



President's report 2019

This year Curl Curl Lagoon Friends has continued to advocate for protection and rehabilitation of the ecosystem at the local, state and federal level and maintained community engagement and education.

Meet the Candidates event

In the lead-up to the federal election this year, Curl Curl Lagoon Friends hosted a community forum on 7th May where Warringah residents could ask questions and hear directly from candidates. While our priority was hearing from candidates on their environmental and climate change policies, especially as they related to urban waterways, we fielded questions on a range of important topics.

In the words of one participant,

“Thanks to organisers and candidates who attended. It was an excellent meeting where we could hear intelligent and thoughtful answers to issues of great importance in this election. Very pleased to hear the empathetic and dignified responses from the candidates who attended.”

We thank the candidates, Kristyn Glanville, Greens; Dean Harris, Labor; Susan Moylan-Coombs, Independent; Zali Steggall, Independent, for participating on the night.

Federal Government support

Curl Curl Lagoon Friends congratulate MP Zali Steggall on her successful campaign and election as the Member of Parliament for Warringah.

We thank her and her staff for the work they have already commenced in progressing the efforts of Curl Curl Lagoon Friends. A Communities Environment Program grant

application to the Department of Industry for a floating wetlands pilot program has been supported by Zali Steggall and we look forward to the outcome.

State Government support

Work commenced in early 2019 on the **Restoring Pride - Environmental Rehabilitation Project** on the north bank of the lagoon basin.

The previously heavily weed-infested stretch of riparian vegetation has been progressively removed and planting of native species has commenced. Coral trees, phoenix palms, lantana and canopy vines have been removed in stages. Further weeding, planting and maintenance will continue over the next two and a half years, involving local school children and community members.

Work is funded by a \$100,000 Coastal and Estuary Grant from the NSW State Government and managed by Northern Beaches Council.

Complete rehabilitation of the waterway is several decades away and we believe enhancing and preserving the ecosystem during this time will ensure that the lagoon retains its value to the community.

We thank Northern Beaches Council Staff, Mayor Michael Regan and Manly MP James Griffin for their expertise and advocacy in securing the funds to restore pride in our place.

Local Government support

Curl Curl Lagoon Friends Executive Committee was invited to participate in a Northern Beaches Council community meeting to be briefed on, and contribute to the Local Strategic Planning Statement: Towards 2040. We are pleased to note that the environment figures as a top priority for the strategic plan.

Community feedback indicates “very strong support for bold, aspirational and strong environmental priorities. Our community wants to be a leader in sustainability. The community sees the environment as the most important feature of the Northern Beaches. The scenic qualities of this area are highly valued. Coastal and bushland biodiversity values are highly prized assets.”

“Towards 2040 includes priorities for the protection and enhancement of our environment, including coast and waterways, bushland and biodiversity, scenic and cultural landscapes...”

Curl Curl Lagoon Friends looks forward to working constructively with council on implementing measures to advance this agenda.

Vale Lorna Plate

This time last year, we recognised the commitment and long-term contribution Mrs Lorna Plate made to Curl Curl Lagoon Friends with a Life Membership to the organisation. It was with great sadness that we informed members and friends Lorna died peacefully aged 95 with family members at her side on March 3 2019.

Lorna was a member of Curl Curl Lagoon Friends Executive Committee for over 25 years and was involved in all aspects of the Association’s work. She was a Clean Up stalwart and was honoured with an award presented by the late Ian Kiernan for her longtime participation on Clean Up Australia Day.

She has inspired many of us to continue her significant work and leaves a beautiful legacy in John Fisher Park. We intend recognise her contribution by mounting a plaque on the new notice board and to use donations made in her name to install a park bench in Stirgess Reserve.

Curl Curl Lagoon Noticeboards

We thank Northern Beaches Council for recently installing two noticeboards near the lagoon - one at the Park St Bridge and one at the Griffin Rd Bridge. Collaboratively, we intend to use the boards to educate locals and visitors about water quality, bird life, lagoon health, events and initiatives. We hope this will inspire interest and a sense of connection with the nature of this place.

Stirgess Reserve

Curl Curl Lagoon Friends Executive Committee has proposed concept and design for a passive recreation area enhanced with native planting and seating provision in Stirgess Reserve.

Northern Beaches Council has reverted with minor design changes and tree species specifications and indicated work will get underway shortly. We're thrilled with the prospect of a local, peaceful place for reflection, meeting and education in John Fisher Park.

It is our hope to have the installation of the passive recreation space progressed to coincide with Curl Curl Lagoon Friends' 40th Anniversary in 2020.

Bird Count Survey

We're into our third year counting birds as part of a community-council citizen science project looking into the biodiversity present in and around Curl Curl Lagoon.

On the last Friday of the month, experts, enthusiasts and complete novices meet at the wooden bridge at 7:30am to spend 20 mins spotting and documenting the birds from each vantage point.

Thank you to Curl Curl Lagoon Friends members Alicia Parmiter, Russell Beardmore, Jan Beardmore, Pam Rawling, Vik McDonnell, Tony Garman and Susan Bruce for your regular participation.

Newton Water Monitoring Pilot

The Newton Water Monitoring Pilot concluded this year after a successful trial period of three months. Evaluation activity showed that its detection of salinity, acidity, temperature and conductivity of the water was accurate and its data-gathering and display system was effective and user-friendly.

It represented not only a new way of measuring key indicators of the lagoon's health, but it was also an educational resource, bringing real-world environmental science into the classroom and advising locals of current conditions.

"Newton" was a collaboration between SAP Australia, Northern Beaches Council and Curl Curl Lagoon Friends who are now looking for ways to improve on and extend the monitoring capability.

Thank you again to Chris Schroefl, Jason Ruszczyk and Curl Curl North Public School Kindergarten and Year 6 students for bringing the project to life.

Clean Ups - Clean Up Australia Day & Northern Beaches Clean Up Crew

Local residents of all ages donned boots and gloves again in March to remove litter from John Fisher Park and banks of the lagoon at this year's Clean Up Australia Day. We found the usual haul of couches, drink bottles, balls and plastic paraphernalia and were pleased to be preventing it from breaking down into the kind of microplastic that so tragically endangers the lives of marine animals.

Northern Beaches Clean Up Crew selected Curl Curl Lagoon as a site for attention in May and counted in excess of 10,000 items removed.

Established this year by local, Justin O'Hare, Curly Community Clean-Up Crew and c2source are running clean up events once a month on Saturday afternoon, meeting at the Sue & Ralph Ranger scout hall. We thank Justin for raising awareness about issues

impacting Greendale Creek, from its source at the old brickworks down to its outflow into the lagoon.

Bush Care

We're pleased to have Adam Burrowes from Northern Beaches Council here tonight, who's been kind enough to provide an update this year's activity.

Council and contractors have maintained and fenced the 2018 National Tree Day site at Curl Curl Dunes, controlling weeds such as Bidens, Asthma weed, fleabane and Ehrharta grass. Council staff planted 1000 plants in the south east corner of the dune bay on 23 May 2019.

Landcare celebrated their 30th Year with a community planting day on 6 September 2019 with guests Zali Steggall OAM MP, Sophie Taylor-Price, 30-Year Landcare Ambassador and Mayor Michael Regan. 700 plants were planted at this event. Weeds in the fenced area adjoining the car park entry will be controlled over 2019 and into early 2020, with possible planting mid 2020.

Looking forward into 2020, a vegetation bay adjoining Griffin Road will be fenced off and 50% of weeds controlled for potential planting in 2021.

Ongoing bush regeneration/weed control to continue and expand to the dune bay to the north after 2020.

We're often asked how people can get involved with Curl Curl Lagoon Friends to improve the environment. Bush Care at Alan Newton Reserve is a wonderful way to learn about bush regeneration, meet locals and give back.

Join the custodians of Alan Newton Reserve on 1st and 3rd Saturdays at 9am.

Issues impacting John Fisher Park and Greendale Creek

In December, sewage from the Mitchell Road overflow tank found its way into Greendale Creek and Sydney Water pumped out the whole Gross Pollutant Trap at Harbord Road. We understand that repeat events are possible in the future.

The Bombers AFL club applied for development approval to install a large electronic scoreboard in Weldon Oval. Curl Curl Lagoon Friends' initial objections to size and location of the scoreboard led to a better outcome.

We are aware that Manly Warringah Netball Association sought grant funding to install 22 shelter sheds around the netball courts and understand that this was ultimately unsuccessful.

We are also on notice that proposals for 5G telecommunications towers within John Fisher Park are anticipated in future.

Our organisation remains committed to principles of the John Fisher Park plan of management and resistant to unnecessary and intrusive development applications.

Ongoing community engagement

In addition to our projects and ongoing commitments, Curl Curl Lagoon Friends engages ad hoc with school and university students learning about the lagoon and provide a valuable source of knowledge and history of the area. We also liaise with sporting groups, Curly Community Garden and the Creative Space within John Fisher Park in an effort to ensure the environment is considered in the balance of community amenities in the area.

Executive Committee Members

I'd like to acknowledge and thank members of the executive committee who volunteer their brains and brawn in service of protecting and enhancing this place that we love so much. This past year's committee included: Pam Rawling, Ray Cox, Harry Elliffe, Susan

Stack, Mark Stack, Jane Lush, Viktorija McDonnell, Lousie Hislop, Greg Jewson and Paula Cowan.

I'd also like to acknowledge the immense contribution made by Ray Cox and Harry Elliffe, who were honoured with life membership of the organisation this time last year. They'll be stepping down from being on our executive committee this year, but will remain important custodians of knowledge and place for Curl Curl Lagoon Friends.

Also stepping down from the committee are Louise Hislop and Greg Jewson. Please join me in thanking them for their wisdom, skills and dedication over the years.