

# WILDTIMES

Issue 32  
August 2008



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## Newsletter of WILDCARE Inc

Tasmania's largest incorporated volunteer organisation, caring for wild places, wildlife and cultural heritage.

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## Dick digs deep for the Frenchman's Cap walking track

Dick Smith, one of Australia's leading entrepreneurs and philanthropists has made a first donation of \$100,000 to the WILDCARE Gift Fund.

The donation will be used to fund track work in the Frenchman's Cap National Park, part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, and a bushwalking icon.

Dick has indicated that this will be the first of 10 such annual gifts, making a total of \$1 million, to be matched over the same period by Parks and Wildlife Service who will continue to spend \$50,000 on the track each year from government funds - a total contribution of \$500,000.

WILDCARE Inc. and the WILDCARE Gift Fund will work closely with the Parks and Wildlife Service to ensure the donation is allocated in accordance with Dick's original intentions.



*Dick Smith and Paul Lennon Discuss Dick's donation to Wildcare Gift Fund*

Jamie Bayly-Stark from the WILDCARE Gift Fund Committee accepted the cheque from Dick Smith.

Jamie said "WILDCARE welcomes the extraordinary leadership and generosity of ...continued on page 2

## Coastal conservation gets a \$40,000 boost

Coastal conservation has received a welcome boost with a donation of \$40,000 to the WILDCARE Gift Fund from Rob Pennicott of Bruny Island Charters and Tasman Island Cruises

Mr Pennicott's business recently formed a partnership with WILDCARE Inc and the WILDCARE Gift Fund to create the Tasmanian Coastal Conservation Fund (TCCF).

Parks and Wildlife Service Community Programs manager, Andrew Smith said the WILDCARE Gift Fund Committee manages the TCCF and considers project submissions that meet the criteria for the fund.

"The criteria for project funding include coastal reserve management, marine mammal and seabird conservation and community awareness and participation," Andrew said.

"A high priority program identified for submission to the WILDCARE Gift Fund Committee is eradication of cats on Tasman Island and PWS staff are now working on a



*Andrew Smith, Rob Pennicott and Peter Mooney Launch the Tasmanian Coastal Conservation Fund*

project proposal for this program."

Mr Pennicott said that a portion of the ticket price on his tours goes towards the Tasmanian Coastal Conservation Fund and that during the tours, people are so impressed with the beauty of Tasmania's coastal environment that they are very keen to donate.

...continued on page 2

...from page 1

Dick Smith. This donation, and ongoing commitment to giving, is a stunning example of individual philanthropy, where the personal motivation is clearly all about making a difference in caring for our natural environment. *WILDCARE* is pleased to be working with the Parks and Wildlife Service to turn Dick's generosity into real projects, on the ground, on the track, in Frenchman's Cap National Park"

The Premier of Tasmania, Paul Lennon, also thanked Dick Smith and *WILDCARE* Inc on behalf of all Tasmanians, for their support of reserve management in Tasmania.

...from page 1

He also said while conducting the tours, every time he has mentioned the *WILDCARE* Tasmanian Coast Conservation Fund and the possibility of cat eradication from Tasman Island, he's received a standing ovation from tour participants.

Parks and Wildlife Service General Manager, Peter Mooney described Mr Pennicott's philanthropic efforts as 'the birth of a new era'.

"A donation of this magnitude will put the onus on other people to follow his lead in donating to conservation efforts," Peter said.

"It's an age old expectation that the Government has to finance the PWS for everything we do, but with Dick Smith's recent donation and now Rob's donation, it signals a change in thinking in that the wider community can assist in conservation management."

If you would like to make a personal tax-deductible donation to the *WILDCARE* Tasmania Coast Conservation Fund use the form located in this newsletter or visit our website at [www.wildcaretas.org.au](http://www.wildcaretas.org.au)

## Leishman Associates Reducing Environmental Footprint

Leishman Associates, conference and event organisers, became *WILDCARE*'s second Natural Partner after proposing an idea to reduce the environmental footprint of conferences and events that they manage in Tasmania. As a result the *WILDCARE* WILDCARBON Fund has been created in the *WILDCARE* Gift Fund, to provide an opportunity for delegates to contribute to supporting revegetation work in Tasmanian reserves.

Leishman Associates will be incorporating the WILDCARBON Fund into all its Green Events, providing an opportunity for delegates to contribute to the Fund as a way of minimizing their environmental footprint. The planting projects will have both a biodiversity conservation

and climate change benefit, and as they will be within reserved land will be safe for as long as conservation reserves exist in Tasmania.

The fund is there for everyone who would like to contribute to those outcomes and reduce their own environmental footprint. You choose how much you give. Every little bit helps.

If you would like to make a personal tax-deductible donation to the *WILDCARE* WILDCARBON Fund use the form located in this newsletter or visit our website at [www.wildcaretas.org.au](http://www.wildcaretas.org.au)

Paula Leishman encourages other conference and event organisations to also contribute to the fund in an effort to reduce the environmental footprint of all events and conferences in Tasmania.

## World Heritage Wilderness Fund Kicks Off

*WILDCARE* Inc has created a Natural Partner Fund for the world heritage wilderness areas in Tasmania.

The fund will support projects to manage and conserve the special values of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and to raise community awareness and participation in managing wilderness.

*WILDCARE* Inc is looking for a corporate Natural Partner for this fund at the moment, so that we can spread the word far and wide that anyone wanting to support projects in the World Heritage wilderness can donate to this fund (to donate see the form in this newsletter).

### Wildcare Gift Fund – How it works

The *WILDCARE* Gift Fund is a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) set up by *WILDCARE* Inc and approved by the Department of Environment and Water Resources and the Australian Taxation Office to receive tax deductible donations to support reserve management and nature conservation in Tasmania.

Donations to the Gift Fund are managed by *WILDCARE* Inc with independent decisions on allocation of funds being made by *WILDCARE* Gift Fund Committee.

The Committee currently comprises:

Jamie Bayly-Stark – Jamie has recently retired but has served in various roles in government including Policy

Director with DPAC, Manager of Nature Conservation Branch for the DPIWE and DELM (as it was then) and as a scientist with the Wildlife Branch in the early days of the Parks and Wildlife Service. He has also served for two years on the Board of Directors of Volunteering Tasmania

Frank Vanclay – Frank is a widely respected author and Professor of Rural Sociology, Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research at the University of Tasmania.

Bob Tyson – Bob has recently retired from the Parks and Wildlife Service where he served in various senior land management roles over many years

Bill Forsyth - Bill is a long time volunteer for various *WILDCARE* programs, most recently coordinating the Overland Track Hut Warden Program at Waterfall Valley. Bill has lived and worked in many far-flung places across Australia, and has spent at least a year of his life on the Overland Track.

The *WILDCARE* Gift Fund has been identified by Parks and Wildlife Service as their Preferred Gift Fund, meaning they will refer donors to the Fund and will promote giving to the Fund through their networks.

It is also an Approved Charity under the Tasmanian State Service Workplace Giving Scheme, allowing State public servants to make donations from their salaries through their pay offices.



## Mt Field Group Soaks Up Wildcare Funds

Well it wasn't so much that the Friends of Mt Field soaked up the money it was the old suffering timbers on the huts that did the soaking. We originally planned to assist with repair and maintenance of Rodway Shelter and Lake Nicholls huts in the Mt Field alpine areas, by painting exterior and interior walls and replacing rotted timber.

In order to do this the group applied to WILDCARE in May 2007 for close to \$1000 and thought this would be adequate to purchase paint and timber.

At our first working bee, on the Lake Nicholls hut, my estimate that 8 litres of paint would be sufficient was very much too optimistic and it was only sufficient for a first coat to three sides of the hut. The state of the timber was such that it soaked up paint very quickly and we ran out.

On the next occasion, in November 2007 we came armed with all our remaining paint so as not to be caught short again. We replaced a number of the boards on the Lake Nicholls hut that were in a poor condition and painted the remaining side left from the last working bee and then continued on until the whole hut was given a second coat. One of the most memorable features of this working bee was how a length of timber grows in weight over the hour between the road and the hut.

Anyway it was now clear, that although we had some paint leftover it would be quite insufficient for the Rodway Shelter hut, so another application was



*Greg Kidd Painting at Lake Nicholls Hut*

lodged with WILDCARE in November 2007, and this time the historic Lake Fenton Hut was also included in the project. In all this application was for a shade under \$1500.

Our attention then turned to repairing the Rodway Shelter at the start of the lovely Tarn Shelf. The outside walls were all given a coat of brown paint and the front wall was given a second coat. Again the timber was in very poor condition and soaked the paint up very quickly and used up all the 22 litres that we had brought in. The rotted interior window sills were replaced with new timber and the interior timber walls and bench seats were sanded and varnished.

Although the shelter was not complete we decided to have a crack at the Lake Fenton hut next (March 08). Due to the historic nature of the hut, a conservation plan had been produced and we had to stick rigidly to the requirements laid down. This involved using a timber preservative that would not change the unpainted greyness of the outside bare timber, and necessitated finding a suitable product. Our search came up with a product called Silox and it was hardly a surprise to find that the timber was very dry and soaked up the mixture, even the second coat absorbed a lot of liquid, so all the 20 litres we had with us was used up. At the time of applying the preservative the timber looked damp, but once it dried there was no discernible change in timber colour. As the interior walls and ceilings of the two main rooms were previously painted in an oil based finish, we gave them a coat of primer.

A month later (April 08) these two

rooms were given a coat with an acrylic paint to match the original colour as was the window sills, frames & sashes. All floor surfaces were treated with Madison Oil and measurements were taken of the missing boards from the porch and side rooms to purchase replacements for a future working bee. The originals had been removed for firewood by quite undesirable visitors in the recent past.

At the end of the working bee we called into the park office to learn that a sheet of roofing had blown off the roof of the Rodway Shelter, and we quickly arranged for a joint working bee with PWS to do the repairs and take the opportunity to replace some rotted timber and give part of the outside a second coat of paint.

With winter at the doorstep the final working bee (May 08) before the temperatures became too cold for painting, saw the missing wall linings for the Fenton hut, replaced as was the missing parts of the ceiling. Only the sections of the porch area that were originally coloured were repainted and the remainder left raw. While this was going on others were giving the interior and exterior window sills, frames and sashes another coat as well as the walls and ceilings of the two interior rooms, and to finish the day a second coat of Madison Oil was applied to all the flooring.

The group has some paint left to give the Rodway Shelter a full second coat and just enough preservative for another round of the outside of the Lake Fenton hut, so they will be on our schedule for the warmer months ahead.

Peter Franklin  
Friends of Mt Field

### WILDTIMES publication schedule

Issue #	Article Submissions Due	Publication Date
33	1 November 2008	December 2008
34	1 March 2009	April 2009
35	1 July 2009	August 2009

Publication dates are subject to receiving a sufficient number of articles to allow publishing to go ahead.





## Obituary: Envirofund



The Australian Government Envirofund was a grant scheme developed by the previous coalition federal government to replace separate earlier Coastcare, Landcare and Bushcare programs.

Envirofund was funded by the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) and provided cash for small community based projects (up to \$50,000) over 10 rounds from 2002 to 2007.

Those of us working with community groups, such as the many *WILDCARE* Community Action in Reserves (CARes) groups, became very fond

of the program and developed some expertise in preparing successful applications.

Over the life of the program *WILDCARE* received a total of \$155,610 for 8 separate projects (of a total Envirofund of \$135 million for 8,137 projects).

But now Envirofund is gone, a casualty of the change in government in Canberra.

In its place is the new Caring for our Country program, described as "...the Government's new natural resource management program ...designed as an integrated package with one clear goal, a business approach to investment, clearly articulated outcomes and priorities and improved accountability."

Wow, what does that mean?

Well, we are about to find out because at least four *WILDCARE* groups (Maatsuyker Island, Coningham, Marks Point, SPRATS) spent much of July wrestling with new guidelines and a new web based application form to submit applications under the Caring for our Country Community Coastcare program.

Successful applicants will be announced sometime later this year.

For more information see [www.nrm.gov.au/funding/coastcare.html](http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/coastcare.html)

## DEAL ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE – "OUR HERITAGE AT RISK"

The recent release of the "Our Heritage at Risk" list by the National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) brought extremely good news for the members of the Friends of Deal Island with the listing of the Deal Island Lighthouse.

The Deal Island Lighthouse is listed in the Federal Heritage Register and the Register of the National Estate, and is situated on Deal Island which is the largest island within the Kent Group in Bass Strait. Not only is the Deal Island Lighthouse the focal point of The Kent Group National Park (Tasmania's most remote National Park), it is also part of the oldest and most complete set of lightstation buildings still existing in Australia. It is the most elevated lighthouse in the southern hemisphere, possibly the world.

The Lighthouse which beamed its first light in 1848 is one of Australia's most historically significant lights. Since it began operation there has always been a problem with the reliability of the Deal Island Light due to the effects of fog and low cloud. Accordingly, the Department of Transport installed electric lights on North East and South West Islands of the Kent Group in 1987 and the main light on Deal Island was no longer required. The Australian Maritime Safety Authority discontinued the Deal Island Light

in 1992. The spectacular site for the lighthouse was the reason for both its construction and its replacement.

Since its first recorded sighting in 1798 by Matthew Flinders aboard the "Francis", the name Deal Island has been associated with a lengthy register of names formative to Australia's exploration and settlement. It was connected to the colony's earliest days of sealing, and the island's waters which are strewn with granite rocks and smaller offshore islands, are graveyard to a copious number of shipwrecks.

Today, the Deal Island Lighthouse stands a distinctly forlorn tower atop a sheer cliff face. Water ingress into the concrete base, bad rust areas, loss of metal and cracked windows are some of the maintenance problems which place this stately old tower at risk.

The Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service have recently commissioned a full assessment of the condition of the Lighthouse and the Friends of Deal Island have a determination to seek funding for the necessary work to be carried out in order that the Lighthouse may be restored to an acceptable standard for its long term preservation. It would be one of this country's greatest shames to forsake such an historically significant lighthouse.



The Friends of Deal Island (a *WILDCARE* Inc group) is a group of dedicated volunteers working in partnership with Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service to preserve, protect and enhance the natural and cultural values of Deal Island and the historically significant Deal Island Lighthouse and Lightstation.

The Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service manage a very successful volunteer caretaker program on Deal Island. Volunteer caretakers live on the island for a term of three months before being relieved by the next set of caretakers. The Caretakers provide an important presence on the island as well as undertaking maintenance duties on the island and the lightstation. Volunteer "work groups" also visit the island to undertake programs of work which have been approved by Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service.

Dallas Baker  
Friends of Deal Island



## Gunns Plains Cave Cleanup



*Cavers with rubbish removed from Gunns Plains Cave*

WILDCARE Group Mole Creek Karst Care found themselves a few miles from home on this recent project. Dave Wools-Cobb reports:

Gunns Plains Cave, a tourist 'adventure' cave has been undergoing re-wiring and re-lighting over the past three months. The contract was expected to be completed in early July 2008 with a planned re-opening on Friday 18 July. Karstcare was approached by the PWS volunteer coordinator about the possibility of carrying out a general clean-up of the cave, including any litter, old electrical wiring and fittings and to recover some of the more inaccessible fittings if deemed safe to do so. As it was desirable to have this working bee completed before the planned opening, an urgent call-up was issued, with 12 volunteers responding.

Before the working bee, considerable liaison occurred regarding risk management and safety issues. This project was joint effort between members of Northern Caverneers Inc & Savage River Caving Club.

The day commenced at 9am with an explanation of the OH&S issues from Trevor Keating from PWS, and explanation of what was expected from the group by David Wools-Cobb. Work areas were allocated to groups of two, and rubbish bags distributed. Paul Darby took the groups in and explained each area to those unfamiliar with the cave.

Meanwhile Neal and David examined each 'exposed' area requiring work which had been deemed unsuitable for contractors to remove old wiring

& fittings. David then spent some time taking a few photos of the volunteers and some of the rubbish already collected for extraction from the cave.

Each pair worked both sides of the pathway and at times higher to the sides where old wiring could be removed. About 20m of wiring and fittings were removed from one of the higher areas along a ledge, but as this had been quite muddy, and the pathway freshly vacuumed by David Butler and Paul VanNynanten, dirty gumboots had to be walked in socks to the streamway for a good scrubbing!

Parks staff made several trips with rubbish bags and assisted by fetching

tools when needed. Most of the easier work was completed by noon, so we carried several bags of rubbish out and had a BBQ lunch courtesy of Parks.

The VanNynantens and Toby then left, and with Stephen Blanden now joining us we headed back in to tackle a few more difficult tasks. One of these was to cut a long thick cable in several places where it headed through a rockfall. It was amazing just how heavy copper wire can be! Lyndsey provided a belay for David to recover more wiring & fittings along an exposed ledge.

Several of the group were involved in the removal of a large cable descending from the Shawl viewing platform and took out most of the cable that had been left for extraction previously by the contractors.

Neal Kell, the lighting contractor, then explained what he had set out to achieve with the re-lighting project and conducted a tour through the cave. The working bee was completed about 4pm with a hot drink provided by Cave Guide, Geoff Deer.

Many thanks to Stephen Blanden, who provided the rubbish bags, Parks staff for working as 'go-fors' and feeding us, and all volunteers who put in a fantastic job.

David Wools-Cobb  
WILDCARE Karst Care



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## DAGs Receive Tas Community Fund Grant

Margate's Derwent Avenue Group, affectionately known as the DAGs, formed as a Care group in 2003.

The inspiration to establish the group came from casual conversations between then residents and some newcomers, with a discussion on views and sight lines, but this gradually shifted to a generalised desire to 'leave the bush alone'.

From there, householders got together and, opening a blank canvas, started examining their values, their reasons for choosing to live in the area, and the importance of trying to maintain and preserve the coastline, its flora and fauna and other environmental and visual values in as natural a state as possible.

With the agreement of a range of organisations, a short stretch of coast, mainly Crown Land but including a small section of Kingborough Council land became The Dave Burrows Walk.

The early years had the group concentrating on improving the track and clearing the reserve of environmental weeds, but behind the scenes planning continued to extend the reserve.

The group doggedly pursued a developer, the Council, Crown Lands, Parks and Wildlife and anyone else who would listen to them, and finally got the rights to extend the reserve by several hundred metres and widen the Crown land strip.



*DAGs volunteer Rae Hogan, daughter of reserve inspiration Dave Burrows*

The Group recently obtained a Tasmanian Community Fund Grant to enable track work that includes track cutting and benching, a boardwalk and a bridge over a small creek.

Final negotiation are running now for Council approval and, all going well, the extended track will be open for business in the coming spring.

And the DAGs have even had the audacity to seek Nomenclature Board approval to naming the hither to

unnamed creek!

The DAGs say that their goal has not only been about caretaking the site; it has also been about community building.

The Group has always sought to engage the local community in its work and invested time in furthering that aim through enjoyable social interaction after meetings and working bees.

Group membership has largely come from the local area but includes members and supporters from further afield.

The Margate Primary School is very interested in incorporating use of the tracks into its programs – in sport and recreation as well as SOSE and is providing some funds for the purpose.

Other community groups are also looking to the extended track and the opportunities that it will bring to their various interests.

The group also respects and values the diversity of views and opinions amongst its members and tries to build and capitalise on those differences. Significantly, the coast and its inherent features remain the inspiration that overcomes any differences that individuals may have.

Gordon Bain

DAGs Secretary

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# BUSHFIRE

## How a Cataclysmic Event Can Change a Group Focus

(This report was received from Jean Taylor and John Hamilton from the Friends of Coningham Nature Recreation Area, a small reserve on the channel coastline about 40km south of Hobart)

On 11 January 2008, a bushfire started to the west of Coningham Nature Recreation Area (CNRA). Fanned by gale force westerly winds and fed by abundant dry fuel, the fire was rapidly out of control. The focus of fire fighters quickly moved from control to protection of life and property and with a suitable wind shift, a back-burn was lit from the shores of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. As a result of the combination of bushfire and back-burn, we estimate that 70% of the reserve has been burnt.

The main threat to the conservation values of CNRA is the declared weed Spanish Heath (*Erica lusitanica*) and our group has been working to control it in CNRA for the last six years. About 120 hectares on the northeastern quarter has been weeded and we were aiming to maintain this by follow up weeding, and to gradually extend our area of work.

The fire, however, has changed our plans. While initially devastated by the fire, we are now trying to exploit the positives. These are:

- much of the area we had cleared over the last six years was not burnt, thus avoiding stimulating germination of the soil seed bank
- a 2006 Envirofund project that funded spraying of large dense *Erica* patches had been finalised in sufficient time that all plants were killed prior to the fire.
- we have been presented with a unique opportunity to control *Erica* in the eastern half of the reserve as the fire has removed much of the biomass, both weed and native, which is enabling us to find regenerating weeds easily and will mean less chemical is needed for control
- the fire has killed many mature *Erica* plants

The negatives are:

- no money for weed control - we are attempting to obtain funding



*Coningham volunteers positive among the ashes*

through Caring for Our Country Coastcare grants. However, we have been told this process is very competitive and we need to continue to search for funding.

- large areas of bare ground susceptible to colonisation by weeds – this is the way *Erica* has spread through the reserve. We have already found partially burnt plants flowering
- *E. lusitanica* is well adapted to fire - it is generally accepted that mature *Erica* plants not killed by the fire will resprout from lignotubers, and that germination from the soil seed bank will be stimulated, although both of these factors are inhibited by dry conditions. It is only now, seven months

after the fire, that winter rain has begun to stimulate growth. While regrowth in some of the more severely burnt areas has not yet been noted, our surveys, particularly in the back burn sites, have showed a significant number of resprouting plants, and we have also found some seedlings.

The group is anxious to maintain the advantage presented by the fire, but we are fearful that no action will cause a worse problem than that initially faced.

Jean Taylor

Friends of Coningham NRA

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# Deal Island Calendar 2009

Following on from the successful Tasman Island calendar in 2007, and the Maatsuyker Island calendar in 2008 Friends of Deal Island (with partner Friends of Tasman Island) has produced the spectacular 2009 Deal Island Calendar which is expected to be available for distribution in late August, early September.

The calendar is sponsored by the Cascade Brewery Company and Tasmania 40° South and features Deal Island's most scenic features viewed from the air and at ground level.

The calendar's photographs have been submitted by a number of photographers, both professional and amateur.

Along with archival material, the calendar incorporates photographs of the tower following the 1997 fires, and views depicting the range of weather systems which are experienced on the island and some of the animal life on Deal Island.

A short, yet comprehensive, overview of the history of the Kent Group of Islands, and Deal Island in particular,

is offered by the calendar's foreword. This insight into the background of such an extraordinary island group, along with the superlative photographic images, defines this limited edition calendar as a unique purchase for both the collector and the admirer of wildly beautiful places.

As this is a limited edition calendar, be sure to order early by emailing



deal2009@netspace.net.au or download an order form from the WILDCARE website at [www.wildcaretas.org.au](http://www.wildcaretas.org.au). Click on 'Groups' and then 'Friends of Deal Island'.

Shirley Baker

Friends of Deal Island

## Quick and Easy Membership Renewal for 2009

All 2008 memberships expire on 31 December 2008.

You can renew your membership for next year anytime after September 1 of this year.

Simply complete the details below, including payment details and post to WILDCARE Inc c/- GPO Box 1751 Hobart 7001.

Or join/renew on line at [www.wildcaretas.org.au](http://www.wildcaretas.org.au)

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## End of an Era for WILDCARE Board

The 2008 Annual General Meeting, held at the WILDCARE Conference on Friday 4 April 2008, saw an end to an era for the WILDCARE Board of Management, at least as it existed prior to 2008.

Prior to that meeting the board included the presidents of each of the WILDCARE sub branches or Community Action in Reserves (CARes) groups.

With around 40 such groups operating under the WILDCARE banner this could have proved a very unwieldy board, but surprisingly it was often the opposite.

It became increasingly difficult to gather enough presidents interested in broader WILDCARE issues to make a workable board.

Following a change to the WILDCARE rules in 2007 the board was reconstituted to include: (with current members shown in bold)

Co-Chair (appointed by PWS - **Andrew Smith**)

Co-Chair (elected) (**Marianne Watson**)

Secretary (appointed by PWS - **Wanita Wells**)

Treasurer (**Craig Saunders**)

Up to three (3) President's Representatives (**John Bowden, John Duggin**)

Up to three (3) General Membership (**Karen Ziegler, Bill Forsyth, Christian Bell**)

Up to three (3) Expertise-based positions with expertise in either marketing, legal or financial areas (currently vacant, seeking expressions of interest)

Manager of the Biodiversity Conservation Branch (DPIW) or his delegate;

Manager of the Tasmanian Heritage Office (DEPHA) or his delegate;

Manager of the Parks and Wildlife Service (DEPHA) or his delegate;

If you would like to contact any member of the WILDCARE board you can do so through Co-chair Andrew Smith at [acochair@wildcaretas.org.au](mailto:acochair@wildcaretas.org.au) or by phoning Andrew on (03) 6233 2836.

Craig Saunders




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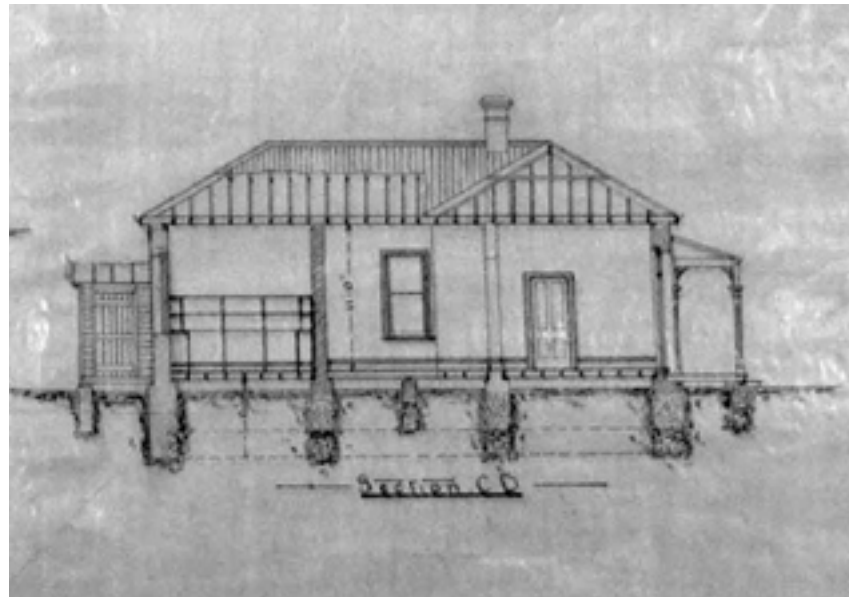
# WILDCARE Helps Secure Original Lighthouse Drawings

In June this year observant members of Friends of Maatsuyker Island (FOMI) noticed in the press that original drawings of lightkeepers' houses and of other buildings on Maatsuyker Island were to be auctioned.

The drawings were the work of colonial architect James Johnston Barnet and included details of Maatsuyker Island, Eddystone Point lighthouse on Tasmania's east coast and several mainland sites.

After many emails and some hasty negotiation FOMI decided to support a bid for the collection to be made by Lighthouses of Australia (LoA) Inc.

FOMI was able to offer \$700 from its own funds and the WILDCARE Board of Management chipped in with another \$700 from our internal grants scheme.



*Part of the original drawings for Maatsuyker Island Lightkeepers' Quarters*

The \$1,400 from WILDCARE enabled LoA to secure the bid for \$3,750 and discussions are now underway to determine a repository for this valuable part of the island's cultural heritage. Craig Saunders

# A Summer Caretaker Program for Tasman Island

Friends of Tasman Island (FoTI) has received 'in principle' agreement from the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service (TPWS) to conduct a caretaker program on the island this summer (November 2008 to January 2009) and is busy finalising a Caretakers Works Plan.

President of FoTI, Carol Jackson is thrilled. "Our group has worked hard for the past 3 years with significant achievements, raising much needed funds and establishing a positive, mutually respectful, working partnership with Parks."

The program, fully funded by FoTI, will provide a presence on the island, for the first time in over 30 years, for the regular small number of annual summer visitors who manage to swim, sail or kayak to the island.

Each of the working bees to date has spent time upgrading Quarters No 3 making it more comfortable for volunteers.

The November working bee, planned prior to the arrival of the first extended stayers, will add some final touches



*Friends of Tasman Island Volunteers in the 'Backyard'*

including removal of old lino, and new squares of carpet for the kitchen and lounge room.

The caretakers will continue a maintenance program as detailed in the recently prepared Catch up Maintenance Plan for Tasman Island commissioned by the TPWS.

The caretakers will also be able to maintain tracks and mown firebreaks around the 3 Light keepers' quarters continue weed control work as well

as conservation monitoring and whale watching activities.

For this first season caretakers will be drawn from FoTI members with experience in other similar island caretaker programs (Maatsuyker Island, Deal Island).

Carol Jackson  
Friends of Tasman Island



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## Help on the Way for Marks Point Grass Trees

The Friends of Marks Point *WILDCARE* group was formed mid 2008. We are a group of people who live or own land near Marks Point on north Bruny Island (checking the map? - look on the north eastern shoreline of Barnes Bay). The reserve has a significant stand of grass trees or 'black boys' (*Xanthorrea australis*) as well as inland *Eucalyptus tenuiramis* and shrubby *E. ovata* / *E. viminalis* forest. It is currently classified as Public Reserve but has been recommended for upgrading to Conservation Area by the Crown land Assessment and Classification (CLAC) project.

We are concerned that the natural values of the reserve are threatened increasing pressure from illegal wood cutting, camping and other recreational activity.

The root fungus *Phytophthora cinnomimi* has also been introduced to the reserve and quite a few of the grass trees have already died.

Uncontrolled track development has occurred and there is a small patch of gorse.

We felt that action could be taken now to prevent the gorse from spreading over the whole area. We also wanted to do as much as we could to restrict the spread of the *Phytophthora*.



Janine Combes and Friends of Marks Point Volunteers

Quite a few local residents visit the reserve on a regular basis to walk, admire the views and fish. Many were not aware of what was causing the grass trees to die or what they could do to help.

Our *WILDCARE* group had its first meeting in early July. We started with a walk around the reserve and a BBQ. We submitted an application for funding under the Caring for Our Country, Community Coastcare funding round. This project will include:

- map and monitor the incidence of the root fungus,
- install information signs to tell

people about the *Phytophthora* and how they could help to restrict its spread,

- install a vehicle barrier and some boot clean stations,
- remove and manage gorse and other weeds, and
- plan for future revegetation.

We look forward to hearing the results of our funding application! If you wish to be involved in our Wildcare group please contact us via the *WILDCARE* website.

Janine Combes  
President, Friends of Marks Point



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## Last of the Lightkeepers

Over 30 people braved a cold, snowy night to attend the launch of the John Cook archival database in Hobart on 21 June.

The database contains a photographic collection of John Cook's life as one of Tasmania's last lighthouse keepers. Mr Cook worked at four Tasmanian lightstations between 1969 and 1993: Eddystone Point, Tasman Island, Maatsuyker Island, and Cape Bruny. During this time he saw light-keeping technology transform from kerosene to electric illumination and, eventually, automation.

Mr Cook's collection, including over 1000 prints and slides, is probably the most complete collection of personal images spanning this era of Tasmania's lightkeeping history. The collection also includes images from the Buckpitt family, which illustrates life on Tasman Island in the early 1900's.

Mr Cook spent eight months working closely with Ms Rosanna Cameron, a museum registrar and former Maatsuyker Island volunteer caretaker, scanning, annotating and collating his collection of images from which Ms Cameron has created an electronic database.



*New Landrover on the Maatsuyker Haulage Way – John Cook Collection*

Many of the images are linked to a digital voice recording in which Mr Cook provides an audio commentary. "John and Rosanna have produced an invaluable resource that presents daily life on a Tasmanian lighthouse station," said Friends of Maatsuyker Island outgoing President Dr Jason Whitehead.

"The de-manning of Australia's lighthouses in the 1990's marked the end of an era in our maritime history and the end of the unique life of the lighthouse keeper.

As the keepers and their families dispersed from some of the country's most isolated locations they took with them a unique way of life."

The creation of the database was made possible by grant from the Maritime Museums of Australia Project Support Scheme (MMAPPS) to the Friends of Maatsuyker Island (FOMI) and Friends of Tasman Island (FOTI).

Jason added that, "We hope that the database can be extended to include other material relevant to Tasmania's lighthouse stations to create an ongoing and complete resource of lighthouse station life."

A selection of Mr Cook's images can be viewed online at the Friends of Maatsuyker Island website at [www.wildcaretas.org.au](http://www.wildcaretas.org.au)

Fiona Taylor

Friends of Maatsuyker Island

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# WILDCARE Book Review

Subantarctic Wilderness: Macquarie Island By Alex Terauds and Fiona Stewart (Allen and Unwin 2008)

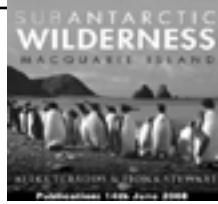
This is a book which invites the reader on a journey to a remote corner of the world. In this case the destination is the subantarctic, and more specifically Macquarie Island. Given the remoteness of Macquarie Island, and the expense in getting there, for many readers this may be the next best thing to a visit. Undoubtedly though, the images throughout the book will prompt many to consider making a trip there one of their life's goals.

The author, Dr Alex Terauds, is well placed to deliver such a book, having spent over a decade on Macquarie Island as an albatross researcher. Alex is not only the author but also the photographer and his familiarity with wildlife shows. Aside from the characteristic photos of penguin 'waddles' (also known as colonies), and pods of elephant seals, there are a range of portraits of less charismatic species such as Fairy Prions and Subantarctic Skuas.

The book is extensive in its scope, covering every aspect of the island's evolution in six main chapters. After a brief introduction, the historical discovery and exploitation of the island is recounted. The stories of one species after another being brought to extinction, or near enough, and the rate at which the plundering occurred, makes for discomfiting reading. The chapter ends on a brighter note, detailing the scientific work that has now continued for the best part of a century.

The following three chapters offer the reader a detailed insight to the island's natural history, beginning with the geomorphological origins of the island. The unique geomorphology and geology of Macquarie Island was a key factor in its declaration as a World Heritage Area, and the chapter gives a solid grounding as to what makes it so significant.

Flora and fauna are the subjects for the next two chapters, and given that these are often the focus for many visitors to Macquarie, it is appropriate



that the information is presented at a lay reader's level of detail. The photography is stunning, and I found the composition of many of the wildlife images quite captivating (the Grey-headed Albatross on page 115 being a personal favourite).

The attention to the less-celebrated aspects of Macquarie Island's ecology is also to be commended, with the exposition of the many multi-hued varieties of fungi, and the marine flora also a highlight. To complement the photography is a range of detailed illustrations of flora and fauna by Fiona Stewart which are a pleasant addition.

The concluding chapter explores life on the island today, with its critical role as a research station for a variety of disciplines: meteorology, geoscience, seismology, flora, fauna and even some lesser known fields such as radiophysics and cosmic ray physics.

The book's closing note is that the fate of Macquarie Island as a subantarctic wilderness is very much in our hands. I could not help think that it would be fitting that humanity could bring about significant change, but in a positive manner, as compared to the destructive impacts of early human use.

Having had little prior knowledge of the island, I found this to be a fascinating read, both for the information presented and the stunning imagery. It would be ideal for those who are after a general overview of Macquarie Island, rather than those with a more scientific bent, who may prefer more detail on aspects of the natural history.

Ben Clark

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# WILDCARE Book Review

Tasmania's Wilderness Battles by Greg Buckman (Allen & Unwin, 2008)

Greg Buckman's Tasmania's Wilderness Battles offers an insider's review of the major environmental disputes that have punctuated Tasmania's last 150 years or more.

As such there are fascinating insights into our power generation, logging, mining and national park history. It is a tale of conservation victories as well as losses. Some of the losses, such as the damming of the South Esk River at Duck Reach in 1895, are all but forgotten.

Not so the flooding of Lake Pedder in the early 1970s, which Buckman rightly signals as a turning point in conservation history. After Pedder, conservation became both more politicized and more confrontational. This led to a different approach – and ultimate success – in the Franklin Dam dispute.

The story of this campaign arguably forms the heart of the book, and its most compelling narrative. Although the book is subtitled 'A History' it is less a conventional history (sifting primary documents; weighing up

alternative views; coming to tentative conclusions) than a series of snapshots from a particular perspective. Greg Buckman's perspective is that of activist.

He has worked for both the Greens and the Tasmanian Wilderness Society. He also worked for the Parks and Wildlife Service in the heady days following the Wilderness World Heritage Area nomination.

So rather than leading the reader through the story, presenting the evidence, and building a case, Buckman signals his conclusions up-front. He then reiterates the conclusion on the basis of events.

This gives the narrative much of its passion, especially where he shares insights gained first-hand. However some readers may not be carried along by every argument.

The book's coverage is very comprehensive and omissions are few. In the light of climate change there could have been more emphasis on the effects of fire; and the impacts of grazing in highland areas might

have received more attention.

There is also evidence of careless editing, as when the 1968 Minister for Lands and Works is called Cushion instead of Cashion (p 175), or when "TWS swang (sic) into action" (p 39).

These quibbles aside, Greg Buckman has done the conservation movement fine service by bringing well-known and lesser-known stories together in one place for the first time. His hope of 'creating a new Tasmania' that fully embraces the protection of its wilderness will be shared by many readers.

- Peter Grant



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