



## **Friends of Melaleuca, Wildcare Inc. Report to PWS and Wildcare, June 2018**

Friends of Melaleuca, Wildcare Inc, is working with PWS to maintain and interpret cultural heritage and to care for natural heritage at Melaleuca and Claytons Corner.

FoM carries out annual working bees each March, holds meetings during the year and has established and manages a small museum at Melaleuca. Chief challenges faced in this location are presented by the west coast weather, and the relative isolation. Transport and freight by air or sea always require rigorous but flexible forward planning.

### ***Working bee, March 2018***

A Wildcare Board of Management grant enabled FoM to run our tenth working bee at Melaleuca, which ran from 12 ~ 19 March 2018. This year our particular focus was to install new gutters on one of the bushwalkers huts, carry out maintenance at Claytons Corner, the PWS Quarters, heritage mine sites and private leases as well as doing the routine annual brush-cutting, draining and fish-oiling.

Building material and equipment was transported to Melaleuca aboard the Fentons' boat *Poinduk* and Andrew Boon's yacht *Juliet*.

Selection of the twelve volunteers was based on relevant skills.



Volunteers at the March 2018 FoM working bee, with Caretakers and OBP volunteers. Photo: Ian Marmion

Relevant skills among us were: qualified electrical engineers/electricians, coxwains, carpenter/joiner, safe work at heights, chainsaw and brush-cutter certificates, engineer, mechanical skills and a number of us held first aid certificates. Seven volunteers arrived by light aircraft on Monday 12 March, joining Janet and Geoff already there, and three arrived aboard yacht *Juliet*. Ranger Ian Marmion joined the team. Our group consisted of seven old hands, one second-timer and four new recruits to FoM's working bees. Volunteers were Andrew Boon, Rik Head, (electrical work), Janet (team leader) and Geoff Fenton (workshop manager, Kings), Chris Creese (works manager Willsons), Rob Banfield (Claytons team leader), David Butler, Melissa Jack and first timers Mark Simpson, Leanne Banfield, David Mitchell and David Ross. Introduction and safety briefings by Janet Fenton were held at Kings' and the incumbent caretakers, David and Wendy Milne, showed us communication and safety equipment at the PWS quarters and assisted with work during the week. Craig and Deb Searle, Orange-bellied Parrot observers, assisted when their schedule allowed.

We much appreciate the input and direction from Ranger Ian Marmion who was able to spend most of the week working with us. Volunteers were accommodated in the Charles King Memorial Hut, at Kings' and Willsons', and on board yacht *Juliet*. Our appreciation to Barbara Willson for making her home available for accommodation and some meals. Thanks to Andrew Boon, Rik Head and David Mitchell (Mitch) who freighted gas bottles and equipment to and from Melaleuca aboard yacht *Juliet*.

### ***Routine jobs***

Brush-cutting is always an important part of our program. The vegetation around the bushwalkers huts was well cleared as well as firebreaks near the private leases. Thanks Mark Simpson.

Drains: In this waterlogged terrain drains are of great importance. Thick tea-tree, cutting grass, bauera etc was first cut to clear the drains before re-digging, straightening and enlarging using shovels. (Conditions so wet that an eel was found in one of the drains.) Drains were improved around the smelter, old Rallinga Mine workshop and Willsons', then NW of Kings' house and at corner of house in prep for restitution work. Thanks David Butler, Dave Ross and Mel Jack.

### ***Electrical projects***

In 2016 Andrew Boon prepared a detailed report on the DC Power supply at the Rangers Quarters, and carried out most of those recommendations during the 2017 working bee. Andrew also began to address concerns about the non-compliant AC wiring at Willsons, especially as OBP volunteers are regularly using Barbara's house.

This year Andrew, Rik and Mitch continued with work on the Willsons project. Andrew purchased the requisite electrical materials (including 4m lengths of conduit) and took them to Melaleuca on his yacht. The team replaced the AC wires from Willsons' workshop to the house with compliant



cabling. To do this they set up support poles between the wind generator tower and workshop; suspended a wire rope catenary from the workshop via the poles and tower to the house; threaded existing wires into 20mm conduit, and fastened this up to the catenary. At the house, the cable now runs in conduit along the back wall to a flexible tail that can be plugged into the appliance inlet in the porch. And the earthing has been made compliant by a direct connection from the appliance inlet to an earth stake.

They also improved the Willsons' DC system by fitting a battery isolator and a fuse, and installed a set of six distribution fuses for the house loads.

All work was tested and confirmed functional.

### ***Heritage Museum and Interpretation project***

The Deny King Heritage Museum is located between the airstrip and the Kings' crown lease. The building belongs to PWS and a Memorandum of Understanding for its use by Friends of Melaleuca as a museum was signed back in 2014. Since then, the necessary modifications and the installation of displays has mostly been completed.

The final interpretation panels were installed in the museum January this year. In the porch area a panel acknowledges the Needwonnee people and directs visitors to the Needwonnee Walk. The final panel inside the museum is a large illustration depicting the diversity of life in the moorland habitat. (Graphic design Lea Crosswell, illustration Janet Fenton, printing Fast Forward Digital.) Adjustments and additions were made to objects and labels in the display cabinets. A favourite local quote routed in a Huon pine plank was installed in the porch with a spray of buttongrass behind it.

Cladding on the exterior of the building is warping and cracking. During the working bee David and Wendy re-coated it with 'Ironbark' stain and screwed in the most warped planks to tide it over until re-cladding is possible. New signage for the museum was installed as some visitors have been missing it. A printed sign was screwed on the outside wall. David and Wendy repainted and relocated the PWS sign to near the entry. Brackets were fixed to the wall to support ledges for displaying a hand pump and mining hand-tools. Thanks to pilot James (Par Avion) for procuring the brackets for us.



New signage and exterior display, Deny King Heritage Museum. Photo: Geoff Fenton



Visitors learn about moorland habitat. Photo: Peter Marmion

Installation of a heritage mining trail is a long-term goal. Ian Marmion, Janet and Geoff Fenton walked around the potential exhibits and discussed the flow of the trail and interpretation options. The walk was somewhat limited by floodwater above gumboot depth preventing an inspection of the Engine Shed (Red Shed) which would be included in the trail.

### ***Mine sites***

The annual fish-oiling program (see Appendix 1) as recommended by Heritage Tasmania, was continued, thanks to Mel and David, who oiled many pieces of outdoor standing machinery and objects in the Smelter Shed. Options for stabilising the separating plant were discussed.

Leanne and Mel did an audit of sheets and colours of roofing iron at PWS works depot. At the Rallinga mine site, Chris re-roofed the dump truck shed using surplus second-hand brown Colorbond. The smelter shed roof was patched with surplus green iron but requires a complete re-roof to protect the heritage smelter and associated equipment. Rob and Leanne Banfield offered some green Colorbond that they have spare on their property. Thanks to Rob's timely organisational skills this was packed and loaded aboard *Ballbreaker* and freighted to Melaleuca on the PWS tractor-shed rebuilding trip in April. It is now on site ready for next year.



Well-oiled gate-valve, a potential exhibit on the future mining trail.  
Photo: Janet Fenton



Chris Creese working on the smelter shed roof.  
Photo: David Butler



Janet Fenton and Alan Thurston with roofing sheets donated by the Banfields, packed ready for shipping to Melaleuca. Photo: Geoff Fenton

### ***Campground, bushwalkers huts and PWS Quarters***

Three to four cubic metres of surplus limb-wood at the campground was cut, loaded and taken by tractor and trailer to the Willsons for use as firewood. Most of the wood came from a dangerous 'widow-maker' of eucalypt limbs, thankfully brought to earth by an arborist contracted by PWS in January. Mark Simpson brush-cut the area around both huts, going over the area twice.

New stainless steel custom-made guttering was installed and plumbed-in on the Second bushwalkers' hut ('Launceston Walking Club' hut). The guttering style followed the pattern of that made in 2012 for the Charles King Memorial Hut, and was fabricated by Minehans in Kingston. This material was chosen for its longevity in a challenging climate. Installation was carried out by David Milne, Mark Simpson, Ian Marmion and Rob Benfield.

Routine gutter cleaning at PWS Quarters was done by Mark Simpson, David Milne and Ian Marmion. This is a difficult task because of the high roof, slope and damp condition. The gutters clog with leaves and a better solution for the job is necessary. Mark agreed to draw up a fixed installation for future securing of rope.



David and Mark installing new guttering, bushwalkers hut.  
Photo: Ian Marmion



Mark cleaning the PWS Quarters roof and gutter.  
Photo: Ian Marmion

### ***Claytons***

The historic Claytons homestead, where Win and Clyde Clayton lived from 1962-1976, was an integral part of this year's Friends of Melaleuca Working Bee. Following the major 2017 footings replacement program, a team of up to six volunteers led by Rob Banfield and transported by coxswain Dave Ross energetically completed a much-needed repair and repaint of most of the exterior. Work took three days (12 person days, 84 hours approx) to complete the following tasks:

- Re-nailed, sanded, prepared vertical ship lap radiata pine cladding on northern and chimney walls and applied two top-coats of water-base Solagard olive green .
- Prepped and applied rust-seal to sheet metal cladding and metal chimney parts
- Primed and top-coated new cladding boards (4 unused are under the building).
- Replaced some rotten boards on southern wall; cleaned wall and applied one entire top-coat of Solagard.
- Prepared and spot primed and two coats of Solagard on east wall.
- Limited spot painting on west wall
- Short term painting maintenance done on two windows.
- Fitted vertical flashing at the corners of the building. (Walkers hut gutter re-used as flashing.)
- West wall and south wall bottom plate aluminum flashings fitted
- Removed two large ply panels that were seriously delaminated on inside north wall of loungeroom, sealed the backs of new plywood panels, cut to size, fitted sheets and refitted all interior fittings.



Work at Claytons.  
Photo: Leanne Banfield



Newly painted wall!  
Photo: Janet Fenton

- Removed deteriorated ramp outside back door, examined frame, replaced all frame members with treated pine, cleaned out footings and reattached structure securely.
- Reattached back door step to framing using bugle screws
- Probed ground for possible water-tank relocation to NW of northern tank. The ground appears to be solid gravel about 400 to 450 mm below the existing peat surface.
- Examined existing northern tank overflow and found that a 2" BSP fitting system with a proper sealed tank wall fitting would stop future leaks.
- Repaired water piping from bottom of tanks to the house.
- Large water-tank: lashed tank overflow pipe to support posts.
- Sorted accumulated maintenance materials from master bedroom; some returned to Melaleuca.
- Checked existing 'long-drop' toilet for fullness: assessed as one more season's use; should check in 2019.
- Garden maintenance: Slashed some bracken; Leanne made plant labels but time ran out to install these in the garden.
- Ian dusted European wasp nest with poison.

### ***Private leases***

Chris Creese was in charge of maintenance at Willsons and directed volunteers to jobs, tools and equipment. Chris repaired the wood stove and carried out maintenance on the house water system. David Butler applied Bondcrete to all of the brickwork on walls of the Willsons' house.

While staying in Karina's, Rob and Leanne repaired the leaking verandah roof and wood-store roof and oiled the exterior cladding.

Geoff and Mark Simpson worked on the north side-wall at Kings. They removed cladding, jacked the walls straighter, installed extra studs and special structural brackets, and fixed new cladding, completing this phase of the house restitution project. Some treasures were found inside the wall cavity including a 1954 threepence and a plank stamped 'Edmonds Acto Baking Powder 6 doz, 14oz'.



Mark Simpson at work on the wall restitution.  
Photo: Janet Fenton

### ***Sundry***

Sundry extra jobs included painting a replacement wind direction indicator, breaking concrete off disused galvanised posts and tidying to PWS depot, sorting roofing iron, photographing work-in-progress, checking first aid kits, routine end-of-work stocktake of FoM equipment, as well as taking turns as chef for the evening meals.

Many thanks to the enthusiastic and well-skilled team of volunteers who put in a combined 644 person-hours, including 84 hours at Claytons during this working bee. The group spent an extra hour every evening reporting and planning. Many of the tasks recommended in last year's report have been completed, and recommendations for future work are listed at the end of this report. As

tight planning is essential for work on a remote site, many extra volunteer days were involved in planning, preparation, purchasing, loading and freighting materials beforehand, as well as assessing and reporting post working bee.

Once again, weather called the tune. Two volunteers had to depart early and the rest were cheerfully weatherbound for an extra day.

Thanks to Wildcare for funding flights to Melaleuca for the working bee, and thanks to the volunteers for funding their own return fares. Thanks Andrew for freight, and donating materials for the electrical project.

Our thanks to Barbara for hosting FoM volunteers and the incoming OBP volunteers. We appreciate the great working relationship we have with Ian Marmion (PWS Ranger-in-Charge, Huon and SW) and his support during the planning stage as well as with implementation of our projects; and Pip Gowen (PWS Volunteer Facilitator), for her support and advice.

Janet Fenton,  
President, Friends of Melaleuca, Wildcare Inc. June 2018



Floodwater on our last day.  
Photo: Janet Fenton

## **Recommendations for 2019 work**

- **Deny King Heritage Museum**

- Replace exterior cladding with 'shadow-clad'. (PWS)
- Repaint exterior (FoM).
- Replace temporary deflector on north side of roof with short piece of gutter. (David Milne?)
- Need gutter on S side above OBP prep area.
- Spread gravel on roadway between museum and airstrip (PWS front-end loader to transport gravel?).
- Install aeroplane propeller display in museum, and label.
- Organise and install a more imaginative donation box.
- Paint angle-brackets under exterior display ledges with epoxy brown.
- Install Freddy's fringe.
- Tidy wall (old door) under Charlie panel (perhaps cover old door with a display or branded tin-bags).
- Replace cardboard tin returns with new ones printed on paper.
- Create extra information folders.
- Stools for the museum - encourage Par Avion to contribute.

- **Mining Trail**

Plan route, features and interpretation for a mining trail. Map sites and develop text.

- **First Camp**

Paint cladding with oil – Peter Rigozzi recommends a 1:1:1 linseed/Stockholm-tar/turps mixture. Test first.

- **Claytons**

- Clean / wash and paint second green top coats on east, south and west walls (then leave for 5+ years)
- Replace some selected long boards and short boards over window on south wall (use four unused pre-painted planks from under Claytons, some may need ripping lengthwise at Melaleuca with power saw)
- Paint barge boards and window sashes / sills with white (there is paint at Claytons)
- Consider some heat proof grey paint for exterior chimney flue and chimney cap
- Place the plastic house-water tanks on the ground to obviate re-building the wooden tank-stand, as these tanks do not need to be off the ground and wood rots out. They could be easily placed on a firm gravel base. Overflow pipe should be positioned to allow for settling.
- Twin tanks leak: install a skin fitting 2" BSP to poly-elbow (2" BSP-F).
- A leaf-separator for SE downpipe was suggested by Chas Wessing.
- Fit an outside tap that does not require a tank main valve to be turned on and then off.
- Consider and possibly action the relocation of tank nearest to back porch to just above its twin (digging required, and disconnect water...pump into big tank? and reconnect to top



tank with equaliser and isolation plumbing...some new fittings may be needed).  
Then plan for water transfer to replace tank support timber to existing top (northern) tank.  
If first tank is permanently relocated, consider a seat structure for guests in place of the rotten tank stand.

- Consider weather proof non-slip covering for floor boards immediately inside back entrance. (about four boards very weathered but still solid, most likely due to rain ingress)
- Install donation box (yachties are keen to contribute; caretakers and locals to monitor)
- Consider making a Claytons house and garden brochure available for a small price.
- Consider the use of the two single bed frames and wires in the master bedroom. Claytons is mostly for day use, however it is used as an emergency shelter and is sometimes quite necessary as such (eg for independent kayakers caught by bad weather). Consider putting slats (use timber under house) under the wires to make them more serviceable with a canvas cover over the wires to make them not too comfortable. (These heritage artifacts should stay in the house for completeness and they are robust enough be used.)
- Install handrail on front concrete entry ramp similar to the original galv pipe structure (Geoff has an idea, and galv pipe is at Melaleuca)
- Fill in existing risky post hole at north end of concrete ramp (covered with a treated pine slab at the moment)
- Clean gutters
- Consider relocating the pile of corrugated roofing that seems to be a mix of some aluminum and some old galv. iron (may be useful at Melaleuca)
- Garden maintenance: re-label and feed garden plants. (Leanne made labels 2018 working bee.)
- Install 20 to 30 stainless pan head exterior screws on flashing installed on corners of building in 2018
- **Works depot**  
Install a new sign "PWS Works Depot" as there has been considerable confusion.
- **Mine Sites**
  - Re-roof smelter (roofing iron is on site)
  - Touch up paint on Red Shed
  - Continue sorting through the metals resting machinery depot/rubbish pile and recover heritage items including Peter's first jig.
  - Continue fish-oil program.
  - Consider options to stabilise separating plant.
- **Clearing, drains and tracks**  
Top-dress pathways with gravel using PWS loader and a trailer.
- **PWS Quarters gutter**  
Cleaning gutter is unsafe especially in damp conditions when the roof is slippery. A different gutter-guard arrangement would help. A deck all around the building would make it easy to access the windows and gutters from a step-ladder. Meanwhile design and install a permanent rope-attachment system fixed to that roof. (Mark Simpson)

- **Bushwalkers huts**

Develop interpretation panels for both huts:

- Charles King Memorial Hut: Who was Charles King; building of hut with HWC involvement; stone fireplace; wood-getting etc.
- Second Hut: About building of hut; LWC involvement; iconic bushwalkers who have visited.

- **PWS marine infrastructure**

Joan Pt slipway at the Narrows does not reach water at low tides and could result in difficulty for solo bushwalkers and damage to boats. Recommend that PWS extend it during summer when a high pressure system is forecast and low tides are likely.

- **Electrical work:**

PWS Quarters: Installation of expanded solar panel and converter system.

- Appendix 1

## Fish-oiling program for heritage objects

[Apply annually, in warm, dry conditions]

| Object   | Oiled<br><2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|--|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Water monitor nozzle   | 2011;<br>2013  | ✓    | ✓    | ✓    | ✓    |      |
| Trommel, Kings' mine   |                | ✓    |      | ✓    | ✓    |      |
| Gate valve   |                | ✓    | ✓    | ✓    | ✓    |      |
| Thompson pump NW of Red shed   | 2012           | ✓    |      | ✓    | ✓    |      |
| Thompson pump used for airstrip fill, beside track to Moth Creek landing | 2011           | ✓    | ✓    | good | ✓    |      |
| Thompson Pump at canal head  | 2012           | ✓    |      | ✓    | ✓    |      |
| Rallinga Mine smelter-objects (tools, moulds, furnace etc)               | 2014           |      | ✓    | ✓    | ✓    |      |
| Peter's big old vice   |                |      |      |      |      |      |
| Rallinga Mine exhaust  | 2013           | ✓    | ✓    |      |      |      |
| Rallinga Mine first jig  |                |      | ✓    |      |      |      |
| Rallinga Mine, crusher   |                | ✓    |      | ✓    |      |      |
| Southern Cross diesel and docking saw                                    | 2010           | ✓    |      |      |      |      |
| Objects in Amenities shed  |                |      | ✓    |      |      |      |
| Objects in Engine shed (Red shed)  | 2014           |      |      | some |      |      |
| Peter's hand-cart (in Red Shed 2017)                                     |                | ✓    |      | ✓    | ✓    |      |
| Peter's hand-fabricated impellers (13 in Red shed 2017)                  |                |      |      | ✓    | good |      |
| Objects in First Camp museum   |                |      | some |      |      |      |
| Gantry at Moth Ck  |                |      |      |      | ✓    |      |