

PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO

ADVERTISER

Your Community Voice!

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

\$1.60 Incl. GST

Cruise control



Phillip Island turned on perfect summer weather for two cruise ships, Seabourn Odyssey and Oceania Regatta, when they arrived last week. Hundreds of passengers disembarked to enjoy pre-booked tours to the penguins, koalas and island highlights, or to simply stroll the streets of Rhyll and Cowes. Photo: Katrina Lawrence. Turn to page 14 for a full report.

Gang targets local supermarkets

The San Remo and Cowes IGA supermarkets were targeted by a gang from Melbourne over the weekend.

The group, which travelled to Bass Coast from Melbourne in two stolen vehicles, also attempted to break into the IGA in Wonthaggi.

Police confirmed they are investigating three burglaries on January 15.

"It's believed approximately 10 offenders have attempted to

force entry to a convenience store on Graham Street in Wonthaggi about 2am but were disturbed by a passer-by," confirmed a Victoria Police media spokesperson.

"The offenders have then travelled in two vehicles to a convenience store on Marine Parade in San Remo where a vehicle was used to gain entry to the store.

"The offenders then travelled to a convenience store on Thompson Avenue in Cowes and another ram

raid was conducted.

"The vehicles are described as a white Mercedes and a silver Subaru and are believed to be stolen. The Mercedes was located dumped in Springvale last night. No arrests have been made at this stage and the investigation is ongoing.

"Anyone with information is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000."

The owners of the San Remo and

Cowes IGA stores confirmed the break-ins, saying a sledgehammer was used to break into the stores.

Konney Behre from the Cowes IGA said the gang broke the store's front door with a hammer and kicked the glass in.

She said the thieves seemed to be focused on cash.

"They kicked in the office door and tried to open our safe but couldn't.

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Holiday Guide

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Island Home

REAL ESTATE GUIDE

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PHILLIP ISLAND

7 day weather forecast

Wed/Jan18	Thu/Jan19	Fri/Jan20	Sat/Jan21	Sun/Jan22	Mon/Jan23	Tue/Jan24
						
SHOWERS	CLOUDY	PARTLY CLOUDY	PARTLY CLOUDY	MOSTLY SUNNY	PARTLY CLOUDY	POSSIBLE SHOWER
17 23	14 21	15 24	15 26	16 27	17 22	17 21



Youki (on drums) and Rob with their band, busked outside Woolworths last Thursday, to help raise funds for a wheelchair accessible car for Rob.

A wheely important fundraiser

Youki Innes and his friends are on a mission, to get their pal Robert Dogger mobile.

Rob is 23 years old and has cerebral palsy and wants to get a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

His sister Isabella has started a fundraiser to help Rob achieve his dream.

The page has so far raised almost \$2500.

Youki's band regularly busks around Cowes, and last Thursday they set up outside Woolworths and donated all their earnings from the session to Rob's fundraiser.

The group includes support workers Sam Haycroft and Ian Burke, and of late, all the proceeds have been going towards Rob's fundraiser.

Rob regularly joins in on percussion and keyboard and according to Isabella, "he does like

to sing a lot".

Isabella describes her brother as very social, and said having a car would mean he was able to venture out further than the local area.

"He enjoys meeting new people, he loves his music, the theatre and watching sport.

"Having a car will open up his ability to attend these sorts of things and give him more freedom.

"We have found a lovely car that would be perfect for him, and now we just need some financial help in order to buy it."

Anyone wanting to help can donate at the GoFundMe page: gofund.me/0e80e6b5

Alternatively, go to gofundme.com and search for "Get Robbie Dogger a wheelchair accessible vehicle".

Cowes and Rhyll connection grows

Bass Coast Shire Council has announced the second stage of a pathway to connect Rhyll to Cowes will start in February.

Announcing the latest stage on its website, the council stated:

"The Cowes to Rhyll Shared Path project aims to connect Rhyll to the main township of Cowes and improve pedestrian access in the community.

"These works will provide a safe, off-road link between the two areas increasing health and well-being, reducing vehicle traffic and continued expansion of our tracks and trails

network.

"The trail will also create a new nature-based tourism visitor attraction, providing access to the unique experience of walking and cycling in Bass Coast."

The project has been incorporated into the newly adopted Track and Trails Strategy and is split into five key stages.

Stage one linked Oswin Roberts Reserve to the carpark, while stage two will link the Cowes-Rhyll Road to Conservation Hill.

The work includes an upgrade of an 800 metre section of the boardwalk, widening

paths to shared trails and upgrading some gravel sections to concrete.

It is due to start in February and is expected to be completed by April.

Further stages included:

Stage 3 - Conservation Hill to McIlwraith Road.

Stage 4 - McIlwraith Road to Beach Road.

Stage 5 - Redwood Drive to Coghlan Road.

This project is a collaboration between Phillip Island Nature Parks and Bass Coast Shire Council, with details available at engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/cowesrhyllpath



The Cowes to Rhyll Shared Path project aims to connect Rhyll to the main township of Cowes and improve pedestrian access in the community, with Stage 2 due to start in February.

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A bejewelled sea creature

This looks like a necklace of purple gems but – according to our resident Phillip Island nature educator Mike Cleeland – it's an underwater organism appropriately called bluebell.

Reader Jill says she has been enjoying our occasional series on weird things found on the beach and sent in this photo, found at Cleeland Bight in mid-November.

"The next day I saw five of them on San Remo beach," she writes.

"Egg cases or something? Please ask Mike."

It turns out Mike was stumped by the purple mass and had to ask another resident expert, ranger Graeme Burgan who solved the mystery.

"It's a Bluebell Tunicate. Yes another colonial ascide-

an," says Mike, the education officer at Bunurong Coast Education.

We've featured quite a few ascideans in recent months, sac-like marine invertebrate filter feeders that come in an extraordinary array of shapes, colours and sizes.

Mike says this purple ascidian has a formal name *Clavelina moluccensis*, and *Clavelina* means little bottles.



Reader Jill sent in this photo, found at Cleeland Bight, which nature educator Mike Cleeland said is a bluebell, or *Clavelina moluccensis*.

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Insurer won't cover coastal homes

An insurance company is refusing to provide cover to Phillip Island homes close to the water, believed to be a first in the island's history.

In what could be a sign of future insurance trends, OBrien Real Estate in Cowes has reported that when they approached insurance underwriters Axis – on behalf of body corporate clients – they were told it was not available.

On their website, Axis states they specialise in “high hazard property risks”.

“We have received notice in writing they will not be offering future cover to properties that are deemed close to water and at a greater risk of flooding,” said OBrien property manager Jamie Harvie, adding it was for homes within about 200m to the water.

Jamie said the shift in insurance policy direction was not just limited to Phillip Island properties, with homes recently flooded in NSW “who might want flood cover being charged \$30,000 for flood cover on a \$300,000 property”.

A spokesperson from the Insurance Council of Australia told the Advertiser climate change was driving rising sea levels and exacerbating coastal hazards known as “Actions of the Sea” such as coastal inundation,

erosion, and recession.

“Coastal inundation, erosion, and recession are leaving Australian communities, properties, and critical infrastructure increasingly vulnerable,” the spokesperson said.

“Insurance cover for actions of the sea is generally not available because of the current risks and will be further constrained because of the growing risk from climate change impacts.”

They said increased protection for at-risk communities should come from investing in coastal protection infrastructure.

“There should also be improved data collection to understand current and future risks, and forward-thinking land use planning/zoning that considers current and future actions of the sea, to determine the long-term viability of existing communities and coastal property.

“When it comes to pricing insurance, insurers will use a number of mechanisms to determine cover, which is why it's important to talk to your insurer and shop around for a quote that works for you.”

The Advertiser approached other local real estate agents but was told most don't handle insurance issues for clients.

Alex Scott agent Greg Price said



A walk along Silverleaves beach shows how yearly erosion is eating into foreshore reserves. This signpost was once in the reserve but is now loose on the beach.

while they gave “insurance a wide berth”, he confirmed insurance companies were getting very careful about insuring vulnerable homes, including those at fire risk.

He added while cost of living was increasing premiums, climate disasters were also adding to local insurance costs.

Retreat

A report commissioned by the Insurance Council of Australia last year into impacts of climate change on insurance found it was not standard practice for insurers to offer cover for Actions of the Sea globally.

As events such as tidal inundation, storm surge and coastal erosion in-

crease in frequency and intensity, “a growing number of exposed properties in Australia will become uninhabitable”, the report says.

“Many communities are at risk now, as a significant amount of property and assets have been built in exposed areas around Australia's coast.

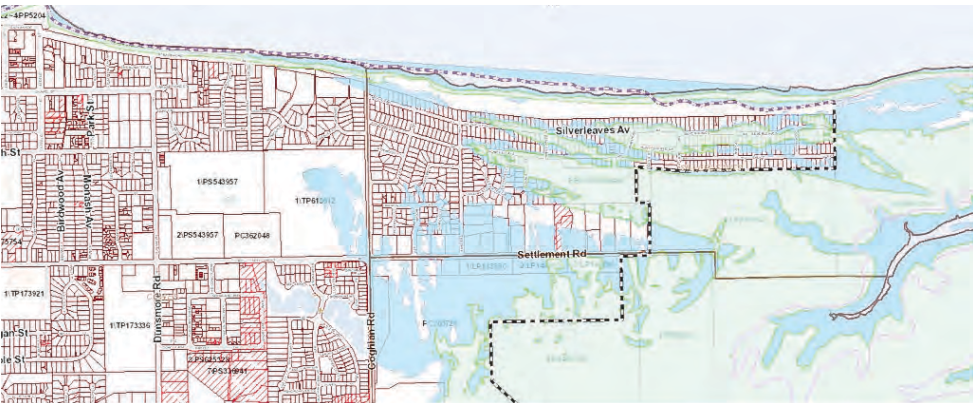
“We recognise there is considerable uncertainty about the best way to address these risks.”

It estimates Australian governments will need to invest \$30 billion in large scale coastal protection and adaptation projects over the next 50 years, as climate change makes coastal communities, property, and infrastructure increasingly vulnerable.

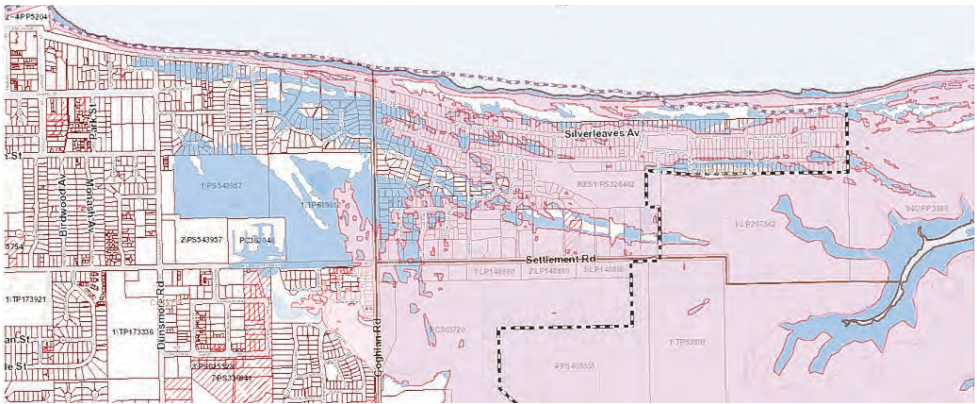
However, the report finds there are limits to mitigation and in some cases planned retreat from coastal hazards “may be the best long-term community option” (see separate story).

Insurance Council CEO Andrew Hall said there was “an urgent need to open conversations of possible retreats”.

“The community needs to be informed about the risks at play so that they can be incorporated into purchasing decisions, emergency response plans or future decisions,” he said, adding there may be “difficult decisions about the long-term viability of existing communities or property” to enable affordable insurance.



Cowes East/Silverleaves showing 2040 (0.2m sea level rise) scenario.



Cowes East/Silverleaves showing 2100 (0.8m sea level rise) scenario. Many property owners will be unable to develop their land in the future in the wake of the new threshold, warn planners.

Risk of sea level rise vetos planning permits

There has been a spike in the number of planning permits for new homes being rejected, following a stricter threshold on predicted sea level rise inundation.

And many property owners will be unable to develop their land in the future in the wake of the new threshold, warn planners.

One source told the Advertiser “people are still spending millions of dollars on homes in flood-risk areas on Phillip Island thinking someone will bail them out in the future”.

Last year the Victorian government amended all planning schemes to re-

quire planning for sea level rise of not less than 0.8 metres by 2100, an increase on the previous 0.2 metres by 2040.

Bass Coast Shire planning manager Donna Taylor said the result of the new threshold saw four applications refused in six months in Bass Coast, with Melbourne Water having the power to veto a permit application.

“It has been unusual for applications to be objected to by Melbourne Water as we have generally come to a solution involving the floor levels of the dwelling to be raised to an acceptable level,” Ms Taylor said.

“We now understand Melbourne Water is applying a higher standard for assessment of inundation risk.”

Mayor Michael Whelan said the implications of this change were significant.

“Many property owners will potentially be unable to develop on land in residential areas,” Cr Whelan said.

While Cr Whelan led the push for council to declare a climate emergency, and is chair of the Southeast Councils Climate Change Alliance, he said the new threshold was “implemented quickly, with little consultation with local government”.

“While council supports efforts to address sea level rise, implementation of such a significant change requires each town to be addressed holistically, rather than one planning application at a time.”

He said all levels of government needed to work together to ensure consistency.

Ms Taylor agreed, saying the risk was every council was now required to fund, develop and deliver their own flooding amendments, and inconsistent approaches “could result in very different outcomes across the state”.

“State government intervention is

required to provide clarity on current requirements, provide certainty on future development and commence a rolling program of review and adjustment to planning schemes as the science changes – similar to the state's role in bushfire planning,” she said.

Melbourne Water advised anyone seeking flood level information for a property – either buying or selling – can request a flood level certificate or a property information statement, and these documents may be included in a vendor statement or Section 32 certificate for any property for sale.

Reserve land for residents forced to flee their homes

Land should be set aside in Bass Coast so property owners forced from their homes by sea level rises can move to safe ground, according to a state government department recommendation.

In its submission to the government's Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) project, which will be heard by a planning committee in March, The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) said coastal resilience was “becoming increasingly important in strategic planning around the Victorian coast”.

The submission requests the town boundary of Inverloch be increased to allow for coastal retreat.

This has led to a call by peak resident body Island Voice for this policy to be applied to all coastal communities at threat from rising seas.

“We request that the boundary of Inverloch township be reconsidered with specific controls relating to coastal retreat,” the DELWP submission states.

“Should the settlement boundary be expanded some land should be

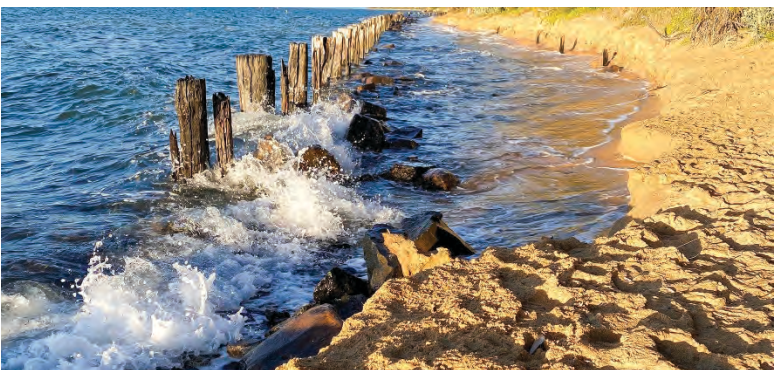
preserved specifically to respond to retreat from coastal hazards, and not open to development for general population growth of the town, which would put further pressure on coastal areas.”

DELWP says the escalation of erosion around Inverloch over the last 10 years “pushes this issue to the forefront for Bass Coast”.

A Region Coastal Hazard Assessment identified areas of the coast between Cape Paterson and Cape Liptrap likely to be impacted by inundation and erosion driven by increases in severity of weather conditions including storms, waves, wind, tides and climate change sea level rises between 0.2 and 1.4m.

“It is likely in some areas retreat of infrastructure and private property will need to be considered in future medium and long term strategic planning.

“The retention of the settlement boundary does not allow consideration of land which can be set aside specifically to respond to coastal retreat – such as land to allow relocation of private assets within hazard



A 360-metre rock wall between Rose Avenue and Coghlan Road and eight timber groynes was built last year at a total cost of \$3.35 million, as defence against increasing erosion (pictured). A report says the cost of mitigation against sea level rise “often exceeds the economic value of individual assets protected”.

zones, or land swap/buy back should coastal retreat be pursued.”

Island Voice spokeswoman Linda Marston asked why does DELWP only recommend leaving areas within the town boundary for retreating from sea rise for Inverloch?

“Surely that should be the case for all coastal communities?” she said.

A shire source suggested the reason DELWP recommended retreat for Inverloch alone was because they had only recently completed the coastal hazard assessment for that area.

Costly

The cost of mitigation against sea level rise “often exceeds the economic

value of individual assets protected” (over the asset life), according to a report commissioned by the Insurance Council of Australia last year into impacts of climate change on insurance (see separate article).

The 360-metre wall and walk between Rose Avenue and Coghlan Road and eight timber groynes – built as erosion defence last year – had a total cost of \$3.35 million.

The report said seawall defence works at Collaroy/Narrabeen in Sydney cost an average \$230,000 per property, paid by property owners.

“Property protection at this cost is unaffordable to many in less prestigious areas,” the report said.

In the UK, during the last 20 years, 34 homes have crumbled into the water in the town of Happisburgh because of coastal erosion.

Authorities tried erecting wooden and concrete defences, but they fell into disrepair as the cost of maintaining them rose and so the local council paid £3.2 million to purchase the most at-risk homes for a reduced price in 2011, helping some people move further inland.



Signs at the Aldi carpark in Cowes clearly state two hour parking.



There are no visible time limit signs in the Coles carpark.



Woolworths has three or four small two-hour parking signs displayed through the supermarket car park.

Parking complaints continue

Has the council's new sensor parking system created a new parking issue?

According to some local residents, the new sensor parking system is just moving the parking issues to a new location.

The \$377,000 sensor project has seen 506 underground sensors installed: 375 in on-street bays on Thompson Avenue, Chapel Street and The Esplanade; and 123 off-street bays at the Cowes Transit Centre; as well as 262 in Wonthaggi.

The "Bass Coast Parking" guidance mobile app – which will help drivers find an available bay – is also now active and available to download for free.

Electronic signs – on Thompson Avenue on Church and Chapel streets – have been installed to alert drivers to the direction of and distance to available car parking.

The new system also notifies parking offices when vehicles have overstayed the time limit.

To avoid a possible fine from the sensor parking bays, locals say people are now parking in supermarket carparks and residential streets.

Last week, Trish Van Loon wrote to The Advertiser calling on the Council to rethink the new parking strategy, saying "visitors are now parking in the supermarket car parks where

there are no restrictions".

"The elderly and disabled now cannot find a parking spot close to where they shop," she said.

On New Year's Eve another elderly resident told The Advertiser they were unable to go shopping, as the two supermarket car parks were full.

"Obviously, beach goers had beaten us to the punch," he said.

"With further subdivisions already approved, I shudder to think of the parking problems in a year or two time."

Another resident said they had visited the supermarket expecting it to be as full as the carpark, only to find few customers inside.

Supermarket parking

The carparks for two of the three major supermarkets in Cowes – Aldi and Woolworths – have restricted parking.

Aldi's carpark entry clearly states a two-hour time limit, while the carpark at Woolworths has two-hour limit signs displayed. There are no obvious parking limits displayed at the Coles carpark.

According to residents, the extended parking limits – compared to one hour or less along most of Thompson Avenue – is tempting for many drivers.

However a spokesperson from

Woolworths Media said the Cowes store was not aware of any additional parking issues, but noted it was fairly busy over the Christmas period.

The spokesperson said it would be hard to know if that was the regular seasonal trend with holiday makers, or whether it related to the new parking system.

The carpark is managed by the landlord for the shopping complex (Retro).

A spokesperson for the Cowes Shopping Centre management said no complaints had been received from customers about the carpark, and none of the retailers in the centre had raised any concerns.

"We will monitor the carpark however, and ensure customers have access to ample carparking should any issues or concerns arise."

Aldi and Coles were both contacted for comment. Neither responded by our deadline.

Bass Coast Shire Council said it was aware "increased visitation to our municipality over the peak summer period can create additional parking congestion in multiple areas as well as supermarket carparks".

"This occurs every summer holiday period," a Council spokesperson said.

"We conduct regular patrols in

known areas of congestion.

"As supermarket carparks are privately owned, they do not fall under the same parking restrictions for timed areas as the Council provided parking areas to the community."

"Private carparks determine their own timed parking restrictions, these are usually signed at the entrance to, and within the car park."

As the carparks are privately owned, Council said it didn't have jurisdiction over them, unless there is an agreement in place with the landowner.

"A supermarket has the choice to enter into a private parking agreement with Council and agree to have the correct parking signage installed."

"This parking agreement will allow Council to legally enforce and conduct regular parking patrols and enforce time restrictions, to allow for better customer turnover and accessibility for the community."

Council said it currently had such an agreement in place with Aldi in Cowes.

The spokesperson also pointed out that every supermarket carpark provided accessible parking for the whole community, which didn't fall under council parking regulations.

Council also advised that some supermarkets used private parking

contractors to patrol and enforce time restrictions.

App

Bass Coast Shire Council has defended its new parking app, after residents complained it was difficult to use, or "useless".

Linda Marston from Island Voice downloaded the app as soon as it was available but said using it was not a positive experience.

"The refresh rate is so slow and you definitely need a second person in the car to keep poking it," Linda said.

"If you are a solo driver it's a nightmare, especially because you're not meant to be touching the phone."

"I think we have bought a poor imitation of what is found in Melbourne, a \$2 shop version."

However Council said the app has been available to the public for approximately four weeks and Council haven't received any feedback as yet.

"Since going live we have not noticed or been made aware of any issues with the app," the council spokesperson said.

Anyone experiencing issues with the new app is advised to email basscoast@basscoast.vic.gov.au.

"This can be used to report issues or gain support."

Better planning needed for unnatural disasters

Coastal towns should be planning for a sea level rise of 1.2 metres by 2100, which is much higher than Bass Coast's current 0.8 metres by 2100.

An article in The Age newspaper on the weekend voiced state-wide coastal council fears that planning guidance is outdated and inadequate – based on 2008 projections for sea level rise (0.8m), rather than latest science (1.2m) – which will lead to growing threats to homes and infrastructure.

Councils said the Victorian gov-

ernment expected them to plan for at least 15 years of growth but did not provide best guidance on managing risks.

"Regional planning departments are completely slammed with growth and development whilst trying to manage a growing risk portfolio in coastal hazards," one South Gippsland councillor told The Age.

The article highlights that South Gippsland Shire has just released a discussion paper that proposes scrapping urban growth at Ve-

nus Bay, Waratah Bay and Sandy Point. Sandy Point would flood under the forecast 0.8 metre sea level rise.

At Port Fairy, Moyne Shire Council proposed factoring in sea level rises of 1.2 metres by 2100. Many resident submissions objected to the proposal, citing loss of property values or increased insurance. A planning panel opposed the proposal but that shire's CEO said the state government hadn't provided clear planning guidance and they wanted to see controls aligned by

climate science.

The article quoted the chairman of the state-funded Victorian Marine and Coastal Council, Anthony Boxshall, who said it was time Victoria discussed retreat: moving towns or homes, businesses and other infrastructure.

Experts said it was too costly to keep trying to defend the coast.

University of Melbourne geomorphologist Professor David Kennedy – who led a three-year drone research project examining Cowes east beach erosion – said fixes such

as seawalls and groynes interfered with natural sand movement and started a domino effect.

"The biggest issue with coastal management is sand movement and the response is generally to stick a wall in," Professor Kennedy told The Advertiser last year.

"The general rule with a rock wall is that you double the erosion effect at the end of the wall by a few metres."

"But once you armour the coast it reduces the beach's natural ability to adjust."

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Third – hopefully final – annual Covid hit to Nature Parks

For the third year, Phillip Island Nature Parks' annual report has revealed a financial hit from the pandemic to its bottom line, with a \$5.2 million deficit.

There was a silver lining, however, with the net cash flow loss \$1.3 million less than the previous year.

Visitation improved with 415,130 paid visitors, a 30 per cent increase compared with 2020-21.

And in another boost, retail services had a 49 per cent increase in revenue compared with the prior year, while total tourism revenue was 62 per cent greater than 2020-21 but about half of that of 2019-20.

The 2021-22 report said the Victorian government continued to prop up Nature Parks' coffers, with \$1.5 million funding support, following \$4.4 million for each of the previous two years.

"The Nature Parks received commitment from the government to support the Nature Parks throughout the crisis and through recovery until November 2023.

"To ensure the Nature Parks' ongoing financial sustainability, all non-critical expenditure was limited, and non-essential priorities deferred.

"The Board has formed the view that the Nature Parks can continue as a going concern."

Last week Nature Parks CEO Catherine Basterfield told the Advertiser despite a boom in summer visitation (see story, page 6), she envisaged government support would be ongoing, especially cash for infrastructure maintenance.

"Until our cash supply builds back up we will need government support. We will reassess at the end of summer but it will be at least through to



Phillip Island Nature Parks CEO Catherine Basterfield has predicted the organisation's "biggest challenge" will be ensuring enough staff to support visitation growth, reassuring there will be no further redundancies. But until PINP's cash supply builds back up "we will need government support".

November this year," Catherine said.

Redundancies

Following several years of redundancies, Nature Parks in 2021-22 had 170 staff, compared to 260 in 2017 (184 in '19-20).

Catherine said while staff on short-term contracts were let go at the outset of the pandemic, PINP only had one round of redundancies for 10 staff in June 2022, with two staff taking on other roles in the organisation.

And she predicted the organisation's "biggest challenge" would be ensuring enough staff to support visitation growth, "planning and assess-

ing" as tourist numbers rebound and reassuring there would be no further redundancies.

In 2021-22, there were 12 consultancies where fees were \$10,000 or greater, totalling \$300,000, including \$99,000 to Ernst and Young for a business case development.

There were five consultancies with fees less than \$10,000, totalling \$21,900.

Nature Parks uses a Melbourne PR firm for the majority of their media releases and enquiries – the same firm used by Bass Coast Shire – but the cost for this is not disclosed in the annual report because they are con-

sidered a contractor not a consultant.

Wildlife

There was a record 5219 little penguins ashore in one night in April last year – the highest number recorded since counting began in 1968.

The regular five-year census of the penguin population on the Summerland Peninsula revealed it had grown from 32,000 to 40,000, with the first estimates in 1984 suggesting there were about 12,000 breeding penguins.

The Koala Conservation Reserve had 17 resident koalas across the year, compared to 24 in 2019.

Catherine said their koalas were an "ageing population" and they would work with Zoos Victoria and Parks Victoria to improve breeding success or take on koalas needing high care.

While the annual report does not highlight koala numbers in the wild, with less than 30 estimated around the island in 2019, Catherine said they now estimated about 10-15 in the wild.

Last year citizen scientists from 15 countries around the world counted 165,514 seals at Seal Rocks from on-line images, while researchers found 23 seals with entanglements or scars, with most entangled in fishing lines.

The breeding success of the vulnerable Hooded Plover was excellent with the second-highest number of fledglings in 30 years of monitoring: 19 breeding pairs laid 70 eggs, producing 25 chicks.

Phillip Island is now home to the largest wild population of eastern barred bandicoots, which resulted in the status of the species being improved from critically endangered to endangered in Victoria.

Two breeding pairs of bush stone-curlews at the Koala Conservation Reserve will be released to the wild in coming years.

The annual shearwater rescue recovered 409 birds off the roads, relocated back to the colony.

Greening

The first evidence of a fox on Phillip Island in seven years was confirmed, with rangers and conservation dogs, locating and removing it; while 76 feral cats were caught.

More than \$4 million was invested in conservation and research, with staff revegetating 14 hectares of habitat with 14,000 plants, and Barb Martin Bushbank propagating 610,000 plants.

About 260 volunteers contributed 15,081 hours of work.

Nature Parks continued to contract renewable energy, to meet their target of 50 per cent reduction in carbon emissions by this year and carbon neutrality by 2030.

Meanwhile 80 per cent of retail products have sustainable packaging and single-use plastics have been removed from all retail spaces and packaging, with about 40 per cent of menu ingredients sourced locally.

Nature Parks Covid visitor snapshot	
Annual total visitors	
2019-20	745,641
2020-21	317,589
2021-22	415,130

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Residents of Shoalhaven Estate are still waiting for their promised wetlands, after originally raising concerns about the lack of progress on the project back in 2014.

“Nobody is accountable”

A resident of Shoalhaven Estate said the ongoing saga of the wetlands construction on the estate is “absolutely frustrating”.

“Nobody is accountable,” Roy Brooks said. “Our island council representative who proudly boasts ‘if you have a problem, please contact me’ has previously been indifferent to this issue, stating ‘what can I do.’”

Roy is so fed up with the lack of progress on the wetlands, and the lack of response from council that he said he is seriously considering leaving the island altogether.

In November last year, residents again complained about the state of the site.

Despite reassurances from Melbourne Water and Bass Coast Shire Council that it was properly secured, the temporary fencing was broken, the site was overgrown and there appeared to be very little progress made on the wetlands construction.

As of last week, the site was still not securely fenced, there was rubbish dumped beside the fencing and large patches remained overgrown, due to high numbers of nesting birds.

The surrounding streets were covered in bird poo. When asked why the site still had not been properly secured and work hadn’t recommenced on the wetlands, authorities seemed unable or unwilling to take responsibility for the ongoing breaches and delays.

A Melbourne Water spokesperson said the wetlands were being completed by a developer as part of the estate development.

“Maintenance of fencing, rubbish and grass are part of the development’s permit that was issued by the local council,” the spokesperson said.

“The responsibility for construction fencing, grass maintenance and rubbish remains with the developer and its contractor under the Council-issued permit.

“Melbourne Water has requested, however, that the developer addresses these issues.”

The spokesperson said Melbourne Water would become the land manager of the wetlands once it was completed, and they would not be commenting further on the issue.

Bass Coast Shire Council said it was aware of the breaks in the temporary fencing.

“It will be reinstated today (January 13) by the developer’s contractor,” a spokesperson said.

“Officers will undertake inspections to ensure this is completed.

“The landscaping in the wetland reserve is now expected to be recommenced in April due



The residents have again endured the nesting birds for months, with adjacent streets and houses covered with bird poo.

to dry weather conditions.

“This is to ensure the plantings have the best possible chance of survival.”

History of failure

Residents of the estate first raised concerns about the failure of the developer to deliver the promised wetlands back in 2014.

Five years later, by late 2019 as residents’ complaints grew louder, Council confirmed the developer had advised the “the works will be completed this summer”, however the wetlands failed to materialise.

In February 2020, a similar promise to have landscaping work done in April and the works completed, didn’t happen.

In August 2021, work was halted on the wetlands site due to nesting sea birds in the area, with a council spokesperson advising in November 2021 that once the birds had moved on, the contractor would recommence work.

In January 2022, another promise was made that work would be underway shortly, with the wetland due to be finished by mid-January.

By November last year, residents were again contacting council about ongoing issues with the birds and the state of the site, as another year rolled by without the promised wetlands being completed.

Over the years, failure to complete the wetlands project has been blamed on drought conditions, unseasonal heavy rain, lack of expert contractors and the nesting sea birds.

Here’s hoping that 2023 will be the year when the wetlands is finally delivered.

Penguin Parade summer boom

The Penguin Parade was sold out for 19 nights in a row over summer, a post-pandemic record.

Nights from December 23 to January 10 were sold out in advance to a seating capacity of 2500 visitors, with subsequent days selling close to that number.

It is a major turning point for the parade, which was closed throughout the past three years and when open was at a reduced capacity, with 100 visitors at the lowest capacity and up to 1000 people pre-December 2021.

Phillip Island Nature Parks’ CEO Catherine Basterfield said it signalled the tourist attraction was getting back to business as usual.

“We are coming out of a really rough period and everything is looking very optimistic for 2023,” she said.

“We currently have about 25 per cent of visitors who are international and 75 per cent domestic. Pre-Covid those figures were basically in reverse.

“So we have a lot of opportunity for growth in off peak and shoulder season.”

Catherine said China represented 30 per cent of visitors pre-Covid.

“I don’t know when we can expect Chinese numbers to bounce back, possibly six to 12 months.

“It took eight months for the rest of our international visitors to come back when borders opened, with the first wave friends and relatives.”



PINP CEO Catherine Basterfield said things were looking “very optimistic for 2023”, after the Penguin Parade sold out for 19 nights in a row over summer, a post-pandemic record.

She added visitation would not be as “reliant on China” with growth markets coming from India, Malaysia and Singapore.

Catherine said Nature Parks management had set a new seating limit of 2500 in April last year, below the pre-pandemic limit of 3800 (tide dependent).

“We made an assessment around the amount of seating that would fit visitors and the impact on their experience at the height of capacity and at 2500 the stands are full and everyone has a good view,” she said.

“It’s also a capacity that is financially sustainable. There weren’t many times in the year we were getting to 3800.”

Pandemic hit

Last week Nature Parks released its long-awaited 2021-22 annual report.

Figures show while PINP attractions were closed for a fifth of the year – and when opened operated with reduced capacity – they achieved 415,130 paid visitors, a 30 per cent increase compared with 2020-21.

Before the pandemic, international tourists made up more than half of visitor numbers. When operations returned to full service, domestic tourists made up the chunk of paid visitation, with a 16 per cent increase compared to 2018-19.

“The Nature Parks is focused on maintaining the domestic market growth achieved in 2021-22 which will be complemented by a returning international tourism market in the years to come,” the report says.

First hint Nature Parks will boost wildlife rescues

Phillip Island Nature Parks will look at ways to provide more help for Phillip Island’s only volunteer wildlife shelter operator.

Late last year volunteer operator Colleen Gilbee said the local wildlife death toll was taking an increasing financial and emotional toll.

Since 2000 Colleen has helped more than 3000 animals annually, and since 2019 has run Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Shelter Phillip Island and Bass Coast.

It costs her thousands of dollars every year out of her own pocket, with about 70 per cent of animals especially after hours needing to be euthanised because of the extent of their injuries.

But in an interview with the Advertiser last week, PINP CEO Catherine Basterfield said in the next month they would review how to provide more help through their wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre, which operates 7.30am – 4pm seven days a week.

“We are not in a position to add more financial resources given our financial results (posting a \$5.2 million deficit),” Catherine said.

“But what we are committed to do is work with Wildlife Victoria and volunteer rescuers to make sure what resources we do have are used in the best way.

“Over the next month we will look at ways to improve our services with the resources we have got so we can provide better services and support carers.”



While volunteer wildlife rescuer Colleen Gilbee helps about 3000 animals annually, in her own time and with funds from her own pocket, Nature Parks’ wildlife clinic team responded to about 1910 calls in the past year. There is a growing urgency for PINP to provide more help to the volunteer rescuer.

According to PINP’s 2021-22 annual report, the wildlife clinic team worked with Wildlife Victoria to respond to about 1910 calls for wildlife rescues and advice.

They cared for 79 little penguins (71 in 2020-21) and rescued and cared for 155 other native animals from 65 different species (550 in 2020-2021).

Election

Candidates for Bass in the lead up to the election were asked a public question in early November about the need for wildlife support.

“There is no dedicated 24-hour wildlife shelter and more

support is needed for volunteer wildlife rescuers. What would you do to rectify this situation?” the questioner asked.

Both the Liberals Aaron Brown and Nationals Brett Tessari agreed the program needed to be funded, while the ALP’s Jordan Crugnale said she was happy to look at other funding options.

Independent candidate Jeni Jobe said there was a conflict between tourism and wildlife safety and said she would 100 per cent support a 24-hour wildlife rescue service.

“Why don’t we have it in place already,” Jeni said.

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No “cookie cutter Melbourne development”: survey

Towns are already at capacity and any new housing should be in Wonthaggi and not Phillip Island, according to a survey of Bass Coast residents.

The shire survey found the majority of respondents said buildings should be no taller than two-storeys, while a few supported taller buildings along the foreshore if stepped back.

The survey found most people believed existing township boundaries should not be extended and any new developments would further strain existing services and infrastructure.

The majority of responses (67 per cent) felt that new residential development has had a negative impact on the character of their neighbourhoods.

Respondents commented they didn't “want cookie cutter Melbourne style development” and some said they were concerned about the impact of traffic and car parking from an increased population.

The survey in August last year was part of feedback into the shire's Housing Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Study and included written submissions, pop up events and online feedback, with 344 written responses and more than 1500 people providing general feedback.

Survey respondents agreed the environment was a key priority, with planting of trees

frequently referred to as an important characteristic of neighbourhoods.

“Community feedback suggested that environmental values and landscape character should be prioritised over new housing and built form,” the report said.

“The small village feel and coastal setting of townships is highly valued by residents. It's what makes Bass Coast unique, and attracts people to live, work and visit.”

Others agreed there should be less concrete and more natural materials on buildings.

Next

The Neighbourhood Character Study will ensure new residential development is sympathetic to local character and is managed in a way that reflects community values, ensuring high quality design.

The Housing Strategy will manage population growth, with Bass Coast Shire, like all councils, required by the Victorian government to plan for 15 years of housing supply. According to a shire strategy, Bass Coast will need to accommodate 10,000 new houses by 2036.

The study and strategy are running in parallel to the state government's Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) project, to guide future planning in Bass Coast, which found similar responses from

Top 10 housing concerns

1. Overdevelopment
2. Township boundary expansion
3. Loss of coastal/small village feel
4. Sustainability and environmental protection
5. Infrastructure and services
6. Small-lot subdivision
7. Tree and vegetation removal
8. Impact of development on wildlife
9. Dominance/scale of new buildings
10. Location-specific development

Source: Bass Coast Shire

residents during its three years of consultation.

The DAL will be heard by a planning committee in March before coming into planning law.

Depending on the outcome of the DAL, the next phase of consultation on the study and strategy will be later this year with final documents released in 2024.

Details: www.engage.bass-coast.vic.gov.au/neighbourhoodcharacterhousing

Tiny homes “only option” to housing crisis

There's a growing push to resolve affordable housing and worker shortages on Phillip Island by easing Bass Coast Shire planning rules, allowing tiny homes for permanent living.

In a proposed two-year trial, set to start this year, the Surf Coast Shire Council will allow people to live in mobile tiny homes following a local law revision.

At the end of last year Western Australia's Shire of Esperance was the first local council in Australia to approve a tiny house planning policy for permanent living.

Tiny homes don't feature in Bass Coast Shire's planning scheme and in a complex set of rules, how a tiny home is defined impacts on whether or not it will require a planning permit.

If, for example, a tiny home is considered as a dwelling or second dwelling – and features toilet and kitchen facilities – a permit is required, while an overlay such as bushfire or environmental may trigger the need for a permit.

But tiny homes defined as a dependent person's unit are frequently exempt.

A shire spokesperson last week told the Advertiser it was open to the idea.

“Bass Coast and Surf Coast experience similar issues with affordable housing, housing affordability and key worker accommodation; as such council will be following the Surf Coast tiny homes trial with a great deal of interest,” they said.

They said until then, council would continue to develop its social housing strategy that will provide advice on how council can use the planning scheme, local laws and advocacy to encourage affordable housing.



“I honestly believe it's the only option to alleviate the housing crisis,” says Philip Batty, who has himself couch surfed for a roof over his head and now runs a tiny home building business.

Couch surfing

Philip Batty, who grew up on the island, has the perfect solution to the housing shortage.

In December 2021 Philip started his tiny home business, working from a shed in the Cowes industrial area.

“I honestly believe it's the only option to alleviate the housing crisis,” Philip said.

“I think it's a really progressive and positive thing to trial. When professionals like teachers and nurses can't afford to live in places then something needs to change.

“The fastest growing homeless demographic are women aged over 55. But there are also families and many other people facing similar situations, living in cars, caravans or even tents.”

The father-of-two knows first-hand the challenges of homelessness.

He moved back to the island in 2021 and stayed at friends, also living in a caravan at his family's property.

“After a year of homelessness and couch-surfing it

made me realise the need for a different type of living,” says Philip, who went to Cowes Primary and Newhaven College, and whose father John and sister Jo still live on the island.

“I have lived through it and it's really, really hard.

“If I had a tiny home at the time, I would have lived in it.”

Tiny houses on wheels are commonly treated as caravans, where occupation is limited to a few days to a few months. But unlike caravans they are designed and built with residential building materials and construction practices.

Having completed his first tiny home, measuring just 6.5m long, 2.4m wide and 4.15m high, Philip says his focus is now to create one-bedroom tiny homes in the affordable \$40,000-range, which are also environmentally friendly.

“I want to make affordable living for people who have not a lot, maybe a spot in a caravan park or a friend with land.

“It's so much nicer than living in a caravan. Much more cosy, comfortable and secure.”



Phillip Island Dance Studio finished off 2022 with two performances at Wonthaggi Arts Centre. Enrolments are now open for 2023 classes, which start in February.

Time to start dancing ... again

Phillip Island Dance Studio finished off 2022 with two performances at Wonthaggi Arts Centre.

The shows included a Mary Poppins story ballet and choreography works of energetic Jazz and moving contemporary and lyrical pieces.

As always, the ever-popular preschool class delighted the audiences, this year performing as dolls and tin soldiers.

It was a wonderful end to the year and great way to celebrate being opened for four full terms, after the disruptions of Covid. The hard work of the students showed through their technical improvement and beautiful dance quality, musicality and joyous smiles at performing on stage.

Classes resume

Classes for 2023 start in February and en-

rolments are now open.

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

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

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

Classes resume February 6 in Cowes. For more information about trial classes contact phillipislanddancestudio@gmail.com.

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After the paralysis, the gratitude

Cowes' resident Steve Barber guides his wheelchair to show off the posh new kitchen accessories, specially designed for his paraplegia.

An oven door that swings to the right, pantry shelves with pull-out drawers and an induction stove to avoid burns.

After one year in his new unit – which was built largely through community fundraising and labour – the 66-year-old says every day he continues to be grateful.

"I'm so blessed how everyone came together and built this for me. I still wake up every day and appreciate what has been done for me by the community," Steve says.

"The one thing I wanted to be able to do was cook. I love to cook. My signature dish is chicken and mushroom fettucine.

"I'm very, very privileged to have a wonderful group of carers who look after me."

Given the positivity and gratitude you wouldn't know that this time two years ago Steve was recovering from surgery, following "excruciating" back pain that caused permanent paralysis of his legs.

Put bluntly, it's amazing Steve is here.

Steve and his now ex-partner Deb bought a house in Cowes 22 years ago, moving here a decade ago, where Deb worked in ticketing for Nature Parks and Steve worked as a cleaner at the CYC, while the couple both volunteered at the Vietnam Veterans Museum.

Around that same time Steve suffered a stroke, having to re-learn to walk, talk and function.

It turned out those skills came in handy in 2020.

Steve says it all started with a sore back, which worsened over two months. Medical tests locally found no cause and he was sent home with painkillers.

Deb, who is now one of his carers, says she "knew something was really wrong".

"Steve is a really tough fellow," Deb says.

Critical

One morning Steve says he was walking to the toilet when he suddenly couldn't feel his legs and he managed to get on to his bed and phone for help.

With the help of two ambulances, two fire trucks and paramedics, Steve was taken to Frankston Hospital, who sent him straight to the Alfred where an MRI showed he



Steve Barber and his ex-partner Deb, who is now one of his carers, in the self-contained unit built thanks to the support and generosity of the local community.

needed immediate surgery.

"I was told another five days and I would have been dead or a quadriplegic," he says.

Doctors told him he had an e-coli infection of his spinal cord that had spread to his spine, which had been exacerbated by arthritis drugs he was taking that lowered his immunity, as well as infection of his tooth and hand.

The surgery cut out the infection but – after being sent to Caulfield for rehabilitation – eight weeks later it returned and he was again operated on, this time with rods and screws inserted into his spine.

For about 11 months Steve was in rehab and hospital, including six weeks on drugs that included nuclear medicine, similar to chemotherapy.

Support

Given he suffered permanent paraplegia, nurses told him he would be unable to look after himself and he would need to live in a nursing home or shared accommodation.

That's when the Phillip Island community rallied in support.

Phil Dressing, the former manager of the Vietnam Veterans Museum, spoke with the owners of environmentally-friendly modular homes, EcoLiv in the Gurdies, then getting together with Steve's former boss at the CYC to kickstart the build.

Within a remarkable six weeks Steve had a new home, built in Cowes in front of the house Deb and her partner Ernie now live in.

Selling their carport and caravan, combined with GoFundMe donations and a fundraiser at Phillip Island Lawn Bowls, they raised enough money to kick off Steve's self-contained unit.

EcoLiv then provided the designs and permits free of charge, Zane Mattock undertook the concreting, Neil McRae assisted with the footings and carpenter Craig Bennett "went above and beyond".

The surveyor discounted his fees, Tradelink supplied the kitchen sink and basin free of charge, PKB provided tiles at cost, Wonthaggi Flooring provided a discount on the lino, Capeview Joinery also provided a discounted and purpose designed kitchen cabinetry, and Noel Burrell of DTM Communications set up the specialist electrics.

Plasters, painters, tilers all pitched in.

Other businesses contributed at varying degrees including Beaumont Building Design, Talum Windows, Bowens and Always Cool Air Conditioning.

Steve and Deb's son, a plumber, completed all the plumbing work while their son-in-law, a sparkie, completed the electrics.

"12 months on I just want to thank everybody who got me here. My life would be very different without that. "I'm always thankful for that."

Recovery

Steve now has a rotating shift of five carers including Deb, who works 30 hours a week, including being on call through the night.

Deb and Ernie have been by Steve's side throughout, with Deb admitting she has even been traumatised by the process.

"I find I question everyone. I won't take a straight answer, especially from doctors.

"I worry all the time."

She says time with the grandkids is most difficult.

"We would always surf, go to the beach, bike ride with them but now Steve can't do that. He goes to the skatepark and watches them and we go bowling – Steve has a special ball – and he watches them at Clip 'n Climb."

Steve says since moving in a year ago he has completed all his initial goals.

"I wanted to cook, get back down to the bowls club, do my own shopping and play with the grandkids and I've done all that.

"So now my next set of goals is to lose weight, get upper body strength and be able to get on to a slide board so I can transfer to a car. At the moment I rely on Maxi Cabs and they cost \$63 one way to Wonthaggi and that's with a discount.

"So ultimately I could get a car with a modified steering wheel."

Steve would also like to work so if anyone in the community can offer him any roles that would involve upper body work, he'd love to hear from them.

"I think because I had the stroke and at that time had depression, it made me stronger.

"I have my good days and really, really good days and every now and then a bad day and I want to be left alone.

"But I've come out of this positive. I'm upbeat."

Marine pest risk greater from Port Phillip than overseas

The risk of introducing marine pests from a proposed hydrogen project in Western Port is low, according to a Marine Species Report, commissioned by the company in charge of the project.

However, the marine pest study failed to investigate the key species concern, the Northern Pacific Seastar.

The report instead found the key biosecurity risk for Western Port was the introduction of marine pests from Port Phillip and other regional ports, due to their high numbers of pests, as well as frequent recreational vessel movements, short sailing distances, and similar water quality and temperature.

Last January a world-first ship, the 116-metre brand new Suiso Frontier, was in the bay to transport volatile liquid hydrogen for the half-billion-dollar trial project being carried out on the bay.

The Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain Pilot Project (HESC) is the largest hydrogen demonstration project in the world, with Latrobe Valley brown coal turned into hydrogen gas, transported to the Port of Hastings, liquefied, cooled to minus 253C, then shipped to Japan.

At the time Westernport and Peninsula Protection Council said the trial would put the bay at "immedi-

ate risk" from the introduction of marine pests, especially the Northern Pacific Seastar.

Kawasaki Heavy Industries then commissioned the study to assess the risk of introducing marine pests from the Suiso Frontier.

"There is currently a small number of introduced marine species in Western Port, though far higher numbers occur in nearby Port Phillip," the report states.

"The introduction of exotic marine species is therefore of understandable concern to project partners, and the local community."

Seastar?

The study investigated 14 target species including wakame or Asian kelp, European fan worm and titan barnacle via ballast water and biofouling.

But because a treatment system on the Suiso Frontier sterilises ballast water in a similar way to drinking water treatment – so live larvae are not transported – crabs and seastars were not targeted by the study.

The study made assessments before and after the vessel's arrival at buoys, navigation marks and wharfs, with divers taking underwater photography, video, and scrape samplings.

The results showed biofouling



According to a report, the key biosecurity risk for Western Port is not from this ship the Suiso Frontier, but the introduction of marine pests from Port Phillip and other regional ports, due to their high numbers of pests, as well as frequent recreational vessel movements, short sailing distances, and similar water quality and temperature.

was "more challenging" to manage than ballast water "due to the wide variety of ship surfaces that may be colonised".

However, the report found the biofouling risk was low because the ship uses antifouling coatings and it travelled through tropical water that "would cause significant heat stress to biofouling organisms, re-

ducing their viability".

Safety

A report into a "serious incident" onboard the Suiso Frontier last January is yet to be released.

According to the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) after the Suiso Frontier took on its flammable LH2 load at Hastings it

caught fire.

An investigation into the fire was due to be completed before the end of last year but will now be released in the first quarter of 2023.

According to the marine pest report the pilot phase of the HESC demonstrated hydrogen can be safely produced from coal and transported in liquid form by ship from the Port of Hastings to the Port of Kobe in Japan.

The next phase of the HESC will be to analyse the pilot phase and determine whether it is commercially viable.

The Westernport and Peninsula Protection Council said while the Suiso Frontier was small, future ships would be massive.

"If the hydrogen trial goes commercial, future ships will be very large, requiring catastrophic dredging in order to operate from the Port of Hastings," council spokesperson Karri Giles said.

President of the Phillip Island Conservation Society (PICS) Jeff Nottle said the more than one million tourists who visit Phillip Island each year "do not come to see an industrial waterway".

"Heavy industries and eco-tourism do not co-exist. Phillip Island recognises that the environment is our economy," he said.

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This exhibition was organised by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, in partnership with the National Gallery of Victoria.

Top left and background: **Jožef Tominc** *Man in Ottoman dress* 1830–40 (detail), National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Purchased with funds donated by Luisa, Simona and Luca Valmorbida in memory of Carlo Valmorbida, 2010; Centre: **Alexander McQueen** *Look 30* (detail), from the *Dante* collection, autumn–winter 1996–97. Photo © Robert Fairer © Alexander McQueen. Model: Kristen McMenamy; Bottom: **Alexander McQueen** *Look 15* (detail), from the *Horn of Plenty* collection, autumn–winter 2009–10. Photo © Robert Fairer © Alexander McQueen. Model: Kamila Filipcikova

Paula's aiming for the superstars

Growing up, Paula Wasiak doesn't remember ever seeing a female scientist.

In fact, the Senior Research Officer at Phillip Island Nature Parks didn't even have science on her radar when she was at school.

It was her careers advisor that suggested she might want to look at a science degree.

Not quite an accidental scientist – Paula had done well at biology and always had a passion for wildlife – she's now on a mission to inspire more women and girls to make a career in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) ... and she's about to become a Superstar of STEM.

The Superstars of STEM program supported by the Australian government and run by Science and Technology Australia, is out to smash gender assumptions about who can work in STEM.

Created in 2017, it aims to create visible role models for girls and non-binary people to inspire them to take up roles in STEM.

Being visible means stepping into the media spotlight and getting yourself on television or radio, presenting at schools, and using social media avenues to promote the work you do.

As the saying goes "You can't be what you can't see" ... and by being seen, the STEM Superstars will hopefully inspire girls and non-binary kids to take up the challenge.

Each year, 60 people are selected to take part in the Superstars of STEM program, and in 2023, Paula Wasiak joins them, one of 14 Victorian women selected.

Fighting life-threatening superbugs, firing x-rays at nanomaterials, restoring seaweed forests, building robots and exploring the universe and beyond are just some of the projects of the Victorian participants.

And alongside this impressive line-up, "investigating the secret life of penguins to protect them and our environment", is penguin expert Paula.

Paula says she is still processing the fact that she's been accepted and is in awe of the amazing cohort she'll be working with.

The impetus to apply for the course – an application process that involved a written pitch, questionnaire, head shots from work in the field and an online interview – came from a current Superstar.

"I did a couple of TV shows with Dr Ann Jones, and after the first one, South Ocean Live, someone currently in the Superstars program contacted me, said they loved how I appeared on screen and that I should definitely go for it," Paula explained.

With support from the Nature Parks, Paula put in her application and is now set to become a Superstar over the two-year course, which



Paula Wasiak with a five-week-old penguin chick she's about to weigh as part of monitoring program. Paula, a Senior Research Officer at PINP has been accepted into the Superstars of STEM program.

involves working with a mentor, attending workshops in different states, making school presentations and generating media appearances.

The self-confessed "nature nerd" loves her job and is passionate about penguins, and is keen to spread the word – to protect the penguins and encourage more women to work in science.

"They are amazing, tenacious creatures. I like to call them the clown of the animal kingdom, but they are so much more than that."

"I have a lot of respect for them as a species. I can see the funny side; I've been to the parade thousands of times and I still thoroughly enjoy it."

"They are small, but they're tough and I love them for it."

Much of Paula's work revolves around studying the local penguin population, including in set study sites within the Nature Parks.

Using technology allows Paula and the team to monitor the population without interfering with the penguins' routines.

As well as monitoring the penguin pairs in set burrows, the study site penguins are microchipped, so researchers can see which pair are in which burrow.

Sometimes Paula and the team also use GPS devices to track them as they head out to sea, monitoring how far the penguins go, how deep they're diving, the number of prey

encounters.

There are also three automated penguin monitoring systems or weigh bridges on major penguin pathways around the peninsula ("penguins are loyal to the pathways that they take each evening") and when they walk over the platforms, the microchips are scanned and weight is recorded.

"It's very important with our research now to get as much information as you can, but as hands off as you can, and employing technology to do that."

Paula hopes becoming a Superstar of STEM will help her become a better communicator and encourage other women to take up a career in science.

She also hopes to inspire people to take action on climate change, which Paula sees as the biggest issue the little penguins face.

"If people know more about the penguins, when they realise the depth to them and the importance of them ... people want to conserve what they love and understand."

"It's one thing do all this research, but it's not finished until you then communicate it down to the most basic level. If you're not communicating it down to the general public, what are you doing?"

Follow Paula on Twitter @PaulaWasiak and Instagram paula_wasiak



Cowes IGA was the third business broken into on Saturday, with thieves smashing the front door. After searching for cash, the men smashed computer screens and stole several slabs of beer.

Gang targets local supermarkets

from page 1

"Then they smashed all the computer screens in the office."

"The alarms were going the whole time. They weren't here for very long, probably 15 minutes at the most."

After checking all the registers for cash, thieves then made off with several slabs of beer.

CCTV footage of the incident has been handed to the police.

Konney said the only serious damage was to the front door and the computer screens.

"We feel very lucky. It could have been so much worse."

Konney and her husband Paul worked through the early hours of the morning cleaning up the glass, and the store was open for customers as normal on Sunday morning.

San Remo

Before attacking the Cowes store, the gang broke into the San Remo IGA on Marine Parade.

Again, they used a sledgehammer to break through the front door and appeared to be looking for cash.

"They checked all the tills and damaged the till drawers," said owner Matt Synan.

"They didn't get into the office and didn't get any cash, so out of frustration they started damaging things."

Matt said several glass doors on fridges and bottles of alcohol were smashed.

They took some vodka cruisers with them when they left.

Again, the 10 men were captured on CCTV and the footage handed to the police.

"We have full footage and some of them look quite young," Matt said.

Like Konney, Matt said the outcome could have been worse.

"I'm glad it wasn't a house they targeted. No one was injured, no one was traumatised."

"We can repair anything that was

damaged," he said.

"We will simply tighten our security measures. Unfortunately, it's part of being in business these days."

Matt and his staff cleaned up the store and had the glass door repaired, so it was business as usual for customers the next day.

He stressed the gang was not from the area, and that the locals were "incredibly supportive" of the business.

Both owners think the gang targeted IGA rather than major supermarkets as they were unlikely to have staff working through the night.

"The bigger supermarkets have night-fill, so they're open later and could have someone inside filling shelves," Konney said.

Acting Senior Sergeant Scott Morison agreed the lack of night-fill could have been a reason the smaller supermarkets were hit.

He said independent supermarkets, particularly in smaller towns, were often the target of this kind of raid, although he said it was unusual to see something like this in Bass Coast at this time of year.

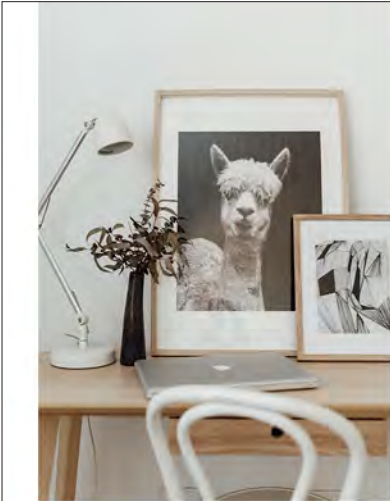
He said local police responded to the incident, which is now being investigated by Bass Coast Crime Investigation Unit, in conjunction with the Southern Metro Crime Team.

Cowes still has a 24/7 service and officers at San Remo were on duty until after 3am on Saturday night.

Acting Snr Sgt Morison described the night as a particularly busy one for the local teams, with call outs including an accident at Woolamai where a vehicle rolled, public order issues in Cowes, an incident at the carnival site and complaints about noisy parties.

"There is plenty going on this time of year," he said.

"And the Australia Day weekend will be a significant one for us, both on the ground and on the water."



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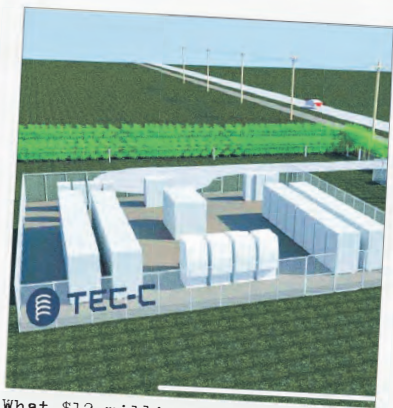
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Our annual summer quiz



What \$12 million project has been built near Wimbledon Heights on Gap Road? See question 2 for answers.



Question 4 is about a study into roadkill on Phillip Island.



It was a world first when this ship came into the bay in 2022. See question 5.



Question 11 is about Seal Rocks' SealSpotter Challenge.



For decades PICAL was based in Church Street, Cowes (question 15).



A \$50 million new National Vietnam Veterans Museum will include exhibition areas, visitor spaces, café and offices (question 17).

1. A 24-hour cat curfew in the shire will start when?
2. What is PICES?
3. A new book called "A Field Guide to the Native Flora of Phillip Island" is set to be published in 2023. How many plants are indigenous or specific to Phillip Island?
4. A three-year study into wildlife deaths from vehicles on the Cowes-Rhyll Road concluded in 2022. How many roadkills were counted across how many species?
5. Why was the arrival of the ship, the Suiso Frontier, in Western Port last year so significant?
6. What new school opened in Bass Coast in 2022? And bonus points for naming all campuses.
7. Who named French Island?
8. What is the maximum speed limit on Phillip Island?
9. List true or false for each of the following: I can walk a dog on-leash in these areas: a) Scenic Estate b) Oswin Roberts Reserve c) Cowes west beach at McKenzie Road.
10. Name the first steam ferry to operate between Cowes and Hastings in 1872?
11. How many seals at Seal Rocks have been found in the SealSpotter Challenge?
12. Name the building company – operating in Bass Coast - that went into liquidation in 2022 and how much did they owe to locals?
13. The Bass Coast Shire's \$42.2 million Tracks and Trails Strategy, released in 2022, identified how many new trails could be built?
14. When did a school in Cowes first open?
15. The Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre (PICAL) was moved from its old premises in Church Street, Cowes, to where?
16. What happened to the latest iteration of the Cowes to Stony Point car ferry?
17. A new National Vietnam Veterans Museum is planned for Newhaven. How much did the state government commit to the project in 2022?
18. How much did the new upgrade of the Rhyll ramp cost?
19. Who is the Federal member for Monash, which includes Phillip Island and San Remo?
20. What was Cowes named before it was so named?



What was Cowes named before it was Cowes? (question 20).

1. The curfew will come into effect from July 1, 2023. The curfew means cats must be kept on their owner's property at all times. It is part of a plan to see Phillip Island free from feral cats, as uncontained domestic cats can contribute to the feral cat population. Domestic cats can contract diseases from feral cats such as the toxoplasmosis parasite, which can impact native animals. Bandicoots can die within two weeks of contracting it.

2. Phillip Island Community Energy Storage System (PICES) is a \$12 million, 10MWh lithium iron phosphate battery energy storage system, comprising of a series of units in a 38m x 34m fenced compound, connected to the electricity grid, on the north-east corner of 380 Back Beach Road – effectively 100 Gap Road.

3. Author Mitch Burrows says there are about 780 Phillip Island-specific plants but the non-profit guide will focus on about 250 of the most common, significant and threatened of the island's terrestrial and marine plants.

4. The three-year study found a total of 190 animals across 25 species were victims of roadkill on a 3.6km stretch of the road.

5. Starting in March 2021, the Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain Pilot Project (HESCC) is 80km. At the end of 2021, Regional Roads Victoria rolled out new speed limits across the island. About 10 roads previously zoned 100km/h were reduced to 80km, including Berrys Road. About 10 roads previously zoned 100km/h were reduced to 80km, including Berrys Road. About 10 roads previously zoned 100km/h were reduced to 80km, including Berrys Road.

6. Bass Coast College San Remo Campus opened at the start of the 2022 school year, a new years 7-9 campus of the former Wonthaggi (now Bass Coast) Secondary College. The school's existing sites are: the Dudley paddock, the former Wonthaggi Campus (year 7-9), the Wonthaggi Campus (year 10-12), formerly known as the McKenzie Senior Campus, and a fourth campus, the FLOW Campus, was established in 2020 after a year, however, due to lack of bus-ing. When it was then ordained education of children aged between six and 14 years was compulsory (as well as secular and free of charge), there was an increase in the number of local schools. The Cowes school was relocated to a new building the same year.

7. It was during a French scientific expedition led by Pierre Bernard Millius and Nicolas Baudin on Le Naturaliste that French Island was named by the French, Ile des Français. In a letter to the Governor of NSW, Baudin de-clared that this land belonged to the 'native capture thousands of photographs of seal colonies at Seal Rocks and with the help of conservationists via an online portal, these images are used to count seals, identify new pups and entangled seals.

8. The maximum speed limit on Phillip Island is 80km. At the end of 2021, Regional Roads Victoria rolled out new speed limits across the island. About 10 roads previously zoned 100km/h were reduced to 80km, including Berrys Road. About 10 roads previously zoned 100km/h were reduced to 80km, including Berrys Road.

9. I can walk a dog on-leash at Scenic Estate Beach, Ventnor Beach and Back Beach roads. Only Oswin Roberts has a total ban on dogs. Cowes west beach at McKenzie Road is a designated off-leash area where dogs must be put back on-leash within 50 metres of a dog.

10. The first steam ferry to operate between Cowes and Hastings was the 54-foot small paddle steamer Sarah, which provided a daily service in 1872 and also called at Griffiths Point twice a week. Sarah was withdrawn after a year, however, due to lack of bus-ing. When it was then ordained education of children aged between six and 14 years was compulsory (as well as secular and free of charge), there was an increase in the number of local schools. The Cowes school was relocated to a new building the same year.

11. How many seals at Seal Rocks have been found in the SealSpotter Challenge?

12. Name the building company – operating in Bass Coast - that went into liquidation in 2022 and how much did they owe to locals?

13. The Bass Coast Shire's \$42.2 million Tracks and Trails Strategy, released in 2022, identified 38 new trail opportunities to expand the existing network. According to the strategy, Phillip Island currently has 20 shared use trails (43.3km), eight walking trails and 102 beach access trails.

14. A school opened at Cowes in 1871 but only lasted one year because all schools closed owing to the end of government funding. When it was then ordained education of children aged between six and 14 years was compulsory (as well as secular and free of charge), there was an increase in the number of local schools. The Cowes school was relocated to a new building the same year.

15. The Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre (PICAL) was moved from its old premises to a new building the same year.

16. Bass Coast Shire pulled out of plans to lead an investigation into the proposed Warley Avenue in December.

17. The National Vietnam Veterans Museum received a \$10 million commitment from the Victorian government towards the new museum project. The \$50 million project will include a 4206sqm building with exhibition areas, visitor spaces, café and offices, ar-

18. The ramp upgrade cost \$4.5 million including the replacement of the three-lane boat ramp with new concrete panels for extension of the lanes deeper into the water – enabling all-tide access.

19. Russell Broadbent.

20. Cowes was formerly known as Mussel Rocks. It was surveyed in 1868 and renamed on the Isle of Wight, which Phillip Island bore a close likeness to in terms of its overall shape. The town of Ventnor on Phillip Island was also named after its namesake on the Isle of Wight.



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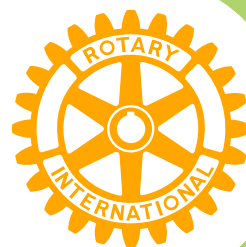
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Cruise control – two ships arrive last week

The cruise ships Seabourn Odyssey and the Oceania Regatta anchored off Phillip Island last week, with passengers taking the opportunity to come ashore and explore the island.

The Seabourn Odyssey arrived on January 8 with 291 passengers and 369 crew on board, while the Regatta, which arrived on January 10 was carrying 593 passengers and 400 crew.

Almost 600 passengers disembarked over the two days, with many heading off on pre-booked tours.

The tours included an Eco-cruise to Seal Rocks, visits to

the Penguin Parade and the Koala Conservation Centre and a Phillip Island highlights trip.

Across the two visits, 235 passengers booked tickets to the penguin parade, with the koalas proving to be the next most popular (125), followed by a boat trip to Seal Rocks (74).

Some intrepid visitors headed to French Island for a 4WD tour while two passengers booked in for a Cape Woolamai Sunset Wildlife hike and others took a kayaking tour around the Rhyll wetlands.

A spokesperson for Des-

tinuation Phillip Island (DPI) said the shuttle buses were kept busy and it appeared most passengers on the ships took up the opportunity to visit Phillip Island.

They said passengers on the Oceania Regatta were especially keen to come ashore and explore, after the ship missed its last two ports.

Close to 400 passengers disembarked on the day and joined different tours.

The next ship to arrive on the island is the Star Breeze on January 24, carrying 200 passengers.

The Seabourn Odyssey returns on February 4 and 9.



A local paddles out for a closer look at the Oceania Regatta when it visited Phillip Island on January 10. Photo: Katrina Lawrence.



One of Germany's finest ensembles, Chamber Philharmonia Cologne is performing in Cowes on Friday, January 20 at 8pm, at St John's Uniting Church.

The Chamber Philharmonia Cologne is coming to town

One of Germany's finest ensembles is performing in Cowes on Friday, January 20 at 8pm, at St John's Uniting Church in Cowes.

The diverse program ranges from Antonio Vivaldi and his famous "Four Seasons" to W.A. Mozart, C. Saint-Saens and Niccolò Paganini.

Tickets are available one hour prior to the concert at St John's Uniting Church (cash sales only).

After several successful European tours in 2019 and 2020 the Chamber Philharmonia Cologne (Germany) is coming back to Australia.

"Classical music around the world" is the motto of the ensemble.

"It is irrelevant for our musicians whether they are playing in a little village church, open air, in a cathedral, big theatre, in their hometown Cologne or in Sydney," said a group spokesperson.

"Their enthusiasm to bring music to the people's life stays the same every time."

"The objective is simple – we want to inspire as many people as possible through all generations to enjoy classical music."

The Chamber Philharmonia Cologne was founded in Cologne, a city which is known worldwide for its University of Music and high quality of cultural education and standing.

The Chamber Philharmonia Cologne feels at home all around the globe with regular tours to New Zealand, Australia, Spain, Great Britain, Ireland, and of course Germany.

Performing this Friday at St John's Uniting Church in Cowes, at 8pm. Tickets on sale (cash only) at the door from 7pm.

See slugs by the seashore

Fancy a day in the water while helping a good cause?

Then join in San Remo's annual sea slug census, on January 27 and 28.

Coastcare's Summer by the Sea program will include guided tours of San Remo's sea slug hot spot with marine scientists using a new guide, the Victorian Sea Slugs booklet.

Prizes will be on offer and all slugs found will be photographed and submitted to a statewide census.

Please bring: sturdy shoes, hat, sunscreen, clothes that can get dirty, and a waterproof camera if you have one. Booties or even gumboots are recommended.

Bookings are essential. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Please register for tickets for both children and accompanying adults.

Details: bit.ly/sscsanremo

Nudi community

Last year's census found 50 species of slugs in an area considered to be one of the most significant species-rich communities in Western Port, so precious it is protected by law.

Ventnor's Kade Mills, from the Victorian National Parks Association, said the 1.5km stretch of intertidal foreshore at San Remo – that juts out north into the channel like a triangle – is protected by the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, with 93 species of one slug species found there.

Sea slug, he said, was a poor choice of words. Nudibranchs – better known as nudis – are described by scientists as having some of the most fascinating shapes, colours and patterns of any animal.

"There is one species of nudi off San Remo that is a beautiful pink and is camouflaged because it is found on a pink sponge," Kade said.

"There is one green that eats seaweed and stores it on its back like solar panels, to provide energy."

"The slug count is like a treasure hunt. They are hard to find but the more you look for them



Commonly known as "nudis", the nudibranch is part of the sea slug family, and can be found off San Remo, one of the most significant species-rich communities in Western Port. Photo: Nick Shaw.

you get rewarded for your persistence."

Kade explained that while all nudis were sea slugs not all sea slugs were nudis.

"We tell people if they think it's a slug, take a picture just in case."

Kade said nudis were like "canaries in the coal mine" in that they have a short one-year life span and had very specific food requirements.

"It's like an orchid on land. Environmental conditions need to be met for them to exist. They're only found in patches in defined climate and soil."

"We don't know if the San Remo nudi population is the biggest or the best. There's so little we know about this species and that's why the count is so important, because it forms a baseline."

Kade, who is a professional diver, said he started the Victorian sea slug count in 2018, and the San Remo event was the first for this year, with further events planned in April, July and October.

"It helps collect information on the presence of slugs in different seasons."



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Tenth anniversary Phillip Island Surfing Teams Challenge

Surfing teams are gathering for a very special Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve 10th anniversary teams challenge on Saturday, January 21.

The competition was the brainchild of Geoff Owens, long-time island surfer and one of the founding members of the Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve Working Group a decade ago.

The contest is a favourite on the annual surfing calendar due to its unique format which showcases different surfing styles and ages and allows everyone to take part in the exciting competition.

"This year's event is extra special as surfers will become part of the rich history of Phillip Island's surfing story," said event organiser, Geoff Owens.

"This year marks 10 years since Victoria's only Surfing Reserve was established and sixty years since the Phillip Island Boardriders Club began.

"It is perfect that our event will kick off the Festival of Surfing because a big part of the Surfing Reserve is celebrating the sport's history and culture."

The comp format includes all ages and styles and is a whole lot of fun – but there is also sure to be some fierce-competition as teams strive to have their name at the top of the honour board and be handed the coveted Dave Fincher Memorial trophy that honours a true island legend.

Team 'Islanders', captained by Sandy Ryan, battled it out to win the trophy in 2022 and this year is shaping up to be another impressive display



Geoff Owens, Andy Neal and Danielle Bayliss from the National Surfing Reserve Committee are looking forward to welcoming everyone to the 10th Anniversary Surfing Teams Challenge on January 21.

of surfing styles with teams featuring the island and region's top surfing stars registered and ready to go.

Location

The event is scheduled for Cape Woolamai, although the final location will be determined by the swell on the day. One thing is for certain – the Surfing Teams Challenge will take to the waves at one of the four Phillip Island quality beaches that make up Victoria's only National Surfing Reserve.

The Reserve was launched in 2013 by surfing great Layne Beachley and is made up of four sites along Phil-

lip Island's coast: Cape Woolamai, Smiths Beach, Summerland and Cat Bay. The inaugural competition was held in 2014 and since then, the event has become a favourite on the surfing calendar because it reflects what surfing and the Reserve are all about – fun, family, community and great waves.

Once again, Phillip Island Nature Parks is presenting this popular surfing comp with strong support from Bass Coast Shire Council, Westernport Water, Phillip Island RSL, Newhaven College, Cape Kitchen, Ramada Resort, Rip Curl and Island Surfboards, among others.

With great prize money on offer

and awards in each category, there is also a list of other accolades including awards and amazing prizes for best unsponsored surfer, team spirit, best emerging surfer, outstanding performance and highest scoring wave.

"I can't believe it's been 10 years since the Reserve was established to share, respect and preserve the Island's world-class breaks and unique surfing culture," said Geoff.

"We are so happy and blown away that the Reserve and this comp are still going strong and that so many local businesses are supporting this event and helping us celebrate the surfing culture of the island.



"It is a community effort and provides a great boost for the young surfers of tomorrow – which is after all what the National Surfing Reserve is all about."

Along with the surfing action, there will be a Welcome to Country to begin the day at 8.30am, food truck, information and stalls.

The presentation at Phillip Island Boardriders Club (from 5.30pm) is also not to be missed with the bar open, complimentary snacks and the all-important presentations including the Dave Fincher Memorial trophy.

Music legend Simon Curphy will be performing with his band to offer a perfect end to another great day of surfing and surf culture on Phillip Island.

Teams can sign up via www.try-booking.com/events/landing/874198.

The committee will be at the Boardriders Club on Friday, January 20 from 5pm – 7pm, if anyone needs help with their registration or has questions about the competition.

For live updates throughout the day, follow on Facebook @PhillipIslandNSR, Instagram (phillipisland_nsr)

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Surfing Teams Challenge Honour Board

The following teams have their names on the Dave Fincher Memorial Trophy:

2014	Pirates Blue , Captained by John Mason
2015	Island Surfboards , Captained by Sandy Ryan
2016	Wave Pinchers , Captained by Walter Hiatt
2017	Archysurf , Captained by Luke Archibald
2018	Island Surfboards , Captained by Sandy Ryan
2019	Team Crushers , Captained by Nick Fostin
2020	Cancelled due to COVID 19
2021	Cancelled due to COVID 19
2022	Islanders , Captained by Sandy Ryan

PHILLIP ISLAND NATIONAL SURFING RESERVE

10TH ANNIVERSARY SURFING TEAMS CHALLENGE

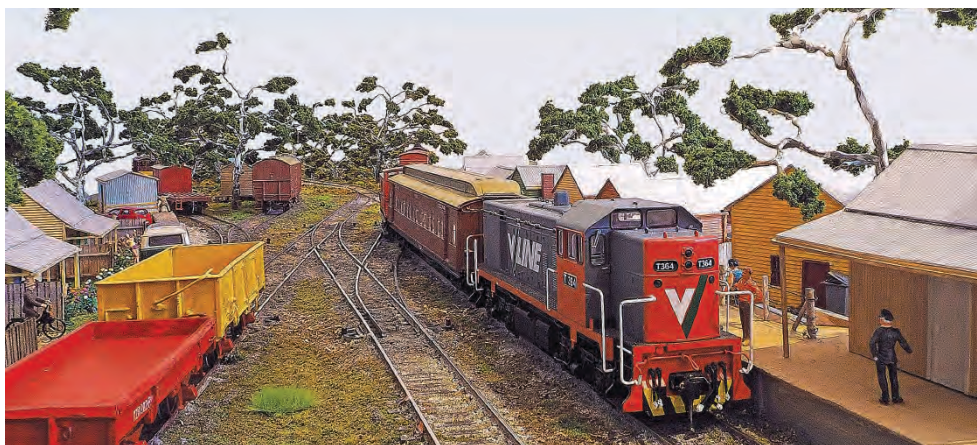
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The Phillip Island and District Railway Modellers annual exhibition is on January 21 and 22 at the Senior Citizens Hall in Lions Court, Cowes.

Model railway show

The Phillip Island and District Railway Modellers will be holding their annual exhibition on January 21 and 22 at the Senior Citizens Hall in Lions Court, Cowes.

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

There will be models large and small, old and new, simple and sophisticated. Some exhibits will delight the meticulous, while others should offer encouragement to those with two left thumbs. The important thing is to enjoy yourself.

There will be 13 exhibits with all but two having been constructed by club members.

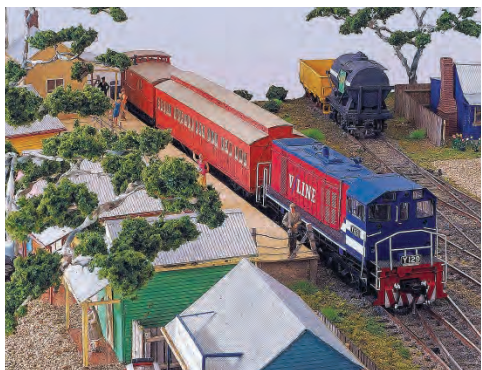
The ever-popular U-drive layout for the kids will feature Thomas and Percy. Whilst David will bring back fond memories of running a model railway on the dining room table with his vintage trains.

Prototypes modelled cover Australia, USA and the UK. Exhibits have been constructed in a range of scales ranging from very small to large.

The two visiting exhibits comprise a Victorian Railways shunting layout and a larger scale British narrow gauge railway.

New and second-hand models and accessories will be for sale to suit rank beginners and experts, the rich and the poor, and those of us who get along somewhere in the middle.

Whatever the weather, kids of all ages can look forward to enjoying time at the show. And please talk to the exhibitors; they never tire of talking to anyone who takes an interest.



There will be models to delight all ages on display, as well as models and accessories for sale. The exhibition is open from 10am – 5pm on Saturday and 10am – 4pm on Sunday.

The crew from the Seniors Club will be there on Saturday, to see if you can resist the smells and sounds of a sausage sizzle – so come hungry.

And in a first for the club, exhibition attendees will be able to choose from a hard copy exhibition guide or a digital version obtained via a QR code.

Further information can be obtained from Martin Murden on 0416 186 589.

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Model Trains

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Vale Jo Ablett

The Phillip Island community is mourning the loss of Jo Ablett on the weekend.

A psychotherapist who also taught at schools across the region, Jo was well-known and loved in the local community.

Jo grew up in Parkdale with parents Jeff and Netta Coote.

She graduated as a teacher at Victorian Teacher's College, then moved to Phillip Island permanently where she met and married David Ablett, raising their children Zac and Carly at their family home in Ventnor.

Jo taught at Bass Valley Primary School, Powlett River Primary School, Cowes Primary School, and was one of the first teachers in the infancy of Newhaven College.

Through her work with young people she found her calling as a psychotherapist.

She completed her Masters in Counselling and continued to work in the field with a focus on helping young people, specialising in expressive therapies. She expanded her work to include supervising and training therapists through her businesses, Into Blue Expressive Therapies and Super Vision, while counselling at San Remo Primary School.

She was also known as an artist, creator and avid gardener who brought colour and love to everyone around her.

Adored by many, she was an incredible woman who will be dearly missed by her immediate family and friends and the broader community of Phillip Island, San Remo and surrounds.



Jo Ablett was a teacher, psychotherapist, artist and avid gardener. She will be dearly missed by her immediate family and friends and the broader community of Phillip Island and San Remo.

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Rotary



Club of
Phillip Island &
San Remo

in conjunction with
Rhyll Community Association

Funding for endangered Fairy Tern seabirds

Phillip Island Nature Parks will embark on a \$200,000 conservation project to support the recovery of the Critically Endangered Fairy Tern seabird population around Phillip Island.

Nature Parks staff and volunteers will partner with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation to improve and expand suitable breeding habitats for Fairy Terns, and install a series of cameras to monitor the species and to better respond to feral cats and other threats such as storm surges.

The project has received funding from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning Nature Fund, which will complement co-investment from Phillip Island Nature Parks, the Penguin Foundation and Melbourne Water.

Nature Parks Environment Ranger Brandon Zerafa said the work would centre around the Fairy Tern's last known successful breeding site in Western Port and Port Phillip and will aim to secure a safe breeding site at Observation Point.

"The movement and breeding site selection of the Fairy Tern population is highly variable, and most breeding attempts fail," Mr Zerafa said.

"Since 2016, the only successful breeding in the Western Port and Port Phillip area was at our Observation Point on Phillip Island in 2019/20 when 31 Fairy Tern pairs fledged 49 chicks."

Since then, there has been no successful breeding of Fairy Terns due to a number of factors including pest animals, weed infestation and human disturbance.

"It is our hope that this project will ensure the long-term breeding success of this critically endangered species."

The Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation will work with Nature Parks and BirdLife Australia to undertake weed removal,



Phillip Island Nature Parks will embark on a \$200,000 conservation project to support the recovery of the Critically Endangered Fairy Tern seabird population around Phillip Island.

revegetation and participate in Fairy Tern monitoring on Country.

"The Fairy Tern is critically endangered in Victoria and its population has drastically declined in recent decades," said Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation Land and Environment Manager, Shani Blyth.

"The Bunurong Land Council Environment team is looking forward to partnering on this important project to help secure Observation Point as a safe haven for the Fairy Terns."

The Fairy Tern project is one of 16 projects across the state to improve outcomes for the state's most threatened species.

Other projects supported by the latest Nature Fund announcement include habitat improvements for critically endangered Major Mitchell's cockatoos in Wyperfeld National Park and restoring habitat for the endangered Central Victorian ant-blue butterfly.

For more information go to www.environment.vic.gov.au/nature-fund



The highly acclaimed Melbourne Djembe Creative Dance and Drumming Company will be performing at the Rhyll Hall and Park, at a special "Gathering of Neighbours" to celebrate our national day on January 26, presented by the Rotary Club of Phillip Island and San Remo.

Arts on Australia Day

There will be a feast of visual and performing arts at Rhyll on Australia Day.

The highly acclaimed Melbourne Djembe Creative Dance and Drumming Company will be performing at the Rhyll Hall and Park on Thursday January 26.

The family-oriented event, according to Peter Buitenhuis, President of the Rotary Club of Phillip Island and San Remo, is a significant departure from the traditional Australia Day celebrations.

Peter said: "We understand that attitudes to this day vary and we hope that the event which has been dubbed a 'Gathering of Neighbours' can encourage us all to reflect on our shared history and show respect for all cultures bringing us together by acknowledging that we are all part of the story."

"The day will also include an array of food, fun and free activities for all the family including the highly entertaining circus playspace, live music, face painters for adults and children and of course a magnificent art show in the historical Rhyll Hall.

"It really will be a day with a focus on families and just getting together and having fun."

Melbourne's Djembe will also be holding workshops for those interested in learning drumming skills. "I have seen them perform and they are absolutely sensational," Peter said.

The Djembe (pronounced jem-beh) a symbol of West African culture, is one of the most versatile and widely played percussion instruments in the world.

The djembe drum is goblet-shaped instrument, traditionally carved from a single piece of African hardwood, covered with an animal skin as a drumhead and is played by using the hands and fingers.

The fun starts at 11am and goes until 3pm on Australia Day.

Artists exhibiting at the Rhyll Hall on Australia Day are all exceptionally talented and award-winning Phillip Island locals, whose work ranges from abstract to classic styles in various mediums.

Featured artists include: Carolyn Jane, David Taylor, Dianna Edwards, Ian Pascoe, Jan Taylor, Jenny Jackson, Jill Rogers, Joy Brentwood, Lois Green, Marilyn Forrest and Tom Tyrrell.

Australia Day at Rhyll – something for everyone, starting at 11am at the Rhyll Mechanics Institute Hall and Park on Thursday January 26. / Sponsored article /



EVs & Solar

A Community Event

PRESENTED BY TOTALLY RENEWABLE PHILLIP ISLAND (TRPI) & RHYLL TWILIGHT COMMUNITY MARKET

Friday January 20th, 4-7pm
Rhyll Twilight Market

4-7pm Displays by local accredited solar businesses

INFORMATION SESSIONS, RHYLL HALL

5pm ALL ABOUT EVs' – Bryce Gatton, EV transition consultant and EV writer/commentator

6pm Council's plan to develop shire-wide Ev Charging network – Christian Slattery – Climate Emergency Project Officer

6.15pm Panel Q&As – Bryce Gatton, Christian Slattery, John Lovell and Sarah Disher

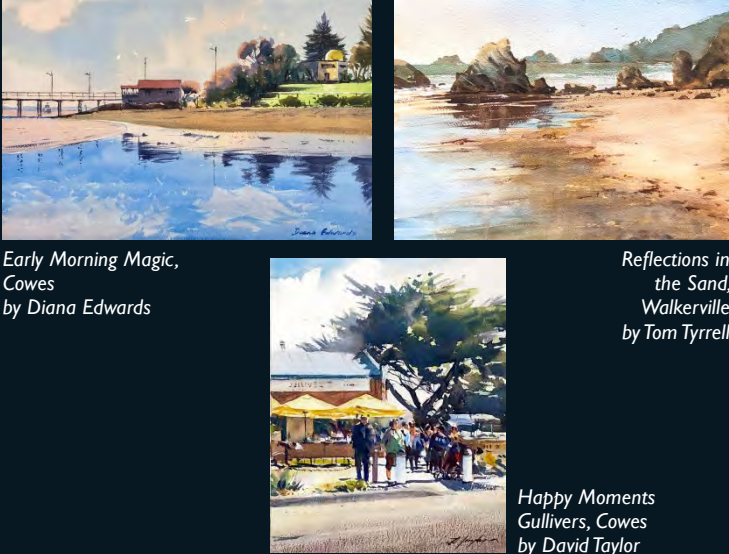
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More information contact Mary Whelan 0408 055 867





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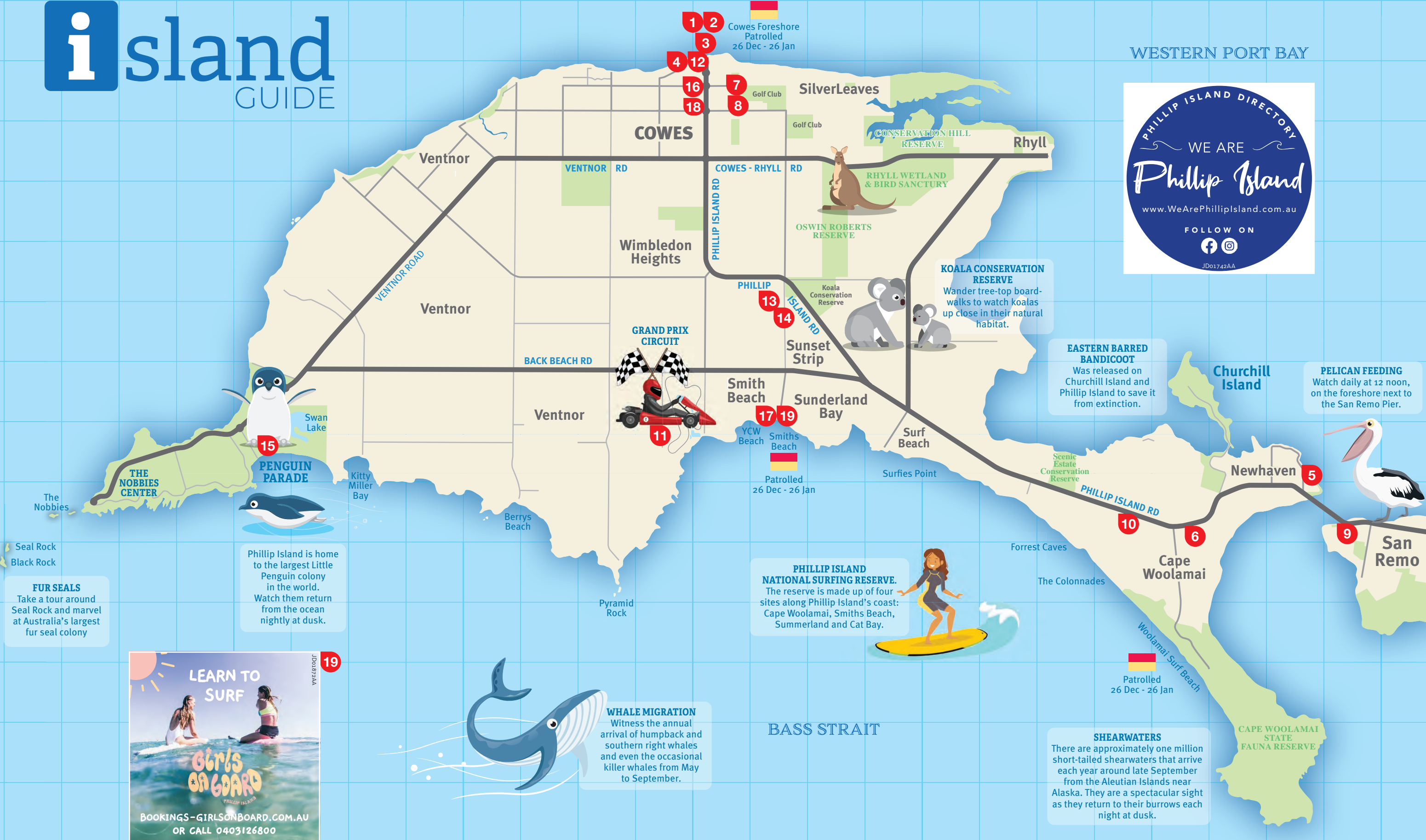
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i island GUIDE





Polished timber floors, high ceilings and extensive use of glass to the north and south accentuate the bright inviting ambience through the spacious open plan living and dining room.

Breathtaking location with spectacular views

An absolutely breathtaking location directly above one of the island's most spectacular surf breaks affords this unique clifftop property with spectacular uninterrupted views of Berrys Beach and surrounding headlands. Idyllically situated within the natural environment, a haven for local fauna and birdlife and surrounded by approximately 2.5 acres (8361sqm) of coastal inspired landscaped gardens with your own mod grass tennis court, this sensational contemporary coastal retreat has been brilliantly designed to provide ocean views from every room. Polished timber floors, high ceilings and extensive use of glass to the north and south

accentuate the bright inviting ambience through the spacious open plan living and dining room with open fireplace and a well-equipped kitchen. Sliding doors open to expansive decks on both sides offering sheltered year-round outdoor entertaining options. Three bedrooms with BIRs and two bathrooms includes master with stunning ensuite featuring a deep relaxing bath overlooking the ocean. Features include electric heating, laundry, outdoor shower, double garage, storage and ornamental lake. Call Alex Scott & Staff today on 5952 2633 to arrange a private inspection, you will not be disappointed!



Sliding doors open to expansive decks on both sides offering sheltered year-round outdoor entertaining options.



Property prices are booming in San Remo, according to the latest data released by Proptrack, which put the village in the Top 10 growth areas in the state.

San Remo in Top 10

New data reveals the top towns with the strongest growth, with San Remo coming in at number four. Proptrack has identified strongest percentage growth in median house prices between November 2017 and November 2022. In Victoria San Remo had the fourth biggest increase at 116 per cent just behind Angelsea and Somers but ahead of the likes of Port Fairy, Point Lonsdale, Barwon Heads, Blairgowrie and Torquay. Garth Lisle Property Consultants is extremely proud of the influence they have had in achieving this magnificent growth. See the table for Top 10 in Victoria.

VICTORIA TOP 10			
	Nov 17 median	Nov 22 median	Growth
Bright 3741	\$485,000	\$1,250,000	158%
Angelsea 3230	\$745,000	\$1,692,500	127%
Somers 3927	\$820,000	\$1,837,500	124%
San Remo 3925	\$497,000	\$1,075,000	116%
Port Fairy 3284	\$487,500	\$1,575,000	115%
Trentham 3458	\$509,000	\$1,080,000	112%
Point Lonsdale 3225	\$765,000	\$1,575,000	106%
Barwon Heads 3227	\$900,000	\$1,800,000	100%
Blairgowrie 3942	\$855,000	\$1,700,000	99%
Torquay 3228	\$720,000	\$1,375,000	91%



San Remo has recorded the fourth highest median property value increase in Victoria between November 2017 and November 22.



8 Verdino Terrace San Remo
Price: \$800,000 - \$850,000
Titled Vacant Allotment – Size: 1116m²
Adjacent to the beautiful Penniwells linear Park providing direct access to the beach via the walking path, this sizeable 1116m² allotment is uniquely appealing allowing for more than one dwelling (STCA)



1 Breeze Court San Remo
Price: \$1,000,000
Titled Vacant allotment – Size: 1585m²
Enjoying an elevated northerly aspect and Westernport Bay views and within a seaside stroll along the pathway to the shopping village; with local schools and kindergarten nearby plus magnificent beaches, this premium allotment could be the blank canvas to make your sea change dream a reality.



Lot 13 Cappella Court San Remo
Price: \$799,000
Titled Vacant Allotment – Size: 969m²
Westernport Views is San Remo's latest boutique development offering magnificent unobstructed bay views. With an elevated position and northerly aspect Lot 13 (No.8 Cappella) is a sizeable 969m² allotment in a quieter court location allowing for more than one dwelling (STCA)

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Beachside and bay views

Located in a highly sought after position on Coronet Bay's beachside is this neatly presented dual level home. In under a minute, the beach access from Kowloon Crescent leads to a family friendly swimming beach.

The lower level comprises three bedrooms, spacious lounge area with split system air conditioning, a sleek renovated kitchen, bathroom and separate laundry.

The upper level offers a huge living space with wood heater that leads to a full-length deck facing Westernport Bay and French Island with water views.

Situated on a fully fenced 602sqm (approx.) parcel of land with a single garage and plenty of off-street parking, this is an ideal family-friendly home.

A local general store is nearby to cater for everyday requirements and Coronet Bay is also close to some great attractions such as Phillip Island and Bass Coast wineries.

This wonderful property is available for inspection by private appointment.

Address: 3 Kowloon Crescent, Coronet Bay
Contact: Stockdale & Leggo, Jaime Morris – 0408 367 310 or Camille Morris – 0417 181 961



Located in a highly sought after position on Coronet Bay's beachside is this neatly presented dual level home.

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Regional demand still strong

According to a new report from the Real Estate Institute of Victoria, ongoing demand for housing in regional areas holds the reins in Victoria's property market growth.

Alongside the usual peaks and troughs, in 2022 the Victorian property market experienced eight interest rate rises and a confluence of pressures from the rental market. Despite this, property in regional Victoria continues its strong performance.

The REIV's December Quarterly Median Report reveals that regional Victorian house prices grew 8.0 per cent over the year to \$610,000 while the annual median for Units and Apartments rose 6.5 per cent to \$425,000.

Although the house prices in Metropolitan Melbourne saw a 3.3 per cent drop in the annual median (to \$1,040,000), there are plenty of areas that continue to show value, with pockets of growth across the outer ring of the city.

Island snapshot

According to the report, prices for homes in Cowes peaked in the second quarter of 2022, with a median house sale price of \$852,000. The median currently sits at \$820,000, well above the regional median of \$610,000.

The median rental in Cowes is \$420, in line with regional Victoria.

The report records in Cape Woolamai, the median house price peaked in the third quarter of 2022 at \$830,000. It currently sits at \$810,000. Back in 2017, the median house sale price was just \$411,000.

The median house sale price has almost doubled since 2017.

It's unclear if the 3925 figures shown for Cape Woolamai actually also include San Remo and Newhaven, as there was no price breakdown provided for those two areas.

Surf Beach saw the median house sale price rise from \$430,000 in 2017 to \$840,000 in 2022, while at Ventnor the median price peaked at \$923,000 in the first quarter of 2022.

REIV President Andrew Meehan said the December data demonstrates good buying opportunities for Victorians and a resilient real estate market across the state.

"The drop we've seen in the median prices in Metro Melbourne must be seen in the context of the rapid price growth Victoria has recorded over the past two years", said Mr Meehan.



House prices across Phillip Island remain strong, with most areas recording median house sale prices well above the average for regional Victoria, according to the latest report from REIV.

"Property prices still remain higher than they were in December 2020 – the post-Covid real estate boom has placed Victorian property in a stronger position than ever before, a trend we continue to see across numerous suburbs in metro Melbourne and our regional areas".

"Now, as we enter the new year and the immigration levels return, we will no doubt see continuous demand in the market as Melbourne's population grows and investors see strong potential for growth in our state".

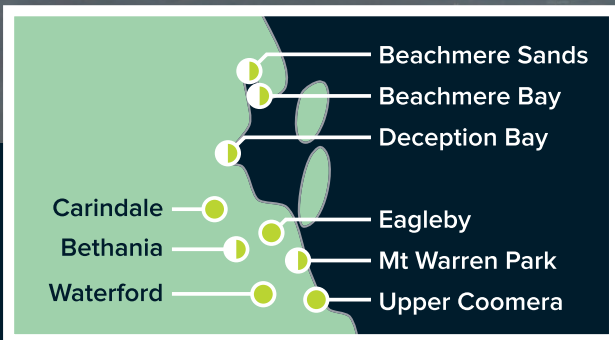
To see the data and insights for your area, visit reiv.com.au/market-insights#suburbsearch

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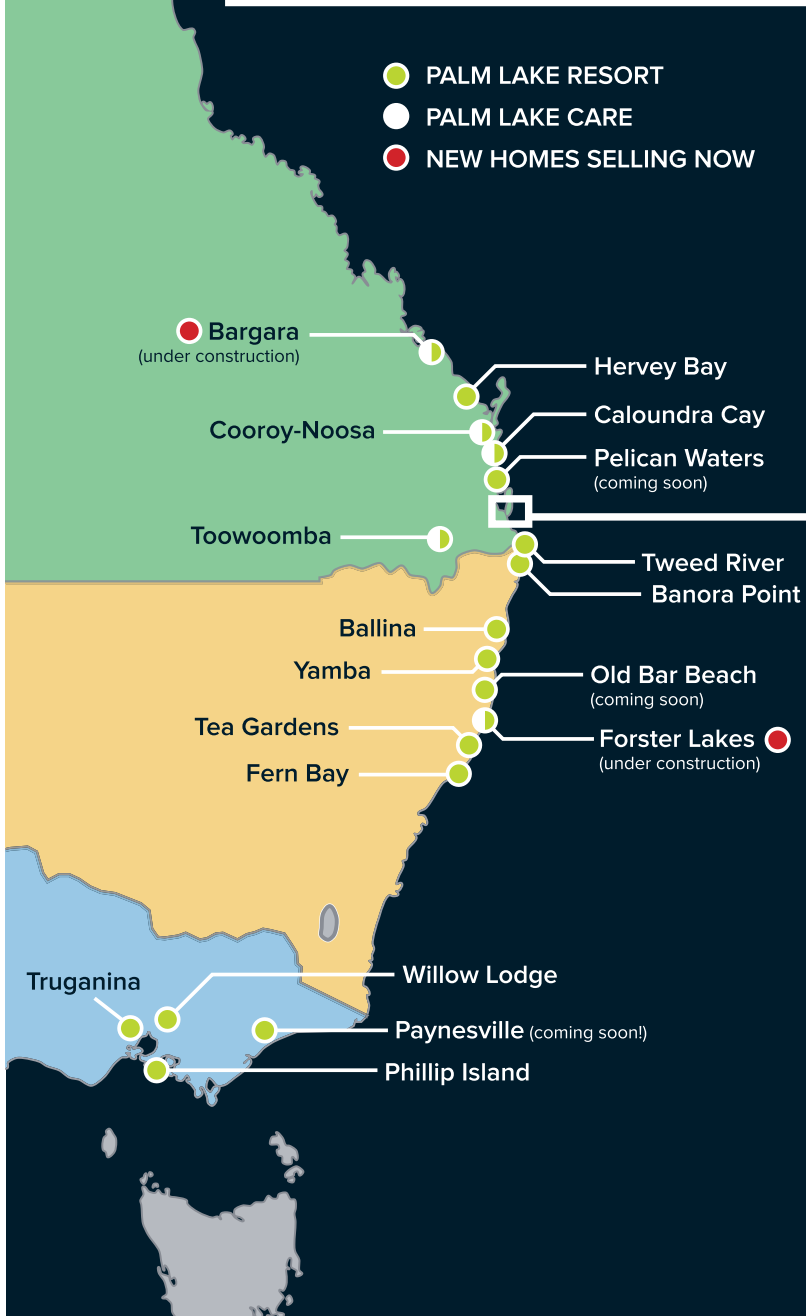


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Address: 13 Devon Ave, Cowes
Price: \$860,000 – \$910,000
Contact: Michael McLeod, 0412 712 034
Features: Three bedrooms, 2 bathrooms



Lifestyle and location – this perfect beach house is only metres from the beach.

More than meets the eye

Nestled in a quiet pocket of Rhyll and within easy walking distance to the water, boat ramp, park and eateries makes it the ideal location whether it's permanent or holiday living.

This home has had extensive renovation and extensions, and has been designed for easy living. The large open plan living area is the main feature of the house capturing all the natural light during the day.

Complete with four bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a second living area for additional family or guests. The house is perfect for entertaining family or friends with plenty of decking overlooking the rear yard.

Additional features:

- Miele electric wall oven and dishwasher
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- ducted range hood
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 - Reverse cycle A/C to living rooms and main bedroom
 - Large double garage with rear vehicle access
 - Well established garden and secure yard
- Address:** 29 Jansson Road, Rhyll
Price: \$1,150,000
Contact: Kendall O'Garey, 0410 595 130, First National Real Estate.
Features: Four bedrooms, 2 bathrooms.



This home has had extensive renovation and extensions, and has been designed for easy living. The large open plan living area is the main feature of the house.

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24 THE ADVERTISER, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2023

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10 GLAMIS ROAD, VENTNOR



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216 COWES-RHYLL ROAD, RHYLL



- Totally self-sufficient, 7-star energy rated home.
 - Set on 4.48ha (approx.) with sweeping views of Westernport Bay and French Island
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3 GLAMIS ROAD, VENTNOR



- Breathtaking location, directly above one of the Island's most spectacular surf breaks with uninterrupted views of Berry's Beach and surrounding headlands
 - Tennis court & ornamental lake situated on approx. 2.5 acres
 - 3 Beds/2 baths/2 cars
- EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

11 HOPE WAY, COWES



- Brand-new double storey home with large undercover alfresco area
 - Situated in the Shearwater Estate overlooking the Rhyll Wetlands
 - 3 Bedrooms/2 Bathrooms/2 Cars
- \$940,000 to \$960,000**

43 BATMAN STREET, SURF BEACH



- Located on The Esplanade at Surf Beach with superb ocean views from Cape Woolamai to Pyramid Rock
 - Massive 3 bay garage with entry to the home
 - 3 Bedrooms/1 Bathroom/4 Cars
- \$1,950,000 to 2,100,000**

25 HOPE WAY, COWES



- Situated in Shearwater Estate, a short walk to Cowes Golf Club & Silverleaves Beach
 - 6.0-star energy rated brick home
 - 4 bedrooms/2 bathrooms/2 cars
- \$960,000**

10 DUNVEGAN CRESCENT, SURF BEACH



- Historic homestead with amazing water and rural views
 - Set on an impressive 1956m² allotment with established gardens
 - 4 bed/2 bath/3 car
- \$2,000,000 to \$2,100,000**

92 RED ROCKS ROAD, COWES



- Picturesque rural and water views with a short stroll to Red Rocks Beach
 - Fully fenced rear yard with established gardens
 - 3 bedrooms/2 bathrooms
- \$890,000**

23 PHILLIP ISLAND ROAD, SUNDERLAND BAY



- Modern new home – just move in and enjoy
 - Double garage and full concrete driveway
 - 3 bedrooms/2 bathrooms/2 cars
- \$690,000**

349 COGHLAN ROAD, SILVERLEAVES



- Situated only 100m to the beautiful north facing Silverleaves beach
 - Large north facing open plan kitchen, dining & living area
 - 4 Beds/2 Baths/2 Cars
- \$1,400,000**

85 RIDGWAY ROAD, KILCUNDA



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57 GRAMPIAN BOULEVARD, COWES



- Situated in the Whitesands Estate with open plan living
 - Large alfresco area with Zip Trak café blinds and wood heater
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23 BOOBOOK GROVE, COWES



UNDER CONTRACT

25 BUNYA DRIVE, CAPE WOOLAMAI



- 780m² vacant allotment within prestigious Woolamai House Estate
 - Absolute beach frontage, only 100mt from Cape Woolamai safety beach
- \$1,100,000**

12 BARRY STREET, SUNDERLAND BAY



UNDER CONTRACT

21 GROSSARD POINT ROAD, VENTNOR



- Double storey with amazing water views
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This character filled residence is located in the heart of Tenby Point, a stone's throw away from the water. Situated on 1303sqm of land this property is a must inspect.

As you enter the driveway, you are greeted by the contemporary colour pallet of the home and will notice the beautifully maintained gardens which are ready to be enjoyed.

This immaculately presented home is newly painted internally and externally, featuring LED lighting throughout, dado timber paneling and solid timber floors - this home exudes warmth and charm.

The modern kitchen has everything you need, complete with Jarrah timber bench tops,

gas cooking, dishwasher and breakfast bar, this really is the heart of the home.

With all four bedrooms complete with built-ins and ensuite to the master, this property has plenty of room for the whole family.

The main bathroom offers a spa and separate toilet for convenience. The internal laundry has access to the side of the home along with a linen cupboard and bench space for all your laundry needs.

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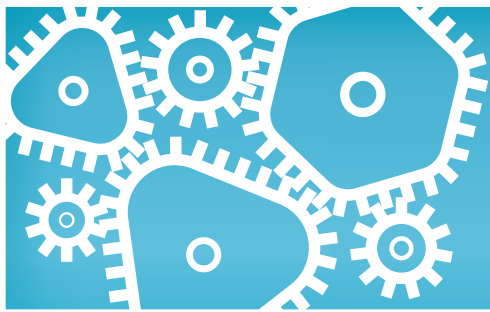
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Registered Nurse Carrie Grieve assists patient Mark Scott, who thinks the new ward is so wonderful that Bass Coast Health will have difficulty getting patients to leave.

"It's awesome. It's open, it's

Visitors to Kodowlinun Ward can access the ward by coming to main reception in the new hospital.

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PHILLIP ISLAND MARINE

Gold star for bright smiles

Staff, families and children at Phillip Island Early Learning Centre and San Remo Preschool are all smiles after receiving their Smiles 4 Miles award.

Smiles 4 Miles is an initiative of Dental Health Services Victoria and is implemented locally by Bass Coast Health.

The centres achieve the Smiles 4 Miles award by implementing healthy eating and oral health policies, engaging families about the importance of oral health and educating children through a variety of fun learning experiences based on the Smiles 4 Miles key messages – Drink well, Eat well and Clean well.

Tooth decay, an oral disease, affects half of all children and adolescents and is five times more prevalent than asthma.

The percentage of children in Bass Coast aged 0-5 attending public dental services who have at least one decayed, missing or filled tooth is 25 per cent. Chil-

dren with tooth decay and poor oral health can have trouble eating, sleeping, and paying attention at kindergarten.

“Phillip Island Early Learning Centre and San Remo Preschool are leading the way to help children form good oral health and healthy eating habits early,” Smiles 4 Miles Coordinator Beth Allan said.

“Children take lessons they learn at a young age with them, right up to adulthood. By promoting healthy habits early in life, together we can decrease the likelihood of poor oral health later in life”.

Educator Paige Kouts from Phillip Island Early Learning Centre was excited to see the service awarded.

“We know that good oral health is essential to overall health and wellbeing and it’s rewarding to achieve our award and know we’re teaching children these good habits early in life,” she said.



Paige Kouts (right) from Phillip Island Early Learning Centre receives the Smiles 4 Miles award from Coordinator Beth Allan.

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



Who's gonna save us? Take 5

Partly responding to the Bass Coast Shire's Communications and Engagement Review, the document implies feedback is encouraged. In practice, it's how the Shire tells us what they're doing. It asks for community feedback, by phone or email, but my experience is they take no notice.

Many of us are blacklisted, so emails are intercepted by a moderator, pending their discretion about forwarding to anybody. If received at all, replies are usually meaningless. The problem is true up to and including sending photos of things like a large branch, dropped from tree adjacent to kiddies' playground. Very dangerous, but after 10 days no action by the Shire.

The starting point might be for the shire to tell the truth. There is so much expertise devoted to disinformation.

Now Bass Coast outsources to consultants. For example, the "energy efficient" building, like PICAL, ignoring orientation site and building. Most windows should face north, to capture solar daylight and warmth. Where's the solar PV? Where's the double glazing? Where's space for 50 per cent growth by 2035? More false economy?

Bernie McComb, Cowes

Say No has no answers

A member of the Say No group visited Sunday, to gain my signature for the petition against the Surf Beach Sunderland Bay Roads and Drainage Improvement Scheme. She said it will cost me \$30,000 but was unable to provide any evidence.

I find it offensive how the group (who don't want to contribute to the cost of the legally established scheme under the Local Government Act) are misleading our community with their version of costs to scare us into signing their petition.

Given council has not voted on the preferred option, calculated the cost or provided this to rate payers – this scare tactic needs to be called

out!

Pioneer Bay ratepayers paid as little as \$14,000 (average \$18,000) for their roads, drainage and paths.

It can be paid over time and financial support is available for those who need it.

When asked about the dust that chokes our lungs, many of us can't go outside or open windows, flooding and potholes, she provided no solution and seemed indifferent to these impacts.

Her group is putting our community's health and wellbeing in jeopardy. When asked what guarantee they have Council would pay to address these issues if they stopped the scheme, she had no answer.

Council has clearly explained the scheme is the only permanent solution to stop the dust, fix the drainage and potholes. They won't be wasting tax-payers money implementing temporary spray seals again and simply move on to introduce it to Smiths Beach.

We will be left languishing, complaining about the dust, flooding and potholes just like Sunset Strip.

Their petition, in my opinion, is a marketing tactic to gain property owners' email addresses, to send their misinformation, creating a database of every house in our estate, noting who has signed and targeting houses that haven't.

They are asking people to contact neighbours, real estate agents and even pretend to be putting up a fence to gain our contact information, dubious tactics questionably in breach of the Privacy Act.

Council uses the legal process to engage with property owners. When presented with the petition, place it where it belongs, in the recycling bin.

Gavan O'Connor, Surf Beach

We're voting Yes

Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach are growing communities of modern homes that cater for permanent residents and holiday homeowners. We believe they should not have to tolerate substandard roads and a drainage system from a past era.

There is an increasing number of cars on our roads and the unmade roads require a high level of main-

tenance. In addition there are continual problems of dust, noise and safety. Modern residential areas require properly constructed roads, with appropriate calming arrangements and a well-designed drainage system.

Safety is a major issue with unmade roads with poor drainage arrangements. Residents use the roads for walking to the beach and for walking/jogging as exercise. This includes the elderly and family groups, often walking dogs on leads and pushing children in strollers. Bike riders have to negotiate the rough edges as they cope with passing cars. Some roads have large open drains on either side preventing access to nature strips, where they do exist, for walking. As a result residents and visitors are frequently required to walk on the roads.

The present drainage system does not cope with the seasonal rain and the drains are often full of water, weeds and rubbish. The drains are poorly constructed and maintained, are often unsightly and become breeding grounds for mosquitoes. The poor drainage system does not allow water to drain away from some properties which leave the yards as mini swamps. For a modern growing community the drainage system is completely inadequate.

We realise cost is a major factor for some residents but the Council has attempted to help with this matter. There is a need to balance cost against safety, dust, noise, traffic management and drainage requirements. It is inevitable that the road and drainage issue will need to be addressed and delaying the matter will only lead to higher costs in the future, which will be passed on to future generations.

Reg Elder and Cathie Roby, Surf Beach

Safety, seriously

Like many residents of Red Rocks and Ventnor, I'm deeply concerned by the spate of terrible traffic collisions (including the fatal incident on Christmas Day) at the intersection of Ventnor and Red Rocks roads.

Platitudes from authorities do nothing to heal broken hearts, or prevent future tragedies.

Far more effective would be a detailed assessment of this deadly intersection, followed by a serious safety upgrade.

Helen Brown, Red Rocks

Surf Beach dust up

I am one of the community members walking around the Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach estates informing people of Council's special charge scheme and seeking support to halt the current proposals put forward by Bass Coast Shire – that is the one size fits all approach and let's change a gorgeous seaside village into a concrete jungle that services the tourists rather than the residing community.

Speaking to ratepayers of Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach there is a consensus from both sides of the Special Charge Scheme discussion that Council is currently filling potholes created by the wet season and undertaking their usual tourist season superficial roads tidy up by putting down less than suitable aggregate.

Ratepayers have voiced their concerns regarding the quality of the aggregate, that the aggregate size is larger than used previously on our roads and that this aggregate appears to be producing more dust than previously.

It may be coincidence or fact, only suppliers and Council will know the truth, but the timing seems to suit Council as it tries to push through a scheme that clearly more than 51 per cent of the community are strongly and vocally against.

Again, we ask that Council meet with the Say No group to discuss a more suitable, environmentally friendly, water smart, cost effective solution to the dust and drainage issues for our community.

You can sign the Say No petition at the local bottle shop or coffee van at Surf Beach.

Susie Wickes, Surf Beach

Penalties for Barro Group

Australia's biggest concrete company is facing huge penalties before it starts sand extraction at

Grantville.

Victoria's Environment Protection Authority has cancelled Barro Group's licence to operate its Sunshine Landfill site at Kealba. Action against the company began in October 2022 after many complaints. The EPA said Barro Group failed to meet compliance issues required under its licence. Bass Coast residents are concerned that the company will show equal contempt for its permit conditions at Grantville.

Charges issued alleging non-compliance with the General Environment Duty have a maximum penalty of \$1.8 million for the company and \$360,000 for each director.

Barro Group has a sand extraction permit on a site adjoining Bass River in McGrady Road, Grantville. Neighbouring landholders, Anne and Philip Westwood have advised Bass Coast Shire Council that they believe the company has already breached its permit conditions but the Shire has taken no action.

Phil Westwood, Grantville

Wrong way-go back

Referring to the front page of last week's Advertiser (January 11).

Points of compass/navigation/directions are all no go zones for me, but having said that, I'm 99.9 per cent sure that if I'm driving from The Esplanade towards Chapel Street, I would be heading south not north. Lots of visitors here atm ... don't want them confused.

Bronwyn Raeck, Cowes

Stop the circus

Stop the circus that is circulating regarding Vote No for the Surf Beach Sunderland Bay Special Charge Scheme.

When submissions to rate payers have been sent, then that is the time to vote and I assume one vote per household ... As it stands now, the "No" enthusiasts are banging on doors and asking people to sign their names to have the scheme dropped. On scrutiny you will find more signatures than rate payers! Please take this seriously, it's far too important for the games that are being acted out. Let's be adults here.

Judith Doyle, Smiths Beach

Sharks set up the season

A Grade

The A grade travelled over to Scorpion Park for a grand final rematch in a must win round 10 clash. Losing the toss in stifling conditions, the Sharks were made to field.

Marcus and Charith opened the bowling in a new combination and were stingy with the new ball on a ground conducive to runs.

Whilst not getting any wickets the game was still in balance, as the heat started to take effect. Simon was introduced into the attack and struck immediately.

Another partnership was building until Charith ragged one to take the stumps of the Town captain which saw the Scorpions 2/98.

At the 30 over mark the game was slipping away from the Island boys as Leongatha Town were 2/138 with 10 overs to go, before a great catch by Eli off the bowling of Kirton saw the league's most damaging bat on his way and a big sigh of relief for the Sharks.

From there we were able to put the clamps on the scoring whilst also getting some wickets.

Some clinical death bowling from Baxter who finished with 2/40 and Silky who finished with 3/19 from his eight overs, saw Town finish on a very chaseable 173.

A new look batting order saw the Sharks off to a flyer, with TK (24 off 15) taking a liking to the new ball.

With his departure the score was 40 off 7 overs and we were well in front of the game. It also brought debutant Tom Blackwell to the crease, who was looking solid until copping the yorker of the year from the Town quick.

Jarrold Black fell shortly after for a well-made

26 after a great job behind the stumps earlier.

These wickets brought in-form Silky to the crease alongside out of form captain Mock. With the game in the balance it was an important partnership for the Sharks.

After a slow but steady start, the partnership started to blossom and runs started to flow as the pair hit the Town attack to all parts, in a run-a-ball 94 run partnership and all but sealed the game.

Silk was dismissed for a well-made 56. Shortly after the boys got over the line with seven overs remaining, with Mocky finishing with a well-made but overdue 53 not out.

A great win by the Sharks which will help set up the rest of their season.

Man of the match was Shiran Ratnaik 3/19 and 56.

A2 Cricket

Looking to lock in a top 4 spot the A2 cricket team took on bottom placed Glen Alvie in a one-day fixture at Cowes.

Skipper Clint Wilson won the toss and decided to field, hoping to dismiss the opposition early and avoiding the heat.

Things started well for the Island with a terrible mix up from the Alvie openers handing us a run-out for an early wicket.

From there Alvie skipper Harris was making the most of the lighting quick outfield, picking up boundaries regularly off our openers Tom Niven and George McCausland.

With the score 1/65 off 12 overs, Wilson brought himself and Tim Niven into the attack with immediate success, Tim having Harris out

to a great catch by George McCausland for 40.

With the breakthrough, Clint brought Heath Womersley on at his end, Heath getting a wicket via a good catch by his dad Dave at mid-on.

With the score 3/83 off 20 and the heat rising, we were keen to knock over the Alvie middle quickly and Tim Niven pulled off a brilliant direct hit run out from side on to get a wicket. When Dave Womersley got his own wicket next over, Glen Alvie were in strife at 6/103 with 15 overs still to go.

For the remainder of their innings Glen Alvie just occupied the crease as the temperature really started to rise in the middle.

All bowlers did a great job as we restricted them to a final tally of 148 off 40 overs.

Dave Womersley 1/12/4 was tidy and Heath Womersley 1/13/6 bowled a great spell unchanged, Skipper Wilson finishing with the miserly figures of 1/11/8.

Daniel Bourke opened with Kurt Lane with the latter keen to unleash his big hitting and get the chase over quickly.

After a couple of tight overs Kurt found his range and quickly got to 25 before Bourkey decided he wanted to bat with someone else, hitting a ball so close to the bowler and running that Kurt was run out by half the pitch.

Luckily Kurt took it really well, so Bourkey didn't feel too bad!

Sarath Angelo joined Bourkey, and the pair really started to take full toll on some loose bowling by Glen Alvie, Gelo in particular hitting a massive six to go with his seven boundaries on his way to a run-a-ball 43, his wicket ending a 77-run partnership and we were 2/108

off 18 overs.

Dave Womersley was in next, and he was happy to rotate the strike as Bourkey really started to find his groove, playing some beautiful strokes including two delightful drives for six.

As we neared the victory tally, Bourkey was trapped in front LBW for a fantastic 57, Kohen Beaumont joining Dave to tick off the last four runs as we passed the required total with 14 overs still to go.

The victory puts us two games clear in second spot with a huge away game against third placed Wonthaggi this week, a win in that game could sew up a top two spot and a home final.

RSL man of the Match was Daniel Bourkey.

PHILLIP ISLAND
3-151
D. BOURKE
D. ANGLO
K. LANE

GLEN ALVIE
7-148
C. WILSON
D. WOMERSLEY
H. WOMERSLEY

A2 GRADE

PHILLIP ISLAND v GLEN ALVIE
SATURDAY JANUARY 14
COWES RECREATION RESERVE

PHILLIP ISLAND
6-172
M. MARCO
D. DUNGAN
D. CAFFERI

WONTHAGGI
60
T. NIVEN
G. MCCAUSLAND
N. WILLIAMS

UNDER 17'S

PHILLIP ISLAND v WONTHAGGI
SATURDAY JANUARY 7 & 14
COWES RECREATION RESERVE

PHILLIP ISLAND
6-96
J. WILLIAMS
A. WILLIAMS

KORUMBURRA WHITE
8-62
DR. FUSINATO
J. WILLIAMS
A. WILLIAMS

UNDER 15'S

PHILLIP ISLAND v KORUMBURRA WHITE
SATURDAY JANUARY 7 & 14
NEWHAVEN RECREATION RESERVE

PHILLIP ISLAND
6-199
B. ROSS
T. ASHURUMUI
T. HORNBY

WONTHAGGI
8-194
T. ALLAN
D. MCCAUSLAND
C. PIFANO

B2 GRADE

PHILLIP ISLAND v WONTHAGGI
SATURDAY JANUARY 14
NEWHAVEN RECREATION RESERVE



Novice champion

Congratulations to Lynne Thomas from Phillip Island Bowls Club being Strzelecki South Novice Champions winning against Cheryl Floyd from Corinella 21 - 10. A great game to watch and both players bowled like seasoned bowlers. It was commented after the game that the quality these two ladies displayed it was hard to believe they were novices. Well done!

Bridge results

The new partnership of Ann Hodgson and Caroline Shaw got off to a good start, winning the day on 69.63 per cent.

In second place were Deb Anglim and Greg Nicholson on 61.48 per cent. Shirley Stewart and Bron Sund finished third on 55.19 per cent.

On Wednesday, January 11, there were only two and a half tables, so it was agreed to have fun and play social bridge, so no results to report.

Thursday social bridge will recommence on Thursday, January 26.

It is an opportunity to practice play, share knowledge, and support new players.

To ensure there are sufficient numbers please register attendance with Wendy Mckergow on 0459 200 265.

Midweek bowls

The game was held at Lang Lang Bowls club and was another great day for our family of bowlers.

30 of our team turned up at Lang Lang for this week's challenge, and what a challenge it was, I have never seen so many drawn matches ever before.

The weather was a bit on the warm side with most of our players heading for the shade between shots.

The green was in excellent condition, but it was still a bit tricky for quite a few players.

A few wrong bias shots added to our RCH tin which is always good.

And, as usual, quite a bit of friendly banter between players as well as quite a bit of laughter across all rinks.

Winners today on 35 points were Peter McWilliams / Lindsay Russell (Co-Skips), Joy Brown (2) and Runners up on 30 points were Michael Dady (S), Laurie Bell (3), Frank D'Unienville (2) and Wayne Stevens (L).

Shirley Corcoran (L).

Runners up on 30 points were Michael Dady (S), Laurie Bell (3), Frank D'Unienville (2) and Wayne Stevens (L).

Best One Game winners were Mark Andreatta (S), Robyn Coulson (3), Chris Coulson (2)

and Bob Arnold (L).

It was great to see so many players who have been missing over the past few months turning up.

Also good to see Jan who came along to have a look even though she is recovering from a bad fall.

A big shout out to Marianne and Colin in the bar, Vern who cleared up the green after the match and Marianne again with Bev in the kitchen after the match.

Next week we will meet at Corinella for yet another great day of bowls.

So looking forward to seeing everyone on site by 10am to allow time to get the teams in order.

Meanwhile, have a great week and hoping everyone has a good win at this week's penant matches.



Winners today on 35 points were Peter McWilliams / Lindsay Russell (Co-Skips), Joy Brown (2) and Shirley Corcoran (L).



Runners up on 30 points were Michael Dady (S), Laurie Bell (3), Frank D'Unienville (2) and Wayne Stevens (L).



The first event of the Bass Coast Series, the Cape Aquathon, is on this week. It's followed by the San Remo Channel Challenge (pictured) on February 4, and Cowes Classic on February 18. Registrations are open online at www.basscoastseries.com.au.

Bass Coast Summer Series underway

The first event of the Bass Coast Series kicks off this weekend when 150 – 200 competitors hit the water at Cape Paterson for the Annual Cape Aquathon on Sunday, January 22 at 10am.

This is followed by the Channel Challenge, which takes place in San Remo on Saturday, February 4 at 11am. The Cowes Classic follows a fortnight later on Saturday February 18.

The Little Penguin Dash for 7 – 14-year-old competitors will also be held at Cowes on the morning of the Cowes Classic.

There are nearly 100 competitors already registered for the Cape Aquathon with many of those aiming to complete the trifecta of Aquathons held each summer in the Bass Coast Shire.

The Channel Challenge has 220 competitors

entered already. There is also \$3400 in prize-money to be awarded to the best competitors, Open and Local, in 16 categories for points awarded over the whole Bass Coast Series.

A reminder to all intending competitors that the Channel Challenge and Cowes Classic are only open to online entries.

The Channel Challenge Race Centre will be open for two shifts for competitors to collect their race packs – on the Friday evening between 5.30pm and 7.30pm when on the spot registrations will be taken and on Saturday morning from 8am – 10.30am when race packs will be available for online registered competitors.

Register for all events in the Bass Coast Series, and the Little Penguin Dash at www.basscoastseries.com.au



Hunter and Reece McRae celebrate with their Mum Natasha after getting big personal bests in their races.

Swimmers shine at Traralgon

While many holiday makers were enjoying a sleep-in throughout the region, 75 South Gippsland Bass swimmers headed off to Traralgon to compete in GSI 7 on January 2.

For many it was the chance to get back into race mode after the summer break, with the major meets the next two weekends for the more experienced members of the team.

For many of the juniors, it was a chance to have another swim and build up their experience and get back into race mode again.



Emily Croatto, Jedda Tagell and Eden Roberts were very pleased to have qualified for the State Sprints championships next weekend with impressive swims in the 50m freestyle.

There were an incredible number of Personal Bests (PBs) achieved on the day, with some swimmers not having raced competitively for six weeks.

Many of those PBs amongst the older squad members have meant that several swimmers will now be swimming next weekend competing in the State Sprints championships.

Several SGB swimmers were lucky enough to be part

of the D21 team where they received extra coaching to try and help them go that second or half a second faster that is needed to have them swim at Vic Countries in a fortnight.

Coach Dylan was pleased with their efforts.

"The months of training have paid off for the swim-

mers and those heading to competitions are looking fantastic in the water and we had some great times.

"I did love seeing our junior's swim. They are really going to have such fun swimming over the next few weeks at school competitions and upcoming Gippsland champs."

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Phillip Island Football Netball Club 2023 season is coming!!!

Senior player registration day Sunday 5th of February at 3pm. (D,C,B,A grades)

Registration and tryout games.

2023 Trials registration is now open for all junior teams. Register via the link below before 5:00pm Friday 3rd February.

Dates:
Sunday 5th February
Sunday 12th February

Important information:

- My Netball registration must be paid prior to trial
- Attendance at 1 trial session is compulsory for all age groups and teams. Attending 2 is even better!
- If numbers allow we will be entering second teams in the Leongatha & District Netball Association. This competition season aligns with WGFNC season, LDNA support teams from other local football leagues and importantly it is good to support our regional netball competitions.

Any queries regarding the 2023 season please contact Netball Operations directly on 0404 019 852.

PHILLIP ISLAND BULLDOGS
FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB



Lucas Chihotski, winner of the weekend's Junior Points competition, after steering a salmon from the water to weigh-in.



Helen Ismail had the biggest snapper of the weekend, weighing 1035 grams, and won the Senior Heaviest Weight competition prize.



Paul Goodwin conjured the best King George whiting of the weekend, worth 1708 points (610 grams), to win the Senior Points competition.

Angling Club fishing competition

The Rhyll-Phillip Island Angling Club (RPIAC) resumed their 2022/2023 angling competition, with the seventh competition for the season held over the weekend.

A preliminary forecast promised scorching heat and sunshine for Saturday with cooler and windier weather for Sunday.

Indeed, the forecast delivered great summer weather.

Considering a water temperature around 22 degrees and reports of monstrous King George whiting and ravenous snapper, anglers were poised for extraordinary feats.

The Rhyll boat ramp webcam confirmed that an early start meant a short stroll to the pontoons, whilst late-sleepers walked slightly further from the foreshore. A few large vessels used the recently upgraded facility as a private marina and recreational boaters struggled to find space and temporarily moor for launch and retrieval.

Thankfully the large vessels were gone by midday, and Rhyll's harmony was restored.

A total of 36 fish and four sharks were weighed-in at the RPIAC clubrooms within the designated 4.30pm to 5.30pm weigh-in window for each day.

Russell Gallagher, the RPIAC weigh-in master, and Chris Leonardos, RPIAC Club Captain, were swift and focussed, ensuring all data was collected.

The range of eligible species included pinkie snapper, King George whiting, flat-head, salmon, and gummy sharks.

At the 5.30pm Sunday conclusion of weigh-in, the results were finalised, and the pace slowed to island-time.

Anglers and supporters gathered at the RPIAC clubrooms for the post-competition presentation and enjoyed a meal of Cafe Bazarre pizzas, complemented by salads, ice creams and slices.

A great deal of effort by volunteers, particularly Lorraine, Nikky, Jill, and Peter, made the whole weekend a great success.

The RPIAC's Extraordinary Catch Incentives for eligible species, caught by members on competition weekends, remain banked.

None of these \$1000 first-to-catch prizes have been claimed this season, although many are optimistic about catching an eligible species that equals or exceeds the nominated weight: King George whiting (1000 grams), snapper (10 kilograms), gummy shark (20 kilograms), mullet (25 kilograms) and kingfish (25 kilograms).

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

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

With holidays coming to a close for many, the Squidgie category, for anglers aged nine and under, was uncontested this weekend.

The Junior Weight competition was won by Lucas Chihotski who steered a salmon weighing 535 grams out of the water and into the weigh-in room.

The Junior competition welcomed Mitchell Smith, who reeled-in a King George whiting worth 1400 points (500 grams) to win the Junior Points prize.

With an abundance of pinkie snapper in Westernport the challenge was to find the biggest.

The Senior Heaviest Weight competitions were

won by Helen Ismail and Peter Cubeta, weighing in a pair of snapper of 1035 grams and 930 grams, respectively. King George whiting were the species that dominated in the Senior Points competitions.

Paul Goodwin conjured the best King George whiting of the weekend, worth 1708 points (610 grams), to win the Senior Male Points competition.

Female Club Champion Carriane Peatey took the Senior Female Points prize for a King George whiting worth 1218 points (435 grams).

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

Anglers were keen to bring their gummy sharks to weigh-in and the most impressive, caught by Mark Griffin, tipped the scales at 6280 grams to win the shark competition.

The Secret Weight prize was awarded to Tenille Preddice, closest to the secret weight with a 335 gram King George whiting (secret weight 346 grams).

The RPIAC clubroom is located adjacent to the Rhyll boat ramp and is open to members and visitors on Fridays (from 5pm) and competition weekends coinciding with weigh in.

The next angling competition will be held over the weekend of February 4 and 5.

There are still many opportunities to take part in the scheduled angling competitions and compete for weekend prizes and the club championships.

For further information about the club, events, competitions, and rules, please visit the website: www.rpiac.com



The Phillip Island Boardriders Club is celebrating 60 years of surfing this year, with a Festival of Surfing throughout January and February.

Boardriders celebrates its 60th

The Phillip Island Boardriders Club (PIBC), which started in 1963 is celebrating 60 years of surfing this year.

The celebration coincides with the Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve's 10th anniversary, since it was declared a National Surfing Reserve in 2013.

To mark the occasion, PIBC is hosting a Festival of Surfing throughout January and February showcasing surfing and its culture through events, competitions, displays, art, and live music.

With 14 surfing events and activities on offer, including state and local events, it is sure to appeal to all kinds of surfers of all ages and abilities.

"We are proud to present the Festival of Surfing with our partners Bass Coast Shire Council, Surfing Victoria, Surfers Rescue 24/7, Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve, Phillip Island Nature Parks, Island Surfboards, Girls on Board and the Disabled Surfers Association Bass Coast," Club President Hannah Eisen said.

"I invite the surfing community to come celebrate the sport that we all love and check out the awesome program of events on our website.

"With three generations of members actively involved in the club, we have tried to make sure there is something for everyone."

The Festival of Surfing program of events kicks off on January 21 with the National Surfing Reserve's 10th Annual Surfing Teams Challenge and concludes with the Cutback Festival and the Victorian Teams Titles on the last weekend in February.

During the Festival there is a range of activities on offer, including free Surfers Rescue and CPR courses, come and try surfing sessions with Island Surfboards, the popular Supergroms program supported by the Phillip Island RSL and the Disabled Surfers Association Bass Coast will be offering a surfing experience for people with a disability at Smiths Beach.

To bring the event to a close, the club is hosting the Cutback Festival, a community-focused, family-friendly music festival with local artists. It invites the surfing community to join them for an epic day of live music and good vibes to celebrate 60 years of the Phillip Island Boardriders Club.

The Cutback Festival's musical line-up includes bands 3 Humps and Ozone, as well as solo artists Steve Cousins, Felipe Baldomir, Cassandra Craddock, Nira Quinn and duo Dannielle Baylis and Jacquie Sterling.

A highlight during February is the Phillip Island Boardriders Club competing in the

Australian Boardriders Battle.

The club is representing Victoria for the fourth consecutive time in Newcastle where the team will surf against the country's best Boardriders Clubs, in Australia's biggest grassroots club event. Keep an eye on the club's socials for streaming details.

"Events like this Festival of Surfing are only possible with strong community supporters," said Hannah.

"I'd like to thank the following businesses who support the club year-round, including Bang Bang, Young Henrys, Archi Sign, Rip Curl, Eisen Property, McHenry Motors, Atoll Travel, Flock Surfboards and many more."

Program of events

January

21st: Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve's Teams Challenge

February

3rd: Festival Opening at Bang Bang with Vintage Surfboard Display

4th: Come and Try Surfing, book with Island Surfboards

4th-5th: Woolworths Victorian Junior Surfing Titles - Round 1

PIBC team representing at the Australian Boardriders Battle Newcastle

11th: Cat Bay Longboard Classic - hosted by PIBC

11th: Supergroms program at Smiths Beach

12th: Disabled Surfers Association Smiths Beach, volunteers needed

15th-16th: 24/7 Surfers Rescue Program, book online

18th: Twin Fin Specialty Event - PIBC

18th-19th: Indigenous High Performance Training Camp with Surfing Australia

25th: Victorian Open Round 3, Cutback Festival - at the Phillip Island Boardriders Clubhouse

26th: Victorian Teams Titles

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TIDE GUIDE

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

HIGH TIDE IS MARKED IN RED

WED 18 JAN	THU 19 JAN	FRI 20 JAN	SAT 21 JAN	SUN 22 JAN	MON 23 JAN	TUE 24 JAN
LOW 2:23 am 1.15 m	LOW 3:16 am 1.28 m	LOW 4:20 am 1.39 m	HIGH 12:20 am 2.71 m	HIGH 1:31 am 2.82 m	HIGH 2:39 am 2.93 m	HIGH 3:38 am 3.03 m
HIGH 8:33 am 2.59 m	HIGH 9:18 am 2.51 m	HIGH 10:17 am 2.44 m	LOW 5:35 am 1.44 m	LOW 6:57 am 1.39 m	LOW 8:11 am 1.25 m	LOW 9:15 am 1.05 m
LOW 2:44 pm 0.52 m	LOW 3:34 pm 0.48 m	LOW 4:36 pm 0.46 m	HIGH 11:30 am 2.39 m	HIGH 12:51 pm 2.42 m	HIGH 2:10 pm 2.50 m	HIGH 3:22 pm 2.62 m
HIGH 10:00 pm 2.60 m	HIGH 11:07 pm 2.64 m		LOW 5:49 pm 0.43 m	LOW 7:06 pm 0.38 m	LOW 8:15 pm 0.32 m	LOW 9:17 pm 0.30 m

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Claudia Croatto placed third and is with her proud coach Caiden after receiving her award.



Rec Brocklesby celebrates second place in backstroke.



Olivia Holmes, with one of her two second place medals.

SGB sprints to success at championship

Standing on the same starting blocks where their idols stood just over a month ago, 49 South Gippsland Bass (SGB) swimmers competed in the 2023 Victorian Sprints Championship.

All events are 50m and in age groups, with SGB having swimmers competing in all categories, swimming against the best of all of Victoria.

Only swimmers who had qualifying times were able to compete, so competition was fierce. To have 11 swimmers make the finals is a superb effort for the club.

In a competition where the difference between 10th and 30th can be half a second, the SGB swimmers can hold their heads up high with their results.

Several swimmers made finals and many of the swimmers achieved PBs – an amazing effort given how frequently they have raced lately.

Coaches Dylan and Caiden were really impressed with the effort of the swimmers.

“Watching the swimmers’ progress throughout the season and have the success they have had over the weekend, with PBs or making finals has made me proud,” Dylan said.

“They have worked so hard, they are really seeing all their training and you can just see it paying off.”

Proud family watched on from the stands as swimmer after swimmer emerged from their race pleased to have qualified, to have done their best and most with PBs.

The SGB team: Rebecca Barclay, Lillian Basset, Freya Berry, Billy Boyd, Maddy Boyd, Max Brocklesby, Rex Brocklesby, Claudia Croatto, Emily Croatto, Isabel Croatto, Tomei Dal Pozzo,



Warm up time at MSAC.

Ebony Donohue, Billy Fisher, Maggie Fisher, Cormac Flynn, Lachie Grimes, Kuga Heenan, Olivia Holmes, Joshua Hunt, Sienna Hunt, Holly Hurst, Kiannah Kranen, Mostyn Lumsden, Isabella Lynch, Rahni Matheson, Sienna Matheson, Taylah Matheson, Sophie McKenzie, Harper McRae, Hugh Munro, Skye Munro, Trinity O’Keefe, Lachlan Paterson, Cooper Quaife, Gypsy Quaife, Eden Roberts, Miah Roberts, Jade Ruffin, Jasmine Ruffin, Jemma Rump, William Simmons, Aidan Smyth, Archie Smyth, Archie Smyth, Lara Smyth, Jarrah Tagell, Jedda Tagell and Mason Wiggins.

Heats

Heats were held on Saturday, with the following swimmers returning Sunday to compete in finals.

Rex Brocklesby, 11yrs U 50m

Fly, 50m Back, 50m Free.

Claudia Croatto, 13yrs 50m Breast.

Tomei Dal Pozzo, 19yrs O 50m Back, 50m Breast.

Olivia Holmes, 13yrs 50m Fly, 50m Free, 50m Back.

Mostyn Lumsden, 15yrs 50m Fly.

Rahni Matheson, 14yrs 50m Breast.

Sienna Matheson, 16yrs 50m Breast.

Sophie McKenzie, 18yrs 50m Butterfly, 50m Breast, 50m Free.

Miah Roberts, 13yrs 50m Back.

Archie Smyth, 11yrs U 50m Fly.

Will Simmons 13yrs 50m Free-style.

There was no rest for swim families, with over 70 of the swimmers heading to Wangaratta for the weekend to compete in the Countries Long Course event where SGB hopes to finish in the top 4 again for regional based teams.

Finals results

Pretty impressive effort given this is the best for each age group for the whole state!

Rex Brocklesby, 11yrs U 50m Fly 5th, 50m Back 2nd, 50m Free 7th.

Claudia Croatto, 13yrs 50m Breast 3rd.

Tomei Dal Pozzo, 19yrs O 50m Back 5th, 50m Breast 5th.

Olivia Holmes, 13yrs 50m Fly 4th, 50m Free 2nd, 50m Back 2nd.

Mostyn Lumsden, 15yrs 50m Fly 4th.

Rahni Matheson, 14yrs 50m Breast 6th.

Sienna Matheson, 16yrs 50m Breast 10th.

Sophie McKenzie, 18yrs 50m Butterfly, 5th, 50m Breast 1st, 50m Free 4th.

Miah Roberts, 13yrs 50m Back 9th.

Archie Smyth, 11yrs U 50m back 7th.

Will Simmons, 13yrs 50m Free 8th.



Olivia and Will celebrate making finals at the Victorian Sprints Championships.



Jasmine Ruffin enjoying the day.



Team manager Janelle and Katherine are all smiles with the swimmers’ success.

**ALEX SCOTT
AND STAFF**

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