

Newsletter: December 2017

Dates for Your Diary 2018

To be advised fro Coastcare groups and Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve

General Meeting Dates. Heritage Centre Meeting room, 89 Thompson Ave Cowes:

Sunday 8 April, 2 p.m.

Sunday 8 July, 2 p.m.

Sunday 30 Sep, 2 p.m.

AGM: Sat 6 Jan 2019, Parish Hall.

Annual General Meeting: Saturday 6th January 2018, bring and share meal 6 p.m., meeting 7.30 p.m. St Philip's Parish Hall, Cnr Thompson Ave and Church St, Cowes.

Enquiries: Christine Grayden, ph 5956 8501 m 0400 900 612 e: cdgrayden@gmail.com (note change of address)

Sub-committees of PICS:

Red Rocks Coastcare/Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve: Co-ordinator is John Eddy, ph 5956 8501

e: johneddy1946@gmail.com (note change of address)

Saltwater Creek Coastcare: Co-ordinator is Kevin Harris kevin@grating.com.au

Other groups:

Barb Martin Bush Bank: Sales and volunteers – every Wednesday + 1st 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: secretary@focis.org.au

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

Bird Life Bass Coast: Penny Manning, convener, penny@waterfront.net.au

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, 6th January 2018

6 p.m. for bring and share meal. Meeting: 7.30 p.m

St Philip's Parish Hall, cnr Thompson Ave and Church St Cowes

If the weather is very hot, the venue will be changed and a notice put on the door of the Parish Hall.

Annual reports

Election of office bearers

General Business

Treasurer and Minutes Secretary needed! Help share the work!

Enqs: Christine 5956 8501 cdgrayden@gmail.com

PICS COMMITTEE 2017

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

Vice President: Pauline Taylor ph 5952 5485

Secretary: Christine Grayden, ph 5956 8501 e: cdgrayden@gmail.com (note change of address)

Minutes Secretary: **VACANT** Acting Minutes Secretary: Christine Grayden

Treasurer: **VACANT** Acting Treasurer: Christine Grayden

Committee: Steven Angel (webmaster), Margaret Hancock (planning), Penny Manning (Chair of c/ee and sub c/ee meetings) Terry Nott, Jeff Nottle, Lisa Schonberg, Phil Wright

C/ee meets at 9.30 a.m. mostly on 1st Sat of each month at Community Emmaus Room, Parish Hall Cowes.

President's Letter to Members

There was a wet end to the late spring and the island's vegetation and coastline are looking magnificent!

Phillip Island Landcare celebrated its 30th birthday on December 1st on a rainy night at Bill Cleeland's farm. The group was one of the first formed in Victoria and is certainly one of the most successful. Many thousands of trees have been planted on the island, weeds removed, remnant vegetation fenced and waterways protected. Local indigenous plants from the Barb Martin Bushbank have been supplied to urban Landcare members. All of these actions resulted in the transformation of landscapes and provided habitat and shelter for birds and other wildlife.



During the year Penny Manning and I with Carmen Bush from Preserve Western Port, met in Cowes with AGL's Community Relations Manager and the Senior Manager of Strategic Projects. The purpose was to talk about the proposed LNG import jetty project at Crib Point, and their wish to keep the community informed. Extensive reports and monitoring of the proposal are ongoing. The most recent update is in this newsletter.

"Women in Conservation on Phillip Island" will soon be at the printer. Margaret Hancock, Christine Grayden and I have brought together the stories and contributions of 22 women who have participated in activities over many years, ensuring the preservation of the island's unique natural environment.

Christine has done a wonderful job with the editing and we are always most grateful for her talent and commitment. The Minister for the Environment, Lily D'Ambrosia, has agreed to launch the book in May on a date to be determined.

The proposed Vehicular Ferry Discussion Paper has been released and a Business Case is to be presented to Council for approval in the New Year. There is ongoing community discussion about the proposal and a frustration that a preferred site for the terminal has not been included in these discussions. The PICS committee had a briefing session with Peter Frances, the Bass Coast Council Manager of Business, about the project, last month.

2018 will bring the 50th Anniversary of the formation of PICS. There will be a special event during the year for members and friends to celebrate this milestone and the Society's remarkable achievements.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the AGM in the Parish hall on January 6th. Thank you for your support of the Society, and wishing everyone a restful Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Anne Davie.

LNG FACILITY UPDATE:

As we head towards the end of the year I would like to provide you an update on where things sit with the feasibility study into the Crib Point Gas Import Jetty and pipeline project.

I had hoped to be able to provide you with the Cold water plume modelling report this week but it is not quite complete. It may be complete pre-Christmas but the most likely scenario is I will be able to provide you a copy within the first half of January next year. At this time, I should also be able to provide you with the emissions report and noise report for the operation of the FSRU. (Ed: = Floating Storage and Regasification Unit)

The remaining piece of work following this will be the impact assessments on the marine ecology of the FSRU operation. (i.e. how the cold water plume effects marine ecology) (Ed: Cold water is produced during processing of the LNG and is discharged into the Bay)

Engagement with landowners who may be impacted by pipeline easements between Crib Point and Pakenham is now underway. We would expect all landowners who may be affected by the pipeline corridor to have been contacted by mid-January next year. After this point we will be able to share the route more broadly with the community. Once all landowners have been contacted and access obtained for survey works our pipeline partners will be able to undertake the necessary flora, fauna and cultural heritage studies required for an application for a pipeline licence.

I'll touch base again in January when the next round of reports are ready.

Jay Gleeson, Community Relations Manager, Strategic Projects

AGL LNG Import Jetty Project t: 0499 027 630 e: jgleeson@agl.com.au

Bass Coast Environment Groups Get together

A dozen groups, plus David Martin from BCSC and Bruce Aitkin, Coastcare co-ordinator for much of Gippsland (and soon to include Phillip Island), met at the Koala Conservation Centre's Chisholm Room on Saturday 14 October. The Nature Parks provided the venue free, and BCSC funded the catering. About 20 people attended what was a most informative and inspiring day. Most of the guests went on a walk at Scenic Estate Reserve, where their guide was co-ordinator of the Friends of SER, John Eddy. A few others went into the KCC, compliments of PINP.

After the walk and a lovely afternoon tea, guests made themselves comfortable and we had reports from each of the groups represented there, which comprised: PICS, Ventnor Coastcare, Wonthaggi Seed Bank, Birdlife Bass Coast, Rhyll Coast Action, Cape Woolamai Coast Action, Barb Martin Bushbank, Red Rocks Coastcare, South Gippsland Conservation Society, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, Boomerang Bags, the Energy Innovation Co-op, and a report from each of David and Bruce on the activities of their departments. Here are some notes, taken by John Eddy, regarding just the Phillip Island groups:

PICS, Anne Davie: After acknowledging the indigenous people and paying respects to elders, Anne told guests that PICS turns 50 years old in 2018 and there will be some sort of celebration. Meanwhile, the book: *Women in Conservation on Phillip Island* is being produced over summer, to be launched by the minister in May. PICS sub-committee PWP celebrated the decision by Infrastructure Victoria to make Bay West the next container port, not Western Port. PICS has been pleased with recent planning decisions by BCSC, notably refusing the application for an inappropriate caravan park at Forrest Caves, and also refusing a subdivision in Red Rocks Rd which would see much established vegetation removed. The Cowes-Stony Point Vehicular Ferry is back on the agenda, and PICS is closely following developments with that project. PICS has a small, hard working committee, and, as with all groups, could do with more 'troops on the ground'. PICS met with AGL about their future plans for a LNG terminal at Crib Point. There is a need to be eternally vigilant!



Florence Oswin-Roberts and a nurse caring for burnt koalas, 1950s, Cowes. From the book: *Women in Conservation on Phillip Island*.

Ventnor Coastcare – Janet Owens and Jill Sunderland: This group’s area is the coast between Anchorage Road and Grossard Point. They were successful in getting a government grant. BCSC backs them up well, thank you David! The group has concentrated on the Pall Mall area with revegetation and major weeds dealt with. Both volunteers and contractors (on the steep bits) do revegetation and weed control. Some weed mat is used to protect this steep area from erosion. Jill grows some of the plants for the reveg projects.

Rhyll Coast Action – Carmen Bush: This group has teamed with the Rhyll Yacht Club recently to clear some inappropriate plants and revegetate other areas near the Yacht Club to create a ‘native garden’ effect, which involves using native plants in a creative way. Students from Newhaven College helped with the planting. The group is also doing screening planting around the fence where some of the yachts are stored. About 400-800 plants were put in and have created a habitat area. The group holds 3-4 working bees per year.

Cape Woolamai Coast Action – Kate McLaughlan: For the last two years this group has concentrated on the coast adjoining Woolamai Estate. Last year they put in 4,500 plants, which were most successful, apart from very wet areas. This year they aimed to do infilling planting of about 750 plants. Unfortunately they are getting a lot of rubbish, such as builders’ rubbish, from the subdivision. They also work on Sea Spurge in the area. Kate broke her arm during the year which curtailed her activities. Next year the group aims to remove large pine trees from the reserve. Kate also mentioned how good it was that San Remo IGA is no longer giving out singlet bags but using Boomerang Bags.

Barb Martin Bush Bank – Anne Davie: Anne reported that as part of the re-development of the Penguin Parade area, PINP will be moving in with the Bush Bank. BMBB is very active, with about 12 volunteers committing time each Wednesday and Thursday. Apart from being productive, these are also very sociable occasions.

Red Rocks Coastcare – John Eddy. John gave a short Power Point presentation with an aerial photo showing the RRCC area, and describing the work that has been done there over many years, with the group established in 1996. They have now basically run out of work to do in the established area, apart from Blue Periwinkle and other weeds which require regular removal to keep on top of them. The group is looking further afield and may move east to tackle the area near the small creek and old tip site at the end of Church St where there is a grove of old-growth Banksias..

BCSC Coast & Bushland team – David Martin. Dave is the co-ordinator of Coast & Bushland and the Natural Resources Officer. BCSC works with other land managers, with much work being on the urban interface. His work includes:

- Work with Coastcare and other volunteer groups
- Upgrading of facilities
- Use & works permits
- Fire prevention
- Liaise with all sorts of clubs using the reserves
- Maintain assets
- Weed control and revegetation
- Support volunteer groups.



Dave showed some most interesting photos of the coast and bushland of BC highlighting many of the issues involved.

This is always a worthwhile event to attend. It is easy to get bogged down with all of the issues and environmental battles we need to fight, but this event clearly shows all the wonderful work that lots of groups are doing in Bass Coast.

REPORTS

Red Rocks Coastcare

Recent activity has been mainly about weed control. Our September working bee targeted the seasonal weed Angled Onion, along tracks and near recent plantings, leaving contractors to spray heavy infestations. In November we did a 'search and destroy' mission on the very invasive Blue Periwinkle, which continues to emerge in small numbers. One very dense patch was uncovered, overlooked before, and left for contractors to deal with. Thanks, as always, to Sue, Bruno, Patsy and Maurice.

The annual Spurgebusters outing at Justice Rd in November saw the six volunteers clear sea spurge from the whole beach/dune area in less than an hour, showing how well-controlled this pest now is. We had time the same morning to also attack a dense patch of the garden escape succulent Crassula, near Penguin Rocks. Other weeds, like thistles, have also been targeted recently.

Saltwater Creek Coastcare

There have been no recent working bees at SWC. The August community planting on the south side of the creek reserve near Richardson Way has been most successful. Adequate rain right into early December has resulted in excellent survival and establishment, with guarding so far effective against wallabies.

Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve

1. Premature disintegration Of cardboard tree guards has been a concern. The guards are milk carton type, which are plastic coated cardboard and have been breaking down after only 5 months to litter the site and surrounding vegetation with thousands of bits of white plastic. Complaints have been lodged with the suppliers.

2. During October, contractors sprayed the few small infestations of Angled Onion, bridal creeper and other weeds. Thanks to BCSC for arranging that.

3. Several unfortunate incidents took place in October. In one alarming incident, an off-leash dog attacked a dog that was being walked on a lead, resulting in minor injury to that dog, and a traumatic experience for the owners. Then someone dumped a large bin-full of rubbish on the edge of the car park. A few days later, in a similar way to last year, the gate leading into the Reserve was smashed open, allowing a vehicle to drive around the walking tracks, but no apparent other damage. The culprits remain unknown, and the incidents are probably not related. In response, BCSC installed a security camera at the gate, and a notice in the carpark.

4. As part of the statewide Aussie Backyard Bird Count, we did three 20 minute counts in the Reserve, listing 15 species.

5. Bollards are to be installed by BCSC across the entrance to the old service road to stop access by 4WD vehicles which have badly carved the track up and destroyed revegetation work.

6. The FOSER committee, which meets every couple of months, was sad to farewell Samantha Coleman as the PINP representative. Sam was thanked for her very considerable contribution. We welcome Roger Whitelaw as the new PINP rep on the committee.

7. Locals would have noticed the large pile of sand just beyond the carpark during December. This has now been used for upgrading some of the old estate roads into walking tracks leading to and from a new boardwalk through Swamp Scrub in the Reserve. This is part of the Council's Stage 2 development. The boardwalk was not favoured by FOSER, due to its impact on the native vegetation, but will provide an alternative route for visitors. As part of stage 2, the PINP will also create a new path to the Reserve's NW corner, where another viewing platform will soon be constructed.

Grassland area. Our measurements have shown that this encroachment has been over one metre in the past year, and is an on-going issue.

9. In early December botanist Alison Oates and I set up 13 monitoring plots in the various Ecological Vegetation Classes in the Reserve. They aim to show, via annual monitoring, any vegetation changes that might have management implications for the Reserve as a whole.

10. We also monitor cliff erosion along the coast at SER. Recent measurements showed no significant change in the 12 months to December. For high-tide storms, it has been a relatively benign year. Thanks to Phil Wright for helping with the measurements and also those monitoring the encroachment onto grassland.

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
SUN 1 OCTOBER 2017, 2.00 p.m., HERITAGE CENTRE COWES.

PRESENT: As per attendance book

APOLOGIES: As per attendance book. Apologies also from our speakers Kayleen Mendola who is ill, and Colleen Dilbee, who was out on wildlife rescue calls.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of indigenous people.

MINUTES of the previous meeting held 8 July 2017. Penny Manning/Terry Nott *Carried*.

MATTERS ARISING:

Blue Gum alley: Margaret Hancock presented on this at the BCSC community forum on 9 August 3 p.m. Wonthaggi.

Margaret and Anne Davie met with BCSC planner Jodie Kennedy recently, and also discussed Blue Gum alley.

Margaret reported that she had just been to a lunch gathering of Blue Gum Reserve users with 16 people present.

TREASURER'S report circulated "That the treasurer's report be accepted". Christine Grayden/Lisa Schonberg *Carried*.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Inwards:

Deidre Griepsma, BCSC re: seeking nomination for BC Natural Environment Advisory Working Group. Phil Wright has been nominated.

Veronica Dowman, Small Coastal Townships Alliance, re nomination as above.

Environmental Justice Australia receipt for annual subs

BCSC Community Health and Wellbeing Admin re our comments on dogs off leash on beaches and BCSC considering the BC Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-21 last week.

Cr Michael Whelan x 2 re tree lopping at Coghlan Rd

Jeff Nottle re meeting with AGL

John Halford re car ferry business case giving link

Rebecca Taylor, Infrastructure Maintenance, BCSC re management of road side vegetation, sharing links to appropriate policies.

Smiths Beachcomber Association Spring newsletter

Environment Victoria subscription due notice

Environment Victoria AGM and community environment awards Wed 25 Oct, 5.30-7 p.m., RMIT building, 445 Swanston St Melbourne. RSVP by 20 Oct 9341 8100.

ACF notice of annual subscription due November

Environment Victoria News Issue 28 Spring 2017

ACF Habitat magazine Vol 45 No.2 October 2017

Gillian Collins – resignation as minutes secretary, but offering to stay as PICS representative on Port of Hastings Community Consultative Committee.

Outwards:

All BCSC councillors thanking them for disallowing development proposal Red Rocks Rd

EPA Gippsland seeking a meeting on noise on Phillip Island in light of Visitor Economy Strategy Game Changer #1 that the area become a Global Sustainable Tourism destination. EPA rep has contacted us and will soon be in touch with a meeting time, to also include BCSC rep if possible.

To Paul Buckley, CEO BCSC re tree lopping Coghlan Rd

Gillian Collins – thanking her for her years as Minutes Secretary, and also for her offer to POHCCC.

Regarding the correspondence, Christine read out an excerpt from the ACF's Habitat magazine on the drivers endangering the planet. Sue Saliba pointed out that people seemed to be distant from nature now. She had been to the Eastern Barred Bandicoot talk where Duncan Sutherland spoke about the eradication of foxes from Phillip Island and the current campaign to eradicate feral cats, but Sue asked, what about other dangers, such as human behaviour? Christine commented that at the round table discussion that happened with the development of the BCSC Natural Environment Sustainability report, education of the public was a high priority. Now that a NES Advisory Working Group is being formed, they will hopefully address this vital issue. Phil Wright is the PICS nomination to this group.

REPORTS: John Eddy referred members to the reports in the recent newsletter, but gave brief updating reports as follows:

Red Rocks Coast Care working bee was held recently with 9 volunteers who concentrated on angled onion, which is an increasing problem on the island. John has found vandalism of some of the tall anti-wallaby guards and stakes protecting Bursaria. Next working bee 19.11.17

Saltwater Creek Coast Care: Kevin Harris has been in Bali a lot so no working parties, but John has seen vandalism to the June planting on north side of creek. South side of creek had a community planting day in August, with the survival rate excellent so far.

Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve: working bee Sunday 26.11.17. There is a lot of water lying around at present in the reserve.

GENERAL BUSINESS.

1. John reported that he was to meet tomorrow with BCSC's Scott Morrison to speak about tree lopping at Coghlan Rd following on from PICS's letter to BCSC on the matter.

2. Penny Manning and Anne had met with AGL personnel regarding the LNG import jetty at Crib Point which is in the very early planning stages. They were very friendly and informative and were also going to the Advertiser. They plan for a minimum of 20-40 ships per year which are about 310 metres long. There will be an Environment Effects Statement. A swinging basin would need to be included and a pipeline from Crib Point to join up with the existing pipeline at Pakenham. Members expressed concern over the size of the swing basin required and the noise which would be generated by the ships and plant, and the dredging required for such big ships. What of the RAMSAR site? What of all the whales now using the bay?

Qn: What of ballast water? A: very strict regulations exist regarding this. The ships will be unloading gas and loading WP water for ballast on return trip. Otherwise any ballast discharge must happen 20 km offshore.

Q: Where does the gas come from? A: all over the world. *(continued on back page of newsletter)*

Phillip Island Conservation Society, Inc.

The Penguin Newsletter

December 2017

If undeliverable, return to:

PICS Inc.

PO Box 548

COWES, 3922

Your PICS membership subscription is due now. A form is with this newsletter. Please pay your subs as soon as possible. We value your membership! Donations are also accepted happily to our General fund to help with our insurance cover, or our tax deductible Public Fund to help with projects.

General Meeting mins contd...

Q: What about renewable? A: The life of the terminal will be about 15-20 years by which time renewables will be sufficient to take over from fossil fuels.

Anne reported that the AGL staff had said that AGL wants to get right out of coal.

3. Anne alerted members to the forthcoming community sessions on the proposed vehicular ferry this coming Thursday.

4. Anne reported that BCSC had rejected the proposed caravan park at Forrest Caves. This may well go to VCAT. PICS had objected. Anne also warned that the airport issue has not gone away. BCSC will be asking the community for input at some stage.

DVD: Instead of a speaker members watched the Phillip Island & District Historical Society's DVD "Phillip Island History" which Anne and Christine worked on with John Jansson and which has a lot of environmental history in it. Members agreed that it was most worthwhile.

Meeting closed 3.00 p.m.

The next General Meeting will be following the AGM on Saturday 6th January 2018, starting at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall.