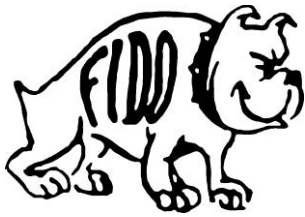


MOONBI #139



MOONBI is the newsletter of Fraser Island Defenders Organization Limited. The word Moonbi is the Butchulla name of the central part of their homeland, K'gari.

FIDO, "The Watchdog of Fraser Island", aims to ensure the wisest use of Fraser Island's natural resources

A warm welcome to all you new FIDO members and, to long-standing FIDO members, thank you for your loyalty and patience.

It's been a long time since the last MOONBI was published, in November 2018, shortly before the passing of FIDO's founder, inspiration and driving force, John Sinclair. This issue of MOONBI is especially dedicated to the memory of John and his remarkable life, and also to the continuing commitment of FIDO to celebrate and protect the many World Heritage values of K'gari.

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The importance of MOONBI

From Fraser Island Bulldog (chapter 2), a memoir by John Sinclair

At the time of the formation of FIDO when mining leases were being opposed in the Mining Warden's court, (Christmas New Year 1970-71), one of the methods we had of keeping Fraser Island in the news in the light of media reluctance to promote the issue was through our ever-growing network. We had almost 500 members and a very large distribution list. Thus, I documented our side of the case as concisely as I could and then included these articles in our FIDO newsletter MOONBI. It was sent far and wide. Thus, despite being ignored by some of the commercial media, FIDO's story of Fraser Island had an enviable circulation and was being relayed to friends, neighbours and relatives of the recipients.

MOONBI had a huge flow-on effect and I found myself constantly at the handle of the old Gestetner duplicating machine running off hundreds of copies of every edition, then with the assistance of my family and a small team collating, folding them and posting them out. It was tedious but the effort and expense was well justified. It still is. After more than forty years later I am still producing MOONBI with some slightly more sophisticated tools of the computer and using commercial photocopying machines. MOONBI became one of the more widely read conservation journals and was to help our cause enormously.

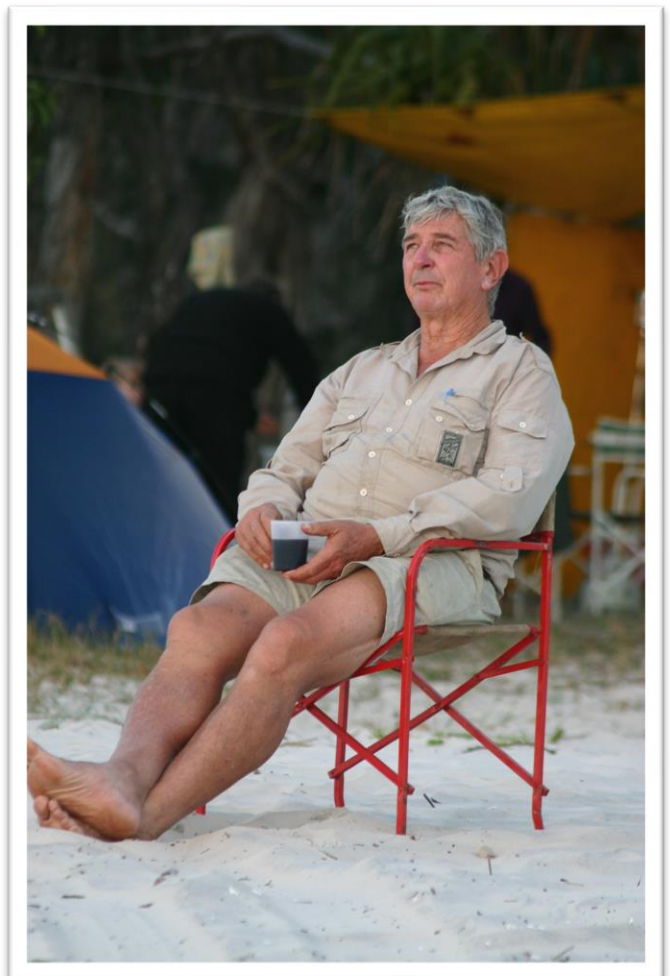
A Tribute to John Sinclair AO.

By Susan Zela Bissett (with Keith Sinclair)

In 2006 I was taking part in one of John Sinclair's Fraser Island safaris with my teenage son, Rowan, when I noticed other campers calling John 'Fearless Leader' or just 'FL'. I had already perceived that he remained calm in the face of evening storms, flooded tents and trucks bogged in seemingly bottomless sand. John recalled that he got the nickname during a memorable safari at Cradle Mountain, Tasmania, after he saved the food supply from marauding possums and chased a juvenile Tasmanian devil between the beds of the tent. Russell Close, just finishing his first safari, was so impressed by these feats that he bestowed the title 'Most Worshipful Fearless Leader' on the camp protector. It was 1992 and John Sinclair was already 53 years old. So by the time of my safari the nickname had stuck for over 20 years!

'Happily it has been since abbreviated,' John explained at the time.

Wildlife incursions, however, were far from the most serious issues that Dr John Sinclair AO, had to face. His 1994 co-author and biographer, the late Peter Corris, recorded that John Sinclair's long, hard-fought campaign to save Fraser Island 'cost him his first marriage, his job, superannuation and house, and put an enormous strain on his physical and mental resources.' There is no doubt that the costs of championing K'gari were immense. There were



John "Fearless Leader" Sinclair.

signs in shops saying, 'Sinclair not welcome here'. He received physical threats for his challenges to both the sand mining and logging industries. John himself told an interviewer, 'The worst and most difficult opposition occurred in my home-town of Maryborough.'

Fifty years later, in 2018, a young high school student asked if she could interview John for a school project. Her request was granted, and towards the end of the interview she asked, 'Did you achieve in anything other than conservation?'

John struggled to respond to this question but I will give it a go. In the course of five decades devoted to this cause, broadly termed 'conservation', this man turned his considerable intellect and abilities to environmental science, campaign strategy, publicity, town and regional planning, report-writing, mentoring, preparing and arguing court cases, map-making, sustainability consulting, not to mention serving on international panels such as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). His son Keith remembers his father watching the nightly news and often telling the family, 'I met with that minister yesterday.'

'He knew everyone,' Keith recalls.

From a small country town rural youth educator, through relentless allegiance to his cause, he came to rub shoulders with powerful politicians, elite scientists, other great conservationists of his era and, most recently, with a young man named Harry of the British house of Windsor. Never one to stick to an old formula, John was constantly building alliances, nurturing connections, finding common cause, working with all parties: from celebrities and experts to the chance-met person in the street. Changing political territory and new media possibilities demanded embracing new technologies and developing new skills.

In deeply and profoundly serving a single cause, John Sinclair took on a plethora of roles: environmental scientist, author, legal consultant, group leader, wildlife wrangler, campaign strategist, to name a few. A look at the various editions of MOONBI, Backgrounder papers and contributions to other journals testifies to his prodigious output as a writer. Visual artist Joolie Gibbs, a passenger in his truck during the 2016 K'gari BioBlitz, recalls John putting out a steady stream of observations and ideas.

'There ought to have been someone recording every conversation, every prediction, every observation,' she recalls.

His belief in science, in the best sense, the systematic study of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment, remained unshaken to the end; hence, his efforts in recent years in organising scientific surveys (BioBlitzes) to document the amazing biodiversity of the Cooloola Coast and K'gari.

The diagnosis of a life-threatening illness brought this hardy warrior a new challenge to his fearlessness. He met the end with dignity and seemed to have no regrets about the great work of protecting K'gari to which he had devoted his life. He strove to ensure that projects are in capable hands to carry them on, and that continuity is assured in the care of K'gari. Now is a time for the rest of us to work together, to continue John Sinclair's legacy. Caring for K'gari and Cooloola is a demanding task to which we must rise. Indeed, just as John did, we must see it as a joy and an honour.

Reflections from the President

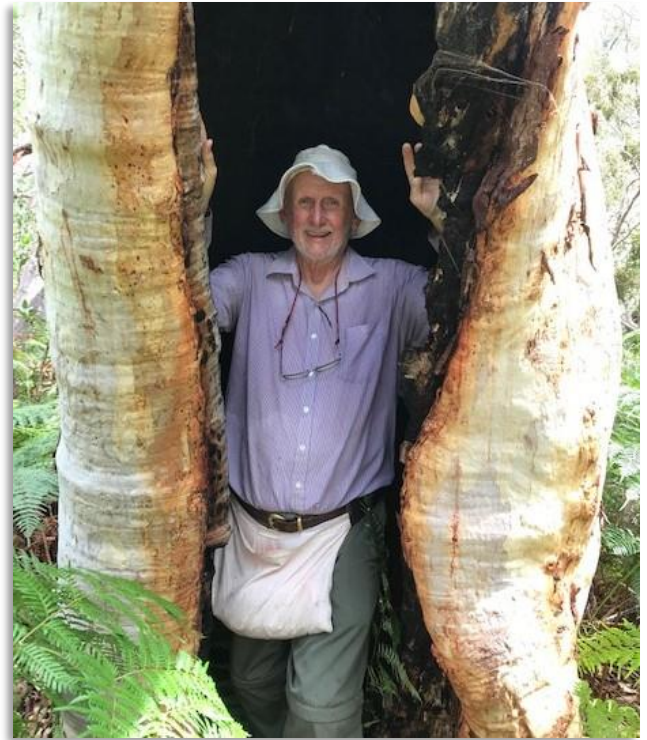
By Peter Shooter, FIDO President

Greetings FIDOS

I have just read a wonderful book: *Fighting for Fraser Island: a man and an island / John Sinclair, an autobiography with Peter Corris*, first published in 1994. If you haven't read it, read it. If you have read it, read it again.

It is a love story. It is pure romance. It is a story of a remarkable young man from Maryborough who fell in love with a sand island, K'gari. The young man was smitten by the sheer beauty and grandeur of K'gari. He dedicated his life to preserving her and her virtue.

Evil manifestations sought to possess K'gari. They saw not, nor cared about her beauty and grandeur. They sought to rape her and steal the riches she possessed in her mountains of sand. They sought to take the riches she possessed to themselves and leave her defiled remains to the mercy of the elements, with no thought or concern for the evil they had done. Her beauty and grandeur, nurtured and developed over millions of years by Mother Nature, to be laid waste by greed and lust.



Peter Shooter, FIDO president.

But the gallant young man was not daunted by the evil manifestations and, against all odds, determined to defend K'gari to his last breath. Such was the deep love he held for her.

He was smitten by her wondrous golden beaches flanked by rolling surf to the east and wind-sculptured sand dunes to the west. As far as the eye could see, they beckoned. He was smitten by her silent, giant, vine-entangled forests of beech and kauri, satinay and tallowwood, brush box and hoop pine.

He was smitten by her many mirror-like perched lakes, seeming to defy gravity perched high above the water table in pure sand catchments that should normally be expected to suck them dry. Some as clear as the sky above, some still clear but with the hue of amber, and all soft as silk to touch, refreshing and calming for a weary body and thirst quenching in the purest form.

He was smitten by the great array of animals and birds that found solace in her forests, on her beaches, in her wetlands and on her rocky outcrops. From the soldier crabs, the wongs* and wong birds* on the beaches, the sea eagles soaring free in the sky, and the myriad of bandicoots on the forest floor and the honeyeaters in the banksia trees.

He was smitten by the succour she had provided to her own indigenous people, the Butchulla, whom she loved and provided for over tens of thousands of years. And who, in return, loved and protected her.

But evil was mounting. Lust and greed were seemingly unstoppable. And the young man, armed only with his undying love of K'gari and intellect, confronted the juggernaut evil manifestation.

But the young man was not alone. Men and women of good spirit shared his love for K'gari and the gifts of Mother Nature. They rallied to the cause and determined to confront the Evil Manifestation, undaunted by its wealthy connections and support in high places.

What they lacked in wealth and influence they made up for in tenacity and integrity. And they took a mascot in a dog. A creature of determination, a creature of pure spirit, not daunted by the Evil Manifestation. Its name is FIDO.

The battle raged for eons. The young man suffered scorn. He was pilloried and persecuted. But FIDO stood beside him as he fought the evil thing. And they went to war together against overwhelming odds.

There were tussles in the media, jostles in the courts, lobbying in high places, treachery and scorn. It was David and Goliath. But the young man had his dog.

The young man grew old and left us. But his great cause bore its fruit: mining companies gone for good, and the loggers followed too. K'gari's virtue was defended and her splendour is preserved.

FIDO's work is never finished. We carry the great love of the young man onward, ever onward. To do less would be a betrayal of all his love for K'gari, all he fought for and all he achieved.

So read the book, reflect and rejoice. John Sinclair and FIDO: saving K'gari against the odds

*In Butchulla language, wong is the eugarie or pipi and wong birds are the pied oystercatchers which feed on the wongs.

John Sinclair Memorial Lecture 2020

By Zela Bissett, FIDO and Keith Scott, Australian Rainforest Conservation Society Inc. Parts of this article appeared in The Rainforest News No. 68, June 2020. A publication of Australian Rainforest Conservation Society Inc.

FIDO has established the John Sinclair Memorial Lecture to honour our founder.

We anticipate the lecture will be a biennial event, and that the focus will be on the significant environmental issues of the day.

The inaugural lecturer was Dr Aila Keto, founder and president of the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society. The title of her lecture was 'John Sinclair's voice booms – Is saving the planet possible?'



ARCS President Dr Aila Keto.

In 1981, Aila's mind was opened to the immense global significance of these rainforests by Peter Raven, internationally celebrated scientist and Director of the Missouri Botanic Gardens. She realized that Australia was a center of survival for some of the most remarkable evolutionary radiations and ancient relict lineages of plants and animals, giving unparalleled insights into the drivers of life on earth. She affirmed her devotion to the task, and in 1982 the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society (ARCS) was born and there was no looking back. Aila looks upon John Sinclair, then already famous for saving Fraser Island, as an early mentor.

Dr Aila Keto has worked for many years on the conservation and protection of Queensland's natural heritage. She was involved in the preparation of three successful world heritage nominations: the Wet Tropics, Fraser Island and the

Gondwana Rainforest. Her efforts have been recognized by numerous awards, including the Fred M Parker Award from the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

In 2010 she reflected, 'Little did I realize when Yvonne Cunningham sent out an urgent call to arms to stop logging at Downey Creek that I would spend the next ten years of my life in singular, intensive and sometimes traumatic dedication to protecting the rainforest of my birthplace. My heart responded to an awful sense of loss for the last of the cathedral forests in one of the world's most beautiful and diverse places where reefs and rainforests uniquely meet.'



The John Sinclair Memorial Lecture 2020 held at The Masonic Grand Lodge, Brisbane.

Thanks to her work and commitment, more than 15,000 km² of Queensland's rainforest is today protected. A further 15,000 km² of other forests have been scheduled. Consistent with John's deep concerns about the climate crisis this lecture analyses the root causes of the problem, the immense challenges facing us and some early signs of hope. The landmark IPCC 1.5°C Report released in October 2018 provided an early roadmap for the transformational change needed across all sectors of society. Since then the situation facing Earth and all that live on it has worsened. Time is running out but enough change is still possible to avert the worst of all outcomes. In this lecture Aila talked about what transformational change really means for our integrally and reciprocally linked social, economic, environmental and political systems.

Aila emphasized that at the core, success or failure is up to us.

The lecture, attended by close to 200 people, was recorded by ABC and broadcast on the Big Ideas program on Radio National on 23 April. It can be downloaded from the ABC web site at <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bigideas/is-saving-our-planet-still-possible/12043686>.

The ABC broadcast is a shortened version of the lecture to fit the program's time slot. Aila is currently updating the lecture and it will be available for download on the ARCS web site shortly.

Australian Rainforest Conservation Society Inc.

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Be like John – Write!

By Zela Bissett

A prolific writer... so John Sinclair has been described. And deservedly so, as many issues of *Moonbi*, *Backgrounder* and the FINIA newsletter can attest. To understand this, we can look back at his early career as an adult educator. In the process of helping adults improve their literacy, the basic lessons of composition became second nature to him. These skills enabled him to be an effective advocate in two fields: writing and speaking. In this article, I want to focus on the written side of communication.

As a high school English teacher, I know there has been a huge emphasis on persuasive speaking in the last decade in state schools, both primary and secondary. Looking back, when Queensland's first NAPLAN results showed our education system in an unfavourable light, the Education Department focused on improving our rating. In the written task children are asked to complete, there were only ever two genres used: one was persuasive writing, the other was narrative writing. In many Queensland schools, from that day on, only these two writing genres were covered, particularly in the NAPLAN-tested years Three, Five and Seven. From an educational point of view, in many ways this was a loss in diversity. However persuasive text was a genre in which teachers had to hone their skills and those of their young charges, so I propose to share some of the techniques with you, and examine how John himself used them in his writing.

First, find an engaging 'hook line'. Persuasion has not essentially changed much since the orators of ancient Greece addressed their countrymen in the Palatine Forum. A good orator, or exponent of Rhetoric, had to reach the audience on three levels, with appeals to *pathos*, *logos* and *ethos*. In the written persuasive field, it is no different.



Image: Zela Bissett.

Pathos: tugging at the heartstrings

An appeal to the emotions is often a good way to gain readers' attention. Students are taught to use a rhetorical question as an opener, e.g. How long must this heartless slaughter be tolerated? (could be for racehorses at the knackery/whales hunted/others). The following sentence should make plain what cause the writer is embracing. In this section, the advice is to use personal pronouns (we, our, us) to create a sense of togetherness in the readers, e.g. 'We must take action together now!' is more compelling than 'Something should be done immediately to stop this'.

Ethos: the moral imperative

Many sustainable enterprises these days claim to use ethically sourced raw materials, from coffee beans to diamonds. The implication here is that the enterprise is conducted in a morally upright manner. In persuading people to take action for an environmental cause, as we do in FIDO, on behalf of K'gari, we appeal to the sense of right and wrong. For some people, the most compelling of the three aspects of persuasion is the feeling that they are taking what Buddhists call 'a right action' in respecting a natural place and behaving in an environmentally aware way in relation to water quality, wildlife and other concerns.

Logos: the rational mind

Many readers will appreciate facts, statistics and other 'hard' evidence that the writer's claims are true. This is the 'Head above Heart' section of your readership. This is especially important when dealing with government departments or legal issues. John often referred to data from government sources, and at times appeared more informed than those working in the field.

The 'logical' section is the part of your story where you should include quotes from experts and authoritative sources. Credible experts are used to give authority to assertions. For example, research by a university team or support from a high-profile authority like David Attenborough or Jane Goodall will add weight to your argument.

For this exercise, I want to look closely at a short piece John wrote in the August 2018 issue of the FINIA newsletter. With the title *A Clash of Cultures Kills K'gari Icon*, John uses an emotive phrase to gain attention. The story concerns an incident when a rare vine was cut down, just as it was about to flower for the first time, through ignorance and miscommunication. He informs us that for four years, FIDO had been nurturing a rare Fraser Island creeper (*Tecomanthe hillii*) in a sheltered spot right beside the Eurong restaurant.

Pathos: Firstly, we see the use of emotive language, associated with *pathos* in the words 'this very special vine that bears the most beautiful waxy burgundy bell-shaped flowers in amazing clusters'. The words allow us to form a mental picture of the attractive clusters of flowers.

Ethos: Our sense of wrongness is exaggerated by the use of the words: 'took them to the dump like a bundle of weeds'. These words are calculated to emphasize the great loss that occurred. We are also given a moral imperative to educate ourselves and become more sensitive observers.

Logos: In the logical arena, John returns to the theme he had returned to on many occasions, the idea that a kind of re-awakening of aesthetic sense had to be cultivated in order to appreciate the 'chaotic' charm of the island's vegetation. His conclusion reminds the reader that this change in aesthetic sensibility must transform people's awareness to allow them to tune in to the unique and unfamiliar:

'Despite being inscribed (on the World Heritage Listing) for natural values, the obsession with tidiness and a notional idea of European designed gardens are widely held on K'gari, creating significant environmental problems as a result of this clash of values.'

As an organization we have discussed how to take up the mantle of leadership, and that it must be shared among the FIDO membership. Writing is something we can all do. In summary, first find an appealing phrase or group of words about your topic which will engage a reader's attention. Take care to cover the three bases of pathos, logos and ethos. Don't wait to be a perfect writer. Get something down and refine it. I am happy to proof-read and edit. As members of FIDO, we are all going to be called upon to both to write and verbally articulate our position on many aspects of the future of K'gari and other related issues. Let's take on board those lessons and be like John – WRITE!

Native Title – Butchulla FIDO Collaboration

By Peter Shooter, FIDO President

The people of the Butchulla Nation, the original custodians of K'gari and surrounding areas are progressing their Native Title rights in a very commendable way.

FIDO strongly supported the Native Title aspirations of the Butchulla people, and seeks an ongoing respectful working relationship with their people and their elected representatives.

In working to achieve this aim, we are cognisant of the three main Butchulla Lores that Butchulla people have lived by for tens of thousands of years:

1. ***Minyang galangoor gu djaa, kalim baya-m - What is good for the land comes first***
2. ***Wangou nyin gaminda biralundar, nyin wumga-n - Do not take or touch anything that does not belong to you***
3. ***Minyang waa nyinung, waa bunmalee dhama-n - If you have plenty, you must share***

FIDO overlays these three Butchulla Lores with our stated aim:

'To ensure the wisest use of K'gari's Natural Resources'

Adherence to the three Butchulla Lores and FIDO's aim underpins all our activities on K'gari.

Having suffered under Government policies of dispossession and dispersal, the Butchulla people have fought for many years to have their native title rights over their traditional waters and lands recognised in the Federal Court of Australia.

Native Title has come to the Butchulla by way of two Federal Court Determinations. The first in October 2014 recognised non exclusive Butchulla Native Title rights over 164,000 hectares of the island, the vast majority of the land mass of K'gari. The second determination in December 2019 grants exclusive Native Title rights over one fifth of the granted land.

The Butchulla people have established two Prescribed Body Corporates (PBCs) to administer their affairs.

Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC)

The original claimant group for K'gari established the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC). This body has grown into an effective administrative body that is focused on managing the Butchulla peoples' Native Title rights on K'gari in good faith. The BAC is also developing their Strategic Business Plan, and a Cultural Heritage Plan. The Cultural Heritage and Strategic Business plan will act as tools to guide the future management of K'gari, led and developed by Butchulla people.

The BAC also manages a group of Rangers, the Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers, who work in a partnership with the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife service, as well as doing work on various other projects. Since 2019, this group has been working with FIDO on our weed management program at Happy Valley. This is a great collaborative

experience for both the Butchulla Rangers and FIDO volunteers. We hope to expand our working relationship with the Land and Sea Rangers into the future.

The BAC have appointed one of their Directors, Jade Gould as the contact person with FIDO. Jade is responsible for maintaining and fostering relationships between FIDO and BAC including project collaborations on Country. This is a very good arrangement that serves to strengthen the relationship we have with both the Butchulla people and the BAC.

Jade is a young scientist, who works for the Federal Government. Jade attends FINIA and FIDO events as her workload allows. Since becoming a BAC Director, Jade has attended two Bioblitzes that FIDO has run in conjunction with Cooloola Coast Care Association and played a role in organising the 2019 biennial FIDO conference. The 2019 theme - Community, Culture and Collaboration - was jointly organised by FIDO, USC and BAC, and was held at the University of the Sunshine Coast campus at Hervey Bay.



Jade Gould – BAC Director

Butchulla Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (BNTAC)

The second Prescribed Body Corporate, the Butchulla Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (BNTAC) has administrative responsibilities for areas of the mainland, islands and sea included in the second Native Title Consent Determination. BNTAC is in very early days. FIDO looks forward to establishing close working relationships with BNTAC as time progresses.

As well as mainland Butchulla country, BNTAC is the recognised Native Title Body Corporate with responsibility for all the beaches surrounding Kgari, from the spring high tide mark down.

John Sinclair and the Butchulla People

Our founder John Sinclair had wonderful relations with many Butchulla people going back to his childhood. This was evident when a contingent came all the way to Brisbane for John's commemorative service. The smoking and welcome ceremony and traditional dance was very moving. FIDO seeks to honour the relationship John had with Butchulla people through ongoing close collaborative work.

Who or what is FINIA?

By Sue Sargent, Chair FINIA

The Fraser Island Natural Integrity Alliance (FINIA) was formed in December 2005 following a 2-day weed workshop on K'gari with stakeholders. The group met to discuss weeds of significance and barriers to implementation (such as tenure) on the island.

Facilitated by the Burnett Mary Regional Group, workshop participants included Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Hervey Bay and Maryborough City Councils (now Fraser Coast Regional Council), Fraser Island Defenders Organisation, National Parks Association of Queensland, Cooperative Research Centre for Weed Management, Sandy Cape Lighthouse Conservation Association and Butchulla Traditional Owners (now Native Title holders) of Fraser Island.

After two days visiting sites across the island, workshop members decided there were many more cross-tenure natural resource management issues in the World Heritage Area needing greater collaboration. The participants formed the Fraser Island Natural Integrity Alliance (FINIA) to address issues that were threatening the sustainability of Fraser Island's natural environment.

With an initial focus on weeds and pests, a full-time Weeds and Pest Management Officer was employed at the University of the Sunshine Coast for three years (2008-11) to develop and deliver a Landscape Weed Management Plan for Fraser Island.

In 2011, the model was showcased at an international conference as 'the key to successful holistic weed management on Fraser Island' by Dr Alison Shapcott from the University of the Sunshine Coast—where it attracted considerable attention from parks managers from around the world.

As the partnership grew, so did the dedicated effort by participants and their volunteers. FINIA collaborators 'branched off' to lead several other initiatives. These included:

- native seed collection; propagation and revegetation (starting with 'Plant me instead' replacement programs);
- pest management of the Jamella (pandanus leafhopper) and cane toad;
- marine debris clean-ups;
- research to address fire, dingo management and increase the knowledge of the island's unique patterned fens and swamp orchids;
- erosion and rainfall monitoring; and
- education and awareness (with a newsletter, website and Facebook pages).

Cultural Heritage mapping, led by the Fraser Island World Heritage Area Indigenous Advisory Committee won the Queensland Landcare Award in 2015 for Indigenous Land Management.

In 2016, members of FINIA gathered on the island to mark ten years of collaboration and to review the group's achievements—generously sponsored by the University of the Sunshine Coast. John Sinclair AO, a long-standing



Sue Sargent, Chair of FINIA.

advocate for Fraser Island, said that after ten years, it was a good time to reflect on FINIA's achievements and plan the next decade.

'FINIA provides a great vehicle to get things done. It's overcome several issues that hampered on-ground work in the past, but also ensures that we all communicate more effectively,' said John.

'FINIA is the catalyst that holds us all together and makes things happen,' added Butchulla elder, Glen Miller. 'Without FINIA, it's unlikely that we would have been able to achieve the success we have and the range of projects that FINIA now supports.'

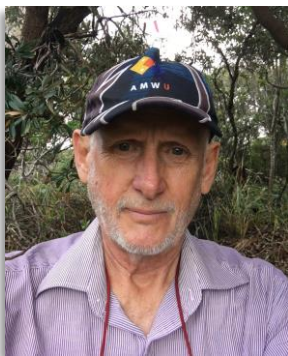
With a current membership of 17 organisational partners, FINIA has grown (and continues to expand) with partners all committed to maintaining and improving K'gari's natural integrity. FINIA brings stakeholders together to meet common goals proactively and respectfully, acknowledging often different organisational objectives. All without a formal governance structure.

Sadly, FINIA has lost the knowledge and skills, although not the passion, of three of the workshop's original participants. All community leaders in conservation, these were John Sinclair AO (Fraser Island Defenders Organisation), George Haddock (National Parks Association of Queensland) and Marie Wilkinson (Butchulla elder). Still, as they no doubt would wish, their legacy and the work of FINIA continues.

Put simply, FINIA is an alliance of great organisations with remarkable people, doing remarkable things **together** to protect the natural integrity of a globally significant place, K'gari (Fraser Island).

FIDO EXECUTIVE – Meet the team!

FIDO elected the following executive at the August 2019 AGM. We introduce them here with a brief statement from each about their association with K'gari.



President: Peter Shooter

My wife and I first visited K'gari with our friend and colleague Ian Little (a CSIRO scientist working in a team mapping the Great Sandy Soils) and his family. Easter 1968. Seven in a Land Rover. Saw fewer than half a dozen other vehicles.

Camped on the beach. Fish galore. Blown away by the beauty and the grandeur. Still am, albeit more cars and fewer fish now.



Secretary: John C Sinclair

My father first took me to K'gari as a child and we stayed with my grandparents at Eurong. We played all day in the beach streams, building dams and channels. All our school holiday long

weekends were spent on FIDO safaris exploring K'gari and meeting interesting people.



Treasurer: John Cruickshank

My grandmother, Billie Watts, was a very active, long-term FIDO member. I admired her strength of conviction and was eventually drawn to join FIDO. I believe the preservation of K'gari is vitally

important and contribute what I can to help the real heroes on the front line, pulling weeds and making their voices heard.



Executive Vice-President: Suzanne Wilson

I met John Sinclair in September 2015 when I was working at the Coolum Community Native Nursery and he asked if would I like to

gather seed on K'gari. From my first trip with FIDO in October 2015, I propagated four species. Since then, I have collected and grown more than 70 local endemic plant species, which we distribute free to K'gari residents.



Executive Vice-President:
Maria Miller

My connection to K'gari began with the week-long BioBlitz based at Dilli Village in November 2016. What a great place to get hooked on citizen science. Since then I've joined working bees at Eurong, FINIA

meetings, Cooloola Bio Blitzes and fundraising cruises and helped with grant submissions and conference organisation.



Executive Vice-President:
Mike West

I campaigned to protect Moreton Island in 1980, John Sinclair was interested in my work and invited me and my wife Lindy to join him on a Fraser Island/K'gari safari. I couldn't believe such a place existed: clear streams, massive trees on a sand island! Then I saw the logging destruction, thought 'no way!' and straight away signed up to FIDO. (See Zela Bissett's interview with Mike in this issue.)



Executive Vice-President:
Jane Enchelmaier

My mother Colleen and I first met John Sinclair Snr in 2000 through Go Bush Safaris. We visited K'gari with him in 2003 and loved every moment. Since then my family and fiance have visited regularly. It is a wonderful place of immense value that must be treasured. John introduced us to FIDO and I held the position of Treasurer from August 2006 for 13 years.

John Sinclair - The early days.

By Arthur Comino

My name is Arthur Comino.

My only claim to fame is that I have had the privilege of knowing a number of outstanding individuals. Amongst these are John Sinclair, Lew Wyvill and my father, Stephen Comino.

They were all country boys. John was born in the country town of Maryborough, Lew in Upper Yarraman, near Kingaroy, and my father Stephen in Laidley. As country boys, they all had the keen intelligence, the natural congeniality and the love of nature that is a characteristic of country people.

John was a teacher, Lew was a barrister and Stephen was a solicitor.

It appears that they got to know each other when they became involved, together with other outstanding individuals, on the Cooloola Committee which was formed in the early 1970s with a view to protecting Cooloola from the threat of sand mining.

It appears that when this threat arose, this group of outstanding individuals spontaneously mobilised to oppose the threat and protect Cooloola.

The members of this committee showed brilliant political nous.

At that time, Joh Bjelke-Petersen was the Premier of Queensland as the leader of the Country Party, which ruled under a gerrymander with the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party predominated in the city electorates while the Country Party predominated in the country electorates.

The stratagem the Cooloola Committee devised was to bring political pressure to bear in the marginal Brisbane Liberal electorates. This was done by drafting a petition and seeking as many signatures as possible and then presenting it to Parliament as occurred so as to make the Liberals appreciate the depth of community feeling in favour of protecting Cooloola from sand mining.

In the early 1970s, before an upcoming state election, the petition was presented. When the vote was taken in the government party room, it was decided by one vote not to allow sand mining in Cooloola. This was the first great victory for conservationists in Queensland and the precursor of future campaigns.

This is where John, Lew and Stephen got to know each other and work together for the first time.

The threat of sand mining then passed to Fraser Island (K'gari) itself and in June 1974, a mining warden recommended that Queensland Titanium Mines Pty Ltd be granted mining leases over some 1,100 acres on K'gari. John, on behalf of FIDO, opposed the applications on the ground that, for environmental reasons, it was not in the public interest that they be granted. John applied to the Supreme Court of Queensland for a writ of Mandamus directed to the warden requiring him to hear the applications and objections according to law.

The application was heard by the Full Court of the Supreme Court, which discharged the writ of Mandamus. John then appealed to the High Court pursuant to special leave granted on 28 February 1975. In the High Court, John was represented by his barristers Bill Pincus QC, who was assisted by his junior, Lew Wyvill, with the case being handled by his solicitor, Stephen Comino of King and Company.

John's barristers argued that mere compliance with the formalities of an application gave no entitlement to a recommendation that a lease be granted and that the warden had misconceived his function because the question was whether, in light of the evidence before him, the company was entitled to the grants. They argued that the warden had not directed his mind to whether there being minerals under only 60 acres of the land, the subject of the applications, these would be a grant over the whole area sought.



John Sinclair fronting the media 1987

They relied on the famous English administrative law case of *Anisminic* to argue that the writ of Mandamus could be issued to require the warden to exercise his discretion properly by only taking account of relevant considerations. They further argued that the warden also erred in holding that, because John represented a small group, the warden could not conclude that the public interest would be prejudiced by a grant of the leases.

The High Court agreed with John's barristers and it was ordered that the warden reconsider the application, taking account of John's objections according to law.

This famous case is reported as *Sinclair v Mining Warden at Maryborough* 132 C.L.R. 473. This was the first great legal victory for conservationists in Queensland, the Cooloola victory being the first great political victory for environmentalists in Queensland.

John and his legal team of Lew and Stephen were to later fight many other legal environmental battles together. These three stood out for their resoluteness in the face of pressure from the establishment which failed and continues to fail to properly perceive and defend the public interest.

Finally, it should be borne in mind that John in becoming the Plaintiff in the case assumed grave personal financial risk because had he lost, he would have been liable to pay all the relevant legal costs of the other side. His legal team took on the case pro bono but because they were successful, they would have received payment of the legal costs involved. This unfortunately is the danger of all environmental litigation, namely, if the objecting environmentalist loses, he, she or it runs the risk of financial ruin.

New members make a big contribution

By Zela Bissett

Navin and Sandra Naidoo are relatively new members to FIDO, but they have already made a substantial contribution to FIDO's work on K'gari. They arrived in Gympie in 2008 from South Africa with three sons. Navin was born and raised in South Africa where he trained and worked as a general practitioner. Sandra hailed from England and is a nurse by profession. Navin is now working in private practice as well as in the State Health system. Sandra helps run the family business and is heavily involved in arts and environmental groups in Gympie. In 2018 they found out about a Sandy Strait Eco-cruise to be run from Hervey Bay with John Sinclair as guide. Aims of the cruise included:

- raising funds to oppose the then-current proposal to mine coal at the Colton mine in the Mary River catchment
- allowing interested people to share the extensive knowledge of the Sandy Strait accumulated by FIDO founder, John Sinclair, in the course of his long association with K'gari and the Sandy Strait



Sandra Naidoo

The experience of the cruise, with its scenic beauty and sightings of rare and endangered creatures, motivated them to play a part in preserving the special place that they discovered was on their doorstep. They wasted no time in joining FIDO and have already taken part in two weeding expeditions to Happy Valley under the guidance of Peter Shooter and Chris Breitenbach, in October 2019 and March 2020.

For many FIDO members, being without our founder and driving force, John Sinclair, has been challenging. For Sandra and Navin, although John was commenting on the Sandy Strait Eco-cruise, their involvement has come about since his death in February 2019. Although they say they have heard stories about him on the weeding trips, their relationship with FIDO is independent of John and it is

instructive to hear their ideas and perspectives.

Working with the Butchulla rangers was a highlight of their first weeding trip to Happy Valley, where they stayed at *Kurrawa* and worked with the other volunteers to control invasive weeds, mainly *Abrus precatorius* (var *africanus*) and Easter cassia (*Senna pendula* var. *glabrata*). Sandra and Navin have made a priority of devoting time to the care of K'gari.

Sandra says, 'I have a very flexible schedule and having the trip planned and catered for makes it much easier to just drop and go. My sons are all young adults now so leaving the house in their care works well. As there is ample wifi coverage and free time in the evenings, if I have needed to keep up with any work commitments, I fit them in then.'

The couple report that having knowledgeable guides and time to work together and ask questions was a highlight of the trip, enabling them to see and learn about K'gari with people who know the island well. They feel this is a wonderful way to explore and gain an understanding of the situation.

Navin says, 'The best highlight is knowing that the work done will have positive consequences into the future.'

They hold many vivid memories of the special places that their experienced guides shared, including Champagne Pools, Lake Allom and Indian Head (Takky Wooroo).

'It was so amazing to be driven around and able to take in the sights and sounds. Of course, the lakes are breathtaking, the sand blows are otherworldly, but I think the valleys where no one else goes hold a special allure, knowing that they are so unique and relatively untouched for me makes them very valuable,' says Sandra.

Looking to the future

While FIDO has amazing volunteers, at the moment only four trips to Happy Valley each year are planned. Sandra and Navin see the need for more work to get on top of the target weeds and would be interested in taking on extra responsibility and getting trained up to lead extra trips.

Overall, Sandra and Navin found the trips to be very well organised with plenty of equipment and food supplies. They both say that they are looking forward to being able to go again. This is great news, because Sandra and Navin are the kind of highly capable and motivated volunteers we need, and we are very thrilled to have them on board!



Navin Naidoo

Vale Lew Wyvill QC

Excerpted, with permission, from the eulogy delivered by Hon Matt Foley at Lew Wyvill's memorial service, held at the State Library of Queensland 29 February 2020. Lew moved Matt's admission as a barrister in 1983 and was his Senior Master at the Bar.

A committed conservationist, Lew Wyvill was, with John Sinclair, a founding director of FIDO and closely involved in successful campaigns to prevent mining at Cooloola, Moreton Island and Fraser Island/K'gari. He showed courage under fire during the dark days of the 1970s and 80s when the causes of Labor, civil liberties and the environment were less than fashionable, indeed suppressed by the state government of the day. Lew's efforts have made Queensland and Australia so much better for us and our kids.

Lew acted for FIDO in the High Court together with Bill Pincus QC in the landmark case of *Sinclair v Maryborough Mining Warden* [(1975) 132 CLR 473. That successful High Court appeal confirmed the power and duty of the Mining Warden to prevent mining that was contrary to the public interest. This historic case was pivotal in protecting Fraser Island from sand mining.

Lew was an inspiration for a generation of young solicitors like Wayne Goss and Terry O’Gorman, along with barristers like Stephen Keim, Mark Plunkett and Lorenzo Boccabella – all of whom have made a profound difference for good in Queensland.



Lew Wyvill (left) with Stephen and Penelope Comino (right)

He inspired barristers Mark and Lorenzo to organise a roster to help FIDO, the Queensland Conservation Council (QCC) and other conservation groups in their actions before the courts. This led eventually to the establishment of the Environmental Defenders Office.

Lew Wyvill was a man for all seasons - equally at home trekking through the rainforest at Binna Burra as he was appearing before the High Court to fight for justice. Barrister, bushwalker, battler’s mate. To borrow a phrase from Shakespeare, he ‘looked on tempests and was never shaken’.

FIDO Weedbusters – Protecting the natural integrity of K’gari.

By Peter Shooter, FIDO President.

Since 2005, FIDO volunteers have been involved in removing invasive weeds on K’gari. In the main our efforts have focused on land in and around the towns of Eurong and Happy Valley.

Many exotic invasive weeds arrived on the island as garden plants, brought over by land owners. With K’gari’s World Heritage Listing in 1992, a ban on taking plant material to the island came into place. Sadly, the ban has not been sufficiently policed -- thousands of 4WD vehicles arrive on barges, making thorough inspection impossible -- and the practice continues right up to today.

Education is the answer, and more work needs to be done in this regard. Having said this, the situation has improved considerably over the years. The word is getting out that only plants grown from local plant stock can be cultivated on K’gari. And there are plenty of wonderful options to choose from. FIDO runs a small nursery to supply plants to locals.



The bright and attractive Abrus seeds. Picture: Sophie Munns



Coral Creeper (*Barleria repens*)

As with most things FIDO, John Sinclair started the weeding programs and they have grown over the years. We do at least four week-long trips per year each to Happy Valley and Eurong and usually have 5-10 volunteers per trip. Su Dawson leads the program at Eurong, and Peter Shooter and Chris Breitenbach run the Happy Valley site.

We charge a fee of \$300 (\$200 concession) per volunteer, which covers all transport to and from the island from Brisbane, with pickups along the way, plus accommodation in rental houses, food and a limited happy hour. Carnivores and herbivores are catered for. Volunteers are required to work a minimum of four hours a day, usually in the morning, depending on the weather and tides. After work and lunch we explore the island and see the sights. We swim in magnificent lakes, walk through towering rain forests and enjoy the splendour of K'gari.

Both Eurong and Happy Valley became quite weed infested over the years with the usual culprits: Easter cassia, lantana, basket asparagus, Singapore daisy and a range of others well known to landcare workers. In addition to these, each township has a weed specific to its location on

K'gari: Eurong has coral creeper (*Barleria repens*), and Happy Valley has crab's eye (*Abrus precatorius* sub species africanus).

Both plants originated in Africa. Both are extremely invasive. Both flourish in K'gari conditions. Both were introduced as ornamentals and both have become major weeds in and around these two towns. FIDO is targeting both these invasive weeds in an attempt to prevent their spread to other parts of the island and to keep them from establishing in the national park.

Beginning last year, the Butchulla Land and Sea rangers have joined us working on weed control at Happy Valley. This is a wonderful development, giving FIDO volunteers the opportunity to work and share information with and get to know our Butchulla brothers and sisters, and for them to get to know FIDO.

Our years of work have greatly improved the weed situation at these two sites, but as always, with weed control, the battle goes on!

A flash of orange: progress on K'gari dingo research

By Dr Benjamin L Allen, University of Southern Queensland

Known to the local Butchulla people as K'gari wongari, there are few populations of Australian wildlife that elicit such strong emotions from people as do the dingoes (*Canis lupus dingo*) on K'gari.

I've been involved in dingo research since I was child, and my earliest memories include following dingo tracks in the red outback sand and the thrill of seeing a flash of orange fur through the bushes. Now, 35 years later, I still get those thrills because of a deeper understanding of just how much is and is still not known about dingoes – 'a very elegant animal' (Breckwoltd, 1988).

The dingoes on K'gari have, for many years, been the 'type specimen' for what lay people think of as dingoes: 'Dingoes are like K'gari dingoes, and if it is not like a K'gari dingo then it is probably not a dingo.' Not true, but still what many people think.

Interestingly, for this most well-known and easily observed population of dingoes, relatively little scientific information on their biology, ecology, or behaviour has been published on them. I'm glad to say this trend is changing.

Early scientific research focussed on their identity, genetic purity, and a mix of other bits and pieces such as parasite prevalence and deterrents. Many reports also discussed the complex interactions dingoes have with people of all stripes – indigenous people, fishermen, tourists and managers.

As enlightening as these studies were, they did not seem to satisfy many of the burning issues of concern to visitors and others interested in K'gari.

How many dingoes are there? What do they eat? Are they healthy? Are they going extinct? Why do some get euthanized? How many have been euthanized? Does euthanizing them present a threat to their persistence? How far do they roam? What causes them to bite people? What is the genetic status of the population? Are they unique? What can be done to reduce the conflict? Are current management practices sustainable?



K'gari Wongari (*Canis lupus dingo*)

Fortunately, many of these questions have been answered following the comprehensive investigation of these topics in recent years. Contemporary dingo researchers and managers have done a fantastic job compiling and disseminating valuable information that previously accumulated on dusty shelves and in overflowing filing cabinets. And all of it is now available to the public.

This great effort has not answered all the burning questions though, and K'gari dingoes are just as mysterious and attractive as they have ever been. There is still much to learn about their ecological roles, the factors that influence their persistence, and better ways to manage their conflicts with people.

One area of interest that has received growing attention in recent years is dingo genetics. Some good work has been done in this area, but advances in analytical capabilities mean there is much that might still be done. To this end, the Queensland Government has recently commissioned a collaborative project to assess the genetic health and status of the K'gari dingo population. The project is led by the University of Southern Queensland in association with the University of Cape Town, South Africa.

As part of the project, community stakeholders will decide which questions are most important and need to be investigated. A broad team of dingo and canid genetics experts from Australia and around the world will then determine how best to answer those questions with the available genetic material (samples). Independent providers will then carry out the analyses according to the experts' directions. The results will be made publicly available when completed. This process will ensure the community gets the most robust and reliable answers to their burning dingo genetics questions.

We would have already been a fair way through this process if COVID-19 had not disrupted the scheduled workshops and travel plans of the many stakeholders and experts involved. So we'll just have to wait a little longer for the answers. These are uncertain times. But one thing is certain – K'gari dingoes will remain a fascinating and important animal worthy of scientific enquiry for many generations to come, and I look forward to seeing it unfold.

In for the long haul: Don and Lesley Bradley at Sandy Cape

By Zela Bissett

Sandy Cape is a very special place. For those who do not know, it is the extreme northerly end of K'gari. Remote and beautiful, and blessed with incredible biodiversity, it is an important nesting site for large sea turtles, mainly loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) and green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*).

In 2002, Lesley and Don Bradley were a newly retired couple who had recently been on a trip with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), where they learned the basic skills involved with turtle monitoring, nest relocation and flipper tagging with both green and loggerhead turtles. These were females who had come ashore after incredible journeys of thousands of kilometres, to nest on their home beach. The turtle program was driven by Aubrey Strydom, then QPWS Ranger at Sandy Cape.

For three nights the couple drove along the isolated beach with QPWS rangers. By the fourth morning Lesley reports that their 'eyes were on matchsticks' from tiredness, but they were overwhelmed by the sheer unspoiled scenery and profound interactions with rare wild creatures.



'We were smitten by the beauty, biodiversity and solitude of the area,' she recalls.

This was to be no fleeting infatuation. The following year, they began volunteering while ranger Aubrey Strydom was on four days leave each fortnight at Sandy Cape. At that time, all costs associated with fuel and consumables were met by the volunteers themselves, so it was a considerable effort. Lesley also regretted that their prized fern house at home had degenerated into a 'weed house' due to their extensive absences!

The year 2004 saw the formation of Sandy Cape Lighthouse Conservation Association, a group affiliated with Landcare's Lower Mary River Land and Catchment Care Group. Lesley took on the role of Project Manager and this allowed her to source out funding for fuel for turtle monitoring, mesh to replace nesting cages, personal protective equipment, hi-vis shirts and equipment for turtle monitoring.

Sadly, Sandy Cape no longer has a full-time ranger. This post was discontinued in 2008 and since then the task of caring for the area has fallen to volunteers. To fill a full-time roster of volunteer caretakers for the year is a considerable project. People must be prepared to be self-sufficient in a remote spot for between two and four weeks. Following a roster organised by a QPWS ranger, volunteers provide a presence at the lighthouse and work four hours each day. Aub still assists and remains in touch with the area.

There are times when illness or other factors result in the roster being incomplete. This is heartbreaking for Lesley and Don when the volunteers cannot reach nests in time to protect the eggs from predation by dingoes and goannas.

Since the early 1950s, all marine turtles became protected species in Queensland, but green turtles have only gradually been increasing in numbers at about 3% a year in the Southern Great Barrier Reef. They are still listed as

Vulnerable, but Lesley reports that green turtle eggs are not currently relocated and 60 of 61 nests that were pegged for the predation survey were completely or partially destroyed by predators.

The other species to nest at Sandy Cape, loggerhead turtles, were heavily impacted by the trawl fishery before the introduction of TEDs (Turtle Exclusion Devices) in the 1990s and are still listed as an Endangered species. An estimated 44 loggerheads nested at Sandy Cape last season, some completely predated, whereas up to 100 nests have been recorded in previous years. A loggerhead turtle nest relocation project is carried out annually from 20 November to 20 February. This year, 34 loggerhead nests were relocated to the four secure, aluminium mesh relocation cages located in strategic places in the Sandy Cape area. This is a demanding task, and even during the relocation patrols, numerous loggerhead nests were totally or partially predated by dingoes before the volunteer caretakers could reach them.

During the years 2015 to 2018 Lesley and Don have helped Aub with a satellite tracking program. Satellite trackers provide a broader picture of a turtle's life cycle, revealing extensive migratory pathways and home range foraging habitats, which can be anywhere from 100 kilometres to 3000 kilometres away! Tracking devices attached to 26 male and female green and loggerhead turtles contributed much useful information about the range of the turtles' journeys, their feeding and courtship behaviour. However, in 2019, no satellite tracking devices were attached to any of the Sandy Cape turtles.

In 2016 Lesley started the Hervey Bay loggerhead turtle nesting monitoring program with backup from Don, volunteer assistants, and support from Col Limpus (of Mon Repos Turtle Sanctuary near Bundaberg) and QPWS Marine Parks Hervey Bay. In addition, she supports the Sandy Cape program by acquiring funding for laptops, fuel for the turtle monitoring, necessary sundries and weeding tools, completes reports and keeps volunteers in touch! Don still co-ordinates the weeding program, compiles the statistics and reports as well as completing QPWS data forms for submission.

Even when not on K'gari they devote time to delivering lectures at the public libraries, schools and other community locations about the turtle relocation programs, shorebirds, and other related topics.

Over the years there have been countless challenges: times when the beach is covered with pumice stone or seaweed or is badly eroded out. Cages are damaged or become unusable. The fortunes of some turtles seem ill-fated. Yet despite all the challenges, Lesley and Don are preparing for their 54th tour of duty for the preservation of Sandy Cape in July, once restrictions are lifted.

FIDO salutes these hardy and tenacious volunteers and thanks them for their salutary service!

Lesley and Don share some memories of John Sinclair

Lesley & Don Bradley

John had just started his vehement campaign of closing the sand mining when we arrived in this area and it struck a chord with us. He took us on our first visit/ tour to K'gari in 1972 when the eastern beach was totally eroded to black coffee rock after a cyclone.

We celebrated in Wanggoolba Creek with him in 1976 when he successfully stopped sandmining on K'gari: bubbly wine, cold creek water and white sand ... and sandflies.

Due to our work commitments and young children, we went our separate ways, renewing our acquaintance with John again in 2005 with the forming of the FINIA group.

- Inauguration of FINIA (Fraser Island Natural Integrity Alliance) group, an allegiance of all stakeholders of K'gari, Fraser Island.
- Aim was to bring all groups together to hold open discussions on where activities and projects are and ideas where improvements should be attended to.

With his relentless drive, and bountiful knowledge, John led the group in many fruitful discussions and 'kept everyone honest'!

John left big footprints to follow but we are sure he would be happy to think that the group will continue the good work.

Mike West: John Sinclair's henchman and proud of it!

By Zela Bissett

Mike West's role in the protection of K'gari unfolded during the battle to prevent further logging of K'gari's forests. It all began when John Sinclair invited Mike and Lindy West to a FIDO safari for an Australia Day weekend. At the time, Mike was Queensland President of the Australian Democrats and had a high profile on environmental issues. He immediately joined FIDO when he saw the devastation of the logging there.

John invited Mike to become vice-president of FIDO and this was the start of an adventurous friendship that lasted 38 years. John and Mike made a formidable team, complementing each other's various skills. Mike jokingly boasts that he had more 'animal cunning' than his buddy.

When John moved to Sydney, he asked Mike to be the local FIDO contact. Mike worked closely with the Butchulla people, including Auntie Olga Miller, who he always called 'Her Majesty' because of her regal qualities. With the local team, Mike took over the fundraising and educational safaris while John was away.

When the Fitzgerald Enquiry into Fraser Island was set up, John asked Mike to be FIDO's liaison officer on the Joint Conservation Group, which consisted of all the major conservation groups in Australia. There was quite a divergence of views within the group and, in 1989, anxiety over its weak stance led to direct action on K'gari to slow down the logging operation. Mike supported the blockade with help in transport, supplies and advice. It was here that Mike was described as 'John Sinclair's henchman on the island' by the local newspaper - a badge he still wears with pride.



Mike West

'I remember quite a lot of colourful personalities, including Giselle Thomas, who was quite a star of the blockade,' Mike recalls.

Apart from supporting the 'greenies' in the forest, Mike engaged with pushing for World Heritage listing for Fraser Island, and it was in this role that he scored a major coup for FIDO.

During the Hawke Labor government, Mike had to deal with Bob Hawke's environment minister, Graham Richardson. During this period there was a lot of controversy about logging in Australia's forests. Although widely regarded as influencing the Labor Party towards conservation, Graham Richardson told Mike that unless the Fraser Island issue got onto the front page of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, he wasn't interested in supporting FIDO's case for World Heritage listing.

To achieve this aim, Mike approached Alicia Larriera, who was then a state political reporter for Queensland, based in Brisbane. He persuaded Alicia to come on a three day adventure on K'gari! Mike and Lindy spent three days bouncing around the island tracks with Alicia and a 'giant photographer' who Mike avows was 2 metres tall!

Mike knew a special spot where the stump remained from a massive forest giant felled years before in 1981. John Sinclair had taken a group of school students there previously and photographed them all crowded onto the massive stump. Mike clearly recalls lugging a ladder which was precariously perched on a four-wheel drive to get the tall photographer to the angle from which he took the money shot of Mike sitting on the stump of a huge forest giant.

It appeared on the front page of the Saturday lift-out of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, with the largest circulation of any newspaper in Australia, under the headline: *The Unkindest Cut*.

Graham Richardson had no choice but to agree that if Fraser Island met the criteria, he would move to list it on World Heritage. Mike and Lindy got the job to guide the scientists around the island and the rest is history! (K'gari/Fraser Island was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1992.)

'Once you get there, the island weaves its magic,' Mike declares.

After Fraser Island's World Heritage listing, Mike and John were joined on the Fraser Island World Heritage Area Advisory Committee to the Environment Ministers by George Haddock from National Parks Assoc Qld for many years. This trio was very influential on issues such as tourism regulation, air management and fire management, including getting an open campfire ban, beach closures, fishing regulation and saving albatrosses from longline fishers. Mike also introduced a plan to have the brumbies taken to good homes rather than the alternative.

Mike and Lindy still own a house at Eurong and their plans for the island continue. Mike's current major ambition for K'gari is to complete the George Haddock Track section of the Great Walk with Butchulla support and engagement.

Important information on access to K'gari and other areas during COVID-19 restrictions

The following has been drawn from: <http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2020/6/4>

Media Statements

Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts

The Honorable Leeanne Enoch

Thursday, June 04, 2020

Opening up Queensland for Queenslanders to camp

From today, Queenslanders can book and enjoy a camping getaway in the state's National Parks, forests and recreation areas, following the Chief Health Officer's approval of the necessary COVID-19 plan.

Minister for Environment and Science Leeanne Enoch said Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed campgrounds, which were closed due to COVID-19, were once again open to the public with camping set to recommence from today June 4, 2020.

The Minister said bookings were essential to ensure visitors have the appropriate permits.

"Under Queensland's plan for recovery, we're easing intrastate travel restrictions," the Minister said.

"It's the perfect time for a winter camping escape.

"We want to support tourism through Queensland's recovery plan: *Unite and Recover for Queensland Jobs* and driving and camping holidays are a terrific way to support tourism.

"But, as has always been the case, make sure you go online to get the right camping and vehicle access permits.

"Along with the reopening of camping and recreation areas, facilities such as picnic tables and barbecues that service the camping facilities will also re-open.

"Public shower facilities will remain closed.

"And capacity in some locations may be reduced to maintain appropriate numbers for social distancing in the interests of community health and in line with Queensland Health directions.

"Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service officers are working hard to ensure that Queenslanders are kept safe when visiting our world class national parks and state forests."

Minister Enoch thanked Queenslanders for their patience while measures were put in place to reopen campgrounds and booking systems.

"Queenslanders love a camping holiday. We have some of the most beautiful national parks in the world and it's great to see so much enthusiasm from people to get out and support local tourism and businesses," she said.

Visitor numbers will be restricted in the Cooloola and Bribie Island recreation areas where a specific *COVID-19 Access Authority* will be required to enter these locations.

COVID-19 Access Authorities are available online for no additional cost to the normal requirements of purchasing vehicle access and camping permits and are a mandatory requirement for access to these four-wheel-drive recreation areas. Please check the website for details.

Queenslanders should check the park alerts website before leaving home to ensure they are equipped with up-to-date information.

Important information about bookings:

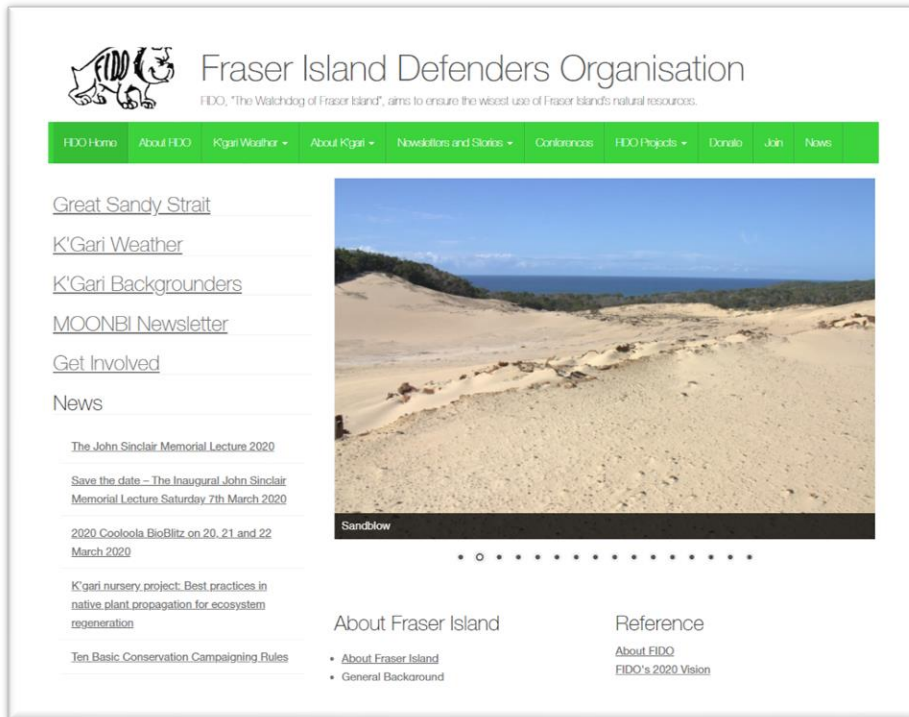
- Camping areas and vehicle access permits (all locations except Minjerribah and Mulgumpin) – book via [Queensland National Parks Booking Service](#)
- Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) — book for visits from 13 June via [Minjerribah Camping](#) (external site)
- Mulgumpin (Moreton Island) — book for visits from 13 June via [Mulgumpin Camping](#) (external site).
- Cooloola and Bribie Island – details are available via the [Queensland National Parks Booking Service](#) for how to book and acquire a mandatory *COVID-19 Access Authority* to [enter the Restricted Access Area](#) (external site)

Bookings must be made online and will not be accepted by telephone or through QPWS counters or agents.

For bookings, please visit www.qld.gov.au/camping and for park alerts please visit <https://parks.des.qld.gov.au/park-alerts/>

Please refer to <https://parks.des.qld.gov.au/covid-19/> and always check [Park Alerts](#) before leaving home for up-to-date information for a specific location.

Visit us any time!



Whatever the travel restrictions, you can always visit us at fido.org.au, where you can

Join and donate to FIDO;

Keep up to date on future FIDO activities and read about our projects so far, such as conferences, BioBlitzes, campaigns, research, weeding bees and the K'gari native plant nursery;

Read previous issues of MOONBI and FIDO's K'gari E-News; and

You can even check the weather on K'gari.

FIDO's refreshed website (thanks to the work of Pauline, Keith and John Sinclair) is a valuable and accessible resource for all FIDO members and anyone interested in the natural wonders of K'gari.