

First Quarter: March 2014

## Dates for Your Diary 2013-2014

Sat 12 April **General Meeting** 7.30 p.m. Heritage Centre Meeting room, 89 Thompson Ave Cowes. 7.30 p.m. start. Speakers: Bernie McComb and Melanie Wright will speak of their experiences with CERES like communities in South America and UK.. All welcome. Followed by supper and chat.

Sun 13 April **Red Rocks Coast Care working bee**: weed control. Meet at Red Rocks car park 10 a.m. Enqs: John Eddy ph 5956 8501

Sunday 1 June **Red Rocks Coast Care planting day**. Details as per 13 April

Sat 5 July: **General Meeting** 7.30 p.m. Details as per 12 April. Speaker TBA

Sunday 6 July **Red Rocks Coast Care planting day**. Details as per 13 April

Sunday 13 July **Red Rocks Coast Care planting day**. Details as per 13 April

Sunday 28 Sep **Red Rocks Coast Care working bee**. Weed control. Details as per 13 April

Sat 4 Oct **General Meeting** 7.30 p.m. Details as per 12 April.

Sat 10 Jan 2015 **AGM**.

**Enquiries for all events**: Christine Grayden, ph 5956 8501 m 0400 900 612 e: [cgrayden@waterfront.net.au](mailto:cgrayden@waterfront.net.au)

**Barb Martin Bush Bank**: Sales and volunteers – every Wednesday + 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month 10 – 1. Phone Anne Davie ph 5956 8216

**Friends of Koalas (FOK) Habitat Days**: First Sat of every month at 10 a.m. **Koala Count** at the Koala Conservation Centre, second Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m. Contact Patsy Hunt ph 5952 2407

**Friends of Churchill Island (FOCIS)**: email: [webmaster@friendsofchurchillisland.org.au](mailto:webmaster@friendsofchurchillisland.org.au)

**Groundswell** Bass Coast Climate Change action group: <http://groundswellbasscoast.com> Contact Ray Astbury: [rugged@people.net.au](mailto:rugged@people.net.au) phone 5952 1991.

**Bird Life Bass Coast**: Penny Manning, convener, [donpenma@waterfront.net.au](mailto:donpenma@waterfront.net.au) ph 5956 7586

## **PICS COMMITTEE 2014**

President: Anne Davie (media contact 5956 8216) e: [bimbadeen@nex.net.au](mailto:bimbadeen@nex.net.au)

Vice President: Pauline Taylor ph 5952 5485

Secretary: Christine Grayden, ph 5956 8501 e: [cgrayden@waterfront.net.au](mailto:cgrayden@waterfront.net.au)

Minutes Secretary: Gillian Collins

Treasurer: Danielle Angel

Committee: Terry Nott, Steven Angel, Penny Manning (Chair of c/ee and sub c/ee meetings), Margaret Hancock, Lisa Schonberg

C/ee meets at 10.30 a.m. on 4<sup>th</sup> Sat of each month at Community Room, Parish Hall Cowes.

## ***President's Letter to Members***

It has been once again a busy 3 months for the PICS Committee. A successful AGM was held early in January and the Committee is pleased to welcome a new member, Lisa Schonberg. Lisa has a great passion for the Marine life of Western Port and she and her daughter, Alia, have some amazing images, which they present to groups etc on request. A street stall was held on the morning of the AGM, outside Coles and there are always people who are unaware of the activities of the diverse environmental groups on the Island. At the same time, Christine was holding another successful Children's Environmental morning in the Heritage Centre.

But of course the main news item is the large Public Meeting convened by PICS on March 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Parish Hall. Over 100 people attended the meeting, called to provide information about the concern over the proposed expansion of the Port of Hastings. Speakers were : Margaret Hancock who spoke of the PICS history of involvement with Western Port issues, Lisa Schonberg presented her magnificent collection of photos of the marine life, Jeff Nottle spoke of the potential effects of the dredging on the Cowes foreshore beaches, Xenia Dennett, from Birdlife Australia spoke of the importance of Western Port as a Ramsar site and Jenny Warfe, Co-ordinator of Blue Wedges, spoke of the effect of dredging in Port Phillip. They were great Speakers, with excellent power point presentations

During Question and Discussion time, Natalie Hutchins, Shadow Minister for Ports, Freight and Logistics, stated that the Labour Party did not support Hastings as the Port expansion site.

The Meeting passed 2 Motions with regard to the proposed expansion of the Port of Hastings :

1. "That this meeting inform the Premier, Dennis Napthine and Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews, that the development of the Port of Hastings will negatively impact on the environmental, economic and social value of Western Port and should not proceed."
2. "That a Preserve Western Port [PWP ] Action Group be formed"

The Motions were passed unanimously

The PWP Action Group held its first meeting 2 days after the Public Meeting and has 20 enthusiastic members!

*Anne Davie*

### ***PLANNING UPDATE***

The GOOD NEWS is that the Bass Coast Shire Council voted to abandon AMENDMENT C132, and informed the Minister for Planning of this decision. C132 was the proposal to extend the East Cowes Settlement Boundary so that it would enable a housing development on the high ground east of Coghlan Rd and a redevelopment of the Cowes Golf Club and its associated facilities.

There are various proposals bubbling along at present:

1. A SPA FACILITY on the south western corner of the Phillip Island Tourist Rd and Churchill Rd.
2. Possible extension of the Newhaven residential area on the north side of the PI Tourist Rd between Boys' Home Rd and Churchill Rd. Unfortunately, some of the very sensitive coastal area is included on *private titles*.
3. The Port of Hastings proposal and all it entails for Western Port. The "PRESERVE WESTERN PORT" group which was formed at our Public Forum last Saturday has a long and difficult road ahead. The projected numbers for container transport are alarming. We ALL need to take a closer look at what we buy, where it is made, and how it travels to Australia.



Tenders closed on Thursday March 20<sup>th</sup> for the "Isle of Wight" site. I was shocked to read on the sale notice that the land includes FIVE titles – so all sorts of proposals may come up, not just *one hotel* as we always have expected!

*Margaret Hancock.*

### ***ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – ANNUAL REPORTS***

#### ***1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:***

It is with pleasure and pride that I present the Annual Report of the Phillip Island Conservation Society. 2013 has been another busy for the Society. The committee is energetic and committed with each member active in many different roles. PICS is fortunate to have Gillian Collins watching and informing about what is happening or not happening on the other side of the Bay. Our thanks must go to Steve Angel for the PICS web-site and to Christine and John for the Facebook Page. Danni continues to be our excellent Treasurer and we appreciate this as she has a very

busy life. The 4 editions of the Penguin Newsletter each year are as a result of John and Christine's efforts. As always, a big thank you for John's commitment to Red Rocks. He is definitely the area's guardian.

Earlier in 2013 PICS held a Sustainable Housing Forum which was well attended and our thanks to committee member, Terry Knott for organising this.

The Society supports Environment Victoria, the Environment Defenders Office, the Australian Conservation Society, Animal Rescue and the new Climate Council.

The big planning issue for the last 12 months was the Panel Hearing with regard to the rezoning Amendment 132. Margaret will speak about this later when she gives the Planning Report. PICS put together an outstanding team for the Hearing.

PICS representatives continue to meet every 2 months with a Bass Coast Shire Planning Officer. A successful Meet the Candidates was held in August and chaired by Pauline Taylor. It was very well attended.

PICS has sent submissions to the Victorian Coastal Strategy, the State Government Review of VCAT fees and the Bass Coast Council's Rural Land Strategy. It has representation on the Phillip Island Nature Parks Community Advisory Committee, its Scientific Animal Ethics Committee, the Penguin Foundation and the Environment Committee of the Port Phillip and Western Port Catchment Management Authority.

In November Mike Cleeland gave a Presentation in the Heritage Centre for PICS titled: Review of Data on Climate Change. It was held on the Climate Change Action Day.

A special general meeting was held in November which passed changes to the PICS Constitution and new Model Rules and requirements by Consumer Affairs Victoria.

PICS was invited to speak at one of the community meetings, held once a month in the Newhaven Information Centre, organised by Cr. Phil Wright and Mary Whelan, convenor of the South Coast Community Group. The topic of the meeting was the Port of Hastings. I spoke on behalf of PICS, informing of the commitment of the Conservation Society over many decades, to the welfare of Western Port. Once again Christine Grayden's, *An Island Worth Conserving* was a great reference document. Mike Lean, the CEO of Port of Hastings Development Corporation, was the Guest Speaker and said he would be available to speak at a PICS general meeting, early in the new year.

The committee has been busy today in Cowes promoting PICS and other environment groups. Our thanks for Pauline for organising this. Christine held her annual *Animals of Oz* in the Heritage Centre.

The Society remains extremely concerned about the damage by fires and the blatant disregard of the foreshore vegetation. Members raised this matter several times at Council Meetings during the year, and will continue to lobby for greater surveillance and penalties.



2014 is a state election year and the environment must be an important issue for all Victorians.

There is much concern about the possible privatisation of some State parks and other proposed policies.

PICS is very aware that the Port of Hastings is well and truly on the local agenda. It is alert and will endeavour to make certain it is kept informed. As I said in the last Newsletter : this, I believe is the big one for Phillip Island and Western Port. *Anne Davie*

### ***PLANNING:***

We began 2013 with a celebration to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "Battle of Saltwater Creek" – and what a happy occasion that was! Since then preparation work and tree planting has been done beside the creek. BUT – no bridge work yet! All planning matters have unexpected twists and turns and now, in consultation with the Shire and local people the site of the bridge is moving closer to the Foreshore. But before work proceeds we need to have the boundary between the Public Foreshore land and the privately owned adjacent land clearly delineated. We are urging the Shire to treat this as a matter of priority.

C312 – the Amendment to extend the eastern settlement boundary of Cowes – was strongly opposed by PICS. Our thanks go to the team of people who represented PICS at the three day Hearing held in Cowes. The Panel recommended in favour of the Amendment, but to our great relief the Shire Councillors voted to abandon the Amendment. In my opinion, this is a case of "Watch this space". If the Cowes Golf Club proves to not be financially viable, what is the future

of the existing Front Nine and Back Nine? Once planning issues are raised, they don't just 'go away'. If the first proposal fails another will eventually be tabled!

We also continue to 'watch this space' with the "Isle of Wight" site – this site is far too valuable to be just left derelict!

PICS has taken part in discussions about the Rural Land Use Strategy – a matter of great importance to Phillip Island. One idea which may gain momentum is the creation of a CERES-like proposal as has been developed in several places overseas.

Some of us took part in discussions about the newest version of the "Victorian Coastal Strategy". This is a very attractive document – both in appearance and in content – and is of little use as it has no *Planning Teeth!*

The BIG ISSUE for 2014 and beyond is the proposal for the development of the Port of Hastings. We all have a great deal to learn about this issue and all its ramifications. I urge you all to come to the information session with Port of Hastings Development Corporation CEO Mike Lean will bring us up to date with current information and tell us what is happening from here on. Twenty years ago PICS vigorously opposed the development of the BP Refinery at Crib Point; some of you may remember the vigorous campaign, and the big Public Meeting in this Hall on a hot, hot, Saturday morning! Well, here we go again – we will not be bored in 2014. *Margaret Hancock.*

### ***FRIENDS OF KOALAS***

Free-ranging koalas on Phillip Island continue to battle on against the odds. Recent reports of koalas have come from Ventnor, Oswin Roberts Reserve and Rhyll. Please let us know if you see a koala, as such information is important to the Nature Parks and FOK. Contact Patsy Hunt ph 5952 2407. Koalas at the KCC had their annual check-ups in early November. As 2013 draws to a close I would like to thank the committee members for their support during the year. I would also like to thank and congratulate our small but dedicated group of volunteers who have taken part in Habitat Days and Koala Counts. This year has also seen FOK spend considerable time on submissions and letters on issues affecting koalas and their habitat on Phillip Island and further afield. While such lobbying is time-consuming and sometimes seems futile it does raise awareness, helps to educate people and is made worthwhile when gains are made.



### ***BARB MARTIN BUSHBANK REPORT***

The Bushbank celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> birthday in September with a happy luncheon in the company of friends and volunteers.

When you visit the Bushbank you will find it looking extremely healthy. The plants are outstanding, as a result of the late Spring and early summer rains.

Landcare continues to place the largest order and there were significant farm plantings last winter. Coastcare and Phillip Island Nature Parks are also reliable purchasers. There has been a large increase in retail sales, and been sustained during the entire 12 months. Co-ordinator, Jenny Toy has the much appreciated assistance of some volunteers on the first Saturday of the month, when the public can come for information and to buy.

Volunteer numbers and hours continue to be excellent. There have been modifications and improvements in the work area of the Bushbank as a result of a generous grant from the Bendigo Bank of nearly \$9,000 for the work. The changes have addressed some occupational health issues that had been of concern. The Bendigo Bank also gave \$3,000 for sponsorship of the Bushbank and a sign on the Phillip island Tourist Road, acknowledges this support.

The Bass Coast Foundation provided \$5,000 to assist with Jenny's wages, the Friends of the Koalas gave a donation of \$800 and Bowens have given the Bushbank a state of the art BBQ, which was put to good use at the Christmas BBQ. The members of the Friends of the Koalas continue to be great supporters in many ways of the Bushbank. All this wonderful assistance is very much appreciated by the committee and ensures that the facility can continue to operate, we hope, for many years to come. It must be acknowledged, the dedication and commitment of the Bushbank Co-ordinator, Jenny Toy. She is an absolute gem. *Anne Davie*



### ***FRIENDS OF CHURCHILL ISLAND REPORT***

PICS sits on the c/ee of FOCIS along with Friends of Koalas and the Phillip Island & District Historical Society representatives. The late Pat Baird's revised book *Churchill Island: History and Her Story*, reprint was funded by FOCIS. Bob Baird subsequently gifted all copies, royalties and copyright to FOCIS. C/ee member David Maunders delivered a tribute to Pat at the February G.M.

FOCIS had working bees on the farm machinery on Sat April 6<sup>th</sup> and the house and contents on Sat 7 Sep and Sat Nov 30. FOCIS has paid for pavers to lift outside historic farm machinery off the ground. Some have been done, but due to staff

resigning we have to wait for the rest. PINP Open Day, 3.3.2013, Peter Paul had a FOCIS table at the Community Groups Expo and Curator Christine ran a guided tour and show and tell session.

New research sent to us on Harry Jenkins by aviation historian Kevin O'Reilly was written up for the FOCIS website by David Maunders. A major Churchill Island Key Area Plan has been completed and an information session will be held at the next FOCIS GM in Feb 2014.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Serenade at Sunset was held on CI last Feb and was highly successful, but unfortunately numbers were insufficient, and sponsors not available, to continue these. Costumier Cheryl Stratford has donated many replica period costumes for our new mannequins to wear, located in the eastern end of the dining room. They are very popular for photos. Road up to Visitors Centre was resurfaced. FOCIS did not participate in the Easter Festival due to lack of volunteers.

Speakers: February Christine spoke about her visit to Ambleside Park historic homestead in Ferntree Gully; May, 25 FOCIS members and other volunteers had a lively and productive workshop for the CI Key Area Plan. November PhD candidate Rebecca Sanders spoke about the relative importance of the first European garden in Victoria, planted on CI in 1801, and about the various types of settlement on Churchill Island.

Curator Christine and her volunteers worked very hard to get CI Reaccreditation under the Museums Australia Victoria Museums Accreditation Program and in the end after a very detailed site inspection and many policy rewrites, CI passed with flying colours. FOCIS President Stella Axarlis celebrated 10 years on the PINP Board with an unexpected visit from the Minister for morning tea during a Board meeting. C/ee is the same as last year except that Ruth O'Dea has taken over from Peter Paul as Vice President.

FOCIS was successful in getting a \$1500 Bass Coast Shire Community Grant to video the working horses on CI on Easter Sat 2014. Local videographer Paul Cooper will do the filming and edit to 10-15 min DVD.

Review of proposed new constitution and also members' preferences for receiving correspondence and notices was undertaken. Many more members opted to use email which will save FOCIS approximately \$1500 per annum. *Pauline Taylor.*

### ***RED ROCKS COASTCARE***

For Red Rocks Coastcare, 2013 has been a year of consolidating the gains we made in weed control in 2012. Blue Periwinkle was again the main target, with contractors Envirogain spraying the remnants of this very persistent creeper in June and November. While our application for a Communities for Nature grant to fund this work was unsuccessful, the Bass Coast Shire Council was able to support the project. In addition, at two working bees, our volunteers followed up with the application of herbicide to isolated emerging shoots using the dabbers. Fresh shoots continue to appear, and will require further control during early 2014. With patience and persistence, we will win in the end!

We also continued the hand-pulling of Sea Spurge, aiming eventually to clear it from the beach and foredunes of the main beach area and the Hooded Plover habitat to the east. During our April working bee, 10 bags of seed-laden plants of this weed were removed. Seedlings continue to emerge, attesting to the large seed reserve present, so this project is also on-going into 2014.

Survival rate of our 2012 planting was very disappointing, due to unusually dry conditions over Spring 2012 and Summer 2012 – 13. By contrast, in 2013, good rainfall continued from autumn to December, giving this year's planting of 350 plants over 8 sites an excellent start and the hope of a high survival rate.

As wallaby numbers increase in the foreshore and adjacent reserves, it is becoming increasingly difficult to establish some important tree species, especially Sweet Bursaria, due to selective grazing by wallabies. An allocation of \$500 from Cr Kimberley Brown's Discretionary Fund allowed us to purchase enough heavy-duty wire netting and stakes to assemble 50 tree guards, each 110 cm high, to protect plants from wallaby grazing. Some have been deployed already and the remainder will go into use next year, when more Bursaria are planted. We thank Cr Brown for her support.



The program of working bees during 2013 has been our most successful ever, with more than 10 participants on 4 occasions. Overall, during our 7 working bees, volunteers contributed a total of around 130 hours work in caring for Red Rocks. We thank all our volunteers most sincerely for their commitment. We also thank Dave Martin, Bass Coast Shire Council's Natural Resources Officer, who provides equipment and guidance, and enthusiastically supports our

endeavours. The three year plan to control Blue Periwinkle continues in 2014, with the main planting phase in areas previously covered by the weed. Over 500 plants are scheduled to go in, over several planting days. We look forward to sharing these and other activities with all our volunteers at Red Rocks in the coming year. *John Eddy, Red Rocks Coastcare coordinator.*

### ***BAYVIEW PARK PROJECT REPORT***

A small area of parkland in Bayview Drive, Red Rocks ( now known as Bayview Park) includes a patch of remnant Swamp Paperbark Scrub which has been heavily invaded by Pittosporum, a weed tree species. Late in 2012, a project led by nearby resident and PICS member Sue Saliba began to progressively remove the Pittosporum, some of which was present as large trees, and to revegetate the cleared patches. A group of volunteers began cutting out the Pittosporum and treating the stumps early in 2013, and an allocation of \$500 from Cr Kimberley Brown's Ward Discretionary Fund allowed the purchase of 270 tube stock of indigenous groundcover, shrub and tree species from the Barb Martin Bush Bank. Most of these were planted at working bees in June and September, with a number of local residents contributing. The remainder of the tube stock is being held at the Bush Bank for planting next autumn after further removal of Pittosporum. So far, establishment of the plants has been good.

Our thanks go to Mark Hill, BCSC, for carting away the cut Pittosporum, Dave Martin, BCSC, for advice on species selection and for arranging herbicide application on Bridal Creeper, and to Cr Brown for support with funding. *John Eddy.*

### ***HOODED PLOVER WATCH AT RED ROCKS 2013 – 14***



Some of our members have been actively involved in the Hooded Plover Watch program, coordinated for Phillip Island by Jon Fallaw of Phillip Island Nature Parks, and supported so capably at Red Rocks by the tireless efforts of Sue Saliba. While no chicks were hatched at Red Rocks over the summer of 2012-13, we welcomed the hatching of 3 chicks early in December at their chosen nesting site in front of a small creek east of the main swimming area. The chicks continued to thrive under the watchful eye of about 10 volunteers during the hectic holiday period, and we now look forward to them being fully fledged in the next day or so .Over the past week, we have observed them taking increasingly longer flights from just a metre or so to 200 metres.

Community interest and support for this project continues to grow, despite some unfortunate behaviour on New Years Eve resulting in damage to some of the signage at the refuge area. A very high tide and strong winds also washed away the signs last weekend, but they were quickly re-instated by Nature Park staff. In general, dog owners have been very cooperative and adhered to Council regulations consistently. Our special thanks to Sue for coordinating the volunteers. The successful rearing of all three chicks is a great achievement and a credit to all involved. *John Eddy.*

### ***CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES:***

PICS participated in two children's activities in 2013. Last January we had Dr of Zoology Lee Webley and her Animals of Oz presentation give two sessions to 40 children and as many if not more adults. The total cost for Lee is \$420. Bass Coast Shire Council pays \$400 and PICS pays the extra \$20 and approx \$40 for advertising. The children learn lots about the animals Lee brings and learn how to stroke them gently rather than actually handle them.

PICS also participated in Bass Coast Shire Council's World Environment Day Schools Environment Expo, which is held in November due to weather being better than in June when WED actually occurs. But we always use the WED theme, which this year was "Think, Eat, Save...Reduce your footprint". For our part in the expo I set up a display on traditional Aboriginal food. If you would like to see the display, it is currently on at the Phillip Island & District Historical Society museum for the holidays, open Thur and Sat 10-12 and Sun 2-4.30. It includes some bush tucker examples from Angel's Health Foods and the Rhyll Trout and Bush Tucker Farm. I had them for the expo and the children really enjoyed smelling them. The display was featured in the Advertiser with me and two children from the French Island school, which was nice publicity for PICS. *Christine Grayden.*

### **facebook**

Have you been on the PICS facebook page yet? Over 200 people a week visit to catch up with Phillip Island environment news, and all the PICS action, including Red Rocks Coast Care photos and information. Find us at

<http://www.facebook.com/picsvictoria>

### **PICS WEBSITE & SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Our website, put together by c/ee member Steve Angel, is taking shape and is always worth a visit. Thanks to everyone who has already paid their subscriptions. If you haven't yet, we look forward to receiving your subs soon. Remember,

now you can pay and make donations securely online on the PICS website with Paypal. Go to [www.picsvictoria.org.au](http://www.picsvictoria.org.au)  
Donations of \$2 or more to the Public Fund are tax deductible. You will be sent a tax deductible receipt from our treasurer, Dani Angel.

#### PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING HELD SAT 11.1.2014 AT THE PARISH HALL COWES, 8.55 P.M.

The meeting followed immediately after the Annual General Meeting.

PRESENT: as per attendance book

APOLOGIES: as per attendance book

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING held 5.10.2013 Patricia Hunt/Pauline Taylor *Carried*

MATTERS ARISING:

1. Fires on beaches. As this matter has been dragging on for some years it was felt time for some decisive action. Secretary to write to new BCSC CEO Paul Buckley in mid-February and to Chief Commissioner of Police Ken Lay. Individual members encouraged to send letters and emails to council and councillors about this matter.
2. Draft Victorian Coastal Strategy – although this document has many good features, it has no ‘teeth’. PICS submitted a detailed response.
3. Western Port Biosphere Growing Connections grant application for revegetation at Saltwater Creek – application unsuccessful
4. New constitution has been approved by the Dept of Justice.

CORRESPONDENCE

Inwards:

Dept of Just: amendments made to our rules are approved.

BCSC: Council decision to abandon Amendment C132

ACF Membership renewal notice

Environment Defenders Office: thanks for renewal

BCSC: invitation to participate in survey re review of planning scheme

Outwards:

New members Kevin Harris & Alison Smith – copy of PICS history

New member AnjaHoerig – copy of PICS history.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Bass Coast Landcare Network has funding for Public Fund operators (such as PICS). Cr Phil Wright suggested that there are 16 ‘unloved’ parcels of BCSC land along the south coast that PICS could put in for preparing management plans and doing some vegetation work. Bernie McComb gave an example of such a piece of land that he and a group of locals are reclaiming near Grossard Court.

Anne, Margaret and Penny will ask the BCSC planner when next they meet.

Lisa Schonberg spoke about the whales in Western Port and how a Southern Right Whale was seen just this week in the bay. Greg Johnson stated that he has a video of a Southern Right Whale off Red Rocks many years ago. Christine will put whales in WP information on PICS FaceBook page.

Anne Davie proposed that a new group was needed to protect Western Port from the threat of the Port of Hastings, and that PICS could initiate such a group.

That PICS takes steps to organise a public meeting in order to establish a new action group for Phillip Island focused on the protection of Western Port. Greg Johnson/Pauline Taylor *Carried*.

Penny Manning reported that she had attended an information session about the new Hot Springs development proposed for the western side of Veterans’ Way, Newhaven. This will be a very large development with hot pools run on gas, accommodation and a wide variety of other ancillary activities. Put on watching brief.

Margaret Hancock reported that she had participated in the trial green waste collection and found it most successful and satisfactory. This trial is now being expanded. Margaret asked that PICS write to BCSC congratulating them on this initiative. Margaret Hancock/Cathie Robie *Carried*.

John Eddy told members that a Red Rocks Working Bee would be held tomorrow, Sunday 12.1.14 and all were welcome to participate in cleaning up rubbish and removing Sea Spurge.

Cr Phil Wright reported that PINP would soon be undertaking a Key Area Plan for the south coast of Phillip Island and there was a need to ensure that BCSC management issues of adjoining land were also incorporated into the plan. PICS representative on PINP Community Advisory C/ee to keep watch.

Phil also read a letter from BCSC CEO Alan Bawden regretting that Phil's nomination of Maurice Schinkel as Citizen of the Year had not been successful. However, all members present agreed with Phil's nomination with acclamation due to Maurice's excellent record in ensuring BCSC officers were totally accountable.

Meeting Closed 9.30 p.m.

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC  
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD 11.1.2014 AT PARISH HALL, COWES, 7.30 P.M.

PRESENT: See attendance book

APOLOGIES: See attendance book

WELCOME: President Anne Davie welcomed members and acknowledged the traditional owners of this country.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 12.1.2013. David Lancaster/Margaret Hancock. *Carried.*

ANNUAL REPORTS:

1. PRESIDENT – Anne Davie
2. PLANNING – Margaret Hancock
3. BARB MARTIN BUSH BANK – Anne Davie
4. FRIENDS OF KOALAS – Patricia Hunt
5. FRIENDS OF CHURCHILL ISLAND – Pauline Taylor
6. RED ROCKS COAST CARE – John Eddy
7. CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENT ACTIVITIES – Christine Grayden

See March 2014 newsletter for text of annual reports

Reports received: David Lancaster/Penny Manning

TREASURER'S REPORT

Steve Angel presented the 2013 Financial Statement on behalf of treasurer Dani Angel. (Attached)

Steve Angel/Peter Fensham *Carried.*

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

John Eddy took the chair

NB Under new constitution a nominator and seconder are not required.

President – Anne Davie. Elected

Vice President – Pauline Taylor. Elected

Secretary – Christine Grayden. Elected

Minutes Secretary – Gillian Collins. Elected

Treasurer – Danielle Angel. Elected.

The meeting decided on a committee of five. David Lancaster/Pauline Taylor. *Carried:*

Penny Manning

Lisa Schonberg

Terrence Nott

Steve Angel

Margaret Hancock

Red Rocks Co-ordinator – John Eddy

Anne Davie took the chair.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

The meeting decided that due to increased expenses, fees would be increased from January 2015 as follows:

Single from \$15 to \$20

Family from \$25 to \$30

Concession from \$10 to \$15.

Margaret Hancock/Bob Baird *Carried.*

Meeting Closed 8.55 p.m. Next Annual General Meeting: Saturday January 10, 2015.

## Letter to Paul Buckley, CEO, BCSC, with copy to Chf Police Cr Ken Lay

Re: Fires on Beaches

Dear Mr Buckley,

For some years members have been very concerned about the problem of fires on the shire's beaches, especially those on Phillip Island's north shore, including the area of our Coast Care group, Red Rocks. The fires occur intermittently during holiday times, and involve beach partygoers dragging vegetation from the foreshore onto the beach and lighting fires, getting more foreshore vegetation as the fire dwindles. Their activities frequently result in damage to mature vegetation and recent dune stabilization plantings and invariably result in rubbish being left on the beach. They also disturb beach nesting birds such as Hooded Plovers, and cause distress to nearby residents. Sometimes fires are lit on the dunes, and this is an obvious hazard to the whole foreshore reserve and neighbouring private property.

This is an unacceptable situation which has been dragging on for years without any real attempt by any authorities to solve the problem. We have asked the Council officers about this in the past and been told to notify the police when we come across beach fires. However, the beach fires are usually lit during very busy times when the police are involved in other duties and do not seem to have the man-power or will to approach the culprits.

The society is very keen to have definite action on this problem and ask that the Council and police, and if appropriate also the CFA, work together in a concerted manner to:

1. Have a public education program clearly identifying the deleterious effects of fires on beaches.
2. Include this information in a young-people-friendly format with brochures and social media aimed at Schoolies and holiday visitors.
3. If a by-law is required to deal with this problem, have such a by-law formulated and enforced.
4. If the problem falls under the jurisdiction of the CFA, ensure that they have police presence with them when they approach offenders.
5. If the problem falls under the jurisdiction of the police, include it in any forward planning for the busy holiday season so that tackling beach fire offenders can be factored in.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing of decisions made with regard to this problem.

Yours sincerely,  
Christine Grayden, secretary.

*Phillip Island Conservation Society, Inc.*

***The Penguin Newsletter***

First Quarter: March 2014

If undeliverable, return to:

PICS Inc.

PO Box 548

COWES, 3922



Speakers at the PICS Port of Hastings forum, l-r: Xenia Dennett (Western Port waders); Jenny Warfe (Blue Wedges – effects of dredging); Jeff Nottle (potential effects of dredging on Cowes foreshore beaches); PICS president Anne Davie; Lisa Schonberg and daughter Alia who spoke about whales and other marine life in Western Port.