



President's report 2017

I'd like to think not all election outcomes in 2016 were unexpected and terrifying.

My inauguration as President of Curl Curl Lagoon Friends took place without fuss, and our executive committee has had us busy from day one.

Early on, we set about reviewing our constitution, confirming our mission and collaborating on a strategic plan for the years ahead. Our thanks to Mark and Susan stack for their significant contribution to preparing, facilitating and drafting this document. This has guided how our volunteer efforts will be best directed and where we'll be most effective.

Our focus for the near future will be on protection of the lagoon, knowing that one day it will be returned to its once-pristine condition, and to educate the community on the value of the lagoon environment.

Your membership fees and donations have supported an active year advocating on behalf of the lagoon we all treasure.

Clean Up Australia Day

Word has got around about our kids' treasure hunt on Clean Up Australia Day. Local children brought their parents along to pick up rubbish around the lagoon in John Fisher Park, and our record number of 105 volunteers collected a meagre 40 bags of rubbish. This reduction in volume is testament to the changing littering habits of locals and visitors to our park. Special thanks to vice-president, Viktorija McDonell, Steve Brickwood and Dave Platter for your logistical prowess, and extended thanks to the many volunteers who appeared on the day.

Advocacy to Council under Administration

When council amalgamations took effect, stakeholder groups such as the Curl Curl and Dee Why Lagoon Committee and John Fisher Park Advisory Committee were disbanded. These were council-led forums where diverse stakeholders such as sporting and environmental groups sat together to progress initiatives in a measured and constructive way.

We felt this led to a fragmented approach to management of these key environmental assets, and addressed the administrator and staff at a council meeting to this effect. Our concern was that community committees were not being consulted early enough and weren't treated as partners in implementation of the initiatives that most affect them.

Council at the time was responsive, and since this time has proactively contacted us regarding proposals, inviting us to consultation sessions and providing adequate information to make

informed submissions. We were pleased with the way we were consulted on the proposed walkway through The Glen near Surf Road as part of the Palm Beach to Manly walk, and are hopeful of an outcome that is sympathetic to the fragile environment it traverses.

Our executive members also engaged directly with Council Administrator Dick Persson on several occasions to raise issues and provide constructive solutions on concerns such as:

- Netball parking and traffic management around John Fisher Park, and
- The need to reclassify Stirgess Reserve from sportsground to passive recreation space as a park.

We're pleased to now have a dedicated contact at council with responsibility for John Fisher Park, Jeremy Smith - Manager Park Assets - Planning Design & Delivery. We welcome him tonight.

Thanks to Deb Moffat, Ray Cox, Jane Lush, Louise Hislop and Pam Rawling for their operational smarts and advice.

Partnership with Council Staff

This year, we've been thrilled to join forces with Northern Beaches Council's Natural Environment unit to conduct a bird count survey over a two-year period to better understand our local avian population. Experts, enthusiasts and complete novices meet at the wooden bridge on the last Friday of the month at 7:30am, select a vantage point and count what they see over a 20 minute period.

We thank Jeanne Thuez, Environment Officer - Lagoons, for her expertise, organisation and motivation on this project. We're each more appreciative of the birdlife around us, and we look forward to the survey results.

Over the last 18 months or so, we've been so captivated by the science behind our local ecosystem, we organised a series information nights for the community that were impressively well attended. Our guru in this respect is Jason Rusczyk, our other favourite Lagoons Environment Officer.

We're fortunate to have a scientist on our doorstep who is such a great communicator and whose enthusiasm for lagoon health is infectious. Thanks to Jason, we can all rattle off the term ICOLL (Intermittently Closing and Opening Lakes and Lagoons) with aplomb.

More on the oyster project to come.

Our Local Representation

We have found an involved and interested partner in our new State MP, James Griffin, elected earlier this year. He declared in his inaugural speech in parliament one of his priority initiatives to be fixing up Curl Curl Lagoon, and in a further address commended the work of this very organisation. This is encouraging, and has opened up a dialogue regarding potential next steps.

I encourage anyone with enough time on their hands to read the relevant transcripts - it does make the chest swell with pride to have our rehabilitation and protection efforts recognised at this level.

Curl Curl Lagoon Friends met with council staff Jeanne and Jason, as well as with Todd Dickinson, Executive Manager Natural Environment & Climate Change and Adrian Turnbull, Manager Coast & Catchments, to talk through the collective vision and potential projects to improve Curl Curl Lagoon*. The proposal was presented to MP James Griffin to consider when applying for Coastal and Estuary Grants and promoting the interests of our electorate.

There is a survey currently open for anyone to review and make comment on these, facilitated by Mr Griffin at: tinyurl.com/CurlCurlLagoon

Pride in our Place – no Optus Tower

In a display of coordinated and determined effort, CCLF together with residents saw the Development Application for a 26m mobile phone tower in Adams Reserve rejected by Council and an independent panel of assessors.

- Over 800 petition signatures collected
- More than 150 objecting submissions made
- Manly Daily profiled concerns of residents and CCLF
- Over 13 speakers including CCLF President, Paula Cowan, presented arguments against the proposal before the Northern Beaches Development Assessment Panel in July.

We thank our local MP, James Griffin, councillor Natalie Warren, CCNPS Council, sporting groups and the hundreds of residents who stood together to protect the character of the locality we love.

Enjoy the view, people!

Council Elections

Curl Curl Lagoon Friends hosted the Curl Curl Ward candidates for the recent council elections, at North Curl Curl Surf Club. We had a crowd of about 65 people who were rewarded with a courteous and cordial night, hearing the candidates speak and answer their sometimes tricky questions! We congratulate Michael Regan, our returned Mayor, David Walton and Natalie Warren on their election and thank them for their support tonight.

We look forward to a fruitful relationship with them as we continue to care for our local environment.

Bush Care

If you've ever wondered what can be done about the weeds you've noticed invading our natives bushland, the answer could be closer at hand than you think. In just a few hours a month, you could learn how to recognise and remove weeds while making new friends at Bush Care. Join the custodians of Alan Newton Reserve on 1st and 3rd Saturdays at 9am and become part of the solution.

Respected Community Group

Curl Curl Lagoon Friends members are a diverse group with valuable and unique perspectives and experience. We have been approached by alert members to provide submissions on a range of issues this year from local to state issues. Thanks to these grassroots prompts, we have:

- Corresponded with Premier Berejiklian regarding the Biodiversity Conservation Bill and Local Land Services Amendment Bill that we believe will weaken protections for native flora and fauna;
- Helped to mobilise the community regarding the proposed Optus Monopole;
- Provided submissions regarding the CCNPS redevelopment project on matters of its impact on the local environment, lagoon health and heritage.

We thank Ray Cox, Chris Thomas, Steve Brickwood, Sophie Stack, Rebecca Eddington and others for bringing issues to our attention and lending their expertise to the response our group was able to make.

We value the input of those passionate about celebration and protection of our local treasure, Curl Curl Lagoon.

We look forward to the year ahead in the knowledge we have forged strong partnerships with the people who share our vision.

***Potential improvement projects**

1. Improving the Curl Curl environment

This component of the project will complete a number of outstanding actions from Stage 4 of the Curl Curl Rehabilitation Project including:

Creating better foreshore areas around the lagoon for bird and fish habitat

Removing weeds to improve views and access between Griffin Road and Curl Curl Beach

Installing better access points to the lagoon and beach

Supporting our local volunteer bush regenerators and our local environmental groups in protecting this special waterway

The actions will make a significant improvement to the look and feel to the eastern areas of the lagoon which have not had substantial works done as part of the earlier stages of the Curl Curl Rehabilitation Project.

Community involvement – “From Pollution to Pride”

\$40,000 over 2 years

Education program for businesses and residents upstream of Greendale Creek and around Curl Curl Lagoon.

Installation of interpretive signage along the path and at the major structures to provide community information about lagoon condition, what they can do to help as well as providing experiential activities.