

**Interview with Jill Jordon at Maleny Enterprise Network centre,
27 Coral Street, Maleny**

on

for the Oral History section of Work for the Dole

Interviewed by Inga Green



Q1: When did you move to Maleny:

1970

Why:?

I was working at the time....I was married, living in Brisbane, and getting pretty disillusioned with cities basically. I was working in a fairly high powered job and both my husband and I needed a retreat, if you like, and at that stage, (it was just before the Nimbin Aquarius festival, the first one) I guess like a lot of other people we were looking to move out of a frenzied city lifestyle into something more environmentally conducive to less stress and a bit of harmony. So we looked all over, from Northern NSW ,right up past Bundaberg and came across this current place that we bought in 1970.

Q2: Where is your home located?

It is down in thethe old local name for it is Frogs Hollow. It is a valley basically between the Witta plateau and Baroon Pocket Road. It is right at the end of Bridge Creek Road and we have now got a community there.

Q3: What is the country side like around your home?

Well , when we got it ,we bought it form Steve Bonney, the butcher, one of the butcher's here at the time and he was running it as a beef cattle place but basically it is very marginal. It is very steep and it had a dairy on it (before) Henry Richons used to dairy on it until 1958, I think. And they were also cutting timber out of it at that stage, because just up on the next place, a place which since about 1975 or 1976 belonged to a woman called Kath McCarther and it is now

being resumed by the Water Board, there used to be an old what they call a case mill on it. They used to make banana cases and tomato crates and stuff like that and they used to cut a lot of wood off our place and other places around to actually make the cases at that case mill. Really it's never been suitable for anything much except growing trees, which we are now re doing, we are re-afforesting it.

Q4: What shops and businesses do you remember being in Maleny when you moved here?

It was a very dead little town at that stage. I mean there were things there going on then, for example where Darcy's is now and there the Co-op is, was an electrical appliance store and I always used to walk past that and it just used to remind me of one of those real old sort of towns out West that are just dying. But Nagy's was the obvious one. Nagy's when we arrived here was just this little tiny one counter place there they sold drinks and cigs and lollies basically and so since that time I've just seen expansion of that and more and more expansion into the place it is today. Boxsells was there. I mean all the shop fronts as they are now were here but there were a lot of empty shops. When I say all of them (the shopfronts), I mean the main ones. For example, where Peace of Green is now, there was some people in there who were actually run out of town. It was a woman who now lives in Findhorn Village in Scotland, and her partner, her husband at the time and a fellow who used to speak at the Domain - a very famous fellow called Webster. They came here, heaven knows why and started an Esoteric Bookshop, which of course all the very conservative church goes thought that it was sort of pagan, you know some dreadful stuff happening, so they were literally run out of town by some of the conservatives here. Up where the Arts and Crafts supply shop is (near Cooke Park) at the time there was nothing going on there and then the Sunshine News started up there in 1974. It was an old, if you like alternative Newspaper, that operated around the Sunshine Coast. The Co-op started up in there in one room and that was in 1979 and before that, there was also an Arts and Crafts supplies run by a woman called Jenny Moffat in there. Of course none of the top - you know all of the Rainforest Plaza or the bit where Double Take and Maleny Travel are - none of that was there, it was all housing. And of course none of this down at Riverside was here so it was just a very quiet little town. Richard Cooke, who is now back in town, owned the Supermarket, and that was quite a small place, the supermarket. He used to run bees in the back yard, he had hives. I remember he was one of these very British people who used to carry people's bags - the woman's boxes, they had boxes rather than plastic bags then. "Can I carry your box for you Madam?" He would do that. But he also, as I say had bee hives in the back garden.

Q5: The History of Maple Street Co-op:

In 1978 a bunch of us got together, because basically there was no provision of whole foods or there was no fresh food grown locally in the town. Nagy's and the Supermarket used to go twice a week to Brisbane and bring stuff back, when in fact there was a lot of stuff being grown

around here by the late seventies. So half a dozen of us got together and wondered whether we should just form a bulk buying group but we made the very courageous decision to start our first business in the town, rather than just a private buying group because we just wanted to benefit the whole town really. Out of that came the idea of the Co-operative, our first Co-op here. There was an American woman, Lorna Wilson, who had actually been involved in a food co-op in California and so she said, You ought to look into this. You know we'd heard about the old Dairy Co-operative here but nobody knew much about co-operatives. So we researched the Co-operatives Act and found that was the way to go, and that was the way we started. As I said, in one room, where the Arts and Crafts supplier is now. It was just an amazing process, I was the first manager there. I worked for nothing for a year, then we went up to \$20 a day wages, which was pretty good then. Then we moved over the road, and that really took off.

Q6: How did the people of Maleny accept the Co-op?

Good question. The locals looked on it with a huge degree of suspicion. The locals, the old settlers, had been here for so long with very little change in their lives and then all of a sudden there was this great influx of new settlers in the 70's and they were really suspicious of them. We were pretty horrible to them, we used to say terrible things like: "You are mismanaging the land" and "Don't chop down the trees" and all that sort of stuff. We really didn't have an understanding of how to build bridges and we were sort of fairly angry young people at that stage, quite environmentally concerned and so they were pretty suspicious about us. I suppose really the first people to come in to the Co op were the old women. We'd ask them to bring in their glass jars and their plastic bags so that we could recycle them. And those older people remembered the days when things like glass jars and plastic bags were valuable commodities.. So they saved them anyway, so then they could come in and bring their glass jars and sort of have a bit of a look round and then they'd say "Who can sell here?" And we said: "Anybody who grows."

"You mean if I grew some stuff, could I sell here?"

"Yes, no worries at all."

So then they started selling stuff and bringing it in and selling it so they could make a bit of extra money and for a lot of them, even though they had a lot of land, they had never really grown fruit and veggies before. You know, all the old farmers would have one bush lemon on their back door but nothing else, and so that really started a bit of a phase where a lot of people started growing more on their properties. And then there was also a wonderful man, who needs to be mentioned by name, George Cassells, an old Scotsman, very staunch figure in the Uniting Church for a long, long time, he's almost blind now and living in Erowal in one of the units there. At the time, he came in just very interested in the type of people who used to frequent the co-op. He was working as a plasterer down in Nambour at that stage and he would often find hippies, as we were called in those days, hitching along the road and so he would pick them up and he said to me later, in a Scots brogue, "You know Jill and I had a wonderful time

speaking to those youngsters, they were the most intelligent people I have ever come across and they talked about interesting things. So that was really what drew him into the Co-op and he actually became one of the first staff members at that stage.

Q7 How is the Co-op going now:

I think it is going very well. I has had its ups and downs, as all organisations do, and I think at the moment I think Alan Harrington, the Manager is very good for the Co-op. What I saw happen was that it went along very well, quite co-operatively for quite some time and then there was a concern about money, things got tighter, a lot more of the business around town started selling the sorts of things that the Co-op had considered it's specialty items and the Co-op started to feel the squeeze and they became tighter, rather than putting out for help, they got more closed. You see this often in group processes, just when people need to be asking for member help they close down and get a bit more tight and tense about things and don't want people to know that it's not going well . It was a very rocky stage about 3 years ago, just before Alan Harrington came on board where the members basically formed into a group, not as a protest group but as a friends of the Co-op and actually helped the Co-op through that last stage. Alan came in, a bureaucrat from Canberra. Us old cooperators, were a bit worried about him - afraid that in fact the Co-op would lose its cooperativeness - but in actual fact what's happened is it's been a very happy marriage. Alan has taught the other people involved, the directors and the long term staff there, more about good business practices and principles from his experience, so the directors and long term staff there have been able to teach Alan about co-operations. It has been a very good marriage, I think and it's going really well. There is now a move on the part of the Maple Street Co-op, the Credit Union and the Upfront Club, as the 3 big new wave trading Co-ops in town to form a cooperative development centre and build a whole big new purpose built building on those 3 blocks that are owned or leased on a 99 year lease to the Upfront Club and the Co-op.

Q8 Any other businesses?

There was one vet, David Wilson. The Bushman's Warehouse was the vets and I was here when he was the only vet. I think he came just after or around the same time (have to check with him. I was very surprised to hear this, Eddie Oehmichen told me this the other day when I was doing an Oral History with him, that before David Wilson there was just this bloke who didn't even have a veterinary degree, looking after people's animals, he did quite a good job of it, but D Wilson was the first vet in town.

Q. Entertainment, local dances (do you remember)

Back then the big entertainment was the pub. They used to have Cabarets every month and Judy Porter and some other musicians whose names I

can't remember now, they all used to wear those red satin shirts and those string ties with like a cows head on them to pull them up, like a bandana-ery sort of thing, and cow boy hats and moleskins or jeans and they'd sing Country and Western, that was the big entertainment. There were the Deb Balls and stuff like that. You see there was no local newspaper back then. The first Maleny News came out late 70's, early 80's, I'm not sure, but you tended not to get the news of dances. There were movies, I think Rotary did movies in the School of Arts as it was called then, but there weren't many balls or anything like that, I think that was all the 50's era, I think they stopped in the 50's and when we arrived there was just the monthly cabarets going on, sort of like a ritual .

Q 10 Other organisations in town?

Maybe Lions were going then, I think Rotary started after we arrived in town, that was quite a bit later, and I don't think Apex was going then. There was none of the sort of Probus Club type, no cultural groups, the showgrounds was there, so I guess there would have been cricket clubs and football clubs, but because you never heard about it, because there was no newspaper, you really didn't know what was going on. Unless you got to know people face to face you just didn't know what was going on outside your own circle. That's why our local newspapers so incredibly important.

Q11 What do you remember of the Maleny Folk festival?

Well, it was started in 1986 and the last year was 1994, the last year I was in council. So it was here for 8 years. I used to go every year but I didn't ever camp there and I suppose really it got bigger and bigger....I loved it. I can remember having one of my greatest shocks in Maleny. I was sitting in the Folkloric Café, it must have been about 1990 and there were belly dancers on stage and camels walking past and I had to sort of rub my eyes and I thought is this Maleny ? Camels and belly dancers. So it really bought a huge range of multicultural stuff because again something struck me when I arrived in Maleny, how very few non Caucasian people there were here. How very few.... Well I say that ...there were quite a few Germans and French and Swiss people because they felt at home in the rolling green hills and the slightly cool temperature, so you get quite a lot of languages spoken, but they were European languages. No Asians, South Americans, Murri people -nothing, no Murriss - anything at all, so really the festival brought some sort of multi cultural flavour to Maleny. By the time I got into Council in 1991, I was quite worried about the exponential growth of it and that was I believe its down fall in Maleny - it grew too big, as is a problem with all the co-ops and all the Community Organisations, that actually take people on board and provide the people's needs like that. Community organisations, when they grow really quickly, it's very hard to handle, especially where you have something like that in a very confined

space, because they outgrew the showgrounds by about 1992 and Bill Hauritz, the organiser said No, he didn't want to limit the size of the Folk Festival, he just wanted it to grow. I was on the Council and I said well basically the showgrounds can't cope with all that growth so that was when they began to look for a home and that was when of course the whole conservative push came along to get rid of the Folk Festival. When they knew that Bill wasn't prepared to limit the size of it, that the Folk Festival couldn't stay in the showgrounds, it was too big, it was over loading the sewerage system, they realised they had them on the run. That was a really sad day for Maleny when the Folk Festival left, not only culturally, as I say it really broadened Maleny culturally I think, but economically. I believe that at the time that it left, there was something like a \$3 million spin off to Maleny, with business that you wouldn't even think....I mean not only Mary Nagy and the Supermarket making huge dough out of it. Maleny Landscaping, now they made \$10,000 extra dollars out of that Folk Festival. That's a big thing for a small business. It was very disappointing because the Chamber of Commerce of the day didn't stand upon it's hind legs and say we as the Chamber want this Festival to stay, we believe it's good for the economy. So that was a bit gutless, it was a really sad thing that the Chamber didn't support the Folk Festival publicly. There are a lot of people like Mary Nagy who came out and said "Your nuts (to let it leave) and they just said, "Well you are biased, because you make money form it. So, big deal. For five days of the year, sad. Still, Maleny's loss is Woodford's gain. Woodford's doing very nicely out of it, very nicely.

Aboriginal names?

Not really, I mean, Steve Jones who's Hilary Cameron's brother, has written a couple of small books on it, you know like "Lake Baroon Revisited", and the "Bunya Festival" or "Seasons of the Bunya" or something like that, but I am not familiar with any names at all. I know there is a fair bit of contention about things like Barung which could be a gathering place I thought, but somebody told me it could be something else. I was talking the Eddie Oehmichen, who's upon the corner of Tesch Road and Ochmichen Road and he can remember as a small kid the Aboriginal people passing by their place on the way to where they used to camp up around near where the Witta Rec ground is.

What natural disasters do you know of in the area?

Well, I can remember 1972, it wasn't the big flood of 74 that hit Brisbane, it was 1972, we had a huge wet season here and basically it was before the new bridge was put in, and the water came right up over the bridge and Maleny was cut off, and that was really exciting but a lot of the hillsides slipped away during that time. We had something like 3 foot of rain in 3 days, so it really bucketed down. That was 1972, but apart from that it's been pretty good. There've been storms that have cut swathes through just a particular small area. I can remember in Tom Porters place, after one

of the really severe wind storms, all the coral trees had been mown down and everybody was going “how terrific” but it was again just a small path that it cut . Well there have been occasional fires and stuff like that, but not even a big fire in the town, that was all the 50’s and before, when everything burned down. Since then I suppose it’s more social problems rather than natural disasters that have characterised the last say 10 years for social change.

What can you tell me about LSC?

I was a councillor but that was long after the time they changed to Caloundra City. I remember the history of all that stuff, I was right in there in an action group. The actual change from LSC to CCC came in 1986 but in the history of the Shire the actual Shire administration moved from Landsborough town itself to Caloundra in 1963, but it was still called Landsborough Shire Council. Because the hinterland was settled first, there was a preponderance of councillors from the rural area and only 1 or 2 from what is now the urban strip, the coastal area. As the coast built up its population there was this sort of struggle. There was always this resentment from those coastal councillors about the huge influence that the “rural; rump” as they called it had, and how they controlled the purse strings and so on and so forth. Jack Beausang, the Chairman... he was very rural, he came from Conondale and Conondale and Maleny basically ruled the roost right up until the time Jack Beausang left. He was the first Mayor of Caloundra City, so he would have left in 1988. Then came Don Aldous who was a Landsborough boy, basically he lived on the coast and ran Sunland Meats, the abattoir in Landsborough. But going back to the time it was changing from Landsborough to Caloundra City, we could never understand it up here. The reason that John Smith, the Shire Clerk, and Jack Beausang, the then Chairman of Landsborough Shire Council, gave for it was that in tourism circles nobody knew where Landsborough was but everybody knew Caloundra. So we said Why can’t you call it Caloundra Shire, and we never really got an answer to that but I suspect it was because Jack wanted to be the Mayor of a City before he retired. So he became the first Mayor, he was there for 2 years and he retired after that. Don Aldous was Mayor for one term and I stood for Council during that time. I stood in 1985 when it was landsborough Shire and I didn’t get in. I stood in 1988 and didn’t get in = I missed out by a few votes and then I stood again in 1991 and got in. that was when there were 3 Councillors for the whole of the rural area from Kenilworth up past Landsborough right down to Beerwah, so we all ran that whole area and that was a really big one. I got a new car and clocked up thousands of kilometres and I was only on the Council for 3 years because I guess basically I’m politically naïve and I don’t fight dirty. I guess basically, again because it’s such a conservative stronghold here, they actually got rid of me on the basis on the Folk Festival which was very odd. I could never understand it. There was such a lot of ill feeling about the Folk Festival. There were hundreds of

phone calls made around the district saying that if I got back in to Council, people would get the festival next door to them, so they all panicked and didn't vote for me. Anyway that's just the naivety of me in politics, it just wasn't my scene. We did achieve heaps in that term but the thing that was so disappointing to me was how very quickly it's all dismantled again, so it's all very temporary.

Lake Baroon Dam

It was an interesting story because we started to hear rumours about the then Water Resources Commission possibly building a dam in or about 1979. We wrote to them, because if a dam was built it would affect the property at Frogs' Hollow that we lived on. The Commission wrote back saying there was not a dam planned in the foreseeable future. Well, by 1981, there was very definitely a dam on the drawing board and we started a campaign against it, believing it was really a dumb use of the land resource and that it had not been thought out well. We were really concerned about the use of agricultural land for water storage.

So we did about an 18-month campaign against the dam. We had big displays, not only in Maleny but down on the coast in shopping centres. We even got petitions from around the place here. We did a t-shirt which was called the Maleny Flush More t-shirt with a toilet bowl going into the dam and a tap coming out the end saying Maleny Flush More – the Sunshine Coast needs the water. Basically all of the town of Maleny with all its septic tanks and runoff is in the catchment of the Baroon Pocket Dam. We thought it was really dumb to do that. Anyway in spite of the 18 months of protest we did and we had someone come up from the Tasmanian Wilderness Society after the big Franklin (dam) campaign down there teaching us all about non-violent action. It was brilliant training and we've used that well since. It really united us as a community to do all of that sort of stuff so it wasn't in vain. We produced pamphlets and held education nights and still we lost that fight. It was a really sad time for us and we wanted to do salvages from the ponded area, the area that would get smothered, because it was that beautiful heartland of our place and many other places as well. They wouldn't let us because of the liability.

Harvey Bryce was a goat farmer down there and Brian Turner was also down there with his cows. There was another man called Graham Bop who had a medical laboratory down there; quite a few people were running enterprises, agricultural and non-agricultural, in Baroon Pocket and they lost all that.

But we lost the heart of our property, beautiful rainforest, creeks, platypus and all that, which was precious to us. I guess it was our social heartland. We got all the groups from down the coast, Wildlife Preservation Society and all of those. Old people, dodderly old people in their 60s and 70s coming through and trying to save the little orchids and bromeliads before the waters rose. We also had a ceremony, a little goodbye ceremony which was really sad and then one night it was raining like crazy when the dam wall had come up and you could hear the waterfalls, big waterfalls near Jan Tilden's house. She said she woke up and

heard the waterfall and then she heard it no more. That meant the water had risen right up to the top of the waterfall and it was all drowned. All gone, just gone. And now they pay \$2000 a day to get the blue-green algae out because they put the dam in the catchment of Maleny's sewage.

Was there anything more you wanted to say about Council?

I was talking before about how the balance in Council used to be on the rural side and then it very definitely swung the other way and so rural councillors tended not to get much of a say, unless they were very good lobbyists in Council. I found that very frustrating, that unless you got the numbers around the table, then whatever you said didn't count for much. That was always a really difficult situation and that is why I've been very interested in this Hinterland Shire movement because it strikes me that as a rural Councillor I was always going down and looking at, doing inspections on, developments and projects on the coast but it was always hard to get the coastal councillors to come up here. They came up for a Christmas party at Mary Cairncross, so at least that got them here. I can remember a really great time before sewerage in Landsborough was mooted, they couldn't understand how dreadfully polluted Landsborough was, so we actually took them there and asked them to wear their gumboots. Of course none of them had gumboots and so they were tramping around this really disgusting mess that was Landsborough before sewerage in their high heel and business shoes. It certainly showed them, I think, that there is a huge difference between issues in the hinterland and on the coast but there is great resistance to actually letting go of the hinterland.

Why is that?

Well, I guess, when you look at it, the coast has a big population, but around 21% of the Caloundra City's economy comes from rural enterprises, so that comes from this area. We've got all the land resources, most of the forestry resources and all the water resources. So we've got resources and they've got the people who need to use the resources. So why would you let us go?!

I think that its time will come and I have said that I will not be party to any more local politics until that time, that would stand again when there is a hinterland shire, but not until then.

What about any funny stories?

I can remember when we first arrived here, one of the first set of people that we met was Noel Keleher and his wife, Fay. Noel used to run an old sawmill on the Reesville Road until it burnt down. Fay tells the story – it's not a funny story but an extraordinary story – of Noel getting up at 2 o'clock in the morning because somebody told him the sawmill was on fire. They lived quite a way from the sawmill and he hopped on his tractor and drove through the sawmill to cut the fire off from the other part, straight through to cut the half of the building from the other and coming out of the other side with his hair flaming. He is a real one per

center Noel Keleher. I guess meeting them was quite an entrée into rural life and I can remember at the time there was a woman who – they lived in a dome – amazingly enough. They came there about 1974 or 75 down on a place that is now John Gillpen's place, used to belong to an old chap called Eddie Lovie. They had this dome there which was a real rickety affair that somebody had built and this Margo Fulcher, the woman was called, approached Noel Keleher and asked him would he get her some posts (off her property) to re-stump this dome. He said "Yeh, happy to" and she said "Well, I need to pick out the posts because I wouldn't like you to take this sort of tree and I wouldn't like you to take that sort of tree." And he said "Alright, I'll come down and see what you've got." Anyhow, she showed him these trees and they were dreadful old trees and young trees, saplings, nothing that you would ever think of building house stumps out of. And Noel said "Yes, I could make the stumps out of those, that is if you don't mind waking up on the ground the next morning."

So those old characters they were just wonderful and they were very bemused by the hippies. They couldn't understand us, yu know... like us being vegetarians and would say "Oh, invite me over for a barbeque," that sort of thing. They were real characters.

What do you like most about Maleny today?

I guess the variety of people. You see it in every range News profile, the variety of people, the skills of people here and the fact that even though it is the conservative heartland, people who are a bit more radical can get on and do their stuff. The fact that there is such a strong co-operative ethic in the place. I remember Peg Burnett, I think it was, who said to me, "You know, things haven't changed much". From back in 1939, she's got a photo of something like four blokes up on the old kindergarten roof and forty women down below getting cups of tea and sandwiches. She said, "The only difference these days is that it would be the women up on the roof and the blokes down getting the tea and sandwiches."

It's always been a very co-operative minded little town in spite of the huge growth which I think has been really difficult on the town, especially for the older people. They have often remarked that they come into town and don't know anybody anymore. So that's really hard, but in spite of that, it has still retained some degree of openness. People... there's a palpable sense of community here that people who visit can often feel. And they remark on it. So it is a remarkable town in that even though it's had the growth it's still managed to retain that and hopefully will continue to.

And your comments on the future of Maleny?

One of the things that Vivienne Coleman and I did when we got onto Council was to start a process of community consultation and had Divisional offices and things like that, which they had never had before. I guess that I am still very concerned that these days Council processes of communication about consultation are not good enough to get people involved in things. There's not enough input into local

government from the people, so I'd like to see Precinct Committees to enable a lot more communication between the local Councillor and the great mass of people, not just the odd one or two favoured citizens who are influential but to see that broadened. I still think that that's one thing we really miss here, if you want to have people who are doing good thing then you need to teach them how to get involved in things and give them some sense that there's going to be some effect from it. Especially young people – that's really important.

Well, I see growth as having slowed down and hopefully that will come with this LAP coming into place. I have been part of the formation of this Local Economic and Enterprise Development group which is running out of the reception at the Enterprise Centre (MENA). What we're trying to do is to start and help local economic and enterprise development in the way that MENA did when it first started before it became a telecentre in about 1993 or 94. I'd like to see a lot more local economic development. I'd like to see us producing more of what we use. I think we can. We've got the people, the skills and the resources. I'd like to see us a bit more self-reliant in a lot of ways. The local Hearty Politics group is just about to start a lot of conversations which are called *Towards developing a Resilient Community*. I guess resilience is about being able to weather a crisis, economic or environmental, and there could be a really big crisis happening with the Y2K phenomena at the end the year (1999). So we need to be much more prepared for stuff like that and I'd like to see that becoming more generally spread across the community and not just thought of as "those old hippies" or whatever. At least we're "old" now and not just "hippies, we're "old hippies". I'd like to see the Chamber of Commerce really interested in LEED, not just looking after their businesses and having a bit of a social club, to actually help young people into employment, help them by mentoring them, giving them a good reason to be able to stay around here. At the moment they leave, they have to leave. It's alright young people leaving to get further study but if there are no jobs then they are not going to come back.

On the job prospects for youth...

Hopefully they'll be better and better as we actively do something about it, but things don't just happen, you've got to drive them, to take hold of them and work it out.

Anything else you'd like to say?

One thing I would like to say is that it has been said that Maleny's a divided town, that there's a lot more conflict here between the old settlers or the conservatives and the new settlers so I suppose really I've done a lot of work after I came out of the Council, in Councils all around Queensland and overseas, and in every community I have been in there are tensions. So I would say to people who think of Maleny as being divided that it is rubbish, that in actual fact, the very fact that Harvey Bryce comes in here (MENA) and is working with young people on a Work for the Dole scheme is fantastic. It's a bit like in Australia there can never be reconciliation between Murri people and non-aboriginal people until there is

communication between the black and the whites. In that sense, division comes from when you don't talk to people and that's why a lot of people have bad attitudes towards Murri people or hippies or whatever, because they just get what they get through the media images and look at them and say "I don't like the look of that." Whereas when you get people actually communicating then you realise that everybody is in the same boat, everybody has the same needs for love, affection, for making a decent living and all of that and we're all the same. So far all the projects that have happened here in the last 5 or 6 years, like Barung Landcare, all the youth projects, are fantastic because they are breaking down those barriers which set up divisions between groups of people.

So I am really hopeful for Maleny and in fact Maleny is regarded very highly in the rest of the world because it has been part of innovation in the last 20 years. It's at the forefront of a lot of, especially, co-operative development but also Barung Landcare is one of the best Landcare groups in the county, so we do it well here. We've just got to focus on the positive things we do and communicate better than we have been doing.

(end of interview)

Jill Jordan 1945 – 2010 Cofounder of the Maleny Credit Union 1984

October 15, 2013 in [Latest News](#)

Jill was born in Kent, England. Her family emigrated to Townsville in 1951. She studied psychology at Queensland University in the late 1960s. She moved to Maleny in the early 70s where, with friends, she established the Frogs Hollow Community, today known as Manduka. For much of the rest of her life, Jill lived a simple life in 'The Bails' which has been a small milking shed.

In the early 1980s, Jill and friends embarked on an ambitious plan to establish Maleny's own credit union, which opened in 1984. Still today the Maleny Credit Union is the only home grown credit union on the Sunshine Coast.

Jill's life was dedicated to building strong communities through promoting cooperatives and social enterprises. In addition to the Maleny Credit Union, Jill helped to establish the Maleny LETS in 1987, Wastebusters in the early 80s, the Up Front Club in 1994 and the Local Economic and Enterprise Development Cooperative (LEED). Jill was a Councillor in Caloundra City Council from 1991 to 1994.