



# FOCIS

newsletter

Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.

SPRING 2003

Dear Readers,

While I have been away enjoying other horizons and other islands, rain has rained and Spring has come! How lovely it is to see our land's subtle spring - the wattle, the purple hardenbergia, the lapwing's swooping defence and the rosella's urgent search for nesting hollows. We have a pair of rosellas at our place, all winter they have kept a regular check of last year's nesting hollow, chasing away the starlings, and making sure everything is right for this spring. I've never known them to nest so early. Sorry, that's not strictly Churchill Island, but perhaps similar things are happening there too.

The AGM in July saw the re election of our current president, Ann Penaluna for another year, also Vice President Keith Hocking and Roger Hollingworth Treasurer. All thanks to these wonderful workers and also past secretary Jan Fleming, membership secretary Diane McCarthy, for their great help and welcome to new secretary, both general and membership, Jill Fitzroy Kelly. Our many thanks to all these sterling supporters of our Friends of Churchill Island organization.

The new office bearers and committee are as follows:

**President:** Ann Penaluna;

**Vice President:** Keith Hocking;

**Treasurer:** Roger Hollingworth;

**Secretary/membership secretary:** Jill Fitzroy-Kelly.

**Committee:** Patricia Baird, Jocelyn Bradley, Diane McCarthy, Chesterman Chalmers, Jan Fleming, Joy Gladman, Neil Gladman, Barbara Stephens, Maureen Symmonds, Lee Tierney. Phillip Island and District Historical Society representative: Cherry Macfee. Phillip Island Conservation Society representative: Julie Box. Friends of the Koalas representative: Jan Beale.

2002/2003 has been a great year for FOCIS with an even more successful Working Horse Festival and steady progress in our organization. Jocelyn and I look forward to keeping you informed and interested and hope to draw even more of you into our volunteer guiding programme. Come along and see how you like it. There are many opportunities to follow your interests in history, gardening or guiding and contribute a little time for a great social return.

Cheers from Jocelyn Bradley and Pat Baird.



## RANGER'S REPORT

- Cold and wet it may be but spring is on the way with over forty lambs being born so far, and three Highland heifer calves, one of which is from our best purest bred cow. This will greatly enhance the Churchill Island fold.



- We have just finished building a lean-to on to our machine shed. This will allow us to operate the chaff cutter for demonstration purposes in all weather conditions.
- Our resident pair of Cape Barren geese decided to nest inside the pump house near the settling dam, and have been successful in hatching out two healthy goslings.
- We have been busy catching up on weeds in our area. The drought conditions that prevailed have allowed weeds to get a good hold mostly cape weed and thistle.
- The old water tank in the homestead gardens has been removed to make way for a kitchen garden from around the John Rogers' era around the 1860s.
- A large amount of fence replacement has taken place this winter, and a new cattle grid installed halfway down the entrance paddock.

Scott Campbell. Head Ranger.



## FROM THE GARDEN

Winter in the garden at Churchill Island has been very wet and cold this year, but it has been great to have the rain start to fill the dams and wetlands again. You can tell spring is on its way with all the baby animals everywhere, little lambs, calves, plover chicks like little balls of fluff in the paddocks, and black and white striped Cape Barren geese chicks, with their parents, venturing out into the big wide world.



Gardener Lisa Burrell & Burnley College Students on site of new kitchen garden.

Visitors to the historic precinct will have noticed that the large concrete tank in the sunken garden area has been removed. It was broken up and taken away to Evans quarries, where it was reduced to rubble and used in their driveway. How's that for recycling!

The area where the tank was will be a kitchen garden of the 1800s era, and be planted with vegetables, flowers and fruit for use, hopefully, in the Visitor Centre, and perhaps for a stall at the Farmers' Market.

A picket fence is to be built first. I have got some quotes for that, and then funding has to be arranged. Hopefully things can get started soon. Anyone who would like to help with the kitchen garden or other gardening can contact me on 0408106180.

The garden club, which meets on a Wednesday morning, is going strong and getting lots of things done. We have decided to hold a Garden Party in November again this year. Last year's party was to welcome new members to FOCIS, and this year will be to promote a book by Dr Mary Ellis on historic gardens in Victoria, with the first chapter on Churchill Island. Mary has given me a copy of the book for the garden library. It is a very interesting and informative book, one that I think we should have on sale here. We're looking forward to the Garden Party, Sat Nov 15 - it should be a great day if we have weather like last year.

Recently I met with Jane Edmanson from the Gardening Australia programme on ABC television, and who does gardening talkback on radio. She came for a walk around the garden and then to the moonah forest, and was very impressed with the Island. She has applied for membership to FOCIS, and is very keen to be involved with the garden. It was fantastic to meet her, and hopefully we will see a lot more of her in the future.

We have also decided to have another basketry workshop with Pat Dale on Saturday, 25 October. Anyone interested in attending can contact me on the number above. So there are a few exciting things on the go!

See you in the garden.

Lisa Burrell.



## PROJECT OFFICER

### 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.

The guides, dressed in period costume, add greatly to the Churchill Island visitor experience. They have also been seen churning butter in an original churn and writing secret letters with a feather quill!

We recently held a guide get together where we discussed issues and had morning tea. We also welcomed two new guides; Kevin and Brenda who are keen to join the program because they love Churchill Island and want to help work for its ongoing protection. Our last field trip was to Ripponlea and the Botanic Gardens and we are looking forward to visiting other historic sites in the near future.

Guides are crucial for security and interpretation in the historic areas and we always 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 5952 3156 to register your name and we will get back to you.

### Working Horse Festival 2004

Work has already begun for next year's festival to be held on Saturday April 10 and Sunday April 11th 2004. We are busily working on funding applications for local government and have also submitted an application for an exciting arts project with Arts Victoria we will keep our fingers crossed.....

### Moonah Sculpture

Next time you visit Churchill Island, you will be greeted by an exquisite sculpture created by talented local artist, Camille Monet. The sculpture is built of clay and was fired in only two pieces. It is the largest work ever attempted by Camille!



Sculpture by Camille Monet

Photo by Jan Bodaan

The sculpture's placement at the entry to the visitor centre is important as it symbolises the beginning of the Churchill Island story and serves to acknowledge the original people, the Bunurong. The work depicts a moment in a Bunurong legend about Moonah trees and forbidden love. It is the result of over a year's work and consultation between Camille and the Bunurong community who were involved in each step of the creative process, production and installation. This included collecting ochres, which were used to colour and finish the sculpture. Everyone's favourite piece of moonah tree has been moved to a prominent place in the lovely indigenous garden.

### Museum Accreditation

The arduous task of achieving Museum Accreditation continues. I regularly attend workshops to further the process and recently attended one on environmental monitoring. We will soon have the loan of sophisticated monitoring equipment to measure environmental conditions in the Historic buildings. The equipment measures things like temperature, humidity and light levels and will help us to identify any problem areas and develop strategies to protect our valuable collection. It will also bring us one step closer to achieving full accreditation.

### And another thing...

- Churchill Island recently featured in a magazine called 'Period Home Renovator'. The article presents the story of the restoration of the historic buildings a copy is on display in the Visitor Centre.
- Lindsay Goding, the new Marketing Coordinator has been busily working on promoting Churchill Island especially as a wedding and function venue. Lindsay, who joined the Park in April, will also assist with next year's Working Horse Festival.
- A big thank you to FOCIS for the donation of garden seats and kettle. Your ongoing support is greatly appreciated.
- I would personally like to acknowledge the work of Dave Scrase, Christine Murphy and Annabelle McDougall who are all moving on to take up new challenges. I have worked with them for many years, especially on Churchill Island projects and have valued their support and wish them well in their future endeavours.

Sally O'Neill Project Officer

**2004 Churchill Island  
Working Horse Festival  
Easter Saturday & Sunday  
10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> April 2004  
Enquiries 5952 3156**

### 2004 Festival Needs You!!

The Working Horse festival is FOCIS's main fundraising event of the year.

It is made possible by the work of volunteers, and it needs more!

All it takes is a minimum of four hours per year!

As a FOCIS member, you can make a significant contribution to Churchill Island by taking up the challenge to be involved in the festival.

Your rewards for this commitment are:

- You are contributing to Churchill Island's ongoing protection and improvement.
- You receive a weekend festival pass - experience the festival free!
- You will feel good inside, knowing you have made a contribution to Churchill Island, as you enjoy your membership benefits all year round.
- You will have a great time and meet new people!



**Take the challenge and contact  
5952 3156 or  
workinghorse@penguins.org.au  
to register.**



### Churchill Island Volunteer Guiding Program

**Becoming a guide is enjoyable, educational and you get to meet a wide range of new people!!**

Volunteer guides work in the Historic Area of Churchill Island welcoming and informing visitors as they wander through Churchill Island's

historic buildings. Guides enjoy training and regular outings to other historic sites around Victoria.

**Call Sally on 5952 3156 for further information or to register your interest.**



### PERSONALITY PROFILE

Mary Mitchell is one of our most passionate and devoted guides who takes great delight in sharing her love of Churchill Island and its representation of the past with both adults and children.

Mary first discovered Churchill Island during the 1970s when her family bought a block of land on Phillip Island. Even then she felt the pull of nostalgia in its reminders of a simpler past. Born in the Riverina district on a wheat and sheep farm, Mary's remembrances of childhood are imbued with the evocation of the simple life as demonstrated on Churchill Island, in Roger's cottages and Amess House. To Mary the kerosene lamps, candles, the Coolgardie safe bring back memories of her childhood on the farm near Mathoura. Their farm was on the edge of the Cadell fault where they lived, only 4 miles from the Murray River. Mary recalls seeing the paddle steamers and barges with their loads of timber chugging along to Echuca. She learned to fish from an itinerant farmer who grew cucumbers and tomatoes near the banks of the river. And even though life was isolated, for Mary there was a sort of purity about it which is echoed in the activities and atmosphere of Churchill Island today, with its heritage farm and the old buildings. The horses too, provide a connection for her as she recalls her father's devotion to



his working horses and how he would always ensure they were fed and sheltered before he ended his own working day. Such an example instilled in Mary an ability for self sufficiency, both practically and spiritually.

In her early school years Mary rode her bike to school and in the absence of school buses was forced to attend boarding school for her secondary education. These were difficult years for a girl accustomed to the warmth and security of a loving family but it's no surprise to those of us who know Mary, that she was able to overcome these difficult times.

One plus during this time was her interest in music. Her mother both sang and played the piano and Mary followed her musical interest throughout her education at Marongo Girls College. The choirs of Marongo & Geelong Grammar College often combined and the musical director of Geelong Grammar, George Logie Smith remained a significant musical influence at that time.

After matriculating in music Mary went on to do Kindergarten training which meshed well with her family life later on. Now her son and daughter and three grandchildren are both a gift and a delight in her life.

As her children matured Mary worked in a number of kindergartens in the district eventually spending some years at Cowes where she established friendships with many children and their families. She is very proud of all her students and they and their families have in turn, confirmed her sense of belonging on the island.

Mary's interests remain with music and her community. Her music horizons have expanded through the shared interest of her Probus Music Group. She has a strong political awareness and is an able advocate on local issues.

Being part of a small community gives Mary great joy her air of content with life and her enthusiasm makes her an ideal guide for those who visit Churchill Island.



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2002/2003

The Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc (FOCIS) continues to attract a very sizeable membership. Many members have given wonderful support to the association over the last twelve months. Churchill Island benefits from the hard work of FOCIS members. It is pleasing to note that a number of members attend bi-monthly meetings of the FOCIS Committee.

### MEMBERSHIP

Six Hundred and thirty-six (636) members are shown from and including 2000/2001.

Paid Up in 2002/2003	395	
Paid Up in 2001/2002	203	(now overdue, please check your Membership card.)
Paid Up in 2000/2001	29	
Honorary and/or Life Membership	9	
Total in receipt of Newsletter	636	

FOCIS would be delighted if non-current financial members would pay their subscriptions, please. **Following the Annual General Meeting on 26th July 2003, 29 (2000/2001) members will not receive their Newsletters unless they**

**become financial members once more. It is mandatory that FOCIS members show their current membership when visiting Churchill Island. PINP staff can also request proof of identification at point of entry to C.I.**

In the near future, FOCIS will change the process for new and renewal memberships at the Visitor Centre on Churchill Island. Consultation with PINP acting CEO Dave Scrase and or new CEO, Mark Manteit will be necessary.

## CHURCHILL ISLAND WORKING HORSE FESTIVAL 2003

Following meetings between the Phillip Island Nature Park and the FOCIS Festival Sub-Committee it was agreed that it was best for Churchill Island if the PINP took a lead role in the planning and conduct of the 2003 Churchill Island Working Horse Festival. All agreed that the festival had expanded to such an extent that it was more appropriate for PINP to assume responsibility. FOCIS remained and continues to remain in close consultation at all times. Sally O'Neill was the Festival Manager for PINP and Annabelle MacDougall, Marketing Executive for PINP put in an excellent contribution to the planning, marketing and execution of the festival. Both women worked tirelessly.

Sally performed an outstanding role. PINP consulted closely with the FOCIS Subcommittee for the festival. This Committee, ably lead by Keith Hocking with magnificent assistance from Maureen Symmonds, Sue Chambers and fellow members, was responsible for the exhibitors, planning in general, and the organisation and management of FOCIS volunteers throughout the conduct of the Festival.

Some 68 FOCIS volunteers worked for the four days. Firstly, to arrange and organise the setting on the Friday before the festival, Saturday and Sunday for the festival (traffic management, welcoming, volunteer guides, provision of cooked breakfasts and dinners for the exhibitors, The FOCIS 'information tent') and then on Monday to ensure CI was cleaned up and goods, equipment, and resources returned to their proper places. We are very grateful for your hard work and support, without which a Festival of this calibre would simply be impossible. Congratulations on your marvellous work, which made this festival the best ever.

A number of PINP staff also volunteered their time throughout the Friday to Monday. Scott Campbell was a tower of strength. His knowledge and skills in early farming were put to excellent use. Scott's passion for, and pride in, the island are evident in every environmental and historical farming aspect of Churchill Island. He is a rare 'find' and FOCIS has the deepest respect for his work and excellent cooperation. Scott's ranger team of Neville and Amy worked wonderfully hard also.

FOCIS appreciates the enormous contribution of the Victorian Working Horse Association. These folk and their magnificent horses are the stars of the festival. The Working Horse people travel so far, work hard throughout the days they are with us, and charm us with their friendly and cooperative ways. C.J. Dennis might say, "We dips our lids to them!"

FOCIS appreciates the in-kind support received for the festival from the Bass Coast Shire Council. For the last two years the Shire has also allocated grants to help with the festival.

Lastly, but not least, FOCIS extends its thanks and gratitude to the Phillip Island Nature Park for its participation with FOCIS to ensure the ongoing success of the festivals. It could not be done as it is, without their efforts, leadership and support. The Festival is slowly being recognised across the state as an event NOT TO BE MISSED!

**Thank you Dave Scrase, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Phillip Island Nature Park, and your staff. We value your friendly support and encouragement to our members.**

#### **PHILLIP ISLAND NATURE PARK BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

A new Board of Management has been appointed. A Ministerial Press Release on Monday 21st July 2003 was issued. The Board will be in place until 4th August 2004. The Board comprises:

Mr. John Laurie, A.C. (Chairman),  
Dr. Ras Lawson,  
Dr. Kathryn Handasyde,  
Ms. Ann Keddie,  
Ms. Stella Axarlis, A.M.,  
Mr. Stephen Davie,  
Mr. David Beatty,  
Ms. Ann Penaluna

#### **ACTIONS BY FOCIS:**

In 2002/2003 The Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc. has experienced a productive year. The FOCIS Committee and members have been active in terms of:

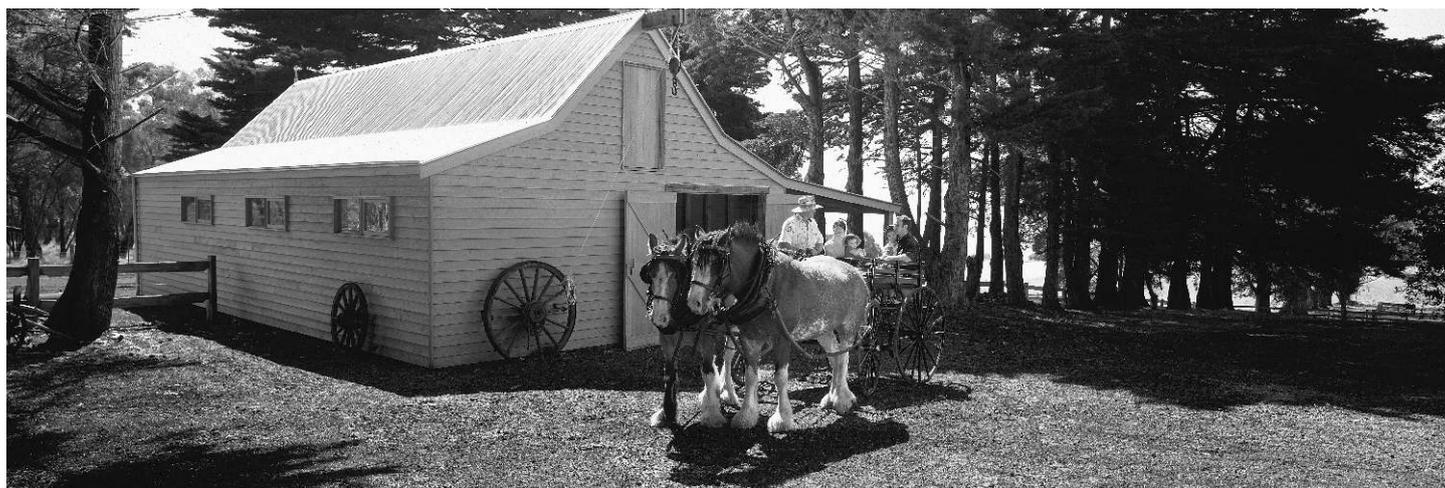
- The editorial Committee continues to produce an excellent newsletter (Patricia Baird and Jocelyn Bradley);
- Our retiring Membership Secretary (Diane McCarthy) has performed an outstanding role both in maintaining the Membership list electronically and ensuring the Churchill Island Visitor Centre staff is au fait with our membership procedures. Thank you so very much Diane.
- The new constitution is working well thank you Roger Hollingworth, Diane McCarthy, Cherry Macfee and Committee members;
- FOCIS had to abandon its application for tax deductibility

status with the Australian Taxation Office because our association did not meet the eligibility criteria. FOCIS does not own the Churchill Island property;

- Thanks to Treasurer, Roger Hollingworth who was successful in obtaining two grants totalling \$6,500.00 for the 2003 festival;
- The 2003 Churchill Island Working Horse Festival was hugely successful because of the enthusiastic participation and hard work by many FOCIS members;
- Proffering advice and new ideas which may encourage more visitors to Churchill Island;
- Donation of farming equipment to enhance the historic working farm;
- Assistance with collation and mailing of newsletters;
- Ongoing terrific work as volunteer guides in period costume for the Phillip Island Nature Park;
- An increasing number of members are attending and participating at the bi-monthly meetings of the FOCIS Committee;
- An excellent initiative to start a regular gardening group of volunteers with Lisa Burrell, PINP part-time gardener (a sincere thanks to Maureen Symmonds for this initiative);
- Successful small functions (afternoon tea in the garden thanks Pat Baird) to facilitate socialising among members;
- Thanks to Committee members who continue to represent FOCIS at bi-monthly meeting with the CEO of the Nature Park. Your attendance at these meeting is valued.
- Thanks to the Phillip island & District Historical Society Inc., The Friends of the Koalas Inc., and the Phillip island Conservation Society Inc. for your ongoing participation with FOCIS through your representatives on the FOCIS Committee;
- Thanks to volunteers (especially Sue Chambers organiser of V's for festival).

In summary, The Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc. is alive and well. Let us keep up the voluntary work for Churchill Island in the coming 2003/2004-year. My heartfelt thanks to our enthusiastic Committee and members.

**Ann Penaluna, President.**



**123** YOUR BUNCH OF DATES  
**456**

**THE FARMERS MARKET - Fourth Saturday in each month!**

**BASKETRY WORKSHOP WITH PAT DALE - Saturday 25th October**

**GARDEN PARTY - Saturday 15th November.**

**WORKING HORSE FESTIVAL - 10/11th April, 2004.**



Photos by James Lauritz & Scancolor

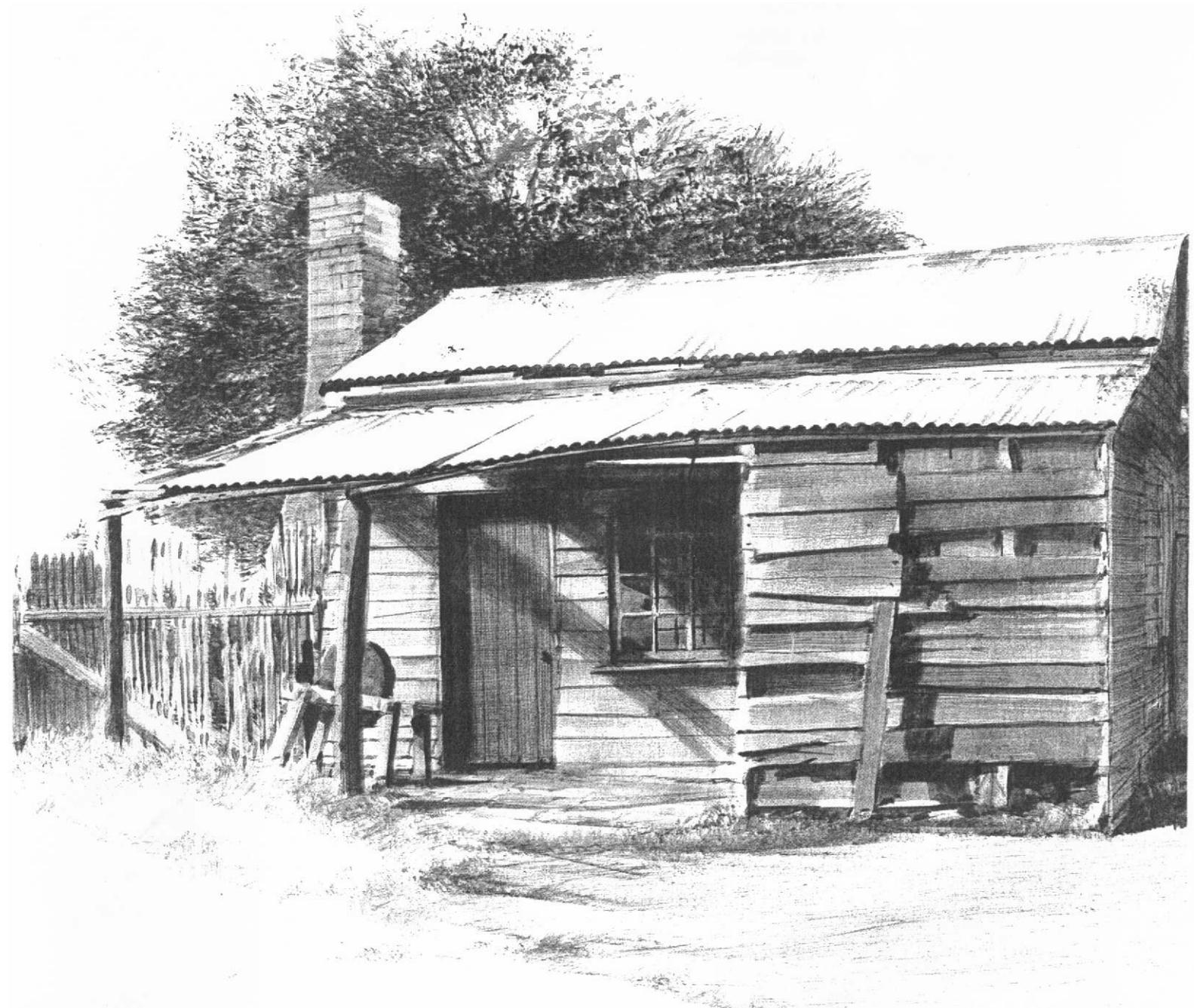
Please send me ..... Green Polo shirts with Churchill Island pocket. @ \$28 each including postage.

Size S M L XL (Please circle)

Name .....

Address.....

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



Robert Ingpen Choochii Island  
August 16<sup>th</sup> 1955

Reproduction of print by Robert Ingpen.

**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.



Friends of Churchill Island Society Newsletter

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

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**ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE 1st JANUARY, 2003**

**SPRING 2003**



**FOCIS**

**Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.**

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