

Friends of Lord Howe Island

Newsletter No.38 Winter 2014



Friends finalist in the NSW/ACT Regional Achievements and Landcare Awards

In August Ian Hutton nominated the Friends of Lord Howe Island in the **Peabody Environment and Landcare Award** category of the NSW/ACT **Regional Achievement and Community Awards**. On 27 August advice was given from the Awards Manager -

"We write to advise that our first round of Judging has been completed. Congratulations, Friends of Lord Howe Island has been selected as one of our Ten Semi Finalist's in the Environment & Landcare Award. We received many nominations across all Awards this year, a true testament to the quality of our groups and individuals throughout NSW and the ACT and their commitment to their communities.

"As Top Ten this year your nominees application will now be submitted to our Category and Executive Panel for consideration on our Judging Day, held on Thursday 18th September 2014. The Judging Panel on this day will select our 2014 finalists and winner for each category. Should your application be successful in reaching our Top Three, I will contact you on Friday 19th September 2014.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you the best of luck for our official judging day and congratulate your nominee once again in making it to the Semi Finalist stage for 2014."

This year the winner of this category will receive a bank account of \$5,000, thanks to the Commonwealth Bank.



Friends AGM July 2014

The Friends AGM was held at the Island Museum on 2nd July at 5.00pm. 24 people attended and apologies were received from eight members who could not attend.

The committee resigned and LHI Board CEO Penny Holloway took the chair. Penny congratulated the outgoing committee and all previous committees on the great job of maintaining an active group that is making a very valuable long-term contribution to assist the LHI Board with its environmental programs.

Following presentation of the reports by President, Treasurer and Secretary, the new committee was elected for 2014/2015:

President: Chris Murray

Vice President: Ian Hutton

Treasurer: Steve Gale

Secretary: John Flint

Committee: Jane Gye, Robert Coenraads, Hank Bower and Glenda Wardle

Then the audience was treated to several presentations: Flora Manager Sue Bower gave an update on the LHIB weeding program. Then Carol West, from DoC in New Zealand gave a presentation on her ongoing work with conservation on Raoul Island (one of the Kermadec Islands to the NE of New Zealand.) Carol was on Lord Howe Island on her second Friends LHI weeding trip.

Presidents and activity report 2014 AGM - Chris Murray and Ian Hutton

Over the past year, again the focus for our Friends of Lord Howe Island weeding trips has been the Transit Hill Climbing asparagus site above Edie's Glen.

Three groups in 2013, and so far the May 2014 group all have been into this area several mornings each trip carrying out the vital follow up work, going over areas previously worked when the mature plants were removed. This task of searching and removing any germinated seedlings or resprouts is just as important as the initial removal of the primary weed infestation. The groups have been very heartened to see how effective all their hard work over the years been – large areas of clear native forest where once walls of Climbing asparagus existed.

Additionally the groups have continued the restoration project on the Edie's Glen gully- where vast numbers of Rice paper plant and Castor oil plant were removed and now the groups nurture the emerging native tree seedlings and clear away thistles, fleabane, and cobbler's pegs. Some of the seedlings that emerged just 5 years ago are now two and three metres tall, beginning to form a good canopy to shade weeds out.

In 2013 and 2014 each group has spent a day walking the Boat Harbour, Intermediate Hill, Rocky Run and Goathouse tracks removing the invasive Broad- leafed paspalum grass. The sticky seeds of this weedy grass can be transported on walkers' socks and shoes, so it is a great job to remove this weed and prevent its spread throughout these tracks. In 2014 the Friends funded \$4,800 for local contractors to treat this weed with herbicide along the airport to Muttonbird Point track. Here, because of the closure of the Mutton-bird Point track the past few years, there has been an explosion in the growth of the paspalum, beyond the manual control that the Friends carry out. In future trips the Friends groups will carry out follow up work on the section of the track too.

Another invasive weed species the groups have taken on is the Sea spurge that is colonizing our Lagoon Beach dune, threatening the native grasses that grow there. Each group has spent a morning working along from north to south hand removing hundreds of Sea spurge plants. It will be some years before we can say this is on the way out; but as with the Ground and Climbing asparagus I am sure the Friends will beat it. A total of 1261 hours were contributed by the 2013 friends groups.

The various accommodation houses and restaurants patronized by the Friend groups have all been very supportive and appreciative of the business by groups visiting in the low winter season.

A big thanks to the committee for carrying on with the paperwork involved with the organization. A special mention to our secretary John Flint, who was awarded the OAM for service to the community. John has been active with many community groups, particularly in the St Leonards area, and was the founding secretary of the Friends of Lord Howe Island in 2001; well done John.

A special thanks to our honorary auditor Rob Kellaway who has audited the Friends financial statements.

Friends trips to feature on ABC Gardening show.

Don Wilson of Northbridge came on a Friends of LHI weeding trip in June 2000. He was so taken by the program that he got involved in bush regeneration back home and has been instrumental in forming the Bush Care Major Day Out.... where bush care groups across Australia all hold a bush care activity on the same day. On Septemebr 6th this event will feature on the ABC Gardening program 6.30pm, and there will be a mention of the Lord Howe Island Friends program. The producers are keen to actually film a segment here one year.



Sea spurge

Friends on Facebook

John Pemble has started a Friends LHI Facebook page:

Lord Howe Island Weeders

Friends of LHI Incorporated and Friends of
LHI Gift Fund Aggregated Financial Report
Year Ended 30 April 2014

	2014 \$	2013 \$
Income		
Donations	1,459.35	1,355.00
Payments	0.00	1,020.00
Subscriptions	2,674.05	2,975.00
Interest / Sales / etc	1,110.53	207.40
Total	5,243.93	5,557.40
Expenditure		
Insurance	370.00	350.00
Tools	134.87	0.00
Statutory Fees	51.00	51.00
Grant / Project Expenses	866.67	0.00
Operating Expenses	0.00	76.15
Bank Fees	25.00	0.00
Total	1,447.54	477.15
Surplus / (Deficit)	3,796.39	5,080.25
Plus Retained Earnings at beginning of the year	48,925.86	43,845.61
Retained Earnings at the end of the year	52,722.25	48,925.86
Total Aggregated Equity	52,722.25	48,925.86
Represented by:		
Assets		
Cash at Bank	52,722.25	48,925.86
Total Assets	52,722.25	48,925.86
Total Liabilities	-	-
Net Assets	52,722.25	48,925.86

Steve Gale

FRIENDS OF LORD HOWE ISLAND INC.

ABN 39 322 895 360

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2 JULY 2014 - SECRETARIAL REPORT

Please accept my apologies for not being able to be present in person at this thirteenth AGM of the incorporated Friends. I would like to acknowledge the support I have received from other Committee members during the past year, and the many friendly messages received from members generally.

Membership at 13 June 2014

Financial
(to 31 Oct) Total

2014	66
2015	16
2016	13
2017	20
2018	12
2019	1
2020	1
Total	129

55 household
74 single



2014 AGM

We have 7 fewer financial members than in 2013, In the present times it is pleasing to see only a minor decline. Many members have taken up the multiple year subscription option, which saves administrative time.

We also have 4 corresponding memberships.

John Flint

Report on weeding week May 2014

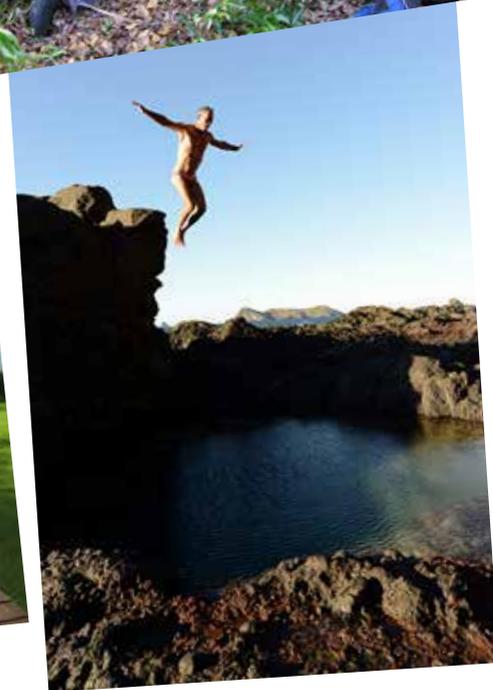
The May trip was very small group, as the regular patrons on this May week had various other plans this year. Annie Hawker, John Pemble, Ian Sinclair, Anne Pickles, Gwenda Lister, Lee Courtwood are all regular weeders, and welcomed newcomer Robyn Beckett from Brisbane.

So just seven people flew into a good low tide day and we all headed straight down to Ned's Beach for a good reef walk. *"We had a lovely time looking under the rocks and marveling at the variety of marine life. The feather stars were a highlight and it was wonderfully warm with no wind."*

For various reasons of boats, tides and a film crew schedule we had the next day over at North Bay. Yes, the Friends again were to feature in a French documentary. Film director Sebastian Lafont wanted to film something special about Lord Howe Island, so when he read about the Friends weeding ecotour program he decided that would be something fascinating for French viewers. For a few days we were accompanied everywhere by Sebastian and his cameraman Patrick, filming our activities.

As it was a small, fit group, we *"took the path less travelled and went up to North Head via the New Gulch. Great views over the Island, and lost of Tropicbirds to keep us company."* The bbq lunch spread was impressive - fresh kingfish fillets, local sausages and garden salad. After lunch there was time for a visit to the Herring Pools, with John and Ian doing the high jumps into the pools.

The next day it was off to the Transit Hill weeding site early. For 2014 the groups are going to start at the bottom of our Transit Hill Climbing asparagus site and do the essential follow up, in a very systematic way, working through designated blocks one at a time. This first morning we started at the fence line at Edie's Glenn and worked along that, and into Edie's Glenn area. The afternoon was such calm weather that five opted for a Balls Pyramid trip- so off we went with Jack Shick for this exciting cruise.



Next day back to Transit Hill weeding; and an afternoon cycle and walk to Little Island, enjoying the Providence petrels and scaling Little Island itself. That evening something different for dinner; all visited Ian Hutton's house to enjoy a roast lamb dinner; joined by Sebastian and Patrick to film the proceedings.

The next day was back to Transit Hill clearing the blocks of asparagus- this time with Sebastian and Patrick getting close up footage of weeders in action, and some short interviews. The afternoon was the glorious Malabar walk.

On Friday we had a special weeding activity- Ed Rourke has asked if we could help remove a bad infestation of Hawaiian Yellow Trumpet Vine from around his and his daughter Danni's house. Many hands make light work so we were pleased to remove every last bit - quite an effort as it was very persistent and thick. Then we had lunch at Lovers Bay and tackled the Goat house walk to check this track for the invasive grass Broad-leaved paspalum. All enjoyed the magnificent views at the top. Dinner was an Italian feast at Ian Hutton's house that night.

For our last day, the low tide had cycled to the morning, so we enjoyed exploring the coastal rock platforms all the way from Ned's Beach around to Middle Beach - fascinating geology and marine life. The afternoon we went to the north side of Old Settlement and did a small project removing grasses from the endangered vine *Calystegia affinis*. We were joined by Rob Pallin who had flown in that morning for a Board meeting. Rob joined us for dinner with another Board member John King. John Pemble received his five-years weeding certificate; and Annie Hawker received her ten-year certificate plus a turned local wood bowl.

On the last morning, following breakfast at the Anchorage with Hank and Sue Bower, the group put a few hours in removing Sea Spurge from Lagoon Beach dune, before an afternoon departure.

This was a very active group. All hired bicycles and were zipping around every day. John, Gwenda and Ian Sinclair went to Blinky Beach each morning for a swim before breakfast; and most nights there was some stargazing after dinner. A small group, but a trip to remember.



Report on the June 2014 tour

This was a strong group, with many repeat weeders having lots of experience – Barry and Barbara Clarris, Brian and Judith Arnold, Elizabeth Staraj, Hugh Cape and Barry Enkelman. But we did have some new recruits to welcome: Mark and Glenda Wardle who are friends of Carol West from New Zealand, on her second Friends LHI weeding trip; and Marilyn Miller, friend of Barry Enkelman; and Philip Badger. Robert Coenraads was the leader, with his daughters Francheska and Leonora along, and their cousin Nathan Coenraads for his first trip.

The first night there were thunderstorms across the island, so it was decided that the forest on Transit Hill would be too wet to work in, so the group went onto the Lagoon Beach dune to remove Sea spurge. Quite alarming to see the number of mature plants and thousands of seedlings present.

After that wet morning, most subsequent mornings were spent on the Transit Hill site working methodically in the blocks set up with string lines. Many areas had so few seedlings emerging that it was hard to find anything to remove, but then in sunny clearings some dense areas were found to take a lot of effort.

On one day we spent all day walking the track to Boat Harbour to search for and remove any Broad-leaved paspalum, following on from the 2013 program with our groups. Very few plants were found, and if we keep this up each year we soon should eradicate this weed from this area. A nice picnic lunch at Boat Harbour enjoyed by all broke the day up nicely.

The tides were low this week so we of course





enjoyed a low tide reef walk at Ned's Beach.

On Thursday we all headed south. The morning was spent removing several garden escapes from land at the side of Mulley Drive – the Hawaiian Yellow Trumpet Vine, Buddleia, Tree tobacco and Monstero. Then after that strenuous effort we had a lunch in the forest out of the wind and then we walked down to Little Island with stories about the geology, palms and Woodhens. We had a few hours at Little Island, exploring the boulder beach and Little Island, waiting for the Providence petrels to come closer and closer and eventually we ventured along the path to Mount Gower and called some of the birds in – always a great excitement.

Friday was North Bay day and we set off in full sunshine on the Coral Princess for remote North Beach. Once there we set off to Old Gulch, and stopped to talk about palms; the highlight was a palm tree climbing demonstration by Francheska and then an invitation for others to give it a try. Hugh and Nathan succeeded. At the Gulch we explored the west side, marveling at dykes, jaspers and blowholes. A great bbq lunch with Barbara preparing a delicious salad to go with the local sausages; pancakes, jam and cream to finish. After lunch we had various expeditions to Mt Eliza, the beach stroll and searching for Sea spurge.

That evening, being the last for the trip, the LHI Board invited the Friends to a thankyou drink at the Museum. here the LHI Board CEO Penny Holloway gave thanks to the great effort by the Friends being put in to assist the LHI Board with its weed eradication programs. Barry and Barbara Clarris received their certificates for ten weeding trips, and a local turned wood bowl. Francheska and Leonora Coenraads and Elizabeth Staraj received their five year certificates.

Unusual bird sightings March to August 2014

The **White necked Heron** that was reported in the last newsletter stayed on the island until about June. (On 2nd March 2014 Leon Brice and Jack Shick spotted the first record of this bird on Lord Howe Island.) It was seen in the paddock areas behind Pinetrees, above Middle Beach and below Capella Lodge.



One **Eastern Curlew** was seen on April 18 Lagoon Beach and stayed around until July (seen by the May weeders group flying over Middle Beach). This is a rare regular visitor to Lord Howe Island, and quite elusive, moving around various rocky shores, and flighty when approached.

Strong winds blow in- The week prior to this newsletter (24-29 August) there was a Tasman Sea low affecting Lord Howe Island, and the strong winds blew in a couple of rare visitors:



Caspian tern. There are only six previous records of this bird on the island, all between September and November (the first in 2000).



South Island Pied Oystercatcher

There are only eight previous records of this bird (the first in 1950). A variety of Pied Oystercatcher from New Zealand - they have a longer orange bill than the Australian form with a red bill.

Friends of Lord Howe Island Newsletter compiled by
Ian Hutton PO Box 157 Lord Howe Island NSW 2898.
Email ian@ianhuttontours.com

Edies Glen restoration a success

The Friends LHI work in Edie's Glen is a classic example of how, with persistent attention to removing weed species, even the most disturbed areas can be restored.

For over a century this gully had been full of Rice paper plant *Tetrapanax papyrifer* and Castor oil bush *Ricinus communis*, with very few native plants present. When the Friends turned their attention to the area of Transit Hill with Climbing asparagus above Edie's Glen, we had to access the area through this weedy gully. So over time, each year, most groups have contributed effort to removing all sorts of weeds from the gully.

Now the site has virtually no major weeds, and thus the native plants that have grown by either natural seed fall, or assisted by Friends broadcast sowing seeds, have flourished and many are now two to three metres tall, shading out the minor weeds.

For the next newsletter I will trawl through the weeders digests and photographs to give a detailed account of this project.

