



Newsletter  
**Moreton Island Protection  
Committee Inc.**

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**AGM Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August at Fort Lytton**  
See back page for details

**Resort proposed for Cape Moreton**

The Premier Anna Bligh and the Minister for Tourism, Regional Development and Industry Desley Boyle announced in the Sunday Mail Page 3, 11<sup>th</sup> May the Government’s intention to promote the development of an eco-lodge using the existing lighthouse and surrounding infrastructure. This proposal was one of 10 proposals identified in the Regional Tourism Investment and Infrastructure Plan developed by Tourism Queensland and Brisbane Marketing. The Government hopes to attract private companies to develop and build the projects.

The Premier stated “While tourism has charted strong growth, now more than ever, we need to ensure we have a plan in place to be a competitive and attractive destination over the next 20 years.” It is hard to imagine how being able to offer resort accommodation for a handful of tourists, in the existing 3 lighthouse cottages is going to significantly enhance Brisbane as a tourist destination.

In the mid 90’s the Australian Marine Safety Authority (AMSA), a Federal Government body had a policy of divesting itself of lighthouse keeper cottages and land surrounding lighthouses to decrease costs. One of AMSA’s options was to sell the cottages and land to a developer, which MIPC opposed. Instead MIPC strongly supported the transfer of the land

and cottages to the State Government as the body most likely to ensure conservation of the site for the enjoyment of all visitors to Moreton Island.

The lighthouse itself is still owned by AMSA and so cannot be part of the resort as proposed. Two of the cottages provide residential accommodation for Rangers. Rangers in residence are well placed to ensure whale watching boats are complying with regulations, and to maintain a presence in the most remote part of Moreton on their way to and from headquarters at Ben Ewa.

The third cottage houses the Information Centre for Moreton as well as a bunk house which is used to accommodate Park volunteer workers and contractors carrying out park maintenance.

Over the years there have been many proposals to “develop” Moreton Island. Many of these proponents of development are unaware of the hard work that has gone into retaining Moreton in its pristine state. Mining proposals in the 80’s provided a focus for the community to demand Moreton become mostly National Park, so that both Brisbane people and tourists can enjoy a natural Moreton Island. A wide range of accommodation is currently available for tourists on Moreton making the proposed eco resort at the Cape unnecessary.....

Cont Page 2

**Combie Trader Service to cease**

MICat has announced its intention to purchase the Bulwer shop, the petrol station, cabins and the ferry service. MICat intends to provide a limited

service to Bulwer. However departure from Scarborough will cease. ....  
.....cont Page 3

**Moreton Island Protection  
Committee Inc.**

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**Statement of Aims**

1. To promote the preservation of Moreton Island as a natural area to be managed for public recreation and enjoyment provided always that the recreational uses are consistent with conservation aims.
2. To foster the conservation of the vegetation, fauna and natural features of Moreton.
3. To facilitate public awareness and appreciation of Moreton Island as a natural area and encourage support for its preservation and management in accordance with these objects.
4. To co-operate with, or promote co-operation by any means with and among persons, trusts, corporations, firms, associations, institutions, governments, instrumentalities or government, municipal authorities and other bodies in the Commonwealth or its Territories or elsewhere for the purpose of carrying out any object of the organisation.
5. To oppose any development or usage of Moreton Island which is contrary to the preservation and good management of the island in accordance with these objects.
6. Generally, to take such lawful action as it considers necessary or appropriate in the interests of promoting the preservation and good management of Moreton Island in accordance with these objects.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Moreton Island Protection Committee or its members.

Contributions to this newsletter are welcome, but the editors accept no responsibility for alterations made to articles.

Printed by Rex Leo ph. 3878 5248

Editors; Alan Gennings, Linda Bach, Chris Hall.

Printed 14<sup>th</sup> July 2008

**Feral Pigs reduced.**

At the beginning of this year feral pig tracks and sightings became very common around Moreton Island. Newly planted plants planted by MIPC volunteers at the North Point campground and the re-vegetation site below the grave at the Cape were being dug up by foraging pigs. The Park's pig control programme had lapsed due to delays in registration of the new safer bait "PIG OUT".

In early May a baiting programme using 1080 poison delivered in a new type of bait was commenced. In accessible areas baits were buried, and in inaccessible areas baits were delivered by helicopter. 1080 although highly toxic to pigs, has a low toxicity to native Australian animals.

Prior to poison bait laying, the new style of bait, without poison was tested to ensure baits were desirable to pigs, and were not taken by native animals. The new type of large sausage shaped bait can be eaten by pigs, but due to the baits large size and texture the poison in the centre is not able to be eaten by native Moreton animals. An infra red triggered camera on Moreton confirmed that test baits were taken by pigs and were not being consumed by native animals. Scavengers, such as highly susceptible dogs and foxes eating poisoned pigs, can only be poisoned if they eat the remains of the bait in the pig's stomach. Once exposed to rain the baits lose their toxicity. It is extremely unlikely that native animals will eat the poison, and if they do they are unlikely to be affected, given the low toxicity of 1080 to native Australian animals. For instance it has been calculated a bird of prey would have to consume more than 10kg of flesh from a recently dead pig at one time to receive a dose to put the bird at risk. (Brochure by Animal Control Technologies)

The May baiting run has resulted in a significant reduction in pig numbers. A follow up programme of aerial and buried baiting is planned for July. It is anticipated that after three or four more

extensive baiting runs pig numbers will be reduced to a level where aerial baiting will no longer be required.

The new Natural Resources Ranger for Moreton Bay Islands, Andy Quirk is responsible for the feral pig control programme. More information on "PIG OUT" can be found on Animal Control Technologies website [www.animalcontrol.com.au](http://www.animalcontrol.com.au)

*Alan*

**Dugong sighted.**

Off duty experienced Rangers sighted a dugong in the waters below the First Light keepers cottage at the Cape during the day on Thursday the 3<sup>rd</sup> July. The unusual sighting was confirmed with binoculars.

**Turtles washed up**

On the 5<sup>th</sup> July, a visitor to the Information Centre reported to Cape volunteers the location of 5 turtles that had been washed ashore. Some had already been recorded by rangers with a total of 8 turtles washed up for the week. Two of these had tags.

**Note;** Turtles marked with a yellow cross across their backs have been recorded by Rangers.

..... Cont Page 1  
**Resort proposed for  
Cape Moreton**

Now is the time to express your opposition to the Cape Moreton becoming a resort to;

The Premier,  
The Hon Ms Anna Bligh  
PO Box 15185  
CITY EAST QLD 4002

The Hon Desley Boyle,  
Minister for Tourism, Regional  
Development and Industry  
GPO Box 1141  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

**Thanks for all the pots!**

The north point nursery now has a substantial collection of pots adequate for the foreseeable future. Merv thanks all those who contributed their left over pots. ...  
.....Cont page 1

## **Combie Trader Service to cease**

Residents on the Redcliffe Peninsular with houses at Bulwer will have to travel to Port of Brisbane, and then on reaching Moreton will mostly have to drive from The Wrecks. MICat has also stated that it will not be able to compete with the prices currently offered by the Combie Trader of \$124 each for 10 vehicle tickets and \$28.50 each for 20 foot passenger tickets.

In a press release on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008, “the ACCC noted the strong concerns from residents of Scarborough, Bulwer and surrounding area about the loss of the ferry service currently provided by the Combie Trader” The ACCC investigated the purchase and reached a view not to oppose the transaction, having regard to a number of factors which included;

- “The likelihood that the Combie Trader service would cease to operate even if the current transaction did not occur
- The likelihood of a new operator emerging to provide an additional service to Moreton Island should Moreton Island ferries significantly increase the price of its services”.

MIPC was assured by the ACCC that the Qld State Government would enable a new operator to operate to Bulwer. A spokesman from minister’s office (Environmental Protection Agency, State Government) confirmed that once Combie’s daily service to Bulwer is replaced by the less frequent service by the MICat service then an expression of interest for a service from North of the River to Bulwer will be issued. The decreased service to Bulwer will result in increased traffic between The Wrecks and Bulwer. Vehicles aiming for Bulwer will now have little option but to drive along a narrow beach strip which can be cut off in a high tide.

**Note:** Links to The ACCC press release and news from MICat regarding the purchase can be found on the MICat website home page on the scrolling menu.

*Beth Crawter*

## **www.moretonisland.org.au**

MIPC has registered the web address [moretonisland.org.au](http://moretonisland.org.au). Incorporating MIPC as part of a web address was considered impractical given the extensive use of MI Personal Computer (MIPC). So instead of piggy backing our web address on Acenet’s web address MIPC now has the easily remembered web address [www.moretonisland.org.au](http://www.moretonisland.org.au).

Email addresses are also simpler and are [mipcvolunteers@moretonisland.org.au](mailto:mipcvolunteers@moretonisland.org.au) and [mipc@moretonisland.org.au](mailto:mipc@moretonisland.org.au)

This change has been made possible due to the ever decreasing prices of web site hosting and registration.

## **Interested in becoming a Cape Information Centre Volunteer?**

Registered volunteers are required to commit to staffing the Cape Information Centre once a year. Rangers are generally unable to staff the centre due to other commitments. Parks training includes

- how the visitor booking system works
- work place health and safety
- protocols in dealing with the public

All volunteers bring with them their own particular knowledge about Moreton which they can impart to interested visitors to the Information Centre.

Parks and Wildlife Service pays for 2 volunteers, MICat fares and arranges transport to the bunk house accommodation, located at the rear of the Information Centre. The bunk house and 4WD transport can usually accommodate 4 persons, 2 extra MICat fares are either funded by the volunteers or by Envirofund. The aim is to staff the Centre over the weekend once a month.

The bunk house has simple but complete range of facilities, eg fridge, stove with oven, pots, plates, hot showers, and bunk style beds. Volunteers bring their own food and bedding.

**If interested in becoming an Information Centre volunteer then please nominate for the training at 10.30 am on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August at Fort Lytton.**  
(more details see last page)

## **Cape Information Centre Volunteers**

The once a month frequency for voluntary staffing has been maintained. During Easter, Ranger Jason Engelbrecht and Justen Herdman also staffed the Centre which helped volunteers gain a better understanding of Parks procedures. This also enabled maintenance work to be done which volunteers had been too tentative to undertake eg. Freeing jammed windows.

Over the last few months volunteers MICat fares for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> volunteer have been funded by the Envirofund grant. When 4 volunteers participate in the week-ends, volunteers have been undertaking Envirofund work at North Point.

The MIPC executive has approved the purchase of the Qld Museum publications, *Brisbane Wildlife* and *Wild Guide to Moreton Bay* and the publication by Logan River Branch of Society for Growing Australian Plants new edition of *Mangroves to Mountains*. Using these books, all Information Centre volunteers should be able to help with those “What plant/animal was that?” questions.

# Volunteers at North Point

## *Report on North Point Regeneration Project.*

The project is moving along as planned with the initial working camp at the North Point campground held in February. Although it coincided with the hottest weather we had all summer, eight volunteers fronted up and bravely attacked umbrella trees, Mossman river grass, cobbler's pegs, yucca, vinca, passion fruit vine and asparagus fern in and around the campground area.

Natural Resources ranger, Andy Quirk came over on the Saturday and gave us a detailed training session on the use of a GPS, and weed mapping techniques used by QPWS. We were also visited by a couple of the rangers on duty, who joined us for lunch. One of them, indigenous ranger Jason Engelbrecht, is heading off for long service leave after more than 15 years of service on Moreton, and we were pleased to have the opportunity to say goodbye, wish him well and thank him for his support for MIPC and care for the Island over that time.

Since the February camp, once a month, groups of four or five volunteers have gone over for a weekend to work on the project site and try to find the best ways of killing or removing the lantana. A variety of different methods have been employed depending on the location and density of the infestation. Hand removal for smaller bushes on the margins, foliar spraying with 10% glysophate for dense areas and, for very large spreading bushes, drilling the base and filling the hole with 50% glysophate. The 'drill and fill' method has been spectacularly successful, and lots of dead bushes were evident on our last visit in May and June. It was also used for umbrella trees and cassias with similar success, and we will closely monitor for signs of any re-growth in spring and summer.

Other notable evidence of the success of our continued efforts on this site are, a big reduction in the number of vinca plants (persistent hand-pulling,) and the control of a patch of yucca by slashing and poisoning the base of plants. We have discovered quite a few new weeds (eg 'Live Leaf' a Bryophyllum species related to 'Mother of Millions') not currently listed as being found at North Point, and by recording and then eliminating them, we hope to prevent future problems of infestation. Another concern is the appearance of khaki grass with spiky seed heads – we hope to nip this in the bud.

It is also very pleasing to see the progress of the seedlings planted in revegetation beds in the campground, and the flourishing plants in the nursery. Due to the co-ordinated efforts of the rangers and MIPC volunteers, the Mossman river grass problem is gradually being eliminated, leading to a more comfortable camping experience.

**MIPC also gratefully acknowledges the support received from MICat ferries for our conservation**

**activities**, and particularly for the North Point Regeneration project by way of offering discounted fares for Envirofund volunteers. *Linda Back*

## **MIPC joins QWaLC**

At the beginning of the year MIPC joined the Queensland Water and Land Carers, an umbrella organization which represents volunteer based water and land care groups. Membership of QWaLC is free and once registered as a member MIPC became eligible to be covered by their insurance policy which has been paid for by the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water.

The insurance protects groups, individual members of groups, volunteers and third parties in the event of accidents or negligence and is current until October 2008. There are three current policies

- Personal Liability
- Public Liability
- Association Liability

Links to these policies can be found on the "News" page on MIPC's website. A copy of the policies will be available at the AGM.

The Personal Liability policy shows that members and other volunteers (eg. Non-members from the local community who help out at a tree planting day) are covered because they are included in the definition of the insured, as follows; ".... working parties and workers, host families/ persons carrying out authorized land care or catchment management activities ..."

Benefits are paid for a maximum of two years. Sickness benefits are not offered under this policy. Members and participants are advised to read the policy for details on any lump sums benefits that may be paid, and for other details of coverage and exclusion.

This new "free" policy seems much more comprehensive than MIPC's previous policy which although costing approximately \$1000 per year did not provide any personal accident cover.

The above interpretation of the policy has been copied from the QWaLC web site [www.landcare.org.au](http://www.landcare.org.au)

*Alan.*

## **Tax deductible donations**

All is now in place for receipt of tax deductible donations. A receipt will be sent after receipt of your donation.

## **4WD's impact beach invertebrates.**

For many years The Moreton Island Protection Committee has lobbied for vehicle-free beaches. The main areas of concern have been the disturbance of birds, nests and chicks as well as public safety. Research by Thomas Schlacher at the University of the Sunshine Coast suggests that the impacts from a "beach highway" are far greater. Assoc. Prof. Schlacher compared 4WD beaches on the Noosa North Shore, with nearby car-free beaches. The focus of the study was micro benthic and macro benthic fauna – invertebrates ranging from single-celled organisms to animals larger than 1mm. Researchers identified more than 12,000 specimens across 37 species. Beaches with traffic had roughly half the number of animals and number of species. In the middle and upper levels of the beach where traffic is concentrated nine out of ten samples had no life at all. The creatures A/Prof Schlacher is working with provide food for birds and fish. We see the escalating coastal population puts enormous pressure on wildlife through habitat loss, domestic animals, and pollution. This research suggests that beach driving creates a pressure hitherto unknown.

*Beth Cawter*

Editors note; *Moss and McPhee (2006) found that Stradbroke Island beaches with 4WD traffic had significantly lower ghost crab abundances than beaches without 4WD traffic. They suggested the lower numbers may have been due to crushing by 4WD's. They suggested vehicle free beaches or restricted traffic at night or at least on new moon nights when ghost crabs numbers are highest on the trafficable part of the beach.*

Moss D. and D. P. Mc Phee (2006) The Impacts of Recreational Four-Wheel Driving on the Abundance of the Ghost Crab (*Ocypode cordiminus*) on Subtropical Sandy Beaches in SE Queensland. *Coastal Management*, 34:133-140.

## **Sea grass watch.**

MIPC volunteers continue their 3 times a year survey of a site on the bayside of the Sandhills area. Due to clashes with long week-ends, and lack of suitable tides, the March/April survey was undertaken late on the 17<sup>th</sup> May by Patricia, Jenni, Alan and Chris. Linda, Philip Janet and Nannette conducted the last survey on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July.

**Once again Tangalooma made the surveys possible with complimentary ferry fares and boat transport to the remote site.**

If interested in participating please seek out one of the volunteers at the AGM or contact MIPC.

## **George Haddock will be missed!**

It was with great sadness I learned that George, long term National Parks Association office bearer collapsed and passed away at the dinner/ bush dance on 29<sup>th</sup> March for the 100 years anniversary of the first National Park declaration for Queensland.

At our last AGM, our prearranged guest speaker was unable to attend due to sickness and so George who came to represent the National Parks Association was roped in to be our guest speaker when he arrived.

I first met George in 1990 when he was NPA's representative at the community consultation process for preparation of a Moreton Island Management Plan. He proposed to the meeting that the Bulwer to Ocean beach road should be closed as it had been made by private individuals illegally and as it went through what is now National Park it should be closed.

Over the years I was privileged to be able to compare notes with George regarding management of National Parks. I expressed to George my concern that limiting the number and allowing the transfer of Commercial Operator permits on Moreton Island, will eventually result in permits becoming valuable and thus adding to costs that would be passed on to commercial operator clients. George in reply expressed concern that on Fraser new "young" operators were effectively excluded from becoming operators due to the prohibitive cost of purchasing a permit from a current operator. For me this had resonance as I had been privileged to become a commercial operator by just applying for a CTO permit for just a few hundred dollars, which is no longer possible. He went on to report that when discussing such issues with Parks managers from Fraser, he made the point that the current commercial permit system on Fraser was resulting in larger operators buying out all the other operators, which would result in just 1 or 2 operators. The department officer replied that Parks would prefer to deal with one or two commercial operators for Fraser as fewer operators were easier to manage.

In George's impromptu speech at our AGM last year he very humbly expressed his personal concern that members of the National Parks Association who had conducted extensive surveys in a remote Queensland National Park now find they are excluded from visiting the area as a result of Parks management agreements with indigenous people.

With these views George was not only expressing his concerns for conservation in National Parks, but also the importance of equitable access for all to National Parks. It is a great loss not to have George challenging Parks managers and conservationists with alternative views that were well founded and equity based.

*Alan Gennings*

## What's on .....!!! Ph 3321 1463

Aug 9<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Cape Information Volunteer Training.

Aug 9<sup>th</sup> 1 pm AGM at Fort Lytton

Oct 3-5 WPSQ/ MIPC camp at Blue Lagoon

### Cape Information Centre Volunteer Training

**10.30 am Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August, Fort Lytton**

Arrive 10 am for morning coffee and catch up.

A Ranger will deliver a workshop for new Information Centre volunteers and previously trained volunteers.

**Please register by 25<sup>th</sup> July for training** either by email to [mipcvolunteers@moretonisland.org.au](mailto:mipcvolunteers@moretonisland.org.au) or **phone 3321 1463**. Please provide your name and phone number. New volunteers who register by the 25<sup>th</sup> July will be provided with their own Volunteer manual. Previously trained volunteers are encouraged to attend so they can update their knowledge of the camping permit system, and get to know Parks staff.

**11.30 am Briefing by Parks on management plans for Moreton for the coming year.**

**AGM participants are welcome to come early for the briefing.**

### Memberships

The AGM is also an excellent opportunity for members to update their nominal membership fees of just \$10.

### Tshirts

A complete range of mens and ladies Tshirt Pied Oyster Catcher design is now in stock. These and discontinued designs will be available at the AGM.

**T Shirts are \$16 plus postage and can be mailed.**

## AGM Sat 9<sup>th</sup> August.

**1.00 pm Fort Lytton**

**12 noon Please bring a plate of food to share and something for afternoon tea.** The kitchen attached to the conference room has plates, stove and fridge. MIPC will provide tea & coffee.

**1pm Guest Speaker Dr Janet Lanyon**  
University of Qld dugong researcher will speak on Dugong research and conservation.

### Agenda

- Presidents report & Treasurers report
- Volunteer programme reports, Cape Information Centre, Envirofund, Nursery and Sea grass monitoring.
- Election of office bearers
- General business

After the meeting new members can meet with the nominated organizer for each group. Volunteers will have an opportunity to provide input and register their interest in volunteering.

### Blue Lagoon 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Oct. ~WPSQ

Wildlife Preservation Society Queensland, weekend at Blue Lagoon. Camp kitchen and marquee tents with stretchers provided. BYO food except for the BBQ provided Saturday evening. Includes tour to Cape Moreton, and Little Sandhills, (Sand tobogganing)

**Departs** 8.30 am Friday, 6.30 pm Friday.

**Returns** Sun 6 pm

MICat terminal Howard Smith Drive, LYTTON

**Members Cost \$125**

**Bookings 0428 783781**

**More information at:** [www.moretonexperience.com](http://www.moretonexperience.com)