



FRIENDS OF MALABAR HEADLAND (FoMH)

Member Newsletter 5

December 2002

FoMH is a community based group formed in April 2000 to help protect the natural and cultural heritage of Malabar Headland. The Headland contains the largest area of native bush left in the Eastern suburbs.

Our Visions & Goals

- A National park declared for the entire Headland
- Revegetation & preservation of native flora & fauna
- Aboriginal & World War II heritage sites protected, restored and maintained
- Build a strong & active community
- Community access for multiple use recreation, cultural & education activities
- A safe clean site

➤ News & Recent Achievements

FoMH's Community Draft Plan of Management for Malabar Headland and the CD-Rom library of plants was launched on Thursday 29th August at the Bowen Library. It was a huge public event, the venue filled to overflowing. The Premier, Bob Carr was invited to be the guest of honour, and other speakers were Peter Ryan, Chair of FoMH, Mike Archer, local resident and director of the Australian Museum, Dominic Sullivan, Mayor of Randwick, Ken Foster, president of the La Perouse Aboriginal Land Council, and the M.C. was Professor Paul Adam from NSW Uni.

Randwick Council fully endorsed the draft plan, and bought a copy for each councillor. You may access the plan from the local and State library, or the FoMH website. Over 100 copies were sold, and comments on the plan are currently being compiled.

Speech excerpts (full transcript of Bob Carr's and the mayor's speech will soon be on the web).

Bob Carr: "I think we're all agreed on the objective that Malabar Rifle Range, that is all the component parts of it, should become a national park." "...the Commonwealth doesn't want to hand over the land until all the shooters' requirements had been accommodated..." "On the prospect of housing: you should bear this in mind, there is no prospect of

housing on the headland, I put a conservation order over the Headland itself when I was Environment Minister, and I mean there'd be blood in the streets if the Commonwealth proposed that: Headlands are very, very precious."

On the Western Section: [It] "has long been zoned for housing, zoned for military housing years ago; this is the area that abuts South Maroubra housing estate, and John Fahey made it very clear, that when he was handing over the rifle range he wasn't intending to hand over that part of it - the Commonwealth wanted to develop that so it got some sort of a return. I've got to say that every time I look at that bushland, going out to La Perouse, I see it as more and more precious... I see it as part of the rifle range, and we have got to insist that we want that from the Commonwealth undeveloped as well."

"But, I've got to signal to you, I feel we will have a real fight with the Commonwealth, arguing that the park ought to include that Western area of the Rifle Range..."

"Now they can't really do much without the co-operation of the State, I mean the Commonwealth in theory can do what it likes with its land, its not bound by the State's planning laws - that's the fundamental legal position, but in practical terms if they don't get State co-operation, they'd be hard pressed to develop any area."

Dominic Sullivan, Mayor of Randwick:

"Back in 1988 your council attempted without the consent of the Commonwealth to rezone it [the western section], to a proposed national park. As the Premier indicated at the moment the western section is still zoned for townhouse development, but council has a draft plan, which says that nothing will be built on it. That is still the current position of council". "We will continue to work with the Friends of Malabar Headland and the State Government to see that the plan you have helped to develop will be adopted..." "I... look forward to placing it officially before our council for endorsement."

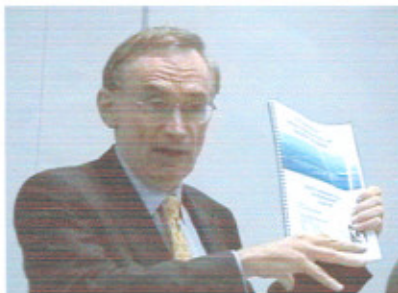
All speakers were presented with a native plant propagated from cuttings and seeds from Headland species, grown by the staff at the council nursery in Barker St, Kensington.

Thanks to all our helpers on the night, you know who you are. It would not have happened without you; everyone did a fantastic job!

CD-Rom of Malabar Headland (above right) is available for \$20 from Margaret Vazey (02) 9349 6043, or borrow it at the library.

Some of you may have noticed the visual display on the launch night, which subsequently appeared in the Bowen Library and helped us to raise awareness of our precious heritage. We attracted many new members as a result and some generous donations - thank you one and all. Here (below and right) are images from the Bowen library display.

Donations: special thanks are due to Margaret Vazey for fund raising to support her CD-Rom project, and to Freyatech Pty Ltd (details from Margaret) for the software development. Major business donors were: Mr Big Stuff Café, Maroubra Beach, Walsh's Village Pharmacy, South Maroubra, and Victory Photographics, at Maroubra Junction.



Headland Bird Count is rising towards 200 native species recorded, thought to be a rather unfortunate result of the drought.

Plant count currently 342 species, refer to Draft Plan for details.

TV interviews Peter Ryan, chair of FoMH and ELEMENTS's Adam Foster were interviewed about the Headland in two separate segments by Channel 31, community TV. Available for viewing see contact below.

Bush Regeneration Activities continue and if you want to get fit for free, join one of our groups: Phone Margaret for the Thursday group on 0412 047259, or Alan for the Sunday group on 9661 6323. No experience necessary, tools provided, bring gloves and water.

Bitou bush spraying/rubbish cleanup by the Commonwealth went ahead in July, but there are still a lot of flowers and seeds on the Bitou, and we can only speculate on the reason for the clean-up – is it like painting the house before you sell?

Newspaper articles

"Forgive us our trespassing and hand over the land" SMH 29/8/02 featured the kestrel that lives on Magic Point, and was a prelude to the launch. Nick Moir is the SMH photographer that lives in Maroubra who often photographs our Headland birds.



SMH THURS 29/8/02

Forgive us our trespassing and hand over the land

The same kestrel and its family was also the subject on an article in Wingspan, the news magazine of Birds Australia at about the same time. Lots of yummy photos of the Headland, the rocks and the babies in the nest.

"Protecting the future of Malabar Headland" Mayor's message in the Southern Courier 3/9/02. Dominic Sullivan reiterates his commitment to saving the Headland.

"Carr park plan for Malabar" Clare Masters Southern Courier 3/9/02. Reports on the Headland and the launch of Draft Plan of Management.

Membership Database Eric has done a fantastic job of designing an easy to use database, which will help greatly with mailouts and membership renewal reminders. Many thanks, Eric.

The council in a small ceremony at Malabar beach donated tools for bush regeneration in September 2002.

Public Liability insurance issue still unresolved. We have no cover until further notice, so all members should be aware of this fact and be extra careful when involved in FoMH activities.

Grey Nurse Sharks have been on the front of the Southern Courier recently (see website: www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au). Critical habitat was declared at Magic Point, Maroubra on 1st December 2002, an attempt to protect the habitat which is vital to the survival of this endangered shark species.

Fire

A recent Southern Courier article drew attention to the potential bushfire hazard affecting adjoining residential housing. A recent government document (Eastern Suburbs bushfire plan) made virtually no reference to the Headland. We are pursuing further discussions on this issue.

Where to from here?

- Discuss submissions received on draft Plan of Management, and consider our next steps.
- Apply for funds and grants to develop databases of the Headland's plants, insects, reptiles, etc.
- Produce material for fund raising, education and promotion.
- Demonstrations and talks in local schools.
- Clean-up Australia day – we must be an official site this year.
- Forthcoming state election March 2003 – good opportunity to get the Headland into local consciousness as a real issue, especially since this is Bob Carr's electorate.
- Any ideas welcome eg, raffles, fund raising days, sausage sizzles, rallies. Consider your skills, or something that you are passionate about, and lets do it.....

Nothing Trendy About It Submitted by Dominic McDonell

Everyone knows that the people in and around Maroubra have strong community bonds. The area's beautiful natural features have always been a focus of the community's love and pride. Just listen to this rhapsody from the "Evening News", November 5 1909. The title is "Maroubra – A Paradise for Weary Humanity"...

"Maroubra, with its delightful walks, balmy air, and matchless views from the hills, which half-circle the magnificent bay, has a fascination for lovers of nature..."

"... All around the landscape is lying in a dream of natural beauty. Oh! It is heavenly... beautiful Maroubra. For years you have occupied a unique position among the seaside resorts adjacent to Sydney. Increase of population and the almost unprecedented growth of the grimy city, have, however made demands on you, and constructive landscape gardening will displace the wealth of natural flora decking your uplands in a variety of colour. The scene is already changing. The vagrant has received his dismissal. One now sees well-formed roads where the wild flowers lifted their pretty faces for the bees to kiss. Bathing-sheds have been created, to abolish the delightful though half-barbaric freedom which previously held unbridled sway. (!) Many substantial residences have taken the place of the white-roofed tents, which added a never-to-be forgotten picturesqueness to the valley below... Before long the domestic tap will supplant the never-failing spring, with its tiny stream of sparkling chain of liquid diamonds trailing over the rocky ledge at the bend in the cliff. Within the next couple of years, perhaps less, a much greater transformation scene must be expected..."

Surely that writer deserves retrospective honorary membership of FoMH! Now just imagine the area one hundred years ago. To get here, you would need to get off the tram at the St Paul's terminus (at The Spot in Randwick). From there you would hike down the military road (the same route as present day Malabar Road). In those days weekend camps were the go, with youngsters setting up tents and huts with names like 'The Irish 13', 'Lecchi's Ragtime Boys', 'Wunsaweek', to enjoy "the new sport of surfing [ocean swimming], which had been legalized in 1902, and to hunt ducks and other wildlife in the nearby lagoons".

These tidbits are among the fascinating local knowledge from **Maroubra Surf Club: the first 75 years**, 1982, published by Lester-Townsend Publishing, Sydney. The book's author is Tom Symonds, local historian and himself a Meritorious Award recipient for "bravery in a most dangerous and successful rescue off Cape Banks". The book is available in Bowen Library, and in the words of the then Club President in his foreword: "I can think of nothing more enjoyable than a comfortable chair, a cold gold and this book."

Next meeting 7 pm Thursday 6th February

St Marks Church Hall corner Franklin St & Victoria Lane, Malabar

PLEASE NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO JAN 2003 MEETING

More information: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/malabar>
Call Peter Ryan 9311 2334 or email: pjrhino@yahoo.com