



## President's Report – November 2013

This year has seen some really great things happen within Karawatha Forest – unfortunately offset by one issue with a nearby development, as well as political policies & restructuring.

### *The Eco Discovery Centre*

Most of you will have heard about the Lord Mayor's allocation of over \$7 million dollars towards the establishment of an Eco Discovery Centre within K.F.

This planned centre is one of the 6 key Objectives of the Society when it was formed in 1991 – **see attached extract**. It will also help with at least 2 of our other objectives, namely education and spreading the Society's word. And it's finally coming about.

Planning called for submissions, of which the Society provided one, as well as several from our members.

The B.C.C. Project Manager, Andrew Ensby was to speak at the AGM, but unfortunately had other commitments. Andrew has spoken here on 3? occasions as the project has progressed.

Related to the **Discovery Centre** was the 'new & improved' **Karawatha Forest Fun Day**. – formerly the **K.F. Bush Picnic**.

### *Karawatha Forest Fun Day*

Meetings were held between several of the committee and Cr Kim Marx where the Discovery Centre was discussed, and crucially, to hand over the control and management of the newly-named Fun Day to Cr Kim's office.

By moving this to May (from September), this would also allow greater interaction with the public to have the opportunity to comment at the Discovery Centre marquee with Andrew Ensby. Andrew Ensby ran the Eco Discovery Centre marquee which was well attended by a constant stream of people.

The Councillor's office did an excellent job, with numbers estimated at probably double last year's Picnic.

## **Facebook Pages**

1. Our member, Lori Floden, set up a facebook page for the Society.

This has allowed us to provide quick news about the Forest and the Society, and to set up Event Notices for things such as the Fun Day and our regular meetings, and map updates.

It also means that people can post public notices and photos the FB page: and we've got some great photos from Jessica Mills and Vince Watego, amongst others.

We are currently at only 86 "Likes", so please spread the word:

[www.facebook.com/KarawathaForestProtectionSociety](http://www.facebook.com/KarawathaForestProtectionSociety)

2. I set up a second facebook page called "Pres KarawathaForest ProtSociety" – this is for the role of president, and is intended to be taken over by the next elected president, so the society does not lose the largish number of facebook "Friends" that the "Pres" has contact with – this also allowed me to remove mainly political and other group "Friends" from my personal FB page to "Pres".

See the **links** at the end of this document.

## **Back to the Discovery Centre – Content Consultant**

Andrew Ensby asked KFPS to provide people who would be interested in showing the Discover Centre's Content Consultant around K.F. Life member Bernice Volz and myself spent some 3½ hours with Jenny Gardner of Creative Hat Interpretations (sub-contracted by Arterial Design) in K.F. That time flew by quickly but we had so much to say & show.

We met at the Compton Rd entrance and went to the Rocks Picnic Area include the tessellated stones near the Echnida Track, the Wooden Rocks steps including the Camunian Rose.

Next visited was Frog's Hollow and surrounds, where the importance of the Green-Thighed Frog breeding habitat was discussed.

We stopped in at Poet's Rock, and then did a quick swing by the Quarry, before heading out to Acacia Rd Picnic Area where we handed Ms Gardner over to Matt de Glas.

Feedback from Andrew Ensby was wonderful as Ms Gardner was extremely pleased with the things that she had been shown, and the wide range of topics discussed.

## **Signage!**

I first visited K.F. in 2008 and quickly became disgusted with the signs within the forest.

Issues include old 'Ordinance' signs, but in particular the track signs. Many had wrong placement and wrong distances. Another fault was that the track-name-blade was indistinguishable from other direction-to-blades. The last major fault was there were no signs to the exits, just signs to other tracks.

This last fault about there being no exit signs helped to cause the situation a couple of summers ago, when a walking party including a dog became disoriented. Due to the high temperatures and the fact that the party had little water caused the people and the dog to become heat-stressed. The dog subsequently died – it could just as easily have been one of the walking party.

In 2010, I heard about and joined the Society & asked about the signs. Some of the committee knew of the faults, but no-one had the time or skill to report the faults to the council.

So I wrote an Audit and Recommendation Report, and presented this to the council. This sat in council's to-do box for some time, and was further delayed by council clean-up operations following Brisbane's flood damage recover work.

Our committee was able to raise a grant from the Gambling Community Fund for \$23,500 to be put toward these signs. This prompted Cr Kim Marx to provide some money from her allocated projects fund, and the Lord Mayor's office chipped in with the final amount.

I had several meetings with BCC 'Local Assets South' staff to review their new designs.

The signs were made and installation commenced in July this year – **see newspaper article below.**

### ***The Federal Election***

While trying not to get political, we met several times with David Lin (federal LNP candidate for Rankin), the federal shadow minister Greg Hunt (LNP), Freya Ostapovich (state member, LNP), and Dr Jim Chalmers (federal ALP candidate for Rankin).

These meetings discussed frog habitat, and the Flinders-Greenbank-Karawatha corridor, especially in relation to wildlife crossings, since the area involved is a large one across different councils, and includes state- & federally-funded roads, which certainly need more crossings.

### ***Rankin Candidates Forum***

Our biggest meeting this year was the Rankin Candidates Forum organised by David Forde.

Attended were Dr Jim Chalmers (ALP), Bill Rogan (PUP), Neil Cotter (GP), David Lin (LNP and Chris Claydon (KAT) – **see photo below.**

This is certainly the best forum that I've attended and the level of questions from the floor was of a high calibre.

### ***The Acacia Rd & Compton Rd Development***

I've attended a couple of mediation hearings with Wally Wight, Donnell Davis, Paula Ross and Corny Van Eldik.

Some things have happened which are destroying our ability to fight this development:

1. the legislation has changed so the all parties in a dispute may have (will have) costs awarded against them. This means that people could lose houses and businesses.
2. The Brisbane City Council have 'rolled over' and are letting the developers get away with riding rough-shod over the rules and regulations.

Donnell Davis has formally asked the court to leave the hearing process.

### ***Life Membership***

With all their volunteered help over the years regarding this development, KFPS voted to bestow Life Membership on Wally Wight and Donnell Davis, and the presentation for this occurred at our last meeting. **See the photo below.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alf Lacis', with a small 'Scanned' watermark below it.

Alf Lacis, President

## Attachments:

### From the Rules of Incorporation:

#### OBJECTS

2. The objects for which the Association is established are:

(1) To promote the conservation of the flora, fauna and landscape values of Karawatha Forest and adjoining bushland for the benefit of the community,

(2) To promote educational, cultural and scientific opportunities within Karawatha Forest for the benefit of the community,

(3) To promote appropriate management of Karawatha Forest and adjoining areas and the establishment of an environmental resources centre to serve the community,

(4) To strive to limit the impact of urbanisation on Karawatha Forest for the benefit of the community,

(5) To protect and preserve Karawatha Forest and adjoining bushland as key ecological areas on Brisbane's southside, and

(6) To educate members and others into the objects of the Association.

#### Facebook page links:

[www.facebook.com/KarawathaForestProtectionSociety](http://www.facebook.com/KarawathaForestProtectionSociety)

[www.facebook.com/pres.karawathaforestprotosoc](http://www.facebook.com/pres.karawathaforestprotosoc)

SOUTHERN STAR, Wednesday, July 24, 2013 15

KARAWATHA

# New signs to get times right

Hayley Sultanie

KARAWATHA Forest will be safer and easier to navigate following the installation of new signs to replace missing ones and others showing wrong directions and walking trail distances.

More than \$120,000 is being spent to install 85 signs

in the area over the next fortnight following a push from Karawatha Forest Protection Society.

Society president Alf Laciis spent 300 hours compiling a report on the state of signage in the forest.

He provided recommendations, which Brisbane

City Council used to plan the upgrades.

He said the outdated signs were a safety issue as there was anecdotal evidence of people getting lost in the area and a dog dying from dehydration after its owner had struggled to find her way out.

"The signs in there now are older but some are not accurate, and that's putting it mildly," Mr Laciis said.

"One of the other issues is once you are in the forest all the signs point to other tracks but there are none pointing to the exits and that is vital."

Cr Kim Marx (Karawatha Ward) said the new signs would make the park more accessible to people.

"These signs will state the direction and length of the tracks and make it clearer for users of the forest to find their way around all of the trails," Cr Marx said.



Alf Laciis and Cr Kim Marx.

### **The Federal Candidates Forum**



Left to right: David Forde (MC, standing), (sitting) Dr Jim Chalmers (ALP), Bill Rogan (PUP), Neil Cotter (GP), David Lin (LNP) and Chris Claydon (KAT)

### **Life Membership Presentation for Donnell Davis and Wally Wight**



Left to right: Pam Smith (Asst Sec), Alf Lacin (Pres), Donnell Davis, Wally Wight (front), Corny Van Eldik (back), Margaret Williamson (Treas), Paula Ross (Sec) and David Forde (Vice Pres)