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Wednesday, January 15, 2025

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It was a sellout crowd and sunny skies for the popular festival's eighth year at Churchill Island. The Cat Empire whipped up the audience, a fitting finale to a day of top-quality Australia music. Photo: ExpMedia. More photos on page 19.

Airport property for sale, "a land bankers delight"

DAL

The 47-hectare Phillip Island airport land is on the market for sale, at an undisclosed price.

Melbourne estate agents Raine & Horne have advertised the 1 Veterans Drive Newhaven site – which is zoned farming – as "residential land" and a "land bankers delight", with "endless possibilities".

"With growing demand for coastal real estate, this property is a smart choice for future development or creating your own private getaway," the ad states, explaining the property is for sale with expressions of interest closing February 22.

"There's potential for tourism-related developments, such as

hotels, resorts, or holiday rentals.

"Overall, Phillip Island presents a compelling opportunity for land holding and development, driven by its growing popularity and demand for new projects."

The land is owned by Glen Waverley Real Estate and came under the spotlight during the State Government's Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) planning panel in 2023.

Under the initial DAL details released in 2022, a protected settlement boundary was proposed for Cape Woolamai, which did not include the airport land.

Furthermore, the DAL proposed a series of beefed-up landscape planning controls to protect areas declared state or

regionally significant, including the coast and hinterland between Cape Woolamai and Ventnor.

Developers – including Glen Waverley Real Estate – then pushed back against these proposed controls and mooted town boundaries in the 2023 DAL planning panel, which was described by planning observers as a developers' "picnic" and a "forum to expand town boundaries".

During the panel hearings, lawyers representing Glen Waverley Real Estate called on a range of "experts".

One ecological witness for the developer gave evidence that – even though the current level of human population on Phillip

Island was "threatening" to the environment – land at the Cape Woolamai airport could be subdivided to benefit nationally-protected species, such as the short-tailed shearwater.

As reported this year, the State Government is under increasing pressure to approve the DAL, after the Victorian Planning Minister Sonya Kilkenny for the fourth time extended the deadline for finalising the long-anticipated law.

Long history

Last year, Phillip Island's helicopter buildings and a slice of the adjacent airport land was bought by the chairman of the National Vietnam Veterans Museum (NVVM).

The property revelation came on the heels of the NVVM's successful approval of the new museum on the land opposite, 40 hectares on Churchill Road.

NVVM board chair Kingsley Munday confirmed he bought the front 2.4 hectares of the land,

Continued page 9



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19 27	15 22	15 23	16 26	16 28	18 20	18 21

Car smashes Woolworth's Plaza, two shops

POLICE

A man in his 70s accidentally hit the accelerator of his car and ploughed into Cowes Woolworths Plaza and two shops on Saturday morning, with police commenting it was "lucky no one was killed".

The accident caused thousands of dollars damage and will see the Thompson Avenue entry to the plaza closed until new doors can be installed.

Cowes Police said it was yet to be determined whether the man suffered a medical episode, with the driver assessed at the scene by paramedics before being released, and will later have his licence reviewed. Sergeant Chris Brinkman said the man drove his car into the parallel parks on Thompson Avenue, directly outside the entry to the plaza about 7am when "instead of braking he panicked and hit the accelerator".

"The bollards at the front haven't done their job and he drove through them," Sgt Brinkman said.

"He then clipped the bins and went through the glass doors of the plaza, before hitting the joining wall of two shops.

"It was very lucky no one was injured or killed. No one was lined up at the butchers. It was a lucky time of day."



A car crashed through the glass doors of the Woolworth's Plaza on Saturday morning. Police yet to confirm if it was "a medical episode or driver error".

Heard of Cowes Butcher Rohan said he was chopping meat at a bench at the time of the accident and was five metres from where the car hit the joining wall between the butchery and the neighbouring Happy Homes & Gifts.

"At first I heard the noise and thought it was an earthquake," Rohan said.

"Then I looked up and the wall of the shop was coming towards me and it was then I realised it was a car.

"I thought 'what the hell is going on' and I ran to make sure the driver was ok. He said he was fine."

Rohan said he was yet to estimate the cost of damages, but the shop was insured.

"The joining wall will need to be rebuilt and I can't use my roller doors," he

said, adding customers had commented the crash was the ultimate "drive-through service".

"We'll have to board up part of the shop until it can be rebuilt."

Sgt Brinkman said a Bass Coast Shire Council engineer would attend the scene to determine the structural integrity of the shops. He added an electrician had also fixed live wires hanging from the smashed entry.

"Once the electrician has done their job, the car can be towed, the debris removed and the engineer can sign off opening the area, which will be boarded up."

He said police were yet to confirm whether it was "a medical episode or driver error".

"So we will be ordering a medical review."

A flamin' beauty...

The Illawarra Flame Tree shows off immense blooming every five years.

However, this one on Sue Chadwick's property in Cows waited 10 years, shedding away all of its leaves to create an uninterrupted red spectacle for everyone to enjoy over summer.



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POLICE BRIEFS

Medical episode

Cowes police confirmed an accident near the Chocolate Factory in Newhaven on January 5 was caused by a medical episode.

A local man driving a Lexus four-wheel drive, heading towards Cowes, suffered an incident that saw him plough into a black Subaru on the opposite side of the road.

The female driver of the Subaru was taken by ambulance to Wonthaggi hospital with an arm injury from her car's airbag.

The male driver was assessed at the scene by paramedics and released.

Police blocked traffic coming onto the island at the bridge, while cars heading off the island were able to pass the accident slowly, with the flow-on impact causing congestion through to Cowes and along the Bass Highway.

Aggravated burglaries

Police have urged residents to lock the doors to their house to avoid "opportunistic burglaries".

Between December 22 to 30 there were four aggravated burglaries on Phillip Island, with thieves accessing homes through open doors to steal keys to cars.

"There have been some attempted burglaries too where they have attempted to gain access but turned away after finding the doors to homes locked," Sergeant Adam Mottershead said.

Fires

Since January 1 police have attended 11 fires across San Remo and Phillip Island, including the major bushfire at The Gurdies.

All fires were generally small and contained, including a small patch of front lawn burnt after a neighbour released an illegal firework, while campers also lit a fire on the beach.

In San Remo there was a car fire from a mechanical failure.

Sergeant Adam Mottershead said any fire in summer required a permit.

"If you don't have one you can be charged. Unless you have a permit, don't even consider lighting a fire at this time of year, not just because it's an offence, but because it's dangerous," he said.

Near drowning

A visitor from Sri Lanka nearly drowned at a Cowes accommodation's pool facility on January 8.

Cowes police said the woman could not swim and entered the pool, not realising how deep it was.

Paramedics attended and she was taken to Wonthaggi hospital for observation.

"If you can't swim, don't go in the water," Sgt Mottershead said.

He said two people were also rescued by surfers after being stranded offshore on rocks at Berrys Beach on January 4.

Summer policing

While Phillip Island has experienced one of its busiest summers in memory, the crowds have all been well behaved, Sgt Mottershead said.

"The island is becoming known as a family-oriented destination so on the whole it's been a good vibe across the holidays and back to schoolies."

Cowes also has a permanent new police officer, who started on December 30.

RESCUES

There have been more than 40 emergency calls on Western Port so far this summer, with about 50 per cent avoidable, including boats running out of petrol and water users failing to understand weather conditions.

Victoria Police confirmed the Water Police have responded to more than 40 incidents on the bay since December 1, with "the majority of calls from recreational boaters and fishermen who have gotten into trouble and required assistance".

Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) told the Advertiser Cowes-based officers had issued many fishers on the bay through summer with infringement notices for exceeding catch limits, taking under-size fish and intertidal shellfish.

Western Port's Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) also confirmed they have attended about 40 incidents, including six jobs in one day.

A VMR spokesperson confirmed the majority of their callouts were "RACV-style", including not enough fuel in the boats or flat batteries, as well as rescues including paddleboarders misreading wind conditions and blown offshore.

In one instance, a man who bought a yacht at Newhaven set sail for Geelong in 25 knots before getting stranded at Flinders.

VMR volunteers tied the yacht to a mooring and told the owner to stay until winds settled, but then at midnight the same day volunteers were again called out when the yacht was stranded in mud at San Remo.

In December VMR worked with Western Port's other marine emergency service, the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard, to rescue two divers off Cape Woolamai.

"The divers surfaced at a distance from their boat and the driver in the boat could not start the engine, drifting faster than the divers could swim," VMR spokesperson Glenn Manning said.

"We were tasked with recovering the divers while the coast guard recovered the boat."

Glenn urged all novice water users to ensure they were educated before taking to the water.

"Go out when it's quiet and practice and take a friend who knows the ropes, hang out with the old guys," he said.

"Be mindful of the weather, especially paddleboarders; it can be calm on shore but 300 metres out the wind can be stronger."

"Keep your vessel maintained and make sure the fuel is fresh and there's enough."



Glenn Manning, from Western Port's Volunteer Marine Rescue. The majority of callouts in summer were "RACV-style" including not enough fuel in boats or flat batteries, as well as rescues including paddleboarders misreading wind conditions and blown offshore.

Volunteers

There are 10 active VMR volunteers who respond 24/7 throughout Western Port and across to Wilsons Promontory, 50km out to Bass Strait.

VMR responds to calls beyond the surf line where Life Saving Victoria does not operate and on beaches not patrolled by surf lifesavers. Glenn said while they covered a large area, about 35 per cent of their callouts were off Phillip Island and he said VMR would "love" to have another rescue group based at Newhaven or San Remo.

VMR works with Victoria Marine Police, focused on rescues, searches and tows, and is government-funded for operational services, paid through boat licences.

But he said they rely on donations from the public to do much of their work, with about half of people rescued giving a donation.

He said like the CFA or SES, VMR was fully operated by volunteers but their work "rarely made the news".

"We are the lost or hidden emergency service," he said.

"Where we do our work no one sees us. It's hard to get a TV camera out where we do our work."

VMR operates in Hastings and Mornington only and - because all members are 20 minutes to their emergency Noosa Cat 3100 fibre-glass catamaran - cover more jobs than the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard operates.

Glenn is a microbiologist by day and said volunteers undergo about three years of training.

The first crew level teaches basics for up to 12 months such as tying knots and hooking up tow lines; the

second level (master to three nautical miles) is 18 months and teaches navigations, meteorology and engineering; and level three is master to 30 nautical miles and is the equivalent of a coxswain.

Glenn said he decided to volunteer to give back to the community and because he loved being on the water.

"Learning the skills and driving a boat someone else pays for is also not bad," he said, adding he had an understanding employer who allowed him job flexibility to attend call-outs.

Fisheries

VFA acting CEO Luke O'Sullivan said officers had been conducting regular on-water and land work around Phillip Island and Western Port over summer.

"They've been pleased to find most people doing the right thing, abiding by size and bag limits and looking after fisheries for future generations," he said.

"However, some fishers have been issued with infringement notices for exceeding catch limits, taking undersize fish and intertidal shellfish collection."

"The VFA will continue to educate fishers on the need to wear lifejackets when rock fishing at designated high-risk zones along the coastline, as well as size and bag limits for species like southern-bluefin tuna, abalone, rock lobster, snapper and King George whiting."

For all size and bag limit information, fishers can download the free VicFishing app or pick up a free Recreational Fishing Guide from a nearby tackle shop.



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Jubilation as Bass Coast goes with Bayside

HEALTH

In a victory for local health advocates, Bass Coast Health has been included in the new Bayside local health service network, rather than Gippsland as originally proposed.

The State Government announced the 12 new networks, which groups health services together by regions, on January 10.

President of the Phillip Island Medical and Health Action Group (PIMHAG), Peter Paul said he was over the moon at the announcement.

"This is not just good news for our community, it is an overwhelming victory for common sense."

Peter said the network announcement, which came earlier than expected, meant focus could now return to the important issue of the new community hospital, due to open this year.

"It now enables the Phillip Island community to concentrate on getting the very best services for our hospital," he said.

Peter said the original proposal for Bass Coast Health (BCH) to be part of the Gippsland network would have been a huge step backwards.

"A lot of people won't understand how good this decision is until it is implemented."

"It was the correct decision and congratulations to all those concerned."

BCH Interim CEO Simone Alexander said the move to Bayside further strengthens existing partnerships with Alfred Health, Peninsula Health and Koowereup Regional Health Service.

"These are relationships we've worked so hard to develop over the last several years and we're pleased input from our staff and our community was included in the final decision about the network structure."

"We already host visiting medical specialists from The Alfred who provide our cancer and cardiology services, and offer outpatient consultations to our community. Medical and nursing staff from The Alfred also provide care to our community from our sites."

"We also have existing partnerships for pathways of care in place with The Alfred for patients requiring more complex care."

BCH's Memorandum of Understanding with The Alfred is now in its sixth year and includes surgery, oncology, radiation oncology, haematology, sub-acute, pathology and cardiology.



In a victory for local health advocates, Bass Coast Health has been included in the new Bayside local health service network, rather than Gippsland as originally proposed.

Member for Bass, Jordan Crugnale was also delighted with the announcement.

"This formalises a grouping that makes sense for patients, their care, clinical support flows and our healthcare workers," Ms Crugnale said.

"I want to take this opportunity to thank the respective Boards, CEO's and Exec teams for endorsing this grouping and of course our wonderful community members and health care workers and the many that wrote to me to advocate in support."

"My many representations and discussions with our Health Minister over the last year on your behalf has come to fruition."

The initial proposal that Bass Coast Health be part of the Gippsland network, was strenuously opposed by former CEO Jan Child, BCH board and management, and PIMHAG.

In December PIMHAG issued "a call to action", asking residents to lobby Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas for BCH to be part of Bayside.

"The vast majority of residents from the island and San Remo have relatives and friends in the Melbourne suburbs and on the Peninsula, so they have family support and accommodation if needed," PIMHAG spokesperson Linda Marston said at the time.

PIMHAG said moving health services to Traralgon, would "not result in the community using them" and would "not result in efficiencies".

Networks

The government claims the 12 networks will "support improved cooperation between local services, ensure doctors and

specialists are available to care for patients closer to where they live, deliver clearer pathways in and out of hospital, and support better waitlist management across a region".

The Bayside network includes Alfred Health, Bass Coast Health, Calvary Health Care Bethlehem (Caulfield South), Gippsland Southern Health Service, Koowereup Regional Health Service and Peninsula Health.

The Gippsland network is made up of Bairnsdale Regional Health Service, Central Gippsland Health Service, Latrobe Regional Hospital, Omeo

District Health, Orbost Regional Health, South Gippsland Hospital, West Gippsland Healthcare Group, and Yarram & District Health Service.

The government said the final groupings were determined following extensive consultation with health services – with consideration given to population growth, community need, clinical capability and distance between services.

"Importantly, the governance of each health service, including its board and CEO, unique identity and connection to their community, will remain unchanged,"

the government stated.

"In early 2025, health services will come together to discuss the priorities and arrangements for their network, focusing on four key priority areas – access and flow, workforce, clinical governance, and sustainability – before networks commence operation on July 1."

The government said local workforces and communities will also be consulted in 2025 to "gain their views as well to address each individual community's health needs".

With the state dealing with a huge debt, the networks are designed to help cut costs in the health system, by "sharing support services and back-office functions to reduce unnecessary duplication".

Minister Mary Anne Thomas said the reforms "will deliver even better care by supporting health services to work together and ensuring local voices are heard".

"At the centre of our health system reform is Victorian patients and staff – this is about expanding access to frontline services, particularly in regional and rural Victoria," Ms Thomas said.

The opposition has condemned the new networks, describing it as an "ill-conceived plan (that) will result in reduced services, job losses and force Victorians to travel further for essential care".

PIMHAG toasts network decision

HEALTH

Phillip Island Medical and Health Action Group is celebrating the decision for Bass Coast Health to join the Bayside network.

"The PIMHAG Committee members and supporters have worked tirelessly, never wavering in advocating for such a result," said President Peter Paul.

"The new Phillip Island Community Hospital lacked any connection to Latrobe Hospital as has Wonthaggi Hospital for several years."

"Bass Coast Health best serves its communities by continuing to develop its partnerships with existing services heading north on the highway to Melbourne," Peter continued.

"Whilst the decision is loaded with common sense, the umbilical cord connecting Bass Coast Health to Latrobe



PIMHAG lobbied for decades for improved health services for Phillip Island, and supported former CEO Jan Child's call for Bass Coast Health to be part of the Bayside Local Health Service Network, not joined with Gippsland and Latrobe.

had to be severed.

"It was never going to be easy to change historical, geographical and financial connections to Latrobe which were deeply entrenched. Along with PIMHAG, Bass Coast Health is to be applauded for their perse-

verance in recent years rallying for a positive outcome for the people of Bass Coast."

He said the Phillip Island community could look forward to this year's opening of their community hospital "knowing they have been recognised".

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New erosion petition needs support

SILVERLEAVES

Residents are being urged to support a petition calling for urgent government funding to build a sandbag wall at Silverleaves.

The petition needs 2000 in-person signatures (or 10,000 online) in order to be tabled and debated in the upper house of state parliament, and is the latest pressure to be applied to the State Government, following a protest earlier this month.

Silverleaves' property owners said the petition was urgent given the imminent risk of inundation to their properties.

The petition states the Silverleaves community's concern "at the lack of State Government funding for emergency coastal erosion works to prevent homes, public infrastructure and public land from being undermined and lost".

It calls on the government to urgently fund the proposed geotextile revetment and work "with the community to plan and fund long term solutions to mitigate and manage coastal erosion".

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) have proposed a sandbag wall costing up to \$500,000 as an interim measure to stop further erosion, but funding has yet to be made available.

As reported more than 200 protestors gathered at the "red zone" beach section of Sanders Road in early January

Resident Natalie Gray told the crowd the risk was "immediate", while Victorian shadow regional development minister Melina Bath told the crowd Silverleaves was a "test case" for coastal Victoria.

"Houses here will go under unless the State Government funds urgent emergency works," Melina said.

Resident Tristan White said Silverleaves needed emergency sand bagging to save the 30 metres of crown land remaining between high tide and private property.



Hundreds of people gathered in the hot spot erosion zone of Silverleaves at a protest in early January that demanded funding for a sandbag wall. Residents have now launched a petition to parliament, calling for the urgent funding.

"Groynes which have deteriorated over decades were not maintained and should be rebuilt," he said.

Disaster funding

State MP for Bass Jordan Crugnale was unable to attend the rally but told the Advertiser she was working with the Environment Minister and the new Treasurer on funding the sandbag wall.

Jordan said the Federal Emergency Management Minister Jenny McAllister had advised that DEECA and council

could meet criteria for this year's disaster funding.

A DEECA report last year found since 2022, in the "hotspot" near Sanders Road, about 16 metres of foreshore has been lost to erosion.

The western shoreline of Silverleaves more broadly has eroded about 77 metres since 1953.

The report suggests sea level rise is coming faster than previously predicted, with the foreshore shifting to the front door of the most northerly homes the

length of Silverleaves within the next decade if nothing is done to stop current erosion.

By 2050 all frontline homes along Silverleaves may be submerged and by 2100 homes in about 150 metres from the current shoreline could have been breached.

Bass Coast Shire Council has committed to lobbying the State Government for urgent funding to address the issue.

Visitors and locals can sign the petition at the Silverleaves Store or the Silverleaves Conservation Society.

Seeing red over red bins

WASTE

It's summer so that means red bin frustration. A quick poll around the streets of Cowes and Silverleaves last week found the majority of landfill bins incorrectly left out for kerbside collection, with only a few leaving out the green (compost) and yellow (recycling) bins only.

So is it confusion, defiance or desperation?

Advertiser readers were quick to give their response, with most again saying it was desperation and calling for weekly – rather than fortnightly – red bin collection between Christmas and Australia Day.

However, many suggested Bass Coast's

bin system was simply "confusing", with tourists putting bins out because they were unaware of the system.

Bass Coast Shire Cr Ronnie Bauer – who unsuccessfully tried in the last council term to introduce weekly peak season collections – last week confirmed he would again try this term, after standing on a platform at last year's council elections on the issue.

Here were just a few of readers' comments:

Prudence: "Now that the container deposit scheme has come in, it's ridiculous to be having weekly recycling pick-ups rather than red bin for holiday towns. Three-quarter empty recycling bins being picked

up by trucks with all their emissions, while people use their cars to go and claim their container deposits. Where is the effective education campaign that targets holiday makers to not create more waste in the six-week period of summer?"

John: "We have a system designed to cater for 14,000 permanent population, not the 80,000 on the island during the holiday season."

Scott: "It's easy: from Christmas to the end of January all three bins should be emptied every week. Rates go up and up and you get less and less from the council."

Ashley: "Every year the same thing. Red bins only get collected every second week all year round."

Barbara: "Maybe it's the tourists who see the other tourists put all their bins out."

Scott: "Isn't it more likely the holiday makers are just putting them all out as they're full."



The kerbside collection bin system in Bass Coast is "designed to cater for the 14,000 permanent population, not the 80,000 on the island during the holiday season", according to one reader.



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Phillip Island Fire Brigade attended a grass and scrub fire at Wonthaggi last Thursday, one of many call outs so far this summer. Photo: Courtesy of Phillip Island Fire Brigade.

Fire is an ever-present danger

SAFETY

With the world’s eyes on the devastating fires in Los Angeles, it’s a timely reminder of the need to be prepared during our hot summer.

February is traditionally the hottest month, and it holds the record for Phillip Island’s highest mean maximum temperature, and hottest recorded temperature (42.1 C) according to Bureau of Meteorology records.

Bass Coast Shire is currently within the “Fire Danger Period (FDP)”, and with more hot weather predicted, authorities are urging people to ensure their properties are summer ready.

Lino Drazzi, Captain of the Phillip Island Fire Brigade stressed people should not get complacent.

He said anyone using a charcoal barbecue or a firepit during the FDP needed to have a three-metre clearance around the flames, and a hose or bucket of water nearby.

Lighting fires on beaches, or in the surrounding dunes is illegal, and could potentially have catastrophic results.

“Any fire on the beach or in the dunes is a big no-no at this time of year,”

“If fire hasn’t been put out properly, it will keep burning out under the sand,” said Lino, adding that high wind could set the embers aflame.

“Lighting a fire on a beach or dune, even burning off in the backyard – it’s critical that it doesn’t happen.

“It only takes an ember or two to start a fire.”

Local residents in areas like Smiths Beach, Kitty Miller Bay and Cape Woolamai have repeatedly raised concerns about fires on the beach or in the surrounding dunes.

In mid-December, the Phillip Island CFA were called to Smiths Beach after people lit a bonfire on the beach. A few

days later, fire fighters and locals helped put out a blaze on the beachfront at Kitty Miller Bay Road in Ventnor.

Lino said there were four to five call outs on New Year’s Eve to small grass or scrub fires.

So far in 2025, the brigade had been called out 14 times to a variety of incidents, including several false alarms with indoor fire alarms at the Health Hub and Woolworths, children locked in cars, bin fires and even a person trapped in a lift.

Support

The Phillip Island Brigade is run by a dedicated group of volunteers.

“A lot of people aren’t aware that we are 100 per cent volunteers, right across Bass Coast,” said Lino.

There are many ways you can help support the incredible work the team does, including supporting their regular BBQ fundraisers outside Coles in Cowes.

The next BBQ will be held on Australia Day, January 26, and members of the brigade will be on hand to talk to the public, and will also have information about what you can and can’t do during the Fire Danger Period.

The brigade also recommends everyone downloads the VicEmergency app and sets up a watch zone to receive push notifications about incidents and warnings in your area.

You can also set up a watch zone for places you’re visiting over the holiday season.

A full list of what you can or can’t do during FDP and days of total fire ban, is available on the CFA website, as well as tips on how to prepare your property.

It is also posted to the Phillip Island Brigade’s Facebook page.

www.cfa.vic.gov.au/.../fire-bans.../can-i-or-cant-i

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Islanders’ elite turn at Summernats

CARS

Congratulations to David and Kelly Neely of Bass Coast Mechanical in Cowes on a big win at the annual Summernats car festival in Canberra this month.

David and Kelly attended Summernats in early January in their 1968 HK Holden Monaro.

The pair were blown away when their car was deemed worthy to be judged in the Top 60 Elite category at the event which showcases the best built cars in the country at the highest level.

Their beloved Monaro was competing against builds costing upwards of \$1.8 million dollars.

The judges were so impressed with the vehicle, which was built in a 12-month period exclusively at Bass Coast Mechanical, that the couple were awarded a coveted invitation to attend the Red Centre Nats (Australia’s ultimate outback car fest) along with only eight other entrants.

Qualifying for the Top 60 Elite at Summernats also entitled them to compete for the title of Grand



David and Kelly Neely of Bass Coast Mechanical in Cowes with their 1968 HK Holden Monaro, which was runner up in this year’s Grand Champion competition at the Summernats.

Champion which is widely regarded as the most prestigious award amongst car lovers.

Comprising of both judging points on the car itself and driving skills demonstrated by Dave on a timed circuit, the couple

ple are still in shock that they managed to snag the runner up title to Grand Champion.

This places the car in the Top 3 overall judged vehicles in the entire country for 2025, which is a brilliant effort.

You deserve more, Monash.

Deb Leonard Vote 1
INDEPENDENT

Authorised by Deb Leonard, 40B&C Bair St, Leongatha

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"Lots of snouts in meagre trough": new taxes hit property owners

REAL ESTATE

Holiday homeowners say they are being slammed with taxes and charges, making owning a second home unviable.

Ventnor ratepayer Phillip Palmer, in a letter to the editor, said he was contemplating renting out his property part-time, with current bills including insurance, land tax, utilities and rates.

He said under a holiday rental he would face extra charges including a State Government short term rental fee of 7.5 per cent for each booking, higher insurance and Bass Coast Shire short term rental registration fee.

"And most concerning of all, the newly introduced rural Vacant Residential Land Tax (VRLT), which is one per cent of Capital Improved Value in year one then two per cent in year two, then three per cent in the third year," Phillip said.

On top of these costs, he would be required to pay rental fees such as an agent holiday rental fee and cleaning costs.

"A lot of snouts for a very meagre trough," he said.

Phillip said based on his calculations, to rent out his holiday home as a short stay rental in the first year, it would take more than nine weeks of rental income to break even.

"In the second year it will take 14.3 weeks of rental income to break even.

"In the third year it will take 19.2 weeks of rental income to break even."

He said the Airbnb occupancy

rate for Phillip Island was about 40 per cent, "which equates to about 22 weeks per annum".

"You do the math."

"Shocked"

Alex Scott agent Greg Price said he was seeing the combination of rising costs impacting owners.

"Property owners who have a holiday rental are being slammed with taxes and charges," Greg said, adding increased costs also included Bass Coast Shire Council garbage charge and State Government fire levy on insurance.

He said the market was currently "subdued", although there were more listings on Phillip Island now than any time in the past 10 years, with sellers offloading for a variety of reasons, including taxes.

"People are shocked by this new (VRLT) tax when they receive the notification."

Greg said many would-be sellers were surprised their homes were worth less than their rates notice valuation.

"The vendor gets shocked when they find just how far the market has come back."

Greg said while there were buyers, there were not as many who wanted to buy for holiday homes or investment, also dissuaded by the government's list of requirements for rentals.

There are currently about 450 properties for sale on Phillip Island and more than 140 in San Remo.

New taxes

From today (January 15), rate-

payers with a second home must notify the Victorian State Revenue Office about whether they are liable for the VRLT.

Prior to January 1, 2025, VRLT applied only to vacant residential land in inner and middle Melbourne.

However, from January 1, VRLT applied to residential land anywhere in Victoria "if the land is vacant in the preceding calendar year", unless an exemption applies.

To be exempt from paying the tax, holiday homeowners will need to declare they stay in the house for four weeks or more a year.

VRLT also applies to homes under construction, and those that are under renovation or uninhabitable, for more than two years.

Those who operate as a short-stay business will not be able to avoid paying one per cent of the capital improved value of the property, increasing in consecutive years.

Also from January 1, the government's short stay levy of 7.5 per cent will be applied to any property owner who accepts a booking that is less than 28 consecutive days, and who charges a fee for the stay.

The shire's short stay rental accommodation registration fee payable annually is now \$312, up from \$300 last year.

The government said the VRLT was introduced to help address the lack of housing supply in Victoria.

It is designed to push investors to fill or sell their empty properties.



Agents report an increase in properties for sale since the introduction of new taxes. There are currently about 450 properties for sale on Phillip Island and more than 140 in San Remo.

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HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW FIRE?

Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne





Chris Dixon (centre) with Michael Coghlan, biomedical engineer at Free 3D Hands and founder Mat Bowtell, at the end of his 200km run, which raised close to \$6000.

Amazing run from Sale to Phillip Island

FUNDRAISER

On the weekend, Chris Dixon ran 200km in 24 hours, from Sale to Phillip Island for a special cause. His daughter Gracie was born without an arm, and Chris' run raised money for island-based charity Free 3D Hands, founded by Mat Bowtell. "I wanted to raise money for Free 3D Hands, and re-introduce Gracie to Mat," Chris said. "Free 3D Hands is the charity that will one day change Gracie's life if she ever decided she wanted an assistive device. "I wanted to show Mat the lengths I would go to for Gracie." Chris was joined on his quest by Jonti Gray and Mitch Hawkins who ran the first 150km with him, "pacing me whenever I needed a little pick-me-up", he said. His friend Jack Montgomery ran the last 50km with him. The fundraiser was supported by Ian "Bugsy" Christensen and the team at Phillip Island Tattoo Studio, who held a post-run celebration, to continue the fundraising. "Our motivation was to help Mat and his team to continue to do this amazing work," said Bugsy.



On the weekend, Chris Dixon (left) ran 200km, from Sale to Phillip Island to raise money for Free 3D Hands. His friend Jack ran the last 50kms with him.

"And to ensure Chris and his family, in particular Gracie, have the support and the right people like Mat on their side." Mat Bowtell was full of praise for the "super-human" effort. "Let's put this into perspective; it's like running five marathons back-to-back. No sleep, running through the night only to be greeted by temperatures in the mid-30s through the second day. "In total, Chris was able to raise a whopping \$5523.98 from supporters on the day, online donations from friends and the running community. Such an incredible effort. "Our team is extremely humbled and grateful for all of the love, kindness, generosity and support." To make a tax-deductible donation to support Chris's fundraiser, visit www.free3dhands.org/donate



Level one of Berninnet (above the library) will be temporarily closed in February for internal work, as part of the process to achieve Passiv Haus certification. Access to the ground floor areas will not be affected. Photo: Peter Clarke.

Another test for Berninnet

COUNCIL

Bass Coast Shire Council said level one of the Berninnet building will be temporarily closed next month for additional internal work. The work is in preparation for an air test scheduled for late February, part of the ongoing process for the building to receive Passiv Haus certification. "These works will involve internal investigations and rectifications, which will require the Level One office to be closed temporarily," a council spokesperson said. "The ground floor areas will remain unaffected." The internal work means level one of the building, above the library, will be closed from February 3 to 26 and won't be open to the public. The council said two community groups would be impacted by the closure, but otherwise the public should not be affected. **Testing** Since May last year the council has reassured the community the cultural centre would meet the strict Passiv Haus environmental certification standards,

even though it has failed the tests multiple times. The certification process requires extensive documentation and testing, and can take an extended period of time. One Passive Haus consultant said "rigorous methodology" was needed to meet the certification which was "generally considered the toughest voluntary building standard in the world". The architectural firm that designed Berninnet, Jackson Clements Burrows, also designed the Gilles Hall accommodation for Monash University, the first large scale building in the southern hemisphere to achieve Passiv House certification. The council has been repeatedly questioned about the certification process for Berninnet. At the November council meeting, CEO Greg Box confirmed Berninnet had indefinite time to achieve the environmental certification, despite a construction contract clause expiring. Mr Box said council's contract with McCorkell Constructions included the requirement for the building to be Passiv Haus certified.

A photograph of three men standing in front of a wall with various posters and tattoos. The man on the left is wearing a black t-shirt with a circular logo that says "TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS". The man in the middle is wearing a white t-shirt with a "Quest Master" logo. The man on the right is wearing a black t-shirt with a "Crawling Death" logo. They are all smiling and looking at the camera.

PHILLIP ISLAND TATTOO STUDIO

Now at 207 Settlement Road (side entrance) in Cowes, having recently relocated from Newhaven. Jack, Bugsy and Connor and visiting artists use this new and creative space in the heart of town, to work with each client to make their experience and tattoo the best it can be. If you're after creativity, artistry and experience, then look no further. All welcome. Instagram: [pit.studio_](https://www.instagram.com/pit.studio_)

A photograph of a woman with blue hair, wearing a floral dress, holding a large tin of "CELEBRATE" candles. She is smiling and looking at the camera.

"A huge thank you to all of our wonderful customers for their support of Brinnie T Home over the last 5 years. Due to overwhelming demand, we will continue to offer gifts & homewares at the studio in The Concourse. Open Tuesdays/Wednesdays/ Saturday mornings from February 1st.

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Airport property for sale, “a land bankers delight”

From page 1

on the corner of Veterans Drive and Phillip Island Road, as well as the buildings used by the helicopter business, then launching the new Island Helicopters.

At the time he said the museum currently used part of that land, “with the good graces of the previous owner”, to park a Caribou aircraft and provide parking in front of the museum.

Last week Kingsley confirmed the museum had no interest in buying the airport land.

“We have our land on the other side of the road and are very focused on building our new museum there,” Kingsley said.

“I purchased the front small block in order to protect customer access to the museum, and also to be able to operate Island Helicopters from that site.”

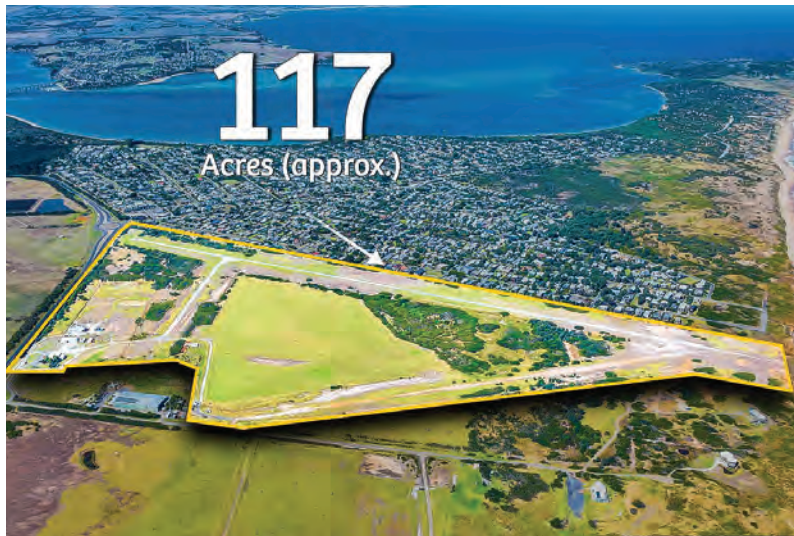
He said he understood the airport land was not able to be developed.

“So anyone who buys it needs either to want it to farm, or simply to land bank over a long period of time in the hope that development approval may be given in years to come, but I cannot see that happening in the short to medium term.

“If it is to be farming land, I suspect the asking price will far exceed its current market price and there would be a lot of work to be done to remove the runways to make the land suitable to farm, if indeed it is suitable to farm.”

It will be up to four years before the new NVVM is built and operational.

Once the new building is open the current site will become offices, conservation centre and storage for the Churchill Road collection.



Melbourne estate agents Raine & Horne have advertised the Phillip Island airport site – which is zoned farming – as “residential land” and a “land bankers delight”.

2016

In 2016 Bass Coast Shire received a planning scheme amendment application, by consultants representing the previous airport landowner, to rezone the airport site from farming zone to general residential zone.

The application also sought to apply a development plan overlay to allow for residential subdivision on the site.

In response, residents formed a new group, the Cape Woolamai Community Association, who vowed to fight the mooted redevelopment.

“The association was formed to protect and enhance the natural environment and amenity of Cape Woolamai for current and future generations and that includes the airport land,” the group’s then president said at the time.

The president said any rezoning

of the airport land would contravene the shire’s own planning policies, including the San Remo, Newhaven and Cape Woolamai Strategic Review 2015.

“For this proposal to be entertained at any level the shire must understand it goes against every strategy and policy they have written themselves.

“If this land gets rezoned it would have repercussions, it would set a dangerous precedent.”

At the time the amendment was reviewed by the planning department and further information was requested from the proponent.

The shire said once all statutory information was provided the proposed amendment would be presented to council to determine whether to request authorisation from the Planning Minister to prepare and exhibit the amendment.

However, this never eventuated.

DAL will be finalised: government

PLANNING

The State Government has reassured that town boundaries are being finalised ahead of the release of the Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) for Bass Coast in coming months.

As reported, in November the Victorian Planning Minister Sonya Kilkenny again – for the fourth time – extended the deadline for finalising the long-anticipated DAL, which will protect the natural landscape and stop over-development.

The government has been under increasing pressure to approve the DAL, which was first proposed in 2019, with high-profile groups describing the delay as “compromising”, “disrespectful” and “farcical”.

But MP for Bass Jordan Crugnale this month said DAL protections were almost complete and waiting on the final consultation of the town boundary of Cape Paterson, with public feedback closing at the end of January.

“Following this consultation process, all the town boundaries can be finalised to be endorsed by Responsible Public Entities,” Ms Crugnale said, explaining additional consultation was required to affirm the Cape Paterson boundary.

“I expect those boundaries to align with community feedback and Bass Coast Shire Council’s submission.”

All the town boundaries are

being finalised following recommendations from the Standing Advisory Committee and further landscape assessments for San Remo and Ventnor West endorsed by Bass Coast Shire councillors in February 2024.

The final stage of the DAL will be endorsed by public entities, including council, which will happen once the draft is finalised.

She said the DAL will provide a blueprint for the liveability of Bass Coast for the next 50 years and “ensure housing growth and infrastructure investment occurs in the right locations”.

Once the DAL is adopted, town boundaries can only be changed by a majority of both houses of Parliament, not by Cabinet or council.

As reported, lawyers for landowners from Potters Hill Road to Punchbowl Road in San Remo argued this area should be included in the proposed town boundaries, including land owned by the Chinese-backed Springway Corporate Group.

And the controversial 24-hectare land (also owned by Springway Corporate Group) in Ventnor West is also proposed for subdivision under the DAL.

A decade ago the land embroiled former state Liberal leader Matthew Guy in an imbroglio that resulted in a confidential taxpayer funded settlement said to be worth \$3 million.

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ADVERTISER EDITORIAL

Things are heating up

The whole world watched in horror as thousands of homes were destroyed in the fires that swept across Los Angeles last week.

A combination of hot winds and a dry winter (with well below average rainfall) saw a fire storm develop that was impossible to contain.

Bushfires are a scenario we are all too familiar with here in Australia, but seeing those fires overtake a city is something we are not familiar with, and probably unprepared for.

Like LA, this area has recorded an exceptionally dry winter.

It was the driest since records began at Rhyll (1994), which followed a dry autumn. While there was a slight uptick in spring rainfall, summer started with less rain than usual. December received 39.2mm (average 45mm), and our water reservoir at Candowie is being supplemented by the Greater Yarra Thomson River System.

Farmers have declared a green drought, where there is enough rain to keep grass green but no deep, critical rain.

Low rainfall. Increased temperatures. Diminished water supplies. Many of the same factors that contributed to LA's scenario.

To think we are not at risk here, safely surrounded by water, is fanciful. As our local brigade captain told me last week, it only takes an ember or two.

Climate change is a fact and none of us can afford to keep averting our eyes.

Jon Keeley, a research scientist with US Geological Survey and a professor at UCLA said while there is really no way to ascribe a particular fire event to climate change, it was a factor in the LA fires. "No question, though, that climate change is exacerbating our fire regime and affecting fires, making them potentially worse."

For decades scientists have been issuing warnings that politicians and many big corporations continue to ignore.

The Climate Council of Australia described last week's fires as "climate crisis in action".

"Climate pollution, from burning coal, oil and gas, is driving longer, more intense and overlapping fire seasons in California and Australia," said CEO Amanda McKenzie.

"We must drive down climate pollution this decade, by ramping up our switch to renewable power."

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) national climate policy advisor, Annika Reynolds echoed these concerns.

"Climate change is driving a cascading series of unnatural disasters all around the globe," they said.

"These complex, compounding and devastating climate disasters will only become more frequent and severe across the world unless we phase out the burning and export of fossil fuels."

We have witnessed American politicians weaponising the LA fires for political gain, claiming the severity of the LA fires was due simply to poor funding or bad recruitment techniques in the fire service, and it is cynical in the extreme.

The same cynical political manoeuvring around climate action happened here in the wake of the catastrophic fires of 2019-20, and it's already happening in the lead up to this year's federal election.

As well as fire, for a coastal community such as ours, erosion is an issue of major concern.

Do we want to wait until our cities or our island is on fire, or our homes are underwater, before we see more action on climate?

Back in 2007, Kevin Rudd declared climate change "the great moral challenge of our generation".

Yet here we are, 18 years later ... and instead of bipartisan support, climate change is still being treated like a political football.

We are failing the challenge. It's time to demand more from our leaders.

"Western Port is a gem in Victoria's crown": researchers

ENVIRONMENT

Western Port is the "underdog" compared to Port Phillip Bay, despite being "more ecologically important and scientifically interesting", an online forum has heard.

The Victorian National Parks Association started a series of webinars at the end of last year – which will continue this year – exploring the "mysteries" of the bay, including latest research from Melbourne Water and the Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation.

The webinar heard Western Port is a "bird superhighway", with one bird species weighing 30 grams, the "size of a Tim Tam" flying from the bay to Siberia to breed and "then flies back and his or her babies follow them back".

"A journey of that magnitude taken by a bird the size of matchbox, if that doesn't make you go we all need to protect that (then I don't know what will)," Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation officer Stephen Brend told the online audience.

"I find the whole migration awe-inspiring."

Stephen said while water moves around Port Phillip in about seven days, it moved around Western Port in three days.

"One third of Western Port is exposed at low tide," he said, "with that vast extent of mudflats making it rich for migratory shorebirds".

Melbourne Water's Andrew Morrison told the webinar Western Port was part of the global east Asian Australasian flyway, with one bird species flying non-stop from here to Siberia.

"Species such as the bar-tailed godwit will do that flight from the northern hemisphere in a single flight, so it will take them a number of days or a week," Andrew said.

"We want to make sure when these migratory shorebirds arrive that they have the best habitat and threats are reduced so they can successfully fuel up to make the return journey to their breeding grounds."

Threats to the bay include feral cats, feral goats, foxes, weeds, and hu-



Authorities continue to try to protect Observation Point so migrating birds can "nest and rest" over summer, including protecting one bird species that flies non-stop from here to Siberia.

man impacts, with researchers also calling for stronger boating regulations to protect the environment.

"Boating in Western Port is impactful and perhaps we as a community might like to consider better boating techniques to help preserve some of the habitat," one researcher said.

"If we can protect habitat, we don't have to restore it."

Researchers said anyone failing to show a duty of care to Western Port bay could now be prosecuted, with laws strengthened to protect the bay.

Dolphins

Data showed there were about 18 resident bottle-nose dolphins in Western Port, which compares to about 120 in the Gippsland Lakes.

An audience member asked if sharks ever attacked dolphins in the bay, with a researcher replying only if they were sick or injured.

"A large bottlenose on the southern side of Phillip Island was found with serious white shark bites, but an autopsy found it had pneumonia," the researcher said.

Restoration ecologist Dr Oliver

Dalby spoke of a large declines in seagrasses in the bay, from 251sqkm in 1974 to 76sqkm in 1983, increasing to 206sqkm in 2019, "recovering while no one was looking".

"Western Port is a gem in Victoria's crown," Oli said.

Western Port is part of the UNESCO – the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – global network of 748 biospheres, to protect wetlands.

The Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation CEO Mel Barker said the bay, "with its internationally acclaimed Ramsar wetlands, annual population of thousands of migratory birds, and its marine environment" needed to be given equal recognition to neighbouring Port Phillip Bay, "which at least has a management plan".

"A strategic plan will be essential to effectively deal with multiple challenges and pressures brought about by the planned transition to renewable energy and hydrogen production, the potential impacts of mining, agricultural and residential development and societal impacts such as waste management and recreational activities," Mel said.

Get training with council

EMPLOYMENT

With ATAR results in and summer in full swing, many young people are enjoying a well-earned break while starting to think about their next steps.

Why not start your career close to home? Or are you returning to the workforce in 2025? Bass Coast Shire Council's Traineeship Program is back for 2025, offering opportunities to gain real-world experience, qualifications, and the foundation for a successful career.

For over 20 years, Council's Traineeship Program has offered 114 positions across a wide range of disciplines, with around 50 per cent of participants transitioning to permanent roles.

"Through the 2024 intake, we now have six full time trainees well on their way to completing their traineeship program," a council spokesperson said.

"Last year was a standout year for our trainees, with Council's trainees and programs earning recognition at the prestigious Apprentice Training Awards."

"One of our Business Administration Trainees was nominated



The 2024 Bass Coast Shire Council Traineeship group. Applications for the 2025 program close on February 2.

in the Inspiration Award: Disability Achievement category, while our partnership with Westvic received a nomination for the GTO Industry Collaboration Award."

The 2025 intake will offer eight diverse roles, including new opportunities in Community Safety as well as Procurement and Fleet.

Trainees will be supported to achieve a relevant Certificate III qualification in fields such as business administration, live production and technical services, tourism, or information technology.

Traineeships on offer: People and

Culture, Building Administration, Arts and Culture, Tourism and Business Development, Customer and Visitor Experience, Business Systems, Community Safety, Procurement and Fleet

Applications for the 2025 Traineeship Program close on February 2.

Successful applicants will commence in March, receiving structured training and support, flexible work arrangements, and pathways to internal opportunities.

Learn more and apply via the group training organisation Westvic Staffing Solutions: basscoast.vic.gov.au/traineeship

**ALEX SCOTT
AND STAFF**

Est. 1886

35 BONWICK AVENUE, SAN REMO



- Refreshed and ready for a new chapter, this brick veneer gem has stunning panoramic views over the bay on 998m² block
 - Short stroll to stunning beaches and township
 - 3 beds/2 baths/double garage & workshop
- \$880,000 TO \$920,000**

24 MCRAE AVENUE, COWES



- Absolute foreshore reserve frontage with water views and sandy walking track to beach
 - Open plan living upstairs leading to huge entertainer's deck
 - 4 beds/2 baths/lock up garage
- \$1,650,000**

49 MANNA GUM DRIVE, COWES



- Centrally located, light & bright open plan living leading to an expansive fully enclosed back deck
 - Fully fenced with established gardens overlooking above ground swimming pool
 - 4 bedrooms/2 bathrooms
- \$770,000**

1/3 BENAMBRA COURT, COWES



- Stunning townhouse with a Japanese inspired feel positioned close to the heart of Cowes
 - Open plan living, private courtyard, short stroll to beach
 - 3 bedrooms/1 bathroom/2 cars
- \$849,000**

26 LOCK ROAD, RHYLL



- Situated on approx. 1840m² of land in the quiet township of Rhyl, close to the General Store and only moments away from the waters' edge
 - Generous open plan living leading to undercover rear deck
 - 4 bedrooms/2 bathrooms
- \$1,100,000**

92 MCFEES ROAD, RHYLL



- FIRST TIME OFFERED – this magnificent farm has been held by the same family since settlement
 - 108.5 acres (approx.) with a natural north facing slope, adjoining foreshore reserve
- CONTACT AGENT**

69 WYNDHAM AVENUE, COWES



- Open plan light filled living with vaulted ceilings and covered rear deck situated on 795m² block
 - Self-contained zone with its own external access – adding versatility for guests
 - 5 bedrooms/3 bathrooms/2 cars
- \$895,000**

5 BELLAVISTA ROAD, COWES



- 150m (approx.) stroll to beach, recently renovated home
 - Open plan living, semi covered deck area, 2 living areas, fully fenced yard
 - 3 bedrooms/1 bathroom
- \$939,000**

18 GEMMA STREET, SUNDERLAND BAY



- Fully fenced with private landscaped yard
 - Recently renovated home, multiple living spaces both indoors & outdoors, perfect for permanent or holiday living
 - 4 bed/4 bath/2 car garage
- \$820,000 TO \$850,000**

33 DAFYDD STREET, COWES



- Charming coastal retreat nestled in a cul-de-sac, just 500m (approx.) stroll to Red Rocks Beach
 - Landscaped gardens, double garage, ample space for parking, covered rear deck set on 802m² (approx.) allotment
 - 3 bedrooms/1 bathroom
- \$670,000**

15 HALCYON AVENUE, SAN REMO



- Discover coastal living in this family home with everchanging water views
 - Charming split-level home with convenient layout and street level entry
 - 3 bedrooms/2 bathrooms/double garage with side workshop
- \$840,000**

16 FLATHEAD COURT, SAN REMO



- Nestled in the heart of San Remo in a court location, across from a nature reserve
 - Step inside to a light and bright seamless blend of contemporary design & functionality
 - 4 bedrooms/2 bathrooms/2 living/2 cars
- \$930,000 TO \$950,000**

19 BERMUDA BEND, CORONET BAY



- Very rare investment opportunity – dual units on single title
 - The front unit is neat and ready to move in, while the rear unit offers great potential for renovation
 - 4 bedrooms/2 bathrooms
- \$540,000**

141 SMYTHE STREET, CORINELLA



- Spacious 3-bedroom home set on a 1400m² (approx.) allotment
 - Expansive verandah with bay views, perfect for entertaining
 - 3 beds/1 bath/1 car garage
- \$1,100,000**

7-9 STEELE STREET, COWES
‘The Castle’ – Villa By The Sea
AUCTION SATURDAY 1ST FEB @ 2PM ON SITE



- This is a rare opportunity to own The Castle – Villa By The Sea, a spectacular landmark property just metres from the north-facing bay beach and the lively Cowes shopping precinct. This exquisite residence, lovingly held by the same family for over 30 years, now offers a new chapter for its next owners.
- Set on an expansive 1,286m² approx. allotment with a significant 35-metre approx. frontage, this six-bedroom, six-bathroom home occupies one of the most sought-after positions on Phillip Island.

1 GALLEON CRESCENT, SUNSET STRIP



- Immaculately presented double-storey home situated on 616m² (approx.) allotment
 - Upstairs open plan living leading to generous wrap around deck offering views over surrounding farmland
 - 3 bedrooms/1 bathroom/1 car garage
- \$780,000**

17 HASTINGS STREET, VENTNOR



- Beautifully presented home with self-contained cottage providing ample space
 - Gas log fire, water tanks, separate workshop, generous 645m² allotment
 - 4 beds/2 baths/2 car garage
- \$1,290,000**



Greg Price
0419 337 441



Brian Silver
0407 347 509



Maree Malloy
0408 316 715



Chase Watters
0423 272 819



Sharon Wintle
0405 575 332



Angus Hall
0466 326 487

113a Thompson Avenue, Cowes
5952 2633 ALEXSCOTT.COM.AU



Private oasis with stunning gardens and modern elegance

Nestled at the rear of the property for ultimate privacy, this beautifully designed home offers an exquisite blend of country charm, contemporary comforts, and natural beauty.

Situated on approximately 1840sqm of land in the quiet township of Rhyll, this property is close to the General Store, cafes, boat ramp, yacht club, walking trails, and only moments away from the water's edge.

Enter the home through the large front verandah and step into a welcoming living area that sets the tone for this thoughtfully designed residence. The open plan living, dining and kitchen area boasts polished timber floorboards and seamlessly flows into a covered and enclosed outdoor room, perfect for year-round entertaining or relaxation.

The contemporary kitchen is a chef's dream, with a gorgeous timber breakfast bar inviting lingering over a lazy Sunday breakfast, sleek cabinetry, and quality stainless steel appliances. Bifold windows from the kitchen open out to the sunroom, creating a convenient servery window for ease of entertaining.

The dining area also features bifold doors leading directly to the sunroom, ensuring a seamless indoor-outdoor flow.

This stunning home offers three spacious bedrooms, all with built-in robes. The master bedroom boasts a private ensuite, while the additional family bathroom is centrally located to serve the rest of the home.

Relax and unwind in the generously sized sunroom, bathed in natural light through stunning skylights and featuring soaring vaulted ceilings and a cozy wood fireplace.



This beautifully designed, three bedroom home offers an exquisite blend of country charm, contemporary comforts, and natural beauty.

From the sunroom, step out onto a large deck area overlooking the lush gardens, perfect for outdoor dining or soaking in the serene surroundings.

Wherever you sit in this home, you are treated to views of beautiful green spaces, enhancing the tranquillity and charm of the property.

The property also features a double garage with a workshop at the rear, a carport at the front of the garage, and a garden shed for additional storage. In the rear corner of the property, a pergola nestled amongst the gardens provides a romantic and tranquil spot to unwind with a glass of wine in hand, regardless of the season.

A standout feature of the property is the carport with a self-contained area above. This private retreat has its own entry, separate balcony, and is ideal for guests or family members seeking privacy.

Outside, the fully fenced and beautifully landscaped gardens are a true highlight. Thoughtfully designed for both beauty and privacy, the lush greenery creates a

peaceful retreat where you can relax, entertain, or explore your passion for gardening. Additionally, there is ample parking space, including an extra-large tandem carport along the side of the property, ideal for a caravan or boat with easy access.

Whether you're seeking a family home or a serene getaway, this property combines modern comforts with timeless appeal.

Nearby, you'll find Rhyll Inlet's stunning wetlands reserve with a scenic boardwalk, Rhyll Park, and the picturesque foreshore. For families, the property is zoned for Cowes Primary School and Bass Coast College.

Cowes Shopping Centre and Plaza are just a short drive away, providing convenience while maintaining a peaceful, secluded lifestyle.

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Lifestyle Communities' new clubhouse launch

EVENT

Renowned interior designer, author, businessperson and Channel 9 judge of The Block, Shaynna Blaze, will be heading to Lifestyle Communities' newest community on Phillip Island, to celebrate the launch of their clubhouse and attend their family open day. And the good news is, everyone is welcome to come along!

With Phillip Island one of Victoria's favourite tourist destinations, renowned for its wildlife, rugged landscapes, beaches and beloved penguin parade, this event gives everyone the chance to experience the much-loved community of Cowes and have a taste of island life.

A chance to get up close and personal, guests can attend a live 'In Conversation' with Shaynna Blaze and Fiona Lloyd, Lifestyle Communities' Executive General Manager - Design and Construction. At 12 noon in the clubhouse, they will discuss the importance of clever design and its inspiration, along with the influence of colour and texture and how it contributes to a sense of community, with the impressive clubhouse at Phillip Island a modern and innovative example.

It is this sense of community, the innovation and design that un-

derpins the look and feel of every Lifestyle community that attracted Shaynna, saying, "I love what the team at Lifestyle Communities is doing with its design of the central clubhouse; creating a warm, welcoming and thoughtful homeowner community with a strong sense of belonging at its heart."

"I'm looking forward to meeting homeowners and visitors alike, returning to beautiful Phillip Island for the day whilst celebrating this incredible community. It's truly unique."

Embraces community

Open to the public and taking place on Saturday January 18 at Lifestyle Communities Phillip Island, the free event runs between 10am and 2pm.

Interested locals, potential downsizers, their families and island visitors alike can enjoy complimentary acai bowls, coffee and pastries for breakfast; reformer pilates demonstrations; a Tai Chi class at 10.30am; there will be a face painter on hand for the kids (cute penguin face anyone?); live music from local talent; a free BBQ lunch prepared by the Phillip Island and San Remo Rotary Club and much more.

This truly is an event that embraces all the community.

Lifestyle Communities is Vic-



Channel 9 judge of The Block, Shaynna Blaze, returns to Phillip Island for the launch of the clubhouse at Lifestyle Communities in Cowes on Saturday January 18 from 10am.

toria's largest provider of affordable, downsizer accommodation with more than 33 communities around the state. Phillip Island is the newest jewel in the crown, located only 350 metres from the beach. With its accessible resort style, this type of living enables homeowners to slow down and live life on their own terms whilst making this serene seaside oasis their own.

Packed with incredible home-



A family open day on January 18 is being held to celebrate the opening of the new clubhouse at Lifestyle Communities in Cowes. Everyone is welcome to attend.

owner amenities including a 25-metre pool, gym, pilates studio, a golf simulator, a boat available for homeowners to use to fish or cruise the bay amongst much more, and the community is still only 1.5 hours from Melbourne.

But at the heart of every Lifestyle Community is the clubhouse - where homeowners gather to share experiences and create memories.

Don't miss the free family

open day to celebrate the Lifestyle Communities' newest clubhouse opening.

Where: Lifestyle Phillip Island, 498 Settlement Road, Cowes.

When: Saturday January 18 from 10am - 2pm

For more information go to: cloud.e.lifestylecommunities.com.au/LPICOJAN2025

Guests can pre-register or just attend on the day.

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CONTACT MICHAEL MCLEOD
0412 712 034

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Nestled in this stunning location overlooking the seagrove wetlands is the perfect home/beach house. With low maintenance in mind just enjoy this quiet setting, excellent access to Cowes central and Cowes foreshore only adds to this complete package. The east and north facing aspect create a warm and inviting area which flows to a sun filled deck with BBQ area which is perfect for entertaining.

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New podcast tells how Mel beat the booze

HEALTH

Feeling a little crusty after too much New Year partying?

Made resolutions vowing to clean up, quit alcohol?

Mel Beynon, from Ventnor, knows the experience well.

Mel, who runs Mindful Connections yoga and meditation classes on Phillip Island, this week marked one year of being sober, since January 9, which in a new podcast interview she says has been a "long journey".

Mel recently appeared on the How I Quit Alcohol podcast with host, sobriety coach Danni Carr, who has written a book of the same name with her husband blues musician Ash Grunwald.

Danni is a friend of Mel's from school in Castlemaine, and spent time together as "ratbags getting trashed", and more recently Mel has taught yoga at a retreat held by Danni.

On the podcast, the 48-year-old Phillip Islander gives an honest and vulnerable account of her experience, recalling how she was first drunk at 13, "just a baby" and ended up passing out in public.

"When I look back now and I think about the quantities of alcohol I drank consistently it's sad and terrifying," Mel says on the podcast, saying at the time she framed being drunk as fun.

"How did I fall through that net?"

Mel says as an adult she continued to drink, often reaching for a drink in social situations as a "self-soother" to relieve anxiety.

"Australians love to use a couple of drinks to take the edge off. It's the way we tend to socialise.

"I was relying a lot on alcohol and loved to party and when I partied I didn't stop.

"If it was Christmas, for instance, I wouldn't be thinking about the food



Ventnor's Mel Beynon has appeared on the How I Quit Alcohol podcast with host, sobriety coach Danni Carr, who has written a book of the same name with her husband blues musician Ash Grunwald.

but what champagne I would be drinking."

Sobriety

Mel explains the turning point happened when she was 40, and asked herself what could change.

"I realised this is not working, this situation is not getting any better."

So she dug into her "shadows from the past" and soon saw she had used alcohol to numb herself, first starting to drink after her parent's "super messy" divorce, as a way to get out of pain.

"I had rewired my brain as 'this is the way I cope'."

Mel says stopping drinking was easy "once I set my mind to it" – admitting moderation wasn't her "jam".

Yoga and meditation – and "nourishing" practices that give her joy – have helped "destructive practices fall away", replaced by "love, understanding, acceptance and forgiveness".

She's now happy to share her experiences honestly, saying most people think they're the only ones going through a specific tough time.

"Our world is really set up for extroverts. Most of us aren't, though, and using alcohol helps us get there.

"I'm over everyone pretending they are normal. No one is not struggling.

"Can't we all be honest? It's so refreshing now people are coming out, like high profile celebrities, saying they've suffered, saying they're not good.

"You don't always have to have it right, or feel confident."

Healthy

Mel is well known around Phillip Island.

She first moved here in 2001 to work as a waitress at Pino's.

Then she was manager at Mad Cowes, a crew member at Wildlife Coast Cruises for about five years, a ranger at Phillip Island Nature Parks for another five years and now works a few days a week at Pollyanna clothing in Cowes.

Her partner Beau Fahle is also a former ranger and now works for Parks Victoria on French Island in cat eradication, while her two sons Gus (14), and

Manny (12), are both at Bass Coast College.

If you haven't met her in any of the above, then you may recognise her from the stage, performing in three Offshore Theatre productions, while she is also on the committee of the island's amateur theatre group and runs their publicity.

Mel says being the mum of two is now giving her a different perspective on drinking.

"It's only as a sober person you realise how insidious alcohol is. It's a carcinogen in the same category as asbestos, yet we're so brainwashed into seeing it as the only way to celebrate and mark an occasion."

She adds while in the past she couldn't cope with "big emotions", these days "I don't want hard times but I am maybe not as afraid of the whole package of life".

You can find the How I Quit Alcohol podcast on Spotify and other streaming services, or go to: www.iqitalcohol.com.au/pages/podcast

Mel's episode is #257: From partying to peace.



Candidate Deb Leonard and local energy expert Tony Wolfe host a community conversation about what real climate action looks like in Gippsland at Dirty Three Wines in Inverloch on Wednesday, January 22, from 6pm.

What does local climate action look like?

ELECTION

Local residents are invited to join Deb Leonard, independent candidate for the federal seat of Monash, and Tony Wolfe, a prominent local energy expert, for a discussion on energy transition, job creation, and the future of renewable energy in the region.

The event will be held from 6pm – 8pm, on Wednesday January 22, at Dirty Three Wines in Inverloch.

Tony Wolfe brings decades of experience as a senior plant operator at the Loy Yang coal power station in the Latrobe Valley, where he worked for over 40 years.

Tony has been at the forefront of advocating for fair job transition plans for coal workers and is a vocal supporter of renewable energy projects. He currently serves on the community advisory board for the Star of the South offshore wind farm, ensuring local voices are represented in major energy initiatives.

Deb Leonard, known for her commitment to genuine local representation is eager to discuss how an independent voice can better champion local interests and help accelerate action on the climate crisis.

"We don't have time to waste," said Deb.

"The climate crisis demands immediate and decisive action, and I want our region to be at the forefront of Australia's transition to renewable energy.

"This conversation is an opportunity for people to hear directly from an expert like Tony, who knows the challenges and opportunities we face."

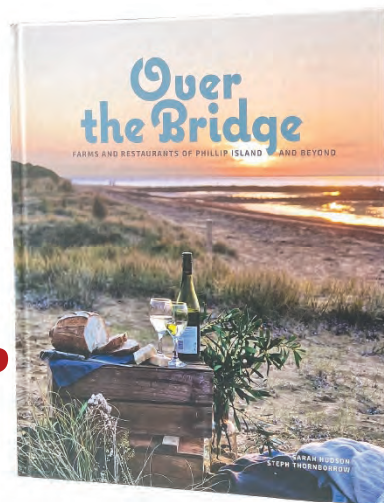
This community event is free and open to all. Residents are encouraged to attend and be part of the conversation about how Monash can lead in renewable energy while protecting and supporting local workers.

Please RSVP at: www.debleonard4monash.com.au/politics_in_the_pub_inverloch

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A sold out, sun-soaked success

OCEAN SOUNDS

It was a sold-out crowd of over 5500 people that celebrated in the sunshine at this year's Ocean Sounds Festival on the weekend.

The weather gods smiled on the organisers, providing a day of perfect sunshine (ahead of the torrential rain the following day).

The triple headline bill of Birds of Tokyo, Boy and Bear and Cat Empire were joined on stage by Sunshine and Disco Faith Choir, Jem

Cassar-Daley, Cool Out Sun and Ozone Street, with a special Welcome to Country by Millowl Dreaming.

Punters from across Phillip Island and Bass Coast mingled with festival goers from afar, with organisers saying people came from every state and territory in the country.

The organisers also thanked their dedicated crew, saying putting on the show involved over 500 people with close to 400 directly employed or volunteering on-site.

"Easily one of the best festivals we have ever run," said Rhett McLaren, Festival Director.

"Amazing crowd, amazing weather, incredible artists!

"Seeing family, friends and young kids having the best time enjoying music together in a picturesque natural environment ... what more could you want!

"We can't wait to do it all again next January."

More photos at pisra.com.au/entertainment



Ralph and Melina Arceo, part of the sold-out crowd at this year's festival. Photo: Steph Thornborrow.



A family-friendly festival with entertainment for the kids. Photo: Expmedia.



Hannah and Youki ready to enjoy the music at Ocean Sounds.



Sarah and Ellen, sun safe and enjoying this year's Ocean Sounds.



Shades on and looking cool at Ocean Sounds, Jordan and Macken.



Kristy Lamaro and Bree Rutherford at Ocean Sounds. Photo: Steph Thornborrow.



Heading into the festival, Cape Woolamai residents Paul (Fonz) Patten and Sally O'Neill, with Geoff Oliver and Mindy Bell.



Nici Cahill with Susie Kreutzer who was down for summer in her holiday home in Cowes. Photo: Nici Cahill, Snapshot Photography.



Jenny and Craig Hollins of Wonthaggi with children Callum and Quinsy, and Jenny's mother Val McDonald. Photo: Nici Cahill, Snapshot Photography.



The Newhaven College team in holiday mode at Ocean Sounds. Tony Corr, Steph Thornborrow, Kate Sidebottom, Katrina Lawrence. Photo: Katrina Lawrence.



Joey Thompson and Archie Robson enjoying Ocean Sounds. Photo: Steph Thornborrow.

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Summer fun with Myli

LIBRARY

Looking for ways to keep the kids entertained these school holidays? Myli – My Community Library has you covered with a fantastic lineup of free events.

Join our Sing for Fun workshops at Phillip Island Library. Participants will discover how to warm up their voices and bodies with lively, fun movements – an experience the whole family will love. No singing experience necessary.

Best-selling author and specialist guest, Andrea Rowe, will be hosting a Story Time session at Phillip Island library at 10.30am on January 16. Enjoy two jam-packed, leap from your seat stories, where kids who like to move can step into the pages of these much-loved Australian picture books. This special Story Time session will also be held at our Inverloch Library.

Phillip Island Library will host an interactive Magic Beach Puppets Story Time session, where participants can immerse themselves in the beloved world of Alison Lester's Magic Beach by creating their own puppet characters.

The summer fun isn't just limited to these locations.



Best-selling author Andrea Rowe is hosting a Story Time session at Phillip Island on January 16 at 10.30am, as part of the Myli holiday program.

Myli libraries across Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Cardinia and South Gippsland Shire are hosting a wide variety of events. From creative workshops to games and everything in between, there's something for everyone.

And don't forget to sign up for the Big Summer Read. It's a great way to keep kids reading and engaged over the holidays.

Track your reading progress, take on fun challenges, and go into the running for exciting prizes. Visit your local Myli library to get started.

All events are free, but bookings are essential to secure your spot.

To see the full program and lock in your family's holiday plans, visit Myli's Eventbrite page: myli.au/jan2025

/ Sponsored article /



Newcomers to the Oz Day at the Daly stage on January 26, is Bass Coast blues-surf outfit Ozone Street. There will also be carnival rides, face painting and a 9.30pm fireworks display. Tickets are on sale now.

A great community day

AUSTRALIA DAY

Now in its fifth year, Oz Day at the Daly continues its tradition of putting on a fantastic community day that showcases local musicians.

Organisers said the objective of the day on Sunday January 26 is to provide an opportunity for families to come together to reflect, respect and celebrate Australia Day.

Bass Coast has produced a wealth of local talent and it is proudly on display at the event, with entertainment provided by three great local artists.

Phillip Island musicians The Times and Imogen Price return to the Oz Day at the Daly stage this year.

Imogen is a talented singer songwriter and guitarist, well known and loved by local audiences.

Musical duo The Times is always a guaranteed good time, with a repertoire stretching across the decades.

Rounding out the bill are newcomers to the Oz Day stage, Bass Coast

blues-surf outfit Ozone Street.

Their sound has been described as "a refreshing blend of vintage blues and surf-inspired melodies" and it's sure to get people up and dancing.

Calling themselves "balls to the wall blues", their swamp-soaked melodies with a hefty injection of funk and soul is a guaranteed crowd pleaser.

The three acts will provide four hours of entertainment and local production company Production Corp together with Bass Coast Sound and Video are on board again, to ensure a first-class sound, light and video operation.

"The day is all about family fun and while there will be carnival rides and face painting there will also be plenty of games and activities and the very popular tug of war," organisers said.

"The Bass Coast Historical Automobile Club will be displaying some of their superbly restored classic cars and the event caters for all ages.

"The atmosphere is re-

laxed and though some seating and tables are provided, people are advised to bring their own chairs or picnic rugs."

Activities continue into the evening with the highlight being the fireworks finale at 9.30pm.

"The quality of the fireworks displays has always been amazing and Fitzpatrick's Fireworks from Traralgon are again expected to put on another great show."

Local residents are reminded to make sure they secure pets and animals that may become distressed by the fireworks.

Oz Day at the Daly is a ticketed family-friendly event held at the Dalyston Recreation Reserve on Australia Day.

Catered for by the Dalyston Football Netball Club, gates open at 4pm with all activities ending after the 9.30pm fireworks display. The venue is licensed and there is strictly no BYO alcohol.

Don't miss out. Book your tickets now at: www.trybooking.com/CYBBX

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Story Time with Guest Author Andrea Rowe –

Phillip Island Library (10.30AM on 16/1)

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visit: myli.au/jan2025

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11am

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Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve was declared in March 2013 and the working group is calling for new members with a passion for surfing and preserving the coastal environment.

National Surfing Reserve calls for new members

COMMUNITY

Phillip Island (Morrow) is the proud home of Victoria's first and only National Surfing Reserve. The working group that helps care for it is calling for new members with a passion for surfing and preserving the coastal environment.

Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve was declared in March 2013 for the surfers of yesterday, today and tomorrow and celebrates the island's surfing culture and classic waves.

The Reserve recognises the island's outstanding surf, together with the long rich surf culture and history. It is made up of four sites: Cape Woolamai, Smiths Beach, Summerland Beach and Cat Bay.

The community was instrumental in establishing the Surfing Reserve. Since

its establishment a dedicated working group has worked to promote and protect the reserve, its values, surfing and its history and cultural significance for Phillip Island (Morrow).

The group is comprised of representatives from Phillip Island Nature Parks, Bass Coast Shire Council, Phillip Island Boardriders Club, Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club, Plastic Free Phillip Island, Traditional Owners and community members.

The group has worked on initiatives such as creating and installing signage and monuments and running events to celebrate surfers of all ages, styles and abilities, including the popular Surfing Teams Challenge.

Members also develop and maintain an archive of the island's surfing history dating back to

the 1920s. The relaxed, fun and friendly working group meets between six and 10 times per year.

"Phillip Island Nature Parks has proudly assisted the establishment and operation of the reserve since its inception and is delighted to be involved in this great community initiative," said Catherine Basterfield, Phillip Island Nature Parks CEO.

"The strength of the ongoing success of the Reserve has been the community passion and hard work and I encourage new members to get on board."

For more information on how to apply, email community@penguins.org.au

Applications close: February 7, 2025.

See National Surfing Reserve updates all year round on Facebook and Instagram: @phillipIslandnsr #phillipislandnsr

/Sponsored article/

Have your say

ARTS

Bass Coast Shire Council is currently running a survey about arts in the region.

They're asking members of the public and the arts community to provide

feedback on the kind of programs and services they'd like to see in the arts and culture arena.

Feedback will be used to shape future programming and also how the council lets the community know what programs and activities are available.

The survey is open until February 16 at engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/arts-bass-coast

Newhaven College – a haven of opportunity

EDUCATION

Newhaven College prides itself on being "about hands-on sensory learning".

"Whether it be outdoor education, music lessons or a maths class, teachers are actively present ensuring each young person's unique learning path is enriched," a college spokesperson stated

"Newhaven's educators are at their peak professionally, resulting in students receiving the best possible education."

The college said it is proud of its academic record, with many students going on to further education.

"However, the college also offers a wide range of VET subjects and unique programs to complement the school curriculum," the spokesperson stated.

They said highlights of an education at Newhaven College include a wide range of co-curricular activities, from sports to an exceptional performing arts program.

"Sports include House and inter-school competitions, plus out-of-the-box opportunities such as the coveted Surfing Academy, Equestrian Team or the newly minted MTB (Mountain Biking) Academy."

"Some of the College's riders and surfers have achieved extraordinary results in 2024 with National Championship wins in a range of disciplines."

For those inspired by the arts, the school's performing arts wing includes one-on-one lesson spaces, a rehearsal studio, sound rooms, collaboration spaces and a Black Box theatre.

"This facility, along with an exceptional music teaching team, provides a nurturing and encouraging space for music students to explore their talent."



Year 9 Teacher Carly Heislers finds the outdoor classes at the Newhaven College Year 9 Environmental Centre brings the best out in her students.

Environmental

Newhaven College offers a unique learning space at the Year 9 Environmental Centre.

Set away from the main College campus, looking out over Westernport Bay, the "open space and healthy atmosphere help to shape a student's mindset".

"Wearing their special Year 9 ranger-style uniforms, complete with hiking boots, students are ready to move between the classroom and outdoor activities as opportunities arise," the college spokesperson said.

"The Year 9 Environmental Centre is a busy, ever-changing place of learning."

"The specialised team provides professional dedication and commitment to supporting Year 9 students as they pass through the challenges of adolescence. They are singly focused on providing the best opportunities so students can thrive."

"An education at Newhaven College is grounded, well-rounded and nurturing. The result is young adults armed with confidence and an open mind, ready to take on what the future holds."

GET ON BOARD!

Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve is seeking new, voluntary members to join the working group to promote surfing on Phillip Island (Morrow).

Have fun, meet new people and help celebrate why the Island was declared Victoria's only National Surfing Reserve in 2013. For information and how to apply, email community@penguins.org.au



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January 4 - 27, 2025. Open Daily 10am - 4pm
Berninnet Art Gallery, 91-97 Thompson Avenue, Cowes Vic 3922

Bringing contemporary art to the community

A model display to delight enthusiasts

TRAINS

Model train enthusiasts of all ages are in for a treat.

The Phillip Island and District Railway Modellers is holding their annual model train show on Saturday January 18 and Sunday January 19, at Berninneit, 91-97 Thompson Avenue, Cowes.

The popular display always attracts many visitors and caters for the diehard model railway enthusiast, the budding five-year-old who loves to watch the trains go around, and everyone in between.

There will be fourteen model layouts to view, many with full digital control and authentic sound.

"We will have models ranging in size from the smaller "N" scale, that fit on a door, the popular "HO" & "OO" scales up to the very large "G" scale, that would take over the garden," a group spokesperson said.

"This year the show features four new model layouts, not seen before at our show as well as an extended version of the large, detailed layout depicting an early 20th century Timber mill and township."

For "Thomas" fans there is a model de-



There will be fourteen model layouts, many with full digital control and authentic sound at the Phillip Island and District Railway Modellers model train show on January 18 and 19, at Berninneit in Cowes.

picting the original Sodas as well as a model where young enthusiasts can drive Thomas or Percy around the track.

"Take the opportunity to talk to the exhibitors; they just love talking about model trains and you will find a wealth of knowledge, experience and expertise."

There will also be a large range of second-hand trains for sale for those starting out or those wanting to expand their collections.

Visitors can enjoy an hour or two, rain hail or shine, in air-conditioned comfort at Berninneit.

On Saturday the exhibition will be open to the public from 10am until 5pm, and on Sunday the hours are 10am to 4pm.

"We are grateful for our sponsorship from Bass Coast Shire Council and Westernport Water as well as the support from Branch Line Hobbies in Croydon and Steam Era Models."

For more information visit: facebook.com/people/Phillip-Island-and-District-Railway-Modellers

Website: piadrm.com/
Or call Geoff Newman: 0419 357 097 or Grant Colwell: 0432 104 220.

/ Sponsored article /

Circles of Life on display

MOSAICS

The Circles of Life exhibition has been created collectively by students of local mosaic and ceramics artist, Heather Fahnle from Mosaics by the Bay, Ventnor.

The exhibition opens on January 24 (5pm to 7pm) at the Creative Arts Station in Cowes.

Students were given carte blanche on their own designs and ideas to create these circles which are made from ceramic tiles, glass, shells and/or porcelain crockery.

Many students have attended Heather's weekly classes for several years, learning and improving their skills as well as gaining the confidence to exhibit their work. The classes are more than just mosaic creations, they have become a space where students can share and discuss ideas, critique each other's work, offer support and a shoulder when needed over a cuppa and cake.

This is the second student exhibition that Heather has choreographed. The Birds of a Heather Exhibition was held at Yarram Courthouse in February 2024 which saw over 50 mosaic birds on display, with many pieces selling on opening night.

Heather offers half or full day workshops for anyone wishing to learn a new skill within an accessible and inclusive environment.

Full details are available on her website: heatherfahnle.com

The Circles of Life Exhibition presented by Mosaics by the Bay, opens on Friday January 24 from 5pm to 7pm at the Creative Arts Station, 119 Thompson Avenue, Cowes and continues over January 25 and 26.

/ Sponsored article /



Circles of Life exhibition features works by students of local mosaic and ceramics artist Heather Fahnle from Mosaics by the Bay. It opens on January 24 (5pm to 7pm) at Creative Arts Station, 119 Thompson Avenue, Cowes.

Model Train Show



Berninneit Civic Centre

91-97 Thompson Ave, Cowes

Saturday 10am - 5pm Sunday 10am - 4pm

18th and 19th January, 2025

Adults \$10 Children \$5 Family \$25

Presented by Phillip Island & District Railway Modellers Inc.

For further information:

Website - piadrm.com

Facebook - facebook.com/people/Phillip-Island-and-District-Railway-Modellers

Contact Geoff Newman (0419 357 097), Grant Colwell (0432 104 220)

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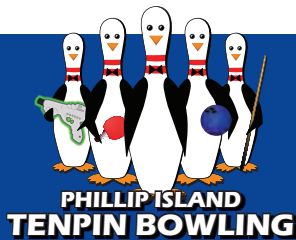
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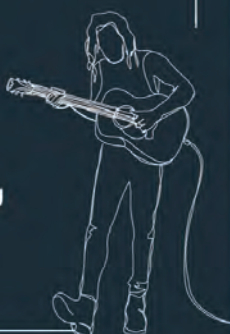
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The Textile Art Group, a section of ASPIR is having their first Gala Exhibition at the new Creative Arts Station on January 18 and 19 and will include items to purchase. The exhibition will include pieces from a range of mediums, including garments, artwork, fabric basketry and embroidery.

Creative textiles on display

ART

The Textile Art Group, a section of ASPIR (Arts Society of Phillip Island Region) is having their first Gala Exhibition at the new Creative Arts Station on January 18 and 19.

The art on display will showcase weaving, felting, sewing, embroidery, spinning, lino cut, string making, and fabric basketry, with many items available to purchase.

There will be plenty to see with many displays and live demonstrations across the weekend of many of the techniques used to create the items at the exhibition.

The free exhibition at the Creative Arts Station, 119 Settlement Road in Cowes runs from

10am until 4pm on Saturday and Sunday, January 18 and 19.

Long history

The textile group has been meeting regularly for many years and the people who participate have common creative interests and are passionate about the preservation of textiles as an artform.

Some notable achievements of the group have been:

- The commemorative wall mural created for the 150 years celebration of Phillip Island. It was presented to Bass Coast Shire Council in 2018.
- The PICAL wall mural representing the many activities and the natural environment of Phillip Island
- Best in Show at the Bendigo

Wool and Sheep show in 2023.

The group meets twice a month to work on group projects, individual works and participate in workshops.

At the meetings, they also prepare work for the annual Easter ASPIR Art Show, which includes a textiles section.

Various members have been successful in local art shows including at Cowes, Pakenham, Tyers and Bendigo.

Some members have also staged successful exhibitions around the area, in Melbourne and overseas. Become inspired and perhaps join the group. No experience required.

Any enquiries, please ring Shirley on 0410 584 025 or Deb 0402 802 465.

/ Sponsored article /



Andy Scott and his Western Swing Orchestra play the Phillip Island Bowling Club on Sunday January 19, from 2pm, presented by the Phillip Island Jazz Club.

Andy Scott swings into Cowes

JAZZ

Andy Scott and his Western Swing Orchestra will be playing at the Phillip Island Bowling Club on Sunday January 19, from 2pm. Presented by the Phillip Island Jazz Club, Andy has assembled a top group of musicians for the performance.

The band features Matt K West on guitar and vocals, Steve Grant on accordion, Esther Henderson on fiddle (in demand internationally), Lachlan Wallace on drums. Steve Temple on trumpet, Ben Franz on pedal steel guitar and Andy Scott on bass and vocals.

“There will be a CD launch on the day for the Andy Scott Col-

lective and we can vouch that the music is great,” said a club spokesperson.

Western swing is a subgenre of American country music that originated in the late 1920s in the West and South among the region’s Western string bands.

Tickets are in demand, so anyone interested in attending is urged to book early.

Entry is \$20 for Jazz Club members and \$25 for visitors.

Phillip Island Bowling Club is at 40 Dunsmore Road in Cowes and the performance is from 2pm until 4.30pm.

For more information or to book tickets, please ring Jill on 0417 416 300 or Geoff on 0409 948 613.

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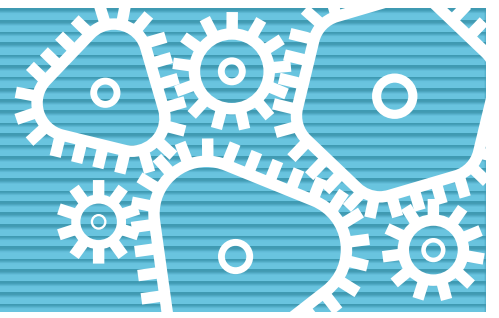
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Annual treat for young and old

COMMUNITY

On January 4, Phillip Island Conservation Society (PICS), hosted the Animals of Oz, at Olive Justice Place in Cowes.

The annual visit by the mobile wildlife education program attracted many interested families.

Seven native animals were individually introduced as the presenter showed the audience the special features of each creature. Excited youngsters got to meet Kookie the kookaburra who can't fly because of an old wing injury acquired after escaping the clutches of a fox and Bubble-gum, the blue tongue lizard who lives under logs in the back yard with his 'five wives' and their twenty-one eggs.

Other animals included Shadow the tawny frogmouth who can look like a part of a tree when perched on a branch or stump and Snappy, the five-foot crocodile.

The children were able to gently touch Snappy on his back and tummy to feel the difference in his skin, but were instructed not to touch his mouth.

"PICS has proudly hosted this event since 2012 and is grateful to be supported and funded by the Bass Coast Shire Council," a PICS spokesperson said.

"Most of the 46 adults and 47 children were either local or related to locals with whom they were enjoying the holiday atmosphere; one family was visiting from England."



Jackson with Shadow the Tawny Frogmouth, part of the Animals of Oz team who visited Cowes on January 4, presented by PICS. Photo: Meg Edwards.

Jet skis targeted this summer

BEACH SAFETY

Jet skiers who speed in five-knot zones or get too close to swimmers are the focus of this summer's Cool Your Jets: Stay in Control safety education program. The Safe Transport Victoria program encourages jet skiers to have fun while following waterway rules. The campaign includes social and digital media, as well as in-person engagement events at Safety Beach (Port Phillip Bay) and Bonnie Doon (Lake Eildon) in January 2025.

"Jet skiers must ride safely and follow waterway rules. Those who don't risk being fined. Always slow to five-knots when within 50 metres of swimmers, boaters, other jet skis, and marine animals," said Chris Banks from Safe Transport Victoria.

"Cool your jets, stay in control, and make sure everyone has a safe and fun summer on the water."

The Cool Your Jets: Stay in Control key safety reminders include:

- Ride within the speed limits in five-knot zones near beaches and inland waterways.
- Slow to five-knots within 50 metres of swimmers, boats, other jet skis, and marine animals.
- Always wear the appropriate lifejacket.
- Ensure their jet ski, safety gear and lifejacket are well maintained
- Be aware of their speed – if there is a wake, they are exceeding five-knots.

To reinforce these messages, the program is supported by targeted compliance and enforcement at major waterways and busy locations during peak periods.

In partnership with Victoria Police, Safe Transport Victoria will again conduct waterway patrols to target unsafe and illegal behaviour this summer, particularly around swimming areas.

Jet ski users who break the law will be caught and face significant penalties. In 2023-24, 388 in-



This summer's Cool Your Jets campaign aims to promote jet ski safety, including not getting too close to swimmers. Photo: Safe Transport Victoria.

fringements were issued to jet skiers.

Rules and resources

Boaters and jet skiers must be familiar with the rules for the waterways they use and are encouraged to pay close attention to waterway signage.

For more information on recreational boating and the Cool Your Jets: Stay in Control program, visit the Safe Transport Victoria website: safetransport.vic.gov.au/cool-your-jets/

Jet skiers can use the Boating Vic website at www.boating.vic.gov.au to plan their day on the water, including viewing boat ramp information and checking ramp cameras to see how busy their favourite ramp is.

Boaters can also download the DECKEE app from deckee.com to see the required waterway rules, speed limits, and essential safety equipment based on the user's location, allowing them to navigate with confidence.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tell us your views with a Letter to the Editor (350 word limit).
Email to advertiser@pisra.com.au, or submit online at pisra.com.au



Show me the money

I was pondering the option of renting out my Phillip Island holiday home on a part time basis.

Current bills are insurance, land tax, connections and use of utilities.

If I rent it out via an agent, extra costs include agent photos (a one off expense), shire registration (\$312pa), State Government registration fee (7.5 per cent payable for each booking), agent fee (an agreed percentage of each booking), cleaning fee (after each stay), maintenance costs, higher insurance levy, and most concerning of all, the newly introduced rural VRLT which is one per cent of Capital Improved Value in year one then two per cent in year two then three per cent in the third year.

A lot of snouts for a very meagre trough me thinks.

Based on information received from reliable sources, I have calculated the following.

If I rent out my holiday home to short stay holiday makers, in the first year it will take 9.5 weeks of rental income to break even. In the second year it will take 14.3 weeks of rental income to break even. In the third year it will take 19.2 weeks of rental income to break even.

According to Google, the Airbnb occupancy rate for Phillip Island is 41 per cent which equates to about 22 weeks per annum. You do the math.

Phillip Palmer, Ventnor

Kudos for CWA

I would like to thank the Country Woman's Association for the gorgeous Christmas Hamper I won at the Cowes Community Market in December.

Our whole family was able to enjoy the fabulous baking, the items from local shop keepers for the children and teenagers, and wine for oldies.

Again, thank you very much CWA, what a fantastic organisation.

Glenda Ballinger, Ventnor

Island wide approach needed

I was at the protest at Silverleaves and there were about 110 adults and a number of kids there, not 200 plus, which was an excellent turnout considering the rain. I would suggest to Tim McCurdy that if the problem is environmental then logic

tells you the solution is environmental not political.

When I asked how much of the problem was being caused by climate change I was told none. Clearly they are climate change deniers in private and climate change believers in public. I note the Silverleaves shoreline has eroded 77 metres since 1953 and as King Canute would have pointed out, this is a problem a long time coming. The Liberal spokespeople kept talking about 'hard' infrastructure, whatever that is, and it smacks of people trying to show nature who is the boss.

I live on the western side of the island and there has been significant erosion here, so I believe there is a need for a whole of island approach when dealing with this issue, and not just a process of responding to the loudest complainants.

It is terrible for people to face the possibility of losing their homes and we should do what we can to prevent, or at least slow the process down. But we really shouldn't be passing the problem on to someone else.

Stephen Paul, Ventnor

Go free range

Freeranger Eggs at Grantville is encouraging more people to set up their own free range farms to beat the current egg shortage.

The poultry industry expects the shortage of eggs will continue throughout 2025 because of the numbers of chickens culled following outbreaks of avian influenza. Last year more than two million laying hens were euthanised in Australia. The shortage demonstrates the importance of local production and provides a great opportunity for new small scale egg operations to supply needs in each area.

Low density systems are far less susceptible to disease than the major industrial-scale producers and an additional benefit is that the supply chain is far shorter. Most outbreaks of avian influenza originated on major production facilities spread by workers travelling between businesses.

Freeranger Eggs in Grantville has an eBook available for anyone who would like to set up their own free range egg business.

Phil Westwood, Freeranger Eggs, Grantville

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The Rhyll Tennis Club invites you to join them for an evening of pickleball on January 17 at the Rhyll Twilight Market. Photo: Kate Perkins.

Come and try twilight pickleball

TENNIS

The Rhyll Tennis Club is excited to begin the new year with a new game by introducing pickleball – a fun, social and friendly game which suits the club’s hard courts. New members and players are invited to keep the courts busy and the club active. Bass Coast Shire Council’s Quick Response Grants provided the Rhyll Tennis Club funds needed to purchase new equipment. Paddles and balls can be hired at the Rhyll General Store upon collecting keys to the court (the two courts can be booked by calling 03 5907 6796). Additionally, memberships are available for avid and frequent players, or the court can be hired for \$15 per hour. Typically, four players get together for a game of pickleball. The rules are simple and is an easy challenge for beginners, but can develop into a fast paced, competitive sport. Thus far there is plenty of interest from those who play at the Cowes Leisure Centre. Many attended the club’s recent open day and enjoy what the Rhyll Tennis Club has to offer. They also have knowledge and experience to pass onto those who are new to the game. Come along and join the fun at the Rhyll Twilight Market on January 17. Courts will be available for the club’s free open evening from 4pm – 6pm. For further information contact Mandy on 0409 186 521. For general enquiries and memberships contact rhylltennis@gmail.com

Results from the green

GOLF

Tuesday, January 7
Men’s 18H Stableford
Overall winner: Art Lyons (22) with 40 pts.
A Grade winner: Terry Crumpton (12) with 35 pts.
B Grade winner: Sam Orr (14) with 39 pts.
C Grade winner: Art Lyons (22) with 40 pts.
BDL: 32 pts C/B.
NTP: 5th Steve Harris, 7th Stephen McAllister, 10th Neville Thurgood, 17th Alf Micallef.
Great score: Adrian O’Gorman (eagle hole – 18).
Men’s 9H Stableford
Overall winner: Graham Robinson (25) with 20 pts from David Gladman (19) with 18 pts C/B.
BDL: 16 pts.
Women’s 18H Stableford
Overall winner: Lorna Evans (42) with 43 pts from Dianna Holmberg (36) on 39 pts.
BDL: 33 pts C/B.
NTP: 5th Rhonda Boyd, 7th Vicki Ramage, 10th Jen Bilson, 17th Jillian Chandler.
Thursday, January 9
Open 18H Stableford
Overall winner: Stephen Mack (15) with 40 pts.
A Grade winner Athol Hill (5) with 39 pts.
B Grade winner: Stephen Mack (15) with 40 pts.
C Grade winner: Joanne Westthorp (41) with 38 pts C/B.
BDL: 33 pts C/B.

NTP: 5th Oliver Duggan, 7th Gregory Williams, 10th Greg Mauer, 17th Brady Ross.
Saturday, January 11
Men’s 18H Stableford
Overall winner: Steve Regnier (16) with 39 pts C/B.
A Grade winner: Christopher Reynolds (9) with 38 pts.
B Grade winner: Steve Regnier (16) with 39 pts.
C Grade winner: Stephen McAllister (22) with 39 pts.
BDL: 34 pts C/B.
NTP: 5th Peter Gray, 7th Daniel Dickson, 10th Anthony Shannon, 17th Brent White.
Women’s 18H Stableford
Overall winner: Naoko McRae (34) with 38 pts from Vicki Amato (23) on 37 pts.
A Grade winner: Vicki Amato (23) with 37 pts.
B Grade winner: Naoko McRae (34) with 38 pts.
BDL: 34 pts.
NTP: 5th Debra Orr, 7th Lesley Meadowcroft, 10th Patricia Jamieson.
Open 9H Stableford
Overall winner: Patrick Owens (22) with 19 pts from David Henstridge (21) with 17 pts C/B.
BDL: 16 pts C/B.
Sunday, January 12
Open 18H Stableford
Overall winner: Jack Taylor (19) with 38 pts C/B from Ben Walsh (11) on 38 pts.
BDL: 32 pts.

A celebration of community and skill development

NIPPERS

The 2024/25 Nippers season, run by the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club (WBSLSC), has celebrated another successful program. This season once again demonstrated the immense value the Nippers program brings to the community, not only by teaching vital life-saving and leadership skills but also by expanding participants’ knowledge of the local marine environment and conservation. This year 400 eager nippers, aged five to 13, gained essential skills and experiences that will serve them for a lifetime. The impact of the Nippers program extends beyond the participants themselves, influencing parents, grandparents, friends, and family members who spectated and assisted throughout the season. “The success of the program would not have been possible without the dedication of over 200 volunteers, including 100 water safety volunteers, who collectively contributed more than 5000 volunteer hours,” said a WBSLSC spokesperson. “Their commitment ensured the safety and smooth operation of the events held at Smiths Beach and Cleeland Bight.” The program was also supported by more than 75 Age Managers and Junior Age Managers, who provided guidance, mentorship, and leadership to the young participants. “Their efforts have been instrumental in fostering a sense of community and instilling a passion for beach safety and marine conservation.” The Nippers program is not only about learning and development; it is also about building community and making lifelong friendships, the club said. A whopping 3000 sausages were consumed during the season, alongside several social events held at the Woolamai Beach Surf Lifesaving Club House, highlighting the social aspect, the camaraderie among participants and their families, all of which acted as vital fund raising for the club. The 2025/26 Nippers program will run from Sunday December 28, 2025 to Sunday January 4, 2026, inclusive. More information will be posted via the email list in the coming months. You can subscribe now via the WBSLSC website. As the 2024/25 Nippers season finishes, the club looks forward to continuing this tradition in future seasons, nurturing the next generation of lifesavers and community leaders. www.woolamaibeach.org.au/nippers



The Nippers program, run by WBSLSC, teaches life-saving and leadership skills but also expands participants’ knowledge of the local marine environment and conservation.

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TIDE GUIDE

Tidal predictions for Stony Point, Cowes -0.09 Newhaven -0.31

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HIGH 2:39 am 2.89 m	HIGH 3:35 am 2.95 m	HIGH 4:25 am 2.97 m	HIGH 5:06 am 2.96 m	HIGH 5:42 am 2.92 m	HIGH 6:12 am 2.86 m	LOW 12:07 am 0.81 m
LOW 8:16 am 1.25 m	LOW 9:16 am 1.12 m	LOW 10:08 am 0.99 m	LOW 10:52 am 0.88 m	LOW 11:31 am 0.79 m	LOW 12:06 pm 0.72 m	HIGH 6:39 am 2.80 m
HIGH 2:11 pm 2.44 m	HIGH 3:16 pm 2.49 m	HIGH 4:14 pm 2.54 m	HIGH 5:03 pm 2.57 m	HIGH 5:48 pm 2.59 m	HIGH 6:29 pm 2.59 m	LOW 12:38 pm 0.67 m
LOW 8:15 pm 0.48 m	LOW 9:12 pm 0.49 m	LOW 10:02 pm 0.54 m	LOW 10:48 pm 0.61 m	LOW 11:30 pm 0.71 m		HIGH 7:08 pm 2.59 m

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Cape Paterson kicks off Bass Coast Series

AQUATHON

The Bass Coast Series 2025 starts this Sunday, January 19 at 10am with the 27th Cape Paterson Aquathon.

Organised by the Cape Paterson Surf Life Saving Club, the race includes a 400m swim and a scenic 4.4km run on coast tracks and through The Cape Eco Village.

The swim is held at Cape Paterson's First Surf Beach.

The aquathon is the first leg of the three-part Bass Coast Series, which also includes the San Remo Channel Challenge and the Cowes Classic.

"We are excited by the interest from the community in participating in this event, and I confidently predict the event will have record numbers," said Ray Rust, Cape Paterson Surf Life Saving Club President.

He described the event as suitable for those "just wanting to be part of it" and experienced athletes alike.

Conditions on Sunday are predicted to be ideal; sunny with a top of 24 degrees and light winds.

Contestant numbers are expected to be over 350, well clear of last year's record registration of 300.

Run by volunteers, the Cape Paterson Aquathon is a popular



The Bass Coast Series 2025 starts this Sunday, January 19 at 10am with the 27th Cape Paterson Aquathon. Registrations are open online until January 18.

community event and all proceeds support volunteer surf life saving patrols at Cape Paterson.

You can enter as an individual or a team, and registrations are open online until January 18.

There are great prizes on offer for contestants.

"The event is our annual standout event, the key fundraiser, with all funds raised going directly to life saving operations so that we can continue to safely patrol our beach," Ray said.

"Sign up to take part, or come down on the day to cheer and soak up the atmosphere.

"Either way, we look forward to seeing you on the beach."

The other events in the Bass Coast Series are the Cowes Classic on February 8 and the San Remo Channel Challenge on March 1.

More details and link to registration: www.basscoastseries.com.au/cape-paterson-aquathon / Sponsored article /

Midweek heads to Loch

BOWLS

The midweek bowls crew headed out to the Loch and District Bowls Club for their new year's return on January 9 after a Christmas break.

Fifty-three players were welcomed by Trevor, Pauline and John whilst Peter worked his magic with team arrangements.

The morning's match proved a treat for competitors, with mild weather and a straight, true green.

As the temperature rose throughout the day, the afternoons game was shortened from 12 to 10 ends.

The club give their thanks to Trevor for his work behind the bar along with Loreen in the kitchen and Paul.

Winners (on a countback) with a score of 33: Mark Hanrahan (S), Brenda Moloney (2), Stephen Muhi (3) and Dennis



Congratulations to winners of the first match of the midweek season (from left): Mark Hanrahan (S), Brenda Moloney (2), Stephen Muhi (3) and Dennis Tomlin (L).

Tomlin (L).

Runners up also on 33 points: Lou Capsalis (L), Amanda Bozelle (2), Peter Gratton (S) and Jaye Allen-Dayle (3).

Best one game winners on 20 points: Craig Brown (S), Aggie Gratton (L), Michael Saunders (2) and Rob Jeffreys (3).

This week, the club will meet at Lang Lang.

Island Summer Triples

BOWLS

The Phillip Island Bowling Club hosted their regular game of Summer Triples on January 8.

Best last game: Phil Martin, Bob Carter and Dave Hoffman.

Runners up: Michael Dady, Terry Floyd and David Burzacott.

Congratulations to winners: John Newcombe, John Paterno and Guilio Marcolongo.



Congratulations to last week's Summer Triples winners (from left): John Paterno, John Newcombe and Guilio Marcolongo.

Juniors take on Jan Juc

SURFING

Congratulations to a host of local surfers who placed in the first round of the Victoria Junior Surfing Titles at Jan Juc on the weekend.

Evie Lutz, Lily Basset, Rye Cicero, Arch and Dusty Rayner all finished in the top 4 in their respective divisions.

In the Under 18 Girls, won by Ava Holland, Lillian Basset finished third, while Rye Cicero took out second spot behind Jarvis Barrow in the Under 18 Boys.

In the Under 16 categories, Evie Lutz finished fourth in the girls event, with Arch Rayner second in the boys.

Dusty Rayner won the Under 14 Boys competition.

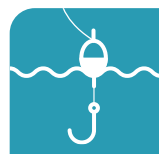
Live scores can be found on-



Cowes surfer Evie Lutz finished fourth in the Under 16 Girls in round 1 of the Victorian Junior Titles at Jan Juc on the weekend Photo: Noah Clifford (Moshxmedia), Surfing Victoria.

line at www.surfingvic.com/live.

The next round is scheduled for Gunnamatta at the end of March with Round 3 of the Junior Titles at Phillip Island on May 10 and 11.



AROUND THE BAY

WITH JIM'S BAIT AND TACKLE

FISHING

After what feels like years, we have actually had a summer with hot days, calm mornings and sea breezes.

With the Christmas rush over and many reluctantly returning to work, things around the coast have quietened down.

A talking point from customers recently has been the amount of sand at the Rhyll boat ramp.

Another one are requests for heavy sinkers to be sold. Whilst we have no control over this we understand where people are coming from, referring to land based, jetty fishing with people utilising sinkers that are too light, ultimately tangling everyone.

Report

Fishing throughout this summer has proved the best it has been in years.

Snapper fired up early and did not let up until Christmas;

pinkies then moved in and took over.

Whiting have remained unchanged for months. Not huge bags but excellent quality and plenty for the freezer. Calamari have also proved the same.

Heading offshore, the tuna fired up early, mako sharks have made appearances and flathead have proved alike to whiting and calamari.

Land based fishing has not missed out on reports either. Pre-Christmas had excellent results with all species reported and plenty of quality amongst them.

For the adventurous, the rocks off the old quarry have produced some excellent fishing and is a much safer alternative to Punch Bowl.

Additionally, this season has seen the usual flathead, whiting, wrasse and salmon along with several kingfish, gummies and large snapper.



Heath and Tyler enjoying the school holidays out on the water.

Those planning on heading out in boats, don't forget to give deeper spots a try for whiting (due to the warmer temperatures).

In regard to offshore tuna, most know the drill by now - six hours of trawling and five minutes of catching.

As the summer season quiets down, we will reduce our shop hours and open at 7am on weekdays along with 6am on weekends.

Keep an eye on our socials for updates on times and fishing reports.

JUNIOR PRE-SQUAD

Designed for young swimmers transitioning from a learn to swim program.

They must be able to swim 25 metres of 2 or more strokes without difficulty.

This is NOT a learn to swim program.

Starts Thursday 30th January 2025 4pm to 5pm for 10 weeks. Cost - \$185

This includes annual membership and term fees. plus \$10 for mandatory PI Swim Club cap. The aim of the program is for swimmers to develop their confidence to progress to our Friday night program.

THE PROGRAM IS EXTREMELY POPULAR AND WITH ONLY 25 SPACES AVAILABLE IT WILL FILL QUICKLY. PLEASE CONTACT PHILLIP ISLAND SWIM CLUB TO REGISTER YOUR NAME AND INTEREST.

swimclub@waterfront.net.au

NOTE: Membership forms will be sent upon registration of interest and then invoice issued.



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14 BEACH RD, RHYLL PHILLIP ISLAND



Caiden and Archie celebrate their backstroke results.



Claudia, Lara and Mia get ready to race.

SGB kick off championship season in style

SWIMMING

Racing was short and fast at the Victorian Sprint Championships hosted at MSAC on January 11 and 12.

Fifty-three South Gippsland Bass Swim Club (SGB) competitors sped down the pool, placing many personal bests and time improvements.

The scorching temperatures were not a hinderance and swimmers enjoyed the refreshing water.

Competitors who met qualifying times raced in a variety of over 50m strokes on Saturday and those that finished within the top 10 returned for finals on Sunday.

Additionally, two relay teams in each age group competed on Saturday to finish off the sessions. Coach Dylan was pleased with competitors' efforts.

"We have a busy few weeks ahead of us and to see them [competitors] put in such a superb effort over the weekend was really pleasing.

"They have all been training hard and it has shown within their results.

"Everyone from the U11s through to the U19s put in some amazing swims and all supported each other so well from the sidelines.

"We don't do relays at other championships, however this one we do and the competitors dug deep, putting in a great effort."

Results (of competitors who made finals)

Josie Richer (11): 7th breaststroke.

Archie Smyth (12): 1st freestyle, 1st backstroke, 4th breaststroke, 1st butterfly.

Emily Croatto (12): 6th backstroke, 2nd breaststroke.

Levi Jarrett (12): 1st butterfly, 1st backstroke, 1st backstroke, 1st freestyle.

Rex Brocklesby (13): 4th backstroke.

Isabella Lynch (13): 4th breaststroke.

Georgia Perry (13): backstroke.

Claudia Croatto (15): 10th freestyle, 7th backstroke, 6th breaststroke, 11th butterfly.

Max Brocklesby (15): 11th butterfly.



Miah celebrates her Backstroke silver medal alongside Dylan.

Miah Roberts (15): 2nd backstroke.

Will Simmons (15): 4th backstroke, 7th freestyle.

Billy Fisher (15): 6th breaststroke.

Cormac Flynn (15): 11th breaststroke.

Molly Dettbarn (16): 9th freestyle.

Rahni Matheson (16): 10th butterfly, 8th backstroke, 2nd breaststroke, 10th freestyle.

Mostyn Lumsden (17): 9th

backstroke, 50th butterfly.

Trinity O'Keefe (19): 7th breaststroke.

U12 freestyle relay: A Team 5th and B Team 20th.

U14 freestyle relay: A Team 11th and B Team 18th.

O15 freestyle relay: A Team 8th and B Team 12th.

Swimmers have a short break this week before they head to Mildura for the Country Championships beginning Saturday January 18.

Island B Grade Sharks victorious against Inverloch

CRICKET

The post-Christmas return to cricket saw the Island's B Grade Sharks head over to Thompson Reserve, taking on Inverloch in a one-day match.

The weather was perfect for cricket, including an immaculately prepared turf wicket.

After Captain Andrew "Tin Man" Finlayson lost the toss, the Island were sent to field under a beaming midday sun.

Timothy McNiven and Jobe Williams opened the bowling for the Sharks, beating the bat multiple times with good pace.

Runs were hard to come by for the Inverloch openers, with Jobe striking first with a wicket in the eighth over.

The same trend continued throughout the proceeding overs, with tight bowling and fielding making it hard for the Stingrays to score.

Jobe struck again in the

tenth over before Dave "Dogga" Womersley and Harry "Yabby" Arceo took over with the ball.

The pair bowled nicely in partnership, using the turf to their advantage and both snagging crucial wickets.

Inverloch slumped to 5/41 at drinks, with the Island in a strong position.

Despite a mini fight back in the back half of the innings from the Stingrays, the Sharks remained clinical, with Tarryn "Finchy" Allan and Loz Ferrari also assisting with the ball.

After 38 overs, Inverloch had been bowled out for 101, a fine bowling and fielding effort from the Sharks.

Jobe Williams did what he does best, finishing with 4/13.

Both Dave and Harry also bowled exceptionally, achieving identical figures of 3/14 each.

"Big Mac" Niven also

bowled beautifully, but his Thompson Reserve curse struck again, preventing him from getting a pole.

Chasing 102 for victory, Connor "Walrus" Epifano and Max Arceo opened for the Sharks.

The pair started steadily, with Rus Epifano doing most of the heavy lifting scoring wise.

After Arceo was trapped LBW, the heavy hitting Tharidu "T" Asurumuni was brought to the crease.

Rus and T looked comfortable in the middle, scoring regularly with some expansive shots.

The pair chipped away at the total setting up the innings beautifully.

Connor finally fell after a rapid LBW decision, being dismissed for a very well made 47.

T continued on the positive batting, despite the Sharks

losing two quick wickets with both Womersley and Ferrari falling.

At drinks, the Island were 4/83 and still in the box seat.

Tim McNiven joined T at the crease, with the pair icing the game for the Sharks.

After a big scoring over in the 21st, the game was all but done.

T hit a nice boundary to bring up the winning runs.

The Sharks finished with a clinical win – a fantastic way to kickstart the back end of the season.

Niven managed four-not-out, whilst T finished up on 28 off 27 balls – a brilliant chasing effort.

His knock combined with Connor's top-score got the job done for the Sharks who now move to top of the B1 ladder.

A tough test awaits next week, with the Sharks taking on third placed Nerrena at the Cowes Recreation Reserve.

**ALEX SCOTT
AND STAFF**

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