

**Friends of Oxley Creek Common**  
**Annual General Meeting on Sunday 30 May 2021, 10:30 am.**  
**The Red Shed, Oxley Creek Common**

**Present:**

Hugh Possingham, Karen Gillow, Robyn Mulder, Zena Dinesen, Trevor Armstrong, Simon Murray, Lyn Whitfield, Fasenya McPhee, Sean McElwain, Mark Gillow, Therese Lynch.

**Apologies:** Matthew Mendel, Mary Lou Simpson, Erica Heaton, Colleen Enchelmaier.

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**President report:**

It has been another odd year for humans, and the number of users of the Common has remained very high as people seek exercise, a quiet walk, and the enjoyment of biodiversity. This increasing human pressure needs to be dispersed with more visitor infrastructure.

The accounts are in good order (thanks Matt) with people paying for longer-term membership. The Tuesday Common Carers are as active as ever with over six hundred hours of work (thanks Mary Lou). Several people have donated many native plants.

Next year should be more exciting with the possibility of more activities and the commencement of the Oxley Creek Transformation process (government willing). FOCC will have to remain ever vigilant as the proposed development, which should be good for the site and good for nature, progresses. It is likely that the first piece of infrastructure will be the bicycle path which will run about 40m inside (west of) the existing walking path. The cycling/walking path will take some pressure off the now crowded walking path beside the creek.

Of increasing concern is woody weeds and water weeds. If the site was owned privately there is a good chance the government would be in trouble with itself for mismanaging the weeds. This year we will start to place more pressure on the state government to improve management of the grasslands and wetlands. The water hyacinth smothering Jabiru swamp has caused a substantial reduction in waterbird diversity. Introduced fish in Pelican lagoon has had a similar devastating effect. I suggest that we progress to some firmer letters to the owners and managers of the site.

I am grateful to the entire committee for their attendance, contributions and steadfast support.

Karen Gillow moved that the President's report be accepted. The members present voted unanimously yes.

**Treasurer report:**

A very detailed financial report for FOCC was forwarded by Matthew Mendel before the meeting. This was presented by Hugh Possingham in Mat's absence. In summary, there is

just over \$5k in the bank, with a recent boost to funds due to many people taking up the special 5 year membership deal (5 years for the price of 4) and three Life Memberships. The full financial report is included at the end of these minutes.

Hugh Possingham moved that the Treasurer's report be accepted. The members present voted unanimously yes.

#### **Other matters:**

**Tues Common Carers:** Mary Lou provided a comprehensive report of progress prior to the meeting. This was summarised by Hugh Possingham in Mary Lou Simpson's absence. This will be published on the FOCC website and in the FOCC newsletter. Highlights include around 638 hours of worker time in the last year. Between 7 and 10 people turn up regularly and we are contributing to coordinating other groups for weeding on the Common too. Signs have been great asset.

Suggested that the mud map of the common be added to Mary Lou's report and could be used for Peaks to Points.

Long term goal: online map of common. Short term: better map for Peaks to Point of the common.

**Seats:** waiting for feedback from the department

**Zena:** thanked everyone on the committee and involved in FOCC.

#### **Peaks to Points:**

- Hugh is doing bird walks as part of the Peaks to Points festival at the Common on 25<sup>th</sup> July (for Pony club) and 24<sup>th</sup> July
- FOCC display on 18<sup>th</sup> at OCC.
- 20 July is the 6<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of the Common Carers.
- Lyn noted that they are approaching 50 different events for the Peaks to Points.
- Around 4<sup>th</sup> June Peaks to Points web site should be updated with all events
- Mark Gillow has volunteered to create a Goose Chase game for families participating in the FOCC display. He presented what had been done so far and informed the committee that there would be a cost of around \$240 for a licence for the software if they chose to go ahead with what he had developed. This was an annual licence meaning it would be possible to develop other "games" for different events or times throughout the year. The BCC have been looking to use Questagame ([www.questagame.com](http://www.questagame.com)) which is more about biological information like iNaturalist.
- Lyn to join FOCC Peaks to Points committee for further discussions and advice for FOCC's part in Peaks to Points.

#### **COMMITTEE NOMINATION**

Hugh declared all positions on the FOCC committee and committee memberships vacant.

Final nominations were accepted as follows:

- President – Hugh Possingham nominated by Zena Dinesen, seconded by Fasanya McPhee. Accepted.
- Treasurer – Matt Mendal nominated by Karen Gillow, seconded by Hugh Possingham. Accepted by email.
- Secretary – Karen Gillow nominated by Robyn Mulder, seconded by Zena Dinesen. Accepted.
- Newsletter editor – Mary Lou Simpson nominated by Lyn Whitfield, seconded by Robyn Mulder. Accepted by email.

General Committee Members: Zena Dinesen, Fasanya McPhee, Lyn Whitfield, Simon Murray, Robyn Mulder and Erica Heaton.

All nominations were accepted unanimously and unopposed.

Meeting closed at 11:15 am.

Next meeting to be **Sunday August 29<sup>th</sup>** at the red shed– bird walk at 6:30am. Morning tea at 9:30am, General meeting at 10am.

**Tuesday Common Carers' Report**  
**for the**  
**FOOCC Annual General Meeting**  
**30<sup>th</sup> May, 2021**

**Vision**

Tuesday Common Carers aim to remove weeds that are threatening native vegetation, restore habitat, encourage natural regeneration, and maintain new plantings. Because this is a vital bird habitat, all our work is in consideration of the bird population. Consequently, we keep invasive grasses, where they are useful to birds. The massive growth of grass this summer and autumn, which looks unkempt to the casual visitor, has sustained Chestnut Breasted Mannikins and finches. Green panic remains protective habitat for Brown Quail. (A nest of 8 eggs was found when we were weeding around the seat at Stony Gully.) We plant species that have been identified as original plants by Greening Australia and are likely to augment bird food and habitat. We hope to have an accessible track along the creek past Stony Gully.

**This Year**

During the second half of last year, we set to work on new areas, previously untouched, as well as continuing to maintain the areas already weeded and planted. This involved a lot of watering as the Spring was fairly dry.

The exceptionally wet summer and autumn delivered a whole new scenario. We lost several weeks of work because of the rain, which was the catalyst in creating huge areas of weeds, (Glycine, Commelina, Cobbler's Pegs, Khaki Weed, Sida species, Rivina, Asparagus Fern, Rhodes grass, Cinderella weed, Green Panic and Crow's Foot grass). In many of our managed sites, the plantings were invisible amongst the grass. Sites that were weeded in February, became unrecognisable by April. Hopefully, we will have rescued our managed sites by the end of June.

Fortunately, many of the new plantings benefited from the moisture. The rampant growth of Green Panic and Rhodes Grass provided our new plantings with protection from the hot summer sun. There has also been significant regeneration of native plants, underneath the weeds.

Several severe storms have brought down rather a lot of dead timber. The original wattles are now dying and are ready to come down in a storm. This has happened to at least 5 trees close to the track.

## Composition

Our weeders are: Brian McDonald, Colleen Enchelmaier, Anna Jack, Anne Alexander, Robyn Mulder, Janet Murray, Amanda Richter, Tanya Scheuler, Laura Wellauer, Caitlin Gaskell, Alex Willmott, Bronwyn Willmott and Adele Dingle. Not everyone is available all the time: illness, work and our 'other life' determine when we can come. However, the commitment of this group is evidenced in a regular attendance of between 9 and 12 people each week. We have been delighted to welcome Tanya and Amanda this year. Trevor Armstrong includes the Common in his demanding schedule and works in the area between the road and the Red Shed.

All these people must be commended for their loyalty to the group, their ability to work solidly for two hours in all temperatures, and to carry both their equipment and bags of rubbish.

## Hours (2.6.20 – 31.5.2021)

Date	Group	Hours	Total
2.6.20 - 15.12.20	Tuesday C Carers	435.5	
18.6.20 – 5.11.20	Thursday Creek C	70	
9.2.21 - 18.5.21	Tuesday C Carers	218.5	
25.2.21 - 6.5.21	Thursday Creek C	45	
<b>Yearly total</b>	<b>Tuesday C Carers</b>		<b>654.0</b>
	<b>Thursday Creek C</b>		<b>115</b>

## Posts

Because of the difficulty of finding exact locations along the track, Brian McDonald suggested we define zones by painting posts a specific colour. Camilla Duff Burford obtained paint from Dulux, and Brian did the painting. There are now zones of roughly 100 metres, designated by the colours of the rainbow and more. Congratulations Brian. It was very time-consuming, but a great idea and a job well done.

## Signs

Robyn Mulder was the driving force behind the new signs at the Common. Stewart Hirth cut the decking, so Robyn could burn the names into the timber. She then oiled them with mould-resistant linseed to help prolong their life. Brad Barratt cut the star pickets and helped Robyn erect the signs. Many hours of work went into creating and installing these attractive signs, which are a great help in locating spots along the track. Congratulations.

## Areas

**Birding Ridge**, a difficult and exposed site, with glycine and asparagus fern infestations on the creek, demands continual attention.

**Luke's Patch and the Willmott patch** either side of the fence became covered in Green Panic after summer. Much of this has now been reclaimed. The new plantings close to the creek struggle to compete with weeds.

**Casuarina Gully** was cleared of grass and planted in Spring. Practically all the plants were dug up by native animals looking for moisture during the dry. The plants we have found in the grass have thrived in the wet season.

**The creek track** between Luke's Patch and Casuarina Gully was slashed by Noel Standfast of Thursday Creek Care. Heavy cardboard has been laid along this track to discourage grass regrowth. There are several attractive sections of Marine Couch, Eclipta and Alternanthera.

**The area south of Commelina Gully (Timberfell)** is a newly established section. When it was cleared of weeds, there was no native growth at all. Over 100 seedlings were planted in this area. Soon after a track was cleared, a Buff-banded Rail was seen.

**Opposite the gate in the brown zone**, is a newly cleared area, which was infested with invasive Commelina, glycine, asparagus fern, coral berry and cobbler's pegs. 25 seedlings (Flindersia, Polyscia, native hibiscus and melaleucas) were planted in the bare area towards the creek. Scrub turkeys attacked this planting, but most seedlings were saved.

**Scrub-wren Point** is a large area between the turkey mound and Snake Gully. There is adequate natural vegetation there, but it is in competition with the usual problems: Glycine, Rivina, Asparagus Fern. This area had never been weeded before.

**Pink Zone** was weeded for several weeks, as there were worrying areas of Commelina and Glycine. Again, this was the first time this area had been worked on. Green Panic has covered this spot and it is hard to see where we were working.

## Donors

John Mansell donated over 70 plants, which have been planted in various sites. Thanks to the summer rain, there has been a good survival rate.

Alex and Warwick Willmott have donated plants, especially for the site before the first gate.

Trevor Armstrong donated Silky Oaks and a variety of rainforest plants. The silky oaks have done amazingly well this summer.

Robyn Mulder also donated well established plants which were planted at Casuarina Gully.

## Natural Regrowth

Native plants continue to regenerate. The rain brought welcome germination of *Alphitonia excelsa*, *Alchornea ilicifolia* and *Trema tormentosa*. *Acacias* readily self-seed, as do Tuckeroos. On the creekbank at Rotary 2 is a healthy outcrop of *Wollastonia biflora*, apparently brought by the creek water. *Einardia nutans* and Warrigal Greens continue to provide ground cover. Additionally, there are areas of native *Commelina* and *Oplismenus* helping to retard the weeds. Despite plenty of unwelcome grasses, such as Crow's Foot, one of the *Eriochloa* species and *Cayratia sp.* have appeared for the first time. There are some small eruptions of Emu Foot, *Cullen tenax*.

## Weeds

Although the major problems at the Common are Glycine, Asparagus fern, Cobbler's pegs, Green panic, Rhodes grass, *Rivina humilis* and Celtis, other weeds have appeared. Blue billy-goat weed *Ageratum houstonianum*, has become prolific this Autumn; Khaki weed, *Alternanthera pungens*, has flourished along the track; Horned Cucumber has re-appeared; and cobbler's pegs are jumping the fence from the university plantings.

## Difficulties

- Our greatest difficulty has been the resurgence of weeds after the Summer and Autumn rain.
- The weed load in the university plantings increases our work.

## OCCA

OCCA is paid by the Department of Works to spend 4 days once a month at the Common. They usually come Tuesdays and tackle the most difficult tasks, such as glycine and asparagus removal, tree removal and slashing.

## Community involvement

A group of St Aidan's students came on two separate occasions and weeded around Stony Gully. Thanks to Camilla Duff Burford for organising these volunteers.

## Thanks

Thanks to all the weeders who turn up regularly every Tuesday at 7 am, with unfailing cheerfulness and enthusiasm. It is a very beautiful time to be at the Common and we often enjoy the company of birds, who seem also to be enjoying the morning and the space to move.

Mary Lou Simpson  
Convenor  
27th May 2021

**Friends of Oxley Creek Common Inc.**  
**Income & Expenditure**  
**For the year ended 31 December 2020**

**INCOME**

Memberships	\$2,085.00
Donations Bird Walks	\$118.00
Grants	\$0.00
Interest	<u>\$6.18</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$2,209.18</b>

**EXPENDITURE**

Office of Fair Trading	\$0.00
Post Office Box Rental	\$67.00
IT cost	\$56.60
Webpage cost	<u>\$170.57</u>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>\$294.17</b>

Deficit/Excess Income over Expenditure \$1,915.01

**ASSETS**

Cheque account at 31 December 2019	\$3,550.20
Petty Cash Float	\$50.00

**EQUITY**

Opening balance cheque account 1 Jan 2019	\$3,550.20
Petty Cash Float	\$50.00
Deficit/Excess Income over Expenditure	<u>\$1,915.01</u>
	<b>\$5,515.21</b>

Signed Matthew Mendel



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Treasurer

28-May-2021

This association keeps financial records in a way which properly records the association's income and expenditure and dealings with its assets and liabilities