

# PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO ADVERTISER

YOUR COMMUNITY VOICE!

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

\$1.80 Incl. GST



Students and teachers headed back to school last week, celebrating the start of the 2024 school year. Ready for adventure, Raph, Harvey, Jude, and Mauve embark on their first day of Prep at Newhaven College. Turn to page 9 for all our Back-to-School coverage.

## A close call at Kilcunda

### RESCUE

Following the fatal drowning of four people at Forrest Caves last month, three people were pulled from the surf at Kilcunda on Sunday afternoon (February 4).

Ambulance Victoria confirmed a teenage girl and a primary school aged girl were taken to Wonthaggi Hospital in a stable condition for further assessment.

A man in his 40s was taken by Air Ambulance to the Alfred Hospital in a serious but stable condition.

It's believed local surfers helped get the three from the water.

Police, lifesavers and paramedics were in attendance, with SES members from the San Remo unit called to help transport one of the people from the beach.

A spokesperson for Life Saving Victoria said they were "alerted at approximately 12.20pm of three people in difficulty at an unpatrolled beach at Kilcunda".

"I can confirm that lifesavers did not assist in the rescue at Kilcunda, but they provided as-

sistance once on the beach," the spokesperson said.

The incident was a stark reminder of the dangers of swimming at unpatrolled locations.

LSV said there have been 32 fatal drownings from July 1, 2023 to February 4, 2024.

The rescue is the second serious incident at this location in the past month.

A man drowned at Kilcunda Beach on Friday, January 12, after being swept out to sea in the vicinity of the Bourne Creek Trestle Bridge around 8.30pm.

### Warnings

Speaking at a press conference after the Forrest Caves drownings, the General Manager of Life Saving Victoria (LSV), Liam Krige, urged people to take care in the water, and swim at patrolled locations.

"As we know, any drowning death is preventable, and we want to try and avoid these drownings.

"Wherever possible, head to a patrolled location. If we can see you, we can save you," he said.

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**Back to School**

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SAN REMO

**CHANNEL  
CHALLENGE**

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PARTLY CLOUDY	CLOUDY	CLOUDY	PARTLY CLOUDY	SUNNY	SUNNY	SUNNY
15 22	15 22	16 22	15 22	15 26	16 19	16 23

# That’s bull. Did you see this accident?

## CRIME

The Phillip Island Masonic Lodge will be out of pocket “many thousands of dollars” after an unknown driver rammed a wall of their building, before fleeing.

Lodge secretary Ian Samuel has called for anyone in the community who saw the accident to contact them.

Ian said on a weekend in mid-January a witness saw a dark coloured Land Cruiser towing a boat run into the wall with a bull bar, but the witness failed to get details.

“The bull bar rammed the south-east

corner of the building, opposite Coles, and then left skid marks to reverse out,” Ian said.

“They then left leaving no details, which we now need for third party insurance.”

A structural engineer told Ian the wall was safe, but would be rebuilt at a cost of thousands of dollars.

Ian said the police were unable to assist.

“They said it’s not an accident so they won’t be investigated.”

If you can help contact Ian on 0413 157 284.



Cameron Ashe was awarded the Australian Intelligence Medal in the 2024 Australia Day Honours. The former Phillip Islander has lived and travelled extensively overseas with his career in the intelligence services.

# Intelligence award for former islander

## AUSTRALIA DAY

Former Phillip Islander Cameron Ashe, the son of local couple Clif and Laraine Ashe, was awarded the Australian Intelligence Medal at the 2024 Australia Day Honours.

His proud father, Clif (who is well known for his service as a local police officer in the 80s) said the medal will be presented by the Governor General at Government House in Canberra later this year.

Cameron attended Cowes Primary School and Newhaven College as a founding student, and the keen footballer

also played with the Phillip Island Bulldogs, including a stint in the Seniors.

A talented student, Cameron was a Rotary Exchange Student in South Africa at the age of 15, and after finishing school went to LaTrobe University, studying politics and graduating with an honours degree.

He then pursued a career in the intelligence service and has held many overseas positions including in the USA, New Zealand, Hawaii and South East Asia.

He is currently based in Canberra and is the Deputy Director General, Signals Intelligence and Effects.

PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO

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A driver rammed a wall of The Phillip Island Masonic Lodge and fled, causing thousands of dollars damage. The Lodge is urging anyone who may have information about the incident to contact them.

Russell Broadbent MP  
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The Australian Maritime Safety sent an emergency vessel to the rescue of an LPG tanker, The Bougainville, which found itself in distress a few kilometres off Seal Rocks on Saturday. Photo: Walter Pless, Marine.traffic.com

# Drama on the high seas

## SHIPPING

The Australian Maritime Safety sent an emergency vessel to the rescue of an LPG tanker, The Bougainville, which found itself in distress a few kilometres off Seal Rocks on Friday.

The tanker, registered in Panama and carrying LPG, was marooned on the water when its propeller sheared off completely out at sea.

The crippled vessel was safely towed into Flinders on Sunday after a rescue mission was mounted, but will be towed to a safer anchorage off Cowes on Wednesday this week, if conditions permit.

The vessel, built in 2014 and apparently very well maintained, was headed for Westernport, carrying a full load of LPG, when the propeller was lost.

The tug The Albatross, was called in to assist from Geelong.

A spokesperson for the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) speaking on Monday, confirmed the tanker had lost a propeller.

"On February 2, the Panamanian-flagged liquid petroleum gas tanker Bougainville experienced loss of propulsion during pre-arrival main engine testing," the spokesperson said.

"It was later revealed to have lost its

propeller. The vessel was holding anchor near Phillip Island, Bass Strait until emergency towage vessels could arrive on the scene.

"The Bougainville was towed to Flinders anchorage where it is expected to remain until conditions are suitable to bring it into the more sheltered Cowes anchorage.

"The vessel is likely to remain at Cowes anchorage until arrangements can be made to tow it to a suitable repair facility," the spokesperson said.

"Dive inspections have revealed the main propeller shaft has sheared off completely. This will require withdrawal of the propeller shaft at a repair facility capable of undertaking this type of work."

The AMSA said it is satisfied the crew are safe and the vessel does not currently pose a threat to the marine environment.

"AMSA will continue to work with the master of the vessel and its operator to resolve the situation."

A local boat operator said it would be a massive operation to get a propeller back on the ship, and most likely would need to be done in a dry dock.

Ship propellers can weigh anything up to a tonne, depending on the size of the ship.

# 10-month Phillip Island bridge works explained

## TRAFFIC

Trucks used for construction are most likely to be impacted by the Phillip Island bridge's upcoming maintenance works, with those carting groceries, petrol and for Grand Prix circuit events unaffected.

Westernport Water is undertaking critical maintenance work on the main water and sewerage pipelines connected to the underside of the bridge from February 26 to November 2024.

To minimise impacts to traffic and the community, suspended scaffolding will be attached under the bridge so workers can access the pipes.

"Both lanes of the bridge will remain open and unaffected," a Westernport Water spokesperson said.

"With safety our key priority, the vehicle mass limit on the bridge will be temporarily reduced to 42.5 tonne to protect the structural integrity of the bridge while we carry out this critical maintenance work."

The limit had locals guessing what trucks would be impacted, with the spokesperson responding that "some trucks commonly used in the construction sector, particularly large truck and dog trailer combinations.

"Trucks that are used to supply groceries, household goods, milk, petrol, and major events at the Phillip Island Gand Prix Circuit are not likely to be affected by the reduced mass limit," they said.

"These trucks typically operate within the allowable weight limit."

Department of Transport and Planning Gippsland director Beth Liley said heavy vehicle mass limits for the duration of the works would ensure safety for workers and road users.

"The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator is responsible for enforcing mass limits and will monitor compliance," Ms Liley said.



Westernport Water is undertaking critical maintenance work on the main water and sewerage pipelines connected to the underside of the bridge from February 26 to November 2024.

"Heavy vehicle operators are advised to refer to the "Heavy Vehicle Map Networks in Victoria" for planned and unplanned disruptions to the road network."

## Bridge strength?

Some residents on social media questioned the reliability and strength of the bridge, asking how the pipelines could interfere with the structural integrity and weight limit.

"The vehicle mass limit on the bridge will be temporarily reduced to 42.5 tonne to offset the weight of the suspended scaffold," the Westernport Water spokesperson said.

"This decision has been made by the Department of Transport and Planning (the asset owners of the bridge) to manage the structural integrity of the bridge.

"The pipelines themselves do not interfere with the structural integrity of the bridge."

Many asked why the project would take 10 months.

"The duration reflects the significant scope of the work and the high-risk factors that need to be managed to ensure a safe workplace," they said.

"One of the pipelines will have its outer surface refurbished and wrapped and across all three pipelines there are nearly 400 connecting brackets to be replaced or renewed in tight areas with limited space.

"Scaffolding will be erected on three bridge spans at a time and relocated as the work moves across the bridge."

Suspended scaffolding is attached to the underside of the bridge, without the need for road closures and it is not impacted by wind speed.

## Foreshore

While the San Remo Channel Challenge will not be significantly impacted from the bridge works, other areas will.

The Westernport Water spokesperson said equipment, site offices and materials in a compound will be kept to a minimum.

"Work will start on the San Remo side of the bridge and therefore the compound will be at the San Remo Foreshore from about mid-February to August.

"The footprint of the compound will be reduced on weekends, public holidays and during major events to allow for greater access to the San Remo foreshore area.

"Pedestrian access will always remain open, as will the access tracks under the bridge."

They said in about August 2024, the compound would be relocated to the Newhaven foreshore until the end of the project around November.

Details: [www.westernportwater.com.au/our-community/projects/current-projects/faqs-general-public/](http://www.westernportwater.com.au/our-community/projects/current-projects/faqs-general-public/)

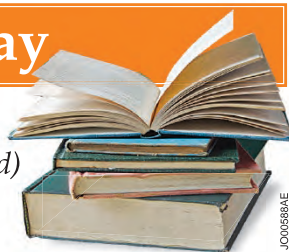
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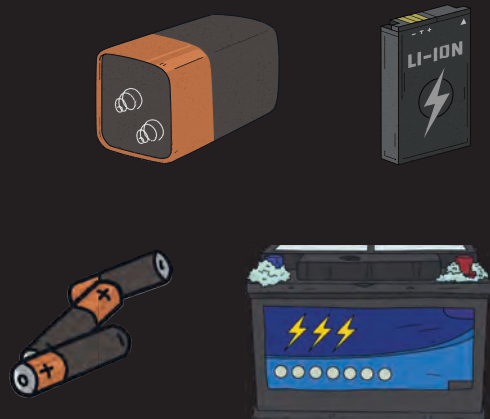
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On Holiday Lifestyles' Facebook page, last year it stated about half of the 49 villas have been sold. Last week the site declared it was "open", despite a purchaser in legal dispute.



These are the homes being built at Holiday Lifestyles Cowes, on the former Islander Caravan Park site.

# Elderly pensioners take legal action against developer

## PLANNING

An elderly pensioner couple say they have experienced "stress, anxiety and expense" after buying into a "lifestyle house and land" package on Thompson Avenue, Cowes, unaware it would be a caravan park.

And, the Phillip Island couple say, since buying in 2021 they have been forced to rent, late in 2023 learning the developer has only just applied for a planning permit.

The developer has responded, however, saying they had not changed the offering to customers (see separate story).

Norm Adams and Leonie Brennan sold their Ventnor house to pay \$247,800 to Holiday Lifestyle Cowes for a 99-year lease on a site at 137-143 Thompson Avenue in November 2021.

The couple signed a contract to pay \$312,800 to KTS Build-

ing and Construction for a two-storey cabin, with an initial payment of \$15,000 for the laying of the foundation in 2022. A further payment of \$51,000 was made to Holiday Lifestyle tradesmen, which they say was meant to secure their home to lock up stage by April last year.

"We expected construction would proceed in a timely manner and committed ourselves to the expense of rented accommodation until completion of our unit," Leonie said.

"Only recently did we learn the developer had not submitted documents for their planning permit to council until June 2023, which was extended to November when it was released publicly."

Furthermore, adding to their "frustration and disappointment", they also recently learned that rather than a "lifestyle village" a significant area of the

site will be devoted to caravan and tent campers.

"We feel this is an activity inappropriate in a "lifestyle village". The site plan we were provided prior to the purchase of our lease site shows the whole site surveyed for lease lots with no indication of caravan or camping sites or facilities for campers," Leonie said.

"They never gave us any indication about a caravan park. We feel very naïve and angry. It's not what we signed up for."

The couple, who have lived on Phillip Island for 23 years, showed the Advertiser their contract with Holiday Lifestyle and KTS Building, which both make no reference to caravan or camping sites.

Leonie said they had phoned and emailed Holiday Lifestyle Cowes, with the manager now not responding to their questions. The couple have now hired

a lawyer in an attempt to void their Holiday Lifestyle contract.

## Construction

Leonie said they had been told their home would be ready three times – April last year, then Christmas and now April this year.

So far only the steel foundation, with concrete stumps for their home had been laid and Leonie said it appeared only six cabins had been constructed on a total of 49 sites.

"As yet, there is little evidence of any building activity on our unit," she said adding the building was permanent and not moveable.

"Alarm bells started going off in April last year because we had paid to get it to lock up and suddenly all worked stopped and we found out late last year they didn't have the proper permits, which is when I met our lawyer to discuss the issue."

She added they have nowhere to live.

"We sold our house, then rented and had to move from that rental after a year, and so moved to Frankston."

"The house we're in has sold and so we have to move out by February 9 and have been trying to find any rental on Phillip Island, all while we're paying for all our furniture to be in storage."

Leonie said it had been a "disastrous chapter" in their lives due to "disappointment, expense of rental accommodation and legal fees in an attempt to recover our money and cancel our contracts".

"It is very disappointing the developer does not realise the stress, anxiety and expense that has been caused to an elderly couple and refund all moneys so that we can move on with the rest of our lives."

"It's mind blowing."

## Developer responds to customer concerns

## PLANNING

The developer of the Thompson Avenue "lifestyle" project has defended the development, saying they had not changed the offering to customers and the planning permit would soon be complete.

And, the developer said, the original independent builder had quit the project, yet to return customer money.

Holiday Lifestyle's spokesperson Lauren Clarke told the Advertiser in 2021 they purchased 137-143 Thompson Avenue, the former Islander Caravan Park, which had existed on the land for more than 50 years.

Ms Clarke said Holiday Lifestyle had "architecturally designed and engineered unregistered moveable dwellings with six individual floor plans".

"These are a much better product than the typically mass-produced cabins of the past," she said.

Ms Clarke said Holiday Lifestyle had leased sites with proposed cabins to be used as either holiday accommodation, an investment, to be rented through the park office on a longer-term basis "to enjoy the benefits of on-site caretakers looking after the property".

"Holiday Lifestyle have not changed our offering at all. We continue to offer long term registered leases over the sites together with an unregistered moveable dwelling on some."

"We have not switched anything.

"Our plans for the caravan park have been advertised regularly and remain the same. Offering onsite management and the opportunity for holiday, overnight, short or long-term accommodation."

Ms Clarke said concerned buyers Norm Adams and Leonie Brennan (see separate story) – given they have a registered leasehold to the site – "can sell it at any time".

"We are happy to assist with this if they do not want to wait for the planning process to finalise."

She said the couple had been aware they were exempt from land tax "because it's a caravan park".

## Planning

Ms Clarke said cabins or unregistered moveable dwellings in a caravan park were permissible, "and usually only require an installation notice".

According to the Residential Tenancies Act Residential Tenancies Regulations 2020 "if planning consent is required a council has powers ... to prevent works which do not have a relevant planning permit".

She said in April 2023 Bass Coast Shire informed Holiday Lifestyle consent was required, and a planning permit application was submitted in June 2023 (with final lodgement including further details in November).

"Last year after we commenced construction of the unregistered moveable dwellings council approached us and advised we would need to submit the different

floor plans, landscape plans etc as a planning application.

"We were advised no work can continue until we have successfully completed this process."

"We confirm all items requested have been submitted and the process is nearing completion."

Ms Clarke said she understood Norm and Leonie were frustrated.

"I feel the same way."

## Builder

Ms Clarke said the original independent builder had quit the project, yet to return customer money.

She said Norm and Leonie had paid an initial deposit of five per cent to the builder – and their footings and subfloor were installed – when Holiday Lifestyle learned they were required to apply for a planning permit.

Holiday Lifestyle had subsequently requested the return of Norm and Leonie's five per cent deposit from KTS Building and Construction.

"We have assured the couple that Holiday Lifestyle will not request the five per cent be paid again and will complete their home for the agreed price with the builder, less the five per cent."

"Building will resume as soon as we get the planning permit."

Ms Clarke confirmed the cabins were moveable within 24 hours, which is required for a caravan park, and also confirmed they had reached resolution with neighbours regarding previous concerns about the shared boundary alignment.

## Caravan park development: how it happened

## PLANNING

As reported in the Advertiser last month, Holiday Lifestyle is seeking a \$2 million construction at 137-143 Thompson Avenue, the former Islander Caravan Park, according to a planning permit currently out for public comment.

The proposed works include: an amended site layout to reduce the total number of tent/caravan/cabin sites from 100 to 49 sites; installation of six cabins (two x two storey and four single storey) with a maximum height of 7.1 metres; installation of a deck, access ramp and stairs with the existing amenities block.

The permit is seeking permission for building and works associated with a caravan and camping park and removal of vegetation, stating the site has existing use rights because of its use as a camping and caravan park for many decades.

"The site will continue to be used for this purpose, re-branded as Holiday Lifestyle Cowes," the permit explains.

Aside from the cabins, the balance of the lots will be used for a combination of caravan and tent usage "depending on changing customer demand", with the park marketed to overnight

tourists, short term stays, and coach groups.

So far the permit has received 10 objections. For the past two years residents and surrounding businesses have highlighted concerns, ranging from illegal tree removal to questions about the planning rules of the buildings,

## Promotion

Holiday Lifestyle in 2021 bought the former Islander caravan park, which is in addition to their other properties at Wyndam Cove, Portland and St Leonards. In 2022 the developers were promoting "house and land packages from \$530,000 in the heart of Cowes", with no mention of caravan or tent sites.

"The homes have been carefully designed with functional floor plans for comfort and space and there is a choice of dual occupancy duplex dwellings," the advertisement said, adding "investors are offered a guaranteed six per cent net return for up to 10 years".

"Owner occupiers, whether retirees or downsizers, can alter plans to suit their lifestyle and have the benefit of no stamp duty or land tax."

"Holiday homeowners can simply relax and receive an income when not occupying if you choose."



# Our best trees to be protected

## PLANNING

A long-awaited significant tree register will soon be made public, with an online map to monitor and protect Phillip Island's most precious vegetation.

After first being mooted in 2019 by community groups, and becoming a local law in 2022, Bass Coast Shire will launch the online tree register in coming months, which will include a detailed street inventory of trees on council-owned land, which so far includes 44 in 22 species, of which 24 are on Phillip Island and San Remo.

Significant trees on Phillip Island include a manna gum at 8 Dunsmore Road, Cowes, a Norfolk Island pine on Grossard Point Road, Ventnor and a Bunya Bunja pine at Woolamai House Estate, Cape Woolamai.

While an urban forest officer has been employed to develop assessment guidelines and oversee the register of trees on public land, private landowners will this year be asked to nominate trees on their own property worthy of inclusion.

Any tree on the register will be protected under local laws, with anyone lopping a significant tree liable for fines, and anyone wanting to lop one required to apply for a permit. Residents and community groups say significant tree registers can give extra protection when battling a major development.

For example, Newhaven residents cited their avenue of golden

cypress as a reason two projects should not proceed: Regional Roads Victoria's mooted upgrade of the Phillip Island Road at Newhaven to four lanes; and the shire's now-failed proposal to create a regional skate park at Grayden's Reserve.

## Protection

Acting shire CEO Jodi Kennedy said a significant tree was one that was rare, old, had an outstanding size, heritage connections, planted by someone famous, or was a stand of trees.

"Once the map is released private landholders can nominate their own trees. Not every tree will be significant, but they can contact council to find out," Ms Kennedy said.

She explained a significant tree was given the same protections as a tree in a vegetation protection overlay (VPO), which protects the majority of private trees, with Phillip Island covered by many VPOS, whereas San Remo is not covered by a VPO.

The new local law also included protections for trees with a girth of 155cm or wider.

"Anyone who wants to prune, chop or lop a tree in a VPO or a tree that is on the register, or is a protected tree, will need to apply for a permit," she said, adding that utilities such as Westernport Water or Regional Roads Victoria have exemptions.

"It's not perfect, but the register puts in an extra layer of protection. We take this seriously and so we do our best with the



Local residents frequently highlight the loss of significant trees in their area, such as these beautiful old gums that were levelled on Chapel Street, Cowes.

tools afforded to us."

Ms Kennedy said to avoid confusion, landholders should call council to check if a tree is protected.

"A 10-minute phone call is all it will take to check the requirements. If it doesn't relate to the tree register it's worth checking the VPO.

"This is about responding to community pride in trees on public and private property. We all benefit from vegetation."

## Impetus

The idea for a significant tree register came after years of concern by ratepayers about constant tree felling, especially following the creation of the 10/30 rule for bushfire protection.

More recently there was criticism more than 3300 trees and plants were removed to make way for the Lifestyle village between Settlement Road and Church Street.

Locals were also critical of the loss of mature gums on a new subdivision on the old market site at Settlement Road, as well as the former Islander Caravan Park.

In response, the Bass Coast Branch of the National Trust and the Phillip Island Conservation Society (PICS) in 2019 proposed the island's first significant tree register.

However, in the wake of Covid the proposed register stalled and the shire took up the register, passing a new local law in July 2022, which came into effect on

January 1 last year.

Former PICS president Jeff Nottle welcomed the significant tree protections in the local laws.

"We are aware of the community angst around the demolition of some trees and we know the community wants to protect them," Mr Nottle said.

## Urban forest

Council has a renewed push to increase and protect tree coverage, last year also approving a new urban forest strategy, which found towns are increasingly losing trees because of poor development, despite 91 per cent of survey respondents wanting more trees.

The strategy has a target of 40 per cent canopy in urban towns by 2040, with Cowes currently at about 30 per cent, with about 10,000 street trees and potential for 2000 more.

San Remo has few public trees, with just 445, and potential to plant more than 1000.

The strategy states no neighbourhood should fall below 25 per cent canopy coverage, with the shire now committing to plant 1500 trees annually, an increase of 1200 trees compared to the current program.

According to the strategy our existing urban forest is "under increasing pressure on multiple fronts", from dieback, poor quality development, infrastructure conflicts and climate change.

The shire manages 24 per cent of urban land in Bass Coast, with 76 per cent privately owned.

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# Upgrade to Cowes-Rhyll Trail

## INFRASTRUCTURE

A 700m stretch of the popular trail between Cowes and Rhyll will be upgraded to a shared use path for pedestrians and bicycles, as work continues to establish an important connection between the two townships.

Bass Coast Shire Council contractors started work last week to upgrade the current gravel path and replace some sections with concrete.

Phillip Island Nature Parks construction staff will also soon start works to widen boardwalk sections and replace decking with non-slip material.

The works will be conducted in stages from late January to May, with a section of the trail between Conservation Hill car park and the Cowes-Rhyll Road crossing closed for the first two weeks of February.

Phillip Island Nature Parks General Manager Infrastructure and Planning, Jarvis Weston, said a section of trail would be closed while the works were completed.

"We have scheduled

the work to coincide with the off-peak season to minimise any impact to trail users," Jarvis said.

"However, it is necessary to close a section of the trail while the works are undertaken.

"The trail may be opened intermittently while the work is undertaken so we encourage locals and visitors to modify their routes to avoid disruption, to observe the signs and respect cordoned areas to ensure safe trail use."

Linda Marston from Island Voice welcomed the upgrade, but voiced concerns.

"While I'm happy to hear it's being made safer, the emphasis should be on it being a shared pathway, not just a bike track for speeding cyclists.

"The needs of other users – children, pedestrians, those on mobility scooters – needs to be considered."

Linda said the more controversial section of the Rhyll path, through the Rhyll town, was still under discussion between Rhyll residents and the shire, with a

meeting planned for late February to iron out issues.

"There are some markings on the ground for the proposed pathway and it's not what we thought had been agreed upon.

"It's in a different area than what we had anticipated," she said.

"So we still have concerns and we will see what comes out of the meeting later this month."

Bass Coast Mayor Clare Le Serve said the latest round of works would allow users safer and better access to the trail, and would complement the \$326,000 upgrade of the Cowes-Rhyll Road pathway funded by the council in 2020.

"These works will offer greater access for trail users to enjoy the trail and spectacular views of the coastline and Phillip Island."

The Victorian Government has supported the project with \$416,000 for the upgrades through Regional Development Victoria.

For more information, visit: [engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/cowesrhyll-path](https://engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/cowesrhyll-path).



Mat Bowtell from Free 3D Hands with Graham from Cool Aqua Springs, that donated a water cooler to the local charity.

## Cool hand for 3D Hands

### BUSINESS

Mat Bowtell from Free 3D Hands, the charity based at Newhaven, has given a shout out to a local business for lending a helping hand.

"Do you want to know who is cool," Mat posted on Facebook.

"Graham and the team at Cool Aqua Springs are! They kindly donated a water cooler to keep our team hydrated.

"The water is chilled and tastes amazing, and once the 15L bottles are emptied they are collected, sanitised and reused.

"That's much better for the environment than using single use plastics," Mat said.

"We are so grateful for their kindness, thoughtfulness and incredibly generous support. Thanks for powering our team!"

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# A close call at Kilcunda

From page 1

On Monday, he reiterated the warning.

"We are extremely concerned about the number of drownings we are seeing across the Victorian coastline and in inland waterways," he said.

"To date this summer, we have seen 22 drownings. That is far too many. Many of those are preventable and avoidable. This weekend alone we have seen significant incidents.

"People are attending unpatrolled locations in the first instance and aren't getting advice from lifesavers that are on the beaches. They are perhaps not aware of their own abilities when they are heading into those dangerous conditions.

"Rescue is the last resort. People can do a lot more by heeding the safety advice before they even get to that situation."

## Unheeded

It appears the warnings continue to go unheeded and local surfers have raised concerns about the lack of awareness from beach goers.

Surfer Bernie Huigsloot said he guided two beginner surfers out of a rip near Surfies Point on Sunday (see separate story), while another told the Advertiser that on Saturday, a group of young children were being swept under in the strong rip at the small bay beside Surfies Point.

"The parents were up the beach approximately 80 metres away and ran down fully clothed," they said.



Following a fatal drowning at this location, and of four people at Forrest Caves last month, three people were pulled from the surf at Kilcunda on Sunday afternoon (February 4).

"One parent managed to swim out in bathers and get them to the rocks. A young girl's head was going under.

"They were a group that included local mums with their kids aged around eight to 10.

"I couldn't believe they didn't read the rip, knowing they are regular beach goers.

"I witnessed it from the top of cliff while my son surfed.

"I ran down the stairs to assist but luckily they didn't need it.

"My friends and I have saved many swimmers this summer, even if just from warnings before they reach the water, and some in the surf already in trouble," they said.

"More needs to be done at a government, immigration and school level.

"Our locals and emergency service have seen too many such incidents."

# Drowning déjà vu

## DROWNING

There's a sense of déjà vu amongst the island community and local surfers as calls continue for improved beach safety signage.

Back in 2019, after two men drowned on Christmas Eve at the Colonnades in Cape Woolamai, suggested improvements included car parks locked to the public and black flags hoisted on days of dangerous swell, improved signage, as well as shock TAC-style advertisements depicting the dangers of surf.

In 2019, a 45-year-old father and his 20-year-old son from Cranbourne East were standing in the water at the unpatrolled Colonnades beach, when they were knocked down and dragged out by a big wave.

At the time, the Advertiser reported the event left lifesavers at Woolamai Beach Surf Lifesaving Club (WBSLSC) traumatised, with 20 members responding to the incident on the day, and the club confirming many had sought counselling.

The circumstances are tragically similar to the most recent deaths at Forrest Caves, where the four people were reportedly wading in the water before being swept out.

After the 2019 drownings, surfer Tony Ringrose suggested that hard-to-miss warning signs – similar to those found on Hawaii's North Shore – be erected.

"Cape Woolamai rips makes Bondi Rescue look weak and boring. It's one of the most rip-effected beaches in our state and great for surfing, but not swimming," Tony said.

"Signs needs to be put up on beaches not patrolled by surf lifesavers, such as Forrest Caves."

Representatives from WBSLSC and the local police agreed social media could be better used to warn visitors of the dangers at local beaches.



There were calls for improved signage after drownings in 2019, but five years later, there has been no significant improvement to beach signage on Phillip Island, nor a uniform and effective campaign on social media to warn of beach dangers.

But five years later, there has been no significant improvement to beach signage on Phillip Island, nor a uniform and effective campaign on social media to warn of beach dangers.

## Blackspot

The 2018 Coastal Risk Assessment for Bass Coast – the Blackspot project, assessed 48 beaches across the shire.

The report said although Bass Coast was the fourth largest local government area in terms of the length of coastline, it is "the second highest of 23 LGAs in terms of fatal drowning events".

Between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2016 there were 29 coastline deaths the report stated.

Bass Coast also represented 15 per cent of all rescues in the state from eight lifesaving patrol seasons between 2007-2015.

The report bluntly stated the drowning risk within Bass Coast was 37 per cent higher than state-wide figures.

This week, LSV confirmed that between July 1 2023 and February 4 2024 there had already been 32 fatal drownings and 22 since the start of December.

Graham Jolly, former treasurer of the now disbanded Bass Coast Ratepayers and Residents Association has been calling for the public release of the blackspot report for years.

He says the local community must have a say about the report, and authorities should listen to the public's ideas on safety improvements, especially from the surfing community.

He suggests a citizen led approach to the report's recommendation that the beach signage be regularly monitored and maintained.

"It would be good if the community as a whole were asked to go to each beach entry and the last point before putting a foot on the sand, and photograph all beach safety signage," Graham said.

He also criticised the Beachsafe app, saying it needed to be revised "especially in other languages".

"The app run in the Indian language fails to show and explain a water rip, standing on the edge of a sand bank, wading in the water, walking out onto rocks and rogue waves," he said.

He believes a warning sign is needed at the caves, as well as at the beach entries to Forrest Caves.

Last week Phillip Island Nature Parks said new signage would be rolled out in the coming months, following the coastal risk assessment.

Bass Coast Shire Council did not respond to a request to confirm if new signage had been organised for the beaches it manages, or a timeline for rollout.

The report recommended a shire-wide approach to beach safety signage.



Last weekend local surfer Bernie Huigsloot guided two beginner surfers out of a rip near Surfies Point. He wrote a sign in the sand to try and warn others of the danger.

# Looking for a sign

## DROWNING

Calls from the community for improved beach safety signage continue in the wake of the four drownings at Forrest Caves last month.

As reported in last week's Advertiser, the long-awaited signage upgrades, recommended in a 2018 Blackspot Risk Assessment Report, are yet to appear.

According to Phillip Island Nature Parks, the updated signage of its beaches is due to be rolled out in the coming months.

Bass Coast Shire Council is yet to confirm what has been organised for shire managed beaches.

Local surfer Bernie Huigsloot believes current beach signage on the island is inadequate.

"We need much larger signs at every access point to the surf side of the island," he said.

"People need to be educated at point of entry with big signs you have to walk around or duck under ... and in animated form for the non-English speaking tourists."

Like most island surfers, Bernie has witnessed many rescues and has himself helped people who have got into trouble at local beaches.

Last weekend he guided two beginner surfers out of a rip near Surfies Point.

"Both had no experience and were paddling against the rip going backwards. I had to show them paddling across it to get out and finally making it back to shore."

In desperation he wrote a sign in the sand to try and warn others of the danger.

Such an incident is not unusual he said.

On the Melbourne Cup long weekend, Bernie watched two helicopters flying over the Woolamai clubhouse area, involved in a rescue.

At the same time, further down the beach, another potentially fatal inci-

dent was unfolding.

"I was at the Colonnades, and there were four boys, all schoolies age, swimming in front of the steps.

"They were all in thigh deep water before being swept out by a wave and in over their heads.

"The surf was big and unruly; no surfers were in the water. It was sunny, a long weekend and no lifesavers on patrol.

"I waited on the shoreline until they all made it to safety. It was a close call, all were exhausted. They had no idea of the danger."

A comprehensive education campaign about the dangers of water safety is needed, he said.

He recalls a day at Smiths Beach, where a strong rip developed, and he pulled between eight and 10 people out of the water, even though he had tried to warn people not to enter the water.

"In a rip, people panic and swim towards the calm water, which is the rip.

"They see these big waves and that looks like danger, but that's what will get them back to shore."

He has called on the council to fix the signage at the local beaches.

"Forget about what looks good, or harms tourism.

"The signs need to be big and grab people's attention. And they need to stand on their own. Don't attach a dog sign to it," he said.

He said signage like the "King Waves Kill" signs on the WA coast at Carnation deliver a strong message - and have become quasi-attractions in their own right and Instagram famous.

He also thinks a system of warnings on days of dangerous swell should be developed for all the ocean beaches.

"It might be beneficial for the shire to go to some of those beaches (that are not patrolled) and put signs out on the day, that say 'beach closed for swimming', or 'dangerous day'," he suggested.



# BACK TO SCHOOL 2024

Advertising Feature



Year 6 students Magnus Bathgate, Callan Reilly, Saxon Collier and Michael Christofi are ready for what 2024 brings.

## Newhaven College kicks off the new school year

Newhaven College was abuzz with students returning to school over Thursday and Friday last week.

Teachers and support staff commenced early for three days of collaborating, professional learning sessions and planning for the year ahead. Everyone was ready and excited to welcome students back to campus.

The greatest excitement was the arrival of the 2024 Preps, with a welcome parade, greeting every Junior School student with a fist bump, handshake or wave. Although there were some nerves amongst the College's youngest students, they all settled in very quickly.

New Year 7 students enjoyed meeting their teachers, connecting with new friends, and exploring their new school environment. Year 5 students were excited to spend their first day in Middle School and quickly settled into their classrooms.

The 2024 Year 9s have strapped on their hiking boots and pulled on their ranger-style uniforms ready for a year of adventure at the special Year 9 Environmental Centre. Everyone is looking forward to hearing about their escapades over the coming year.

A special Forum Day was held for the 2024 Year 12 cohort.

Designed to prepare students for their last year of school, the specialised program forms the basis for a successful year. Educational Consultant Ben Taylor from The English Lab presented "Making Study and Revision your Superpower", a workshop on how to improve learning practices.

Students enjoyed a delicious lunch in the College Pavilion, followed by a House focused pastoral care activity with Year 7 students, including sharing stories and walking around campus. Year 12 can be daunting, but Newhaven College staff provide excellent support and pastoral care throughout the year so students can achieve their best outcomes.

The College grounds have had a facelift over the summer break, with the grounds

and maintenance crew working on cleaning and staining decks and facades and refreshing the gardens. The school campus has never looked so good.

College Principal, Tony Corr welcomes those new to the College community including 11 new and returning staff. The new staff and teachers truly represent the broad range of employment opportunities provided by Newhaven College.

To top off the week, College leaders and staff welcomed parents and guardians with drinks and canapes on Friday evening, providing the perfect opportunity to show off the new Performing Arts Wing. This provided an excellent opportunity for connection in a relaxed atmosphere.

Newhaven College still has limited places available for 2024. Please contact our Registrar, Belinda Manning for details or to arrange a college tour on (03) 5956 7505 or visit [www.newhavencol.vic.edu.au](http://www.newhavencol.vic.edu.au)



Prep Archer Ferretto, surrounded by the love and support of big brother and Year 3 student Sebastian, and proud parents Adrian and Melissa. More photos at [pisra.com.au/education](http://pisra.com.au/education)

## Preps step up

This year Newhaven College welcomed 40 Preps enrolled in two classes.

Eight of the new students have two older siblings at the school, while there is one set of twins.

Two of the new prep students are children of alumni.



Phillip Island Dance Studio offers a range of classes from a specially designed preschool program from 18 months through to adult dance and over 55s dance movement class.

## Dance into 2024

Phillip Island Dance Studio finished off last year with two sold out performances; an Alice in Wonderland story ballet and choreography works of energetic jazz with moving contemporary and lyrical pieces.

Also onstage were the always popular preschool classes who were a delight to audiences.

"It was a great way to celebrate our 21st performance at the newly opened Berninnet in Cowes," said Rowena Campbell, school founder.

"The hard work of the students showed through their technical improvement and beautiful dance quality, musicality and joyous smiles of performing on stage."

Phillip Island Dance Studio offers

a range of classes from a specially designed preschool program from 18 months through to adult dance and over 55s dance movement class.

Offering jazz, contemporary and lyrical dance as well as specialising in classical ballet with a pre pointe and pointe program for school aged students.

The school offers fun and creative classes with qualified dance tuition that focuses on age appropriate and safe dance practices for both recreational and students wanting to pursue dance vocationally. Classes resumed on February 5 in Cowes.

For more information about trial classes contact [phillipislanddancestudio@gmail.com](mailto:phillipislanddancestudio@gmail.com).

## We go the extra mile



Limited places AVAILABLE FOR 2024

Newhaven College consistently goes above and beyond in fostering an environment of academic excellence and personal growth. The College's sub-schools and house structure are designed to create a sense of community and belonging. With innovative teaching methods and a commitment to nurturing well-rounded individuals, students at Newhaven College not only receive a quality education but also gain invaluable life skills.

Come and find out more about our College. Call our Registrar Belinda Manning on 03 5956 7505 or email [belinda.manning@newhavencol.vic.edu.au](mailto:belinda.manning@newhavencol.vic.edu.au)



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The 2024 Newhaven Primary school leaders with new preps in front. Back (from left): Levi, Kai, Arthur, Angus, Archie and Toby. Front: Hailey, Hazel, Sloane, Poppy and Loxley.

# Newhaven Primary takes on the world!

Families returned to Newhaven Primary School last Tuesday to a huge resurfacing project with lots of exciting activities for the students to play on around our basketball court.

We have also cleared our running track around the outside of the oval so all of our students can run to Paris!

The resurfacing around the basketball court has opened up more play area for our students. There are lots of trails, jumps, a chessboard and even a penguin for the students to play on.

Newhaven Primary School is looking forward to another great year with our inaugural Festival to be held at the school on Saturday February 24 from 3pm to 7pm.



The Country Universities Centre offers a physical space for students engaged in online education, and provides a conducive environment for learning as well as fostering a strong sense of community.

## Local education opportunities

The Country Universities Centre (CUC) Bass Coast is playing a crucial role in transforming the educational landscape for students in our region.

By offering a physical space for students engaged in online education, the CUC Bass Coast is not only providing a conducive environment for learning but also fostering a strong sense of community. One of the key advantages highlighted is the ability for students to stay close to their support networks while pursuing online education.

The Learning Skills Advisor program is a noteworthy initiative, emphasizing the importance of academic guidance and confidence-building. This mentorship and support system contribute significantly to the academic success of students, making the learning journey more manageable and fulfilling.

The extended operating hours of the CUC Bass Coast, from 5am to 12 midnight seven days a week, reflect a commitment to accessibility and flexibility. This approach acknowledges the diverse needs and schedules of students, ensuring that the Centre remains open when they need it the most.

The Centre's strategic position, just across from the Wonthaggi Town Hall, represents its function as an entrance to a supportive learning community. The utilisation of Federal Government financing to make registration free supports the commitment to making quality education available to all, removing financial hurdles that can sometimes impede educational ambitions.

In essence, the CUC Bass Coast is not just a physical space for learning; it is a dynamic and vibrant community that values each registered student. By bridging the gap between higher education and community life, the Centre is contributing significantly to the overall well-being and academic success of students in the region.



## PHILLIP ISLAND DANCE STUDIO



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SAN REMO  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Welcome Back to School

Quality educational programs that engage and support our children to achieve their best. Students are given many opportunities to grow and learn academically and socially in a safe and caring environment.

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If you would like more information on our school please contact the principal: Karen Bowker on 5678 5354 or [san.rem.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:san.rem.ps@education.vic.gov.au)

[www.san-remo-ps.vic.gov.au](http://www.san-remo-ps.vic.gov.au)





Cowes Primary welcomes its new and returning staff for 2024. Front: Assistant Principal Sarah Tyrrell, Ash Salter, Caitlin Matthys, Lauretta Mallia, Jess Gysberts, Angelica Burke, Ash Granger and Isabella Hands. Back: Andrew Burgan, Melissa Hill, Principal Rodney McKenzie, Hayley Wallace, Assistant Principal Bree Rutherford, Alex Clough and John Fox.



It was a happy start to school for the latest group of Preps and their parents at Cowes Primary. From left: Kobey Murphy with Jack, Remi D'Agostin with Margot, Stef Rossiter with Harry and Lauren Lees with Alex and teacher, Tessa Johnston.



# Celebrating 150 Years

Cowes Primary has welcomed students back for the start of the 2024 year, as well as new staff joining the dedicated team.

The school is looking forward to celebrating the major milestone of turning 150 years old on February 12, 2024.

The school was officially declared open when John Brook, head teacher of Cowes Primary School, informed the Education Department he had officially opened school with 43 students in attendance.

The school has been busy planning events for this celebration including the return of the ever-popular school fete on Saturday March 9 (Labour Day long weekend).

Due to an administration building fire in 2004 the school has lost all of its historical photos and memorabilia. The school would appreciate the loan of any photos or memorabilia from past students, parents, employees or general community members, to assist our celebration.

## A positive start at Cowes Primary School

Cowes Primary School welcomed 522 students, including 74 eager new preps, for the start of its milestone 150th year.

The school year kicked off on a high last Monday with a day of learning for staff with Dr Nathaniel Swain, a distinguished figure in the Science of Learning movement.

The renowned educator and lead lecturer at Latrobe University shared valuable insights and practical tools, setting an inspiring tone for innovative approaches to learning in 2024.

Cowes Primary School welcomed eight new teachers and three education support staff for 2024, each bringing a wealth of expertise and dedication to the school community. Notably, Bella Hands, a new Year 3 teacher, has a unique connection to the school as her grandmother attended in the 1940s.

This year Bree Rutherford has transitioned into a second Assistant Principal role. Bree's exceptional leadership skills and commitment to the growth of both students and staff will add great value to our school.

Over the break, the Dome received a fresh coat of paint and a number of smaller maintenance tasks were completed. A new cricket pitch and tennis court refurbishment are also planned over the coming months.

Additionally, the school pool became a hub of activity as the YMCA and Vic Swim utilised the facility. The school is very fortunate to have a pool as we're located on an island surrounded by water. Given the potential dangers of our surrounding waters, it is imperative that our students are equipped with the skills to navigate them safely.



Harvey and Ava from Year 1 were delighted to find delicious plums in the vegetable garden when school returned last week.

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

1874 - 2024

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE





Paige, Nelly, Tanesha, Alexis, Pollie, Chelsea are impressed by the open space and views from the oval at the San Remo campus. More photos at [pisra.com.au/education](http://pisra.com.au/education)

## San Remo campus bigger and better

Bass Coast College San Remo Campus continues to grow, welcoming 160 new year 7 students in 2024. This takes the student population to 430.

Along with new students the San Remo Campus has employed 16 new staff across all learning areas and education support.

“The new cohort have settled in well and are showing us they’re kind, eager to learn and inquisitive, all positive characteristics for students to have,” said campus principal Emma Harris.

“Our extensive transition has prepared the Year 7’s well for the expectations of secondary school and reduced anxiety about be-

ing in a new environment as they have already met their teachers before the year begins.

“Our college is going from strength to strength as we grow,” Ms Harris continued.

“We’re proud of our achievements in academic and extra-curricular areas such as sport and music and are expecting to see outstanding results again this year.

“BCC prides itself in being an inclusive school catering to individual student needs and creating positive educational pathways for all.”

2024 sees two new curriculum programs introduced: SWELL (Social, Wellbeing, Engagement, Leadership and Learning) and

Cultural Studies.

Both programs are aligned to the Victorian Curriculum and aim to develop a student’s sense of self and their place and responsibility in community.

BCC’s ongoing commitment to wellbeing is being enhanced with a new partnership with The Resilience Program (TRP) starting in Term 2.

TRP will be a part of Year 7 BOOST pastoral care program which was implemented in 2023.

Enrolment enquiries can be directed to Campus Principal Emma Harris. 03 5610 2020, or email [bass.coast.co.san.rem@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:bass.coast.co.san.rem@education.vic.gov.au).



The Village School welcomed eight new Foundation students, seen here with their Mentor, Christie. From left: Ollie, Noah, Wynter, Cece, Eddie, Louie, Christie (Mentor), Elka, Tuki

## It takes a Village

The Phillip Island Village School welcomed eight new Foundation students this year.

We are looking forward to our whole school Family Camp (FAMP) in mid-February.

In other exciting news, there is now a new building for the Foundation students, and some new rooms in the school’s main space for 2024.

JOZALIAA

# BASS COAST COLLEGE

“Achieving success in a caring and creative environment”

Bass Coast College proudly continuing the 100 year tradition as the area’s government secondary school presence. We remain committed to providing outstanding support for the young people of the Bass Coast area.

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Principal  
Mr Darren Parker



BACK TO SCHOOL 2024

Advertising Feature



Our Lady Star of the Sea welcomed 20 Foundation students to school last week.



Students got to play outside, with dinosaurs! Ayla, William and Andy.



San Remo Primary's Grade 5/6 students working in teams using Lego Kits in their first STEM class.

# Students welcomed back

This year Our Lady Star of the Sea welcomed 20 Foundation students, with 14 boys and six girls joining the school community. On their first day the students enjoyed having a play, going on a tour of the school while trying to find the green sheep and spending some time with their Year 6 buddies!



Foundation student Ava enjoys lunch with her buddies Evie and Amelie.



Reef and Bailey enjoy some outside play.

## Exciting new programs at San Remo

San Remo Primary has had a wonderful start to the year, said Principal Karen Bowker. "With 22 new preps and other new families to the school, we have 170 children at our school this year," Ms Bowker said. "The numbers seem to be growing each year due to the new housing in the area but also because we offer strong educational programs that give all students the opportunity to learn in a safe and supportive environment. "We have a strong focus on catering to individual differences and caring staff who encourage and help children to learn and socialise in a supportive environment." The school has some exciting new programs happening this year as well, which the school community is very excited about. "These are STEM being taught by Daniel Earle and The Resilience Project," Ms Bowker explained. "The Resilience Project is a whole school community program, which includes our parents and carers and will be rolled out alongside our Zones of Regulations and Respectful Relationship Programs within classrooms. "We are very excited this year to finalise our Whole School Masterplan, that will create new learning spaces and set our school up for 21st Century learning and provide a wonderful space for the community in out of school times. "We are looking forward to seeing this work begin at the end of the year, when building commences. "In the meantime, we have our sensory play area and garden space being started next week, and can't wait to show it off when it is finished." In 2024 the school's OSHC partner TheirCare will offer a holiday program each term break to children in the area. "You don't have to be enrolled at San Remo Primary to access this program in the holidays, just visit the TheirCare site to access any details. "This is a wonderful opportunity and service for local working families and we are pleased to support this," Ms Bowker said.



## Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School – Cowes



## Courage, Compassion & Creativity

We believe in providing a welcoming, friendly and safe environment where everyone is respected and treated fairly and justly. Taking pride in environmental sustainability, the surrounding wetlands and "green areas" on the school site will engage students in authentic studies within a natural environment.

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Aquathon and huge community day

SAN REMO  
CHANNEL CHALLENGE

NEWS & PROGRAM



The 38th San Remo Channel Challenge hopes to attract over 600 entries this year, when the race starts at 12.15pm on Saturday, February 10. Photo: Nici Cahill, Snapshot Photography.



Ron Nicholson from the organising committee with Callum McCluskey in 2022. "We would all like to see Callum McCluskey and Chris Deegan replicate their epic battle from the Cape when they were separated by only three seconds at the finish," said Ron.



Local competitor Justin Tilly took out the top spot in the Men's over 40 category last year. At the recent Cape Paterson Aquathon, Justin finished third behind two elite athletes, showing he is in ominous form.

# Channel Challenge set for Saturday

Fantastic entertainment, a new over 60s category, and a top line of talented competitors are locked in for this year's San Remo Channel Challenge on Saturday February 10.

The race, which is the second leg of the Bass Coast Series, is scheduled to start at 12.15pm and expects to attract over 600 entries.

This year's guest starter, John Dickie, represents decades of dedication from the Dickie family to the event.

Last week the race organisers and the Bass Coast Council agreed to introduce the O/60 category for the 38th Channel Challenge and for the 2024 Bass Coast Series.

After decades of competing in San Remo's Channel Challenge each year there are many loyal regulars who started in their 20s and 30s who have now reached the magical age of 60.

But they also have no plans to retire and hang up their goggles and still relish taking on the Channel each year. However, as they graduated from the ranks of Senior competitors through the O/40 and O/50 categories they now find it hard to be competitive against those youngsters who have just turned 50.

In recent years, there has been a growing push to establish an Over 60s category for the Bass Coast Series, and that has now become reality.

This means there will be eight new prizes for first and second in the O/60s Open Male and Female categories and in the O/60 Local Male and Female categories.

"The Bass Coast series will also have four new \$150 Awards for the highest points scorers in the Series in the four new categories," organisers said.

"This has only been made possible by the generous support of the Bass Coast Shire Council and hopefully the reward for them will be to see a new record number of competitors and spectators visiting San Remo and Phillip Island this weekend."

With pre-race entries approaching 500 and reasonable weather forecast for the weekend it appears that there should be 600+ competitors lining up on the starting line.

To help smooth out the process of validating entries and collecting race packs the Race Centre will be open and operating on Friday evening in the upstairs area of the San Remo Hotel from 5.30pm until 8pm.

"This will hopefully ease the congestion on Saturday morning when the Race Centre will be open between 8am and 11.30am," said Ron Nicholson from the organising committee.

"Online entries will now close at 5pm on Friday February 9."

**Starter**

The Dickie family have been great supporters of the Channel Challenge since its inception in 1986 when Ray Dickie was an early member of the organising committee and a steadfast volunteer and helper for many years.

"Since then, we have seen Ray's son,

John Dickie, support the event as a sponsor and donor while Ray's granddaughter, Bonnie Dickie, has been a hardworking member of the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club for several years now," said Ron.

"The organising committee has invited John to represent the Dickie family and the local community at the event as the 2024 Guest Starter."

John will be Guest Starter over an impressive field.

At the recent Cape Paterson Aquathon a team from the Victorian Institute of Sport competed along with the Triathlon Australia Coach, Jarrod Evans.

"We believe that they will be in action at San Remo again this Saturday," said Ron.

"We would all like to see Callum McCluskey and Chris Deegan replicate their epic battle from the Cape when they were separated by only three seconds at the finish while local O/40 competitor, Justin Tilley, showed he is in great form by finishing third behind those two elite athletes."

Once again, San Remo will be turned into a festival site for Channel Challenge day, with the market run by Rotary opening up at 8am and the local traders keen to look after the thousands who are expected to compete or watch the event.

The hotels and cafes should be buzzing, and the heats of the tug-of-war will commence at 11am with the finals on at 1.30pm.

The presentation to all prize winners will be made at 2.15pm on the stage in the forecourt of the San Remo Hotel and that will be followed by music as the happy crowd celebrates another successful event.

CONGRATS TO ALL  
CHANNEL CHALLENGE ENTRANTS!  
BRING IN THE TOKEN BELOW  
ON RACE DAY FOR A POT OF  
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Channel Challenge  
participants

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Aquathon and huge community day

SAN REMO  
CHANNEL CHALLENGE

NEWS & PROGRAM



Open Senior Male winners in the 2023 event from left: Tristan Price (3rd), Callum McClusky (1st) and Harvey Lanigan (2nd)

# History of the Challenge

When the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club ran the first Channel Challenge in 1986 there were only 57 competitors who were willing to brave that first crossing from the mainland to Newhaven and then back over the bridge to the San Remo Hotel.

This weekend, competitors line up for the 38th event, with over 600 people expected to take part.

The inspiration for the challenge came from the late Lyall Williams from the San Remo Hotel as a way to raise funds for the surf club. The response from the local community was amazing.

Service organisations, council and members of the community all pitched in to help and are still doing it.

The original winner of the male section was the late Michael Gordon (former editor and leading political commentator at The Age) while the original female winner, Katie Peart, was a Woolamai lifesaver who became a journalist with the Herald-Sun.

The event quickly caught the public's imagination

and has grown into a contest that on three occasions has featured more than six hundred competitors and over five thousand spectators lining the jetty, the bridge and the foreshore.

Over the years we have seen many elite Triathletes, AFL footballers, Olympic and Commonwealth Games competitors, politicians and of course a bevy of local identities enjoy their day at San Remo.

In 2010, the Channel Challenge celebrated its 25th anniversary, with over 600 competitors.

Both of the 1986 winners were at the event, while two locals, Brian Dallinger and Geoff Daff completed a clean sweep of all 25 events and along with Michael Gordon and Katie Peart, were presented with commemorative medallions.

Sadly, Michael Gordon, always a strong supporter of local biathlon events, died of a heart attack while competing in the Cowes Classic in 2018.

**Athletes**  
Over the years there have

been some serious athletes win the Channel Challenge and the honour roll includes several multiple winners – marathon swimmer Jon Van Wisse, plus leading Grand Prix triathletes Tim Bentley, Bryce Quirk, Robert Harris and most recently Marcel Walkington.

In 2006 several overseas competitors here for the Commonwealth Games entered the Challenge and that year New Zealander Kris Gemmel prevailed over a very hot field while the female division was won by Scottish triathlete Kerry Lang.

However there is no doubt the Queen of the Channel Challenge is Penny Reid (nee O'Connell) who won the female section of the race fourteen times. Penny has also won the Lorne and Portsea ocean swims and has represented Australia at the international level.

In 2019, for the first time in its history the event was cancelled due to weather conditions and was rescheduled for March.

Continued page 16



At the 2003 event winner Bryce Quirk (centre), flanked by second place getter Craig McKenzie and the 2002 winner Rob Harris, who finished third.



2024

CHANNEL CHALLENGE

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9

5.30pm - 8.00pm: Race Centre open – San Remo Hotel.  
Collection of Race Packs. Late entries taken.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 10

8.00am: PISR Rotary Market opens: Arts, crafts and general stalls

8.00am: Race Centre opens – San Remo Hotel. Race Packs – Online registrations only.

11.00am: Heats – Men's Tug-Of-War, Foreshore

11.30am: Race Centre closes

12.00noon: Competitors race briefing at start

12.15PM: 38TH CHANNEL CHALLENGE STARTS

1.30pm: Finals – Tug-Of-War – Men and Women, Foreshore

2.15pm: Presentations on stage – San Remo Hotel

3.00pm: Music at San Remo Hotel – The AMA Band

Changed traffic conditions, San Remo Channel Challenge

Traffic conditions will be changed as part of traffic management and safety precautions for this event. On Saturday, 10 February:

- Marine Parade will be closed between Bergin Grove and Woolamai Grove from 9.30am until 4.00pm
- Bergin Grove will be closed between Mary Grove and Marine Parade from 11.45am until 1.05pm
- Parking restrictions will apply in Bergin Grove
- One way traffic on the San Remo Bridge will be in place between 12.05pm and 1.00pm.

Race starts at 12.15pm

For any enquires please contact our Senior Visitor Economy and Events Officer, Janine Temme on the 1300 BCOAST (226 278) or (03) 5671 2211.





Aquathon  
and huge  
community  
day

SAN REMO

# CHANNEL CHALLENGE

NEWS &  
PROGRAM

## History of the Challenge

From page 15

Despite this hiccup, the rescheduled event attracted 453 competitors, including 62 people who were part of the 31 relay teams who completed the race.

In 2021 the event was cancelled due to Covid.

Everyone was excited for the race return in 2022, and the 36th Channel Challenge ran on February 19, 2022. The conditions were perfect with approximately 500 competitors and 34 teams in the relay category.

The event was won by Australian triathlete Callum McClusky, who finished in 11 minutes and four seconds, only 14 seconds outside Bryce Quirk's record.

Callum beat another leading triathlete with Olympic aspirations, 18-year-old Tristan Price, by 42 seconds.

Just behind them was Emma Jeffcoat, who had represented Australia in the Triathlon event at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Callum and Emma were part of a team of

elite Australian Triathletes who came to San Remo for the event.

The first junior male across the finish line was Ryan McKenzie with a smart time of 13.55.

Ryan is the grandson of an original WBSLSC member, Ron Stephens, who was helping out in the race centre.

### Drama

In 2023 the event took a dramatic turn when the race, originally scheduled for February 4 was cancelled the night before, due to a forecast for high winds and dangerous water conditions.

Initially organisers decided to reschedule the event for the end of the year – on the first Saturday in December, as there were no suitable dates and tides available for the remainder of the summer.

However after meeting with the committee and discussing with competitors, the overwhelming majority were in favour of rescheduling the event for March 11.

Although it was the first day of the long weekend and not ideal, the rescheduled event was described as “no frills” with no market or tug-of-war taking place.

It ran without a hitch, on a sunny autumn day with a light breeze.

There was a record number of entries – 640 – but not that many took to the water. Some of the original competitors were not able to make the new date, but donated their entry fee to the WBSLSC.

Top ranking competitors Callum McClusky and Emma Jeffcoat were the fastest male and female competitors across the water and both went on to win their respective divisions and repeat their victories of the previous year.

Justin Tilley, a local O/40 competitor was the fourth fastest competitor overall while a local youngster, Callum McLeod, also beat home all visiting and local competitors in the Junior Male category.



Jo and Craig Elvish at the 2022 event. Jo has completed the challenge several times and loves it. She told the Advertiser she was also featured in the paper in 1988, when she completed the Channel Challenge aged 17.



Winner of the 1989 Channel Challenge, Graeme Armstrong of Box Hill North runs under the banner, cheered on by the crowd.



The winner of the 2019 San Remo Channel Challenge Marcel Walkington, with second and third place getters Nathan Buschkuehl and James Folvig, and the Senior female winner of the event Tamsyn Moana Veale. Marcel won the event again in 2020.



Long-time supporter of the Channel Challenge, the late Dennis Harris (left) with Rob Williams and Ron Nicholson (right), were honoured with a new memorial trophy at the 2022 event.



Photo courtesy of Coast Magazine.

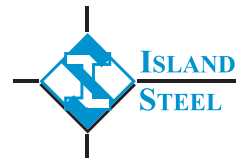
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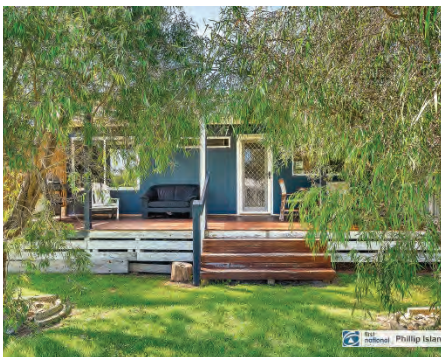


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# A bountiful harvest of food gardens

## GARDENING

This coming weekend, February 10 and 11, sees the return of the third annual Bass Coast Edible Gardens event.

Organised as a fundraiser for Bass Coast Adult Learning (BCAL), the event includes a record 17 gardens, opening for visitors to be inspired and learn how to grow food.

During the open gardens weekend, two local community gardens, the Phillip Island Community Orchard and the Coronet Bay Community Garden, will be offering tasty treats including preserves, pickles and fresh produce.

Visitors can learn about permaculture at Bhavani and David Rook's Ventnor farm and at the Chill House mini farm in Cowes.

In Cape Woolamai Marg and Pete will be opening their quirky, art-filled garden for the first time.

And for visitors wanting a drive through the hills or along the coast, there are three fabulous food gardens in Glen Forbes, Kilcunda and Glen Alvie.

In Kilcunda, Kris and her late husband Philip, have been farming and growing food for more than 50 years. Sharon Willcox, Gardens Coordinator, said that there was a surprise around every corner at the sprawling Kilcunda



In Cape Woolamai Marg and Pete will be opening their quirky, art-filled garden for the first time, as part of the third Bass Coast Edible Gardens event on February 10 and 11.

garden.

The 17 participating gardens will be open from 10am until 4pm on Saturday and Sunday.

Gardeners will be easy to spot this year, as they will be wearing red 'Edible Garden' t-shirts, thanks to sponsorship from Westernport Water.

And as that historical steak-knives ad goes, wait, there's more!

Maddy Harford, the secretary of BCAL, said she was delighted to have recently opened a complementary exhibition at ArtSpace in Wonthaggi.

The Edible Gardens exhibition which is on until early March features artwork celebrating the creativity of growing food.

"Some of our gardeners are also artists, and many

local artists also garden, so it was a natural next step to have an art exhibition about growing food," said Maddy.

Bass Coast Shire Council has also come to the party in spades.

As well as providing a community grant to help with organising the annual edible gardens event, the Council has just announced that it will be funding free gardening workshops for Bass Coast residents to be delivered at community gardens across the shire later in 2024.

Attendees at the Edible Garden weekend can pick up a postcard with more information about these gardening workshops, known as the Bass Coast Garden Gems program.

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# Kaye calls it a day

## BUSINESS

When Kaye Hall started out as a hairdresser in Cowes in the early 1980s, perms and big hair were all the rage.

In the duration of her career she has seen the "very blonde and very straight" era of the '90s through to the more "subtle, natural" current trend.

And throughout those years - until her retirement last week - she has gathered a loyal clientele.

"I still have clients today who I worked with in the 1980s," she says.

After she completed her apprenticeship in Melbourne, Kaye moved to Cowes in 1984 to work at Sundaram Hair Design, taking a break for a decade to have her three children before returning to work there in the late '90s to 2012.

She then opened Island Hair on Thompson Avenue, which she ran for five years.

From 2018 she worked for Elements Hair Room, until last week.

"In hairdressing you get to know people so well, see weddings and births.

"I've loved working with the team at Elements and I'll miss them all."

Kaye has always pep-



Kaye Hall has worked as a hairdresser on Phillip Island for four decades and last week retired.

pered her career with travel and in retirement has big plans with her partner Adrian, her children and partners and one grandchild, while she will continue to work one day a week at the Island Foodstore.

"We have bought a caravan so will be doing a little local travel but the international list of countries I want to see never ends.

"This year I'll be going to South East Asia, including Indonesia, India and Nepal."

## Come join us for summer social bridge

As part of the drive to attract new members the Phillip Island Bridge Club is starting casual sessions every Tuesday night over summer.

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The Phillip Island Movie Club (PIMC) presents "Caravaggio's Shadow" on Wednesday, February 14 at Berninnet, commencing at 7pm.

## A gripping historical thriller

### MOVIE

The Phillip Island Movie Club (PIMC) presents "Caravaggio's Shadow" on Wednesday, February 14 at Berninnet, commencing at 7pm.

The 2022 Italian film is directed by Michele Placido who also stars as Cardinal del Monte.

Caravaggio was a 16th Century painter and regarded as one of the most prominent Italian artists of his generation with his realistic depiction of the human form.

His work was a huge influence on Baroque painting. Caravaggio used prostitutes, beggars and thieves as his models, transforming prostitutes into the Virgin Mary and thieves into saints on his canvas and this earned him the ire of the Catholic Church.

Caravaggio (played here by Riccardo Scamarcio) had earlier been involved in a street brawl with Tomassoni, the gang-

ster son of a wealthy family. Caravaggio was forced to flee Rome after Tomassoni died. He gained temporary sanctuary in Naples, while he hoped for a Papal Pardon.

However, Pope Paul V decided to investigate the painter and the rumours concerning his debauched lifestyle to see if he was deserving of such treatment. He sent a papal inquisitor (Louis Garrel), known simply as Ombra (the shadow) to question some of his patrons and those who knew him best. This included the Marquessa Colonna (Isabelle Huppert) who had first offered him shelter when he fled to Naples and patron and art collector the Cardinal del Monte (Michele Placido).

Caravaggio died under mysterious circumstances in Tuscany in 1610, but this film offers up a plausible solution to that.

Placido has wanted to make this film for 50 years and uses a non-linear nar-

rative structure that jumps back and forth in time to reveal his story and this may be difficult for those who do not know Caravaggio's work. It is a complex time in the history of the church and the film explores this making for a gripping historical thriller.

The PIMC will provide a drink and popcorn prior to the film, starting at 6.15pm.

"We are hoping members will be able to mix socially and meet new members as there will be no need to rush in for a seat as you can now choose your seat when booking," a spokesperson said.

Entry to Berninnet is from the door in front of the kiosk.

Members will need to book for this film and bring their booking and PIMC membership card to gain entrance.

"Caravaggio's Shadow" runs for 120 mins and is rated MA (for strong sex, nudity and coarse language).

## Another bumper sale for Bill's Books

The team at Bill's Book Shed is celebrating after another successful summer sale season.

This year's sale raised \$10,714, bringing the yearly fundraising total to \$32,013.

Since the book sale began with the late Bill

Hopkins at the helm, the dedicated team has raised a total of \$535,005.

All proceeds go to purchase equipment for Melaleuca Aged Care.

The Auxiliary thanked the community for their continued support.

Donations are always welcome. Books must be in clean condition. Magazines or encyclopedias are not accepted.

Bill's Book Shed is located at 1 Watchorn Road, Cowes. 0437 949 029.

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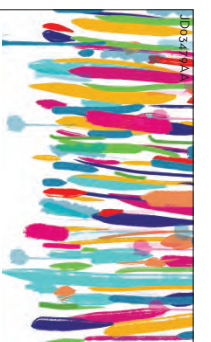
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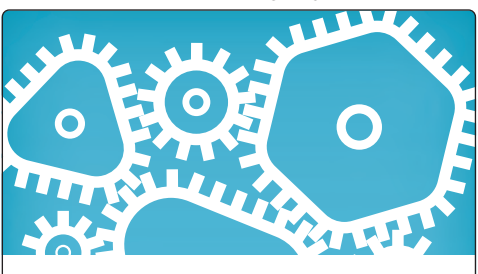
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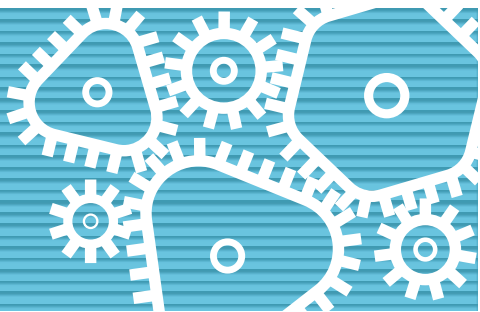
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Marg Harrison and family would like to thank all the wonderful people of Phillip Island for their support on the sudden passing of Geoff.

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### PUBLIC NOTICE

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The maximum vehicle mass allowed on the Phillip Island/San Remo Bridge will be temporarily reduced.

From 26 February to November 2024 the mass limit will be reduced to 42.5 tonnes.

With safety a key priority, the mass limit is to protect the structural integrity of the bridge while we carry out critical maintenance works on water and sewage infrastructure.

Bridge access remains unchanged for all general road users and freight vehicles weighing 42.5 tonnes or less.

Further information, please visit our website or contact us on 1300 720 711.



# Ronnie celebrates his family's prominent past

## FAMILY HISTORY

Sometimes seen sporting a colourful bowtie in Bass Coast Shire council meetings, Ronnie Bauer arguably has something of a theatrical flair.

But it was only on a recent trip to Germany – which he describes as “10 days that shook my world” – that Ronnie came to understand how deep his theatrical roots run.

The trip revealed just why his grandfather's work has been celebrated in film, and sung by the renowned Three Tenors and at the soccer World Cup when Germany hosted in 2006.

“I knew some of my family's history but not to the extent that I discovered on this trip,” Ronnie says, comparing the trip to an episode of the SBS genealogy series “Who Do You Think You Are?”

Ronnie says even as a boy he knew his family's history was unusual.

His grandfather Ludwig Herzer was a librettist in Germany, writing text for operas.

Ludwig's most famous piece was Yours is My Heart's Delight from The Land of Smiles, sung at the World Cup, which also featured in the 2000 war film U-571 and has been performed by the Three Tenors, while Ludwig worked with renowned composers Franz Lehar and Joseph Beer.

“In Australia few people know his songs, but in western Europe and especially in the German-speaking world he and his work are well known,” Ronnie says.

“I have the piano that belonged to my grandparents, bought out from Austria after the war, on which Ludwig composed operettas and it's thanks to that piano that nearly everything I own can be traced back, because of royalties.”

## War

Ronnie says while Ludwig died just before the outbreak of World War II, his wife (and Ronnie's grandmother) Ella was trapped in Austria, a highly dangerous place at the time for a Jew.

“She was kept safe because her friend (Sophie, the wife of Franz Lehar) was having an affair with the brother of Hermann Goring (the powerful Nazi leader).”

Ronnie's mother Henny was 21 when the war started, at the time working as a producer/director in Vienna, and she fled to Switzer-



Ronnie Bauer's grandfather Ludwig Herzer was a librettist in Germany, writing text for operas.

land for safety.

Henny then travelled to Shanghai, where she worked as a nurse in a refugee hospital for 11 years.

“In Shanghai my mother met my father Peter Bauer – who was also from Vienna – and in 1949 they came to Australia, where dad worked as an architect.

“My mother was even part of Steven Spielberg's Shoa Foundation project, recorded to capture stories from survivors of the Holocaust.”

## Discovery

Ronnie's mother passed away in 2004 and it was while he was sorting through her belongings he discovered manuscripts and memorabilia dating back to his grandfather's pre-war compositions.

“It was in German and I couldn't read it, so pointless hanging on to it. I sent six big boxes to the Franz Lehar museum in Austria.”

Those big boxes opened doors that have only now come to fruition.

Through that contact, a book on the life of Ludwig Herzer was recently published, with a performance of one of his operettas having a premier in Germany in mid-December, which Ronnie travelled to attend.

“It was a big deal in Germany. I was interviewed by the media and it won a prestigious operatic prize.”

Ronnie then travelled to Vienna where another performance of his grandfather's plays was being held.

It was through contacts he met then that a whole new world opened up.

“I was invited to visit a theatre museum and I walked in and



Ronnie Bauer on his recent trip to Germany, where he met with Suzanne Beer, the daughter of composer Joseph Beer.

a life-size cutout of my mother greeted me. I was in total shock and very emotional.

“Imagine walking into a museum and your mother greets you after 20 years.

“It turns out mum was the first female to graduate from a major theatre school in Vienna as a producer and director and she is now revered as the pioneer of Austrian theatre like Amelia Earhart in aviation.

“She never spoke about it so I didn't realise how highly she was regarded.

“But the story gets better.”

## New relatives

Ronnie says he had always believed he was the only child of an only child (his mother), of an only child (his grandfather).

But on his December trip to Germany, he discovered Ludwig had a sister who was a piano child prodigy and married a man esteemed in theatre.

“I found out I had all these relations I'd never heard of but then I discovered my great uncle died in a concentration camp and my great auntie fled to America where she died without having children.

“The whole trip felt surreal because of all the unexpected twists that popped up.”

Ronnie says he'll hopefully return to Austria for the reopening of the refurbished Lehar museum that celebrates his family's musical legacy.

“Nothing would make me prouder than to have one of Ludwig's operettas performed at Berne one day.”

STEP UP TO

2024

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Cecily Woodberry and David Maunders accepted the Commendation certificate for FOCIS at the Victorian Community History Awards from Judy Maddigan, president of the Public Records Advisory Council

## A commendable effort

### HISTORY

Two publications from the island have received commendations at the 2023 Victorian Community History awards.

"Once upon an Island" – the book produced by the team at the Advertiser last year, celebrating the history of Phillip Island, received a Commendation in the Collaborative Community History category.

The category was for work which involved significant contributions from several individuals or groups.

The Friends of Churchill Island Society (FOCIS) received a Commendation in the History Interpretation Award for "Whispers from the Past". The award recognised the most outstanding local history project presented in a unique format.

Other Gippsland publications recognised at the awards included:

- "From Rural Health to Community Strengthening: The Story of the Mirboo North and District Community Foundation", by Dr Julie Fenwick.
- "Livingston: A One-Teacher School in the Gippsland Hills, 1913-1938" by David Harris - an article in the Victorian Historical Journal.

The awards were announced



"Once upon an Island", produced by the team at the Advertiser, received a Commendation at the Victorian Community History Awards. The Advertiser's Eleanor McKay with Judy Maddigan, president of the Public Records Advisory Council, at the presentation.

last Friday in a ceremony at the Arts Centre in Melbourne.

President of the Royal Historical Society Victoria Emeritus Professor Richard Broome AM said: "The judges had another exceptional pool of entries to choose from this year and every community historian who participated should be applauded for their commitment to local history."

See the full list of winners at: [www.historyvictoria.org.au/victorian-community-history-awards/2023-victorian-community-history-awards-winners/](http://www.historyvictoria.org.au/victorian-community-history-awards/2023-victorian-community-history-awards-winners/)

"Once upon an Island" is available from the Advertiser office at 60 Chapel Street, Cowes, online at [www.pisra.com.au/once-upon-an-island-history-book](http://www.pisra.com.au/once-upon-an-island-history-book), Turn the Page bookshop in Cowes and select local stores.



The Trenavin Chapel will continue to be available for weddings, but is also now Phillip Island's first Greek Orthodox Church.

## Island's first Greek Church

### COMMUNITY

Phillip Island's first Greek Orthodox Church was officially opened last weekend at the Trenavin Chapel Phillip Island in Ventnor.

Up to 3000 people attended a service by popular priest Papa Lefteris, which was followed by Greek dancing, music and food on the cliff top overlooking Western Port.

Father Lefteris is a controver-

sial figure in the church.

Previously he was priest at the Holy Monastery of Panagia Kamariani in Red Hill, but was last year "let go" by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia (GOAA) for a series of controversial opinions.

He is best known for the traditional Blessing of the Waters ceremony in Rye each year, which sees thousands of local Greeks turn up to show their support.



Father Lefteris is a controversial figure in the church.

## Pop Up exhibit farewelled

### ART

PICES celebrated the success of the 2024 Pop Up Exhibition with a closing night function on Monday January 29.

The exhibition ran over four weeks at the Berninnet gallery and featured 27 first-class emerging and established artists from Phillip Island and beyond, showcasing a broad range of high-quality contemporary photography, painting, sculpture, drawing, printmaking, weaving,

ceramics and pyrography.

PICES is now hosting "PICES in Focus" a two-week exhibition in partnership with Bass Coast Shire Council featuring works from three highly respected local and regional contemporary artists Mae Adams, Andrew Kasper and Mark Schaller.

Open weekdays at Berninnet from 9.30am – 5pm and weekends 10am – 4pm, from January 31 until February 12.

More photos at [pisra.com.au/entertainment](http://pisra.com.au/entertainment)



Artist Ken Fisher (third from the right) sold all but one of his artworks, with wife Carol and Sharon and Joe la Pira.



Chris Farrell, Judy Wolstenholme and Sandra Henstridge at the closing night of the PICES 2024 Pop Up Exhibition.



Marlene Abela (glass artist featured in the exhibition) and Assistant Curator Clem Fries.



Curator of the exhibition Warren Nichols with PICES President Sandra Peeters and Glenys and Peter Paul from Bendigo Bank.



# Solid performance by Sharks

## A Grade

A perfect day for cricket greeted us at Newhaven, as the Island Sharks welcomed the in-form Inverloch who won the toss and chose to field.

Without regular opener Lochie Cleeland, the new look opening pair of Heath Womersley and Tom Niven got proceedings underway.

The young pair were cautious in their approach with sound defence the feature of their partnership. After seeing through the tough new ball period, Tom Niven was the first to be dismissed, falling with the score on 10 in the twelfth over.

This brought the in-form Daniel Mock to the crease, immediately putting pressure back onto the bowling team by pushing for singles and punishing the bad balls. The Inverloch bowling unit continued their tight bowling as Heath was looking to up the ante.

With the tea break approaching and Mock still being busy at the crease, the Stingrays brought on some part time off spin to steal a wicket.

Unfortunately for Heath it worked as he fell in the last over for 22, which meant the Sharks went into the break at 2/80 off 38 overs. The game evenly poised, it was the Stingrays who came out of the break best with Mock dismissed for a well-made 54 off 77 balls, the score now 3/97.

A fiery spell from left arm bowler Rankin, saw Eli Richards fighting through a tough period,

whilst Shiran Rathnayake was once again looking dangerous.

Eli never really got going and was dismissed with the score on 128 and shortly after Shiran fell for a busy 38 to the bowling of Rankin.

Contributions came from majority of the middle and lower order as Brodie Johnston and Kohen Beaumont both made 16 and had a valuable 30 run partnership, with Simon Kirton (17) and Max Royal (12) providing some late runs.

Max Arceo (8\*) and Zac Brown (4\*) closed out the innings as the Sharks finished nine for 209.

A solid performance against good bowling innings from the Inverloch side.

## B1 v Inverloch

After a tight win against Koonwarra last week Phillip Island's B1 travelled out to Inverloch, for a two-day top of the table clash.

Connor 'Walrus' Epifano a big out, still unavailable with a broken toenail, was kept to what he does best as designated scorer.

Skipper Kurt Lane lost the toss and the Island were sent into field. Tim McNiven and Harry Arceo opened the bowling with both coming straight from the rage room.

Both Inverloch openers had started off well, punishing the bad balls from the opening pair and anger was building.

Then the father-son duo of Aidan and Jobe Williams were

brought on and young gun Jobe took the big opening wicket of league leading run scorer Brett Debono.

Kurt Lane then brought himself on taking a wicket in his second over calling for early drinks, with the home team 2-68.

The third, fourth and fifth wickets then came shortly after with Kurt and Jobe both taking their second respectively.

The two young Inverloch batsmen at the crease dug in and made the Island work for their wickets, along with some questionable umpiring.

At the tea break Inverloch were 5-122 and there was calm before the McNiv storm.

Tim started off after the break, taking a wicket caught behind that was given not out and was one of the worst decisions ever seen. The call really fired up Tim as he mouthed off at the young batsmen and then proceeded to ramp up his pace and try to test out the helmet of the young man.

This outburst from Tim has crowned him the angriest player in B1. Soon after the Sharks got a run out, breaking up the 56-run partnership, followed by another wicket in the next over with a cracking catch by Henry 'Pork' Peppard.

The diving catch had everyone in disbelief, especially Pork himself, as he had to check twice and was still shocked to see the ball in his hands. The Sharks exposed the tail and the finisher

Andrew Tolley was brought on and struck, taking a wicket in his first followed by another in his second with some consistent umpiring giving a dubious LBW.

Three overs later, Tolley took the final wicket, and Inverloch were bowled out for 173. The Island openers of Ollie Duggan and Sarith Angelo reluctantly headed out to bat the final six overs of the day.

With 174 to win Duggan was batting to survive the day's play, whilst Big Ange was wanting to make some runs.

Angelo was looking to score from ball one and ended the day's play at 15 not out.

Nightwatchman Tim McNiven was not required, as Duggan remained not out on four.

The Island's B1 had a good day's cricket all-round, with some stand out bowling from Andrew Tolley with 3-10, and Kurt Lane 3-27 off his 19 overs.

Special mention to Henry Peppard with his terrific fielding, along with some great chat in the field from Aidan Williams.

The Sharks will head back to Inverloch this Saturday needing 155 runs for victory, a win that will put them at the top of the table.

## C Grade

With three home games on the Island, the C graders hosted Koonwarra at the prestigious Newhaven College.

The true captain returned to the side and in true form lost the

toss and was sent in to bat.

Koonwarra's young attack tested openers Excell and Dave Fusinato, but they were up to the task. The pair put on 44 before Dave was bowled for 17.

Steve 'hamstrings' Niven joined Excell and it was just like old times, with the pair hitting the ball to the vast expanses of the College oval. Excell then guided one straight to the hands of the gully fielder and was out for 37.

Drew Fusinato came to the crease and he and Niven got the team to the lunch break 2/115.

Drew and Steve continued the assault after tea, with Drew smashing apart the attack and Niven building a solid picket fence. Drew was bowled for 46, an excellent knock in a partnership of 76.

Cleary made a quick fire 18 and Sachin was unlucky, run out for two. True to form, Niven's hamstrings started to tighten up and he had to waddle off the ground, retired hurt for 52.

It was a superb performance by Steve and back-to-back half centuries to go with his back-to-back hamstring problems.

Fallsy made six and Parry was bowled for a golden duck.

Francis and Zac Hughes negotiated the last few overs adding some valuable runs and getting the Sharks past 200.

At the close of play the Sharks ended on 7/208.

A solid total to defend next week.

**PHILLIP ISLAND**  
**9/209**  
D. MOCK 54  
SHIRAN 38  
H. WOMERSLEY 22  
**VS**  
**INVERLOCH**  
SAT 3RD FEB  
WEEK 1 OF 2  
NEWHAVEN RESERVE  
**A1 GRADE**  
IGA  
SAN REMO

**PHILLIP ISLAND**  
**0/19**  
**VS**  
**INVERLOCH**  
SAT 3RD FEB  
WEEK 1 OF 2  
THOMPSON RESERVE  
**B1 GRADE**  
K. LANE 3/27/19  
A. TOLLEY 3/10/4  
J. WILLIAMS 2/36/11  
RSL  
PHILLIP ISLAND

**PHILLIP ISLAND**  
**7/208**  
S. NIVEN 52\*  
DREW FUSINATO 46  
G. EXCELL 37  
**VS**  
**KOONWARRA**  
SAT 3RD FEB  
WEEK 1 OF 2  
NEWHAVEN COLLEGE  
**C1 GRADE**  
Bowens  
THE BUILDERS CHOICE

**PHILLIP ISLAND**  
**2/196**  
D. MCCAUSLAND 58\*  
T. HORNSBY 56\*  
T. ASURUMUNI 56  
**VS**  
**KORUMBURRA**  
SAT 3RD FEB  
WEEK 1 OF 2  
RHYLL  
**B2 GRADE**  
D. WOMERSLEY 2/8/11  
A. WILLIAMS 2/5/6  
T. HORNSBY 2/3/2  
Haymes  
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**PHILLIP ISLAND**  
**2/21**  
**VS**  
**NERRENA/ KOONWARRA**  
SAT 3RD FEB  
WEEK 1 OF 2  
NEWHAVEN RESERVE  
**U17S**  
66  
W. PEPPARD 3/15/4  
H. WOMERSLEY 2/8/6  
T. NIVEN 2/12/7  
ADVERTISER

# Boardriders keep busy

## SURFING

A team from Phillip Island Boardriders took out third place in the team event at the West Coast Wax Up on the weekend.

PIBC was represented by Jerri Liberati, Eli Curry, Andy Borgan and Andy McHenry.

The longboarders event on the Surf Coast included Open

Men and Women categories, Old Long (pre-1968), expression session and the team division.

A group of PIBC groms beat the heat on Sunday, heading up to URBNSURF in Melbourne, "smashing Cruiser and Progressive Turn waves".

"Big thanks to our Super-Grom leader Deb Leonard and her support team and to the

parents who came along and jumped in for a wave too," posted the club on its Instagram page.

This week, PIBC hosts the Protect Australia's Ocean for Good night at the clubhouse on February 7 at 6pm.

And entries are now open for the Cat Bay Classic on March 9 and 10. Enter online at: [liveheats.com/events/205274](https://liveheats.com/events/205274).



A group of PIBC groms beat the heat on Sunday, heading up to URBNSURF in Melbourne.



A team from Phillip Island Boardriders - Jerri Liberati, Eli Curry, Andy Borgan and Andy McHenry - came third in the team event at the West Coast Wax Up on the weekend.





The upcoming season's junior coaches from left to right: Steve Regnier, Tarryn Allan, Justin Tilley, Michael Cleary, Leigh Woolford, Steve Lock, Mark Riley and Jon Parry. Front: Bianca Hellmuth-Pask, Didi Cuthbertson and Viv Lock.

## Preseason excitement builds for PIFNC

### FOOTBALL

As the preseason countdown begins, anticipation surges at the Phillip Island Football Netball Club with the introduction of an exceptional unit of coaches set to nurture our junior talents in 2024.

This year, a dynamic blend of individuals with profound footy expertise takes charge. Notably, the inclusion of U12 and U14 Girls teams adds a thrilling dimension to the upcoming season.

Leading the U10 mixed teams are Tarryn Allan, returning to mentor our youngest players, and the enthusiastic first-timer Steve Regnier, set to infuse his passion into the kennel.

In the capable hands of the seasoned Mick Cleary and Bianca Hellmuth-Pask, the U12 mixed teams are poised for success.

The U14 mixed teams boast the skills of Mark Ricky and Jon Parry, promising a formidable combination.

Leigh Woodford inspires the inaugural U12 Girls, while Justin Tilley and Steve Lock spearhead the U14 Girls, ensuring a trailblazing season.

Welcoming back Didi Cuthbertson from her travels, we eagerly anticipate her leadership with the Youth Girls once more.

With such an extraordinary coaching ensemble, the future shines brightly at the Kennel.

Training kicks off the week of February 19.

Auskick will return this season in Term 2 of school with Steve and Viv Lock looking to inspire our youngest pups to enjoy our wonderful game.

Further updates will be announced via our social media channels.



This week's winners: Dave Busuttill (3), Phil Wright (5), Wilma Rees (2) and Max Summers (L).

## A great green for midweek

### BOWLS

Corinella really turned it on for us this week. Great weather, a great green and great friends.

It was a pleasure to see 54 bowlers turn up to fight it out for team(s) of the week.

We can only hope that the new bowlers today will continue to bless us with their presence in the future. As usual our bowlers seemed to really enjoy themselves with quite a bit of friendly banter along with much laughter across all the rinks.

Not a lot of wrong bias problems, but we are still adding to the RCH donation tin each week.

Our thanks go out to Terry for all his hard work. He opened up, set up the rinks, looked after the bar as well as the kitchen with some help from Robyn.

As usual we thank Pauline and John for their help, but we really thank Peter for

all his hard work to get us all out and onto the green to compete on such a great day.

As usual we have winners and we have the rest of us.

This week's winners on 38 points were: Phil Wright (S), Dave Busuttill (3), Wilma Rees (2) and Max Summers (L).

Runners up on a score of 35 were: Michael Dady (S), Chris Coulson (3) and Arch Connel (L).

Best one game winners today on 35 points were: John Nicholson (S), Cheryl Floyd (3), Dini Home (2) and Michael Waring (L). We look forward to meeting again next week at San Remo.

We really hope that everyone can once again meet up to keep the numbers up.

Good luck to all our pennant players over the coming week and hope for success to as many of our group as possible.

Could all players please try to be on site by 10am to help Peter.



Left to right: Barry Grazules, Marlene Puncher and Ken Gray.

## Sunny conditions for social

### BOWLS

With sunny conditions and a slight breeze our social bowlers had a day out in perfect bowling conditions.

Runners up for the day: Skip Neville Stevens, 3rd Judy Christie and Lead Bruce Puncher. Congratulations to our winners: Skip Barry Grazules, 3rd Mar-

lene Puncher and Lead Ken Gray.

Social bowls run all year round every Thursday and is a great way of learning bowls with entries closing at 11.30am and games starting at 12.30pm.

There are a number of memberships available, so either drop into the clubrooms at 40 Dunsmore Road, Cowes or call us on 03 5952 2337.

## Results from the table

### BRIDGE

#### Monday, January 29

In first place Justin Mill and Jane Rennie on 69.63 per cent, second placed were Deborah Anglim and Greg Nicholson on 58.52 per cent and third place went to Anne Hodgson and Caroline Shaw on 57.78 per cent.

#### Wednesday, January 31 – Nationwide

First place went to Jane Rennie and son

Finn Rennie on 55.56 per cent, equal second were Molly Dowling and Judy O'Connell on 54.17 per cent along with Jill Short and Shirley Stewart on 54.17 per cent.

Social Bridge every Tuesday night is gaining momentum with four new players starting last week and another three joining us this week. So, if you are looking to learn bridge, brush up on your skills or you just feel like a social game please come and join us. For further details call Jill on 0438 248 578.

## Euchre results

The RSL's Euchre resumed last Thursday on February 1 for the first time this year. We had a good first night turnout and presented trophies for the 2023 winners (both men's and ladies).

The ladies winner was Phyllis Staples with 176 wins.

The men's winner was Les Walton

with 212 wins.

Congratulations to both winners.

Last Thursday, our ladies winner was Caroline Smith with seven wins.

The men's winner was Bob Hee with six wins.

Anyone wishing to join us at Euchre on Thursday nights at the RSL is more than welcome.

Please contact Bob Hee for further information on 0418 173 388.

# PIFNC JUNIOR NETBALL TRYOUTS

FRIDAY  
9TH FEB

+

WEDNESDAY  
14TH FEB

### Important information:

- MyNetball registration must be paid prior to trial
- Attendance at a minimum of 1 trial is compulsory for team selection. Attending 2 is even better!
- Registrations via the QR code below will be open until 5pm, Thursday 8th Feb



Any queries about the 2024 season please contact  
Netball Operations on 0404 019 852





Anna Grogan completed the three-way tie for first place in the weekend's Squidgie Mixed Bag competition.



Byron Griffin (left) and Harley Griffin (right) were in a three-way tie for first place in the weekend's Squidgie Mixed Bag competition.



Pauline Leditschke won the Senior Female Points competition, with an impressive King George whiting worth 1274 points (455 grams).

# Eighth competition of angling season

## FISHING

The Rhyll-Phillip Island Angling Club (RPIAC) held its eighth angling competition for the season over a perfect weekend of February 4 and 5.

Anglers made an early start on Saturday, and the Rhyll boat ramp's car park was filled just after daybreak.

The club's female anglers also had the opportunity to take advantage of the good weather and thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon's charter with the team from Newhaven Fishing Charters.

Many anglers worked hard to turn a reel as fish chose to bite at different times and locations.

Others had obviously charged up their fish magnets and had an abundance of fish eager to introduce themselves.

Thankfully, the summer weather itself was a great reward for everyone.

Each day's weigh-in, between 4.30pm and 5.30pm, kept club captain Chris Leonardos and weigh-in master Alex Bowden busy as a total of 48 fish and one shark were recorded.

The eligible species included tuna, snapper, whiting, salmon, leather jackets, flathead, mackerel and a gummy shark.

The weather warmed as club members gathered for the post-competition awards presentation to acknowledge extraordinary feats.

An equally extraordinary feast of roast chicken, scalloped potatoes, salad and deserts by

Nikky and Lorraine followed, made possible by the RPIAC's exceptional volunteer catering team and the club's supporters, embodying the club's spirit of generosity and community, to closing-out another magic weekend.

Whilst the conditions allowed many hours of fishing the elusive RPIAC Extraordinary Catch Incentives remain banked.

None of the members-only – competition weekend \$1000 first-to-catch prizes – have been claimed this season.

Anglers remain optimistic that they will catch an eligible species that equals or exceeds the nominated weight: King George whiting (1000 grams), snapper (10kg), gummy shark (20kg), mullet (25kg) and kingfish (25kg).

RPIAC encourages participation in recreational angling and welcomes newcomers to learn more about participation in the club's activities.

RPIAC offers complimentary membership to children aged 16 and under, so they can develop skills and an awareness of sustainable and responsible angling.

## Results

With holidays over, RPIAC celebrated some great achievements in the Squidgie category, for anglers aged nine and under.

With many anglers returning empty-handed, Anna Grogan, Harley Griffin and Byron

Griffin impressed everyone with a three-way tie for first place in the Squidgie Mixed Bag competition.

The Junior Weight competition was uncontested, whilst the Junior Points competition was won by Ryan Brett with a King George whiting worth 588 points (210 grams).

The Senior Heaviest Weight competitions had the scales bouncing with some big fish and were won by Mark Griffin and Leah Valente, weighing in a tuna of 18,500 grams and a snapper of 1500 grams, respectively.

Again, King George whiting were the species responsible for victories in the Senior Points competitions.

Vinco Anticevic had the best of the weekend, worth 2058 points (735 grams) and Pauline Leditschke also caught a winner, scoring 1274 points (455 grams).

With squid all around Phillip Island, none greater than the one-kilo minimum weight made it to the weigh-in room, leaving the squid/cuttlefish competition uncontested.

The shark competition was a tale of a single gummy shark, weighing 3655 grams and was brought in by Alex Bowden.

The Secret Weight prize was awarded to Diane Savona, for a pinky snapper weighing 900 grams (secret weight 912 grams).

The RPIAC clubroom is located adjacent to the Rhyll boat ramp and is open to members

and visitors on Fridays (from 5pm) and competition weekends coinciding with weigh in.

The next angling competition will be held over the weekend of February 17 and 18.

There are still many opportunities to take part in the

scheduled angling competitions and compete for competition prizes and the club championships.

For further information about the club, events, competitions and rules, please visit the website: [www.rpiac.com](http://www.rpiac.com).

## Darts season due to begin

### DARTS

Dust off your darts and sharpen your focus, because the Phillip Island and District Darts League is gearing up for another exciting season!

Following a well-deserved break, League President Scott Lethbridge is thrilled to announce the 2024 season kicks off on Monday, February 12 with an AGM and Team Registration Meeting at 7pm at 223 Settlement Road, Cowes.

"I hope everyone had a relaxing New Year and got some practice in," says Lethbridge.

"We're excited to see familiar faces and welcome new players as we aim for an even bigger and better season."

Here's what you need to know.

AGM and team registration: Monday, February 12, 7pm at 223 Settlement Road, Cowes.

Please try to have at least two members of your team attend. Owen Walton Drawn Doubles competition is on

Monday, February 19. Get ready for some friendly competition!

Season starts on Monday, February 26. The games begin!

### Calling all new players and teams

We currently have six teams registered (That's All, Dart Vaders, Vikings, Storm, Riverboys, and Joe's Hornets), but ideally, we'd love to see eight or nine teams competing. If you're interested in joining an existing team or forming your own, come along on February 12 and get involved.

Looking for a warm-up?

There will be a casual singles competition after the AGM for those eager to unleash their darts skills.

Don't miss out on the camaraderie, competition and fun of the Phillip Island and District Darts League!

For more information or to register your team, contact Scott Lethbridge on 0407 543 154.

## TIDE GUIDE

Tidal predictions for Stony Point, Cowes -0.09 Newhaven -0.31 | HIGH TIDE IS MARKED IN BLACK

WED 7 FEB	THU 8 FEB	FRI 9 FEB	SAT 10 FEB	SUN 11 FEB	MON 12 FEB	TUE 13 FEB
LOW 3:18 am 1.36 m	LOW 4:18 am 1.45 m	HIGH 12:19 am 2.61 m	HIGH 1:32 am 2.70 m	HIGH 2:37 am 2.82 m	HIGH 3:33 am 2.93 m	HIGH 4:23 am 3.00 m
HIGH 9:14 am 2.44 m	HIGH 10:14 am 2.36 m	LOW 5:34 am 1.48 m	LOW 6:58 am 1.39 m	LOW 8:11 am 1.20 m	LOW 9:12 am 0.96 m	LOW 10:05 am 0.70 m
LOW 3:30 pm 0.54 m	LOW 4:32 pm 0.56 m	HIGH 11:31 am 2.32 m	HIGH 1:00 pm 2.37 m	HIGH 2:21 pm 2.50 m	HIGH 3:32 pm 2.68 m	HIGH 4:34 pm 2.84 m
HIGH 11:07 pm 2.57 m		LOW 5:49 pm 0.57 m	LOW 7:08 pm 0.53 m	LOW 8:18 pm 0.47 m	LOW 9:20 pm 0.44 m	LOW 10:15 pm 0.46 m

All material is supplied in good faith and is believed to be correct. No responsibility or liability for errors or omissions is accepted.



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The PIDCC Women's semi-final team. Congratulations on a great inaugural season.

# Island women give their all in semi-final

## CRICKET

The Phillip Island Women's cricket team travelled to Inverloch for their semi-final match on Sunday. The oval was in mint condition and the sea breeze kept the temperature bearable. Captain Bec won the toss and elected to bat. Winnie and Jay opened the batting for the Island, demonstrating pure skill. Jay hit a cracking boundary through mid-wicket and Winnie another well placed boundary after finding the gap at third man. Rosanna and Jess were

next to the crease. Rosanna was in excellent form, slogging four boundaries and top scoring for the Island with 19 runs. Next in were the Island's young guns, Sienna and Edie. They ran with speed and purpose, taking the Island's total to 63. Emma and Bec kept the runs ticking over, taking the Island to 80. Kate and Rach finished the innings with confidence, running smoothly between the wickets. The Island finished their innings on 97. Sienna opened the bowling

with a string of well-placed dot balls. Winnie followed up with a caught and bowled and the Island women were off to a great start. Kate, Jess and Edie kept up the tight bowling and Bec, Jay and Emma bowled with good line and length. Rosanna and Rach moved swiftly behind the wickets, restricting the runs. Highlights included Sienna clean bowling the opposition (1/11/3) and Winnie's determination (1/13/3). Congratulations to Inverloch, finishing their innings on 125, winning by 28 runs.

Thank you to PIDCC Club President, Andrew for umpiring, Peter for scoring and to all the supporters who came to cheer the Island women on. A massive congratulations to the PIDCC Women's Cricket team on a fantastic inaugural season! You have all done the club proud and created a strong foundation for women's cricket. Finally, thank you to the PIDCC Women's team sponsors, Luke Marshall Cabinets, Paint Place Cowes, Ray White Real Estate, Bang Bang Cape Woolamai and Phillip Island Ten Pin Bowling and Entertainment Centre.

**ALEX SCOTT  
AND STAFF**

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