



Administrator's update



It's been a busy month for us here on Norfolk Island, with a lot of productive work happening across the community.

I have recently had a very good meeting with my counterpart Administrator, Farzian Zainal from the Indian Ocean Territories. We have agreed to work together on issues that our communities share. Assistance to small business and economic development; solid waste management; cyclone resilience; biosecurity and island population information are the initial areas of focus we have identified.

We have also seen a significant milestone in Kingston with the completion of the first phase of the new sewer system. It will be great to see the project progress over the next months.

Further on in this newsletter, we are welcoming Kim Forbes to the Norfolk Island Branch. I'd like to thank Kynan Gowland for the work he did in the role since April. Also, I'd like to thank Grant Anderson who was the on-island Director since late 2022 and has now returned back to Canberra.

Help protect our history – check before you bin it!

Norfolk Island has a remarkably diverse and rich history, and sometimes we can overlook that it exists all around us in our environment.

At the Waste Management Centre recently, members of the Kingston and Arthurs Vale Historic Area's (KAVHA) maintenance team noticed a piece of a spectacle plate (which forms part of the rudder) from the HMS Sirius shipwreck. It appeared to have been inadvertently discarded and was in with household waste. We are fortunate the KAVHA team members have such keen eyes, as to many of us it just looks like a lump of old metal encrusted in remnants of sea creatures!



Portion of spectacle plate found at waste management July 2024



spectacle plate found during archaeological works

The wreck of the HMS Sirius is one of the most significant in Australasian history. HMS Sirius was the flagship of the First Fleet, and its loss on the reef at Slaughter Bay in 1790 was a panic-inducing event in the early Australian colonies. Artefacts from the wreck, such as cannons and anchors, can be seen today in the Sirius Museum at Kingston, but this is the first time we've seen part of the wreck at the tip.

KAVHA's teams have trained professionals with the knowledge and skills to assist in the identification of historical items. They also have access to networks of experts and specialists for further enquiries. We ask the community to consider reaching out to the Museums at Kingston before they discard any interesting, unusual or curious items.

Too many of Norfolk Island's stories have disappeared over time. Unfortunately, this isn't the first time an important piece of Norfolk Island's history has been rescued from the waste streams. Sadly, when historical items are discarded, the stories that accompany and flow from those items also get lost. It's important that collectively we conserve Norfolk Island's history.

Please ask before you dump! Pop into the Pier Store museum at Kingston to discuss your interesting items with Maree Evans, or if you'd prefer, email us at info@museums.gov.nf



90 years young – celebrating our nonagenarians

I had the pleasure of hosting a morning tea for the nonagenarians on island last month, who are those aged 90 and over. This remarkable group of residents were born in the 1920s. Many served in the armed forces during World War II and they have experienced a number of significant technological breakthroughs and lifestyle changes through the years including the advent of refrigerators, automatic washing machines, cars and televisions – so many things that we take for granted. Their stories were remarkable. I'm saddened that Christine Sheridan has since passed away and extend my sympathies to her family and friends.

The Nonagenarians were assisted by the Norfolk Island Quota Club and friends. The Quota Club continue to support and empower members of our community requiring assistance. I thank them for their ongoing care of others.



Watermill Dam update

Many of the community have observed or are aware of the breach to Watermill Dam last month following a heavy rain event.

I want to thank the KAVHA works crew and KAVHA management for prioritising the identification of the issue and subsequent repairs. I understand the importance of the heritage and environmental values of Kingston and Emily Bay. This was forefront of my mind also.

The water levels were observed to be falling on Sunday 21 July, dropping by about 1.2 metres below the dam wall by Monday morning.

KAVHA management identified water escaping in the southwest side of the dam wall and after continued exploration work determined the valve in the drain pipe was partially open, leading to the escape of water. This was likely due to an obstruction. The valve was closed and a leak identified during the exploration has been fixed. Operational testing of the valve will take place regularly to support the full functionality of the dam.

Testing of the surface and marine water was conducted by the CSIRO with the support of Council to assess impacts from the dam breach. Early results indicated that acid sulfate soils are not likely to have significantly impacted waterways downstream of the dam. Further analysis will be undertaken.

All parties worked together to quickly resolve this issue which I appreciate. We are all committed to supporting the ongoing health of our waterways and reef.



Help keep Kingston clean

We are pleased to inform the community that dog waste bag dispensers have now been installed in three locations across Kingston.

They can be found:

- Between the REO & Munnas
- The pathway between Emily Bay Lone Pine BBQ area and the eighth fairway on the Golf Course
- The cemetery- located just past the gate used to access the grassy BBQ area by car.

The KAVHA team will be responsible for the proper disposal of all waste to the Norfolk Wave Recycling Centre.

We encourage all dog walkers to make use of this free resource and dispose of their dog waste responsibly to help keep Kingston clean and beautiful.

Keep an eye out for them next time you drive or walk through the area.



Welcome to Kim Forbes

In July, we welcomed Kim Forbes to the Assistant Secretary role of the Norfolk Island Branch of the Department.

Kim has a wealth of knowledge and experience which she is bringing to the position, including an understanding of working with remote island communities – thanks to her time as Assistant Secretary of the Indian Ocean Territories branch.

We look forward to working with Kim through her time in the role including welcoming her to Norfolk Island on her first visit.