



# FoPI Flyer

October 2008

Celebrating the Centenary of Queensland National Parks 1908 - 2008

## We finally made it! Peel Island lazaret families' day



Photo: Chris Ayres

*W*hat a day! We were third time lucky, with the weather beautiful and the sea calm for a unique gathering on Peel Island at the lazaret. Family of patients and staff of the lazaret, along with FoPI members, QPWS staff and others travelled to Peel Island on Sunday 21 Sept to commemorate the Centary of the lazaret, and of National Parks in Queensland. For some it was their first time to the island, for others it was the first time in many years, but for everyone it turned out to be a very special day. Connections were made or renewed, and with stories of the place and the impact of its history shared. Our thanks to those who made the day possible; the Environmental Protection Agency, the Queensland Heritage Council and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services.



Waiting to board barge at One Mile ( (above); and landing at Horseshoe Bay on Peel Island (top)

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Most photos this edition courtesy Mark Bretherton



# Welcome to Country

Teeka-Roo-Ha.

Place of many shells.

Yuvung and Anami Biame Beera Inta  
which means:

Welcome to this Land and may God  
Bless us all.

Today is a day of getting together with  
beloved families and friends of patients who  
were here, friends and families of the staff,  
and most of all, the Aboriginal families  
of our Aboriginal workers, who worked here all  
those many years ago. I want to acknowledge  
two sisters who worked here, Mrs Irene Egert M's.  
Shirley M'orton. Their knowledge of the history would  
be worth writing about, and also others as well.  
Today is, for all to come together, indigenous  
and non indigenous, alike, to, reflect, with  
kindness, unity, and most of all Trust,  
because, deep down, Trust, is a gift of  
learning, everything, that life brings.

And the love of God, is always with  
you, when, you have trust, you are not  
alone.

I want to end by saying, let us all have  
a wonderful happy day together  
Start afresh and leave the ghosts in  
the closet, because, we the Aboriginal  
people, were no better off than the lovely  
people, who were here.

God Bless.

Aunty Mary.



**Ruth Woods (Qld Heritage Council) and Miles Yates (QPWS) spoke of the importance of places of historic significance, such as the lazaret on Peel Island**



**Bridget Walker, handing over a picture of Noel (Laddie) Agnew (c. 1902) to be displayed at the lazaret**



**Peter Hubbert (L, FoPIA President) handing over a framed picture (c. 1913) of what is now the nurses quarters to Roland Dowling (QPWS) with Miles Yates (QPWS at back).**



***Sharing, appreciating, enjoying...***





## Stories go to air

Terri Begley, journalist for ABC Local Radio (612) came along on the family day at the invitation of QPWS. Her interviews with Charlie Sullivan (his mother was a patient along with two of her brothers), Ruth Hinds (whose grandmother was a patient) and Peter Ludlow (noted local historian), went to air the next day.

If you missed her segment or want to hear it again, visit ABC Radio's website for the morning program's blog site:  
<http://blogs.abac.net.au/queensland/2008/09/peel-island---p.html>



**Terri Begley (above) from ABC Radio (612 AM) interviewing Ruth Hinds, with son David (R) and granddaughter Courtney (in pink)**

**Charlie Sullivan (left) remembers his mother Allie who was a patient on Peel Island, having been admitted for the first time in 1919, aged 17. (Photo courtesy ABC Radio)**

*"On behalf on my Dad (Charlie) and all our family, we would like to thank you for your hard work in making the trip to Peel Island possible yesterday. It was a wonderful experience and a very emotional day for our Dad. I hope you were able to listen to the Radio interview on ABC612 this morning or on their website and you will see how much the day meant to Dad. He asked me to especially send you this email to thank you.*

*I have also sent a letter to the State Government Minister acknowledging your work and the work of the EPA.*

*Our family just wanted you to know how much we appreciate your continual support and kindness.*

*thank you," [The Sullivan Family]*



**Mette Juel who coordinated the event could smile at how well the day turned out**



Peter Ludlow and QPWS staff took visitors on a tour of key buildings and other locations around the lazaret, including a viewing of the last wooden 'totem' sculpture (the pineapple) left *in situ*, and some of the buildings which have been saved from white ants and give an insight into how patients, and staff, lived on the island.



# TIME CAPSULE

As a fitting end to a day commemorating the Centenary of the lazaret all who attended the Family Day were invited to place messages and/or mementos into a 'time capsule'. The story of Peel Island and the lazaret is an ongoing one, and who can tell what will

happen in the future. We know that none of those present on this day are likely to be around in one hundred years to give a reminder to unearth our time capsules. We can only hope that someone is interested enough to do a bit of digging, and find the treasures left behind.



Roland Dowling (Ranger in Charge of Teerk Roo Ra (Peel Island) NP burying the time capsule.

## Memberships renewals and New members

To renew your membership, or join Friends of Peel Island, you can now pay with direct debit via internet banking, or by more traditional methods of cheque or money order. Membership is from 1 July to 31 June each year, and if you *join* in December your membership will be valid until June 2010.

<u>Annual</u>	<u>Membership Renewal</u>	<u>New Members</u>
Full Membership–	\$16.00	\$26.00 (\$16+ \$10 once-off joining fee)
Pensioner, Student & Junior Membership–	\$12.00	\$17.00 (\$12 + \$5 once-off joining fee)
Organisation Membership–	\$40.00	\$50.00 (\$40 + \$10 once-off joining fee)

### Payment options

#### Direct deposit to:

Commonwealth Bank of Australia,  
BSB 064-000; Account 10649391

Include your surname in the comments/invoice number section, and advise the FoPI Treasurer of your payment.

#### Send cheques or money orders to:

The Treasurer  
Friends of Peel Island  
PO Box 1015  
Slacks Creek Qld 4127





Group shot of family and friends on the northern side of the lazaret



## Ranger's update



*A couple of days after the Lazaret event on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, the wind swung around to the south east and began to blow hard. Several of my ranger colleagues expressed to me in their usual colourful manner how lucky we were to pull the day off on the Sunday. I thought that it being our third attempt we were overdue for some good fortune.*

*The north easterly winds on the Sunday made for beautiful conditions at Horseshoe Bay and the Island in general. I must admit to being a bit stressed on the day due to the complicated logistics and tight time frames involved. That being said, all the feedback we have received was that the event was greatly appreciated by all involved.*

*Special mention needs to go to Mette Juel for all of her extra efforts in being the principal logistical planner for the day. Mette really excelled in the role and her ability to manage all the necessary details. Rhonda Bryce's ongoing efforts in researching and contacting all the families was equally complicated and appreciated. To all those involved on the day or in assisting us in anyway to run the event, I pass on our collective thanks.*

*I believe that getting the families to the island – many for the first time – was a highly significant historic event in itself, and just fundamentally a really good thing to do.*

Roland Dowling  
Ranger-in-Charge  
Heritage Parks Unit

*Dear Rhonda*

*Please pass on to all committee and members of the association my sincere thanks for the warm welcome you gave on our trip to the anniversary of Peel Island. The organisation, assistance and friendly advice was most appreciated. I am very happy I was able to attend and represent the Welsh family on the day.*

*Everyone was so helpful, but I'm afraid to try and put names to paper though in case I miss someone. A big thank you to all involved with the day, and the obvious hard work the members of the association have put in over the years I can assure you has not gone unnoticed.*

*I have also written to the QPWS to thank them for their excellent support.*

*Yours sincerely*

  
J.V. WELSH

13 October 2008



## Thoughts from the day

More excerpts from emails sent to Rhonda Bryce, to say thank you for the Family Day.

*"It was a very moving but exciting day for me being on Peel Island. Meeting up with Colleen and Agie, Dad's nieces, then Peter Ludlow was able to show me where dad had his chicken run, and where his hut once stood. To think we pay exorbitant prices for water views on Coochie he paid with several years of imprisonment for his water views."* **[Denise Zuchs]**

*"Just a quick 'hello and thank you' to you and your team of workers for putting together such a great remembrance day at Peel Island. It was a very worthwhile excursion and I personally gained a much better understanding of the events."* **[Judy Cutts]**

*"...it was excellent. Extremely well organised, and well attended. The food and transport – 'first class'. PS My late husband would have approved."* **[Doris Gabriel]**

*"Thank you very much for the photo. Yes, it was a pretty big day, but Mum was really glad to go and be part of it all - she wouldn't have missed it for quids. I realized only a couple of days later how it had affected me. Having spent my first five years on Peel, I had absorbed the sound, smell and 'feel' of the island. Friends commented how relaxed I looked and much happier than I had for a long time. That Sunday was like "coming home" - it was a tremendous experience.*

*Mum was very impressed with how much work had been done with the land and buildings. We had been over in the early '90's and it was so overgrown and much had been destroyed or vandalised.*

*A great day all around - food etc. Many people I spoke to commented on Dad's films (especially being in colour). I have some slides and there is probably more film ( if I can find it in the clean-up I am having) I will let you know when I do. Thank you and the EPA and QPWS for nviting us."* **[Ruth Gabriel]**

*"Thank you so much for your kind invitation and cheery greeting to Kym & myself. We had just a wonderful day last Sunday. Such an interesting talk by Peter & tour of the settlement and aren't the views just superb? The museum is coming on great & we look forward to when the island might be open to the public. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to others on the day and to catching up with old friends / family from Dunwich. And it goes without saying what a wonderful job the caterers did as the lunch was most enjoyable.*

*A sincere thanks to all those involved as such a day just doesn't happen (from one who has been there done that).*

*The book The Leper shall dwell alone has been read & I now have a greater understanding of what the poor patients went through, thankfully things have changed. I intend to write an article about Frank & his sons & our visit to Peel for inclusion in my Family History Journal, if your society would like me to put a contact name in I am happy to do that just let me know. Our journal goes out far and wide you never know someone out there might have certificates etc which could be helpful to your cause.*

*Again sincere thanks to you all."* **[Colleen & Kym Yuke]**