



FOCIS

newsletter

Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.

Number 112 WINTER 2011

HERITAGE AWARD TO AMESS HOUSE

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The Bass Coast Shire Heritage Award 2011 was made to Amess House in recognition of the contribution it has made to the restoration and conservation of a heritage place through specialist heritage trade skills. The award was made by National Trust in partnership with Bass Coast Shire Council to recognize those in the Bass Coast community who have demonstrated

DATES TO REMEMBER

WORKING BEES FOR 2011

Sat 17 Sept, 8-10 am: house spring clean

Sat 26 Nov, 8-10 am: house preparation for Summer season

*Please bring cleaning cloths.
Coffee provided.*

GENERAL MEETINGS FOR 2011

Saturday 13 August (AGM)

Saturday 12 November

1.30 pm Meeting Room Churchill

Island Visitors' Centre

Contact us:

By post—

PO Box 852, COWES,

We are on the web. See this issue in colour

www.friendsofchurchillisland.org.au

President@

Secretary@

Membership@

Treasurer@

Editor@

friendsofchurchillisland.org.au The certificate was presented to



Stella Axarlis with Peter Paul and Julie Box

excellence in retention, restoration, enhancement and reuse of heritage places. The sponsors recognize heritage places as an integral part of the Bass Coast community and the awards highlight their commitment to celebrate and promote our heritage.

FOCIS President Stella Axarlis representing all those who contributed to the restoration and presentation of the house. The presentation on Sunday May 15 was made by Cr Peter Paul representing the Council and Ms Julie Box representing the National Trust.

The framed certificate will hang in the Amess House.

Please submit copy for the next newsletter by 30 September

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Stella Axarlis AM

On behalf of the Executive I wish to thank all members who came to our May 12 Meeting. It was gratifying to see so many of you. Thank you!

As we approach the AGM on Saturday 13th August I regretfully wish to acknowledge the resignation of Roger Holingworth as Treasurer. Roger and Sue have been wonderful supporters of FOCIS and Roger's work has been exemplary and of great support to me personally. My thanks also to Marje Brophy who has been amazing in her role as Membership Secretary. Unfortunately Marje has resigned and we will miss her.

Also thank you to David Maunders for the Newsletter and his contribution as a Volunteer and on special projects. We hope David will be continuing as Newsletter Editor.

We are now in a position to report that we have nominations for Treasurer, Member-

ship Secretary - Tom O'Dea and General Secretary - Christine Grayden. We are delighted with these nominations and Pat and I will offer our nominations again for President and Vice President. Please ring me on 0417 771 939 if you also wish to nominate for any of these positions.

At the June Board Meeting Of Phillip Island Nature Parks The CEO Matthew Jackson an-

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nounced a Grant to be given to FOCIS for a Curator. Matthew was most impressed with the report given by Christine Grayden who in turn will fill that position for one year. Our gratitude to Matthew for this grant. In the meantime the Archiving team of Christine, Irene and Margaret have completed their initial sorting of papers - no small achievement

and we congratulate them for a job well done. Above all however was the excellent presentation given to the Board by Pat Baird and Christine Grayden. The Board was surprised by the breadth and depth of the subject and moved by their obvious passion and love of Churchill Island. Christine showed power point photos in support of the historical significance of our Island and its past owners.

I am delighted to announce that Councillor Peter Paul and Rebecca Saunders will both speak about their passion for Churchill Island. Rebecca is a final year PhD Candidate at the University of Melbourne. Her Thesis Title is : People and Place: Churchill Island and the Practice of Public History. Please do not miss the AGM.

Finally it has been a joy for me to be your President in the past year and I thank you all for your support. With my very best wishes,

Stella

OBITUARY: JUNE WATKINS - NEE MORRISH

By Carrol Schulz

We first met Miss June Morrish in 1980 when she visited Churchill Island to see "how things were going". She checked out the buildings; agreed there was much still to be done! As an active Western Port Bird Observers' Club (WESBOC) member, she

walked around the coast and suggested that the migratory birds might 'stop-over' further around South Point when visitor numbers increase. She also felt that the agisted cattle were nearly as damaging to the shore lines as the rabbits!

The gardens and trees claimed her - "But volunteers will be needed to preserve land".

Her quiet and definite appraisal prompted us to nominate her as a member of the inaugural FOCIS committee being established by the Trust at the time.

PHILLIP ISLAND NATURE PARK REPORT

Matthew Jackson, CEO

Firstly, may I take this opportunity to again thank FOCIS for its contribution towards the protection and preservation of Churchill Island, and the significant volunteer contribution by your many members to assist the Nature Parks to protect and maintain Churchill Island.

The recent Easter "Family Fun Festival" was again a great success with over 5,000 visitors over the 2 days. Clearly this event is a great success and continues to raise the profile of Churchill Island.

I am pleased to update members that final YTD visitor numbers for the 2010-2011 financial year for the Nature Parks were up by 55,084 visitors in comparison to last

year's results and specifically to Churchill Island, are up by 10% or 11,198 visitors. This is an extremely pleasing result.

Easter "Family Fun Festival" was again a great success with over 5,000 visitors

I recently met with the FOCIS executive and provided a further briefing to its members. Further updates towards the "Museum" submission to the Nature Parks Board were discussed and the request by FOCIS to the Nature Parks to fund a curator at Churchill Island, on site 2 days a week.

I am pleased to announce that the Nature Parks has provided

a grant to FOCIS to place a Curator on site as requested for the next 12 months, this will aid the enhancement and preservation of Churchill Island and its history.

May I take this opportunity to thank FOCIS for drafting the updated "Volunteer Guide Book" , this will be a key document for all Nature Parks staff and volunteers to use during their induction stages into the history of Churchill Island to ensure that accurate and informative information is provided on a daily basis to our visitors.

I look forward to working with FOCIS and its members, in the future, towards enhancing and preserving Churchill Island for future generations.

June Watkins - Continued from p.2.

Thus began many years of friendship to us, and a 'sure helper' when we needed it most. Her property at Forrest Caves was a haven for us during storms and tides which made the old Churchill Island bridge impassable! Sometimes, she would tell us of her experiences as a country teacher in hard and difficult times, when children needed her personal care before school. Following her marriage to Ron Watkins - celebrated at Churchill Island in 1987 - she moved to his house at Ventnor. She continued to maintain the Forrest Caves property and later became a strong supporter of Warley Hospital.

Her influence on Churchill Island remained with her contribution to the Highland Cattle fold, and through WESBOC, and she enjoyed FOCIS newsletters, which kept her in touch after Ron's death. Her family finally took her to themselves at Geelong, where she spent her last days. Vale June Morrish.

*"From our hearts, with our hands,
For the Earth, all the world together."*
Richard St Barbe Baker, Man of the Trees.

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD May 14th, 2011 AT 1.30 PM.

Present: Stella Axarlis, Marje Brophy, Pat Baird, Jan Jonas, David Maunders, Christine Grayden, Tom & Ruth O'Dea, Yvonne Robson, Barbara Stephens, Peter & Ann Jelly, Sue & Roger Hollingworth, Bruce & Sue Chambers, Hagen & Margaret Geppert, Meg McCarthy, Michael & Maureen Barden, Gaye Cleeland, Irene McKell, Marianne Pattinson,

Apologies: Julia Nelson, Jeffrey & Marlene Robinson, Kris Moar, Ted & Sue Bryant, Jill & Fred Allen, Wilma & Stewart Carter, Rod & Margaret Simkiss, Leanne, Bill & Rachel Beagley, Doug & Linda Dendle, Ian Jonas, William Scukovic

Visitors: Matthew Jackson -CEO - PINP

Minutes of Previous Meeting held February 12th, 2011 Moved (S Hollingworth / D Maunders).

PINP Report - Matthew Jackson

Matthew Jackson presented a report for PINP. Matthew confirmed that PINP would agree to the employment of a curator for Churchill Island.

FOCIS were congratulated on their submission regarding a museum for Churchill Island.

The number of visitors to Churchill Island is greater than 10,000. PINP have a \$5,000 Education Grant for schools.

There are 4 houses left in the Summerland Precinct and by June 2011, there will be no houses and there is infrastructure in place for all utilities to be underground. Wallabies are starting to return.

The new Wildlife Hospital can accommodate 1500 penguins.

The "local" pass is proving popular for residents.

Farm Manager Report- Trevor Heywood

The Easter Family Festival attracted good crowds.

The lavender has been cut back & replanted. Approximately 5 kgs of lavender has been threshed.

Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Members' Social Day - cancelled.

Working Bees - June 4th, September 17th, November 26th

PINP Strategic Plan - there has been extensive consultation.

Revised Constitution - will be posted to all members to be approved at the AGM.

President's Report

A thank you was extended to all those who had facilitated the social day.

Nominations are required for election of the Executive Committee at the AGM in August.

Thanks were extended to all those who had assisted in the review of the Constitution.

Treasurer's Report - tabled

Moved (Roger Hollingworth / D Maunders) that the Treasurer's Report be accepted.

Membership Secretary

There are currently 140 family members & 115 individual members.

General Business

National Trust - Phillip Island Branch - Churchill Island received the Bass Coast Heritage Award for its historical significance and contribution to heritage skills.

AGM Speaker - Rebecca Sanders

Meeting closed at 3.20 pm.

Next Meeting - AGM - August 13th, 2011

AGM:

The AGM will be held on Saturday 13 August, 1.30 pm in the Visitors' Centre. Minutes were included in the Spring 2010 newsletter (see website). Copies of the revised con-

stitution have been circulated and are available on the website. Nominations for President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer, membership sec and newsletter editor may be sent to the current president (see report p. 2).

FINANCIAL REPORT MAY 2011

Roger Hollingworth, Honorary Treasurer and Public Officer

Period 1 Feb - 29 April 2011

YTD 1 July 2010 - 29 April 2011

	Period	\$	YTD \$
RECEIPTS			
Membership Subscriptions		50.00	4,830.00
Donations		nil	280.00
Bank interest		267.63	921.62
<u>Sundry</u>		11	11
TOTAL RECEIPTS		317.74	6,031.73
PAYMENTS			
Printing		291.50	1,558.50
Postage		114.68	515.94
Gifts to PINP		nil	nil
Festivals		nil	nil
Office		20.00	100.45
Advertisements		nil	nil
Subscriptions		121.00	121.00
Sundry		185.00	716.72
TOTAL PAYMENTS		732.18	3,012.61
NET SURPLUS /(LOSS)		(414.44)	3,019.12
CASH AT BANK			
Opening Bank Balance	1 July 2010		\$43,375.84
Closing Balance	29 April 2011		\$46,394.96

Roger Hollingworth

HON. TREASURER 11 May 2011

WINTER IN THE CHURCHILL ISLAND GARDENS

Meg McCarthy

Winter is here. A season of pruning, cleaning out beds and reorganising plantings.

I have had some great help this winter from groups of up to ten at a time from the International Student Volunteers Abroad. These energetic youngsters have done a power of work in both the Visitor Centre native beds and the heritage garden. Even when it was stormy weather they agreed to clean the Amess House out-buildings; these areas are now dust and cobweb free with all goods and chattels sparkling after a good wash.

The gardens smell beautiful with the perfume of jonquils. Daffodils are pushing through and new shoots abound on the heavily

pruned plectranthus and fuchsias. The old camellias are covered in buds ready to burst into colour. Staff have had a hard time mowing and keeping up with the rate of growth around all the lawns. There has also been a lot of mud tramped through the heritage area as a result of the constant rainfall we've been experiencing. My gumboots and dry-z-bone have been getting a workout this year! The paddocks are quite boggy but it has not deterred the new lambs and calves from frolicking about to entertain everybody.

I am looking forward to the delivery of a load of new shell grit to top up the paths. Also the new arbour will be completed soon. Thanks to the keen garden helpers who are prepared to brave the ele-

ments on Wednesday mornings.

It is always nice to have our morning tea by the fire in Rogers cottage. Happy gardening everybody.

Cheers, Meg.



Newsletter Editor Required

The Newsletter Editor is a member of the FOCIS executive and elected each year at the AGM. Microsoft Publisher templates are available so all you need to do is load new articles and photos. Copy is sent to the printer electronically and address labels printed for posting. Volunteers should contact the president.

MADE IN THEIR IMAGE: Churchill Island and the Colonial Middle Classes

Rebecca Sanders

Synopsis of presentation to be made by Rebecca at the FOCIS AGM, August 13.

For a brief moment in 1801, Churchill Island looked as though it might have been somewhere important in Australian history. In that year Lieutenant James Grant, captain of HMS Lady Nelson, planted a garden and erected a blockhouse on its shores. Since 1801, however, Churchill Island has sat on the outskirts of Australian colonial history.

During the course of the nineteenth century it was subsequently lost, found, ignored, and relegated to a marginal pastoral run, before becoming a home and later seaside retreat in the second half of the nineteenth century. At first glance, this uneven history of use, usefulness and uselessness, seems somewhat bizarre. But, when analysed through a combination of social and land use history, the changing utility of Churchill Island serves as a commentary on one of that century's more noticeable social, political and economic trends- the rising impor-



tance, influence and above all expansion of the middle classes. The myriad ways in which this site was used during the colonial era documents the ever shifting and elastic nature of the colonial middle classes, and their increasingly complex relationship with the Australian landscape.

MACHINERY WORKING BEE REPORT

By Christine Grayden

Thanks to Pat Baird, Margaret and Hagen Geppert and Christine Grayden for their participation in the machinery working bee, and to Meg for working on Saturday morning to supervise us. Saturday June 4 was a beautiful morning, with George the cockie and his neighbouring ferrets all out enjoying the sunshine along with us.

We started with the machinery under the cypress trees south of the homestead, then moved to "Pedro's shed", where a wagon and milk delivery cart were cleaned of built-up leaf mulch, cobwebs and dirt, and the shed walls given a good sweep down. Next was the barn area, where some old horse-drawn implements were cleaned, and the iron wheels and front of

the barn were thoroughly swept. Then onto the wool wagon (see separate article). We then deserved a cuppa!

After our well-earned break we went to the machinery sheds and swept down about half the remaining old machinery. We finished with a pleasant lunch of tomato soup and some of Margaret's delicious home-made bread. All in all an excellent working

bee that achieved lots. Next time it would be good to have a larger group so that we can clean *all* the machinery. Maybe you would like to join in?



Hagen, Margaret, Pat & Christine. Photos by Meg

A SALUTARY LESSON

During the machinery working bee we realised that the beautiful old wool wagon had a load of old, wet and rotting wool bales on board. They must have looked great for the first few months they were in the wagon however many years ago, but now they were a real menace - a rotting hazard to the wagon's floor boards. Meg jumped on board and with Hagen's help managed to roll and pull each bale into a waiting wheelbarrow. Hagen pushed and Christine steadied as the bales were taken, wet and leaden heavy, to a storage spot in preparation for being taken to the tip when volunteers are working on Churchill Island later in the year.

It was then a case of attacking the accumulated rotten wool, soil and leaf mulch on the floor boards with a shovel, shovelling this mulch into barrows and taking it to the compost heap. The remainder was hosed off

and swept out thoroughly by Hagen. What an awful job! Let's hope no one decides to do anything like that again! Hopefully this beautiful old wagon will be able to be moved under cover some time in the near future.



Hagen, Margaret, Pat & Christine. Photos by Meg

PRIVACY STATEMENT

The Society collects, uses, discloses and holds information of members in accordance with the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988. The Society collects personal information about members in order to:

1. Maintain a current membership list.
2. Inform members about the Society's activities.
3. Publish details of members, with their consent, in the FOCIS Newsletter or other Society publications.

Members' personal information will be kept confidential and secure and will not be accessible for unauthorised use, amendment or disclosure. Members may seek access to and lodge any complaints about their personal information by contacting the Society.

The Society will strive to ensure that the personal information of members is accurate, up to date and complete. Members may assist the Society in this task by providing correct information and advising when details have changed

GENERAL MEETINGS FOR

2011

Saturday 13 August (AGM)

Saturday 12 November

1.30 pm Meeting Room Churchill Island

Visitors' Centre

Check our website

www.friendsofchurchillisland.org.au



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