

PRESIDENT'S REPORT presented at Friends of Oxley Common's AGM 6/6/09 by Marion Forrest
Welcome everyone. My name is Marion Forrest, President of Friends of Oxley Common.

We really do appreciate everyone coming out today for our AGM/Speaker & BBQ. Also I need to thank the members of the **last management team for their time and effort and dedication** to Friends of Oxley Common Inc. **Karen Possingham, our treasurer is overseas** but will be back in a couple of weeks.

During the last 12 months, Friends of Oxley Common **have learnt more about the dreaded aquatic weed Salvinia on Pelican Lagoon.** In 2006 we thought we **got rid of the salvinia** by sending around an **aquatic weed harvester boat.** This weed however is still coming back covering Pelican Lagoon every now and again BUT **is getting less** each time. Thank goodness the **Works Dept has now taken over responsibility FOR REMOVING THE SALVINIA.** That, to us, is a really good outcome. **At this point in time,** I believe it was the **effluence, emptied into the Lagoon from the DPI Piggery** situated where the Sunday Markets **some 20 or 30 years ago** which probably made the **lagoon nutrient rich** and caused the problematic weed to thrive. Nature is marvelous, isn't it, as it does understand things **even if us humans do not and it nature sure knows how to respond to mismanagement.**

Now we probably have been **consumed far too long** with the **Government sale of the high land** up there for a cheap price **as it was zoned for community purposes.** Anna Blight did not know it got sold either. As we have **been following the events carefully,** we realized **signs for the BCC's rezoning process were not erected.** However, BCC has just informed us **3 signs** were indeed put up on the **small side street** Martin Taylor Drive and **one sign** was supposed to have been put up on **Sherwood Road.** *The Martin Taylor Drive signs were erected in the wrong spot. Nobody saw the Sherwood Road sign – not me or anyone else* and so we have given the problem back to the BCC by sending in a **statutory declaration stating that no sign appeared.** The sign on the fence, besides rezoning, was **supposed to say The Brisbane Markets wanted to relocate one of the wetlands** which they had accidentally filled in prior to BCC approval.

So we are now attempting to take our minds off that problem. In January we ran a workshop **to see if there was interest in a Community Farm for the Common.** The response **was so great** we commissioned Julia Desbrosses to **write a farm proposal** for us. That proposal also took a bit of our time as we **needed to consult with as many in the community as we could.** We managed to **complete the farm proposal in April** and it was sent in to the Government via the **Works Dept** and to The Brisbane City Council via **Cr Krista Adams,** Chair of the Green Heart City Smart section. **No response** or feedback has arrived yet – things do take for ever it seems when dealing with these authorities.

However, when talking to **MP Julia Attwood** a couple of week ends ago, she reported that **something** was in the process of working itself out – **no money but something.** What that is, who knows.

A community farm is **a vessel to bring about all sorts of community activities on the Common.** Have a **look at our farm Proposal.** It is written in such a way as the farm can grow at the pace the community wants it to grow. We stated we could start by **planting fruit trees and native trees in that paddock behind the windmill.** I can just see, in my minds eye in 20 years time, a row of trees right up to that **gifted house** and even **around to Pelican Lagoon.** The trees would provide **great pathways for the birds** of Common too. However as we anticipate starting small, we have asked to plant in the unused beds in the EPA Air Monitoring Section **FIRST.**

Maybe, **in the future,** we could get a **small organic farm going.** That might contribute to this part of the city becoming more **resilient.** I used to talk about sustainability but now with the **global financial meltdown,** I realize **a resilient community is a sustainably community.** And I realize lots of communities or regions have become **de-skilled** and the **spark of creativity has nearly gone out.** So let's hope we can rekindle community involvement, get creative and become resilient here on the Common.

So once again we think we have had a **very successful year.** **Land tenure issues did sort of slow us down** BUT as I think that will turn around in the **next month or so,** we will **need lots of help soon** to run more **events and get organized for a brand new future for the COMMON**
Once again thank you for coming and thank you for listening. . That is the end of my report.