

MACCY BIOCHAR MEMBER BULLETIN

No. 1 - October 2019

Published by maccybiochar. Edited by Brian Lewis.
Auspiced by the Macclesfield Community Association Inc.

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HELLO ALL. Welcome to our first Member Bulletin.

The purpose of these bulletins will be to keep members promptly informed of all maccy biochar developments.

Let's start with a summary of what we have achieved so far:

WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

A steering committee was formed at a public meeting in January 2019 to drive the project in Macclesfield. The committee has:

- undertaken extensive community consultation;
- made a presentation to the Mount Barker Council;
- held an Open Day to demonstrate the operation of the kilns;
- set up a website;
- obtained a site for our first operating centre;
- made about 700 litres of biochar;
- captured about 500 kg of CO₂;
- printed our first Newsletter (courtesy Rebekha Sharkie MP);
- produced our first group brochure (courtesy Steve Shotton, RDA).

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

We have continued to try and keep the community informed of our activities and how they will benefit the community via the Macclesfield community newsletter, our own Newsletter, our new website and via our Facebook page.

Please encourage others to take an interest in our project and if they show signs of agreement ask them to support us with their membership.

COUNCIL COOPERATION

Mount Barker Council continues to be quietly supportive. We have applied for a Community Grant to enable us to make more kilns and will hear the outcome of that soon. Greg Sarre, a Council Manager, attends our committee meetings to keep abreast of our activities and needs. He approved the use of the Council logo on our new website.

PUBLIC EVENTS

The Open Day was very useful in many ways. In particular it helped us to gain new members and most surprisingly receive the kind offer from Greg Goding to use his property for our first operating site.

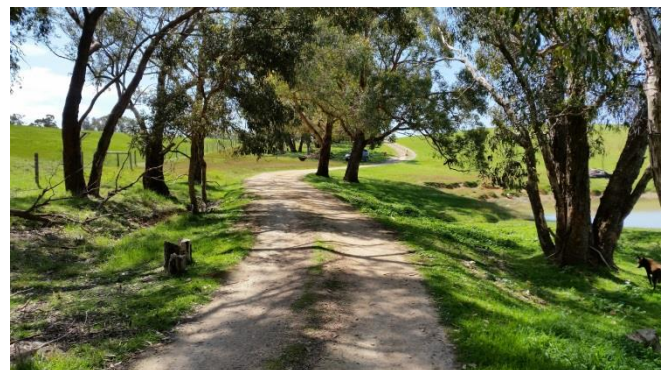
Our next public event will be a stall at the **Macclesfield Strawberry Fete on Sunday 24 November**. We will be selling raw biochar and biochar-based fertiliser from Charboy and showing the results of raising seedlings with and without biochar. Please come along and support this activity.

WEBSITE

Our new website at <https://www.maccybiochar.com> provides much information about us and about biochar. In particular Information Brochures can be downloaded that are written to help Home Gardeners and Schools learn about biochar and how to use it. This needs to be expanded to cover the needs of farmers, orchardists, viticulturalists etc. We will need help with this so please call if you have special knowledge in any of those areas.

BIOCHAR CENTRE

Here is the view of the approach to our first operating centre off Shady Grove road:



BATCHES

We have made 4 batches of biochar so far including the Open Day. One was on a member's property and the other 2 were at our new site. We have had only 4

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deliveries of wood to the site so far. We have set up a pump by the dam, and adjacent to the wood heaps we have 2 small kilns, and 2 pallets to hold big bags. This will be expanded as needed.

Here is what the kiln looks like prior to start-up:



COMING UP:

Tuesday 8 October: Brian and Kelvin will attend a biochar gathering at Temple Bruer Winery, Milang organised to inform other viticulturalists about biochar.

Wednesday 9 October: Working bee at our operating site.

Sunday 24 November: Biochar Stall at Macclesfield Strawberry Fete.

ANZBI CONFERENCE – 20 -26 OCTOBER 2019.

Go to <https://anzbc.org.au> to find out more. This conference will include presentations in the South East of SA.

WHAT NEXT?

With the fire ban season fast approaching we don't have much time left to make biochar this year. It has been a great learning process as we have felt our way forward. This year has been extremely useful in helping us to understand how best to proceed in future. Clearly we must harness a great many more volunteers next year to meet our targets. A twin strategy is envisaged where we use the site we have to the greatest possible extent but also somehow set up a trailer with water tank and kiln so that we can

offer an on-site service to landowners to convert their burn heaps to biochar on the spot.

At the committee level we will need to appoint a secretary and treasurer, and others to concentrate on specific target areas such as individual membership, corporate membership, industry liaison (dairy farming, beef production, horticulture, viticulture, etc); site supervisor and volunteer coordinator; schools coordinator; Facebook coordinator; etc., etc.

So please think about how your experience could lend itself to any of the above and maybe put up a hand.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ROLES so far:

Brian Lewis – Chairman; Website; Newsletters; Bulletins; Volunteer paperwork; Operator; Carbon accounting.

Kelvin Williams – Operator; Grant applications; Biochar analysis.

Kath Thurmer – Community Liaison; Membership.

Greg Marlu – Technical advisor; Operator.

Stephen Heading – Technical and general advisor.

Tess Minett (Ward Councillor) – Council liaison.

Ivars Eglitis – General advisor.

Geoff Brockhouse – Operator.

Meegan Semple – Horticulture and Viticulture liaison.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Continue to support this community initiative!

Encourage others to Join. We want a membership of 100 by the New Year!

Enlist as a Volunteer.

Advertise your biochar products or biochar-related activities on our website.

Help with Working Bees and Open Days!

Use the drop-off service as a household supplier of woody waste. Free for all Macclesfield households and those with a Macclesfield PO box address.

Engage us to make biochar on your property for your use.

Tell us what you think we should be doing next.

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