



# News and views

SIMO: PROTECTING OUR NATURAL ASSETS SINCE 1978



## It's winter on the island, and the whales are on their way!

SIMO is your island-based community organisation championing environmental, social and educational causes since 1978. We value your membership and encourage your feedback.



### Champions of the Bay boat cruise

The annual boat cruise, as part of the Quandamooka Festival is on again, exploring the culture, environment and history of Moreton Bay and St Helena Island. Book now! Details on page 2.



### Investigating hydrology on NSI

A review of the recent research conducted by Honours student, Madelyn Harp, from the UQ School of Earth and Environmental Sciences on page 3.



### Celebrating 40 years of SIMO

The celebrations continue with a morning tea, primarily for past Management Committee members, to honour contributions and collect stories. Find out more on page 3.

# Champions of the Bay Boat Cruise

The SIMO Moreton Bay cultural and environmental boat cruise is on again as part of the Quandamooka Festival. Tickets are limited so book now!

Our Moreton Bay cruise this year will be a highlight of our 40 year celebrations, and a wonderful opportunity for a friendly get together of members and supporters in a fabulous setting.

We have extended this year's bay cruise to include a guided visit to the historical St Helena Island.

The cruise on the bay will be beautiful, and lunch will be delicious! We will be exploring the bay on the Moreton Bay Environmental Education Centre's boat, the Inspiration, pictured below.

We have great guest speakers who have substantial knowledge in their fields. The environment, local history and Quandamooka culture will all be explored during the day, and the ranger-guided visit to St Helena will be fascinating.

WHEN: Saturday 23 June 2018

WHERE: One Mile Jetty (departing 9.30)

TIME: 9.30am - 2.30pm

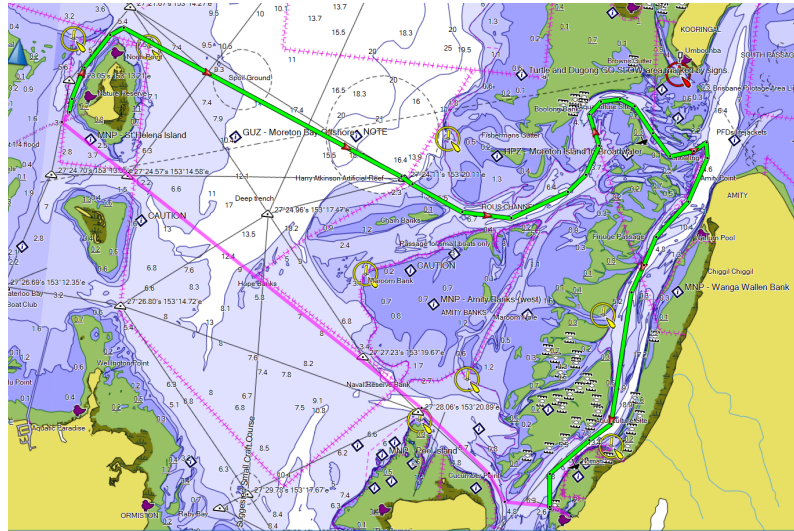
If you are coming from the mainland, catch the Stradbroke Flyer from Toondah Harbour, Cleveland at 8.55am to connect with the cruise at One Mile Jetty.

COST: \$80 per person (payable in advance)

RSVP: Renee 0429 953 705 or [treasurer@simo.org.au](mailto:treasurer@simo.org.au)



The Moreton Bay Environmental Education Centre vessel 'The Inspiration'.



The proposed route from One Mile Jetty, to St Helena Island, and back past Amity Point.



A heritage listed island, the ruins of St Helena are renowned as some of the most important parts of Queensland colonial history. As part of the cruise, we will experience a guided tour through the ruins of St Helena Island.



Quandamooka Cultural Ranger, Patrick Coolwell, was a guest speaker on the 2017 boat cruise.

## Notice of Annual General Meeting

We look forward to seeing everyone at the next SIMO Annual General Meeting:

WHEN: 2.30 on Sunday 26 August

WHERE: Community Hall, Point Lookout.

We cordially invite all members to attend. Please note you must be a financial member to attend, nominate for election and vote. See page 4 for details to renew your membership.

# UQ research into water balance

Water is vital to all life, and a sustainable future for our planet. Closer to home, a University of Queensland student, Madelyn Harp has been studying the wetland and lake systems on the island as part of her Honours thesis.

Supervising lecturer, Dr Harald Hofmann said the study involved looking at four wetlands and lake systems on Stradbroke Island (Minjerrabah) to investigate the influence of the subsurface catchment (perched groundwater system) on the wetland hydrology.

"We found first that rainfall amounts are very different from wetland to wetland across the island.

"While the northern wetlands receive larger amounts of rainfall, the southern part of the island seems to receive significantly less. We calculated a rate of loss of water for periods that have no rainfall.

"The difference between this calculated rate was compared to the actual water decline measured in the wetlands," he said.

The data showed Welsby wetland seems to have a significant contribution from groundwater, whereas the groundwater catchment for Fern wetland and Brown Lake have a much lower contribution from groundwater compared to their catchment sizes. As an example, the perched groundwater system underlying Brown Lake seems to be a lot smaller than its surface water catchment, the topographic area that can be attributed to deliver water to the Lake.



Madelyn's research also noted that native companion wetland showed the highest rate of loss and the least amount of rainfall. The results indicate that wetland underlying perched aquifer systems are very different in size and are independent from the size of the surface water catchment.

Dr Hofmann said these are preliminary results and provide a first assessment of the perched groundwater systems, and that further studies are needed.

SIMO thanks Dr Hofmann and Ms Harp for the work they have done to further investigate the island's hydrology. There is still a lot to learn about the island's hydrology and we will continue to support research and data collection to help preserve this vital resource.

## SIMO's 40th birthday gathering

SIMO was founded in 1978 so it's time to celebrate 40 years of hard work and great achievements.

We're holding a celebratory tea party for past Committee members at the NSI Museum Minjerrabah in Dunwich on Friday 29 June. We want to acknowledge and thank them for their contributions and to share memories from the past 40 years.

There will be some oral history recording on the day. The current Committee hopes to produce a 'potted history' of SIMO in due course, and the stories will be rich material for that project.

Those attending are encouraged to bring their memories and photos to share. Anyone not attending is invited to send us your stories and photos via email or post.

As well as reconnecting over a cuppa and cake while we trip down memory lane together, there will also be an opportunity to mention current and future challenges facing the island and SIMO.

Without the individual and collective commitment of so many good people working for this island we all love, Straddie wouldn't be what it is today!

# Clean Up Australia Day at Pt Lookout

As residents and frequent visitors to the island, we collect rubbish 365 days a year, if we can. But a lot of visitors to the island are oblivious to how they can play a part in preserving our island and ocean.

On March 4, SIMO used the official Clean Up Australia Day as a strategy to spread the word further, organising an event at South Gorge and facilitating more than 50 volunteers to collect rubbish across the island.

A huge thank you to everyone who donated their time for this event. It was a great opportunity to get the message across – thank you!



Across the island, more than 20 bags of rubbish were collected. Items such as dumped ladders and office chairs were also collected ... but didn't fit into the bags!



International visitors Thales and Priscila from Brazil got involved in the action! We used the day as a strategy to spread the word to island visitors about helping preserve the island's unique environment.



SIMO committee members Elinor, Nicole and Emma helped organise around 50 volunteers on the day.



L-R: Point Lookout's Summer Surf Girl, Sam Lavery, Emma (SIMO), Griffith University Professor and students Ruben, Paul and Peter, and Emmie Lou from Reef Check.



Sifting through the sand to collect small pieces of plastic is back breaking work. But cleaning up our beaches can go a long way towards protecting our oceans and marine life from dangerous microplastics - less than 5mm pieces - that are detrimental to the health of our oceans.



Unless we act, by 2050 there will be more plastic in our oceans than fish (by weight). Shown is an example of the type of rubbish that was collected on the day.

Membership fees are now due, and payable by June 30th.  
Family \$18 ... Individual \$12 ... or Student/Pensioner concession \$6

SIMO bank BSB: 313-140  
Account # 12070553

Or SIMO PO Box 304, Point Lookout Qld 4183  
You may pre-pay up to 3 years in advance. Thank you for your support!

Spread the word! Your friends and family may be interested in helping us protect North Stradbroke Island's natural beauty.

Email [membership@simo.org.au](mailto:membership@simo.org.au) to secure your membership today.

# Concerns over fire services downgrade

It very recently came to the attention of islanders that QFES plans to effectively downgrade the fire service on the island by replacing the resident and only full-time Fire Officer, Bill Ewing, with a person who'll only be available 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, and not on weekends or public holidays.

In response to protests, several senior officers came over to the island on 23 May 2018 to discuss the matter with locals, at two meetings - one at Point Lookout, the other at Dunwich. These meetings were held at short notice and not widely advertised. The QFES representatives were Assistant-Commissioner Neil Gallant, Acting Inspector Tim Clark in charge of Cleveland and Redland Bay areas, and Brisbane South Zone Commander, Superintendent Steve Di Pinto.

Not only were requests to have the decision reversed refused, but worried islanders also learned that the replacement person is due to start before the end of May, with only a single week for handover, during which time it is expected that Bill Ewing will somehow manage to pass on his 31 years' experience as a Fire Officer and deep knowledge of this island!

## Find us at the Yura!

SIMO is lucky enough to be part of the Quandamooka Festival this year, hosting a stall at the Yura! in Dunwich on June 2, 2018.

For more information on the festival visit [www.quandamookafestival.com.au](http://www.quandamookafestival.com.au)

2018 Major Event Dates:

Saturday June 2nd - Yura (Welcome) Quandamooka Festival Opening

Sunday July 1st - Buangan Biyigi (Dolphin Day)

Saturday July 21st - Winnam Kunjiel (Wynnum Corroboree)

Saturday July 28th - Yura Yalingbilla (Welcome the Whales)

Saturday August 25th - Kunjiel (Corroboree) Quandamooka Festival Closing



As resident, Kay Dickie, noted:

“None of the QFES Senior staff present at the meeting were in their current positions when 60% of the Island burned over two weeks from 29/12/13 to 9/1/14. I don't believe they understood the depth of feeling of NSI residents at the loss of a QFES full-time professional, available 24/7, and particularly one such as Bill - highly regarded amongst both residents and emergency professionals in our community. Because of the characteristics of the Island this QFES position could be seen to be unique. Bill Ewing is clearly performing very well in it. The view of the meeting on the Island is that he should remain in this position and that a commonsense approach is devised to deliver the training QFES requires, that complements his 31 years of professional Fire Officer experience.”

If you are concerned about the downgrading of the island's fire services, please write - without delay - to any or all of the following:

The Premier - [The.Premier@premiers.qld.gov.au](mailto:The.Premier@premiers.qld.gov.au)  
The Minister for fire and emergency services - [fireandemergencyservices@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:fireandemergencyservices@ministerial.qld.gov.au)  
Neil Gallant - [Commissioner@qfes.qld.gov.au](mailto:Commissioner@qfes.qld.gov.au)  
Mark Robinson - [oodgeroo@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:oodgeroo@parliament.qld.gov.au)

