

**FARA Inc. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 20 March 2021
at Robin Chapple's office, 41 Havelock Street, West Perth**

Members in Attendance: Stephen Bennetts, Judith Hugo, Peter Shannon, Julianne Waldoock, Marie Ferland, Annemarie Hindinger, Sue Boyd, Claire Brittain, Mary Gray, Susan Swain, Chris Swain, Fiona Johnson, Margaret Owen.

Guest speaker: Piers Versteegen, CEO, Conservation Council (W.A.)

Start: 1.35pm

Chair: Marie Ferland

MF commenced the meeting with an acknowledgement to the traditional owners of the land where we meet, the Whadjuk Noongar, and of the land we are meeting about.

JH called for apologies

Apologies: Peter Schultz, Jennifer Laker, Sue Hartree, Linda du Boulay, Jenny Edwards.

Minutes of AGM of 21 March 2020 (conducted by Zoom):

Minutes of the 2020 annual general meeting were approved

Moved: Susan Swain

Seconded: Sue Boyd

Signed off by Judith Hugo

All accepted.

Treasurer's Report

Chris Swain presented the Financial Report for the past year.

FARA's finances were severely affected in 2020 as the Murujuga/Burrup Tour was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns and border closures. The deposits and payments were returned to most people but some were retained as deposits for the 2021 Tour.

These monies were transferred to the Trust Account.

The deposit for CCC has been carried forward from last year.

In summary, \$3,380 in the statement account (less \$5,204) and \$20,984 in the term deposit (increase \$249).

Separately, the Conservation Fund was at \$41 (no change) and Burrup Tour account \$1,995 (less \$2,600).

Non-tour income: \$2,519; non-tour expenditure: \$7,305. Non-tour loss: \$4,785.

FARA has been advised by a potential new auditor that as FARA is classified as a tier 1 association (income less than \$250,000) an annual audit is not required, unless requested by a majority of members at the AGM.

Financial report moved for approval: Sue Boyd

Seconded: Stephen Bennetts

All in favour (one abstention)

AUDIT vote: Susan Swain proposed no audit necessary for this year, all in favour (one abstention).

Co-convenor's Report

Co-convenor, Judith Hugo spoke to the tabled report and began by thanking the Committee and all members who contributed to FARA's ongoing efforts to protect the rock art of Murujuga (the Burrup peninsula, part of the Dampier Archipelago). Key issues dealt with over the past year:

1. North West Shelf / Browse Expansion

FARA sent another submission to W.A. Env. Protection Authority (12 Feb. 2020) in response to Woodside's gas hub on the Burrup. Thanks to everyone else who sent in submissions, an impressive number apparently.

FARA has joined with Conservation Council (W.A.) to highlight (through numerous petitions) the unacceptable amount of greenhouse gas emissions Woodside is proposing to emit and the potential damage to the rock art. CCWA is also challenging Woodside for exceeding the conditions of its original proposal (with assistance from Environmental Defenders Office, W.A.).

2. Research into the impact of emissions & management

The Murujuga Rock Art Conservation research project (set up at UWA) is progressing well.

Numerous tests of different concentrations of pollutants on the effects on rock patina of rock samples from the Burrup have been done to study their rate of dissolution.

Dr Ilona Box and Prof. John Richards (ANU), have been analyzing Landsat data from 1987 to 2017 to assess whether changes in rock surfaces near Woodside operations are different from similar rocks on Dolphin Island (north of the Burrup Peninsula).

Due to Covid-19 the microbiological studies were put on hold as it was not possible to access rocks on Murujuga.

An update on progress has been sent to those who supported the crowdfunding appeal.

Dr Sajni Gudka (Cons. Council W.A.) has released her report "Living with Uncertainty: every breath you take in the Burrup Peninsula". This report examines the adverse health implications of toxic industrial emissions on human health in Karratha, Dampier, etc. The EPA are looking at this report and Doctors for the Environment are expressing their concerns to the WA Dept. of Health.

3. World Heritage Listing

In Feb. 2020 Murujuga was placed on UNESCO's Tentative World Heritage List for Australia. The official application is being prepared for submission in 2022 (the earliest date once Australia's term on the UNESCO heritage committee is completed).

Murujuga Aboriginal Corp. and Dept of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) are assessing the case that Murujuga contains Outstanding Universal Values worthy of WHL protection. DWER is overseeing another Rock Art Monitoring program, results expected in about 4 years. If chemical emissions are found to be damaging the rock art then steps will be taken to mitigate the damage (such as lowering emissions using current new technology).

However, Perdaman Fertilisers' urea plant will be producing even more toxic emissions and the cumulative effect with Woodside's emissions could be over-ridden by the encouragement of the Covid Recovery Commission's oil & gas promoter, Neville Power.

If WHL fails for Murujuga, there can be no recourse for the Aboriginal custodians due to the Burrup Maitland Industrial Estate Agreement's (BMIEA) gag clause. The Commonwealth revision of the EPBC Act still does not have the power to protect Murujuga.

4. Legal Action, particularly relating to Yara Pilbara's licenses

In 2020 Yara Pilbara agreed on advice from State Solicitor's Office, to apply for 2 new licenses for Burrup Fertilisers and the TAN plant. In March 2020, Justice Archer cancelled FARA's original Judicial review.

In April, Environmental Defenders Office informed FARA that it was unable to represent FARA unless they were representing the Aboriginal groups as it is an Aboriginal issue.

11th May, FARA submitted two merits appeals against Yara's new licenses through the WA Appeals Convenor, the specific issue of the argument being DWER's apparently inadequate emissions controls and invoking the Precautionary and Intergenerational Principles.

18th Oct, DWER dismissed all FARA's grounds for appeal. Upon advice from Greg McIntyre SC, FARA has filed another application for a Judicial Review.

20th Nov., FARA submitted a comprehensive response to the Appeals Convenor on DWER's report. The Appeals Convenor has not yet submitted a report on this as it has been on hold during the caretaker period prior to the state election. The report will eventually be reviewed by the new minister, Amber-Jade Sanderson.

Meanwhile, in Aug. 2020 Yara Pilbara lodged plans for a 'green' hydrogen plant beside the Burrup Fertilisers' plant. To facilitate the solar panels for this plant, 25 hectares of panels will be erected – a visual eyesore. FARA has urged that they should relocate to the Maitland Estate (or Karratha Station).

17th Dec., FARA and 25 others sent in submissions against Yara's hydrogen plant proposal; however, WA govt announced in Feb. 2021 that they will be contributing \$2 million towards this development – before it has even received EPA approval.

5. Advocacy

Summary for 2020 to 2021:

15th April – EPBC Act submission. Report not released yet.

22nd June – Perdaman submission, acidic effects of urea on the rock art and human health.

27th July – FARA letter to Environment Minister Dawson enquiring after the safeguarding of National Heritage-listed areas following FARA's concerns for the potential effects of Perdaman's acidic emissions (referring to studies by Prof. Dorn on rock varnish in Arizona).

21st August – Dawson’s reply. Waiting for final EPBC report, but Murujuga Rock Art Strategy now in place with appointment of Puliypang Company in Feb. 2020 to develop and implement ‘a world’s best practice rock art monitoring program’.

9th Oct. – FARA submission to WA Cultural Heritage Bill.

16th Oct. – Future Forum 2020 (Visions for the future of Aboriginal Heritage in WA) was organized through Australian Assoc. of Consulting Archaeologists, Anthropological Soc. W.A. & Aust. Internat. Council on Monuments & Sites. This forum included discussions of the Cultural Heritage Bill.

FARA has collaborated with Cons. Council WA to support the Clean State campaign.

2nd Dec. – FARA co-hosted the launch of 360.org’s “Captured State” report.

16th Jan. 2021 – Juukan Caves submission.

12 Mar. – meeting with DBCA and MAC re WHL

Pending - meeting with new EPA chair, Prof. Matthew Tonts

Marie Ferland gave several public lectures: Geraldton (Feb. 2020); Perth for U3A (2 x Feb. 2020). Commended by audience.

6. Media

FARA website, www.fara.com.au, and Facebook site are constantly updated and membership is encouraged to check the website occasionally and ‘Like’ us on Facebook.

7. 2020 Burrup Murujuga Rock Art Tour

Marie Ferland has been working to re-establish the Tour following the cancellation of the 2020 Tour.

The 2021 Tour dates are 31st July to 8th August. Contact Marie on ferlandmarie@gmail.com to sign up. Also check Tour page on www.fara.com.au (webpage being updated). The 2020 information pack can be used as a guide to tour costs and approximate itinerary.

16th Feb. meeting with Stephen Bennetts, Marie Ferland (FARA), Patrick Churnside, Brian Wall (MAC) where cultural safety concerns from Council of Elders were discussed.

8. Governance & Administration

Despite Covid interruptions, John Black has still managed to continue to assist FARA and continue arguing for the protection of the rock art, Judith commended John on his efforts.

Marie Ferland has continued supporting the various campaigns with detailed submissions and managing the 2020/2021 Murujuga Tour including giving public presentations.

Chris Swain continued as Treasurer. Susan Swain, Public Officer, reviewed and updated the FARA constitution as well as trying to improve the online membership procedures.

Peter Schultz and Jennie Laker continue management of membership register and graphic design requirements.

Sue Hartree has been overseeing the Mail Chimp newsletters, as well as passing on our FARA mail and Google alerts. Sue will be taking a break from these tasks for the rest of 2021.

Stephen Bennetts updates Facebook and has assisted with discussions with MAC for the Tour. Clare Chamberlain has continued to update the FARA website.

Julianne Waldo continues to record the monthly meeting minutes.

Peter Shannon and Linda du Boulay are retiring from the committee. Linda intends to continue to assist when her new work schedule allows.

Judith commended all members of the committee of 2020/2021 but she also called for new members.

Judith announced that with Robin Chapple retiring from Parliament, FARA will have to find another meeting room.

The report was proposed for acceptance by Sue Boyd

Seconded: Claire Brittain

All in favour

2021 Burrup Murujuga Rock Art Tour update

Marie Ferland gave a brief overview. 17 people signed up (mostly from 2020 group), all WA-based. Coach company, motel (Carnarvon) and caravan park (Karratha) have been booked. Rock-art guides are available, itinerary to be decided following discussions with MAC.

Meeting concluded 3.40pm

Election of Committee

Marie Ferland advised that no nominations had been received, so all positions could be nominated direct from the floor. Stephen Bennetts proposed that Fiona Johnson join as an ordinary committee member, but she declined. Stephen Bennetts has offered to continue with the newsletter until Sue Hartree returns. Present committee willing to stand again -

Co-convenors – Judith Hugo and Marie Ferland
Secretary – Julianne Waldock
Treasurer – Chris Swain
Public officer – Susan Swain
Cultural liaison – Stephen Bennetts
Membership secretaries/graphic design –Peter Schultz, Jenny Laker

Margaret Owen moved that all above nominations be endorsed and Fiona Johnson seconded.
All in favour.

Other Business

Piers Verstegen was unable to present his talk, so the meeting was opened to general discussion on issues such as ideas for membership input (joining committee, providing skills – IT especially, etc.). Problems with the post-tour questionnaire: tourers are asked to list 'skills' but this part of the form is not linked to the contact details (Susan Swain is investigating solutions) so we do not lose this information.

It was suggested that a regular meeting reminder be sent to membership for the monthly meetings, however, based on past rejections to FARA's MailChimp newsletters, it was realized that this may be counterproductive. All members are welcome to attend our meetings on the first Tuesday of the month (on the FARA website).

Meetings to update membership were also suggested, but a central-placed meeting facility is lacking. The looming loss of the present meeting room will exacerbate this problem. Rooms at the State Library were suggested.

Fiona Johnson suggested that as the Trust Account is not directly linked to FARA, it should be removed from the monthly FARA financial reports – to be further discussed.

Meeting closed 4pm.