



NEWSLETTER 23

December, 2020
Edited by Erika Shankley

*FoTI is part of the Wildcare network, the largest incorporated environmental volunteer organisation in Tasmania
We work in partnership with Parks & Wildlife Service Tasmania, caring for the natural and cultural values of Tasman Island*



Photo: FoTI volunteers

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Want to know more about volunteering on Tasman Island?
<https://wildcaretas.org.au/branches/friends-of-tasman-island/>
<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfTasmanIsland/>
 email friendsoftasmanisland@gmail.com
www.tasmanisland.org.au

FOTI MEETINGS:

2020 has been a difficult year for everyone. Covid 19 restrictions have kept many of us isolated from our friends and family as well as the activities we enjoy. However, there was one positive—FoTI members from all around the State were able to get together, albeit by Zoom, each month. In this way we could still exchange ideas and prepare for the eventuality when we could, at last, get back to our volunteering on Tasman Island.

WILDCARE BRANCH PAGE:

FoTI has been a member of Wildcare for 15 years, currently with 135 active members. To celebrate, our Branch page has been updated and photos of our more recent activities added to the Gallery. Go to <https://wildcarea.org.au/branches/friends-of-tasman-island/> to read all about us and click on *Gallery* to see the photos.



Photo Chris Ames



Dave, Chris & Karen with
Inner & Outer Catwalk flooring
Photo: Erika Shankley

AMSA AUDIT:

Thanks to former AMSA Heritage Officer Lyndon O'Grady, FoTI has been the recipient of several items of lighthouse memorabilia on permanent loan. In 2009 we had located sections of the original lantern room from Tasman Island, dismantled when the lighthouse was automated in 1976. Unfortunately, some pieces are damaged or missing, but hopefully we'll be able to put it all together some day!

Original lantern room,
Tasman Island light-
house

We're also custodians of the original Cape Sorell 2nd Order Fresnel lens, its pedestal and cabinet. An audit of these items (still to be completed), plus the lantern room, will be supplied to AMSA for their records.

LIGHTHOUSES OF AUSTRALIA AGM:

Unfortunately, with Tasmania's borders closed due to Covid 19 restrictions, LoA wasn't able to have a face-to-face AGM in October this year. Instead, participants gathered via Zoom for a very productive session. Tasmania will again be the host for next year's AGM, set for Friday October 8th 2021.

LIGHTHOUSE CONFERENCE:

The Lighthouse Conference, organised by Thomas Gunn, also had to be cancelled due to Covid 19 restrictions. However, Saturday 19 October has already been booked for the conference to take place next year.

Keep an eye out for these events next year.

**WILDCARE LEADERS' ZOOM:**

One of the positive things about Covid is that it has introduced us to Zoom as a means of communication between Wildcare and their multiple groups from all around Tasmania. In this way, Wildcare group leaders are able to learn the latest information as it pertains to the work that they do. Discussion has covered:

- a Guide to Wildcare services;
- new volunteer registrations with DPIPW;
- grants and other ways to raising funds for volunteer work;
- Insurance Cover;
- And we can learn from each other ...

A big thank you to Wildcare and staff for their initiative. A great way to communicate important information or just talk to each other!



Drainage work in progress in mid-winter at Lightkeepers' Quarters No 1 (Head Keeper's Quarters)
 Photos Chris Creese, Dave Davenport & PWS

Thanks to heritage builder, Dave Davenport, (who is also a FoTI volunteer) and his team from Paradigm Constructions, together with PWS staff, work was carried out in July this year to rectify drainage problems at Lightkeeper's Quarters No 1 on Tasman Island.

Water ingress under the house over the years had caused floor timbers to rot and it was in urgent need of attention. The work was completed in record time and as you can see from the photos below, taken in November this year, there has been an amazing recovery of the ground cover in such a short time.

Once things dry out, Wildcare Friends of Tasman Island volunteers should be able to continue restoration of the timber floor of this substantial brick house which was home to Head Lightkeepers and their families from 1905-1977.



Work on Tasman runs like a well-oiled machine—but then we’ve had 15 years and 32 working bees’ practice as well as a President like Carol, a former lighthouse kid, who puts in many hours work to ensure everything runs smoothly. And it’s also thanks to the support of our local PWS staff who give us valuable assistance and continued support. A grant from Wildcare mitigated the high cost of helicopter transport and various supporters like Kingston Meats, Meredith’s Orchards and Essential Oils Tasmania all ensured this working bee was a success. And to our own volunteer - heritage builder, Dave Davenport (Paradigm Constructions)—grateful thanks for the donation of a painting scaffold and, not forgetting the volunteers themselves – a huge vote of thanks.



FoTI’s volunteers were on their way ... the November 2020 working bee was at last a reality ...



Our team of volunteers had been ready to head out to Tasman Island for our previous working bee, planned for April this year, but then disaster struck - the Covid 19 virus arrived in Australia and Tasmania went into lock-down. Our plans had to be cancelled! A long period of isolation kept everyone at home but, by implementing stringent measures, Tasmania was able to stamp out the virus and, by November, we could, at last, return to Tasman Island.

However, an early start at the Simmonds Hill marshalling area was to no avail. Tasman Island was displaying its weather quirk by being fog-bound while everywhere else was in sunshine! But at last the wind changed, the fog dispersed and nine volunteers plus 800 kgs of gear were able to be safely

landed on Tasman Island, thanks to Osbourne Aviation.

An induction by on-island team leader, Chris Creese, gave his 2IC, Rob Banfield, an insight into the intricacies of opening up the heritage-listed buildings, their water and power systems. Then followed a flurry of activity, allocating Covid-safe quarters for volunteers. A comprehensive tool-box meeting outlined safety procedures, first aid, communication and work plans. Then an island orientation walk familiarised volunteers with the layout of the island which was to be their home for the next ten days.



Volunteers were keen – up at dawn to see the spectacular sunrise – before dispersing to start their respective tasks – a list of which filled two A4 pages and involved many different skills at different sites around the lighthouse precinct and beyond.

At Lighthouse’ Quarters No 1 (formerly home to FoTI’s president, Carol Jackson) the drainage works, undertaken during winter by contractor Paradigm Constructions, were working well.

The majority of building works were happening at the Assistants’ Quarters – Quarters No 2 and No 3. At Q2, the laundry and toilet underwent an upgrade and there was work done in the back verandah to prepare for the re-opening of the back door.

Painters were also busy in various areas. Q3 was having window sashes painted and after adding quad to the joints around the edge of the recently renovated sunroom floor, a coat of Dulux Jet Dry floor paint was added. Gutters were installed along the full length of the front verandah/sunroom restoration and exterior walls received a coat of white paint. Our heritage builder, Dave, was heard to mutter “No one should ever be allowed to nail a parting bead!”



Painters were also at work at the Oil Store, where final coats of Deep Burgandy paint were applied to soffits and facias and nearby the new boot wash station was installed.



Most lightstations seems to have acres of grass to mow and Tasman Island is no exception. This time the grass seemed (almost) as high as an elephant's eye after the winter & spring rains. Mowing, together with brushcutting and raking, is a major job at each working bee, opening up the network of tracks and as a defense in the event of fire.

Working to a Weed Management Plan since 2009, we are now seeing positive results in the numbers of invasive species on the island. However, infestations of Montbretia and the discovery of a previously unnoticed Hebe bush, reinforced the fact that that vigilance is still needed. Californian thistle has been the main target over the last few years. This time, over 1500 of this invasive species were removed during their 10-day stint.



Observations of fauna and flora are also carried out – with November being the prime time for wild flowers – sun and leek orchids were in flower not far from the lighthouse and green rosellas buzzed overhead. Five different types of skink can be found on Tasman Island with multiple sightings this time of the metallic skink (*Carinascincus metallicus*) and a Sheoak skink (*Cyclodomorphus casuarinae*) which is rarely seen.



But it was not all work and no play. In their time off (!!)volunteers took short walks to various parts of the island and learned more about its habitat and history. In his blog Rob wrote about a walk through the "secret garden" with its abundance of wildflowers. There were "endless views across to Bruny", he wrote, where several yachts could be seen becalmed in the Maria Island Race. "Dolphins cavorted under the cliffs and a sea eagle cruised by", with its eye on the many fishing boats below. Discarded items turn up occasionally—What do you think this jug (at right) was used for?



However, the most important members of the team spent their days in the kitchen producing sumptuous meals for the ravenous volunteers. Hooter's Tasman Island Restaurant served up morning and afternoon teas, lunch as well as two-course main evening meals. No complaints here!

ABC Sunday morning radio came to Tasman Island via Rob's mobile phone. Talking almost non-stop, his on-air interview was interesting and informative, with listeners learning more about spectacular Tasman Island, its cultural and natural heritage and the restoration work FoTI has been doing. Thanks, Rob !

The last night on the island was a time for reminiscences –

Why did each volunteer want to come to this beautiful, unique slice of paradise? and

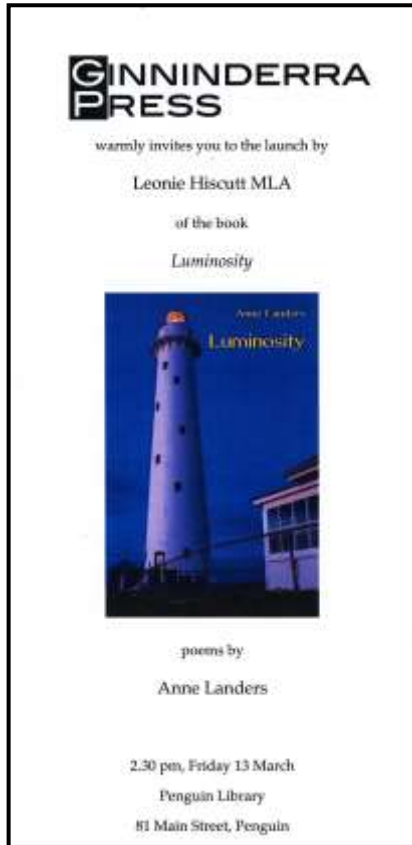
What were the highlights?

Their experiences, they all said, had filled them with memories which will linger forever.



Thanks to Rob and Chris for their notes and volunteers for their photos which helped put together this report of another successful working bee .





NEW
for CHRISTMAS!
 in the Wildcare Shop



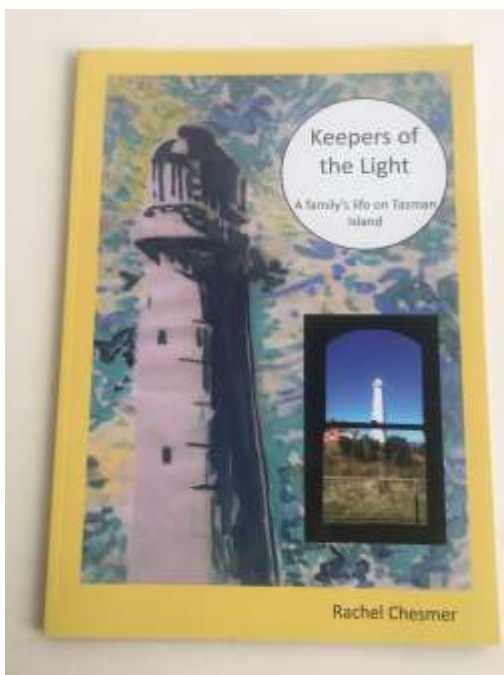
TASSIE'S SOUTHERN LIGHTS:
 For all lighthouse-lovers.

These four cut-outs of Tassie's Southern Lights – Tasman Island, Maatsuyker Island, Cape Bruny and the Iron Pot – are ideal gifts for Christmas! Made in Tasmanian Oak or Myrtle, 13 cm to 16 cm in height, they can double as Christmas Tree decorations or Fridge Magnets – coloured ribbons and magnetic strips supplied.

Only \$40, including postage and packaging.

FoTI volunteer, Anne Landers, has put pen to paper with a small volume of poems from her life's experiences. Included are verses of times spent living at remote lightstations in Tasmania. Front cover photo of Tasman Island lighthouse courtesy Erika Shankley.

The book is available from Ginninderra Press, PO Box 3461, Port Adelaide SA 5015, \$22 plus postage. <https://www.ginninderrapress.com.au/store.php?product/page/2068/Anne+Landers+%2F+Luminosity>



Keepers of the Light: A family's life on Tasman Island by Rachel Chesmer

\$20 including postage within Australia

If like many, you have a love for Tasman Island and haven't had the opportunity to visit yet, you will feel the stories of the families who have lived there, the illustrations and photographs will inspire you and give a glimpse of what life was like for the lighthouse keepers' families, a life still living in these memories.

First 10 sold will be signed copies

**CHECK OUT OUR MERCHANDISE
NOW AVAILABLE IN THE WILDCARE SHOP**

<https://wildcaretas.org.au/product-category/tasman-island-collection/>



FOTI ARTISTS' CARDS: This Tasman Island series now includes 11 different images by Tasmanian artists. Each card tells a story about the island. Thank you to David Edgar, Ailsa Fergusson, Peter Gouldthorpe, Kate Hansford, Veronica Steane, Luke Wagner, Amanda Thomson, David Davenport & Helen Gee who donated the art work for FoTI's Artists' Tasman Island Series of cards. Also included is an archival print of Tasman Island, circa 1840, by John Skinner Prout from the Tasmanian Archives & Heritage Office. Luke Wagner (archivalink.com.au/) has printed the cards for us on fine archival paper.

Purchase any 6 cards for \$35 or the whole set for \$55. Postage included.

NEW

Tasman Island

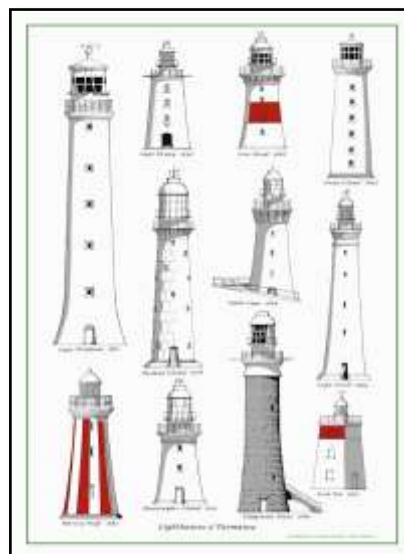
Fauna & Flora series:
Beautiful Firetail
Skeat Andrews
\$5.50 each



EXCLUSIVE TO FOTI
Lighthouses of Tasmania tea towel
Designed by Peter Gouldthorpe
\$15



Supporters Patch
Featuring FoTI's logo,
designed by
Gavin Reynolds
\$15



Supporter's Pack includes:
Lighthouses of Tasmania tea towel, Cardboard Lighthouse kit, Tasman Island pocket book, FoTI supporters patch, Tasman Island bookmarks & cards
\$50

Postage free within Australia

Jobs done FoTI working bee 12 to 21 Nov 2020

- Refitted Greenfield mower parts that were removed from mower for repairs last working bee due to wear and damage.
- Checked over mower, brushcutters, generator ETC before starting work and serviced machines at end of working bee.
- Investigated cause of damage to Greenfield mower cutter deck, straightened cutter disc and replaced blades. Template cut to make a patch to cover the damaged area.
- Mowed and brushcut all usual places. To prevent potential spread of weeds the grass cuttings were left in situ where possible, raked grass put in weed compost tank at rear of Oil Store and in depression east of track half way between Q1 and Clark of Works hut rails.
- Location and removal of weeds. Report to follow from weeders?
- Installed boot sanitizing station supplied by PWS at track leading from helipad, filled with sanitizing solution and tested.
- Scraped, sanded, primed and 2 top coats of paint on Oil Store Soffit and Facias.
- Installed laundry trough in Q2 to replace missing trough. Installed taps over troughs.
- Completed lining of Q2 toilet using recovered original pine lining boards. Flaking paint removed and boards cleaned.
- Replaced missing wall lining with cement sheet in room outside toilet of Q2, reworked old unusable external door to keep area weather tight. Manufactured and fitted skirting and architraves were required, painted all new work.
- Painted wooden louvers of Q2 toilet.
- Repaired holes in step to Q2 toilet with cement and repainted existing white to be more visible in the dark.
- Replaced temporary cement sheet panel beside Q2 sunroom door with tongue and groove boards as per original.
- Relocated bricks stacked in Q2 to the old shed base rear of Q2.
- Removed leaking shower rose in Q3 bathroom and replaced with new one.
- Re-putty Q3 windows where required and prime.
- Re-putty Q3 sunroom windows, scrape, prime and paint with top coat.
- Repaired rot in junction of window sill and door frame to the right of Q3 sunroom door.
- Painted floor of Q3 sunroom with 2 coats of grey oil based Dulux Jet Dry floor paint.
- Removed poorly fitted interior lining cement sheets (only done last year) from under windows in Q3 sunroom and replaced with new cement sheathing and fitted timber cover strips to all joints. All new work painted with primer and white top coat.
- Fitted quad at junction of floor and walls in Q3 sunroom, primed and white top coat on same.
- Painted exterior of Q3 sunroom
- Replaced fascia on sunroom end of Q3 front veranda and painted with primer and top coat.
- Installed gutters along full length of Q3 front veranda.
- Scraped primed and top coat on Q3 rear veranda walls and windows.



Ever wondered about the number of jobs done during FoTI's memorable working bees? Here's the list of work done at the November 2020 working bee! All jobs were ticked off! Great work!

- Removed Q3 laundry window sashes and covered opening with Form ply. Sashes taken off island for repairs.
- Jacked up and repositioned rotted Q3 back veranda post to allow back door to swing correctly, refastened post with SS bracket and Chemset into concrete footing.
- Wash walls and ceilings in Q2 toilet area, laundry, hallway and 2 bedrooms.
- Wash walls and ceiling in Q3 toilet area.
- Fitted cement sheet wall lining to replace missing panel outside Q3 toilet. Manufactured and fitted skirting, painted all new work.
- Chipped grass from concrete paths, shed Bases ETC. Removed grass was used to fill depressions leveling the ground to make future mowing easier.
- Changed water filters on Q3 water supply and recorded date on sticker adjacent to filters.
- Cleaned and repaired render on window arches on east windows of Q3. Painted with rust sealer due to rust evident from recently removed steel lintels. Painted with white undercoat. Will paint with white top coat in future to have same appearance as previous painted steel lintels.
- Made repairs to back veranda of Q2 to keep it weather tight until more permanent repairs can be done. Repaired back door opening to improve access to house and back veranda and in preparation to install temporary opening door in future.
- Cleared out accumulated junk from Q2 back veranda. Some unwanted materials taken to rubbish site at rear of oil store, an old fridge was removed from the island for disposal.
- Recycled old weather damaged wardrobes from Q2 back veranda in to shelves for Oil Store.
- Wardrobe relocated from Oil Store to Q2 and replaced with shelves listed above.
- Relocated good second hand corrugated iron from Sheep dip to Q2 to use for emergency repairs.
- Located drains from Q1 and cleared to ensure water is carried away from house.
- Check expiry dates of First aid kits and fire extinguishers for PWS.
- Inventory of all kitchen/pantry items.
- Checked emergency food supplies for out of date items.
- Inventory of building supplies, tools, petrol, gas, oils.
- Measured up for materials required for future jobs.
- Installed smoke alarm in the one bedroom of Q2.
- Repaired window in Q2 back bedroom, new sash cords and new parting beads made and fitted.
- Removed pad bolt from back bedroom door in Q2
- Relocated building supplies, nails, screws ETC from back veranda to store room of Q3.
- Painted rusty sections of Oil Store roof.
- Repaired leaks in Oil Store gutters
- Made table top for large Tasman Island jigsaw.
- Sorted and arranged timber storage room in Q2
- Painted cupboard in Kitchen of Q3 next to stove.
- Trivet made from wood to protect kitchen cupboard top from hot pots.
- Cleared out junk from meat hanging cupboard in Q2
- Re-laid second hand vinyl on floor outside Q2 toilet

FUNDRAISING

Help FoTI continue their restoration efforts of the natural and cultural heritage of Tasman Island !

Did you know that the Friends of Tasman Island page on the Wildcare web site now has a 'donate' button. Copy and paste <https://wildcaretas.org.au/product/branch-fundraising-friends-of-tasman-island/> into your browser and follow the prompts.

One volunteer is worth ten pressed men
(It's a naval expression used again and again)
So here's to the Friends and their mission bold
And time well spent in Tasman's fold!

Helen Gee, March, 2010

