



President's report 2018

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.

Stirgess Reserve

Curl Curl Lagoon Friends Executive Committee has a vision to enhance Stirgess Reserve passive recreation area with further native planting. We'd love to create more shade, showcase local plant species and provide a beautiful space in John Fisher Park.

We met with Northern Beaches Council Mayor and Council staff on site earlier this year to discuss our concept for a nature-based community space. The idea is to:

- Create a shady, green space in a time of climate change,
- Make room for locals to get together for picnics, learning experiences or relaxation, and
- Allow area for sporting warm-ups and drills to continue.

Win-win-win in our view!

The concept incorporates quiet space away from the playgrounds in a picturesque part of the park, with seating, flowing pathways and endemic plant species.

Council staff have indicated they are pleased with the garden design and plan to make only minimal adjustments. Funding has been sought and we're hoping installation will coincide with Curl Curl Lagoon's 40th Anniversary.

Special thank you to Louise and Steve Hislop for providing the landscape design proposal, to Mayor Michael Regan for supporting and championing the concept and to the executive committee for the creative ideas and thoughtful consideration.

Bird Count Survey

We're into our second year counting birds as part of a community-council citizen science project looking into the biodiversity present in and around Curl Curl Lagoon. We're hoping to see an increase in bird life and the variety of species supported by the lagoon and its surrounds - especially following installation of fish habitats.

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 their vantage point.

We'd love to continue this project beyond the original two-year period, logging our observations in the Australian Living Atlas, and this will be down to the efforts of locals with a shared passion for our local birdlife.

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, keen eyes and sharp identification.

Oyster Castle update

This time last year, Northern Beaches Council, the Sydney Institute of Marine Science, Curl Curl Lagoon Friends and Curl Curl North Public School joined forces to trial the installation of oysters on habitats into the lagoon.

Four types of oysters were numbered, measured and glued to cement balls and then placed in the channel near the end of Surf Road as part of a study into their effect on water quality and biodiversity.

We were interested to see if they contributed to cleaner water through filtration. We wanted to know which kind of oyster was best suited to the conditions. Also of interest was whether the cement structures themselves provided habitat for fish, worms and mussels.

It seems the glue was not strong enough to keep all oysters on the castles and they've since drifted from their initial homes. Northern Beaches Council is the recipient of another grant to fund a second round of oyster study, this time adhering oysters to natural rock features in the same channel. Small fish have been observed in and around the oyster castles, taking refuge from hungry birds when the lagoon empties out.

Newton Water Monitoring Pilot

Designed to trial a new way of measuring key indicators of the lagoon's health, Newton is also an educational resource, bringing real-world environmental science into the classroom and advising locals of current conditions.

Picture an electronic device floating on the lagoon detecting levels of salinity, acidity and conductivity of the water. Newton sends that information to the cloud where it's gathered and displayed via an app, showing real-time and interpretive information.

"Newton" is a collaboration between SAP Australia, Northern Beaches Council and Curl Curl Lagoon Friends who are all interested in studying and looking for ways to improve water quality in our favourite local waterway.

It is named after Alan Newton, the former principal of Curl Curl North Public School who was instrumental in Curl Curl Lagoon Friends' establishment and lagoon rehabilitation. We celebrate his passion for combining learning and the restoration of the lagoon.

We thank Chris Schroefl, Head of Innovation at SAP and local dad who had this fabulous idea and brought it to life, Jason Ruszczyk for sharing his expertise and

passion for environmental science, as well as Kindergarten and Year 6 teachers and students from the local primary school for taking an interest and following along in the classroom.

Restoring Pride - Environmental Rehabilitation Grant

Last year, Curl Curl Lagoon Friends worked with Northern Beaches Council to propose rehabilitation projects worthy of a Coastal and Estuary Grant from the NSW State Government.

We're thrilled to confirm that, this year, the bush regeneration project has been funded to the tune of \$100,000 to be implemented over three years.

The nominated site on the north bank of the lagoon basin is the poorest quality stretch of riparian vegetation and heavily weed infested.

By removing weeds and planting native vegetation on the lagoon's northern bank we'll be providing better habitat for fish and birds, and a better corridor for the movement of native fauna.

The project will be managed by Northern Beaches Council, with Curl Curl Lagoon Friends' involvement in awareness programs, tree planting and bush maintenance.

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.

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

This year, we ran our annual Clean Up Australia Day in March and were pleased with the strong turnout and the adventurous spirit. Those out on the lagoon in the tinny canoe hauled in some interesting objects, some of which encrusted with native mussels.

We were thrilled to have Northern Beaches Clean Up Crew select Curl Curl Lagoon as a site for attention twice this year. The haul gathered by volunteers in a 1-hour period was combined, counted and documented in a sobering forensic exercise. Malin will speak more about the process and what's involved later tonight, but even for those of us who've done the clean ups for years, it was eye-opening just how much plastic is held in the reeds around the lagoon.

Bush Care

Amidst the busy schedule and hectic lifestyle, if you're wondering where to seek calm and order, we encourage you to consider joining the Bush Care efforts in Alan Newton Reserve.

Twice a month you can take time out, be at one with nature and have the satisfaction of improving your little patch of this earth.

Learn how to recognise weeds and invasive species, how to best remove them and what will flourish in their place. Point out with pride to your jogging buddy the regeneration you've been involved in!

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

Memberships

Curl Curl Lagoon Friends is a grassroots organisation with a proud history of over 38 years of environmental service.

Membership numbers as of today are –

	Official members	Paid up for 2019	Paid up only to 2018
Households	140	96	44
Individuals (estimated)	198	134	64

The Constitution states members have six months from the commencement of the membership / financial year to pay dues. On 1 January 2019 this six months period expires and the 'Official members' count will become the same as the 'Paid up for 2019', adjusted by any renewals or new members acquired between now and then.

Households like yours benefit from membership in a variety of ways.

Together we create a strong community of friends and neighbours who value the natural environment.

Projects and initiatives ensure the lagoon and its surrounds are defended and protected for generations to come as a beautiful, open space.

Our strong local membership base strengthens CCLF's relationship with Northern Beaches Council, our state MP and federal MP, and ensures our voice is heard on issues that matter most to residents.

Memberships this year have enabled CCLF to engage in all the initiatives just described as well as to maintain our regular activity:

With your membership support, CCLF will:

- Work with Council to establish an enhanced Stirgess Reserve, showcasing native plant species and allowing locals to meet, rest and learn.
- Partner with technology innovators, SAP, and Northern Beaches Council to trial water monitoring equipment in the lagoon.
- Complete the citizen science two-year bird survey to benchmark the biodiversity present in and around the lagoon.
- Actively lobby to protect John Fisher Park and Curl Curl Lagoon from proposed development not consistent with the Plan of Management.

We encourage anyone new to the area to join, rusted-on residents to renew and the enthusiastic to tell their neighbours.