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Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.

Number 114 SUMMER 2011

MERRY CHRISTMAS

MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA TO PERFORM ON CHURCHILL ISLAND

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At the FOCIS General Meeting on November 12, Phillip Island Nature Park CEO Matthew Jackson announced that the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra will perform annually on Churchill Island from February 2012. Details are not yet available but we understand that consultations are taking place with FOCIS President Stella Axarlis about the content of the program. Stella is a former international opera singer.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD TO STELLA AXARLIS

FOCIS President Stella Axarlis was recently presented with the 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award in Brisbane. This award, Australia's most prestigious in Vocational Education and Training, is presented for distinguished service and a lasting contribution to Vocational Education and Training. Stella has served on numerous peak bodies including the National Training Quality Committee (chair) and Australian National Training Authority (deputy chair)

DATES TO REMEMBER

NEWSLETTER COPY DEADLINE

15 February 2012

GENERAL MEETINGS 2012

Saturday 11 February

Saturday 12 May

Saturday 12 August (AGM)

Saturday 10 November

1.30 pm Meeting Room Churchill Island

WORKING BEES FOR 2012

Saturday 5 May (outside)

Saturday 15 September (house)

Saturday 24 November (house)

8-10 am: *Coffee provided.*

Contact us:

By post—

PO Box 852,
COWES, 3922.

We are on the web. See this issue in colour

www.friendsofchurchillisland.org.au

President@

Secretary@

Membership@

Treasurer@

Editor@

friendsofchurchillisland.org.au



Please submit copy for the next newsletter by 15 February 2012

MSO members in more usual surroundings

FROM OUR VICE-PRESIDENT

Pat Baird

Our President, Stella Axarlis, was unable to attend the last meeting and so the chair was taken by Treasurer Tom O'Dea. We had a good attendance of about 24 people for whom Tom outlined a number of necessary changes to the Constitution and the pros and cons of changes to our banking. (see minutes). It is always a pleasure to have our members come to these meetings which are an important

bond in our mutual care of Churchill Island.

At the meeting it was agreed to make application for funding from the Public Records Office Heritage Grants to cover printing costs for another print run of *Churchill Island History and Her Story*. Since the announcement of Grants is at least six months away in the meantime we

will investigate a shorter run to cover the gap.

Christine Grayden's Curator's notes will tell of one of the disadvantages of our spring rain that happily turned out to be repairable. It is always lovely in the spring but particularly so this year in contrast to the drought. Nature has a wonderful way of recovering and restoring itself.

OUR PRESIDENT HAS ADDED:

Thank you for all your good wishes following my apology, due to illness, at the General Meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the great work of the Executive and to thank Tom for his excellent chair-

ing. My gratitude also to Christine who is doing an amazing job as Curator. I know that Matthew Jackson is most appreciative of her contribution. I wish you all a wonderful festive season and may 2012 bring you joy and good health for you and your families. We

hope to see as many of you as possible in the New Year and perhaps at the Open Community Day of Phillip Island Nature Parks on 4th March. With my very best wishes, Stella.

Stella Axarlis AM.

PHILLIP ISLAND NATURE PARK CEO'S REPORT

Matthew Jackson

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.

I am pleased to update members that YTD visitor numbers in comparison to last year to the Nature Parks in general, are up by 1.3% or 3,883 visitors and specifically to Churchill Island, are up 4% or 1,805 Visitors. This is a pleasing result especially during a difficult and uncertain economic environment.

The Churchill Island "Volunteer Guide Book" has now been circulated to all volunteers at Churchill Island and all relevant Nature Parks staff. This will be used during our induction process to ensure that the history of Churchill Island provided to our guests is accurate and informative. Again, I thank FOCIS for its assistance to have this document developed and published.

The Nature Parks has recently launched its "iPhone App" and this can be downloaded free of charge at iTunes, if any FOCIS members have

an iPhone. This is another valuable tool for the Nature Parks to market its products including Churchill Island to a growing social media market. It is with great pleasure that I inform FOCIS that the Nature Parks was successful in achieving "Winner" and "Finalist" at the prestigious Banksia Foundation Environmental Awards in the following categories:

WINNER Land and Biodiversity - Preserving Our Ecosystems - "Fox Free Phillip Island" - Nature Parks fox eradication program

FINALIST 2011 Mercedes-Benz Australian Environmental Research Award - 42 years of Little Penguin Research - Nature Parks Research Department

This is a significant achievement that further recognises the environmental and conservation excellence achieved by the Nature Parks over many years to which we can all be extremely proud. The Nature Parks has released its Annual Report 2010-2011 and a copy can be downloaded at www.penguins.org.au. It is extremely pleasing to report to our community and key stakeholders a balanced result for the Nature Parks for the period, demonstrating record

tourism and environmental achievements. Unfortunately, due to a lack of stallholder interest, this year's Garden Lovers Festival had to be cancelled. This is an unfortunate result, however I am pleased to inform FOCIS that the Nature Parks has secured the "Melbourne Symphony Orchestra" to perform on an annual basis at Churchill Island commencing February 2013. This will be a significant community event, that will not only raise the profile of Churchill Island and increase visitation, but provide our community with a unique, world class annual event. May I also acknowledge the efforts of Christine Grayden in the new role as "Curator". Christine has already made a significant contribution to this position by reviewing and managing our collection of artefacts. I look forward to continuing to work with Christine over the next 12 months. On a final note, Meg McCarthy has recently left the Nature Parks after 5 years' service. Meg has been instrumental in developing and maintaining Churchill Island's gardens and interacting with FOCIS volunteers. We wish Meg all the best in her future endeavours and she will be sadly missed. However, Meg has informed me that she will still be volunteering her services and expertise at Churchill Island which demonstrates Meg's passion and commitment to Churchill Island and its future.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED ON CHURCHILL ISLAND

Recently, FOCIS members (David Maunders, Christine Grayden, Pat Baird and Stella Axarlis together with Nature Park staff Sally O'Neill, produced an updated volunteer guide manual (available at the PNIP website). The following article appeared recently in the *Phillip Island Advertiser* and is reproduced with permission.

It's undoubtedly the best kept garden this side of Melbourne and one of Victoria's hidden gems. Churchill Island's

sprawling grounds are well maintained by volunteers but numbers are dwindling. Phillip Island Nature Parks' staff Meg McCarthy and Pat Jeffery, both heavily involved in the volunteer program, are putting out the call for new recruits. "We currently don't have enough volunteers to fill our monthly roster," says horticultural officer Meg McCarthy. We're looking for volunteers to help tend the gardens and act as house guides in the old homestead. The guides, most dressed in period costume, are on

hand to answer any visitor questions regarding the farm's heritage". Husband and wife team Dale and Nancy Brain have been volunteering for around 10 years and have enjoyed every moment of their time in this historic and beautiful garden, and sharing it with visitors from around the world.

"I do it because I like to help out, the gardens are peaceful and I enjoy meeting people from around the world," says Dale.

(continued on p. 8)

CURATOR'S REPORT

Christine Grayden

I have now completed photographing the National Trust objects and have started on those Phillip Island Nature Park items for which there is no photographic record. Due to the value of the Janet Amess lace collection, dating from the 1860s, I am starting with the lace. Janet Amess was obviously a very frugal woman as many of the lace pieces are lengths of narrow (1.5-3 cm wide) lace which she - or perhaps a servant - had removed from garments, wound around her finger and saved. Some of it has been spread out evenly to wind, but other pieces have bunched up and need to be carefully spread and rewound. Apart from the lengths of lace, varying from 20 cm to 1.5m long, there are several lace garments, including an extremely fine and delicate bed jacket and a wedding petticoat of linen with a very wide lace border from half way down to the hem. All the pieces are coloured white or ivory, and most are in remarkably good condition. They are stored carefully in acid free tissue. Members who attend our February 11, 2012 general meeting will have the

opportunity to view the collection after the meeting. Due to the age of the lace, however, members will not be able to handle any pieces. The Janet Amess collection also includes three seal skin pieces which will also be on display.

Thanks go to my helpers Irene, Margaret, David, Ruth and Tom, who have helped me with various archiving tasks. Also to Carroll Schulz, previous long-term manager of Churchill Island, who has been helping me with my enquiries. We had a fright recently when the Volunteers' hut, which houses the filing cabinets of archives and photographs, was flooded during a massive thunderstorm. Fortunately no



Janet Amess lace sample



harm was done to the collection, and thanks to action by Matt Jackson and Churchill Island farm manager Trevor Haywood, the drainage problem has now been rectified and the carpet cleaned and dried, so the situation should not arise again. It does make me more aware of the necessity for a disaster plan, which is required of the Churchill Island museum for reaccreditation in 2013 and so I am currently working my way through "Be Prepared: Guidelines for small museums for writing a disaster preparedness plan" (Heritage Collections Council).

Christine Grayden, m 0400 900 612. At Churchill Island Thursdays and Fridays 10 a.m. - 3.30 p.m

Bird List for Churchill Island & Fishers' Wetlands, Spring, 2011

Christine Grayden and Elizabeth Shaw.

These birds have been recently sighted around Churchill Island

White Ibis
Silver Gull
Pacific Gull
Pied Oystercatchers
Cape Barren Geese
Australian Pelican
Great Egret
White-faced heron
Welcome Swallow
Red Wattlebird
Spotted Pardalote
White-naped Honey-eater
White-browed scrub wren
Willy Wagtail
Little Pied Cormorant
Pied Cormorant



Pied Oystercatcher

photo Jenny Skewes

Australian Magpie
Galah
Masked Lapwing
Spotted Dove
Common Starling
Eastern Rosella
Australian Wood Duck
Chestnut Teal

House Sparrow
Purple Swamphen
Dusky Moorhen
Black Swan
New Holland Honeyeater
Black Duck
White-plumed Honeyeater
Magpie-lark (Mudlark)
Little Raven
Australasian Grebe
Hoary-headed Grebe
White-fronted Chat
Grey Teal
Australasian Shelduck
Red-browed Finch
Black-fronted Dotterel
Swamp Harrier
Superb Fairy-wren (Blue Wren)
Eurasian Coot

WORKING BEE SATURDAY 26 NOVEMBER

By Christine Grayden

Thanks to Margaret and Hagen Geppert, Pam Spencer, Anne Davie, Roger Hollingworth and Pat Jeffrey who turned out at 8 a.m. on Saturday morning to help me at the FOCIS historic precinct working bee. Pat used the big dust mop to reach in under and around everything through the house; Roger gave the cottages and store room a thorough clean; Hagen cleaned all the cobwebs from under all of the verandahs and around window frames; Margaret and Pam cleaned everything in the wash house, then cleaned windows and dusted; Anne cleaned the Volunteers' kitchen, dusted and then cleaned out the scullery; I dusted the child's room, dining room, morning room and kitchen, then brushed inside and out of the Coolgardie safe. Between our working bee, Pat's regular voluntary cleaning and other dedicated volunteers, the place looks great and ready for the Summer season. The working bees are an ex-

cellent way for FOCIS to make a positive contribution to the historic precinct and are very enjoyable. Next year's working bees will be: outside machinery Saturday 5th May; house and cottages: Saturday 15th September and Saturday 24th November. We finish with a lovely cuppa and chat! Hope to see you next year.



Hagen removing cobwebs

Treasurer's Report for the General Meeting 12 November 2011

Tom O'Dea

Income and Expenses as at 31 Oct 2011

Category	1/07/2010- 30/06/2011 (12 months)	1/07/2011- 31/10/2011 (4 months)
INCOME		
Donations Received	\$741.00	\$495.00
Grants Received	\$0.00	\$13,000.00
Interest Income	\$1,108.00	\$374.74
Subscriptions Income	\$4,846.00	\$3,663.45
Sundry Income	\$168.00	\$0.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$6,863.00	\$17,533.19
EXPENSES		
AGM Expenses	unknown	\$47.51
Financial Services Expenses	unknown	\$72.05
FOCIS Newsletter	unknown	\$398.32
Government Fees	unknown	\$116.10
Grants Paid	\$0.00	\$13,000.00
Office Expenses	\$2,472.00	\$104.23
Subscriptions Paid	\$121.00	\$0.00
Sundry Expenses	\$520.00	\$109.95
Web Site Expenses	\$0.00	\$54.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,113.00	\$13,902.16
SURPLUS(DEFICIT)	\$3,750.00	\$3,631.03

Budget Position as at 31 Oct 2011

Category	Budget for 1/07/2011- 30/06/2012 (12 months)	Actuals for 1/07/2011- 31/10/2011 (4 months)	Progress Against Budget
INCOME			
Donations Received	\$600	\$495	83%
Interest Income	\$1,100	\$375	34%
Subscriptions Income	\$5,000	\$3,663	73%
Sundry Income	\$100	\$0	0%
TOTAL INCOME	\$6,800	\$4,533	67%
EXPENSES			
Advertising	\$150	\$0	0%
AGM Expenses	\$0	\$48	N/A
Financial Services Expenses	\$100	\$72	72%
FOCIS Newsletter	\$1,650	\$398	24%
Government Fees	\$0	\$116	N/A
Office Expenses	\$1,750	\$104	6%
Subscriptions Paid	\$150	\$0	0%
Sundry Expenses	\$500	\$110	22%
Web Site Expenses	\$60	\$54	90%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4,360	\$902	21%
SURPLUS(DEFICIT)	\$2,440	\$3,631	149%

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 11th, 2011 AT 1.30 PM.

Present: Pat Baird (Vice President), Christine Grayden (Secretary), Tom O'Dea (acting chair), Ruth O'Dea, David Maunders, Gaye Cleeland, Jan Jonas, Graeme Clausen, Peter Brookes, Michael Barden, Maureen Barden, Roger Hollingworth, Sue Hollingworth, Yvonne Robson, Irene McKell, Anne Davie, Irene Measom, Matthew Jackson (CEO, PINP; left after his report), Rebecca Sanders (Ph.D. candidate)

Apologies: Stella Axarlis (President), Ann Jelly, Peter Jelly, Marje Brophy, Bruce & Sue Chambers, Carroll & Amy Schulz, Helen & Don Sandy, Wilma & Stewart Carter, Edith Johnson, Inge Royce, Ian Jonas, Sharon Smart, Cr Peter and Glenyce Paul, Helen and Don Sandy, Linda and Doug Dendle, Tony & Helen Marxsen.

1. Welcome: Acting chairperson Tom O'Dea welcomed all members.

2. Minutes from previous General Meeting held with Annual General Meeting and distributed in newsletter 13 August 2011 Gaye Cleeland/David Maunders. *Carried*

3. Matters arising from previous General Meeting: Nil.

4. Report from Matt Jackson, CEO, Phillip Island Nature Park

Year to date visitation to PINP has been almost equal to last year despite the turndown in tourism. An iPhone application, free through iTunes is being released with information across the park. Also plans to redo the website penguins.org. Annual report has been released and summarised in the Advertiser and indicates a fantastic result for the park. Unfortunately due to lack of interest from stallholders there will be no C.I. Garden Festival this year. However, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is to play on C.I., hopefully Feb or March 2012, and this will become an annual event. There will be a minimum of 30 players and no fee. All under marquee cover. Stella is working with the marketing people on this.

A master plan is being developed for Summerlands. This includes a cultural survey which identified 73 different middens on Summerlands. A Strategic Plan for the whole of the parks for 2012-17 is being completed now; 40 submissions were received. A cultural survey of Cape Woolamai and C.I. is in the pipeline, with \$100,000 committed for this. The Board would like to have Phillip Island declared a National Surfing Reserve. Capital works have included access at Right Point, Pyramid Rock, Ventnor - 350m of boardwalk. Community Open Day is set for Sunday 4 March 2012. Stella is on the subcommittee to organise this.

Matt congratulated David Maunders and everyone who assisted him in developing the new volunteers' handbook for C.I. Meg McCarthy, C.I. gardener, has resigned and it will be a priority to replace her as soon as possible. She will be missed. Fire readiness throughout the park is managed by a five year plan. All is in readiness should a fire eventuate.

Matt concluded by stating that the late Michael Gatehouse was a true gentleman, highly qualified and will be greatly missed, including from the Penguin Foundation where he was Chairperson.

Reports from the Executive Committee:

5. Treasurer's Report - Tom O'Dea:

a) Tom O'Dea presented the Treasurer's Report. See attached. A Curator category will be created in the budget table. Tom O'Dea/Michael Barden *carried*

b) Discussion re: change of bank account from Commonwealth, where we get very low interest, to ANZ, where we can have a cheque account

with two signatures and put the bulk of the money into an online account with free internet banking security tokens, higher interest and no fees. This will also make it quicker to pay bills and reimburse c/ee members who have expenses.

"That FOCIS change its bank accounts from the Commonwealth Bank to the ANZ" David Maunders/Pat Baird *carried.*

6. Membership Report - Tom O'Dea:

Tom reported that we have a total of 193 members. 43 failed to renew. 6 new members. Tom will send reminder letters to those who have not yet renewed.

7. Secretary's Report - Christine Grayden:

Correspondence:

Inwards:

Edith Johnson, renewal and apologies for meeting.

Matt Jackson re: camping on C.I.

Phillip Island & District Historical Society - notice of annual dinner

Department of Justice - advising that constitutional changes have been approved.

Heritage Hill museum re: disaster planning for museums day

Phillip Island Conservation Society Penguin newsletter

National Library of Australia requesting copy of FOCIS newsletter

Museums Australia Victoria - newsletter and Insite Magazine.

Outwards: NIL.

a) On Tuesday 20th September I went to a lecture by Heritage Victoria CEO Jim Gardner on "Living within a Heritage Listed building". It was located at the Mission to Seafarers at Docklands in Melbourne. Heritage is defined as "things of indigenous, natural and historic importance that we value today and want to pass on to future generations". Jim told us that a recent survey showed that 92% of Australians believe that heritage is important. An example of this is the number of people who visited heritage listed buildings in the Melbourne CBD on Melbourne Open House day: 102,000 visited 75 buildings. 15,000 visited the Mission to Seafarers over the two days.

The Mission to Seafarers was built in 1916-17 on its present location. It is built in a combination of Spanish mission and English domestic style. In those days, sailors had 2-3 weeks shore leave and had to keep fit, so the domed building of the complex was a gymnasium. The other end is a beautiful chapel with many stained glass windows with a maritime theme and a pulpit carved to represent a ship. The mess room these days used to be a theatre hall. Cherry McFee can remember being asked to go to dances there to entertain the lonely seafarers. Nowadays seafarers only get between 3 hours and a day shore leave, so they mostly use the Mission to relax on shore, write emails and socialise with other seafarers. There is a new chaplain, so some visit him and the chapel as well.

It was a very interesting talk and a lovely place to visit. Visitors are welcome, just a gold coin in the donations box is all that's required.

MINUTES (continued)

b) Friday 30th September I went to the Bass Coast Heritage Group meeting at the State Coal Mine in Wonthaggi. I was there with both my Historical Society and FOCIS hats on. Apart from us there was the Wonthaggi His Soc, the Wonthaggi Genealogy Society and the Friends of the State Coal Mine. After we had reported to everyone on our groups' activities we had a delicious afternoon tea followed by a choice of tours. I went to the winch house which is a big building and also houses a display on the fire brigade. We then went to the miner's cottage, which is furnished in 1930s style, complete with cottage garden, vegie garden, outdoor "dunny" and heritage breeds of chooks. In the kitchen a continuous tape of oral history recollections is playing. It is very well done and I'd recommend a visit. You only have to pay if you go down the mine. Everything else is free.

Irene Williams from Wonthaggi Historical Society coordinates the heritage group and asked me if FOCIS would run the annual trip next year. She suggested it could be combined with a trip to the Vietnam Veterans Museum in the morning, then FOCIS would provide a meal somewhere close by then guide the group through the historic precinct on Churchill Island. There are usually about 35 people. So I am warning everyone now and we will have it on the agenda for our first meeting for 2012. It might be best to form a sub-committee.

c) Pat's book: Churchill Island: History and Her Story is out of print. FOCIS has applied for a Public Records Office of Victoria Local History Grant of \$6365 to print 500 copies. Pat is currently doing revisions. We received letters of support from the PINP and PI&DHS. Unfortunately we will not hear whether we are successful or not until next June.

Members decided that Pat could ask the printer for a quote on 100 copies and perhaps FOCIS could afford to fund them. To be discussed further by c/ee.

8. Curator's Report - Christine Grayden

I have now completed the stocktake and conditions report of all the objects in Amess House, the Rogers' cottages and storeroom, wash house and half cellar. I went through room by room, so all items are listed by catalogue number (if there is one), object name and description, location within each room and condition. There are a few items still missing, but I hope to find them as I continue with my work. Sally O'Neil when curator had created a folder for the National Trust items which has photos of about half the items. So PINP has given me a camera to use to take photos of all the other items, both National Trust and Nature Park items. I have completed the photos of all the National Trust items and placed them into the folder by room category. There are 174 National Trust items and 611 others on display, so it was a big job to do the stocktake.

We had a very successful working bee in September with 12 enthusiastic FOCIS volunteers attending. We have another working bee coming up on Saturday 26th November which will be our last for the year. FOCIS makes a significant contribution by doing these working bees so I hope we can continue them next year.

The sad news as far as I am concerned is that Meg McCarthy

the CI gardener has decided to move on and will be working at Ready Set Grow nursery in Cowes. I will miss Meg as she is very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the collection. The good news is that my band of volunteers continue to help me, so thanks go to my regulars Margaret Geppert and Irene Measom, and when they can, Pat Baird, David Maunders and the O'Deas. The work you all do makes a big difference to my work load.

9. Rebecca Sanders' Report:

Rebecca's draft is now at 90,000 words. She is now including a theoretical chapter of 14,000 words looking at the various historiography approaches: micro-history, geographical focus, negotiating the archive. Themes of discovering the island, squatting and farming, seaside retreat and public ownership. She is hoping to finish in January and have final copies available for FOCIS and historical societies by July.

10. Speakers for meetings, 2012

Feb: display of lace and sealskin items, Janet Amess Collection.

May: Ask Cherry McFee if she would talk about her childhood.

AGM Aug: Ask Meg McCarthy if she will speak about and demonstrate spinning and weaving.

Nov: Rebecca Sanders to report on final thesis.

11. General Business:

Michael Barden said there was a need to do more name badges.

Christine reported that the Volunteer's Hut had been flooded in the recent storm.

Ruth O'Dea reported that the Clydesdale Sophie had been gashed, possibly by the bull, and is getting veterinary attention and being housed in the stable.

Members requested that a "Get Well" card be sent to Stella.

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 3.10 p.m.

14. Next meeting: Saturday February 11, 2012, at the C.I. Visitors' Centre at 1.30 p.m.



Working Bee volunteers Margaret and Pam cleaning the wash house

(continued from p. 3)

His sentiments are echoed by Josie Billman, a volunteer house guide for 10 years who has spent the morning dressed in period costume, knitting a cardigan and answering visitors' questions.

"Every day there's someone new to meet," she says from the veranda of Amess house overlooking the historic Norfolk pine on the island whose seeds are now propagated by volunteers in the nursery. Volunteer gardeners are on hand every Wednesday to tend to paths and edging, weed, build ponds, lay brick work and nurture the seedlings in the onsite nursery. House guides work on a monthly roster with some committing up to 15 hours a fortnight. All training is provided.

Long-serving staff member at the Churchill Island visitor centre and volunteer, Pat Jeffery, is encouraging pensioners and those on Centrelink to come along and be involved.

"We're a social group and volunteering on the island has been a great way for many of us to make new friends and to stay active," she said.

A mystery bus tour for volunteers is held once a year along with workshops with the botanical gardens and herb society.

Anyone interested in joining the gardening team can contact Churchill Island on 5956 7214.

DATES TO REMEMBER

GENERAL MEETINGS

2012

Saturday 11 February

Saturday 12 May

Saturday 12 August (AGM)

Saturday 10 November

1.30 pm Meeting Room

Churchill Island Visitors'

Centre



The Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc. Newsletter
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FOCIS

The Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.

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