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Spring

Friends Of Churchill Island Society Inc.

FOCIS

NEWSLETTER

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DATES: 2023

October 14

10-12pm Working Bee

November 5

3-30 to 6.30pm

***Bush Dance in Woolshed:
Blackberry Jam***

November 18

1:30pm General Meeting

December 23

11 am and 1 pm

***Christmas 1899. Short
Play and Christmas Carols***

KIDS AS CATALYSTS

FOCIS worked with students at Newhaven Primary School in the Kids as Catalysts program. Over 60 students in schools across Bass Coast partnered community organisations to undertake programs of community change. Students were required to engage community groups, design a project, arrange funding and carry it out.

The FOCIS/Newhaven Primary project involved inviting a group of senior citizens to Churchill Island, providing lunch and providing a tour of the historic precinct and farmyard. A setback was experienced when the residential care facility withdrew shortly before the arranged date but a group of independent living seniors was found instead.

Terry Holman, FOCIS Vice-president, worked with the school to make the arrangements. On 27 July, everyone arrived at Churchill Island. There were 5 students, two teachers, led by Michelle Peters, some parents, the bus driver and only 4 seniors. Don and David each took a group around the house and to the farmyard. Susan kindly showed how she was training her dog to manage sheep but she was still learning and did not have Billie's expertise. Lunch was enjoyed by all in the café and

the students and seniors enjoyed getting to know each other.



After lunch groups exchanged places and visited the house and farmyard. Students were introduced to Charlie and Nellie our Clydesdales.



The seniors enjoyed the visit and it was suggested that future visits could be arranged.



Photos: Michelle Peters

AGM WELL ATTENDED

Members filled the visitors centre meeting room for the FOCIS AGM on 12 August. We were pleased to welcome back Christine Grayden as well as some new members and also to hear that membership numbers had increased by 22 in the last year.

A committee was elected for the forthcoming year as follows:

President: David Maunders

Vice President: Terry Holman

Secretary: Cecily Woodberry

Minutes Secretary: Bonnie Taylor

Treasurer: Tom O'Dea

Membership Secretary: Tom O'Dea

Newsletter Editor: David Maunders

Conservation Society Rep: Pauline Taylor

Committee member (working bees and book sales): Don Johnstone

Committee member (restoration) Jeff Cole

Questions were raised that, as the Historical Society and Friends of the Koalas no longer nominated representatives, whether these positions were still needed or whether the constitution should be revised to comprise the committee of office holders and other committee members.

The president outlined major achievements over the past year. The music and drama events were well supported and more are planned in the forthcoming year. New signs were produced for the Amess House and Rogers Cottage. Film taken by Arthur Evans has been edited into an account of the Jenkins Campbell era. The purchase of Clydesdale Mooreland Charlie was the largest financial commitment and Charlie and Nellie will be demonstrating on Community Day and offering wagon rides later this year. Our major goal remains the establishment of dedicated museum space.

Minutes of the AGM are available at the FOCIS website.

NATURE PARK CEO'S ADDRESS



Catherine spoke about PINP current priorities. 5 years ago they embarked on new strategies and the “New Conservation 30 year vision strategy” is still in place. It was a strategy for “whole of business” to enable PINP to financially support their activities.

Since then we have had Covid19 with a change in the number of international visitors, which had significant financial impact, and changes to funding from the state government. The numbers of international visitors is just now starting to grow back.

Catherine feels they are now doing very well and close to being financially sustainable again. They are responsible for conservation, management and coastal management. It is pleasing to note an increase in local visitors which could be expected to drop off in the future.

Victorian visitors tend to have peaks (eg school holidays) and troughs (eg poor weather), where international come throughout the year.

With increased numbers of local visitors, we need to offer changing activities so they see something new when the visit again.

Catherine went on to speak about:

- PINP are promoting the multi-park pass rather than single park tickets and hope that means Churchill Island has more visitors.
- The fourth Reconciliation Action Plan

- PINP Management restructure which included Churchill Island being managed together with the Koala Reserve.
- conservation initiatives – threatened species, a sailing drone which can monitor water temperature, fish type, food sources, etc; Fire protection and land management.
- Two major infrastructure projects: The Nobbies and the penguin parade board walk.
- The heritage grant for the buildings at Churchill Island
- An audit of accessibility issues for all parks.

Thank you very much Catherine for an interesting and informative presentation.

Thanks to Bonnie Taylor for this summary.

A second session was held again at the end of July to learn about basic photo editing processes, preventative conservation and collection care and the opportunity to assess our lace collection.

Special thanks to FOCIS for their support and use of the CHART grant camera, lightbox and projector equipment (successfully applied for by FOCIS) and to the awesome Churchill Island team who provided support to help the



CURATOR'S REPORT



Churchill Island was successful in gaining a place on the Collections and Community Resilience Projects.

Over three days in July, we received wonderful hands-on training from the Australian Museum and Galleries Association (AMaGA) Victoria when Churchill Island participated in the Collections and Community Resilience Project. This state-wide initiative provides regional communities with the opportunity to digitally preserve their collections and receive onsite training in collections care, preventative conservation and risk mitigation in the face of natural disaster events.

Many thanks to the Heritage and Friends of Churchill Island Society (FOCIS) volunteers – Jude, Marg, Linda and Janine - who contributed their skills and time with enthusiasm as we learnt how to digitise and photograph historic objects in our collection.





days run smoothly. Our overall collections management continues as we work through putting new tags on our collection items and assigning registration numbers to objects that have no numbers. So far Jude has tagged the Drawing Room, Nursery and is getting started on the Dining Room. We've also been cleaning up the Volly Hut to create some more space to store our archival material and boxes with thanks to Marg. Our thanks also to the wonderful restoration team with their continuing work on farm machinery and all the Churchill Island volunteers who give so much of their time and expertise.

With thanks, Andrea

FARM REPORT



It was great to see that July holidays brought a lot of great attention to Churchill Island as the place to visit. Patronage for the whole of the school holidays was excellent. We did the full run of shows that were well received by all visitors.

The upcoming Community Day is progressing well. There will be wagon rides and we will be using our Nellie and Charlie for farming demonstrations. Look out for them pulling the plough and sled to return some of our heritage magic that many of you will remember. In terms of training. Nellie was training in the last week of July where she finished off her training

to pull wagons and familiarise herself with farm equipment. She also learned how to work alongside Charlie as a pair. We are looking forward to seeing the horses around Churchill Island and are aiming for the September school holidays to offer wagon rides for visitors.

We were very sad to report the loss of Max and Lucy the Goose. They are now resting under the Sheokes with Sophie. We were delighted to welcome six little Highland Cattle calves who are now happily in the pastures and are a great attraction to the visitors.

Thanks to Robyn and Terry Holman for calling into Crump Manufacturing in Albury and going through their old files to pick up plans and paperwork to help with the restoration of the Crump spreader being done by Tim.

Pete

TREASURER'S REPORT



Tom reported that total nett assets fell by \$18,903 as on June 30 to \$14,733. This comprises \$8052 in then operating fund and \$6651 in the Heritage Fund. This reduction was largely caused by the purchase of Charlie the Clydesdale. The Museum Investment Fund is now \$40,862.

As membership secretary, Tom reported that over the last year, paying members had increased by 22 to 268. It is likely that a number of these came as a result of the increased music and drama activities. Most claim to have been recommended by a staff member or guide.

The full statement of accounts is available on the FOCIS website.

RESTORATION REPORT

Dray. Finished, and on display in front of the Amess barn.

Stump Jump Plough. Awaiting time and some equipment to continue, I would like to see it sandblasted and painted to preserve it. Likely the most valuable item in the collection?

The collection of ploughs beside Pedro's shed.

Blue Wheat Waggon. Awaiting the steel undercart to make work on it safe, and of course a budget.

The new Gun Carriage, recoil slide etc build is under the supervision of Brian and Greg.

Actual Gun Carriage is built but original iron fittings not installed yet or painted. The recoil slide and platform restoration was started last week.

The big iron ring bolts are at least as old as the cannon itself, the threads are cast, not machined. I am making the gun furniture. Ramrods etc. are finished. Blocks and rope work for retrieval gear are in progress. An old oak bucket is yet to be restored.

Cannon. First stage of conservation in progress, recommended coating yet to be ordered. It seems the Navy, after dropping and breaking it, welded some bars inside and filled the firing chamber with cement. There is little danger of it breaking it again!

Location. Our proposed new location is by the flagpole below the house, the flagpole to be fitted with a cross bar and signalling gear as per Naval practice and some signal flags acquired as a nod to Lt. Grant. The new gun equipment (small arms they are called) to be displayed in a rack beside it. The gun carriage will be fitted with its blocks and rope work as equipped when ready for use.

The subject of location and a shelter is under discussion.

Seeder. Peter Officer acquired a 1920s broadcast seeder in rolling order. Tim is in charge of that restoration and we have every hope that it will be in full working order when finished. An unexpected bonus is that a relative of Tim worked for the company and had an archive including original colour schemes, parts catalogues, sales documents etc.

Brian, Clive, Greg, Jeff, Tim

FUTURE EVENTS

COMMUNITY DAY

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 10th

At 10.30 the Phoenix Singers will be performing in the dining room of Amess house. This is the group that will be performing at Christmas.

They will be dressing up and singing songs of yesteryear.

Here is the list of our music for the CI Community Day.

We'll start with the rounds
Tallis' Cannon, Ah poor bird, Little Jack Horner.

Then the Medieval music
Gaudete, Pastyme and Alle Psallite
All around my hat.

Then the Scottish songs
Afton Water, Dashing White Sergeant and My love is like a red rose. Loch Lomond on the piano. Skye Boat song.

Sea shanties
Wellerman, Blow the man down and Sloop John B.

Madrigals
Since first, Come again and
Fine Knacks, April is in my mistress face.

At 1 pm. The Phillip Island Harmony Choir will be singing a medley of Bush songs and others with audience participation in the Woolshed.

1. *Advance Australia Fair.*
2. *Botany Bay*
3. *Waltzing Matilda.*
4. *Bound for Churchill Island.*

5. *A Place in the choir.*
6. *Road to Gundagai.*
7. *Happy together*
8. *Happy little Vegemite's.*
9. *Singing in the rain.*
10. *Click go the shears.*
11. *Colin's Ned Kelly composition.*
12. *The wild colonial boy.*
13. *I still call Australia home.*
14. *Home amongst the gum trees.*
15. *What a wonderful world.*

BLACKBERRY JAM BUSH BAND

The Blackberry Jam Bush band will be presenting a Bush dance in the Shearing Shed on

Sunday 5 November 3.00 to 6.30. Leave Island by 7.00.

Remember, remember the 5th of November
For a FOCIS Bush Dance for all.
Churchill Island Woolshed the place
From 3 to 6.30 will be our call.

This will be a family event and will be alcohol free. Watch for details of tickets soon.

Those attending may buy refreshments at the café before 4 pm or bring their own.

Blackberry Jam is renowned for its fun, entertaining bush dances and entertainment for all occasions. Entertainment can include their Emily the Emu character, didgeridoo, whip cracking and saw playing and many rollicking Australiana tunes and songs.

Blackberry Jam has performed for dances to the delight of many, many thousands of groups and organisations over the past 15 years.



Tickets (See website for booking information)

Adult (over 16) \$35

Concession (Student, senior etc) \$28

Family 1 adult plus children \$45

Family 2 adults plus children \$80



RECONCILIATION WEEK

Bass Coast Shire held a forum during Reconciliation Week on 2 June in Inverloch. Your FOCIS president attended. It started with a smoking ceremony and had details of reconciliation action plans and other local initiatives.



Many of the First Nations elders are over committed in connecting with local organisations. It does not seem timely to initiate further contact in relation to Churchill Island.

At our February meeting, Kate Adams will be explaining what Phillip Island Natures Parks has done in compiling a Reconciliation Action Plan.

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY



Report from Maria Schnyder, Research manager with PINP:

Eastern Barred Bandicoots are doing well on Phillip Island and have now changed in status from being “Near Extinct” to “Endangered”, given their increase in population in this area. We are still requested to report sightings of them around the island and a couple have even been reported in Cowes.

For Injured wildlife the process is to call “Wildlife Victoria” on (03) 84007300, who will then notify the local support crew to investigate. (Cowes and Newhaven Vet services are assisting with support of injured wildlife locally.)

Funding is available for a Wildlife Plan to be developed relating to Cape Barron Geese, Possums and Wallabies on Phillip Island, which are becoming abundant. The Arthur Riley Institute will assist with this model. Incidentally, The Cape Barron Goose is the 2nd rarest in the world, but we now have a population of approximately 3,000 in this area!

Catherine Basterfield’s Report included:

PINP has experienced a 156% increase in Sales and visits this last year, with the breakdown including 25% international visitors and 75% Australians (many from interstate). Thus the visitation rates are approximately 82-83% of pre-pandemic attendance across all sights.

PINP’s Aboriginal Employment Strategy has employed 3 Aboriginal people to Staff.

Community Open Day will be held on 10th Sept will be an opportunity for locals with ID to enter Parks sites free with the Sunday and Monday nights available for locals to book in on-line to enter the Penguin Pde without charge. (Bring a Licence, Shire Rates account or Power Bill to very local status.) Events that day commence with Welcome to Country at Penguin Parade at 2pm and local conservation businesses will have displays.

Westernport Water:

Planning for 3x storage lagoons in King Rd, Bass to develop a “Waste to Energy” program, using floating wetlands.

Bird Life Bass Coast: welcome notification of any sightings of Blue Winged Parrots, recently sighted at Saltwater Creek. (Look like a large Budgie)

Next Meeting for CEAC planned for November 8th.

Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.

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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live