

Friends Of Churchill Island Society Inc.

FOCIS

NEWSLETTER

ABN 78667051020 INC. No. A 002 19007W

Dates to remember:
General Meetings:
To Be advised

Working bees:
To Be advised



The continuing difficulties of travel and attendance at public places and events have taken a serious toll of attendance at Churchill Island. It has been open, closed, open on weekends and over school holidays open for limited numbers. But control of Covid seems to be being gradually achieved with the perseverance and cooperation of the people of Victoria, and hopefully travel restrictions will soon be eased

FOCIS is 40

Our planned celebrations are necessarily somewhat muted but you'll find some memories in the photo montage inside.

Farm Machinery Display Signage

It seems quite a long time since the promise of new signage for the new Farm Machinery Display shed was organised. It has now been installed by the CI staff and waiting for your inspection when visitors attendance is resumed. They do look first class, and we must thank some of our members for their generous donations to the signage fund.



Letter from our President

Dear Members

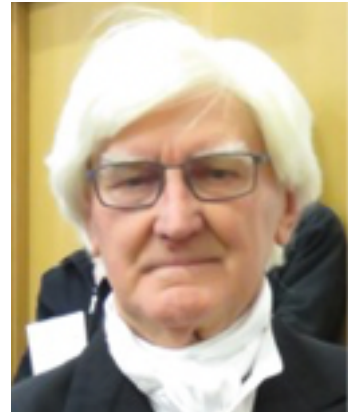
Last year I wondered if we were about to enter the “Roaring Twenties”. Little did I know what was about to hit us!

As you all know Christine Grayden is retiring as Secretary. On behalf of myself and all the members I would like to thank Christine for her amazing contribution to FOCIS over the years. We wish her well and hope to see her at future gatherings. I would like to welcome Leah Tempany who has kindly offered to take over the role of FOCIS secretary and thank you to the others who also offered.

My thanks to all those who attended our ground breaking Zoom meeting, a different way of holding a meeting, but missed the face to face chats.

The 3 PINP parks are open again on a restricted and limited basis.

Graeme



More of the Machinery Display signage





Friends Of Churchill Island Society Inc Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Held via Zoom on 29/8/2020

1: Welcome.

Welcome via this new media. Acknowledgement of traditional custodians and elders past, present and emerging, where each of us are meeting.

2: Present.

Tom O'Dea, Graeme Clauscen, Terry Holman, Jeff Cole, Christine Grayden, Cheryl Overton, Bonnie Taylor, Leah Tempany, Ruth O'Dea, Anne Davie, Jenni Shaw, Margaret Hunter, David Maunders, Peter Brooks, Jeff Nottle, Peter Paul, John Eddy, Roger Hollingworth, Warwick Tempany.

3: Apologies.

Andrew Williams, Jan Jonas, Peter Fensham, Coral Bourke, Cliff Dobson, Janine Dobson, Craig Jackson, Rev Susan Pearse, Diane Scukovic, Marianne Cassar, Jessica Toop, Keith Thieke, Christine Tompkins, Lee Tierney, Adrian Scott, Jacqui Scott, Diane Baird, John Baird, Richard Farrell, Margaret Farrell, Kay Williams, Liz Stinson, PINP Board chair.

Please convey her best wishes for year ahead to FOCIS.

4: PINP Visitor Experience Manager Kate Adams report, Read by Leah.

Nature Parks has seen considerable changes since March including our sites closing, then reopening with limited capacities, then weekends only and now full closure once again. We are very fortunate to have received funding support from the State Government which has allowed us to maintain current staffing levels. We have recently completed our budget and business planning for 2021 and although it looks very different to our original position, we have identified a number of priority initiatives across the business.

We are now focused on deployment of staff to conservation and operational activities that are critical to our business and we are achieving some great results for the environment and wildlife and the maintenance, upgrade and protection of our sites and assets. Graeme has some photos of some of the great work that has been done at Churchill Island to share with you all.

I am extremely happy to inform you that the machinery shed signs are IN.....the final installation was challenging given it had to be done with adhering to strict OHS measures.

I'd like to thank Christine for the time she spent developing and reviewing the content and I have attached 2 images that Ailsa sent me. One of the priority initiatives for 2021 FY is to create new visitor experiences at Churchill Island and the Koala Conservation Reserve aimed at the domestic market given this will be the primary market for our business when travel is again possible. We have started by brainstorming ideas for what we can do at Churchill Island to ensure our visitors have a quality experience that is value for money and that we showcase the amazing heritage values of this site. We will engage with FOCIS on specific projects relating to the heritage buildings, farm and garden as part of the project.

Samantha Happe (Sam - Museum Curator) has been working from home but continues to work on the upload and digitisation of entries into the Victorian Collections website so people can learn about our collection. Sam will soon be coordinating 2 staff to research and write descriptions for contextual information about objects on the website. The information will include what it is, how it is used, why it is used and any other relevant information. This will provide depth and colour to the entries and be accessible to future researchers.



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Sam is also looking into doing some oral history interviews to gather more information on some of the images in our collection. I understand she has reached out to Graeme in regards to this project. We have also ensured that basic cleaning tasks are being undertaken in the buildings on a regular basis as part of the deployment program for staff. We are keeping the drapes and doors closed while the site is closed to minimise dust and insects. Sam will continue to clean the objects as required.

Unfortunately, we are unable to restart any Volunteer programs until the restrictions change but we very much look forward to inviting our Volunteers back in the future.

5: Minutes from Previous General Meeting held Saturday 8th February 2020 and previous AGM held Saturday 10th August, 2019.

Moved that minutes are accepted: Christine Grayden, Seconded: Jeffrey Cole *Carried*

6: Matters arising from previous General and AGM Meetings.

- a. Discussions with Kate Adams (covered in her report)
- b. FOCIS 40th birthday celebrations planned for October 10. (See General Business.)

7: Annual reports from Executive Committee:

President's Report:

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As you all know Christine Grayden is retiring as Secretary. On behalf of myself and all the members I would like to thank Christine for her amazing contribution to FOCIS over the years. We wish her well and hope to see her at future gatherings.

I would like to welcome Leah Tempny who has kindly offered to take over the role of FOCIS secretary. Thank you to the others who also offered.

Our working bee activities have been very limited this year, with volunteering on site having been shut down early in Stage 3 of Covid. However, I would like to thank Christine, Tom O'Dea and Jeff Cole for the work they have done to get us to this point.

I have been in contact with Kate Adam, the Nature Parks Visitor Experience Manager, on a number of occasions and was taken on a tour between Stage 2 & 3 of Covid lockdown. The staff have been busy with maintenance and painting and the place is looking good. The Signage for the Machinery Shed is in place and by now the rope should be in place. The revamp of the farm machinery area has been a major FOCIS project over the last several years.

Thanks to Samantha Mather the Curator who left the role earlier this year and we welcomed her replacement, Samantha Happe. Sam Happe lives in Melbourne, but has been busy during lockdown working at home with the collection in various digital ways. Leah will also read and share Sam's report shortly. At the last FOCIS committee meeting in July the committee decided to review our website, and that task is ongoing at this stage. Tom and Ruth meanwhile ensure that relevant information and facilities are available on the current website. Christine continues to update the "Churchill Island Friends" Facebook page, although there has not been very much for her to report on lately! A plug-in enables those not on Facebook to see the last 10 Facebook posts on the home page of the FOCIS website. Jeff produces our informative quarterly newsletter which continues to be very interesting even in these difficult times.



FOCIS is also represented on the Nature Parks Community and Environment Consultative Committee by Christine, but that committee is meeting on a fairly ad hoc basis and by Zoom, with only one meeting this year. The meetings are chaired by Nature Parks Board member Dr Danielle Auldist and are an excellent information exchange for all of the various local organisations that are



Curators report

Well, what a turbulent year we have had since I last wrote to you. I am writing this report to you from my apartment in Melbourne which I share with my husband and two very energetic kittens. We are in stage four lock d own where I am, and there is a certain amount of readjustment that we are all undergoing. My apartment is a far cry indeed from the tranquillity and beauty of Churchill Island and I am missing it very much. Hopefully you are all keeping as well as you can, and things will normalise for us all soon.

This means of course, I have mostly been working from home. I fondly remember a couple of rare days where I was able to go to work and engage with the collection before lockdown restrictions

were reintroduced. It was wonderful to escape the confines of my place and return to the gorgeous Churchill Island

In the six months since I last updated you, I have primarily been working with our collection. I catalogued over seven hundred photographs and one hundred objects. They are accessible on the Victorian Collections website. This is the first stage of a longer project where I want to make these images and resources more readily available for the public. Due to the scale of the task it will take quite a long time. I am cataloguing these collection items, and I hope I will be able to flesh out and provide context for each item throughout the course of this year. I have been in discussions with the National Trust to look at options so that Amess House and

Rogers Cottages have a bit of a refresh of their displays. We are looking at changing some objects around and swapping furniture and decorations. This will be very exciting, and I will keep you updated.

There has also been some great research being undertaken by the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society into our cannon and trying to demystify its origins and provide a bit more concrete information about its manufacture and introduction to Churchill Island. This has slowed since COVID 19 but we will see if they are able to pick it up when they are able, and I will provide a summary of their findings.

Thank you very much and I hope to be able to see you on Churchill Island very soon.

Samantha Happe.



Treasurer's Report for the Period Ending 30 June 2020

1. Summary of Results as at 30 June 2020

In summary, total nett assets grew by a modest amount of \$185 from \$27,583 as at 30 June 2019 to \$27,768 as at 30 June 2020. During the last 12 months we spent \$4,001 on Heritage activities with a total of \$45,370 spent on Heritage activities over the last 9 years. The main item of expenditure was the Society's contribution of \$2,400 to the signage for the historic farm machinery display. Membership numbers fell by 12 (about 8.7%) from 138 paying memberships as at 30 June 2019 to 126 paying memberships as at 30 June 2020. The total number of paying **Members** as at 30 June 2020 was 234.

Complete report available from: secretary@focis.org.au

A few historic and some fun photographs from FOCIS history

This is Robert Ingpen, artist of the famous watercolours from 1975 or so on the wall in the next photo.



This is what the sales area used to look like in AH well before the PINP came along. One of FOCIS's roles was to attend the shop and sell and give info to customers in there.

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Pat Baird, author of CI: History and Her Story in costume – writing with a quill pen and pouring from teapot. Pat was a long-term guide for CI, and much of her life revolved around CI and FOCIS.

David Lumsden, Ship Model Builder, talks about his model of the Lady Nelson commissioned by FOCIS



Scott Campbell and the CI ferrets. Head ranger on Churchill Island in the 1990s and 2000s, then an environment ranger for Phillip Island Nature Parks. Scott and his little dog Jack and ferrets rid CI of rabbits years ago and made sure it stayed rabbit free from then on.

Carroll Schulz, manager of CI from mid-1970s to mid-1990s, is in the centre of group of garden volunteers from the San Remo Community Health Centre gardening group, who used to help regularly in CI gardens, c.1980s. FOCIS formation was Carroll Schulz idea and he worked with FOCIS on many projects and grant applications in his time as manager.



FOCIS



The Picnic that never was

David Maunders, past President of FOCIS and a fellow guide in a promotion for a dress up picnic that never happened, instead we got a hurricane.

But we turned up, in costume, and had our photo taken



...and retired for tea in the parlour.....



Jane Amess = Dr Rebecca Sanders (PhD on CI history) and Linda Patterson (maid) in Amess House drawing room.

We can't talk about the early days of FOCIS with mentioning Cherry Mcfee, she was secretary for a fair while and liaison with PI & District Historical Society from whose collection many display items came early on. Much of it still there. Cherry was very strong on promoting the heritage side of CI.



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FOCIS members hosting two officials (in ties). In early 1990s. Scott Campbell (ranger) 2nd left, Terry Holman (past president, current vice-president) 3rd left, Jocelyn Bradley in red, Barbara Martin (very long term FOCIS volunteer in shop) at

right. FOCIS frequently hosted dignitaries and held meetings with Government officials before PINP took over management of CI.



Bert Grayden Great Uncle of Christine Grayden, (past Curator), photo c.1980, was made a FOCIS Life Member soon after FOCIS establishment. Bert was a grandson of Samuel and Winifred Pickersgill, and a keen lobbyist to both Phillip Island Council and the Victorian Government to purchase CI. He was in his 90s when this photo was taken near the cannon during a visit arranged by first CI manager and FOCIS initiator, Carroll Schulz. C. 1980. (died this year)



SPRING2020

FOCIS

Following our first ever on-line Zoom AGM, a new FOCIS committee for 2020-21 was elected.

PRESIDENT: Graeme Clausen

VICE-PRESIDENT: Terry Holman

SECRETARY: Leah Tempny

TREASURER: Tom O'Dea

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Tom O'Dea

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Jeff Cole

COMMITTEE: Pauline Taylor, Cheryl Overton, Bonnie Taylor



The Friends of Churchill Island Society
Newsletter

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