FRIENDS OF PERRY LAKES

2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Minutes of Meeting

Date: 27 November 2025
Time 7:00pm - 8:00pm
Location: Cambridge Bowling Club

Attendees: (25)

Cathy Wallace	Judi French	Brett Heil
Don McFarlane	Patrick O'Rouke	Trish McCarthy
Pamela Walter	Tony Harding	Andrew Burbidge
Trudy Young	John Young	Jackie Harding
Penney Griffiths	Peter Griffiths	Sally Wilson
Chris Rtshiladze	Caroline Mitchell	Ray Dohmen
Alan Stevenson	Rod Banyard	Margaret Holbrock
Pam Ghirardi	Rod Dilley	Greg Harrison
Steven Lofthouse		

Apologies: Nolan Penning

1. Welcome:

Martyn French (Chair) opened the meeting at 7:00pm. A quorum was confirmed. Martyn welcomed attendees, gave an Acknowledgment of Country and ran through the agenda. He also presented and thanked last year's committee.

Confirmation of the Previous AGM Minutes:

Martyn asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the previous AGM held on 7th October 2024. Andrew Burbidge proposed and was seconded by Patrick O'Rouke. The minutes were passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report:

Martyn gave an overview of last year's committee activities. A highlight was the 1790 person-hours involved in regular monitoring of water quality, weed control along with native vegetation re-planting and wildlife surveillance and protection. Through FoPL efforts, the ToC has established an independent

review of the underperforming Herdsman Main Drain (HMD) diversion and recently conducted electrofishing for carp in West Lake. Also the recent election of our Communications Officer, Brett Heil to the ToC Council is seen as a hugely positive development for FoPL.

Treasurer's Report:

Cathy Wallace summarised the financial report and stressed that with a bank balance of $6,894, it's been a positive year. Highlights included cash donations of $645. She stated that running costs may increase this year with improvements to the membership web page. FoPL will also look at possible fundraising activities during the coming year; eg. sausage sizzles etc.

Communications:

Brett Heil summarised several key initiatives undertaken this year, including an increased social media presence via Facebook and Instagram. An enhanced website has resulted in more visits. The Citizen Science Initiative was launched with an increase in regular monitoring and recording of water quality and water levels. This information is being disseminated via website blogs. Another highlight was the success of PlanFest25, which attracted a record number of volunteers and visitors. More members is a priority aim together with a more active social media presence and a plea for anyone to help in this regard.

Education:

Don McFarlane highlighted the science-based approach that has been adopted from the beginning of FoPL. The Citizen Science Programme has enhanced this where data on water levels, water quality, fauna and flora are being regularly collected and analysed. This will allow a greater understanding of the impact of water depth and quality on birdlife and vegetation in and around the lake environs throughout the year. Don highlighted the gradual increase in Phosphorus levels in the HMD since 2019 as concern that will be monitored in the lakes more closely through monthly measurements. FoPL has also been involved in scoping out the ToC review of the HmD problems. Also educational talks held throughout the year have been successful with the latest being the presentation by Greg and Bronwen Keighery with 60 attending.

Wildlife:

Andrew Burbidge talked about the increased cooperation with Birdlife Australia, using their birddata app to identify and count birds. He noted that more people are required to record birds. There is currently a lack of data. The long-term aim is to correlate bird numbers and types with water depth and quality. He noted that the current lake water levels are too deep for wading birds such as Egrets and Herons. A recent frog walk only identified two species (that prefer deeper water) rather than the five species that are normally present at this time of the year.

Works:

Tony Harding praised the diligence and efforts of the monthly weeding group and the "Weed Warriors" - 300+ hours. The weed load in the revegetated areas is now far more manageable. There is now better coordination and planning with the ToC regarding planting areas. During this year 5,000 plants were

supplied (4000 dryland and 1000 wetland) with about the same number in 2025 – 2026. Planting will be centred on the west side of West Lake. Plantfest25 was a great success with approximately 150 volunteers participating. Tony stressed the need for ongoing weeding.

Election of 2026 Committee Members and 2026 Focus Areas:.

Martyn presented the names of members who had nominated for the 2026 Committee. Don McFarlane will leave the Education Role and has been appointed to a new position of Citizen Science Lead. Nolan Penning will leave the secretarial role and will now be the Education and Events Coordinator. Caroline Mitchell was elected as Secretary. The 2026 Committee Members are:

Chair	Martyn French	Elected unopposed
Deputy Chair	Peter Griffiths	Elected unopposed
Secretary	Caroline Mitchell	Elected unopposed
Treasurer	Cathy Wallace	Elected unopposed
Communications Officer	Brett Heil	Elected unopposed
Education and Events	Nolan Penning	Elected unopposed
Works Coordinator	Tony Harding	Elected unopposed
Wildlife Coordinator	Andrew Burbidge	Elected unopposed
Citizen Science Lead	Don McFarlane	Elected unopposed

Martyn also talked about the focus areas for the forthcoming year with a continuing emphasis on native plant revegetation, weed control and monitoring of water quality and levels and animal surveillance. Also the ongoing development of the Citizen Science programme is a priority. He noted the benefits of the multi-organisational management committee that oversees the management and development of Lake Claremont and is keen to establish a similar body at some future point for the Perry Lakes.

AOB:

Results of grant applications for next year:

Martyn announced that FoPL's 2025 CSG Application (Community Stewardship Grants) had been successful with an offer of $47,379. Formal Approval is still required.

Don stated that this grant will enable FoPL to establish a comprehensive, community-led monitoring framework for Perry Lakes, focusing on water quality, levels, invasive species, and overall ecological health. This framework will provide a robust scientific basis for improving lake management throughout the year. Brett stated that improvements to our website and database will allow wider community access and engagement.

Martyn also informed the meeting that an application to Toc for a Community Organisation Support Grant for $1,969.00 had been successful. This will be used to refurbish notice boards and produce FoPL signage.

Question: Patricia O'Connor asked if the FoPL could become a charity thereby avoiding GST payments?

> **Answer:** Not advisable as we would not be as able to obtain grants and it can be onerous to prove that you are, and continue to be a charity.

Question: As part of the development programme can schools become involved in planting?

> **Answer:** Martyn said that scouts have previously been involved. Don also said that private schools are more likely to be involved as they have money for buses, insurance and student support but that is less likely to be the case with public schools.

Question: Greg Harrison asked if there was an alternative to the bunting that currently encircles the recently planted areas? It tends to fray and looks untidy.

> **Answer:** This was acknowledged. The committee will look at what other groups are doing to fence off similar plantings.

Question: A concern was raised re the current Algal Bloom at Lake Galup and whether one could occur in Perry Lakes.

> **Answer:** Don stated that the ToC was currently monitoring but not actively managing the bloom at Lake Galup, such as investigating the addition of modified clays to remove P. FoPL is concerned about a similar bloom occurring in our lakes which could be hard to reverse. Hence our monitoring of phosphorus levels to allow early intervention. There will be a meeting with the Friends of Galup soon to discuss further collaborations

Closure:

Martyn closed the meeting at 8:00pm