VSP losses

The service has taken a hit with the retirement of some big

The Rainbow Beach conference was another fantastic few days to recharge the batteries, network with Rangers from across the state and bring back a heap of ideas that can be implemented on your own patch.

The conference started with an outstanding welcome to country ceremony by Cooloola’s Traditional Owner Rangers Darren and Conway that made you feel honoured to be their colleague. Senior Ranger Bart Klekar and new Great Sandy Regional Manager Ross Belcher then gave us an introduction to the Cooloola and Great Sandy Region.

Conference speakers gave presentations around the theme ‘pressure on parks’. This included some amazing talks from Marc McDonald on Rangering in Africa and Col Lawton on managing dingoes on Fraser Island.

Nick Bowman from the International Mountain Biking Association of Australia also gave an interesting talk on cooperative management of mountain bikes throughout the country.

This year we were fortunate to have Sean Wilmore from the Thin Green Line Foundation present an inspiring behind the scenes look at his Thin Green Line documentary.

Sean’s keynote speech on Tuesday night gave a whole new perspective on the issues Rangers face around the world. From those who had their wages halved in the hope they’d accept bribes from loggers to Rangers being ambushed and killed in retaliation for anti-poaching activities, their struggles put a new perspective on our daily concerns.

continued on page 3

For some of our parks, 2011 isn’t off to a good start. Unprecedented flooding across the entire state topped off with a category five cyclone has affected our natural areas and strained our workforce.

This issue we’ve brought together a collection of photos and stories from around the state showing how these disasters have affected our protected areas.

Our coverage starts on page 4.

Moreton Bay Region

Westward bound

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Well the beginning of the year has been an extraordinary time for Rangers. Queensland has copped a battering from Mother Nature through floods and cyclones. A lot of parks have sustained significant damage both from an ecological and infrastructure perspective, and as expected Rangers have looked at the massive job ahead of them and just got on with it. During these tragic events I’ve seen and heard of teams pulling together, forming a united front to undertake mammoth tasks that continue to be admired by local communities. It just goes to show how resilient, versatile, compassionate and hard working Rangers are.

If you missed out on the QRA Conference at Rainbow Beach you missed out on a great couple of days. It was a fantastic opportunity to network with Rangers from across the State, listen to some great guest speakers, taste the legendary spit roast at the Hooha’s Bar and catch up with Sean Wilmore - Director of the Thin Green Line Foundation. We’re hoping to have the presentations from the conference on the QRA website in the not too distant future to benefit those who couldn’t make the conference.

At this year’s conference we generated heaps of ideas to take the QRA forward over the coming years. One of the first pieces of business that we’ll be addressing is the re-establishment of Regional Representatives as a result of MOG changes and the realignment of regional boundaries. This will keep the QRA aware of regional issues and have local representatives with local knowledge to assist members with issues which could benefit Rangers state wide.

World Ranger Day will be here before we know it on 31st July. Preparations are already underway for some events across the state so keep an eye out for the QRA Newsflash for updates.

This year’s Council of Australian Rangers Association (CARA) meeting will be held in NSW around September and like last year, the QRA will be sending delegates to keep abreast of issues facing Rangers across Australia. The QRA will once again be choosing delegates through a selection process.

We are looking forward to getting more results for QRA members to enhance Rangers professional development. As members, it is up to you to let your Regional Representative or the QRA Executive know of issues that need to be addressed or benefits or strategies you believe your Ranger colleagues can benefit from.

Looking forward to the future!

Andy Dutton – QRA Chair
In conjunction with QPWS, the QRA presented Sean with a $2000 cheque for the Thin Green Line Foundation. This money will be used to support the families of Rangers killed in the line of duty.

Wednesday saw the QRA AGM, Lloyd from Replas filled us in on new developments in recycled plastic technology and our famous trade show. In the afternoon we split into groups for field trips to Double Island Point or boating up the Great Sandy Straits on the western side of Fraser Island.

The social night of the conference was held at the Hooha’s bar where the Cooloola Rangers and their families turned on the hospitality with a sensational spit roast pig and lamb. On the night we raised another $225 for the Thin Green Line foundation.

Thursday morning had more speakers that couldn’t fit into the first day’s line up before we departed for another year.

The QRA would like to thank all our guest speakers, our sponsors, QPWS Executives and the dedicated Great Sandy Region staff who provided a lot of logistical support.

Of course we can’t forget you the members; without your attendance this years conference wouldn’t have been the success that it was.
Floods and cyclones

My name is Ross Domin and I am the Senior Ranger for the Ingham sub-region, which roughly covers the area from Tully to Townsville. I was asked to pick some photos and put together a short summary of park damage from Yasi and the subsequent floods.

It was hard to figure out what to write and which pictures to select. Every recreation area, walking track, road and fence is damaged and most of it is pretty major. The saddest thing though is the destruction of the forests and the impact on the fauna.

I finally decided to attach a single photo from Broadwater State Forest Park. Prior to Yasi this was a 50m tall old growth endangered riparian rainforest with numerous massive old trees. Somewhere in the tangled mess are the remains of 220m of raised boardwalk and 500m of walking track.

Broadwater was known for having one of the highest diversity of birds in Australia. Cassowary’s were regular visitors and the surrounding hills are habitat for the endangered mahogany glider. Broadwater is also very important to the local community, with many families being regular visitors over generations and forming life time connections.

As a measure of the importance of our parks to many in the local community the first question my daughter asked me after establishing that we were OK was “How was Broadwater?” What could I say? It’s a fair mess but we will fix it and nature has an amazing ability to recover with time.

Most of the flood and cyclone photos were sent to us by staff who didn’t necessarily take the photos or know who did. Due to this photo credits aren’t given for the photos in this section.

A Wet Tropics experience
Compared to other regions affected during the floods and Cyclone Yasi, MBR came through relatively unscathed. Most of our efforts were focused on helping cleanup flood effected suburbs of Brisbane, and helping in the reconnaissance of the bay and rivers and removing debris in target areas.

Most of the damage within the region was to roads on Bribie and Moreton Islands plus some damage to Marine Park moorings and buoys.

Marine Park monitoring is being carried out by relevant DERM units (Sciences, QPWS), some in conjunction with the CSIRO. They will be looking at the effects of flooding on key areas of aquatic marine animal and food habitats.

Joseph Caloiiero

**Sunshine Coast / Burnett Region**

The region had widespread flooding however the worst of the damage was at Benarkin State Forest.

Here about 600 metres of road was continued on page 7
Is it true a well-known QRA member didn’t attend this years conference at Raibow Beach because he was feeding possums?

This ranger is a Kiwi and former forester well known for his love of feral possums from his home land and getting teary-eyed about all those good saw logs going to waste.

He is now setting up feeding stations and building homes for possums in cyclone damaged areas. It’s great to see a ranger can change his spots…

Clockwise from top left: What’s left of Emu Creek access road; The remnants of a spider bridge at Mount Binga NP; Emu Creek bridge covered in silt; Some of the South East Region clean up crew; Hook Point ‘high tide’ access road, Fraser Island; A house washed onto Harris Street, Grantham.
washed away when Emu Creek broke its banks which also undercut a vehicle bridge on the same road.

One other incident of note was the basement carpark of the regional office flooded to about waist height when a sewer main overflowed.

**South East Region**

Regional staff assisted communities in the greater Brisbane and Lockyer areas including Grantham, Goodna, Fig Tree Pocket. We also sent a deployment to help our northern colleagues affected by Yasi.

There are still areas within the Region that haven’t been assessed due to lack of access however SER Rangers are doing everything they can to provide visitors the recreational experiences they were used to before the storms.

Andy Dutton

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**Kroombit Tops incident**

Paul Lawless-Pyne and Tim Connolly fill us in from Capricornia Region.

Heavy rainfall experienced during December and January throughout the Capricornia Region resulted in a staggering amount of damage to QPWS estates. However damage was mostly confined to park infrastructure.

No final cost is available but four parks in the Capricornia Region have an estimated repair expense of around $270,000.

Damage included land slips, loss of road base due to the drainage systems being unable to cope with the rain, culverts undermined and washed away, damaged fencing, walking track and firebreak erosion and damaged road surfaces from vehicle use during the period - even though most areas were closed to the public.

No staff accommodation either on park or private was damaged and no injuries notified to staff or park visitors.

In December and January more than 700mm of rain fell at Kroombit Tops. During this period an incident occurred that caused more damage to the park infrastructure than the rain did. The story is picked up by Tim Connolly.

On Christmas Day a four wheel drive with three passengers became bogged in Kroombit Tops National Park about ninety kilometres south west of Gladstone.

Unable to recover the vehicle, the two younger of the occupants left on foot in search of mobile reception for assistance. Reception was eventually gained at The Lookout - twenty five kilometres from their vehicle.

Police attempted to reach them but were prevented by flood waters. Late Boxing Day four SES personnel in two four wheel drives managed to access the two visitors at The Lookout and the third person at the vehicle.

Attempts to return to Gladstone were halted by a flooded Kroombit Creek. All other road access out of the park was also cut. The visitors and SES crew made their way to The Lookout and remained in contact with authorities in Calliope.

An emergency helicopter attempted to provide assistance but failed due to low cloud.

It was decided on the afternoon of December 27 the best way to rescue the stranded people was to use a six wheel drive, 31 ton, articulated dump truck due to the weather conditions and the number of water crossings.

While proving suitable for the task, the truck damaged concrete causeways and left huge wheels tracks in the wet dirt roads, funnelling rains that further damaged the roads.

At 14:30 on the 28th December all arrived at Calliope safely rescued. No injuries were experienced by the visitors or the rescue party.
Clockwise from top left: Landslip at Nuga Nuga NP; Working on the track to Josephine Falls; A blown over toilet at Edmund Kennedy NP; Ungowa DUA, Fraser Island; Repairing Ma:Mu; Start of Granite Arch and Pyramid tracks at Girraween NP; Getting to work at Mossman Gorge
Clockwise from above: A very damaged Lawton Road, D’Aguilar NP; Djiru (formerly Tam O’Shanter) NP, Mission Beach; The extent of another landslip at Nugu Nuga NP; Cardwell visitor information centre; An upturned jetty in mangroves near the Wynnum boardwalk, Moreton Bay
**Old timer tales**

A snippet from the past by Peter Ogilvie

Any organisation should treasure and learn from its past. The past is not only a record of significant events, it also contains a range of stories, anecdotes and light-hearted experiences; most of which are never formally recorded. That may be so, but they should be shared.

A couple of events spring to mind from my early days with national parks. In order to put ‘early days’ in some perspective, I commenced work with the National Parks Branch of Forestry Department just after New Year’s Day in 1966. My first job involved carrying out a fauna survey at Lamington National Park. On 1 April 1966, I was confronted by an out of breath workman (there were no rangers on parks in those days) on the track to Binna Burra who said the Overseer at the Nagarijoon Camp had been bitten by a tiger snake and needed urgent medical attention.

I should point out that Lamington accommodation in 1966/67 wasn’t exactly something to write home about. The slab hut at Nagarijoon was actually a luxury compared with what was on offer at the Morans Creek camp some four kilometres inside the park from O’Reilly’s Guest House. The photo shows the old plywood hut with wooden windows, open fire galley and outdoor laundry facilities. Water was collected from the creek, heated in the galley or the outside copper boiler and transferred to the outdoor shower bucket. I won’t bother with the details of the overseer’s rescue, as the story is more about the biter than the bitten. Nevertheless, it needs to be said that carrying someone on a stretcher for more than four kilometres is a bit exhausting. The biter was in a slightly mangled state because the bitten, Dick Cooley, had recorded his displeasure at being bitten by beating its head end into a sort of pulpy mass.

Being the ‘fauna expert’, it was my job to identify the snake. “What species is it?” was the first question from the doctor at the Southport Hospital when we finally arrived in convoy with the ambulance. My preliminary identification was rough-scaled snake, but I needed to be sure so I headed off to see David Fleay at Burleigh. On confirming the snake’s provenance, and advising the hospital, David decided we should investigate two interesting bulges in the snake which were not caused by Dick’s onslaught. We were in David’s kitchen at the time so, to my surprise, he simply pushed his lunch items to one side, laid the snake out on the kitchen table and proceeded to cut it open. One bulge was a partly digested native rodent, a common species in the park. The other however, was a complete and utter surprise to both of us. It was the second ever record of a dormouse possum from southern Queensland. The animal was not even partly digested and had probably been taken only an hour or so before Dick inadvertently stepped on the snake at the bottom of the steps to the now-deceased Nagarijoon slab hut (which burnt to the ground many years ago). It is also possible that the tiny possum helped save Dick’s life, as the snake hadpossibly used a significant component of its venom on its two captures. The whole event was the subject of David Fleay’s Nature Notes in the Courier Mail on 5 April (should someone wish to check it out).

By the way, Dick made a full recovery.

Peter Ogilvie joined the National Parks Branch of the Forestry Department in January 1966 as the first National Parks zoologist. At one time or another, he has held positions with State-wide responsibility for the management of national parks, marine parks and wildlife, plus some periods acting as Director Q.NPWS.

His career highlights are varied including establishing Queensland’s first marine national parks in 1973 and overseeing, as Director of Marine Parks in Q.NPWS in the early 1980s, the day-to-day management component of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Peter established a vibrant and innovative interpretive team in the ‘new’ National Parks and Wildlife Service in 1975 and had responsibility for developing and implementing the service’s herbie logo.

He has visited more than thirty countries in an official or semi-official capacity to study parks and wildlife management and has represented states and territories on the Australian negotiating team for the International Convention on Biological Diversity. More recently Peter has been dealing with World Heritage matters, including presenting our healthy credentials on the international scene. In 2002 Peter was awarded the Public Service Medal as part of the Queen’s Birthday Honours List for “outstanding public service in the field of conservation in Queensland”.

Rangers often find themselves in situations where the truth can be stranger than fiction. If you have a tale from the good old days that you’d like to share for posterity, send it to rambler@queenslandranger.org
A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There by Aldo Leopold

A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There was written by Aldo Leopold in 1949 and has become one of the classics of conservation literature. It is more often than not read as a rite of passage, coming recommended from someone - usually a kindred spirit who has just finished it and found in it a wealth of quotations, gems of dry and witty nature writing (sand county prose) and timeless wisdom about land and wildlife conservation.

This and more: over the years different editions have either been illustrated with detailed pencil sketches or in some cases, with images of the sand county area taken by a photographer following in the steps of the author. While the story can easily stand on its own, the images add another dimension to the book that helps give it its down to earth almanac feel.

Published a year after his death, A Sand County Almanac confirmed Leopold as one of America's great nature writers and nature philosophers. His profession was wildlife management and this book expounds, in a poetic way, his views of the damage of predator control and the broader problems of poor land management.

His ‘Land Ethic’ and ‘Conservation Aesthetic’ still challenge the modern reader, raising a suite of land and wildlife management issues that are still unresolved and, if anything, more pressing today than when they were first broached in this book.

At a time when there is growing disconnection with nature this book offers a wake up call to readers (and even conservation organisations) to rebuild connections to land and wildlife as an important, if not the most important, prerequisite to effective nature conservation.

Have a read and recommend it to a kindred spirit.

And finally, two Sand County Almanac quotations to ponder:

Our ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty. It expands through successive stages of the beautiful to values uncaptured by language. (p. 96)

By making conservation simple, we have made it trivial. (p. 210)

Now there's something to think about…

Tom Mumbray

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Replas now produces over 200 robust, high quality products. In creating these environmentally-friendly and sustainable products the company is not only reducing the amount of plastic going to landfill, but also helping to save natural resources.

Increased demand led the company to form a network of distributors throughout Australia. As a result of the growth in product range and manufacturing, The Replas Resource Centre Pty Ltd (RRC) was established in 2010. The RRC will ensure consistent quality of service and product delivery.

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A new conflict brews in Libya - one of the world’s key oil producing nations, and for the first time since July 2008 the price of oil is in the headlines as it threatens a global economy still attempting to recover from the GFC. Saudi Arabia’s ability to sustain any significant increase in its oil production to offset this disruption to global supply is in doubt. This is very significant as over the past 40 years Saudi Arabia has been the world’s greatest “swing producer”. It has been able to increase its production enough to stabilise global oil prices in the event of supply disruptions in other oil producing nations. But now its own massive oil reserves appear to have reached a production plateau. Theories of Peak Oil and imminent, irreversible global oil decline seem to have taken another frightening step closer to validation.

So what’s this got to do with rangers and managing protected areas? Well, quite simply, everything.

Queensland’s protected areas are a wonderful by-product of a wealthy, democratic and industrialised nation’s unusual capacity to indulge an ideology where certain parcels of its natural and cultural heritage are set aside for preservation and enjoyment by its people. Nations like Australia have been built upon the principles of capitalism and capitalism requires something very curious - constant growth. Most industrialised, capitalist nations have grown steadily at 2% per year for the past 150 years. One source of energy in particular has had the transportability and energy density necessary to facilitate this growth – crude oil. And whilst capitalism’s hunger is infinite, crude oil is essentially the fossilised remains of long extinct algae and its availability is most certainly finite. A study commissioned by the US government in 2005 predicted we face at least twenty years of global economic depression if we wait until oil supplies peak before attempting to switch to alternatives (and these alternatives include nuclear power and coal liquefaction).

Have we indeed waited too long to make the transition? And if the world enters a new paradigm of desperately looking for alternatives to oil will this necessitate an end to any commitment to reduce carbon emissions?

Ranger wages and park operating budgets are funded by our oil-fuelled economy. Park visitation relies on oil-fuelled surplus wealth and oil-derived fuels to power the machines that bring people there. Park management is powered by oil – try and think of a single piece of equipment used on park that isn’t fuelled by oil, made of oil or required oil in a critical stage of its production. Fire management, compliance operations, threatened species programs, wildlife exhibits, visitor centres, office complexes, interpretive presentations, you name it – it can’t operate without oil. Oil will rebuild Queensland’s flood and cyclone ravaged park infrastructure. Even the microprocessor powering the computer on a ranger’s desk takes ten times its weight in oil to produce.

And we rangers like to think we maintain a modest carbon footprint!

Jason Flesser

In the next issue – what becomes of rangers and protected areas in an oil depleted future?
Keep the wild creatures wild

A state wide approach to feeding wildlife

I was amazed at the level of intensity dingo management gets on Fraser Island. From Col Lawton’s presentation I really got a feel for the impact a habituated species can make. But then I thought about my patch. I’ve had birds; honeyeaters and kookaburras plus the occasional goanna destroying some visitors’ picnic from time to time.

One time I even had a phascogale trapped in a car that was left open with food in it after dark. When the poor animal was released in the morning the whole interior of the car was “redecorated” to the amazement of the owner.

What do I do about it? Well mostly very little; it’s one of those small issues for me and it only affects one in fifty visitors. But do I follow-up on visitors and make sure they secure their food? No!

To stop the cycle of habituation, what can we do? I’ve had to relocate the occasional animal, but I’ve never really dealt with the source of the problem.

This issue is one we all should face, if we can train visitors to manage rubbish we should be able to encourage responsible storage of food.

I call on all rangers to increase awareness of this issue and manage visitor’s food storage to make sure we keep the wild creatures wild.

Frank Mills

The ‘Who’s looking while you’re cooking’ poster was designed to be used in all parks. Contact us if you would like a copy for yours.

Heli Charters Australia Pty Ltd provides a range of leisure and commercial charter operations in Queensland and Australia wide. We have extensive experience with organizations such as Qld Parks & Wildlife Service, the most recent including surveys and infrastructure tasks. We are SOA approved. Heli Charters runs a highly responsive operation with an eye for flexibility, client needs and excellent outcomes. Our company has access to several different types of aircraft, extensive logistical support/resources, knowledge and experience that makes our company the ideal candidate for all your helicopter requirements.

Right: Firefighting in Lawn Hill
Far Right: The team at Mission Beach after lifting/installing a viewing platform
Below: Jetranger with Les Jackson on clean up duties after Cyclone Larry

Operations include…

- Aerial survey / mapping
- Aerial lifting / long lining
- Search and Rescue
- Feral animal control
- Track maintenance
- Viewing platform installations
- Aerial fire-lighting
- Bambi bucket operation (fire-fighting)
- Kibble bucket operation (concrete pouring)
Whole coastline of Namibia declared national park

Namibia recently designated its entire 1,570 kilometre coastline a national park. The 10.7 million hectare Namib-Skeleton Coast National Park is larger in area than Portugal.

The new park consolidates three existing national parks: Skeleton Coast, Namib-Naukluft and Sperrgebiet. The last is the site of Namibia's diamond mines, which have long been closed to the public.

The park does not stop at national borders either: at the southern end it connects with South Africa’s Richetersveld National Park, while in the north it is linked to Angola’s Iona National Park.

Historically, Namibia has been a trailblazer in using tourism to fund conservation, and has encouraged tribal communities to set up conservation areas which they manage in order to keep poaching at bay and attract tourism.

Cows out of Alpine National Park

The Victorian State Government introduced 400 cattle into Alpine National Park in January as part of a scientific research trial. However Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke says the Victorian Government did not check to see if the project complied with federal law.

The cattle have now been removed for the rest of the year and Minister Burke wants the trial permanently stopped.

Cows were reintroduced as part of a bushfire mitigation study but the move has been criticised by environmental groups and traditional landowners. Greens MP Adam Bandt says the so-called scientific trial has about as much claim to scientific validity as the Japanese government’s claims that whaling furthers national research.

Minister Burke posted a message on YouTube saying “Whether or not they’ve broken federal law doesn’t change the fact that the principle of this is all wrong.”

“We’re talking about a national park, we’re not talking about a farm.”

Cattle were returned to the park five years after they were removed by the former government, mostly because of their damaging impact on the sensitive alpine environment.

NSW Environment Department abolished

The incoming New South Wales Government has abolished the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water and transferred most of its functions to the newly created Office of Environment and Heritage - a division of the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet. Marine park management and land clearing have been transferred to the Department of Primary Industries.

Cambodia approves rubber plantation - in national park

Cambodian Prime Minister, Hun Sen, has granted two 70-year leases on land totalling nearly 190 km² for the production of rubber trees and other crops in Virachey National Park.

Spanning 332,500 hectares, Virachey is Cambodia’s largest national park. The park is one of only two Cambodian ASEAN Heritage Parks and is one of the top priority areas for conservation in Southeast Asia. It is a crucial watershed for the Mekong and provides habitat for Asian elephants, sun bears and clouded leopards. It is also home to several groups of indigenous peoples.

Virachey National Park was created under a Royal Decree concerning the creation and designation of protected areas in 1993.

According to human rights and environmental monitors, land concessions have been used as a means to circumvent a 2002 moratorium on commercial logging. In 2006 the Cambodian Government opened up 60% of the park to mineral exploration by Australia’s Indochine Mining Limited.

Virachey National Park was a focus for a US$5 million World Bank Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Project (BPAMP). Under the BPAMP a five-year strategy was developed for the park and boundaries and regulations for four community protected areas were established together with local communities.

The Bank stopped its BPAMP project, partly as a
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Sunshine Coast / Burnett incident management trailer

In March 2009, a submission for plant and equipment funding to build a fire response trailer with ICS capabilities for QPWS on the Sunshine Coast Burnett region was successful. This started the wheels turning (no pun intended) on a project that kept QPWS Cotton Tree ranger and fire coordinator David Johnson busy for several months. Prior to that time, it had often been talked about at RIC meetings and district meetings how such a trailer, with a built-in VHF repeater, would benefit the region in terms of improving communication in fire and emergency response situations.

The first step was to look at other similar trailers around the traps to see if there could be any improvements made and/or shortcomings to watch out for. After talking to a few rangers who had been involved with similar projects and milling over many photographs, a pretty good idea started to emerge of the design of the trailer and how it should be fitted out. After going through the process of obtaining quotes etc. for the manufacture of such a trailer, the successful bidder was a local business, Sunshine Coast Trailers, situated not far from Cotton Tree. It was also close to where Dave lived, so this made it easy for him to drop in going to and from work to check progress and/or discuss aspects of the design and fit out.

As is the case with a lot of projects, the gap between when funds were made available and the deadline for completion was quite short, but on this occasion the manufacture and fit out proceeded quite smoothly and completion was achieved and payments finalised prior to financial year cut-off.

Features of the trailer included an enclosed Pantec design with 3 doors (2 lift up with gas struts and 1 double barn style), off road suspension & 15 inch off road tyres, electric brakes, storage cage on the roof, internal LED lights, water tank & 12V pressure pump, pull out gas BBQ, 60L fridge, fold out table and a built in portable VHF repeater with a 9m pump up mast.

With the fire season’s having been relatively kind to us since its completion, the trailer has only been used at a handful of fires for ICS purposes. The feedback from those that used the trailer though, has been very positive. The unit has been successful in eliminating a couple of known black spots for communication in the Bellthorpe range area and used at fires within the Glasshouse and Kenilworth management units.

The trailer is easy to hook up, tow and assemble on site in a relatively short time, with set up time only 30-45 minutes.

If you would like further information on the mobile repeater trailer contact David Johnson or Omar Bakhach at the Cotton Tree office on (07) 5459 6110.

David Johnson
**Art in the park**

*Conondale National Park is to get a world class art installation*

Well known for its agricultural industry, wine trails, farm stays, national parks and forests, the Kenilworth and Conondale Ranges region will soon be known for its art as well.

In 2008 Sunshine Coast / Burnett staff hatched an idea to incorporate artwork as a feature of the Conondale Range Great Walk. This has lead to the commissioning of renowned sculptor Andy Goldsworthy to build a sculpture along the track.

Scotland based Goldsworthy is known world-wide for his sculptures and ephemeral artwork. An internet search will reveal hundreds of works created by the artist all over the world.

Great Walks staff applied to Arts Queensland for funding through the ‘art + place’ program and after a few meetings with the curatorial panel, were pleasantly surprised by the panels support for the concept.

With financial support from Arts Queensland and logistical support from QPWS, the project will begin in the coming months with a scheduled completion date later in the year.

The Conondale National Park sculpture will be a 20 tonne stone cairn titled ‘The Strangler Cairn’. It will be built in a small clearing in the rainforest about one and a half kilometres from the start of the walk.

A key feature of the sculpture will be the planting of a strangler fig in a 650 kilogram stone on the top of the sculpture. Over time the tree will grow and its roots will encase the cairn giving it an ancient appearance not unlike the historic temples of Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

Andy Goldsworthy has also built a cairn for Parks Victoria as part of their ‘art in the park’ program on Herring Island in 1997.

Stay tuned to coming editions of the rambler for updates on the progress of this unique project.

Omar Bakhach

**Kurrimine Beach**

*Miki Bradley fills us in on how last years conference venue fared after Yasi*

I went to Kurrimine two weeks after Yasi and it still didn't have electricity. The town seemed to be hit pretty hard; windows blown out, sections of roofs missing, collapsed sheds, powerlines down all over the place, truck loads of furniture and personal possessions on the footpath.

There didn't seem to be any structural damage to the conference venue although the fence at the back had blown down and a caravan was flipped over. A boat had ended up in front of the Kurrimine Beach Conservation Park walking track and heaps of vegetation was down.
Regional representatives

The QRA is seeking to reinstate regional representatives across the state. We want all ten parks regions and the three wildlife regions to have a regional QRA representative.

The responsibilities of regional QRA representatives are:
- Promote the Queensland Ranger Association and its benefits to staff in their region
- Monitor general working conditions and social justice issues affecting QRA members and disseminate any issues to the QRA executive
- Distribute QRA information to members, potential members and other relevant staff in their region as appropriate
- Participate in QRA teleconferences from time to time as required
- Identify and / or collate articles for the Ranger Rambler magazine of happenings in their region
- Confirm the QRA members listed for their region in the current member list is accurate
- Act as a starting point for coordinating regional ranger exchanges within their region for other QRA members

So far we have the following reps in the following regions:
- Capricornia: Paul Lawless-Pyne
- Great Sandy: Bart Klekar
- North Queensland Marine: Jo Peterson
- South East: James Plant
- Sunshine Coast / Burnett: Brett Hollindale
- Wet Tropics: Delys Wilson
- Contact a member of the QRA executive if you're interested in becoming a QRA representative for your region.
- Some formalities of the position are:
  - Election of regional representatives is to occur one month prior to the QRA annual general meeting. Regional representatives must notify the QRA executive group of their appointment. Confirmation of appointment will occur at the next annual general meeting.
  - Length of representation is one year and re-election should occur at the end of each term. As long you are a QRA member there is no maximum number of terms you can serve.
  - Representatives may resign from their position at any time by giving notice to the QRA executive group. Regions can elect or appoint a casual representative for the period between the resignation of the previous representative and the next election in the month before the annual general meeting.

Dundaburra computer issues

The QRA was recently advised that Rangers at Dundabura, Northern Management Unit on Fraser Island did not have access to the Department's computer network at their base since January, and weren’t expected to have access until the end of the financial year. The problem was identified as equipment failure related mainly to Telstra’s Next G connection. The Rangers only access to the Department’s computer network was at the Eurong Management Unit; a 40km drive along the eastern beach. The QRA simply saw the situation as unacceptable.

Obviously the Department’s computer network is one of the most important communication tools and is vital for Rangers to conduct their work professionally.

The QRA brought this issue to the attention of QPWS Executives who acted immediately to find out how to resolve the matter. One of the main obstacles was scheduling as the work needed to be done in conjunction with Telstra. By the time you are reading this article the QRA hopes the issue will be resolved. If not the QRA will not rest until it is.

If you have an issue you feel the QRA can assist with, remembering the QRA is a professional development association and leaves industrial issues to the Union, please let the QRA know through your regional representative.

In the news

From page 18

response to the government’s decision to award the concession to Indochine Resources.

The World Bank told the Cambodia Daily “We have raised this issue with the government and initiated a discussion within the Ministry of Environment in an effort to clarify the government’s intention… [W]e continue to encourage the government of Cambodia to make good choices when they pick business partners and … to ensure their partners are committed to socially and environmentally responsible development.”

The Asia Times has reported that with the World Bank’s money gone, the national park reduced the number of rangers from 70 to 55 and cut their salaries from US$70 to about US$30 a month. At the same time, the price of wildlife and timber on the black market went up, increasing the likelihood of illegal poaching and logging inside the park.

Betty White Forest Ranger

Former Golden Girl Betty White recently became an honorary U.S. Forest Service park ranger. With Smokey the Bear looking on, the U.S. Forest Service presented White with a badge and a ranger’s Stetson hat at a Performing Arts ceremony at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

The seven time Emmy award winning actress aspired to be a ranger when she was younger, but at that time the U.S. Forest Service didn’t accept women.

“In my heart I’ve been a forest ranger all my life, but now I’m official” said 88 year old White.

She went on to explain “wilderness is harder and harder to find these days on this beautiful planet, and we’re abusing our planet to the point of almost no return.”

White says she’ll use her celebrity status to help the Forest Service.
Queensland Ranger Association

Membership application / payroll deduction authority

I agree with the principles and objectives of the Queensland Ranger Association (QRA) and wish to become a member through one of the following payment methods:

FULL MEMBERSHIP (DERM employees only)

- Ongoing membership by fortnightly payroll deduction until otherwise advised

I authorise you as my employer to deduct the sum of $2.00 per fortnight pay period out of the money due to me in respect of wages from the next pay period and continue such withdrawal each fortnight until I advise otherwise, this being for my continuing annual membership fees of the QRA. Please deposit the fortnightly amount to the nominated QRA account below.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP (non-DERM employees)

Select one of the following payment options:

- Pay 1 year of membership in advance by attaching a cheque or money order for $24.00
- Ongoing membership by monthly bank deduction until otherwise advised

Please make all cheques and money orders payable to ‘Queensland Ranger Association’.

Applicant details:

Name:

Address:

City: __________________________

State: QLD __________________________

Post code: __________________________

Email: __________________________

Region: __________________________

Employee number: __________________________

Signature: __________________________

Date: __________________________

Witness name and signature: __________________________

Date: __________________________

Post completed form to:

Queensland Ranger Association

PO Box 1760

Ingham QLD 4850

Office use only

QRA bank name: Suncoor Metway      BSB: 484 789      Account number: 020128564

Received on: __________________________

Received by: __________________________

Membership details: __________________________

Receipt number: __________________________
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