



# FOCIS

newsletter

Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.

SUMMER 2003

Dear Readers,

Our lovely island is flourishing this early summer with the spring crop of calves and lambs growing strongly. I always drive very slowly up the road to the car park, those highland cattle intrigue me. Those horns! A visitor to Amess House a week or so ago said to me 'What breed are those cattle? My wife thinks they're woolly mammoths!' I laughed at the thought, but she's right you know, there is something ancient about them and I think that might be part of their appeal.

Isn't it wonderful that after all those years of drought, the weather pattern does seem to be changing and we're getting more rain? It's so good to see the big trees beginning to regain their health. Bring on more rain I say, until they are deeply content again.

We welcomed a visit from the new Nature Park CEO, Mark Manteit and his wife Meredith at our November committee meeting. Mark spoke of being in the look, listen and learn phase of his management and that he had high hopes for improved services and profitability in the Nature Park as well as some ideas on sponsorship and expanding the educational/information side of staff/visitor interface. He expressed some concerns about health and safety issues in regard to the use of old machinery in running the heritage farm. He also indicated some changes will be made to improve food presentation and service at Churchill Island. We all had coffee afterwards and it was a good opportunity for FOCIS members to speak with Mark at a personal level.

The Phillip Island Nature Park has worked wonders during the past seven years in restoring Churchill Island and Amess House. Lack of finance in previous years made the task of volunteers at that time, extremely difficult. That Churchill Island and Amess House have survived is due in no small part to the efforts of volunteers of all sorts and to the co operation which exists between staff and volunteers. Today, volunteers still provide a significant contribution to the 'Preservation of that which is precious'.

As we come to the end of the year it's time to once more thank all those who contribute effort in whatever way, to the betterment of Churchill Island. To Scott and all the Nature Park crew both indoors and out, to Lisa and the garden club toilers whose efforts are visible throughout the garden. To Sally who encourages us with a charming smile and keeps us all informed, to our office bearers and committee members who steer us with wisdom. To Keith Hocking and Maureen Symmonds and all who work so hard for the Working Horse Festival throughout the year and to those who help with collating and folding these newsletters! And finally our volunteer guides who bring their charm, their passion and their nostalgic air to evoke an earlier time



in Amess House.

On behalf of the committee we'd like to express our personal thanks all around and to wish you all the compliments of the season and bright hopes for year 2004.

Cheers from Jocelyn Bradley, Pat Baird and Neil Gladman.



## NEWS FLASH!

Updating of our membership list shows us that we have 509 paid up members and 99 unpaid. All Members should note that those who remain unfinancial by 31st March 2004 will receive no further newsletters. So when you notice a gap in your life and you start to miss your newsletter you will know that you are unfinancial! Delivery will resume on payment of membership fees which are now payable from July to July each year.



## PROJECT OFFICER REPORT

After the long, dark winter the excitement of summer on Churchill Island is fast approaching! I would like to welcome Mark Manteit to the Park and look forward to working together on many new projects. I have moved 'house' and am now working from the Penguin Parade in the marketing department so you can always find me there.

On Wednesday 26th November, we had a fabulous Ladies Lunch at Churchill Island. The lunch was part of a campaign to re-launch the café and reinvigorate interest in Churchill Island. You may also notice the large banner promoting Churchill Island at the Phillip Island Information Centre.





Over 80 locals attended the Ladies Lunch which we hope to make a regular feature, so stay tuned. Festivities featured live music from Nicky and Pete Baird and complimentary massages from local masseur, Trish Hanrahan. (Unfortunately, the staff missed out on massages!!)

Due to popular demand, farmers markets will be held fortnightly on Churchill Island through December and January from 8am - 1pm.

This doubles the opportunity for locals and visitors to buy fresh and organic produce for their summer entertaining.



Churchill Island is the perfect location for a Farmers Market and the only one on an island with a spectacular bay view!!

The market which features over 30 stalls sells fresh, local produce including vegetables, tomatoes, cheeses, fruit, fresh juices, eggs, olives, jams, bush flowers and much more!

The connection of 'grower to consumer' fosters community spirit and an appreciation and respect for fresh clean food and the environment from which the food is produced. It also strengthens the local economy, providing greater returns to the grower and excellent value to the customer. Remember, every stallholder is either the grower or the maker!

### Summer/Autumn Events Program

We are working on developing a range of events for the coming season. Put these in your diary and stay tuned for new additions!

### **123** YOUR BUNCH OF DATES

**456** Farmers Market Dec 13<sup>th</sup> & Dec 27<sup>th</sup> 2003

Farmers Market Jan 10<sup>th</sup> & Jan 24<sup>th</sup>

**Committee Meeting** Information centre, 1 pm 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2004.

**Bush Dance** January 24<sup>th</sup>

**Basketry with Natural Materials** February: A special workshop with Pat Dale. Call Lisa at Churchill Is. 5956

7214 for date and details.

**Autumn Slow Food Festival** Food and wine and much more. March 27<sup>th</sup> 2004

**Committee Meeting** Information centre, 1 pm 27<sup>th</sup> March 2004.

**Working Horse Festival - April 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> 2004.**The Mane Event!! Please register yourself to volunteer for this fabulous weekend as soon as possible!!

**Committee Meeting** Information centre, 1 pm 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2004.

**AGM** 24<sup>th</sup> July 2004



### GUIDING PROGRAM

All FOCIS members should say a big thank you for the wonderful work of our small, but dedicated, team of volunteer guides who have brought warmth to the Historic Area this winter.

Guides are crucial for security and interpretation in the historic areas and we urgently need more guides to offer a day a fortnight or month to ensure the Historic Area is protected and interpreted. You don't have to know everything or take formal tours you can just add a presence to the area for security and enjoyment of visitors. Please consider a small donation of time. If you are interested, call 5956 7214 to register your name and we will get back to you.

Sally O'Neill

### VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

#### Churchill Island Collection Management

*Opportunities exist for volunteers to assist with the management of the 'Churchill Collection' of objects on Churchill Island.*

Duties include:

- Recording of information
- Data entry onto file and computer
- Tagging of objects
- Digital photography of objects.

If you could assist with one or more of these tasks, please call Sally O'Neill on 0408 101 976.



### RANGER'S REPORT

It's starting to dry out on Churchill Island already and the real summer is still to come.

We are busy making hay at the moment, the horses and CI staff are having a good workout. It looks like we should have a better harvest this year as last year was very poor due to the drought.

There have been lots of births on CI this spring, seven Highland calves have been born, our old black cow (she is eighteen years old) surprised us all by having a good big heifer calf, one of the Ayrshire cows had a heifer calf and forty two lambs were born and are doing very well.

Bird life on the island and Fisher's Wetland has also swelled this spring with lots of young cygnets getting around following Mum and Dad, one clutch numbering seven. The resident Cape Barren Geese pair raised two goslings in August. These have flown the coop now, but low and behold Mum and Dad decided to start again and now have three young following them around. We may soon see a large rise in geese numbers throughout the islands.

The Farmer's market is going well and throughout summer will be run twice a month.

I'm sitting at my desk in the Ranger's office writing this report. Just outside in a flowering gum tree a wagtail is in

the process of laying her second clutch of eggs this spring; they have already been successful in rearing five chicks. Gluttons for Punishment eh? It's interesting, the tree they nest in was marked for removal during construction of the visitor centre, but we managed to squeeze it in and two little birds are very grateful.

My staff and I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year and thank you for your continued support.

Scott Campbell, Ranger in Charge, Churchill Island.



## FROM THE GARDEN

It has been very busy here lately as we have been working on the indigenous garden at the front of the visitor centre, many thanks to Jill Fitzroy-Kelly and sister Tonia Luther who turn up every week for a few hours to help out. The weeds have been pulled out, some mulch applied and some signage installed to explain to visitors what an indigenous garden is about.

The garden in the historic precinct is looking lovely for spring and summer; the visitors who stroll through are stopping and say how much they love it. I am always happy to hear positive comments!

The kitchen garden is taking shape with Mick helping out with digging of garden beds, FOCIS are donating money towards the pickets for the fence (thank you) so at last we can get some produce started. Burnley College students have finished their project for a working plan for the kitchen garden so it will be interesting to see it when it arrives.



The garden party was a great success. Although I was hoping for a sunny day it was an absolute blaster. A very hot thirty five degrees. I am glad we had champagne on ice!

It was so lovely due to the hard work of all involved. Roger and Sue did so much to help, plus a fantastic welcoming speech, Julie who did the catering and refused any help, Gordon who made some delicious cream horns (I heard they were sensational), Lindsay and Sally did all the name tagging,



Maureen and Verity made sure every one was looked after, Nick who played violin and Graeme who took photographs of all the swanning about. Greg Moore's speech was amazing and passionate and Mary Ellis

was thrilled by the response she got for her book. I hope that we can sell the book here at Churchill Island as people have been asking about it.

I wish every one a very festive, happy and safe Christmas and New Year and hope you have lots of garden parties wherever you are.

Lisa Burrell



## GARDEN CLUB REPORT

This project is running along nicely with new people coming along from time to time. It has been an exciting time to be working in the garden with all the spring blooms coming on and new things to see every week. We do lots of weeding and cutting back along paths. Before long we will also be in the new home garden as Lisa has started planting and the fence around is gradually taking place. We have a very social time with lots of talk over morning tea and this week Lisa provided us with a delicious light lunch under the plum tree on a perfect day. We now have about a dozen people who come from time to time but the number on any one day is about six. A concerted effort was put into the indigenous garden around the visitors centre by Jill and her sister Tonia with me helping out on one day. Our project was to attack the weeds and I must say it has made a huge difference. A sign will be going up shortly to explain that it is an indigenous garden.

It is great to see local people come to enjoy and help Lisa with the garden. My hopes are that we can keep expanding our band of workers, start up selling plants that are cultivated here, even selling produce. Having local schools become involved with projects, the ideas are limitless. The joys of being involved for garden lovers are many.

This is not a new idea and for many years there were a group of locals who came and cared for the garden, now is the time to continue on with it.

The spring garden party and book launch of Mary Ellis "A History of Gardening in Victoria" was a great success. Beautiful day although very hot and windy and was attended by about 40 people. Mary sold more books than she had expected to and was very happy with the launch.

Maureen Symmonds - Garden Club



## FOCIS COMMITTEE 2003 - 2004

**President:** Ann Penaluna (03) 5956 9302

**Vice President:** Keith Hocking (03) 5821 9189

**Treasurer/Public Officer:** Roger Hollingworth,

**Membership Secretary and General Secretary:**

Jill Fitzroy Kelly (03) 5672 5235

### FOCIS Members:

Staff have requested that Focis members make sure they have their membership cards with them at all times when visiting Churchill Island and that they show them at the desk on arrival. This will make it much easier to monitor current memberships.

**FRIENDS OF CHURCHILL ISLAND SOCIETY INC.**

To: Secretary FOCIS, PO Box 852 COWES 3922, Vic. Aust.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Please Enrol/Renew a FOCIS Membership for

Name .....

YEAR .....

Address ..... Postcode .....

Phone: Home ..... Business .....

Email .....

Membership is from 1st July to 30th June **ADULT \$15**  **FAMILY \$25**  **CONCESSION \$10**

**Able to volunteer**  **In the Garden**  **As a Guide**  **Doing Restoration**

I understand that a current FOCIS membership entitles me to:-

**Visit Churchill Island any time during opening hours plus discount for special events.**

Visit **Penguin Parade** and **Koala Conservation Centre**

during opening hours 4 times a year for ongoing members and 2 times a year for new members,  
10% discount for accompanying visitors, 10% discount on food and souvenirs.

Participate in Churchill Island Projects.

*N.B. Membership card is not transferable. All privileges are dependent on production of your current membership card.*

If elected as a FOCIS member, I agree to abide by the Society's Rules as laid down in its Constitution.



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If undelivered return to: FOCIS, PO Box 852, COWES 3922

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