

Annual General Meeting 2011

Minutes

Time: 4pm • Date: Saturday 3 December 2011 • Venue: 98 Yoorala Street The Gap

1. Present and proxies

Robert Ah Hoon, Emily Brash, Wayne Briscoe, Mark Crocker, Matti Crocker, Robert Dunne, Stella Field, Peter Hayes, Genevieve Graves, Richard Harding, Anne Jones, Allen Kamp, Geraldine Knapp, John Laing, Maggie Magafakis, Carolyn Mason, Trevor Ozanne, Ian Prentice, Jane Prentice, Leona Reif, Saxon Rice, Adam Richardt, Robert Whyte, Margaret Young

2. Apologies

Yvonne Li, Neil Lyons, Fred Moffett, Colin Peile, Michelle Peile, Jane Prentice, Ray Sinkinson, Lynn Swan, Ken Watson, Karen Webster, Rick Webster, Craig Weldon, Joan Wilkinson, Dawn Whyte.

3. Acceptance of previous minutes

The previous minutes were accepted. Moved Genevieve Graves, seconded Carolyn Mason.

4. Reports

President: Geraldine Knapp

SOWN Environment Centre

SOWN Environment Centre has become an important community hub for The Gap. By having this base, SOWN has been able to build partnerships with like-minded groups such as:

- Yoorala Street Community Garden
- Balaangala garden and reconciliation group
- Transition The Gap
- BRAIN - Brisbane Rainforest Action and Information Network.

In 2011, SOWN received development approval for the Centre. So we look forward to raising money so we can implement our plans to make it even better.

Ithaca Intact

In 2011, our major project was Ithaca Intact.

It was supported by grants from the Department of Environment and Resource Management and the Estate of the Late Harold Corbould managed by Perpetual.

This funding allowed us to make a major headway restoring Ithaca Creek.

Our Ithaca Intact Coordinator Glenn Withers led the way but he left at the end of May to take up a job at Queensland Rail.

Glenn was replaced by our SOWN Director Robert Whyte.

Rob made huge progress. Many volunteers worked on the creek through the Conservation Volunteers Australia scheme with Rob's right hand persons, John Marnane and Suzie Barker.

It's great to see progress along Coopers Camp Road.

In 2012, Ithaca Intact will focus on the Dawn Street Park starting with an Australia Day planting on 26 January.

Glenella Parklands Fish Creek

Our sister group, BRAIN, has made huge progress in 2011 working with Walton Bridge Reserve Bush Care group on Glenella Parklands.

There were four community plantings this year and there are four more planned for 2012.

It's great to see the fantastic support from the community with many local people joining in. Special thanks to locals Allen Kamp and Wayne Briscoe, and BRAIN's Marina Novak for organising the community events.

Lots of people are now walking along the creek from Glenella Street to Walton Bridge. One day we hope to install a bush track.

Nursery

There have been huge improvements at the SOWN Nursery this year. The new netting looks great. The Open Day was a huge success. There will be more Open Days in 2012.

Thanks to Richard Harding and Lynn Swann for all their great work coordinating the nursery activities.

Vale Clif Bell

SOWN life member Clifton Bell passed away recently.

We hope to install a seat in Wittonga Park in his memory.

Thanks

Thank you to all our SOWN committee members especially our outgoing treasurer Genevieve Graves.

Thank you to our major supporter Brisbane City Council and the BCC staff who work with us including:

- our Creek Ranger Emily Brash
- our Habitat Brisbane Officer Melinda McLean
- everyone at The Gap Ward office especially Deb Smith.

And thank you to all our SOWN members who work on the creek, all the members who come along to community events, and everyone who plants a plant from the SOWN Nursery. You are all magnificent.

Director: Robert Whyte

We had a very big year. The Ithaca Intact was a major project and a huge success. Thank you to the project's funding bodies. During the project we used the model of having professionals supporting volunteers which has been very successful. There is a lot of activity restarted along Ithaca Creek.

There was a degree of conflict with Brisbane City Council bureaucracy over the removal of weed trees. There was quite a bit of guerrilla bushcare. It was reminiscent of the early days when Trevor Ozanne used to plant at night because Council wouldn't allow planting in the creek corridor. There are plans to model our activities on the Mt Nebo and Mt Glorious Environment Protection Association which forms partnerships with utilities and government to undertake paid work.

The nursery was reinvigorated. The Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre had been pricking out for us but we need to diversify the plants available. *The Creek In Our Backyard* was

a great success. There have been 2 editions and we have lodged a grant application for an expanded edition to cover all of South-East Queensland.

Working with locals is the key but we need to manage that relationship. We need to take it up a notch. Creek Rescue And Catchment Care (CRACC) is our new professional group working on regeneration. Now we have lots of gear and trained people, we can get a site very well prepared. We are moving to make sites more biodiverse. The key to this approach is having enough money to pay professionals. Council is working on a new weeds policy. SOWN put in a submission which said Council should get rid of the weeds and replant with natives. We need to use the energy of the community. We have the opportunity to save South-East Queensland and we should get on with it.

Treasurer: Genevieve Graves

Genevieve Graves presented the audited reports for Save Our Waterways Now and the SOWN Environment Fund.

The year in review

It has been another great year for SOWN, with interlinking between the various projects. Ithaca Intact received funds from the Queensland Government and from Perpetual. The benefit of the mixed funding was that we had a great deal of flexibility to evolve the way we worked on the project, coupled with the discipline of the agreed outputs in our funding agreements. Consequently, we were able to fund the project officer, some significant on-ground work and the enhancement to the nursery.

The nursery benefitted from the Ithaca Intact funding with a refit, additional plants and new equipment. The volunteers largely carried out the renovations to the nursery so the \$14,000 contribution on nursery and supplies understates the enhancement. As usual, the investment into the nursery is returned many times with the outputs of plants produced by the volunteers.

Other groups

Funding was received for a number of projects for BRAIN and the Community Garden. Where possible, the funding has been built into the grants to fund the administrative component of these projects. There have been a couple of exceptions, where funding agreements will not allow any contributions to auspices. In these cases SOWN has borne these costs. This has not been too onerous in a year when the organisation has had adequate funds. The benefits are evident when we look at the growth of the community garden.

SOWN Environment Fund

The fund benefitted from the Christmas appeal last year and received a total of 45 donations and in excess of \$87,000, including the Perpetual donation.

Funding outlook

There has been no additional large new grants received by SOWN in the past twelve months. This is partly an impact of the natural disasters at the beginning of the year, which has meant much funding has been diverted to recovery and rebuilding projects. We have also held our fire for the environment centre.

We have now received planning approval for the SOWN environment centre building works and we will focus our fundraising on implementation.

Finally a few thanks

Thanks to Caroline Lim, our bookkeeper at ToadShow and to Mark Sing for managing our enquiries and the membership database. Your help is always appreciated.

Creek Ranger: Emily Brash

Emily said she has been Creek Ranger for one year and three weeks. She has enjoyed it very much despite the challenges. She has worked on the Catchment Kids program. Next year Payne Road State School will be in the program and unofficially St Peter Channel. Several other schools in the catchment are becoming very active.

The first big event will be on Australia Day 2011. The local fire station will be watering.

The corporate volunteering program will continue next year.

There are many opportunities to work with Conservation Volunteers Australia.

Nursery: Dick Harding

The SOWN Nursery faced a number of challenges at the beginning of the year. Rats were eating the seeds, brush turkeys were destroying the plants and volunteer numbers were low. There was also limited diversity in the plants available.

During the year, a slab has gone down, hail netting has been put in place to stop the brush turkeys, and cages to stop the rats are under construction. Thank you Maurie Park who did the netting.

The Nursery still needs more volunteers and seed collectors. In particular, we need rainforest species. We are going to start propagating from cuttings. We are also hoping to propagate more vines. There is a desperate need for people to collect more seed.

All reports were accepted. Moved Carolyn Mason, seconded Leona Reif.

5. Election of Office Bearers

Nominations

- President: Geraldine Knapp
- Vice-president: Dick Harding
- Secretary: Anne Jones
- Treasurer: Robert Dunne
- Members: Mark Crocker, Allen Kamp, Adam Richardt, Karen Webster, Robert Whyte, Maggie Makafakis.

Appointments

- Director: Robert Whyte
- Senior Adviser: Brian Hallinan
- SOWN Environment Fund: Genevieve Graves appointed to replace Michael Dart

All accepted. Moved Carolyn Mason, seconded Wayne Briscoe.

6. General Business

- Irwin and Associates were appointed as the auditors. Moved Genevieve Graves, seconded Robert Whyte.
- Trevor Ozanne spoke about the origins of SOWN 25 years ago. Trevor Ozanne, Bob Whiteman and Tom Randell came up with the idea 25 years ago this week and the first trees were planted on Australia Day the following year.
- Geraldine spoke about having a long-term vision for creek restoration. Many people have contributed such as Athol Brown, Fred and Vera Moffett. Geraldine quoted Brian Hallinan who said you have to get people to own the creek.