

# GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

1:30pm, Saturday 16th July, 2022

Function Room, Visitor Centre, Churchill Island.

## 1. Welcome

*We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, the Bunurong/Boonwurrung people, and pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in our community today.*

### Attending:

Graeme Clauscen, Terry Holman, Jeff Cole, David Maunders, Pauline Taylor, Di Scukovic, John Eddy, Don Johnstone, Janine Shottle, Dianne Whale, Alyssa Shottle, J. Colpoys, Annette Colpoys, Sue Trist (and Leah & Warwick Tempany via zoom)

### Apologies:

Peter Paul, Marianne Cassar, Lynne & David Lumsden, Bonnie Taylor, Tom & Ruth O'Dea, Brian Holden, Margaret Geppert and Robyn Holman, Christine Grayden.

**2. Minutes** from previous General Meeting - Feb, 2022  
Maunders, Carried

Moved: Pauline Taylor, Seconded: David

## 3. President's Report

Dear members,

It has been a while since our last Newsletter. However, we have not been standing still!

Earlier in the year we launched the 3<sup>rd</sup> and fully revised edition of the Churchill Island book, *Churchill Island history and her story*. It was a very good day and the weather was very kind. My thanks go to Leah our Secretary and Andrea Cleland the Curator for their efforts to make this day such a success. Special thanks to Sally O'Neil for launching the book for us. The book is available from Turn the Page bookshop in Cowes, Churchill Island Visitor Centre, and online through our website [focis.org.au](http://focis.org.au)

On the same day we launched the Tipping Dray project. I would like to thank Chloe for launching the Dray, done with great style and a bottle of Victoria Bitter! Also our grateful thanks to the Churchill Island staff for their help in setting up for the day. On behalf of everyone I would like to thank the FOCIS members involved in both of these significant projects.

A recently successful CHART Grant has seen FOCIS acquire a number of items.

A new digital camera with stand and light box, as well as a new data projector will make a wonderful contribution to our cataloguing and education efforts.

We gratefully acknowledge this support by the Australian Government's Culture, Heritage and Arts Regional Tourism (CHART) program.



During the last few months our collection of 8mm and 16mm film has been gradually digitized from DVD to USB and hard drive. Most of the film is from the Jenkins Era, however there are some for which we have yet to discover the contents, so it will be interesting to see what we have.

Preparation is underway to produce a LARGE PRINT Edition of the book. It will be available on request through the Online Shop when finished.

Jan Jonas, a long-time devoted Churchill Island volunteer and FOCIS Life Member, has moved to Brisbane and we wish her well.

Trevor Haywood has left Churchill Island after more than 10 years in the job, and we have a new Farm Manager. We wish Trevor well. Peter Officer, who has been on the Churchill Island staff for some years, is now the new Farm Manager. Thanks to Peter and his co-worker Chloe Dann for managing Churchill Island together over the summer holidays prior to Peter's official appointment.

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Finally I have advised the Committee that I will be retiring from active Committee work and will not be standing for President again. I will provide a more detailed report for the AGM.

Best wishes, *Graeme Clausen*

**Additional comment by David Maunders:** Peter's title is CI Farm Activities Manager

## 4. Treasurer's Report

Highlights from this report are:

- a) Nett assets grew by \$7,015 from \$28,978 as at 30 June 2021 to \$35,993 as at 30 June 2022.
- b) Membership numbers grew by 2 from 125 Paying Memberships as at 30 June 2021 to 127 Paying Memberships as at 30 June 2022.
- c) The total number of paying Members as at 30 June 2022 was 246, an increase of 11.

Moved: Jeff Cole      Seconded: Don Johnstone      Carried

**5. Correspondence**      Moved: TH      Seconded: DM      Carried

## 6. Curator's Report read by Pauline Taylor

Dear FOCIS Members

The summer days since the launch of *Churchill Island History and Her Story* in January seem very distant as winter sets in on our idyllic island. Aside from the usual day to day of cataloguing and care of the collection, there has been wonderful achievements through the involvement of your members. We took part in the Australian Heritage Festival through the National Trust to showcase the tipping dray and offer a tour of the house and garden. Although we didn't get many direct visitations as a result (most likely due to the timing), it did provide the chance for us to promote Churchill Island and what we do more generally and gain some learnings on the day. It has also been exciting to watch further restoration work continue on smaller projects on the island such as the ice chest and wooden horse. Leah and Warwick have also been undertaking an audit of the inventory of moveable objects identified in the 2014 Churchill Island Conservation Management Plan. Graeme has also been highly supportive in further digitising the Arthur Evans films onto USB.

A highlight in May has also been the donation by Jack and Juneen Schulz of two beautifully documented folders of Carroll and Amy Schulz reflecting on their time on Churchill Island. The folders contain written accounts, photos and documents. Carroll and Amy lived on Churchill Island part time during 1979 and then full time from 1980, and also lived in the cabin from 1982 until 1993. Carroll and Amy managed and developed the island under the Victorian Conservation Trust, and were lifetime members of FOCIS. We are very grateful for the contribution made by the Schulz family to our collection and it was lovely for Graeme to be here while we showed them around and heard about their own recollections of Churchill Island.

Congratulations on the successful CHART grant and I am very excited about the museum curator role now having a camera, stand and photo studio box to further document our collection. This will be instrumental in updating our catalogue records in Victorian Collections which require photos of a digital camera standard. I am also very much looking forward to the upcoming celebrations of Amess House that FOCIS have been working on.

As always, thank you for your support.

Best wishes, Andrea

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## **Additional comments by Graeme:**

*A number of original films from the FOCIS archives are being converted to high quality digital video. The films are mostly from the Jenkins era but includes a film which we have been unable to play and therefore not seen, possibly for the last 40-50 years. It will be very interesting to see what is on it given Harry Jenkins adventurous life. It is due to be picked up next week.*

### **7. PINP Report**

Not available

### **8. Business arising from previous meeting**

a) GC announced that Christine Grayden has taken on the role of Newsletter editor in a capacity that complies with our constitution for her to do so without holding a committee position.

### **9. General Business**

#### a) Large print book – Graeme

In response to being alerted to a need, Christine Grayden has produced a wonderful large print version of the *History and Her Story* book. Print it Fast in San Remo have provided a quote and we anticipate it being made available to the public soon. The book is now being checked for corrections. A grant is being sought to allow for free copies for the local/regional library service and various local aged care facilities and community venues. Pricing is expected to be \$40, or \$50 with postage

#### b) Restoration projects report by Jeff Cole

The Restorations Projects group has gone beyond the dray reconstruction, though that is still in progress.

The dray is now awaiting the re-metalled axle and axle boxes at present at an engineering firm in Geelong that specialises in such work. The Nature Park made an offer to finance this work from their budget, some \$1500, but I have not yet ascertained whether the expenditure was approved. If not we will have to be careful that we do not lose track of the axle and axle boxes and have them returned. Brian, one of the team is across the contacts with the firm concerned.

In the house kitchen is the restored 1930's era ice chest, likely from the Buckley era as it was supplied by Foy and Gibson. There are quite a few other items from this era, identified from a 1930's Foy and Gibson catalogue. The old white metal fittings had broken so were replaced by similar pattern new brass obtained from Malaysia, and period brass castors from Cornwall.

A new project in planning and construction is a Dairy Trail. Churchill Island has a history as a dairy farm. Part of the regular demonstrations is the milking by hand of a cow. My idea is to use the items we already hold to construct a trail using QR codes and short recorded stories for the items. They include dairy relics from the Amess and Jenkins eras. The half cellar and its compliment of separators, churns, milk and cream cans, a butter table and a large iron cheese press. The Scullery with a limestone butter cooler, butter pats, a butter churn. The house has butter dishes, old thick rimmed milk bottles, and the restored Ice chest. The cafe has a 1930's ice cream maker and a cream can. And of course, there's the milk delivery cart. The butter table has been dismantled, repaired, cleaned, waxed and rebuilt. Two smaller butter churns similarly treated. The conservation of the milk and cream cans is under way at present. There is a much larger butter table in the big shed off limits.

My idea for the commentary connected to the items is to use people's memories such as as:

*"In the bail with a mouthful of oats Gran would tie her tail to her leg and sit on the 3 legged stool and wipe her teats clean. Then, head against her flank with the web of his thumbs he'd begin to strip her milk out. The tinny sound of the first streams of milk hitting the bucket, and then the gurgle as the bucket filled.\* Daisy*

# GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

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*getting restless, shifting about, Gran calming her with his voice, directing a warm stream of milk into my face if I got too close, into my mouth if I was lucky, and the smell of fresh creamy milk in the air."*

A staff member has volunteered to do the QR code work. A suitable set of narrators will be needed for the commentaries. Probably 3. The idea is to relocate the items from the half cellar to a place where they can be seen, but leave the others in place to create a 'trail'.

The Winnower, a very rare item, has been fumigated to hopefully kill off any remaining borer.

There are of course larger projects that are beyond the physical capabilities of our small team, the finances likely to be available and the tooling and structural capabilities of the island's buildings. These include the wool wagon and the wheat wagon which are both in very sorry states.

Jeff, Brian and Tim.

## c) CI external collection items Audit Report

An assessment of the external heritage items is well underway. This assessment provides an update to a 2014 audit and provides a condition rating, commentary and updated photograph for each item. It is approximately 50% complete and is hoped to ultimately achieve the following:

- Capture the current status, condition & siting of objects.
- Rank the urgency of maintenance of each object.
- Create/update a management plan for each object
- Identify working bee jobs (e.g. retagging).
- Update Victorian Collections records.
- Inform a strategic forward plan for displays.
- Support any grant applications.
- Inform budgetary needs

Leah and Warwick Tempny

## d) Amess House 150th Anniversary – David Maunders

The play preparation for the anniversary celebration is well underway. Two performances will be held on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September, the day after the AGM. There will be no charge to watch and it seems an appropriate commemoration of the event.

*"Whispers from the Past"* by David Maunders

The cast as at this stage:

**THE NARRATOR** - David Maunders

**SAMUEL AMESS** - Mike Cleeland

**JANE AMESS** - Pip Cleeland

**BARON FERDINAND VON MUELLER** - John Eddy

**CORA** - Kate Cleeland

**GEORGE BROWN (BRUNI)** - Don Johnstone

**MINNIE LAWRENCE** - Chloe Dann

**MABEL LAWRENCE** - Alice Ward

**MARJORIE AMESS** - Helena Leonardos

**MARGARET AMESS** - Kate Cleeland

David also shared a summary of the scenes and some further plans:

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

1:30pm, Saturday 16th July, 2022

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Terry Melvin is willing to video one of the rehearsals free of charge and sound recording is offered by Simon Eddy for a nominal fee.

It is planned for performance on the house verandah, but if raining, it will be moved to the shearing shed.

FOCIS has allowed a budget will cover a small gift to each cast member, a possible back drop and previously mentioned sound recording. Programs will be printed by PI Nature Parks. All are invited to bring a friend to enjoy the performance and enjoy the legacy left to us all.

**10.** Next Meeting: Annual General Meeting – 1:30pm, Sep 17, 2022 at Churchill Island.

**11.** Speaker: Don Johnstone

FOCIS member and Farm guide, Don Johnstone, spoke to the group of his childhood memories of Sister Campbell and Churchill Island in the 1960s.

Don spoke of his mother, Elsie Johnstone's friendship with Sister Margaret Campbell, CI owner from 1963-1974. He spent happy visits to CI as a young boy. His first trip in 1966 he remembers the wooden bridge and staying in Roger's cottage. These visits to the island and Sister shaped parts of his adult life. Through "Sister's" love of the jumper he became a died-in-the-wool Geelong supporter. Don's interest in cars found a kindred-spirit in Sister Campbell, and he shared a photo of the jetty where he spent many hours catching "hundreds" of fish. He respectfully remembered the blocked off dining room and having a rare day off school to see the 1968 unveiling of the memorial cairn to commemorate the planting of the first wheat crop in Victoria here on Churchill Island. Don shared some precious footage of his mother in her later years, speaking about days gone by on the island.

Thank you, Don, for not only returning to serve the place and community as a FOCIS member and volunteer guide at the farm, but also for a fascinating insight into CI in the 1960s and the influence of Sister Campbell on your life. Thanks also go to David Maunders for recording Don's talk, and to John Eddy for operating our new data projector so that we could all see Don's photos.