



FOCIS

newsletter

Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.

AUTUMN 2004

Dear Readers,

Hello there - here we are at the beginning of another autumn and the pastures are pale with summer dryness. But the garden has been flourishing nevertheless as you will read in Lisa's report later. We have had scattered showers throughout the summer, never enough, but better than none.

Being a volunteer guide brings us into contact with many different people. From other states, other countries and of course from all over Victoria. We share many a laugh when it comes to our experiences and I want to share some of these with you.

Sometimes we sit in the chair in the kitchen with the window behind us, which leads to some interesting questions, such as:

'Is that old lady real, Mum?' or, 'Have you always lived here?' or 'Are you a ghost?', 'Is that a hologram?' or a little more challenging, 'Is that old lady stuffed?' to which at the end of a long hot day, I am inclined to answer 'Well, yes I am today.' I think the best of all was the one in which a child pulled at her Mum's skirt and said 'Is that the Virgin Mary, Mum?' Any more gems out there?

So guiding has its amusements and its rewards and we are always in need of new guides to fill the places of a few we have lost over the past couple of years. Some of us are getting on a bit and do occasionally feel that - 'We've always lived here!'

So if you have ever thought of spending some very pleasurable time on Churchill Island give Sally O'Neill a call and talk to her about becoming a volunteer guide. (5951 2825)

A breath of news came to me that sadly, the great granddaughter of Samuel Pickersgill had passed away after a long illness. Thanks to her sister Eileen for sharing this with us. We offer our condolences to Eileen and her family.

We are considering offering subscribers the option of receiving their newsletter by email and would be interested to hear what you think. You can email your response to Neil at gladman@waterfront.net.au if you think this is a good idea.

Lots of news this issue. Lisa's garden news, Scott's Ranger report, a profile of our FOCIS Secretary, Jill Fitzroy Kelly, and of course Sally O'Neill with all sorts of news on the up and coming Working Horse Festival at Easter, 10th and 11th April, 2004, and which promises to be better than ever.

Regards to everyone, Jocelyn, Neil and Pat.



NEWSFLASH

A community advisory committee has been set up to facilitate community input into the Phillip Island Nature Park. Representatives of all relevant groups will meet and report back on current issues such as access etc.



RANGER'S REPORT

This summer season has been the busiest I have seen. Our Eco tours have proved very popular with visitors enjoying 'a journey back in time' on Churchill Island.

There is some good news regarding our horses. Lolly the younger of our Clydesdales is in foal and will be due on the 10th January, 2005. She was joined with a stud stallion at Tooradin. His name is Dondale Jeune and he is from a good line of show champions.

Lolly and foal should prove a great drawcard for the island. The John Rogers kitchen garden fence has been completed by Churchill Island staff. Funding for part of the construction was gladly received from FOCIS, to the sum of \$1000, plus \$200 for a potting bench. At the moment a garden shed is being constructed - this will be built in to the garden.

Well, the Working Horse Festival is almost on us again and this one looks like being BIG. So hopefully Mother Nature will be kind to us on the day. Though any rain before then would be well received as drought conditions continue.

It would be great if as many members as possible could make themselves available as helpers during the two days. Please contact Maureen Symmonds if you can give us an hour or two, or return the form included in the December newsletter. Maureens' number is 5956 6715.

I will be taking 7 months long service leave at the end of April so for the moment I would like to thank you all for your support through the years. It has been very important for the wellbeing of this special Island. Thank you.

Scott Campbell and staff, Churchill Island.



FROM THE GARDEN

The garden club is doing wonderful things right now, such as helping keep the garden under control with a lot of cutting back, realigning the pathways in the herb & kitchen gardens with brick edging as well as a program of heavy mulching with stable manure.

In the historic area there has been a lot of progress with the picket fence around the kitchen garden being completed at long last. Pat Russell & Neville Johnson did a fantastic job putting it up in no time at all. The vegies are thriving (apart from rat damage) so if you haven't been up to the garden area lately it is worth having a look.



Neville Johnson & Pat Russell working on picket fence.

Recently I took some garden club members to the Heronswood Diggers Club at Dromana for the day and we had a delightful time looking around the grounds with Helen, one of the head gardeners who showed us behind the scenes at the workings of this magnificent place. It is very inspiring to see how dedicated everyone is to the presentation & style of the whole complex. The cafe food is simple & delicious and they use their own produce. I met with Talei Kenyan who is the PR manager and we are currently working on some way that we can involve the Diggers Club with Churchill Island. I already use their heritage seeds in our kitchen garden and it would be nice to get some sort of sponsorship or relationship going.

It feels like autumn is on its way some cool mornings and still warm days.....it would be great to get some rain though as everything is very dry, which is why mulching is so important, and using plants that are drought tolerant!

The garden is still looking good with the hibiscus flowering, the canary island smokebush is putting on its display of tiny fluffy flowers covering the whole bush outside Roger's cottage, which causes amazement and wonder to all, and the amaranthus outside the kitchen garden looks vibrant with its red stems & leaves...there is always something to see & enjoy!

LISA.



COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

REPORT -All Set for Working Horse Festival

The ferrets are booked, the horses are registered, the sheep are ready to be shorn, the poets are practising and the musicians are tuning up for the island's Mane Event -



the Working Horse Festival on Saturday April 10th and Sunday April 11th.

This year's line up again features a wide variety of events to keep the whole family entertained. The Mane Event is of course the awesome Clydesdale Horses which put on spectacular displays in the paddocks over the two days. This year will also feature Bullock Teams, Working Donkeys and the local Pony Clubs putting on a show. The range of other demonstrations it too large to mention, but a few to whet your appetite are Working Sheep Dogs, Ferret Races, and the Sheep to Shawl and Sheaf Pitching Contests.

There will also be demonstrations of chainsaw sculpting, whip cracking and much, much more.

Saturday will feature special entertainment for the kids including karaoke with cowgirl, Miss Dolly, Pockets the Clown, Dorothy the Dinosaur Shows and a Bush Dance. Fun for Kids will continue all weekend with Old Time Games, face painting, kids craft and much more.

All through the weekend, there will be music and entertainment on the Mane Stage, Fiddlers Green and around the festival. This will include musical duo, Peter & Nicky Baird, bush band, Celtic music, Wallis & Matilda performing Banjo Patterson poetry to music, country music, local sounds and headline act Johnny Diesel.

We look forward to welcoming all FOCIS members and their friends to the festival. Please note that the entry fee for FOCIS members will remain as an upgrade cost which means that you still get your entry to Churchill Island for free. We are also offering a two day festival pass this year so you can enjoy all the festival has to offer. Accompanying visitors will pay general entry fees. All revenue benefits Churchill Island.

For further festival information, please call 5951 2800 or check out www.penguins.org.au

Sally O'Neill

2004 Churchill Island Working Horse Festival

Saturday April 10 & Sunday April 11 2004 10am - 5 pm
Entry is \$15 for adults, \$8 children, \$38 family and \$10 concession. Two day passes also available. Tickets available on day. Churchill Island is accessible by bridge from Phillip Island - parking is free. All revenue supports Churchill Island. **No dogs or BYO alcohol allowed.**

Information: Call 03 5951 2800 or
www.penguins.org.au

VOLUNTEERS WHO CAN GIVE AN HOUR OR TWO DURING THE WORKING HORSE FESTIVAL SHOULD PHONE MAUREEN SYMONDS URGENTLY ON 5956 6715.



Become a Working Horse Festival Volunteer!!

The festival needs your support! Volunteers are needed for the smooth running of the festival and it's a great way to experience the festival and meet new people! There are a wide variety of ways you can help. You are also helping FOCIS to keep the Working Horse Festival alive.

Please call Maureen Symonds on 5956 6715 to register your support.



PERSONALITY PROFILE

Jill Fitzroy Kelly

Unlike many of the people I have met here, I do not have a 'history' tied to either the Island or South Gippsland. Ours was a family which visited the beach on very few occasions. Instead we headed for the High Country. As a child my holidays were spent at Jamieson, as a schoolgirl with the Boucher Family at Swifts Creek, as a teenager at Licola or Mt. Buller and then after marriage, 12 years in the Mansfield area.

My first visit to Phillip Island was in 1955 when a friend and I came to see the penguins. It was an experience I have never forgotten. We lay on the beach eating our picnic tea when they came in from the sea. They treated us like rocks or some other annoying obstacles and proceeded to climb over us and our meal, completely unafraid. We were stunned by their behaviour and just lay there as penguin after penguin marched in a steady line across us. It was sheer magic! I should add that we were the only people on the beach at the time.

My second visit to P.I. was in 2001, after I retired to live in Wonthaggi. How the Island had changed from the very quiet place of my memory. I understand that things have to change with time and the practical reasons behind the Penguin Parade as we see it today, but I believe it was the memory of the earlier visit that triggered my interest in Churchill Island.

My first reaction to C.I. was "I want to live here on this beautiful, peaceful place." I wandered around the garden and buildings and struck up a conversation with Scott Campbell (and Jack). He told me a little of what they were doing to preserve the Island to maintain its heritage value and mentioned FOCIS. I got a newsletter from the Visitors Centre and after reading it decided to become a member and in some way contribute to the preservation of Churchill Island.

I was a volunteer guide with the National Trust at "Como" and a founding guide at The Portable Houses in South Melbourne in the late 1970's, early 1980's. But these days I prefer to garden rather than guide, so I am sure that Lisa Burrell will be happy to continue my education in distinguishing native grasses from weeds.

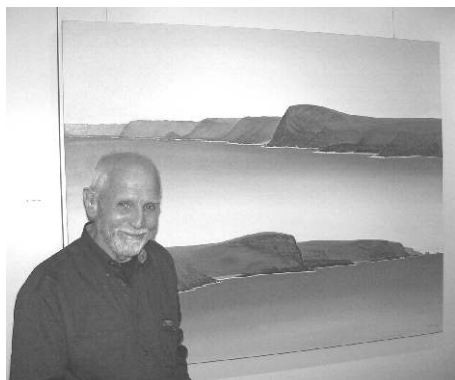
One of the pleasures of being Membership Secretary is getting to speak to members of FOCIS, being able to answer queries, settle complaints (yes, there are a few) and hearing why people become involved with the FOCIS. People of such diverse backgrounds come together to share their knowledge of the past and their concerns for the future of the Island.



Island Paintings at Churchill Island Art Space

Local artist and FOCIS member, Bob Baird, launched the new Art Space at the Churchill Island Visitor Centre with his solo exhibition, *Island Paintings*.

The launch was a great success with many enjoying the evening with a



glass of wine and nibbles provided by the Churchill Island café.

The exhibition launched the professional art space in the Visitor Centre which is now open to artists to exhibit on a selection basis. Call Sally O'Neill for more details on 5951 2825.

The *Island Paintings* exhibition featured twenty four works which focused on Phillip Island and Victorian island landscapes in acrylic on canvas and board.

In describing his work, Bob said, 'My paintings are distilled poetic memories of my favourite places. Remembered visions can contain more than one image. The horizon is wherever you want it to be.' The exhibition closed on Sunday 14th March, 2004.

123 YOUR BUNCH OF DATES

456 27th March, 2004 - Committee Meeting, Information Centre, 1pm.

10th & 11th April, 2004 Churchill Island Working Horse Festival.

March Music - Live music in the café 1- 4 pm every Sunday in March.

Farmer's Market, Fourth Saturday in each month.

22nd May, 2004 - Committee Meeting, Information Centre, 1pm.

11th June-25th June, Art Space Exhibition of paintings by Josie Kent, 'Moons and Moonahs'

24th July, 2004. FOCIS Annual General Meeting, Information Centre, 1pm.



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 2004 to 30th June 2005 **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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ABN 78 667 051 020 Inc. No. A 00219007W