

CWCN AGM Presidents report 2017

Tonight's report will be shorter and not well illustrated as Presidents reports have been in the past. The reason for this being that I have been absent on sick leave for the vast majority of the year.

However the strong and resilient committee has stepped up and kept CWCN rolling for the year

At last year's AGM and elections of new office bearers we noted that the statutory office bearers (President Secretary and Treasurer) had all been changed to new faces. However we had a strong committee of additional members. Most of whom have long previous experience and so able to step in to both the Presidents' and Treasurer's roles.

AWARDS

Notable highlights and achievements for the organisation have to be

Members Lyn Cole and Ray Kelly were honoured by Lord Mayor of Brisbane with Australia Day awards. Both members have done CWCN proud not only through long service, but service with great achievements which leave a lasting mark on the Catchment.

Lyn was honoured with the Green Heart Award for an Individual for her bird activities (going well beyond local surveys) and also for her immense contribution to rehabilitating the Chapel Hill reach of Mount Coot-tha with her group Wandering Weeders.

Her results have shown that we still have a vibrant and resilient birdlife in the catchment, with no serious decline in biodiversity values – despite that habitat is still being lost through urban development (encouraged by Council's new economic community zonings). Lyn continues to run birdwatch activities every month in the key locations that best typify conditions in the catchment.

Ray Kelly received an Achievement Award. In that he has provided a now 22 year record of longitudinal citizen science of water quality monitoring results which are stored in the citizen science WQM database being maintained by the Regional Body Healthy Land and Water. When I meet with other Catchments,

they are in awe of the informational resource Ray has provided to this catchment. And again as I understand it, the trend in Water quality has been fairly steady – a true achievement of the rehabilitation work going on in the catchment despite the increased urbanization which has occurred over 20 years.

Fungi Festival

My next notable achievement was the successful conduct of the Fungi Festival in spring last year. This was conducted with Queensland Mycological Society, Australian Mushroom Growers Association, Chapel Hill Kindy and funding and support were received from SEQ Catchments and Brisbane City Council.

With attendance figures of several hundred people attending, the Festival that demonstrated a number of things – we are taking big steps to educate people who live in the catchment on very important topics – for instance the Fungi and Lichen kingdom is larger in species and biomass than the plant and animal kingdoms combined. Before the festival I wonder how many of the people in the catchment knew that. It was also a tribute to the organizers and workers on the committee lead again by our communications and education specialist Jutta Godwin. Jutta, the Catchment and CWCN owes you a profound vote of thanks for Organising such an event.

Habitat Brisbane and Bushcare Groups

Next is the growth in Brisbane City Councils Habitat Brisbane Program Bushcare Groups whom we work with. For instance in Cubberla Creek Connect, we have grown from seven to ten groups. In *Witton for Wildlife* we have grown four to six groups. On the other hand Brisbane River Corridor has declined by one group. *Western Creek* has one new group and *Toowong Creek Turnaround* has remained with one group. So for those who can do the maths, we now have 21 operating Bushcare Groups. Each month each group makes its contributions either by beavering away quietly, or by managing major rehabilitation and in some cases major earthworks and creek stabilization through engineering as well as soft engineering. I wish to acknowledge the assistance from a number of arms of Brisbane City Council in this work and also for other community volunteers not necessarily members of CWCN

Book Club

The CWCN Book Club continues to grow from strength to strength – it has conducted regular book discussions every month and is able to choose informative and challenging topics to elucidate among those who can make it. This positive trend is a true credit to Robin Trotter for so capably running the discussions.

Education

CWCN has reached out to the tertiary institutions and has been able to have students from the QUT Capstone project again conduct an experiment and demonstration – this year the Students developed a riparian vegetation condition assessment process. QUT also had a Student Catchment Immersion Project (as an extra curricular activity) which in our case was to be an aquatic vegetation survey. Unfortunately the weather gods predicated against us – and despite all Tony’s work to get the materials and survey instruments to hand – he had to call the event off at the last moment. On the other hand UQ student Hannah Barham conducted a study on the demographics of CWCN members compared with the background city demographics – ie why CWCN is not attracting large numbers of younger age members. This is still a work in progress.

The CWCN Education program has continued apace with kindergarten programs carried out with children of Chapel Hill Community Kindergarten and activities for kindy to primary school age during every school holiday period over the last year. The group is lead by Jutta Godwin and includes Melanie Venz, Judy Haines, Masayo Friedler, Annette Flower. I We all had to take a deep breath when arriving on the grounds of the Centre to see a small crowd up in that back yard but only to realize (by their lack of mobility) that it is the scarecrows created during one such education event. Tony, with assistance of a SEQ Water ‘Water for Life’ grant is working with Kenmore South School doing water quality observations and implications

Grants and Fund Raising

CWCN has fared well in grants during the year, notably the grant from the Gaming Machine Community Benefit Fund which will allow us to replace our struggling old and outdated Horiba water quality monitoring instrument and to provide new audio visual and sound systems for the events we regularly conduct.

We continue to be successful at the Council level with CCA (community conservation assistance) grants, where the financial aspects of the projects are performed by Council through the Habitat Brisbane and Creek Catchment Officer programs. This year we were further pleased to receive two Lord Mayor's Sustainability and environment grants – one for Little Gubberley and the other for Sandy Creek in the St Lucia Golf links and are about to complete one benefiting Dillingen Street Park. CWCN was pleased to be recipient of two brand new Whats Your Nature grants, one for the Ambrose Treacy College Vegetation Rehabilitation and one for Manaton Park weed and vegetation management, and is in the third year of a previous *What's Your Nature?* Grant benefiting Cubberla Creek at Burns Parade.

The fund raising events at Bunnings Oxley have continued to inject welcome amounts but very valuable discretionary funds which can be used to help keep the doors open and the lights on.

Corporate Volunteers

Our corporate volunteering projects are continuing with Golder Associates at Dillingen Street Park, who have demonstrated they are likely to stay the course while we are still in the early but very satisfactory stages with Sugar Research Australia.

Water Quality Monitoring

As mentioned before, we are proud of the water quality monitoring work undertaken and records maintained from the past, and it is important to record that Tony Pressland and Henry Camacho continue the sampling each month in the four CWCN Creeks. We thank Brisbane City Council for calibrating the Horiba instrument on a regular basis so as to ensure the data we record is of the highest standards

Seed Propagation

Our Seed Propagation facility continues to improve – it is still in its early stages and appreciation goes to Henry Camacho and his team to achieve what we have to date.

Lions Club

I would like to also make mention of the support we receive from the Lions Club, who provide support at each and every one of our major functions, without their support, in providing ‘for the inner man’ I am sure we would not continue to attract as many eager volunteers and attendees.

BCC Staff

And I must not forget to give particular vote of thanks to the staff of the BCC Creek Catchment Officers, Adam Richardt and Anna Bourke and to our Habitat Brisbane Officer Catherine Cleary. They are always on hand to give us inspiration and to help us negotiate our way through the bureaucracy which often seems a bit of a maze to we ordinary mortals.

Committee Members

So in summary, we have challenges with a stagnating to declining and aging membership, but on the other hand we can attract numbers for on ground works and our major events. Thus, I have to register a strong vote of support and my applause for our/your committee (all eight of them) without whom the place could easily have fallen apart during my absence. I sincerely thank each and every one of them and ask that you too applaud them.

Brian Venz

President CWCN