



NEWSLETTER

Number 9 June 2013

Q: Which volunteer community group with a passion for Maatsuyker Island turned 10 on 11 June 2013?
A: FOMI

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOMI!

Yes, that's right, FOMI is celebrating its 10th birthday! Who would have thought that when a small group of Maatsuyker Island enthusiasts attended a community meeting in 2003 - braving what back then was a cold, wet, winter's night - FOMI would go from strength to strength to become the strong, vibrant and successful group that we are today.

Highlights of our first decade include publishing the Maatsuyker Island Visitors Guidebook and winning a string of competitive grants to fund projects on and off the island. Such projects include volunteer working bees to remove weeds and make repairs to the lighthouse keepers' quarters, and archiving John Cook's

photographic collection from his time as one of Maatsuyker's longest-serving lightkeepers. FOMI has also led annual day trips to the island since 2004, providing members of the community with the opportunity to visit this special island. In doing so, FOMI has worked closely with the island's manager, the Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service, to develop visitor access guidelines to ensure Maatsuyker's environmental and cultural values continue to be protected for future generations.



Craig and Deb, current caretakers, arriving on Maat in February

Other achievements during our first decade include a State Landcare Award, the purchase of original plans of the Maatsuyker Lightstation Master's Quarters and Tramway (now safely housed with the National Archives of Australia), and participation in significant State events such as the biannual 'Wooden Boat Festival' and this year's

hugely successful Maatsuyker exhibition at the '10 Days on the Island' festival.

To celebrate our 10th birthday, FOMI Committee members past and present will attend a dinner in Hobart later this month. Then we have even more birthday celebrations planned for all FOMI members to coincide with the Tall Ships visit Hobart in September. Watch this space for updates and information.

Australian Wooden Boat Festival FOMI had a display at the Festival held in early February and made contact with many old friends who have supported us over the years and made many new contacts who are now on our mailing list. We also boosted our funds by about \$2000 with the proceeds from the raffle and sales of merchandise. Thank you to all who volunteered their time to people the stall.

Grant writing Members of the FOMI Committee put in a huge effort writing many grant applications toward the immediate weatherproofing and restoration of the lighthouse, cataloguing the many Objects on the Island and to continue the weed management program which has done such great work treating Blackberry, Hebe and Montbretia. This year we also included undertaking surveys of the Short-tail Shearwater. The grant writing is such an important role for FOMI to ensure ongoing funding to undertake these important works on the Island. Last year was a lean year for grants and we were grateful to the Maritime Museums of Australia Project Support Scheme (MMAPSS) for funding toward cataloguing Objects on

Maat., as well grateful to the Wildcare Board for support toward this years working bee \$2000, support toward FOMIs 10 Days on the Island exhibition \$2000 and support for 2 FOMI crew to undertake Chem-cert training \$900. The following link will take you to the Wildcare website for more information

http://www.wildcaretas.org.au/groups_details/maatsuyker.

Working Bee 24 – 31 February 2013 nine intrepid and very enthusiastic volunteers climbed on board the helicopter, bound for Maatsuyker Island, with Ranger Jeremy Hood and ingoing Caretakers Deb and Craig Searle. Our volunteers included 6 weeders, 2 cataloguers' and 1 builder. The weather was superb and all worked tirelessly to make the most of the time on the island. The weeders Jenny, Sally, Louise, Roz, Cara and Marina tracked down every weed way point and treated Hebe and Blackberry as well as undertaking more survey work. It is pleasing to see the positive results of follow-up on the weeds. Our one builder, Ron worked with Craig on shoring up the floors in Quarters 1 as well as constructing 2 beautiful new window seals for the Whim Shed. The Cataloguers Rosanna and Anne worked tirelessly to record 400 Objects from the Lightkeeper to the Caretaker era.



Evie and Jonah Wiltshire reading from their book at the 10 Days on the Island

Ten Days on the Island 3013 FOMI - Wildcare presented a wonderful exhibition at HuonLINC in Huonville as a part of the 2013 Ten Days on the Island Festival in March. Highlighting the natural and cultural values of Maatsuyker Island to the general public, the artwork included painting, drawing, writing, textiles, photographs, books and paper by artists who have spent time on Maatsuyker Island: Sue Lovegrove, Jonah and Evie Wiltshire, Kate Hansford, Ailsa Fergusson, Marg Beal, Marsha Durham, Judith Kentish, Robyn Mundy, Matt Newton, Margie Jenkin and Gwen Egg. Supporting activities in Huonville while it was a Ten Days on the Island town included conversations at DS Coffeehouse Café, photographic displays at the Parks and Wildlife shop, Stihl Huonville and Griggs butchers, book readings by 'The Lighthouse Kids of Maatsuyker Island' at the library and the Huonville Primary School and a presentation

by writer and former caretaker Robyn Mundy. FOMI members were delighted to hear Violet Armstrong talk about her life as a light keeper's wife on Maatsuyker during the '50s and '60s at a conversation in the café and customers at the Stihl shop were very interested in the pin ups of caretakers working with the Maatsuyker mowing machines. HuonLINC was a fabulous venue, staff and clients were enthusiastic about our FOMI exhibition which was also visited by many Ten Days on the Island enthusiasts.

Craig and Deb current caretakers on Maatsuyker Island just had their resupply after 4 months on the Island. Craig and Deb have been keeping warm building steps up from the gulch, tending the garden, installed with help from 5 kayakers a poly tunnel in the garden, cleaning drains and yes still mowing.



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

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