



FRIENDS OF MAATSUYKER ISLAND



Newsletter

Number 10 April 2014

December 2013 Working Bee - Maatsuyker Island

From 7-16 December 2013, a team of 10, including weeders, seabird biologists and builders, were on Maatsuyker Island for the annual Friends of Maatsuyker Island (FOMI) Working Bee. The team based themselves in Quarters 3 (Q3) which was the first time in many years that Q3 had seen so much 'action'. Thanks to an Internal Grant from the Wildcare Board of Management, a new fridge was purchased for the island to be utilised by Wildcare volunteers and the fridge was a great asset for the FOMI Working Bee. The weeding program was supported by a Caring for Our Country Community Environment Grant and general FOMI funds supported the seabird project and the building maintenance work.

The weeding group (Marina Campbell, Karen Ziegler, Vicki Campbell, Amy Saunders, Noah Poole and David Milne) spent a large amount of time undertaking systematic survey work to locate and treat new infestations of blackberry and *Hebe elliptica* as well as revisiting weed GPS waypoints from past work. Nicole and Pete, two artists-in-residence on Maatsuyker for a 3 month stint, also joined the team and helped out with the weed survey work.

The Working Bee marked that start of a new initiative by FOMI - the 'Shearwater Research Program'. Surveys of the

island's Short-tailed Shearwater (muttonbird) colony were undertaken to enable a new estimate of the population size on Maatsuyker and to begin monitoring of the burrow occupancy and burrow density of this species. The seabird work (by Sheryl Hamilton and Georgie Hedley) involved checking more than 1000 burrows using a specialised 'burrowscope' - a camera at the end of a hose that projected an image to a screen outside the burrow.

The building crew, Ron Fehlberg and Keith Darke, carried out much-needed floor repairs in Q1 and Q2 and identified other areas of flooring that need urgent replacing in Q3.

On the last day the whole team, including the artists, undertook some sensitive clearing of vegetation around two sites on the old haulage way (as approved by Parks & Wildlife Service managers). It was very exciting to reveal an elevated section of approximately 25 metres almost intact.

Despite the very unsettled, early summer weather (with only one 'sunset over the Needles' photo opportunity!), the Working Bee was a great success. The fantastic team worked hard, achieved much, supported each other well and, most importantly, had lots of fun.



• Some of the many drawings done by Nicole O'Loughlin while Artist in Residence on Maatsuyker

Island Arks Symposium III

From 11-14 February 2014, the third Island Arks National Symposium was held in Hobart with over 100 participants from Australia and its external territories, New Zealand and Fiji. Wildcare was one of the main sponsors of this year's event. Christian Bell, FOMI Committee member and Wildcare Board Member, was Wildcare's representative on the Tasmanian organizing committee for the Symposium.

Sheryl Hamilton and Marina Campbell gave a presentation titled "*Volunteer-managed weed control and seabird monitoring programs on Tasmanian World Heritage Area's Maatsuyker Island*". The talk highlighted the key work undertaken by FOMI to support PWS in the management of the island to maintain the cultural and natural values of the island. The talk acknowledged that FOMI's achievements are largely due to the committed, professional committee who fundraise and implement on-island and off-island projects and the strong partnership with PWS.

FOMI also joined with Friends of the Bass Strait Islands (FOBSI) and Friends of Tasman Island (FOTI) to run a joint stall and display for the duration of the event. Thanks to Ailsa Fergusson, Erika Shankley and Suzanne Skira who assisted with the construction and transport of the displays as well as the other volunteers who assisted with staffing the stall.

Artists in Residence Summer 2013 – 2014

We arrived via helicopter on a spectacular day in mid November. It was our first trip to the island and FOMI had helped us out with lots of insights into the island and what to be prepared for. The weather remained fairly good for our three months on the island with the occasional blustery storms blowing in across the Southern Ocean, especially when the FOMI working crew visited for 10 days.

Pete is a photographer who makes his own cameras inspired by what he is taking a photo of, combining sculpture and pinhole photography.



- *Pete's pinhole camera stands proudly with the real thing.*

He constructed a lighthouse replica model from our waste on the island, which also takes 360 degree images. He also took many photos on film, with 50 rolls to be developed. Nicole is a printmaker and painter. Her time was spent doing 50 small watercolours of feathers, bones, leaves, moss and lichen. She also completed some larger works ending up with around 70 works in total. A very prolific and inspiring time for both artists!

We both agree that it has been one of the best experiences of our lives and fell in love with Maatsuyker Island, its birds, flora and fauna and of course the isolation.

Now we are in the process of finishing up the works and will be having an exhibitions later this year, to which you will all be invited!

Nicole and Pete.

First Order - Australia's Highway of Lighthouses by Garry Searle is a beautiful new book for all lighthouse enthusiasts.

www.seasidelights.com.au/FirstOrder/LoA



Leah on the left. Arriving at Alomes Gulch, Maatsuyker Island



Leah is second from right. The day trippers are whale spotting – 3 Sperm Whales South East of Maat.

Day Trip to Maatsuyker Island 22 March 2014

This was a very special trip for one of our day trippers. Fifty years on, Leah Burton was returning to Maatsuyker Island. Leah lived on Maat. as a child in 1962-63 with her parents Walter and Pat Krulis. Leah remembers that back then the keepers did the weather and lighthouse duties and made sure the generator and the trolley cart were kept in good order. "When we left the island Dad had become quite

passionate about the weather and he trained as a meteorologist. We then went on to live in various places in Australia including Thursday Island. So we lived in the most Southern and Northern areas of Australia."

The December 2013 Working Bee had a special mission – to deliver the photo montage of Craig (Saunders) to Maatsuyker Island. Craig has been and will always be a very special part of our working bees and friend to the islands.



For more information call Sheryl Hamilton (Secretary FOMI) via the contacts below.

Friends of Maatsuyker Island - Wildcare Inc

wildcaremaatsuyker@gmail.com

Ph 0448174298



