



“The Penguin” Newsletter

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Newsletter: June 2018

Dates for Your Diary 2018

To be advised for Coastcare groups

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

Sunday 8 July, 2 p.m.

Sunday 30 Sep, 2 p.m. In lieu of a meeting we will be having our **50th birthday celebration** at the Chisholm Room of the Koala Conservation Centre. See invitation in this newsletter for details.

AGM: Sat 6 Jan 2019, Cultural Centre Cowes

Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve:

All scheduled working bees to be on Sundays , 10am to 12noon, starting at the car park.

8th July Planting Day 2 - Moonah woodland extension

2nd Sep Gorse control

11th Nov Site Maintenance

Rhyll Coast Action is holding planting days at Pleasant Point at the end of McFee's Rd Rhyll. The dates are 1st July and 22nd July, 10 a.m. – 12 noon. Look for signs towards the end of McFee's Rd for meeting point.

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 currently closed while revamping is undertaken by new managers Phillip Island Nature Parks. 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 Pauline Taylor: gpctaylor@gmail.com

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

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, 8th July 2018, 2 p.m., Heritage Centre Meeting Room,
89 Thompson Ave Cowes.

Speaker: Dr Lynda Hanlon

'COASTAL MYCOLOGY - 'FRIENDLY' FUNGI IN SAND DUNES'

ALL WELCOME Enqs: Christine 5956 8501 cdgrayden@gmail.com

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: Phil Wright

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

Letter from the President *Anne Davie*

After a prolonged dry spell the rain has finally come and most welcome for last year's plantings and for the preparation of the ground to commence the 2018 plantings.

With the winding up of the Barb Martin Bushbank and its management now by Phillip Island Nature Parks, Island Groups were informed by the Committee that there were some funds available for distribution for planned Island environmental projects. The successful applicants were the Cowes Catholic Primary School, Newhaven College, Phillip Island Landcare, Surf Beach/Sunderland Bay Coastcare and Rhyll Coast Action.

The Bushbank is currently undergoing some much needed improvements and it is hoped will be ready for Retail Sales in July. Meanwhile volunteers are busy propagating and ensuring the Client Orders are ready when required. Candice, the new Coordinator, has had a challenging time with the works and changes on the Bushbank site but has remained cheerful and optimistic.

PICS was invited to participate as a member of the Working Group to produce a 30 Year PINPS Conservation Plan. I have attended a number of meetings and the Draft will soon be put out for comment. Over the next decades, the Island's flora, fauna and coastline will be subject to increasing pressure as a result of climate change and growing numbers from tourism visitation.

The Energy Innovation Co-operative, with the support of interested organisations, groups and individuals launched Phillip Island 100% Renewables in the Cowes Cultural Centre on Sunday June 24th. Secretary Christine Grayden and I attended with an information table. The hall was packed and a working group was formed. This is a wonderful initiative and interest is strong and growing. The whole presentation was streamed live and is now available on the PICS Facebook page.



On behalf of PICS members I want to thank Jane Jobe, Chair of the PICS Car Ferry Group and her committee for their commitment and leadership on this issue.

Planning Report

Margaret Hancock

When Christine rang me with a reminder that the newsletter material was due, I thought to myself “That’s fairly straight forward.” Well, it isn’t! The proposed housing subdivision of two acres of residential land in Red Rocks Rd, wended its way to VCAT, and achieved a satisfactory, if not ideal, outcome. The “Glamping” proposal for Appley Avenue has been modified. As yet we are not quite sure how “Glamping” fits into residential areas, so this will be a learning experience!

Last Sunday I went to a committee meeting of the local National Trust branch, and discovered Amendment C151 to the Bass Coast Planning Scheme proposes to simplify planning controls by removing objectors’ right to appeal to VCAT in relation to proposals for the “Isle of Wight” Hotel and “Warley Hospital” sites! Submissions close on Friday July 27 at 5 p.m. I’m sure that PICS will be objecting. I know that I will, and I hope that you do too!

Our Speaker for July:

Our speaker for Sunday July 8 is now officially “Doctor Lynda Hanlon”, having gained her PhD quite recently. Here is how she describes her journey into the fascinating world of sand dunes:

My journey to PhD in Coastal Mycology began with a two year Cert IV in horticulture at Burnley College twelve years ago, after leaving work as an English grammar teacher. The course piqued an interest in the soil, and particularly the rich and varied microbial universe within it. After Honours in Soils Science investigating mycorrhizal fungi and soil aggregation in agricultural fields, my interest turned to the role this 'friendly' fungi plays in plant survival on sand dunes. The dunes are the interface between land and sea, and are the habitat of Little Penguins, and the endangered Hooded Plover. The importance of mycorrhizal fungi in the ecology and health of dunes, and the vegetation they support, has been little studied but is of vital importance to their sustainability and conservation.



THANK YOU TO MEMBERS!

A big PICS welcome to our new members this year: Tania, Susan, Nicola, Michael, David, Joan, Ronnie, Bea, Ron, Grazyna, Vanessa, Frank, Saoirse, Mary-Lou, Eric, Rick, Fiona, Carolyn, Robyn, Bruce, Rick, Phillip, Cameron, Catherine. Thanks also to our regular members who have subscribed for 2018. Thanks to our donors, both to the Public Fund (tax deductible) and to our General Fund, which helps pay our annual insurance bill.



WOMEN IN CONSERVATION ON PHILLIP ISLAND

The Mayor of Bass Coast Shire Council, Pamela Rothfield, launched our book: "Women in Conservation on Phillip Island" on Tuesday 27th March. Most of the 23 women featured in the book, or representatives of their families, were in attendance. Pamela, our president Anne Davie (who was on the book sub-committee) and project co-ordinator and editor Christine Grayden, all spoke at the gathering. A lovely afternoon tea was had, with everyone circulating and catching up, sometimes after many years! It was a great event. Gillian Armstrong had her camera and Fay Magee kindly took a big group photo for us.

The book is for sale for \$20 per copy + \$5 postage. Contact the secretary, Christine Grayden on cdgrayden@gmail.com or phone 5956 8501.



Back row l-r: Bob Davie, Jeff Nottle, Penny Manning, Margaret Birtley (who wrote her mother Ailsa Swan's entry with her sisters Barbara Roberts and Sally Swan), John Eddy, Bruno Chene, Maurice Schinkel, Sue Saliba, Tim Patkin (wrote Sandy Shively's entry), Barbara Roberts, Sally Patkin, Linda Cuttriss, Greg Johnson, Mary Karney (wrote Florence Oswin Roberts's entry), Kate Smyth, Patsy Hunt, Lisa Schonberg, Jan Fleming, Christine Grayden, Anne Oswin (who wrote Barb Martin's entry), Rose Thomas.

Seated: Hilda Cox, Verna Davey, Margaret Hancock, Bessie Tyers, Pamela Rothfield, Anne Davie, Kay Setches, Pauline Taylor, Gillian Armstrong (who wrote her mother Ethel Temby's entry with her brother Jon Temby)

Car ferry report – Jane Jobe

In March, PICS formed a working group to prepare a response to the Cowes Stony Point car ferry business case and any subsequent reports. PICS considers that a car ferry is inappropriate anywhere on Phillip Island because the potential impacts on natural assets, including beaches, foreshore, the marine environment and wildlife, are simply too great.

Car ferry report contd...

As highlighted in the Phillip Island and San Remo Visitor Economy Strategy, our economy is dependent on our environment, and Phillip Island's natural assets must be protected and enhanced through sustainable development and management practices.

The PICS submission exposed fundamental flaws in the economic, social and environmental assessments of the car ferry business case. The purported benefits are questionable, and the costs and risks are understated. There are serious deficiencies in the economic analysis, raising questions about the potential patronage, viability and economic benefits of the proposed car ferry. The assessment of environmental impacts is inadequate, focussing simply on the approval processes likely to be required and concluding that the environmental impact is minimal.

The register of submissions, available on the Bass Coast Shire Council's web site, shows that many in the community, including Phillip Island Nature Parks, share similar concerns.

On 18 April, Bass Coast Shire Council resolved to provide in-principle support for the car ferry, but to defer consideration of the business case pending investigation of whether the Cowes jetty is a more suitable location for a car ferry terminal than the originally proposed Mussel Rocks site. Council resolved to request state funds for this investigation and to require a full environmental effects assessment on the preferred terminal location.

The Minister for Regional Development Jaala Pulford responded, advising that she would not consider further funding support for the car ferry project until Bass Coast Shire Council recommended its preferred location for the ferry terminal and endorsed a business case. Council has requested further discussion.

Meanwhile, PICS published an open letter to the Victorian Government, urging it not to provide funds for investigation of the Cowes jetty as an alternative site, since provision of these funds would carry forward a fundamentally flawed business case. For example, the proposed Cowes Stony Point car ferry is uniquely uncompetitive—the only service among international case studies cited in the business case that will, on average, cost users both time and money—so it is likely to be unviable. This problem remains whether the car ferry terminal is located at the originally proposed Mussel Rocks site or at the nearby Cowes jetty. The full letter is online at picsvictoria.org.au.

PICS commends the Victorian Government and Bass Coast Shire Council for their advocacy for tourism, which is a critical part of the local and state economies, but cautions against focussing too narrowly on advancing the car ferry project prior to other key actions in the visitor economy strategy. The proposed car ferry is not a panacea that will increase overnight visitation and economic yield or smooth out seasonal peaks and troughs. This requires sustainable approaches that increase visitor amenity and protect our most valuable tourism asset, our natural environment.



Photo: Destination Phillip Island website

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING SUNDAY 8.4.2018

Welcome and acknowledgement of indigenous peoples.

PRESENT: As per attendance book

APOLOGIES: As per attendance book

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Saturday 6 January (as distributed in March newsletter). Margaret Hancock/Penny Manning. *Carried.*

Matters arising:

Nil

Reports:

Coastcare/FOSER report – John Eddy

Planning – Margaret Hancock: The Surf Beach caravan park is still ‘bubbling along’. The glamping application at Appley Ave Red Rocks is unlikely to go ahead due to 100 objections.

Treasurer’s report:

Christine Grayden presented the report.

Margaret Hancock/John Eddy “That the Vehicular Ferry encumbered fund money be used for accounts for the current campaign” *Carried*

Correspondence dealt with by committee at yesterday’s meeting

General Business:

1. Car Ferry Working Group submission – a successful public meeting was held by PICS resulting in the formation of a Working Group, including non-PICS members. The WG at first thought they might ask for an extension of time for response to the business case, but decided to go ahead with writing their submission. An excellent submission has been produced and submitted to Earthcheck, then widely distributed after the closing time.
2. Women in Conservation on Phillip Island book was launched on Tuesday March 27 at a lovely event at which all but one of the women in the book were present or represented. The mayor launched the book for us and a group photo of all present was taken. The Advertiser covered the event and the book with a double page spread.
3. Barb Martin Bush Bank grants – Anne Davie reported that after 20 years of operating, the committee of the BMBB was in a difficult position with falling orders and so approached PINP to ask if they would take over the running of the BMBB, to which they agreed. The BMBB committee now has \$50,000 to distribute. Members present were asked if they have any suggestions for hands on projects for which we can apply for funding from BMBB. Sue Saliba suggested weed control along the Cowes coast. Members felt that while this is much needed work, it really needs a local group to take control of such a project and is beyond PICS’ current resources. The committee had discussed projects yesterday and felt that a vegetation and landscape plan for Blue Gum Reserve might be a suitable project.
4. PINP 30 year conservation plan: A meeting took place with Anne representing PICS, Kellie Nichols for Landcare, BCSC, CEO PINP, representative of DELWP with a Greening Australia facilitator. The emphasis was on climate change and its effects on Phillip Island, including coastal inundation and the probable need to introduce plants that tolerate

warmer conditions than we have at present. We also need to provide diversity. By 2040 there may well be a 20 cm sea level rise which will affect the mangroves.

5. PINP Threatened species committee: PINP has formed this committee. Christine Grayden is to be PICS rep.

6. Road kills and lowering speed limits – PICS FB post response. Christine reported that a post she had put up on the PICS FB page on road kills in response to a message from a follower had received 1400 reaches, over 30 likes and many comments, most of which pointed out the need for reduced speeds on Phillip Island's roads. Christine will write to VicRoads asking them if they have a strategy planned to deal with wildlife road kills on Phillip Island.

7. PICS 50th birthday celebration: an event will take place on 30th September to celebrate our birthday. Margaret suggested we ask PINP if we can have a tour of the restoration works at the tip, starting from Conservation Hill where PICS started. Christine will investigate.

Speaker: Dave Sutton from South Gippsland Conservation Society gave a Power Point talk on Blue Carbon from Peter Macreadie of Deakin University. Blue carbon is saltmarsh, mangroves and seagrass, pictured below.



Meeting closed 4 p.m.

The next general meeting will be on Sunday 8 July, 2 p.m. in the Heritage Centre meeting room.

*Invitation to
Phillip Island Conservation
Society's*

50th birthday celebration

Sunday 30th September 2018, 2 p.m.

Chisholm Room, Koala Conservation Centre

Displays, scrap books, Power Point, short speeches,
food, drink, chatting, FOC entry for us to KCC that afternoon!
(Thanks to PINP)

Please RSVP to Christine Grayden 0400 900 612

cdgrayden@gmail.com by Wednesday 26 Sep.

100% carbon neutral Phillip Island

A variety of speakers presented at the afternoon held in the Cowes Cultural Centre on Sunday June 24. Tarryn Lane spoke about a number of European island communities she had visited that are aiming to be carbon neutral very soon. Hepburn Shire has Znet which considers electricity, heat, waste, transport, agriculture and industry emissions, not just households or businesses. In Europe there can't be any target but 100%. We in Australia have too low a target and need stronger political leadership on this issue.

100% carbon neutral Phillip Island contd....

Matt Charles-Jones spoke about Totally Renewable Yackandandah, which aims to have 100% renewable electricity by 2020. Matt gave the example of Yackandandah community owned hospital that now has a 99KW solar installation, which included a lighting upgrade, a new look at waste streams and the time they did the washing became when the most solar power was available. The hospital has halved its energy usage. Matt pointed out that communities need to work together with the local grid energy providers. The problem is a lot of people are looking to disconnect from the grid, but then how does the grid operator maintain their asset for people who remain on the grid?

Moragh Mackay, Chair of the Energy Innovation Co-op explained the workings of the co-op, both in Gippsland and beyond. It started in 2004 and now has 340 shareholders. They have a Southern CORE fund, which is a tax deductible donation fund, which makes interest free loans available for suitable projects. As the money is paid back to the fund, it is reused for other projects. An example is the Old Energy New Energy project at the State Coal Mine in Wonthaggi that

100% carbon neutral Phillip Island contd...

is a 90 KW system to handle most of their needs. The Community Solar Portal contains projects put forward for investment. Expected return is usually 5-7%.

Bob Davie, who farms Bimbadeen with his wife, PICS president Anne Davie, and their sons Richie and Steve, is passionate about carbon sequestration in soils. His paddocks are soil tested strictly by Western Port Water, and have shown increasing carbon sequestration over the years due to crops grown. Bimbadeen will soon be getting recycled water to irrigate more deep-rooted crops to capture more carbon in the soil. All of the buildings are solar, and they now have an electric quad bike. They offset their emissions with two small paddocks and have gone from 160 tonnes of carbon to 228 tonnes sequestration in 2 years.

Lauren Barker spoke about Boomerang Bags to eliminate the use of single use plastic bags; Plastic Free Phillip Island & San Remo to eliminate the use of non-reusable food utensils, etc; responsible cafes that offer discounts to customers who bring their reusable mugs; and the Straw no More campaign against plastic straws.

Among other speakers, Adrian James spoke about the new Grow Lightly concept where Phillip Islanders can now order locally (Gippsland) grown fruit and vegetables online each week and pick them up weekly from Bimbadeen, the Davies property.

A motion was passed: “We support the formation of a Totally Renewable Phillip Island working group to support existing and develop new community initiatives to pursue the following vision: Phillip Island will be a carbon neutral community by 2030 through our collective efforts to use clean, efficient energy, reduce pollution and offset emissions”.

Notes by Christine Grayden.



Yackandandah Hospital showing solar panels
Photo: Totallyrenewablebackyard.org.au