

Friends Of Churchill Island Society Inc.

FOCIS

NEWSLETTER

ABN 78667051020 INC. No. A 002 19007W

Dates to remember:

*August 19. Annual General Meeting.
1.30, Churchill Island Visitors Centre
Working bees:
14.10.17 (house and cottages 8-10 a.m.);
9.12.17 (house and cottages 8 -10 a.m.)*

Speaker for November meeting:

*Christine Grayden:
Journey from Melbourne to Phillip Island
1869.*

Visitors, visitors, visitors



We've had a few recently, amongst them 1700 Chinese Amway representatives which entailed a large encampment of marquees in the lower paddock.

Ms Emma Jones from Warrnambool, a descendent of Samuel Amess visiting CI.



Registration Number: A0021907W

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PO Box 852, COWES VIC 3922

Dr Jaimie Cleeland visiting today with relative (by marriage) Pat Jeffrey. Jamie completed PHD on bird life on Macquarie Island and has lived in Tasmania 10 years. She is about to take up 13 month appointment on Gough Island in S Atlantic part of S African Antarctic territory. She remembers her mother baking scones in Amess House in early years of public opening.



Donations

We have received donations totalling \$1,370.00 from 22 members during June 2017. It is very gratifying that after all the hard work on the part of the committee organising the donation fund that we are now seeing results.

Some the donors were:

- Coral Bourke of DONVALE VIC
- Dorothy Pedersen of WARRAGUL VIC
- Kevin McCormack of BURWOOD VIC.

Focis acknowledges their and others contributions to the ongoing work of the society.



A combination of the donated Wilf. Duggan collection of cross cut saws and a selection of compatible tools and equipment from our own collection have been housed in a new display in the blacksmith's shop. Behind perspex panels, the sometimes sharp edges are safe from small fingers and the seat is still in use.

We are still looking for a farriers horse shoe nail clinching tool for the Farriers Display in the same area

FOCIS President's Report

1. Lady Nelson.

The model was completed and launched at an afternoon tea on 23 February. David Lumsden, the modeller spoke about his approach to historical accuracy and proved an enthusiast for the Lady. A number of PINP board members and staff attended. Christine arranged the glass case, signage and QR codes which connect with detailed information on our website. A short extract from the reenactment video is also included.

Unfortunately, a delay in completing the stand delayed display to the public until 5 May but it is now on show and proving to attract interest. I am pleased that FOCIS has been able to add this exhibit to our museum.

2. Volunteer coordinator.

With several other guide and garden volunteers, I attended Rachel's consultation on how volunteers see their role and the nature parks. I was concerned that some volunteers feel that there is not enough communication from PINP as I feel that this has improved over the last year. I had a private meeting with Rachel on 9 May to explain about FOCIS. She later asked me to comment on her draft volunteer policy.

3. Heritage Grant Launch.

On 9 May, together with many of the guides and garden volunteers and nature parks staff, I attended a morning tea with staff of Heritage Victoria to recognise the award of a \$75,000 grant to restore the historic buildings. I gave the visitors a guided tour. They commented that this was the best attended reception they had experienced.

4. Meetings with CEO. 9 June 2017

Historic Farm Machinery Grant.

The submission to the PI Community Benefit Fund was unsuccessful. However, feedback recommended that a submission be made to the BC Community Fund. Christine will prepare this. However, there is a ceiling of \$10,000, so additional funds will be needed from PINP and/or FOCIS. Catherine indicated that, although the item was not included in the budget, some support could be found. PINP continues support for the project. The outcome of the PROV submission for signage will not be known until August.

Restoration Work funded by Heritage Grant.

A project manager and builder had been appointed and work should start soon. The finalisation date has been extended to April 2018.

Visitors' Centre Repairs.

A second information banner has been damaged. Repairs will be made using stronger cables. The admissions gate is on order.

Curator Funding

Funding will continue for 2017/8. An agreement will be prepared with FOCIS shortly.

Reaccreditation is due in 2018. Christine will assist the Vietnam Veterans' Museum with its accreditation process and it is possible that MAV inspections will be coordinated.

Volunteer Issues.

Rachel has shared a draft of the volunteer policy for feedback. Improvements will be made (curtains, mirror) to the volunteer hut to provide for volunteer changing. One of the bunk beds will be removed as they are not longer extensively used.

Staff Training

Christine will provide a short training input on the Heritage Act as it affects CI for CI staff and some volunteers.




Making Subscriptions Fairer

This article is about the proposed changes to the membership subscription rates.

Rule 3.7 of the FOCIS Constitution requires the Committee to present a recommendation to the members at each AGM about the amount of the annual subscription for the following financial year and the date for payment of the annual subscription.

The Committee has been studying the membership subscription rates over the last few months and has decided to recommend some changes to the current membership rates. If accepted, these changes will take effect from 1 July 2018.

The proposed changes are about making the membership subscriptions fairer. They are not about raising extra money.

Some members will be asked to pay more than they are currently paying, some will be asked to pay the same, and some will be asked to pay less.

Please study this article to understand the background to the proposed changes and why the changes are needed so that you can contribute to the discussion and the decision making at the 2017 AGM.

Current Membership Subscription Rates

1. Current rates for members who pay by cheque are:
 - a. Family Membership - \$25.00 per year.
 - b. Adult Membership - \$15.00 per person per year.
 - c. Concession Membership - \$10.00 per person per year.
2. Current rates for members who pay online are:
 - d. Family Membership - \$26.00 per year.
 - e. Adult Membership - \$15.70 per person per year.
 - f. Concession Membership - \$10.55 per person per year.

Proposed Changes

1. That the membership subscriptions be set **per Household** instead of **per Person** in order to make the system fairer.
2. That there should be 3 types of membership subscriptions:
 - a. **Family Household.** A Family Household is defined as a household consisting of two or more adults without any children, or two or more adults with any number of children under 15. This is the equivalent of a Family Membership, or a Dual Adult Household Membership, or a Triple Adult Household Membership under the current membership categories.
 - b. **Single Adult Household.** A Single Adult Household is defined as a household consisting of a single adult who is not eligible for any concessions. This is the equivalent of a Single Adult Household under the current membership categories.
 - c. **Concession Household.** A Concession Household is defined as a household consisting of one or more adults where all members of the household are eligible for a concession. This is the equivalent of a Single Concession Household, a Dual Concession Household, or a Triple Concession Household under the current membership categories. If the household includes a person who is not eligible for a Concession membership, the membership will be a Family Household Membership

1. That the membership subscription rates as from 1 July 2018 should be set as follows:
 - a. **Family Household** rate = \$30.00 per year.
 - b. **Single Adult Household** rate = \$20.00 per year.
 - c. **Concession Household** rate = \$15.00 per year.
2. Membership subscription rates should be the same regardless of what payment method the member chooses to use.
3. Membership subscription rates should be the same regardless of the member's preferences for receiving communications from the Society.

The Need for the Proposed Changes

1. It would be much fairer to set the subscription rates **per household** instead of **per member** because the Society's costs for providing services to members are per household, e.g. one copy of the newsletter is sent to the household regardless of the number of people in the household.
2. Current membership subscriptions rates are unfair and don't make sense. If there is a Dual Adult Membership which consists of 2 adults and zero children, we ask them to pay \$30.00 but we only charge \$25.00 for a Family Membership which consists of 2 adults and any number of children. It would be much fairer to have the Family Membership rate set at a level which is the same regardless of the number of children in the household.
3. Current subscription rates for Adult and Concession memberships are unfair because:
 - a. A Single Member Adult household contributes **negative income** of \$1.88.
 - b. A Dual Member Adult household contributes more than its fair share with a **positive contribution** of \$13.12.
 - c. A Single Member Concession household contributes **costs us** \$6.88.
 - d. Dual Member Concession household makes a **positive contribution** of \$3.12.
Negative income means that the cost of providing services to the member (sending out newsletters, membership renewals and reminders, membership cards, etc.) is greater than the subscription income received from the member. A **positive contribution** means that the subscription income from a member is sufficient to cover the cost of providing services to the member with money left over which can be used for Heritage activities.
4. We currently charge members extra when they pay their membership subscriptions online. However, instead of being penalised, members should be encouraged to pay online as it is more likely that members who do so will choose to receive communications from the Society by email instead of post (e.g. the Newsletter) thus reducing our printing and postage costs.

The Impact of the Proposed Changes

1. The total annual income from subscriptions will remain about the same because the proposed changes are about making the system fairer, not about raising extra money.
2. Members who currently have a **Family Membership** at \$25.00 per year will be asked to pay \$5.00 **more** at \$30.00 per year for the new **Family Household Membership**. This will affect about 44% of memberships.
3. Members who currently have a **Single Adult Membership** at \$15.00 per person year will be asked to pay \$20.00 per year for the new **Single Adult Household Membership**. This will affect about 9% of memberships.
4. Members who currently have a **Dual Adult Membership** at \$15.00 per person year will be asked to pay the **same amount**, i.e. \$30.00 per year, for the new **Family Household Membership**. This will affect about 5% of memberships.

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1. Members who currently have a **Single Concession Membership** at \$10.00 per person year will be asked to pay \$5.00 **more** at \$15.00 per year for the new **Concession Household Membership**. This will affect about 25% of memberships.
2. Members who currently have a **Dual Concession Membership** at \$10.00 per person year, i.e. \$20.00, will be asked to pay \$5.00 **less** at \$15.00 per year for the new **Concession Household Membership**. This will affect about 16% of memberships.

In summary, about 78% of members will be asked to pay more than they are currently paying, about 5% will be asked to pay the same, and about 16% will be asked to pay less.

Membership Benefits

The current membership benefits will remain:

1. Unlimited entry to Churchill Island during operating hours plus discount for special events.
2. 25% off entry fees to Phillip Island Nature Parks attractions.
3. 20% off purchases in Phillip Island Nature Parks Gift Shops.
4. 10% off at the cafes – Churchill Island, Penguin Parade & Koala Conservation Centre only (excluding liquor).
5. Regular issues of the FOCIS Newsletter which will be sent to you by email or post in accordance with your preferences.

Membership Value

Even though **some** members are being asked to pay more, FOCIS membership still offers good value for money for **all members**. For example:

1. The value of a Family Household Membership is conservatively estimated to be in the range \$42 to \$70 per year. The current membership subscription is \$25.00 per year and the proposed rate is \$30.00 per year so even if the rate is increased, the members in this type of household will still receive value for money.
2. The value of a Single Concession Household Membership is conservatively estimated to be in the range \$19 to \$28 per year. The current membership subscription is \$10.00 per year and the proposed rate is \$15.00 per year so even if the rate is increased, the member in this type of household will still receive value for money.

Cost Saving Measures

Over the last 5 years we have implemented a number of measures to earn more interest on our savings and to reduce our expenses, e.g. by enabling members to choose whether they receive communications from the Society by email or post. Total annual savings are more than \$2,000.

The Committee will continue to look for ways to further reduce our costs in order to keep membership subscription rates as low as possible.

What You Should Do Next

1. Please study this article in order to understand the current situation, the nature of the proposed changes, and the reasons for the changes so that you can contribute to the discussion and the decision making at the 2017 AGM.
2. Please contact myself or any other member of the Committee if you have any questions or suggestions about these proposals.

Tom O'Dea, Treasurer

FRIENDS OF CHURCHILL ISLAND SOCIETY MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING 13.5.2017

1. PRESENT: Terry Holman, David Maunders, Christine Grayden, Tom O'Dea, Ruth O'Dea, Diane Scukovic, Deb Martin, Irene McKell, Pauline Taylor, Peter Jelly, Di Spencer, Graeme Clauscen, Anne Balfe, Peter Balfe, Jeff Cole.

2. APOLOGIES: Roger and Sue Hollingworth, Anne Davie, Margaret & Hagen Geppart, Robyn Holman, Anne Jelly, Peter Brookes

3. WELCOME to members, visitors. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of traditional owners

4. REPORT FROM PINP CEO Catherine Basterfield:

Visitor number to the Nature Parks sites continue to increase with growth of 5% or 30,603 for the financial year to 30 April 2017 compared to the same period last year. Churchill Island has not experienced the same growth but has maintained visitor numbers consistent with last year, which reached just over 120,000 to April 2017. The result for Churchill Island is pleasing in that the opening of the Nobbies Centre Antarctic Journey has not eroded visitation.

The Penguin Parade Visitor Centre is progressing well and has moved into the detailed design phase. Construction is scheduled to commence in February 2018 with the building set to open in late 2019. Although not originally included in the plans it has become apparent that the Environment, Research, Education, Ground Services and Retail Warehouse teams may need to be relocated to complete this development. Our project team are looking at alternative locations for these teams and the preference at this stage is the Koala Conservation Centre. More work will be done to finalise these plans in the coming six months.

The Nature Parks have tendered the Food and Beverage service and will now deliver cafés in partnership with Delaware North. Our new partner has commenced their transition plans and the planned transition time frame is early June. The volunteer and staff meal benefits will continue to be in place with our new partner.

Churchill Island will be a hive of activity over the coming months with a number of projects being completed on the site including:

- Renovation of bathroom facilities within the building, including a minor building extension to cater for additional cubicles. This is expected to relieve the pressure on the current facilities in the short term.
- Completion of the shearing shed stadium seating, which is currently in progress.
- Installation of a new farm shed for machinery storage. This will include the removal of many of the dilapidated shed structures and shipping containers to tidy the works yard site.
- Repairs to the heritage buildings. We were successful in securing a grant from Heritage Victoria to commence the repairs to the heritage buildings as identified in an audit completed in 2016.

Thank you to all who attended the National Volunteer Day BBQ. The Nature Parks appreciate the efforts of the many Churchill Island volunteers and were pleased with the turn out for this event.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING 11.2.2017 Pauline Taylor/Graeme Clauscen *Carried.*

6. MATTERS ARISING:

- a) Farm machinery display grant announcement due May 18
- b) PROV signage grant announcement due July
- c) Model of Lady Nelson: launch excellent. Model in place Amess House dining room
- d) PINP Open Day, Sunday March 5 2017. Children's activities were once again supervised by Linda. Amess lace collection samples were displayed along with a history of lace display in the Visitor Centre.
- e) Working bee was held Sat 8.4.17 (farm machinery 10-12) thanks to Terry, Peter, John, David, Di, Christine & Kaye

7. TREASURER'S/MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Tom reported on the c/ee's discussion regarding a Financial Sustainability Report he had compiled in response to concerns expressed by some members. Tom had previously distributed a draft and then second draft including feedback from c/ee of his extensive report and went through the second draft explaining various aspects and answering c/ee members' questions. The Report originated at the Strategy Planning Workshop 20.2.2016 in response to attendees' concerns over falling membership. Tom has been able to show that FOCIS would remain viable until 2027-28 even given an average decline in membership of 10% annually because our fixed costs are very low. However, he was also able to show that our membership subscriptions are currently unfair and need to be changed to per household rather than per person. For example, a two single person household is paying \$30, while a family with x number of children is only paying \$25. Also, the concession rate of \$10 p/p is not covering the cost of servicing a single concession membership. After much discussion about whether we should change the subscription rate, it was decided to adopt a set of principles which would guide the future setting of subscription rates. Tom will rework the principles included in the 13.4.17 version of the report and circulate the new version to c/ee. C/ee will then need to come to an agreement on a recommendation to the AGM for subscription rates from 1.7.2018. Tom circulated and explained the treasurer's report. The Heritage Fund has a balance of \$2669.21. Members = 291 adult individual members. "That the treasurer's report be accepted" Tom O'Dea/Terry Holman Carried.

8. CURATOR'S REPORT: Christine Grayden

I have held several productive meetings with the new PINP volunteer co-ordinator Rachael Ferguson. CI staff member Boz and I drove to Melbourne to collect the model of the Lady Nelson from Lumsden's apartment, 31 floors up, and we held the launch the next day which was a very successful event. I held a display of some items from the lace collection for the PINP Open Day. The stocktake of National Trust, PINP and loaned items in house and cottages is half completed. FOCIS volunteer Jeff fixed the back of the rat eaten jinker seat and oiled the dray and Clydesdale horse sculpture. I spoke on behalf of FOCIS at Life Member Ian Jonas's funeral. PINP has introduced a new record keeping system across the parks and I have been occupied in transferring files to the new drive and onto the desktop.

I spent Easter Saturday and Sunday in Rogers' Cottage churning butter with hundreds of families - very busy! I was dressed as a scullery maid. I attended a workshop on our online cataloguing program Victorian Collections. Thanks to those who helped with our farm machinery working bee. Another of my jobs is keeping the FOCIS Facebook page up to date. Please jump on and Like the page - we need 100 likes to be able to access stats, and are currently at 88. The page reach has gone from 4-6 when I started to about 40-100 per post now, so we are gradually building an audience. Feel free to Like my posts.

On the farm front, 5 year old Clydesdale Nellie is undergoing training to pull, and is up to pulling a tractor tyre. This work is being done with her by farm worker Toby and retired ranger Scott. She is going really well. Also, the working dog demonstration area has been moved down the hill to allow for better viewing, and also means that the archaeological stone footings in the old area are now more protected. The shearing demonstration shed is being rebuilt and enlarged to allow for raked seating and a display area, and will be a great improvement when completed.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS:

David reported to members that at the next meeting - our Annual General Meeting - on 19.8.2017, Wilf Dungan and David and Lynne Lumsden will be nominated for Honorary Membership for their contributions to Churchill Island, and Rebecca Sanders will be nominated for Life Membership for her contribution over ten years to the historical research of Churchill Island.

Ruth O'Dea asked how this information can be captured for the future - for example, what was the nature of the contribution of the individuals? Ruth suggested that a tab could be created on the membership spreadsheet which could hold this information.

10. SPEAKER: Russell Kenery spoke on the Open Boat Voyages of Matthew Flinders. This talk can be accessed online at pidhs.org.au under Essays and Talks (the website of the Phillip Island & District Historical Society Inc). Christine Grayden gave the vote of thanks, carried with acclamation. The talk was most interesting and very well received, even though Flinders himself did not come to Churchill Island. His voyages were undertaken in the same era as early European exploration of Western Port.

Meeting closed 4.05 p.m.

Next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting to be held on August 19, 2017, starting at 1.30 p.m. in the Churchill Island Visitor Centre function room



The Open Boat Voyages of Matthew Flinders, a talk by Russell Kenery. Part one (of 3)

Matthew Flinders' circumnavigation of Van Diemen's Land and '*Terra Australis Incognita*', his discovery of Bass Strait and his extraordinary cartography are well-known. My talk at the '*Phillip Island & District Historical Society*' dinner in December was not about Flinders' achievements as an explorer and navigator. The focus was Flinders' outstanding seamanship reflected in his small boat adventures of which little has been written.

But first, some brief observations in respect of Matthew Flinders the man. He was seventeen when he joined the Navy, at a time when most 'young gentlemen' usually joined up at twelve or thirteen years of age. His Naval career was only fifteen years of active service. He was just 40 when he died; the same age of James Cook was when he set out on the first of the three voyages that made him famous. Flinders was a literary man, but with a scientist's brain on matters mathematical. He had a perfectionist's temperament that drove him to chart astounding distances in remarkable detail. He was also an exceptional sailor and the fabric of his stuff was truly tested by his small open boat adventures.

The first (1795) was in an overladen *Tom Thumb*, a nine foot rowing boat with a spritsail. Flinders, George Bass and a fourteen-year-old boy sailed in the confused sea from the Heads of Port Jackson. Great skill would have been needed to prevent the little dinghy from sliding under. Governor Hunter had asked Flinders and his friend George Bass to go to Botany Bay and explore any river inland. After they had wobbled down and back along the coastline, Flinders' journal entry regarding this nine day adventure simply says: '*[...] we proceeded round in this boat, to Botany Bay; and ascending George's River, explored its winding course about twenty miles. The favourable report... induced His Excellency to establish there a new branch of the colony, under the name of Bank's Town.*'

Governor Hunter dictated another task and the second voyage was undertaken in the only slightly larger *Tom Thumb II*. She was 14 ft long and Flinders with the same two companions sailed south from Sydney to Lake Illawarra on an eight-day journey during which they were caught in the strong East Australian Current, they battled ferocious seas below a wall of cliffs which prevented landing, encountered unfriendly locals, escaped and put out to sea, then were hit by a southerly buster. They struggled for their lives and eventually found the only safe refuge on that long stretch of coastal cliffs at today's Wattamolla Beach in the Royal National Park. Despite these trials, the lack of drinking water and the cramped conditions, they achieved what they had set out to do: to discover a large river, rumoured to be south of Botany Bay but not indicated on Captain Cook's chart.

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It's almost spring again and the birds on the island are active looking for mates and nesting sites. A reminder to drive slowly and keep a weather eye out for distracted pairs.



The Friends of Churchill Island Society
Newsletter

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