**President’s Report 2017**

**Significant figures 2016/2017:**

* 22 financial members
* 91 people receive our monthly newsletter and 44% regularly open it.
* 10 enquiries received via our web page; 2 seeking community service hosts in Ballina, 1 seeking info on fauna survey at Lake Ainsworth, 3 school groups, and 4 enquiries re endemic species info for local gardens
* Facebook page – Kelly posts weekly, Malcolm once and Shaun rarely. Posts celebrating our local, natural environment receive the highest interest (up to 1500 ‘reaches’ with c 10% - 20% clicking to view further. Some posts ‘shared’ by the Lennox Wave.
* Monthly newsletter – 91 recipients of which 44% typically open and read each month.

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|  | **Working Bees** | **av. Volunteers** | **total vol. hrs** | **plants planted** |
| **‘core’ gp** | 46 | 7.6 | 687 | 1103 |
| **Skennars Hd gp** | 70 | 3.3 | 443 |  200 |
| **Shorty’s Stairs gp****Pinnacle Row gp** | 2 / 2021 / 50 | 8 / 15 / 1 | 113.5415 | ??3100 |
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We continue to be represented on Ballina Shire Council’s B Ward and Coastal Advisory teams and also on the Lake Ainsworth Interest Group.

Despite BSC being labelled the driest region in the state in March, following 7 unusually dry months, our work at all sites has continued in much the same vein as last year. We continue to cover 10 sites in total, 9 of which are on land managed by BSC and 1 on land managed by NPWS.

At Boulders the Green Army ran 2 more teams prior to being wound up unexpectedly by the Federal government. The 2 work sites mentored and supported by Spider at the Lower Point have continued to expand. In particular the site to the north of the boardwalk has benefited from the enthusiasm and untiring efforts of resident John Hill who works on site more days than not and has inspired 5 community planting days during the year. Further north the remnant littoral rainforest opposite William St suffered badly from vandalism over the September to December period but is slowly recovering after assistance from Coastcare and BSC to fence it off. Work at the Bora Ring has been delayed whilst we waited for the go-ahead to start planting canopy in the areas that need repair. NPWS have now given the go ahead and we are hopeful that Jali Land Council will also following a site visit in the near future. Management of Water Hyacinth at LA is now in ‘maintenance’ mode under the watchful eyes of Peter B and Kelly and mainly controlled by Pete outside working bee times. Sites at Skennars Head, Ross Lane and along the dunes north of the surf club have continued as usual.

During the last year we have also launched a Facebook page which is gaining quite a good reception within the local community. Kelly posts weekly and Malcolm has used it to post some before and after shots of Boulders. It’s also been a good way to receive and answer queries about weeds, plants and our sites in general.

A special event was the installation of a memorial seat at Lake Ainsworth to acknowledge the many years of work completed by Don Apps. This was supported by BSC with the Malcolm’s invaluable assistance. Malcolm became involved in Landcare after Don had moved on but he knew Don and was instrumental in making him the first life member of Landcare.

We are committed to fostering an understanding of and care for our natural environment and it’s importance in our lives and will pursue this in any way we can. As a result in the last year we again hosted a number of school excursions from sites as close as Skennars Head and as far away as Casino and Brisbane. We also ran a stall at the Love Lennox festival in June to promote all of our work sites and teach people about some common garden ‘weeds’ that cause us grief at our worksites. The stall was colourful and vibrant and attracted a lot of interest, including 9 new names for our newsletter distribution list.

As plans for works in the South Eastern Precinct of Lake Ainsworth have chopped and changed through the year we have continued to work in partnership with Lennox Head Residents’ Assoc. and Ballina Environment Society to maximise community understanding of the plans and their benefits. Currently Council is about to submit a DA for the works and call for submissions before the DA is presented to Council to be endorsed. Once again we anticipate a need for those who support the concept to make their voices heard if Councillors are to stand firm and authorise works to begin.

The work we do carries a need for funding from time to time. In this regard we have been supported by BSC for training in Chemical safety, First Aid and Chain Saw use, insurance costs and consumables such as fencing materials, mulch, water tanks and plants. Also during the last year we have received generous donations from Bunnings (c. $250), the family of Don Apps ($150) and the mysterious benefactor supporting the Pinnacle Row group (c. $3000). This is still not sufficient to meet all of our plans so on top of this we have applied for and received $4840 in grants and applied for a further $

To expand works at the Lower Point.

None of this would have been possible without the invaluable contributions of the following people;

* all of our working bee volunteers
* all of those who value our work and speak up for us in a variety of ways
* Mike, Warren, Pat C, Malcolm, Kelly and Sue for co-ordinating the rehabilitation of their respective areas and keeping up with the paperwork involved.
* Malcolm, Spider and Paul brown (BSC nursery) for continuing to propagate stock with local provenance for planting
* Kelly, Sue, Malcolm and Spider for helping to plan for plantings at the eastern riparian zone of the Lake and the Bora Ring
* Kelly, Malcolm, James B and Spider for assisting with grant applications.
* Kelly for continuing to produce such engaging articles for the Wave each month, posting great articles on the facebook page each week, helping out with school excursions and for being such a supportive and enthusiastic VP.
* Malcolm for keeping track of the bulk of our equipment and ensuring it is in good condition, helping out with school excursions and for continuing to share his vast wealth of knowledge and experience with us.
* Warren and Sue for their work as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. .
* Lastly I would like to make mention of Robert Johnston. Robert has been a member of LHLC for at least 10 years. He propagated many thousand of plants for us over the years and often helped Malcolm down at Boulders in between working bees. His generosity extended further to bringing his own chainsaw along when needed and to sharing passionfruit, cucumbers and other miscellaneous goodies from his garden. Robert and his wife Cheryl finally managed to sell their home in Amber Drive this year and are now living at Fern Grove in Ballina. His presence at our weekly ‘bees’ is sorely missed and we wish he and Cheryl all the best for this new adventure in life.

Shaun Eastment

August 28th 2017

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