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Stradbroke Island Management Organisation Newsletter June 2015

Respecting native title rights

The Queensland Government will implement its pre-election commitment to restore the end of 2019 as the date by which mineral sand mining must end. The required legislation is expected to be before Parliament shortly. There will be a Parliamentary Committee with a call for public submissions. SIMO will make a submission supporting the cessation of mining in 2019.

The SIMO Committee has taken a consistent view that the extension of mining to 2035 over-rode the native title rights of the Quandamooka people. Restoring and respecting these rights is an imperative. In all conscience, we cannot have a system of Aboriginal land rights that can be set aside at the whim of a government or through the lobbying efforts of corporations.

The SIMO Committee believes that Sibelco, with assistance from the Government, must offer the best possible adjustment arrangements for the mining workforce - those who live on and off the Island. This means more than severance pay, and successful adjustment schemes to start as long as

possible before a closure. One example is the closure of the Newcastle steel works where all workers had access to long-term education and training of their choice.

The State Government has said it will reinstitute the transition funding promised in 2011. The funding needs to go into projects and actions and not into more consultants. We support the objective of the Island becoming the site of Australia's most sustainable tourism - both culturally and environmentally. This is something about which we all ought to be able to cooperate.

Over the last two decades, Sibelco has continued to make good profits from the Island but there has been less return to the Island because more Sibelco workers are living on the mainland. Sibelco worked hard with their PR firm Rowland to create the sense that mining, and Sibelco, were essential to the Island. They convinced some people but, overall, the Quandamooka people and the natural environment have paid the price.

IN THIS ISSUE

Wildlife



Amity



Plus Toondah, Heritage, Events

Wildlife

By Peter Spinner

Almost three years ago an article under the same heading appeared in this newsletter. In that 2012 article the value of Australian native wildlife, a proven economic tourism asset, was proposed as a potential mainstay of North Stradbroke Island (NSI) tourism. An opportunity was provided in that article to put forward a few ideas as part of an environmental 'wish-list'.

One of those ideas was that perhaps the decommissioned Dunwich High School could be utilised as a terrestrial zoological/wildlife education and training centre where conservation biology could be one of the main themes. Having the already well-established University of Qld (UQ) Moreton Bay Research Station (MBRS) as a model demonstrates that this concept has a very good chance of success. For many years this external campus of UQ has hosted thousands of students from Australia and overseas.

Another idea canvassed in the same article was the need to form a group of people with expertise or interest relevant to wildlife matters. This group's role would be to identify issues on the island pertaining to the protection and conservation of NSI wildlife whilst advocating on its behalf.

The article was based on an individual submission made to the former Bligh government's Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) which had called for community input into a post-mining economic transition strategy for NSI. Of course, it's sad that one has to rely on putting an economic value on the natural environment and wildlife in order to enlist bureaucratic support for its conservation. However, in this modern world there seems to be bipartisan political agreement that we are

dependent for survival on 'the economy' rather than the environment. People seem to be more often referred to as 'consumers' than as citizens or community members. Thus, it seemed pragmatic to advocate for NSI's wildlife along those lines, particularly as the theme was 'economic transition'. Naturally, it would be more morally desirable to think we were preserving wildlife for altruistic reasons than monetary ones.

In order to progress this wildlife-oriented concept, an expanded version of the newsletter article was presented to several Redland City (RCC) Councillors, including Cr Craig Ogilvie, the councillor representing NSI. Cr Karen Williams, the Mayor of the Council, was also presented with a copy of the article/submission complete with photographs, some of which appear in this newsletter. Copies of the article were also given to local MPs, as some of the topics (eg. bushfire hazard-reduction programs and some island road speeds) are responsibilities shared by local and state government, whilst the federal government is responsible for threatened species (eg. koalas), along with other authorities.

Some of the issues and threats to our wildlife highlighted in the expanded article were: overzealous bushfire hazard-reduction programs; excessive signposted road speeds/roadkill; inadequate wildlife advisory signage; inadequate council domestic animal management; the proliferation of invasive feral plant species (such as asparagus fern, Brazilian pepper tree, lantana); and control of feral animal species (eg. foxes, cats).

Some of the ideas embodied in the submission, whether by coincidence or fortunate timing, seem to have found a sympathetic audience. Let's start with the idea of a panel of people to identify and progress wildlife-relevant issues. This concept dovetailed perfectly with similar ideas held by Greg Grimmet, coordinator of Stradbroke Wildlife



Rescue at that time. Together with his wife Stella and Jack Jackson, one of NSI's most dedicated 'wildlife warriors'. They convened NSI's first Wildlife Forum in September 2013. The inaugural chairperson of that first meeting was Kathy Townsend, Director of the MBRS. Also present at the Wildlife Forum were at least 30 people representing a diverse range of groups and institutions together with NSI land-tenure holders and concerned individuals. There were representatives from UQ's Conservation Biology Department; Sibelco, the mineral sandmining company; Quandamooka Yoolooburbee Aboriginal Corporation (QYAC); Straddie Camping; Qld Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS); Amity Point Progress Association (APPA); Australia Zoo; Stradbroke Island Management Organisation (SIMO); Friends of Stradbroke Island (FOSI); Qld Police Service (QPS); RCC; and South East Qld Catchments, amongst others.

Three main sub-committees/working groups were formed on that day. One was the Feral and Pest Animal Working Group (FPAWG), whilst another was the Marine Rubbish and Plastic Waste Group. The third group was the wildlife rescue group now known as 'Straddie Wildcare.' All three groups have achieved a great deal in a short timeframe. These achievements include, amongst other things, an intensive, upgraded fox control program involving

multiple NSI land tenure holders and land managers. Highly successful 'Clean Up Days' along NSI foreshores have resulted in the removal of large amounts of land-based marine garbage and plastic waste which threaten all forms of marine life including sea birds and turtles. As well as this, the ongoing work of the wildlife rescue group is perhaps

To the credit of Mayor Karen Williams, Cr Craig Ogilvie and other Council officers and staff, quite a few proactive steps have been taken by the RCC towards ensuring a better outcome for NSI wildlife. A year or so after receiving the submission the RCC introduced a far more eye-catching array of wildlife advisory signage on the approaches to and within the townships of Amity Point and Point Lookout.

overly-aggressive hazard-reduction burns carried out by the Dept of Natural Resources. These overzealous, inappropriate hazard-reduction burns, combined with several extremely damaging bushfires, were undoubtedly having an adverse impact on the biodiversity of native wildlife and vegetation. Recently a far more benign regime seems to have been implemented with greater concern being shown for the natural environment by means of cooler burns, taking in much smaller, more manageable areas at any given time. This beneficial procedural change, together with the commissioning of a NSI Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) unit and the appointment of the first, extremely experienced, full-time, island-based QFRS Officer-in-Charge, Bill Ewing, heralds a better fire management era.



Jack Jackson and Carolyn Hahn protest at Point Lookout in 2009 about the road deaths of 2 koalas killed near Two Mile.

one of the most unseen, thankless and heartbreaking tasks any person could be involved in. Those volunteers are worthy of the highest possible praise.

Another proposal in the 2012 article was the possibility of the, then-closed, High School being used as an education and training centre. Fortuitously what has recently taken place is that QYAC has taken charge of those premises. Who on earth could have a deeper cultural connection with the Island than the Quandamooka 'First Nations' people? Who could possibly have closer links with the natural environment and heritage of Minjerrabah than the 'First Nations' people? Informal talks with QYAC representatives have been extremely encouraging and the possibility of cultural heritage and nature-based education and training as part of the future use of this prime site is certainly part of the discussion. In fact, SIMO and QYAC have a great deal in common regarding the future of our Island home.

At about the same time, signposted speeds on council roads entering Amity Point and Point Lookout were lowered from 80kph to 70kph, and 60 kph to 50kph respectively. Another important move by the RCC, which had spearheaded the NSI fox control program, was to broaden the program. Originally the program simply took in the township areas (ie. Dunwich, Amity Point and Point Lookout). Via the FPAWG of the Wildlife Forum, the Council was instrumental in leading the way and encouraging other land-tenure holders to adopt a wider program involving feral animal control across the entire length and breadth of NSI. Of equal importance to any of these measures, the RCC finally began to take the issue of domestic animal control more seriously. Once again, recommendations from the FPAWG have been acted upon by the RCC, resulting in a long-overdue increase in the presence of council's highly efficient Domestic Animal Management unit on NSI, headed by Bill Clifton. Holding facilities for impounded animals have also been constructed at the Dunwich Council depot.

Another topic in the 2012 article was bushfire and bushfire hazard-reduction management. On a State Government level, particularly following the devastating 2013-14 bushfires, the Qld Fire and Emergency Service has taken on much more community input with its broadened Fire Management Committee. Including representatives from groups such as SIMO, QYAC, the RCC and the APPA has served to address some long-standing concerns regarding

The Qld State Government must also be praised for increasing the coverage of NSI /Minjerrabah's national parks. With the addition of Naree Budjong Djara National Park to the formerly tiny area around Blue Lake, there is a commensurate increase in hope for preservation of our wildlife by means of increased habitat conservation. Local NSI/Minjerrabah National Park rangers have been doing an excellent job of maintaining walking tracks, eradicating feral vegetation, etc.

Praise must also be given to the Federal Government for its 'Green Army' initiative on the Island. Under the inspirational leadership of Bill Smart, an Amity resident, a team of young NSI/Minjerrabah residents have been doing a tremendous job of tackling the arduous and daunting task of attempting to eradicate some of the large tracts of feral vegetation around the Island. This non-native vegetation has in many areas choked and overwhelmed large areas previously covered by native grasses and trees. What this young, mostly Indigenous, 'army' is doing, besides proudly reconnecting with their island's natural heritage, is restoring critical food

supplies for native NSI/Minjerribah wildlife such as wallabies and koalas.

Maintaining the broadest possible spectrum of flora and fauna biodiversity is after all, arguably, critical to the welfare of all species including our own exponentially increasing one. Or do we want to leave our children and other descendants a natural world and in microcosm, an island - viz.

NSI/Minjerribah - where increasingly 'wildlife' is dominated by rats, cats, foxes, dogs, poisonous toads, etc?

Some say that the way we treat animals, in this case our native wildlife, is a measure of our own humaneness and humanity. In a world where there are ever more of us and consequently fewer of them, let us hope we can all rise to the challenge(s)!

shoreline or close to it. Although not present at the first meeting of this group, a SIMO representative – this correspondent – was invited to attend this second and any subsequent meetings. Also in attendance were three RCC officers and Cr Craig Ogilvie, who is the group's chair. The State Government and QYAC also need to be involved in the process.

The RCC convened this committee as an ongoing part of a process to formulate an Amity Point S.E.M.P. This follows on from the release of a 'Draft' consultant's report in December 2013, and an apparently lively public meeting at Amity Point in February 2014 that challenged the consultant's report. .

One of the committee's tasks is to appoint a member to a Council steering committee that is investigating the management of shoreline erosion across the whole of RCC's area of jurisdiction.

BMTWBM is the consultancy group that provided Council with the contentious report rejected by the Amity community. The firm is still involved in drafting the S.E.M.P and produced an 'amended' report in February 2015 including what it terms 'available options'; these are

- *Do nothing;*
- *Beach nourishment;*
- *Channel relocation;*
- *Structures; and*
- *Retreat*

The report goes on to summarise these:

After reviewing the coastal processes, risks and values for the Amity shoreline, it is recommended that the following options should be considered for a future implementation plan:

1. *Immediate education campaign regarding the potential for dramatic slumping into Rainbow Channel,*
2. *Geotechnical consultant assessment of slump hazard zone,*
3. *Retreat of assets within the hazard zone,*
4. *Construction of or formalising existing terminal protection structures,*
5. *Nourishment of beaches between the groynes at the Amity Caravan Park, and*
6. *Ongoing monitoring of beach condition and success of management strategies.*

While there is much debate to come, the Council process is now much more participative than in 2012-13. Even so, the consultant's report is opaque and seems to be trying to please everyone.

There are two sets of questions and issues. One set is about the technical feasibility of the rock wall to prevent erosion. This includes getting long-term certainty that the rock wall will be maintained. The second set of questions are about the sharing of the costs, now and in the future, between the Council (and possibly the state government) and property owners.

So, dear reader, you can see that there is a great deal at stake for the Amity Point community, particularly those owning property on or near the erosion-prone shoreline areas. More updates will follow in future issues of this newsletter.



Amity Point Erosion - Update

By Peter Spinner

In the world of acronyms here is yet another: a S.E.M.P. What is a S.E.M.P. one may ask? Well, a S.E.M.P. is a *Shoreline Erosion Management Plan*, and the Amity Point community is engaged in the process of creating a new one.

A local advisory committee, convened by the Redland City Council (RCC), recently held its second meeting at Amity Point. Other committee members were Amity Point residents, some of whom have properties on the



Dunwich Causeway and Tunnel

By Elisabeth Gondwe

The heritage status of places at Dunwich was controversial at each of the last three community forums held by Mayor Karen Williams. The repairs needed to the convict causeway that now serves as a roadway to and from the ramp used by the RedCat is one of the issues. For some, heritage just gets in the way while for others it is a matter of cost and delays.

One of the objects in the SIMO rules is to 'press for protection of the island's significant natural, cultural and historical assets'. These assets include the physical evidence of the convict presence at Dunwich. Two such places are on the [State Heritage Register](#). [One](#) is the *Dunwich Convict Causeway*; [the other](#) has the unprepossessing name of *Public Reserve incorporating the Privy Pit and Site of Convict Barracks and Store*. The Register only covers non-Aboriginal places and the causeway and privy pit are the oldest places in the state listed on the Register.

The Moreton Bay Penal Settlement was set up at Redcliffe in September 1824 and moved to Brisbane the following May. In 1827, Patrick Logan, the Commandant, was instructed to establish a warehouse and a barracks for convict labourers, boatmen and soldiers at Dunwich.

Plans were made for a warehouse and barracks at Dunwich. It was completed by 1828. The intention was that larger ships from Sydney would unload at Dunwich with smaller craft taking the goods across the bar of the Brisbane River. In May 1828 Logan reported that the magazine at Dunwich was roofed and nearly completed.

The causeway is a convict-built stone and earth-filled structure, 150m in length and 7m in width. The northern wall is visible and the rest has been

covered over by roadworks and land reclamation since the 1970s. Some timber piles are also extant.

The causeway has provided a landing place for vessels over a continuous period from British colonisation to the present day. It served as port facilities for the military garrison, 1827-1842 when it enabled larger ships to unload their cargoes from Sydney and to pick up cargoes of pine logs or maize brought from the Brisbane area.

After the military garrison, the causeway served the Catholic Mission 1843-1847, the Quarantine Station 1850-1865, the Benevolent Asylum, 1866-1947, and the Myora Mission 1892-1947. Since 1973 it has been a landing place for barges.

The causeway is built from ferricreted sandstone of local origin. The rocks are thought to have been taken from Aboriginal fish traps.

The other surviving structure is the tunnel or 'privy pit' that is on the lower terrace of the reserve at Junner Street. The military post and stores were built on the headland.

In October 2012, a team of geological researchers from the University of Massachusetts-Boston were on the Island working with the University of Queensland to decipher the Holocene history of Flinders Beach. The team used ground penetrating radar (GPR) on the site of the Military/Stores Depot and interpreted the data for the North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum.

The GPR imagery suggests a linear feature approximately 2 m wide, more than 1.5m high and at least 10 m long. The feature begins at the spot marked "privy pit" on the lower terrace of the site and trends east-northeast at 60 degrees.

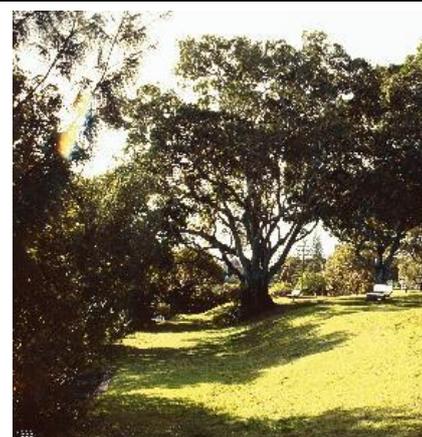
The stores depot/military post and the causeway are really one heritage site. It enabled larger ships to unload their cargoes and to pick up pine logs or maize.

There are only three known surviving convict built structures in Queensland; the windmill at Wickham Terrace, the Commissariat Store at North Quay and the Dunwich Causeway and tunnel. The Dunwich causeway is the only known convict-built maritime structure in Queensland. The causeway and tunnel to the military garrison are surviving physical evidence of occupation by convicts and soldiers of the penal settlement.

References

Buchanan Architects 2001, Dunwich Convict Causeway Conservation Management Plan for Redland City Council.

Gontz Allen M 2012 "Ground Penetrating Radar Investigation of the Convict Barracks, Dunwich, North Stradbroke Island, Queensland, University of Massachusetts-Boston.



Junner Street Reserve, Site of Convict Barracks and Store



Convict Causeway, Dunwich

Events & Activities

SIMO Forum

Showcasing Minjerribah's Natural Assets...Respectfully

Saturday 15th August 1.30 -4.00pm

Dunwich Community Learning Centre

Speakers include

Paul Donatiu, Executive Coordinator, National Parks
Association of Queensland

Darren Burns, Joint Management Coordinator/Land and
Sea Manager, Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal
Corporation

Jan Aldenhoven, Biologist, Naturalist & Film-maker
Kevin Townsend, Moreton Bay Research Station, UQ

The forum is an activity with the Queensland
Conservation Council as part of the Quandamooka
Festival

SIMO Annual General Meeting

Sunday 16th August

Point Lookout Hall

Starts at 1.45 with tea, cakes and mingling.

Formal business 2.30 - 4.00

Guest Speaker Dr Uncle Robert Anderson

The formal notice for the AGM and a call for nominations
for the SIMO Committee for 2015-16 will be distributed to
members in early July.

A gentle reminder that you should have received a notice
that fees for 2015-16 are now payable..

YURA! QUANDAMOOKA FESTIVAL OPENING CELEBRATIONS

The inaugural Quandamooka Festival is a three-month calendar of events from July – September 2015 celebrating the culture, country and people of the Quandamooka region.

<http://quandamookafestival.com.au/events-and-activities/>

Toondah Harbour

Deputy Premier Jackie Trad, Redland Mayor Karen Williams and The Walker Group joined together on June 19th to [announce](#) that the ALP Government will proceed with what is now termed '*The Toondah Harbour revitalisation project*'. They shared the hype. According to the Deputy Premier:

The project will revitalise the local tourism industry by delivering a world-class ferry terminal and marina, waterfront retail and commercial space, apartments and public parks on the 67-hectare Cleveland site.

The project will transform the gateway to Moreton Bay and North Stradbroke Island, supporting more ongoing jobs and business opportunities for locals.

The Mayor called it a game-changing project that was the most important in half a century for the Redlands community.

The community will gain all the benefits of better infrastructure, a deeper harbour and world-class waterfront boulevards and open spaces without the burden of having to pay for it.

That's two 'world-classes'!

The Walker Group said they have an impressive development proposed and

You won't simply go there to catch a ferry to North Stradbroke Island; our proposal is to create a destination in its own right.

With such a meeting of the minds, there might be little to add. The two Governments and the developer say that '*detailed design of the project could be available as early as mid-2016*' [after](#) the environmental impact assessment. This

will put pressure on those who have concerns and want more dialogue.

The SIMO Committee are among those with concerns. We accept that improvements are needed at Toondah - we all stand out in the sun and the storms; some of us struggle getting on and off buses and put up with the toilets and very limited amenities. But, we do not think that an adequate economic and environmental case has been made for such a large development.

At this stage of limited information, the best we can do is set out our issues;

- How will adverse impacts on fish habitat and mangroves be avoided?
- What will the development provide for Island residents - cover from sun and storm, a more commodious place to wait for water taxis, better public transport to Cleveland and beyond?
- What will happen to the availability and cost of parking - many Island people keep a mainland car at Toondah, will there be parking charges and, just as importantly, will long-term parking be acceptable to a commercial centre and upmarket residences?
- How will the public benefit from the windfall profits to landowners (like Stradbroke Ferries)?
- Will there be adequate provision for the two existing water taxi operators. Given the recent increases in barge fares, will the project ensure that new barge companies are able to operate from Toondah in line with commitments given by Transit Systems to the Australian Consumer and Competition Council (ACCC)?

- Will the physical design of the project be sympathetic to its setting and how will it respect the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage of the area?

The consultation process and the EIS need to answer these questions. However, we fear that we are facing 'a development is good' mentality that will brook little criticism.

This is very relevant to the transition of the Island post-mining. There are strong voices, including the Chair of the Chamber of Commerce, who want big developments like resorts and theme parks. Put plainly, a view of the more tourists the merrier.

This would mean a 'big' tourist industry



controlled by off-Island interests - not much different from mining and with little thought for environmental and human impacts. The alternative is to provide tourists with culturally and environmentally acceptable activities that increase the 'spend per tourist'. This could build a new economy 'upwards'; one that has a human and natural face and ensures long-term balance. Toondah, at this stage, is not a good model.

Winter is here and so are the mullet!

The mullet fishing industry is one of the oldest industries in Queensland and is a sustainable fishery. Sea mullet is an important part of the diet of the local community.

This fishery has provided food and employment for local families for generations. If you are lucky enough, you may see the mullet fishers on the ocean beaches over the next couple of months.



Good eating

Clean and fillet as fresh as you can. Shallow fry, grill or bake. Or try these recipes

<http://www.fishtales.com/herveybay/mullet.htm>

Two ways with mullet roe

For some people the value of mullet is in the roes. The delicacy can be preserved in two different ways. One way is to salt and then cold smoke them. There are some details of how to do it [at this link](#).

Or make *Bottarga* - salted, cured fish roe, originating from Sardinia and Sicily. It is traditionally grated and sprinkled on pasta and soup.

There are very similar Chinese, Korean and Japanese recipes. Now becoming a global 'foodie' thing, it was and is a local food for local people. Bottarga is described as the caviar of the Mediterranean and SBS has a recipe [here](#) that it classes as 'easy'.

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