and territory based groups. We are now looking for people committed to join us. This can be both as members of The Labyrinth Society,Inc and/or listing your name on the Labyrinth Website below. Read Cedar Prest’s article “Paths on the Move” on pages 18 and 19.

- Join a list of people wanting an Australian Network www.labyrinthlinkaustralia.org
- To join the newsletter emailing list lgrodda@iprimus.com.au
Building an Australian Labyrinth Society

“We sat side by side in the morning light & looked out at the future together”
www.storypeople.com

Firesouls.

Behind each sacred space is a firesoul. A word used to describe the people who are the sparks behind the creation of sacred spaces. The firesouls’ passion and vision are the driving forces behind nurturing the sacred spaces from idea to reality. Their energy, enthusiasm, patience and persistence inspire communities to come together around the creation and use of public green spaces.
www.openspacesassacredplaces.org

Are you a “Firesoul”? Then you maybe interested in joining the team as we walk towards the labyrinth being an integral part of the communities in which we live, work, learn play and pray.

Come Walk With Us . . .

Being a Member of The Labyrinth Society Inc - Australian Region both supports this peak body working on our behalf as well as building a base for our own Australian Network.

As a TLS member you can also join with others who are contact people in their home State or Territory. These positions are called Regional Representatives. Come walk with us . . .

- Membership of the Labyrinth Society Inc - Australian Region & State Representatives. www.labyrinthsociety.org
- To join the newsletter emailing list larodda@iprimus.com.au
- Join a list of people wanting an Australian Network www.labyrinthlinkaustralia.org

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