



“The Penguin” Newsletter

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Newsletter: December 2018

Dates for Your Diary 2019

To be advised for Coastcare and FOSER groups

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING with speaker. Saturday 5th January, 6.30 p.m. for bring and share meal. 7.30 p.m. for AGM. Cowes Cultural Centre meeting room 1. Enqs Christine 0400 900 612.

GENERAL MEETINGS: All at: 2.30 p.m. Cowes Cultural Centre meeting room 1.

Sunday 14 April, speaker TBA, but theme will be planning, “How to”

Sunday 7 July Speaker TBA

Sunday 29 September Speaker TBA.

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

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

Other groups:

Barb Martin Bush Bank: Is now open again.

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 0419552385 OR 0484921028.

Friends of Churchill Island (FOCIS): email: secretary@focis.org.au

Groundswell Bass Coast Climate Change action group: <http://groundswellbasscoast.com> Contact Pauline Taylor: gpctaylor@gmail.com

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

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday January 5, 2019

Cowes Cultural Centre, meeting room 1

6.30 p.m. for bring & share meal

7.30 p.m. for President’s & treasurer’s report, report on planning workshop
& election of office bearers.

SPEAKER: Richard Faulkner, Phillip Island Nature Parks on
“Introduction of bush stone curlew to Phillip Island”

ALL WELCOME

Enqs: Christine Grayden, secretary, m 0400 900 612

PICS COMMITTEE 2018

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

Vice President: Jeff Nottle

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

Minutes Secretary:

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

Committee: 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. on 1st Sat of each month at Community Emmaus Room, Parish Hall Cowes.

All positions will be vacant at the AGM and you are encouraged to nominate. Nomination forms can be taken from financial members at the meeting and you can nominate yourself.

Letter from the President Anne Davie

2018 has been an incredibly busy one for the Conservation Society and the pace has continued during the final 3 months of the year.

A very happy 50th Celebration was held on September 30th in the Heritage Centre, Cowes. The Committee was delighted that 4 Bass Councillors joined us. The Displays, Posters and Christine's books enabled members to share the many and varied experiences of the lobbying and the actions to achieve positive outcomes for the Island's natural environment.

The Community Street Parade was a tremendous success as part of the 150th celebrations to recognise the Island Land Ballot in 1868. The Island has a diverse and dynamic community and over 50 organisations, including the Conservation Society, marched with pride down Thompson Avenue, to the cheers of an enthusiastic crowd!

The Planning Session, an initiative of Vice-president Jeff Nottle, resulted in 18 members attending the session in the Cowes Cultural Centre on November 17th. Long-time and valued member, Greg Johnson had agreed to be the Facilitator for what proved to be a valuable exercise. The Planning Day Report will be presented at the AGM in January.



Back l-r: Linda, Anne, Jeff, Grazyna, Greg, Kevin, John, Brigitte. Front l-r: Phil, Carmen, Lisa, Jane, Terry, Bessie – at the PICS Planning workshop.

The reopening of the Barb Martin Bushbank at the beginning of October has been warmly welcomed. The hours of operation are Wednesday, Thursday and Saturdays from 9.30 to 3pm. The plants are looking wonderful.

Phillip Island featured in an episode of Going Places with Ernie Dingo on NITV in November. The Island looked magnificent and our family was delighted to be asked to talk about the importance of the work of Landcare and the preservation of the Island rural land.

How inspirational to see so many young people marching for action on Climate Change. They are the future for the Planet.

Hoping to see you all at the AGM next month [more details in this Newsletter] and wishing you all a peaceful Christmas and New Year.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Instead of being presented at the Annual General Meeting, most of the annual reports are being presented here. The President's and Treasurer's annual reports will be reported at the AGM, which will also have a speaker.

FRIENDS OF THE KOALAS (FOK)

This year has been a frustrating year for Friends of the Koalas. For the first time since our group was formed in 1990 we have not been able to do habitat work, or Koala Counts at the Koala Conservation Centre, due to ongoing volunteering problems with the Phillip Island Nature Parks (PINP). Nevertheless we have managed to keep focused and occupied by continuing our advocacy on matters which affect koalas.



One of the major concerns this year has been the management of Victoria's forests and the continuing loss of habitat for koalas and other precious wildlife. Closer to home, FOK has commented on draft plans released for comment by PINP. Our major concerns are what seems to be very little consideration of koalas and the narrow list of stakeholders to be involved in future management plans. For example, neither FOK, nor the Conservation Society, is listed as partners to complete a Master Plan into the conservation and tourism opportunities for the Koala Conservation Centre site.

Our AGM will be held on 19th January 2019 at 2pm at the Koala Conservation Centre (in the Chisholm meeting room). Come along to what will be an important opportunity to comment on the future of FOK, the KCC, and koalas on Phillip Island. We believe that after such a long association with the Koala Conservation Centre FOK has earned the right to be actively involved in its future. Personally, I would like to thank the FOK Committee and a small group of dedicated volunteers for their unwavering support during what has been a difficult time.

Best wishes for Christmas and 2019

Patsy Hunt

PRESERVE WESTERN PORT ACTION GROUP (PWP)

A key highlight was the launch of the history of Preserve Western Port Action Group (PWP) Campaign written by Phyllis Papps. The history provided an excellent outline of the campaign resulting in a “Glorious Win” in May 2017 when Infrastructure Victoria opted for Bay West in Port Phillip for the second container port for Victoria, not the Port of Hastings.

The history Foreword was written by the Bass Coast Mayor Cr Pamela Rothfield who stated: “What a debt of gratitude, we the residents of Phillip Island and waterline towns owe to the Preserve Western Port Action Group”.

This year has also seen other attempts to industrialise by the gas industry and the State and Federal Governments. PWP and PICS have been active in developing partnerships to express concerns about the AGL proposal to process LNG gas in Western Port. We have made submissions to State and Federal Governments seeking greater environmental scrutiny. Both initiatives have been successful and State EES and Federal EPBC examinations will be undertaken.

RED ROCKS COASTCARE

Due to other commitments, I have had to put normal activities at Red Rocks on hold this year. However, we did run a working bee in March to clean up rubbish and old plant guards, with 9 volunteers attending. In August, a small group of volunteers put in 74 plants.



Sea Spurge continued to be monitored and removed regularly, and is now emerging in very low numbers. That is a great outcome. I have done Blue Periwinkle “search and destroy” missions several times during the year, and we have 3 “hotspots” for that persistent weed which require spraying by Shire contractors.

As usual, special thanks to the Shire’s Natural Resources Officer, Dave Martin, and, in his Long Service Leave absence, Adam Johns, for their great support and encouragement during the year.

John Eddy. RRCC coordinator 14.12.2018

SALTWATER CREEK COASTCARE

This group has been inactive during the year, as coordinator Kevin Harris has been pre-occupied with on-going commitments in Melbourne. He hopes to spend more time on the Island next year. Most plants put in over the past 3 or 4 years continue to do fairly well, with wallaby guards generally effective. *John Eddy*

FRIENDS OF SCENIC ESTATE RESERVE

The Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve held 6 working bees during the year, with volunteer attendances of 7, 6, 14, 6, 6 and 9 respectively. Weed control, rubbish clean-up and planting were again the main activities, and, of course, morning tea! In addition, a number of smaller activities, involving just 1 or 2 volunteers, took place. FOSER sincerely thanks all its volunteers and gratefully acknowledges their on-going support. Special thanks to Kate McLaughlin for always supplying the hot water and cups.

Over the two planting days in June and July, a total of 420 plants went in, at 3 sites within the Reserve: the entrance from the carpark, the area in the middle of the Reserve we call “Stinkwort Flats”, and an open area near the coast into which we are hoping to extend the Moonah Woodland. Early indications promise good survival in all 3 areas.

Three weeds have been targeted this year. Stinkwort in the centre of the Reserve has been reduced sufficiently now to make hand-pulling an effective means of control, preventing seed set. Along the old service road to the south, infestations of this free-seeding annual have been dense enough to still require spraying by Shire contractors. The key aim of preventing any seed-set of Stinkwort at all in the Reserve was achieved. Thistles of several sorts have been cut and dabbed, or pulled up, on a regular basis, mostly Spring to Autumn. We concentrate on Gorse in late winter, when flowering makes its presence obvious. Several heavily-infested areas had to be sprayed this year. Less dense infestations have been controlled manually, again by cutting and dabbing with Roundup. Some of our volunteers are reluctant to use Roundup these days, so we need to look for effective alternatives.

A significant outcome for 2018 has been the completion by the Shire and the Nature Parks of Stage 2 of the Development Plan for the Reserve. A new boardwalk through Swamp Scrub and a new viewing platform in the north-west corner of the Reserve have been constructed, with Nature Parks staff doing the construction very capably. Additional pathways to and from this new infrastructure have also been completed.



Interpretative signage has also been installed throughout the Reserve. Seven engraved metal signs covering the key aspects of flora, fauna and history of the Reserve were designed and installed as a collaborative project between BCSC, PINP and FOSEER. The large painted sign at the carpark has also been upgraded, as have the numerous directional signs. No doubt this all adds to visitors having a positive experience.

I regret that, due to other commitments, we have only been able to get the FOSEER committee together for formal meetings on two occasions during this year. However, most issues that arise are easily dealt with via emails, and conversations during working bees. An on-going issue, still not fully resolved, has been how best to incorporate FOSEER into the PINP’s Volunteer Program. This will probably be via an “Access Agreement” for scheduled work on the Nature Parks-controlled foreshore reserve. Insurance cover for our volunteers has been the difficulty, but is probably sorted out now.

Again this year, there have been several unfortunate incidents involving off-leash dogs at the Reserve harassing other visitors and their dogs. Each time, the Shire has been notified, and, for a time, we posted a sign at the entrance re-enforcing that dogs must always be on a leash.

We continue to monitor the rate at which Swamp Paperbark is encroaching into the Native Grasslands, and the erosion of the coastal cliffs at the Reserve. Fortunately, we detected no significant encroachment overall, nor change in the coastline for 2018. Special thanks to Phil Wright for helping with these measurements. Botanist Alison Oates and I also monitor changes in 13 plots covering the main plant communities on an annual basis. Again, only minor changes were detected this year, suggesting stable plant communities. Special thanks to Alison for her efforts.

Predictions for 2019 suggest a year that will be significantly drier than normal. Consequently, we are planning to do only minor planting, and will concentrate on weed control, and assessing the success of previous plantings.

As usual, we sincerely thank Bass Coast Shire Council and staff, and the Nature Parks staff, for their support of FOSER , and the work in the Reserve.

John Eddy, FOSER coordinator

FRIENDS OF CHURCHILL ISLAND SOCIETY INC

Unfortunately the planned FOCIS Old Fashioned Picnic did not go ahead due to the one bad day of weather in six weeks – the day of the picnic! Due to a number of factors it proved too difficult to hold on another day, so all of our planning and preparation will have to wait for another year.

FOCIS was successful in gaining \$5,000 from a BCSC Community grant to put to the extension of the main shed housing Churchill Island’s collection of historic farm machinery. FOCIS has put a further \$10,000 of our own funds towards this project plus over \$2,000 from a crowd-funding campaign to put towards signage for the new display of the machinery once the extension is complete in a few months time. PINP is funding the balance for the shed extension.

Our curator Christine Grayden retired in July after eight years and has been replaced by Melissa Hayes. Christine continues to organise FOCIS working bees where 6-10 FOCIS members attend to clean the house and cottages or the historic farm machinery several times per year.



Meanwhile our requests to have the gardener’s position made full time to cope with the workload was successful. The gardener Kate is now full time but unfortunately Melissa is only 15 hours per fortnight.

Pat Baird’s wonderful book *Churchill Island: History and Her Story* is currently on special at 4 copies for \$20. These books make excellent gifts and are also a fundraiser for FOCIS. You can buy them from the FOCIS website.

PLANNING

2018 saw a sensible outcome to what could have been intensive subdivision on Red Rocks Rd, when the developer agreed to fewer, larger blocks and more tree retention. In the same geographical area, an application for Glamping at Appley Avenue, on the Red Rocks foreshore fire track, was withdrawn after much opposition from local residents and others. This would have been a most unfortunate precedent.

At present we are awaiting the panel report on Amendment C151, Cowes Activity Centre plan implementation. A very interesting two day hearing was held at the Cowes Cultural Centre and many discerning questions were asked by the two members from Planning Panels Victoria. You will find an excellent report of the proceedings in the Phillip Island and San Remo Advertiser of November 21st. An outstanding submission was made by Susan Barclay on behalf of the body corporate of “The Waves” apartments, which included a suggestion that a special historical overlay should be put over Steele Street to protect its particular charm, and to show the

importance of guest houses. To me this seemed a very positive suggestions, and one which we all should support. It's worth taking time just to have a wander in Steele Street and enjoy its ambience and the assortment of trees and gardens leading to Erewhon Point. Hopefully a new architecturally successful "Isle of Wight" will eventuate.

At present there seems to be no positive plans for the Warley Hospital site. And the original intent of the purchase of "Olive Justice Place" seems to have vanished into history! This may have happened because it now seems so long ago – during the time of the shire amalgamation, and the reign of the commissioners. At the Panel hearing I was grateful for Christine's information about Olive Justice as a real person, who wanted the whole community to benefit from the use of her property – not just a car park! And not a possibly four storey apartment block! We need to come up with some creative suggestions about this rare opportunity to create a special 'people place'.

The proposed caravan park at Surf Beach is headed for VCAT next year. If you are one of the many people who lodged an objection, please follow it up and appear at the VCAT hearing. Lodging objections is important, but it's equally important to follow up with the "I wish to be heard"! *Margaret Hancock.*

MINUTES: There was no general meeting in September as our 50th birthday celebration was held instead.

Olive Justice by Christine Grayden (great neice)

Olive Justice was a granddaughter of original 1868 settlers Charles Grayden and Margaret (nee Larkie). She was born in 1895 and lived at her parents' farm in Anchorage Rd Ventnor until moving to Melbourne to work. She married Reg Justice of another pioneering Phillip Island family. They moved to Newhaven where they bought Ocean View guest house which Olive renamed Ferry Lodge, which catered for up to 14 visitors. She also offered guided motor tours of the island and was one of the first women on the island to get a driver's licence. Certainly she was the only woman doing guided motor tours. Reg operated the punt taking cars across the Eastern Passage until the first Phillip Island bridge opened in 1939. In the 1950s Olive, Reg and their two offspring Zenda Joyce and Roy moved to what is now Olive Justice Place, 70 Chapel Street Cowes, where Reg had a blacksmith's shop in the 1920s and Reg built a house there.

There was room enough on the block for Olive's magnificent garden and for the hot houses where her son Roy, groundsman at the Sunseeker Hotel (cnr Justice and Church Streets), grew potted plants for charity street stalls. They also had many fruit trees. Olive went blind from glaucoma in her early 60s and Reg and Zenda having died, Roy cared for her until his death in the house in 1992. Olive then went into care, first in Melaleuca Lodge and then in Warley Nursing Home. But the house was left as it was while she was alive and her nephew Keith Grayden regularly took her out in a wheelchair and pushed her home for a cup of tea.

I looked after Olive's affairs while she was in care. My uncle Keith and I spent many hours with her, and she often expressed her wishes for the site. During her time there she had been approached many times to sell the site for development and despite the large sums she was offered, she always refused. Development is most definitely not what she envisaged for her home site. She frequently told me that she wanted it as a small park with a facility where mothers could breastfeed their babies in privacy and pleasant surroundings, where people could get out of the weather without having to go to a cafe if they could not afford it, and where gardens would flourish for everyone's enjoyment, as hers had done. *Continued on page 8*

Phillip Island Conservation Society, Inc.

The Penguin Newsletter

September 2018

If undeliverable, return to:

PICS Inc.

PO Box 548

COWES, 3922

MEMBERSHIPS are now due. A membership form is with this newsletter. We appreciate prompt payment of your subscription. As we have \$1200 worth of insurance to pay each year, it would greatly help PICS if you could also manage a donation to the general fund. Or if you would like to donate to our on-ground and educational work, you can make a tax deductible gift to our Public Fund. Please see the form for methods of payment.

If you are a new member and joined some time between October and now, you do not need to pay for 2019. You will be sent a new membership card shortly.

Olive Justice, continued...

Olive died in 1995 aged 99 years, a much-loved islander whose life echoed the twentieth century history of Phillip Island. The area was at that time under the control of the Commissioners, and Commissioner Bill Power, who had spoken to Olive about her land while she was still alive, was keen that her wishes be fulfilled and that the council should buy the property. This was done in the time of the commissioners, and the council paid \$250,000 for the land – a very reasonable price, even at that time. Olive's and Roy's combined estates were willed to the Salvation Army and the proceeds were used in the building of a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre.