



The Penguin

Newsletter of Phillip Island Conservation Society - First Quarter, March 2003

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Dates for your Diary

Saturday, 5 April 2003 and the first Saturday of each month: FOK Habitat Day, phone 5952 2407 for information.

Tuesday 8 April and first Tuesday of each month: KCC Koala Count, Koala Conservation Centre.

Saturday, 12 April 2003: General Meeting, 8 pm, Heritage Centre, Cowes. Guest Speaker: Amy McDonald, Project Officer, Mornington Peninsula and Western Port UNESCO Biosphere Project.

Sunday, 13 April 2003, Red Rocks Working Bee, 10 am. Bring tools for planting and weeding, bags for rubbish, energy, lunch!

Saturday, 19 April and Sunday, 20 April, FOCIS Working Horse Festival, Churchill Island.

Saturday, 17 May 2003, Seasonal Walk - Ventnor Koala Reserve, Ventnor Road gate, 2 pm.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The 35th Annual General Meeting of the Phillip Island Conservation Society was held on 11 January 2003. The Annual Report was given at this meeting. The [Annual Report](#) is provided online.

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CORAL'S 34 YEARS OF SERVICE TO PICS

Coral Wood, a PICS Life Member, retired from the PICS committee at the last AGM after serving continuously and actively on the committee since PICS' inception in 1968.



Coral and her first husband, the late Jack Oswin, were absolute stalwarts of PICS, and instrumental in many major projects such as the Conservation Hill purchase and the Fisher's Wetlands acquisition. Coral served as Secretary from 1972 until 1978 inclusive and was host to committee meetings in both of her homes until quite recently. I took over from Coral as Secretary (until 1987) and found her wonderfully supportive. During the fieriest of meetings (and there were many!), Coral could be relied upon to remain gracious and listen courteously to all sides, and as such was a great role model for us all. Thank you, Coral, for your wonderful contributions to Phillip Island's environment.

By Christine Grayden

ESTABLISHING OUR PUBLIC FUND

Diane Baird has been hard at work finding out about our eligibility for tax deductibility. In order to apply to the ATO for tax deductibility, PICS must have a Public Fund. The purpose of this fund is to receive donations of money &/or property and to authorize expenditure of

money from the fund for the purposes as set out in the constitution. This fund must be completely separate from other PICS accounts. The full requirements of the fund are listed by the ATO and our constitution now defines the setting up and running of this fund.

The Public Fund must be administered by a minimum of three people. These people may be members of the PICS executive, but they need not be. There are regulations about who may be on the management committee of the Public Fund. PICS will need to establish this fund as soon as possible so we may move ahead with our application for tax deductibility. The following motion is proposed and is to be voted upon at the next General Meeting, Saturday, April 12 (see Dates):

"That PICS establish and maintain a Public Fund:

a) to which gifts of money or property for its principal purpose are to be made;

b) to which any money received because of such gifts is to be credited; and

c) that does not receive any money or property.

Further, that this fund shall be named the Phillip Island Conservation Society Public Fund. Members of the PICS executive committee shall be responsible for establishing this fund, in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Register of Environmental Organisations."

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THE MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR WHITE ELEPHANT

What to do with the Seal Rocks Victoria building is a problem on many people's minds at present. The government appointed a task force to, in part, address this problem, and on-site inspections have been held by local groups who have brainstormed lots of ideas. The task force put its case to a heated public meeting last month, where their architect suggested four options for the Nobbies site (or elsewhere on Nature Park land):

- An Oceanarium
- An Earth Interpretation centre

- A Nature Lodge
- A Wellness Centre

Since most involved overnight accommodation and a huge investment (probably of private funds, about which most people were understandably nervous) they were all soundly rejected by the meeting. If consensus was possible on the night, it seemed to be that people wanted to retain some of the building whilst greatly modifying its height and bulk. Some uses suggested were for an environment centre, a regional art gallery, a Victoria University research centre, or a simple structure purely for some food and some interpretation. Others wanted the whole Summerland Peninsula returned to its natural state, with only bare facility buildings, with suggestions that, due to technological capacity, all information and interpretation to do with Seal Rocks and the area's history could be accommodated at the Penguin Parade where facilities already exist to cater for large numbers of visitors.

PICS held their own on-site inspection on Sunday 2 February 2003 where many questions were raised regarding the viability of the existing building (extremely costly to run) and any modifications. Suggestions included:

- The controversial mounds should be removed
- Properly define the built environment envelope for the area and ensure all structures are within the envelope, preferably in the furthest part from the coastline.
- Do not include anything at the Nobbies that could be done at the Penguin Parade, which is a large facility under-utilised during the day.

At present the building remains closed as it is unsafe following being hit by a water spout last year when a large section of the roof was blown away. It is undoubtedly a costly eye-sore and a millstone around any future Nature Park Board's neck. Some hard decisions will need to be made - let us hope they are made on environmental and not purely economic grounds.

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YOUR PICS COMMITTEE

The PICS Committee, elected at the last AGM, meets once a month to discuss issues of immediate concern to conservation on Phillip Island. These meetings are very informative and challenging. Members are welcome to attend

at 8 pm on the first Friday of each month in either the Heritage Centre or Cultural Centre, Cowes.

The elected committee for 2003 is:

President	Margaret Hancock (Ph/Fax 5952-2557)
Senior Vice President	Rose Thomas
Secretary	Margaret Johnson
Minutes Secretary	Bruce Howe
Treasurer	Gillian Collins (Ph 5956 8840)
Other Members	Anne Davie, Penny Manning, Greg Johnson, John Jansson, Julie Box, Pauline Taylor
Other PICS Responsibilities:	
Newsletter	Christine Grayden/John Eddy (Ph 5956 8501; Fax 5956 8314)
Meeting notices and publicity	Rose Thomas
Ventnor Public Land Committee	Gillian Collins
Red Rocks Coast Action Project	Gillian Collins
South Coast Walking Track	Penny Manning
Bike Paths	Penny Manning
Friends of Churchill Island Liaison	Julie Box
Barb Martin Bushbank Liaison	Anne Davie
Landcare Liaison	Morag Mackay
Landcare Salinity Committee	John Jansson

Website Manager	Diane Baird (dianeбайд@yahoo.com)
Grant Investigation	Tim Patkin

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And also

Thank you to our newsletter sponsor **Kevron Plastics** (Tel 03 9387 9811), Australia's Leading Manufacturer of Plastic Identification Products.

The hard copy of our newsletter contains some items that are not included in the online version. The PICS newsletter is available at the Phillip Island Library.

Previous online issues of **The Penguin** are:

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[March 2002](#)

[June 2002](#)

[September 2002](#)

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