

Robin's Roundup September 2013

Robin Chapple MLC ~ Member for the Mining & Pastoral Region



Apologies for the large break between Roundups, but on the bright side I have lots of stories to tell!

Winter Break

I gladly retreated north to my hometown Derby for a month during the Parliamentary winter break. This followed the Legislative Council's marathon 24 hour-long sitting.

While in the Kimberley, I was able to show Greens Senator for Queensland Larissa Waters, around Broome. The visit focused on a public forum to discuss the proposed fracking projects in the Canning Basin. We were accompanied by Senators Scott Ludlam and Rachel Siewert.

In July I went, as usual, to help out with the annual FARA (Friends of Australian Rock Art) Burrup Heritage Tour, its fifth. I helped guide a diverse group of 50 people through a very special area in the Pilbara. Sharing my knowledge about the Burrup Peninsula's history and Aboriginal rock art is when I am at my happiest. The art tells the story of ancient Aboriginal occupation during the past 30,000 years and brings alive this unique and fascinating precinct. We were fortunate to come across an archaic face carving that I had never sighted before; a great discovery as archaic faces are believed to be produced more than 25,000 years ago, making them possibly the oldest and most unique material remaining on the Burrup. The

tour was the perfect end to my time up North, a warm retreat from Perth's winter!



Photos: The Burrup Tour group, and the archaic face rock art (Credits: Glen Slee and Robin Chapple)

Current Issues

In the last month we have had several runs in the media about important issues that our office has been looking into. These include:

- **Wind down the drain** - Huge amounts of clean energy produced by the Esperance Windfarms are being wasted due to a commercial agreement which caps wind energy to ensure the town's gas-fired power station has revenue certainty. A classic case of greenhouse-gas intensive fossil-fuel power generation being granted a massive public subsidy, and shows in microcosm just what is wrong with this government's approach to energy policy.
 - **Nahan sees the light** - I attended the Energy in WA 2013 conference in August and was delighted to hear our Energy Minister Mike Nahan (who is known as a renewable energy hater) say that he has changed his mind on renewables as he never thought that renewable prices would drop so dramatically. He has asked the Economic Regulation Authority (ERA) to review the role of renewables, large and small, in the energy market. It was like music to my ears. Now I just have to make sure he keeps his promise...
 - **Forced Council amalgamations** – Another Barnett/Grylls government take-it-or-leave-it edict, which most councils are opposing. As local government should be the bedrock of our democracy this is a disappointing
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move, and I am continuing to fight for communities to be the drivers of these decisions. The WALGA local government conference that I attended last month was excellent in getting an update on these issues and meeting old and new acquaintances in the local government sector.

- **Burrup Peninsula Protection** – I have appealed by letter to the Premier to stop the proposed mining on the Burrup Peninsula once and for all. This was after the discovery that Burrup Materials Pty Ltd have taken out a number of leases for mining in the area. They plan to remove pieces of the rock art to mine and blast rock material for the new Brendon Grylls Dampier marina.

Kimberley Vision Launch

Last week I visited Broome to attend the Greens Vision for the Kimberley launch. WA senators Scott Ludlam and Rachel Siewert along with Greens' Durack candidate Ian 'Jessie' James addressed the large group of locals, explaining what the Greens will do for the Kimberley. It was great to catch up with the Broome community and, while there, to visit James Price Point, especially coming soon after having received the great news about the Supreme Court ruling that all environmental approvals for development at JPP had been found to be invalid.





Photos: Kimberley Vision Launch; while in Broome the Hat and I visited a decomposing whale at Quondong Point (Credit: Ogy Simic, Betty Richards)

Greens Parliamentary Office in Broome

With all the support that the Kimberley has given me over the years I have decided to open an office in Broome. My Electorate Officer Maria Mann has moved back to Broome and is working there three days a week. She has set up a small office, dealing specifically with Kimberley issues. To make an appointment you can phone Maria on 9192 8128 or 0427 935 052 or send an email to: maria.mann@mp.wa.gov.au.

Federal Election

I will be spending Election Day (this Saturday the 7th of September) in Kalgoorlie this year, having a chat to locals about the work of The Greens. Just a reminder to everybody about the importance of your vote, and if you are still unsure about who to vote for check out the ABC Vote Compass at <http://australia.votecompass.com/>. It produces a clever short series of questions to discover how you fit into the Australian political landscape. The best part is that it separates politics from the polices, so you can see which political party you generally align with based on their polices.

Until next time,

Robin Chapple, MLC



Photo: Beautiful James Price Point, with no gas hub in sight (credit: Betty Richards)
