



FOCIS

newsletter

Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.

AUTUMN 2003

Dear Readers,

At the end of summer 2003 the pastures are dry in spite of occasional summer showers. It is in the absence of rain that we begin to recognise its essential role in maintaining our land, our trees and our wildlife. The wallabies are crossing the road more often to access hard to get water sources, even echidnas, snakes, blue tongue lizards and possums are to be seen more often. And because of this they are more vulnerable to road death. Some bird species have come down from up north because conditions have been so bad up there. So its good that they've had rain in northern areas even if we have not yet had sufficient to really compensate for the last few years of drought. It really distresses me to see large eucalypts obviously suffering from prolonged dryness, and responding by dropping limbs to preserve themselves. And then, all too often being cut down because they present a danger! Still, on Churchill Island we are, for the most part, removed from these bleak concerns.

The monthly farmers market has proven a great success. Its gentle atmosphere and casual informality is a pleasure to experience - hopefully it will go on, responding as the natural world does to the circle of the seasons with different produce, changing weather and crowds waxing and waning with the time of year.

Now at the beginning of autumn we have the Working Horse Festival to look forward to at Easter. Every single person who is available is asked to register as a volunteer helper. In this way the workload will be lighter for each and all will have the opportunity to enjoy themselves. It's a wonderful occasion and one on which the shared pleasure of working together counts for a lot.

In January about one hundred people attended an evening 'Corroboree' - a performance of dances by several Aboriginal men. It was a calm and balmy moonlit night most suitable for such a performance. One of the dances was the Cape Barren Goose dance, and like all such dances ended quite suddenly with a clap of the sticks and a shout. In the brief silence that followed someone pointed to the sky and there, across the face of the moon, flew a pair of Cape Barren Geese.

We were all amazed, and even more so the Aboriginal dancers. They did not realise they had such power and were I think a little bit spooked by what they had done! We were all very impressed with this demonstration of the power of dance!

Your editors - Jocelyn Bradley and Pat Baird.



REMEMBER!

2003 Churchill Island

Working Horse Festival

Saturday 19th & Sunday 20th April 2003

Planning is going well for this exciting festival! Over 110 stalls and exhibitors will come together to provide a weekend of pioneer skills, entertainment and fun.

The festival is now entering its fifth year and each year its success grows. It is emerging as one of the premier working horse events in Australia and its importance is preserving our pioneering past.

The Committee of the Churchill Island Working Horse Festival need the assistance of its members at the upcoming Easter Festival on Easter Saturday and Sunday, 19th and 20th April, 2003.





JOIN THE FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER TEAM!!!

Volunteers are essential to the festival's success.

Being part of the Festival Volunteer Team is great fun and an important way to support Churchill Island's main fundraising activity for the year. Volunteers are required to work on a roster system throughout the festival, leaving you time to enjoy the festivities. A short training session will also be held before the weekend.

Don't miss your chance to join the team!

Call 5952 3156 to register before April 4th.

I,am available to help out on Easter Saturday atam.....pmSaturday/..... Sunday

For further information please contact: Sue or Bruce Chambers on 5952 2530.



Ranger's Report:

Churchill Island remains very dry. According to a local farmer who has been on Phillip Island all his life, the worst he has seen. He is in his late eighties.

We have been feeding out hay regularly. This hay was meant for Winter feed. The manure spreader we restored and converted to horse drawn has been put to good use spreading 5 ton of dynamic lifter fertilizer to all our grazing paddocks. Sophie does a great job of pulling it. And "if" we receive good Autumn rains this fertilizer will ensure good Winter grazing.

At the moment we, the staff at Churchill Island, are in full flight preparing for the Easter Working Horse Festival.

The restoration of horse drawn machinery to be used during the event has been high on the list.

A new water line has been laid underground to the new campsite for the Working Horse people. This new campground is below the windmill paddock dam.

The "Season" on Churchill Island has been very busy with talks and demonstrations to lots of school groups and other organised visiting groups.

I would like to urge all FOCIS members to support our Working Horse Festival by bringing along friends and family to this wonderful weekend. It is shaping up to be the best yet.

Kind regards,
Scott Campbell and the staff at Churchill Island



Personality Profile:

Our personality profile in this issue is the President of FOCIS, Ann Penaluna, who has been an inspiring leader of the Friends for some years. All of us who have worked with her over this period know how dedicated she is



Churchill Island Working Horse Festival

Easter Sat & Sun 19th & 20th April 2003

- Working Horse displays
- Music : *Vika & Linda Bull (Sat), Bush Bands, Local Sounds*
- Pioneer Skills & Crafts : *Blacksmiths, Woodturners*
- Entertainment : *Poets, Buskers, Dancers*
- Sheep to Shawl Contest
- Working Sheep Dogs & Farm Animals
- Stalls – *Great Food , Craft & Local Produce*
- Kid's Fun – *Old Time Games, Easter Egg Hunt*
- Island Walks and Much More!!!



Phillip Island NATURE PARK

Adult \$12 Child \$6 Family \$30 Pens \$8
All revenue supports Churchill Island NO DOGS PLEASE



Information 1300 366 422

to the care of Churchill Island. This is Ann's sixth year as a member of the Phillip Island Nature Park Board, as well as serving two years as secretary of FOCIS, and then the following five years as President. It has been during this time that the restoration of the historic precinct and the building of the Visitors' Centre has taken place, and there can be no doubt that Ann's enthusiasm and commitment to quality have helped to bring about these developments.



Ann's own background is one of contrast and change. Born in Waikerie, South Australia, her family soon moved to Mildura where Ann grew up and was educated. Her early life in the north of Victoria contributed to her love of wide horizons and spreading plains. After finishing school she studied at the Ballarat Teachers' College and then taught in a series of country schools - Korweingubwora, Carlisle River, Avoca and Mildura South. In all this time her considerable skill as a tennis player was fostered.

She came to Melbourne in 1958, and completed a course in special education at Melbourne Teachers' College, teaching at special schools in the western suburbs of Melbourne as well as Fitzroy and Croxton. Her teaching took her overseas where she taught in special schools in the East End, both residential and day, and increased her vocabulary quite astonishingly in the process. During this time she and a friend rode bicycles from London to Vienna, and ended up losing both their bicycles somewhere in Eastern Europe. Later she was to spend a year teaching at Biddenden in Kent on exchange.

She has lived on Phillip Island for eleven years and takes an active role in a number of community activities, but it is safe to say that her first love is Churchill Island. Her commitment to FOCIS and the preservation of Churchill Island is total, and we on the committee can only applaud and admire her devotion.

Jocelyn Bradley.



IN THE GARDEN - with Lisa.

So Summer has come and gone and what a long hot summer with such a lot of visitors to the island. Now we are over the frenzy of the holidays...we can get back to normality and take stock.

Visitors to the Churchill Island garden will have noticed that the old mulberry tree is fenced off due to it developing a severe split in its main trunk. I think the combination of age, heavy leaf & fruit canopy, and people climbing up into it to get the fruit and extremely dry conditions all got too much for it.....so it now has steel supports for its limbs and had some initial pruning by local arborists to stop it from completely giving way. The Heritage Victoria assessors have looked at the tree and advised major work and also an arborist from the Melbourne Botanic gardens will be coming to give an assessment as well. Then we will be able to take some appropriate action as to the future of the tree.

Now for some good news. Dr Mary Ellis has written a book on the significant gardens of Victoria called 'People and Plants, A History of Gardening in Victoria' and Churchill Island is featured in the first chapter. I have asked her if she would do a book launch here when it is published and she said she would love to....so I will let you know later when that will be.

I have also talked to Talei Kenyon from beautiful Heronswood on the Mornington Peninsula and she will be coming to Churchill Island to discuss the kitchen garden area near Rogers Cottage which I would like to get organised for this coming season. Hopefully we can get rid of the large concrete tank in the garden which by the way does not actually get used for any garden purpose, its sole occupation is to fill water tanks on vehicles.

Talei has said that the Diggers Club at Heronswood have an extensive heritage seed collection and will be happy to assist in any way they can, so that is an exciting development to look forward to next season.

Don't forget that if you would like to spend some time doing garden stuff just call in and look for me in the garden....

Lisa

123 YOUR BUNCH OF DATES:

456 The Farmers Market - Fourth Saturday in each month!

Focis Meetings:

22nd March, 2003. 1.00pm, Education Room Churchill Island Visitor Centre.

24th May, 2003. 1.00pm, Education Room Churchill Island Visitor Centre.

26th July, 2003. After AGM.

WORKING HORSE FESTIVAL - 19/20 April, 2003.

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.



FOCIS COMMITTEE 2001 - 2002

President: Ann Penaluna (03) 5956 9302

Vice-President: Keith Hocking (03)5821 9189

Treasurer/Public Officer: Roger Hollingworth

Membership Secretary: Diane McCarthy (03) 5956 8300

Minute Secretary: Jan Fleming

Please note new admittance charges:

\$19.00 per family, \$7.70 adults,
\$5.00 concession, \$3.70 child.

(Group discounts available)

FOCIS discounts applicable as previously.

Please send me Green Polo shirts with Churchill Island pocket. @ \$28 each including postage.

Size S M L XL (Please circle)

Name.....

Address.....

Town..... Postcode.....

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 January to 31st December **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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ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE 1st JANUARY, 2003

AUTUMN 2003



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Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.

ABN 78 667 051 020 Inc. No. A 00219007W