



PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO

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A sucker for a good film

Marine biologist, author and filmmaker Sheree Marris is set to make a new documentary about Western Port, which she hopes will not only showcase the "magic" of the bay but will also become a community resource. The former Young Australian of the Year, who recently released a new book about octopuses, wants to hear from you, about your stories on the bay. See inside for details. Pic: Zoe Strapp

San Remo to double: new roads, shops, services needed

POPULATION GROWTH

San Remo is set for its biggest ever overhaul to make way for an almost doubling of the population.

The town's boundary is proposed to expand about 150 hectares east to Punch Bowl Rd, which will require vast infrastructure upgrades - including a new commercial area, new roads and an expansion to Marine Parade - with current services not able to "withstand" proposed growth.

The overhaul is detailed in Bass Coast Shire's newly re-

leased draft San Remo structure plan, which will guide planning to 2041. The draft plan is based on community consultation over the past two years and - with hundreds of pages of reading - is open for public consultation until April 28 through a survey, submissions or meetings: March 26 (Silverwater Resort, 6pm-7.30pm) or April 2 (Marine Pde, 2pm-6pm).

The plan states about 2000 new residents are expected in the next two decades, including in the growth east.

This will require a new "convenience centre" or commercial area east of Potters Hill Road

including medical and childcare centres and a new park.

The growth east - which will be detailed in the state government's Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL), expected to be released in April - will also require new roads.

It proposes a new east-west connector road to continue Shetland Heights Road from Potters Hill Road to Punch Bowl Road or the eastern settlement boundary, as well as a new north-south connector road to run south from Phillip Island Road, (at or around 425 Phillip Island Road).

As for the existing San Remo

township, the structure plan states:

- Marine Parade will be expanded and redeveloped, including building heights up to five storeys, while it is proposed the Recreation Reserve be redesigned;
- traffic will grow by more than 60 per cent to 2041, worsening if no interventions are made. It is recommended speeds reduce to 30km/h on all local streets;
- traffic lights may be installed at the intersection of Potters Hill Road and Phillip Island Road;
- a San Remo ambulance

service should be established, and Bass Coast College may be extended beyond Year 9;

- car parks may have new or more restricted time restrictions, parking detection technology will be introduced, and potentially commercial e-scooters and e-bikes; and
- San Remo currently has little to no vegetation on private land, and a lack of open space, with a proposal to boost wildlife corridors and plantings, as well as a continuous walking track along the southern coastline.

Continued page 10



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New emergency food relief opens

COMMUNITY

Emergency food relief will be available in San Remo one morning a week starting on Wednesday March 26.

Those experiencing food insecurity are welcome to come to St Augustine's Anglican Church Op Shop, 111 Marine Parade, every Wednesday from 10am to 1.30pm, for basic food items such as pasta, rice, long life milk and tinned goods.

Months in the planning, the project is the brainchild of two San Remo residents Samiro Douglas and Jane Ross.

"We aren't church members but, with the increasing cost of food and other bills, we thought it would be difficult for people in San Remo to access emergency food," they said, "so on one day a week, they won't have to leave town to seek such help."

"The church Op Shop area seemed the ideal setting."

The Anglican Parish of Bass/Phillip Island is the responsible body, while Samiro and Jane will act as volunteers.

The parish council has decided on a three-month trial and, depending on the need, may seek donations from the community and local businesses.

"Everyone we've spoken to in the last few months supports the idea. As the project is community-driven, we feel confident of its success," said Samiro and Jane.

Anglican Deacon the Reverend Erena Norfolk is pleased with the initiative.

"Sharing the Op Shop with emergency food relief is a wonderful way for the church to extend its service to the community," she said.

"As the coordinator of PICAL pantry in Cowes, I know there is a great need for food support throughout our communities."

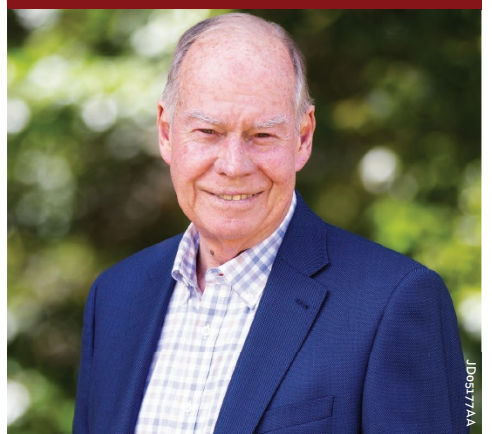
The Rector of the Anglican Parish of Bass/Phillip Island the Reverend Ruth Hanlon added, "I am thrilled that we can partner with community volunteers to offer emergency food relief through St Augustine's."

She said it ties in with a nationwide Anglican initiative called Hope25.



Emergency food relief volunteer Samiro Douglas (left) helps Anglican Deacon Erena Norfolk pack shelves with food ready for opening on Wednesday, March 26.

RUSSELL BROADBENT MP



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Authorised by Russell Broadbent MP, Independent Federal Member for Monash, 46c Albert St Warragul VIC 3820

CWA twilight market treats

COMMUNITY

Love a CWA sweet treat? Then mark in your diary CWA Phillip Island Twilight's next market stall.

On March 22, from 8.30am, there is a market stall and devonshire teas at the Market on Church, St Philip's on Thompson Ave, where there will be scones with jam and cream, tea and plunger coffee.

The stall will have baking and preserving: scones, cakes, sponges, yoyos, Anzac biscuits, and slices, jams and pickles.



On March 22, from 8.30am, the CWA will hold a market stall at the Market on Church, St Philip's on Thompson Ave, featuring all their famous baking and preserving goods.

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At last week's \$2.2 million state government funding announcement to a new privately operated long day care centre and kindergarten in Cowes are from left Jordan Crugnale MP with Cr Tracey Bell, D'Lene Johnson, Director of 5 Outcomes, with Steve Bright who is Excelcon director and the project builder.

\$2.2 million to new Cowes kindergarten

EDUCATION

A new and privately owned kindergarten, currently under construction in Cowes, has been granted \$2.2 million in state government funding, ahead of its planned opening next year.

The facility, which will offer long day care and kindergarten, is being built at 39 Dunsmore Road, opposite the Phillip Island Bowling Club, with the owners successfully applying to the state government for early learning grant monies to deliver the 66-place early learning facility. Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale MP announced the \$2.2 million grant last week.

Ms Crugnale said it would give children on Phillip Island easier access to kindergarten, offering programs for 3-5 year-olds and also long day care.

"Our community is growing and we're building on the strong foundation of early childhood education with new and expanded kinders across our community which ensures that our kids have the best start in life," Ms Crugnale said.

D'Lene Johnson, Director of 5 Outcomes, which is the name of the company behind the new venture, said the new centre would give families flexibility with a choice of days and longer hours per day and "provide a high-quality educational program, delivered by bachelor qualified teachers".

"We are thrilled to have received this grant to bring Phillip Island Kindergarten into the community and are really looking forward to becoming part of the Cowes community and supporting families in their children's education," D'Lene said.

Bass Coast Shire councillor Tracey Bell described the announcement as a fantastic outcome for the community.

"We are grateful to 5 Outcomes and the State Government for their partnership in delivering this much-needed service. Having this new kindergarten join the centralised enrolment system (CRES) will ensure local families have greater access to quality early education. We look forward to continuing our work with the State and Federal Governments to strengthen local education and training opportunities, supporting a skilled workforce for the future."

The state government is aiming to deliver 15 hours of three-year-old kindergarten each week by 2029 and up to 30 hours of pre-prep each week by 2036.

Businesses back Good Friday Appeal

FUNDRAISER

The Phillip Island Good Friday Appeal (GFA) have described an "awesome response" from community businesses after a permit has not been issued to rattle fundraising tins on Thompson Avenue.

"The wonderful community of Phillip Island has shown support and kindness towards the CFA in what is expected to be one of (our) most challenging years," said CFA volunteer Anne-Marie Branch.

Many businesses in Cowes and across the island have taken tins and organised events in support of the appeal to raise money for the Royal Children's Hospital and regional health services.

Last year on Phillip Island, the CFA "tin rattler" volunteers raised more than \$19,000 for the CFA.

However, this year, permits for the volunteer firefighters, who have been rattling tins on the Cowes main street for decades, did not come through.

Each year the CFA lodges a group application for dozens of permits for CFA tin rattlers across the state.

Many of these collecting stations in regional areas, such as Phillip Island, are held at roundabouts.

Although continuing for years without issue, the Victoria Police website states collections may only be conducted at intersections where lights control the flow of traffic. The Advertiser understands this year before lodging the permits, the CFA were alerted by Victoria Police that permits sought for areas that did not have traffic lights would be subject to increased scrutiny, and ultimately rejected.

As such, the CFA did not put forward permit applications for areas they understood would be rejected.

CFA

Simon Hartley of the Phillip Island CFA said his continued appeals to Victoria Police to be able to continue the long term practice had fallen on deaf ears, and he had not yet received any response from state headquarters.

Catherine Drazzi, a volunteer with the Phillip Island GFA, said the group were now for the first time actively chasing businesses for support, and the response had been "huge".

Hotel Phillip Island are donating one



Despite not having a permit to rattle tins on Thompson Avenue for the Good Friday Appeal this year, many local businesses have backed the CFA's efforts to raise money for the Royal Children's Hospital. CrossFit Phillip Island are holding an open community workout session on Good Friday at 9.30am for a gold coin donation. Other businesses also supporting are businesses in support are Hotel, The Store in Ventnor and Café Lugano.

dollar from every schooner of Jetty Road Pale Ale sold between March 11 and April 18.

On the Hotel window there is also a QR code which links donations to the Appeal.

"The Store in Ventnor was also one of the first to jump on board this year," Anne-Marie Branch said.

"They're hosting a number of community events from market days to art classes."

CrossFit Phillip Island are holding an open community workout session on Good Friday at 9.30am for a gold coin donation.

Other businesses such as Ember and Oak, Sweet n Sassy ice creamy, and Cafe Lugano have also stationed tins in their businesses.

"This kind of community spirit can truly make a difference for such a meaningful cause," Anne-Marie said.

The Phillip Island CFA also advises that the community can support them through social media: Good Friday Appeal Phillip Island and Instagram at: phillipisland_goodfridayappeal

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Get your copy of The Island

The autumn edition of The Island magazine, produced by the Phillip Island and San Remo Advertiser, is out this week. This award-winning magazine is currently being distributed across Phillip Island and San Remo.

The Island magazine celebrates the people and places of Phillip Island and San Remo and is available at your local newsagent, IGA, cafes, restaurants and stores, as well as from the Advertiser office at 60 Chapel Street in Cowes.

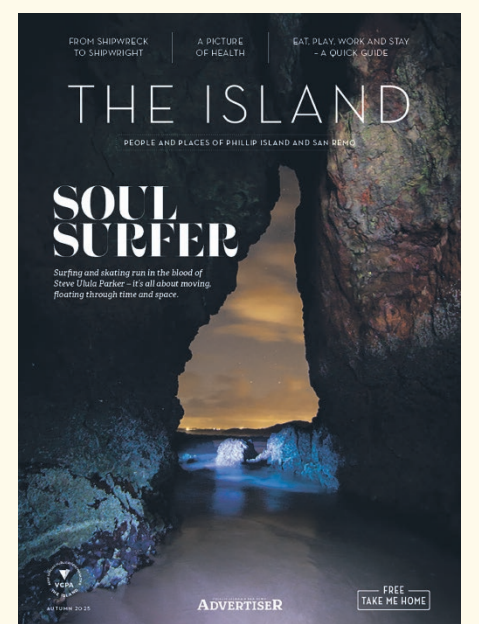
This is the 10th edition of The Island and once again, there's great stories of local people doing incredible things, plus the return of a former and much loved resident.

On the eve of his shows at Berninnet, Bryan Dawe talks of his move to Morocco and navigating his grief after the loss of John Clarke. Steve Ulula Parker shares his spiritual connection to the waves, while Mel Beynon shares her journey of health and mindfulness. Emily Hulbert is cycling across the globe and helping third world communities access clean water, and Rhys Uhlich returned home to a new direction, helping create affordable homes.

These are just some of the journeys

in the autumn edition of The Island, along with another delicious recipe, plus guides on where to eat, stay and play.

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“Fishing Nanna” saves stranded jetskiers

RESCUE

A San Remo resident and local fishing advocate has beaten the police airwing to a jet ski rescue in Western Port last week.

Amanda Keilar was headed up the Boys Home channel in Newhaven when she spotted a pair on a jet ski stuck on a mudflat.

The pair, a daughter and father-in-law, who had been staying at a caravan park in Cowes, had set out for a trip around the island before becoming stuck at low tide.

Neither had a phone to call for help, nor water or food, and had been stuck for around four hours before Amanda, the self-named “Fishing Nanna”, came to their

rescue.

“I got the binoculars, and sure enough there were two of them stuck out on a jet ski. The girl was on the back frantically waving,” Amanda said.

In the meantime, the pair’s family in Cowes had raised the alarm and reported them missing to the police - who responded with a boat and an airwing unit which arrived later just as the pair made it back to shore.

“The jet skiers obviously came flying around the corner and hit the mud and that was that,” Amanda said.

By the time Fishing Nanna got to them, the jet ski was taking on water, but luckily the pair were wearing lifejackets.

“She was quite traumatised and in shock (by the time we got her on the boat),” Amanda said of the woman.

“It just goes to show that you might think it’s a short little ride, but anything can happen.”

A Victoria Police spokesperson said Water Police regularly received reports of boats and jet skis stuck in low tide in the Westernport area.

“If you’re heading out for a day on the water, always ensure you have the correct safety equipment including a marine radio, lifejacket and torch.

“Always check weather conditions and let someone know where you’re going and when you expect to a return.”



Local fishing advocate Amanda Keilar last week saved two jet skiers stranded on a mud-flat at low-tide just off Newhaven. Victoria Police said responding to boats and jet skis at low tide in the Westernport area was a common occurrence.



Finn helping at the popcorn machine at the San Remo primary cinema night.



The San Remo community came together at Friday’s cinema event.



Members of the San Remo primary cinema night events team: Bree Lauren and Kat



Pat Caffery enjoying ice cream and popcorn at the Moonlight Cinema

San Remo’s inaugural film night

COMMUNITY

San Remo Primary School last Friday held its inaugural Moonlight Cinema.

The event brought families from across Phillip Island and San Remo for a night of outdoor movie magic beneath a full moon, with the school oval transformed

into a cosy outdoor theatre, with picnic rugs, beach chairs, and blankets. The evening, sponsored by Bass Coast Shire, included popcorn, and movie snacks.



Since 2019, the site adjacent to the San Remo IGA has remained seemingly dormant.

Movement on Waters Edge San Remo development

PLANNING

Building could commence “in the next few weeks” at the long-stalled Waters Edge development on Marine Parade in San Remo according to the developer.

Since 2019, the site adjacent to the San Remo IGA has remained seemingly dormant. Construction of the proposed four-storey, 22-apartment complex with four retail shops has been delayed for nearly six years due to a number of permit disputes, and COVID.

A permit renewed last year gave the development until February 7, 2026, to begin construction, with the permit expiring if the project is not then completed by February 2028 - although the developer can apply for a permit extension.

However the developer Arthur McKenzie said this week Waters

Edge now had the necessary capital backing and that “hopefully we’ll start setting up site sheds and everything in a few weeks”.

Mr McKenzie said he expected the build to take between 18 and 21 months.

“I’m just ordering steel and everything at the moment, and once we pay the insurance next week that’s when we can get on site,” Mr McKenzie said.

“Probably not next week, maybe the week after we’ll start on site.”

Mr McKenzie said once the insurance was paid, council would issue the permits in order to close the footpaths on either side of the development.

It is understood a large portion of the footpaths on both Marine Parade and the IGA carpark will be needed for the development works.

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New Western Port documentary set to start filming

ENVIRONMENT

Got a favourite slice of Western Port? Maybe you work or play on the bay, or perhaps have a rollicking yarn about the waterway?

Either way, Sheree Marris wants to hear from you. The marine biologist, author and filmmaker is set to make a new documentary about Western Port, which she hopes will not only showcase the “magic” of the bay but also become a community resource.

“I’ve already started talking to the San Remo Fisherman’s Co-op and so I want to get moving quickly,” said the 50-year-old, who grew up at Hastings.

“I want to get the most compelling footage and stories from fishers, divers, surfers, community groups, anyone who has a link to the bay.

“As we capture footage and gather stories from experts and locals, we’re keen to spark conversations around its ecological significance and the urgent need for conservation.”

Sheree, a former Young Australian of the Year, is currently producing a three-minute teaser for the documentary, which will be released mid-year, before working with scientists and launching full scale production for the 45-minute film for a 2026 release. Alongside she hopes to make available a resource library, to be used by the likes of schools and advocacy groups as a “call to action”.

“This project is set to unveil the hidden wonders of Western



Former Young Australian of the Year, Sheree Marris is making a documentary about Western Port and wants to hear from local lovers of the bay.

Port, one of Victoria’s most ecologically rich yet overlooked marine environments.

“Despite being home to vast intertidal mudflats, Australia’s southernmost mangroves and large reef systems built by tiny marine architects found nowhere else in the world, Western Port remains largely unknown and undervalued.

“If people don’t know what we have we can’t value and protect it.”

Eight years ago Sheree created a documentary Melbourne Down Under (melbournedownunder.com.au), which featured on Channel 10, with the “Western Port Down Under” project

set to be a similar format.

“Despite that it’s more ecologically significant and complex than Port Phillip, boasting three to four times the total number of species diversity - Western Port remains largely unknown and undervalued.

“Before Melbourne Down Under I wanted to do Western Port but it’s a harder sell. We are the poor cousin of Port Phillip.”

Marine

Sheree studied marine biology at Deakin University and has largely worked on her own projects in science communications, “bridging the gap between science and the public”, alongside experts



“Despite that it’s more ecologically significant and complex than Port Phillip, boasting three to four times the total number of species diversity - Western Port remains largely unknown and undervalued,” says Sheree.

from the likes of James Cook University.

She has written seven books, her most recent Octopuses - Underwater, about “the planet’s most extraordinary animals”, as well as KamaSEatra - Secrets of Sex in the Sea, about the unique reproductive methods of sea creatures.

She is a former Parks Victoria board member and regularly appears on television including Channel 10’s The Project and is a regular contributor to Ocean Geographic and Australian Geographic. For the Western Port documentary, Sheree will work alongside a team of experts including from the

Western Port Biosphere Foundation, as well as the Surfrider Foundation, drone operators, divers and cinematographers.

She will do much of the work pro bono, but is confident she will receive funding.

“I’ve got to figure out how best to showcase the bay because it can be difficult because of the big tides and visibility is not always great.

“But on the flip side it is an incredibly beautiful waterway. There’s magic in the mud and mangroves. It’s not somewhere that Shrek lives. I want to show the beauty.”

Details: <https://www.westernportdownunder.com.au/>

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Wallaby numbers on the Summerland Peninsula have grown by about 750 since the last census a decade ago, to 1227. Possum numbers on the Summerland Peninsula show a "highly abundant" 2.3 per hectare. Cape Barren geese numbers in the past year total 3120 geese, which is 354 more since the 2023 survey.

It's not just humans; wildlife also impacting the island

ENVIRONMENT

Populations of wallabies, possums and Cape Barren geese are increasing on Phillip Island and methods to stop their impact on the environment are largely failing, according to an update on Phillip Island's Wildlife Plan.

And the plan states geese egg management trials could start soon, while local traditional owners are successfully culling possums to create traditional possum skin cloaks.

The Wildlife Plan - originally released in 2021 by Phillip Island Nature Parks, Bass Coast Shire, farmers and the State Government - details measures aimed at balancing populations of Cape Barren geese, wallabies and possums.

The plan came in response to criticism in 2019 by farmers and other groups - such as the golf course, Grand Prix circuit and Newhaven College - where Cape Barren geese were "pooing and chewing" their way through the landscape; with residents and businesses also reporting significant damage from swamp wallabies and brushtail possums.

Now the third update of the wildlife plan has shown goose numbers in the past year total 3120 geese, which is 354 more since the 2023 survey.

Wallaby numbers on the Summerland Peninsula have grown by about 750 since the last census a decade ago, to 1227, "with densities increasing from two to three individuals per hectare".

Possum numbers on the Summerland Peninsula show a "highly abundant" 2.3 per hectare, suggesting they have spread to a wide range of habitats across the island, even open habitats without woodland.

Meanwhile a 12-month study on possum browsing on the health of eucalypts - using cameras to capture images - has revealed the majority of 16 swamp gums that had protective collars to exclude possums accessing the canopy enjoyed canopy growth. This compared to uncollared trees that remained open to possum browsing, "suggesting that mitigating possum browsing could help improve tree health".

On the Summerland Peninsula, the average survival rates of

unguarded trees were 1 per cent after 12 months, compared to survival rates of guarded plants averaging 44 per cent after 12 months.

"The findings emphasise the profound impact of browsing on conservation plantings and the importance of protective measures, such as exclusion coops or tree guards to safeguard new plantings from herbivore pressure."

Failures

The wildlife plan shows several proposed solutions to deter wildlife impacting the environment have failed.

For Cape Barren geese, the plan states investigations into the use of decoy crops to relieve grazing pressure on surrounding agriculture show "this would not be an effective strategy used on its own, but would be better suited as part of an integrated approach".

Also trials to evaluate commercially-available deterrents - including Sen-Tree and D-Ter - showed both products were ineffective at reducing the impacts of browsing from Cape Barren geese and wallabies.

"Several sites on Phillip Island have been exposed to high levels of browsing pressure leading to degradation of seabird habitat including erosion and collapse of burrows," the plan states.

Exclusion fencing to protect more than 6 hectares of eucalypt plantations on Phillip Island has "proven extremely effective at safeguarding koalas" against the impacts of possums and wallabies, with a "floppy top" overhang design and "hot-wires" to prevent possums from gaining access.

However, while "extremely effective at protecting vegetation, the high costs associated with fence construction may exclude this strategy from broader applications".

Successes

While the plan acknowledges setbacks, it also highlights successes, in particular the use of possum carcasses for Aboriginal cultural use.

The plan states possums are "harvested sustainably and humanely", and Bunurong Land Council will "continue to ac-

cess possums for cultural use by Bunurong community with the support of DEECA and Nature Parks".

A BLCAC representative said creating a possum skin cloak was not an easy task and required many skins in good condition, with skins tanned before being incorporated into cloaks and other uses "as part of a millennia long practice".

"Sourcing possum skins directly from Bunurong Country will restore cultural connections and traditions and over time, we hope to be able to integrate more traditional methods into the process."

The plan also proposes new trials of Cape Barren goose egg management, working between DEECA, Nature Parks and BLCAC.

While not being specific, the plan states a "mix of currently available control interventions using various combinations of culling and fertility reduction (management of eggs)", will be "effective in returning the population - and impacts on ecological and agricultural values - to sustainable levels, albeit over time".

"Models for an uncontrolled Cape Barren Goose metapopulation show that it would continue to increase.

"If trials were to proceed, engagement with our land holders and managers will commence."

The plan also still holds hope powerful owls on Phillip Island could be used to prey on possums, with a single owl preying on up to 300 possums each year.

To improve the resilience of the Little Penguin colony and other wildlife on the Summerland Peninsula against climate change-induced threats like bushfires and heatwaves, a range of projects have included: clearing of 5.5 hectares of firebreaks and the planting of 12,415 plants across 7 hectares, focusing on expanding tree canopy and shade coverage in penguin habitats.

The Gap Road wetland has had an additional 2000 plants across the 8-hectare site.

The plan is now three years into its five-year target, aiming to improve animal welfare, reduce the negative impacts of wildlife and maintain a viable agricultural industry



GPS tracking of six Cape Barren Geese from Phillip Island show they fly to places as varied as Yanakie, Tarwin Lower, Moe and Tyabb.

A wild goose chase

WILDLIFE

Phillip Island's Cape Barren geese population has been tracked flying as far as Wilsons Promontory, Moe and Lang Lang.

The third update of the Phillip Island Wildlife Plan explains a Melbourne University PhD project, which started in August last year, fitted 100 GPS loggers on to geese.

In addition, 22 geese have been tagged with plastic neck collars, and a total 200 will be attached this year.

Results showed some geese have travelled almost 100km from Rhyll to a reservoir near Morwell, while others reached Yanakie near Wilsons Promontory.

Most movements off Phillip Island occur along the Bass Coast, between Lang Lang and San Remo with six geese visiting French Island regularly.

One goose has been tracked visiting the Mornington Peninsula near Tyabb.

In addition, many geese have shown a preference for specific farmer's paddocks, often returning to the same locations on multiple occasions.

"Flocks on Summerland Peninsula and Fishers Wetland have dispersed and moved to paddocks off the island highlighting the significant dispersal during the non-breeding season, and suggesting that geese from Phillip Island are connecting with other regional populations," the report states.

According to the PhD candidate Vince Knowles little is known about the geese, especially on Phillip Island "where no formal study has been completed to understand their movements and behaviours on and off the island".

"Despite being very common on Phillip Island, CBG have a small total range confined to the islands off southern Australia," Vince told the Phillip Island Conservation Society recently.

"Therefore, it is vital to un-

derstand their basic ecology and biology so that the geese can be managed in a way that maintains a viable population, as well as minimising the effects they are currently having on agriculture and revegetation in conservation areas on Phillip Island."

The study will run from May 2024 to December 2027 and investigate their migratory and territorial behaviours, which will help clarify their seasonal use of breeding and feeding grounds.

The Wildlife Plan - originally released in 2021 by Phillip Island Nature Parks, Bass Coast Shire, farmers and the State Government - detailed measures aimed at balancing populations of Cape Barren geese, wallabies and possums.

Farmers

Victorian Farmers Federation Bass president Bill Cleeland has been on the working group since the wildlife plan's inception and acknowledged progress has been made.

"When we first started we could only get permits to scare and now we get permits (to cull) relatively quickly for a reasonable number," he said.

He said geese were nevertheless continuing to cause damage to pastures and cost money, with a flock of geese equivalent to a flock of sheep in terms of feed eaten.

"It costs us and other farmers thousands of dollars every year," he said.

Bill said geese populations had exploded since Phillip Island had become fox free, while wallabies and increasingly swamp hens were also causing damage to pastures and tree plantations.

"Geese and swamp hens also cause problems when they poo in water troughs as they carry bacteria that can impact lambs and calves.

"Whereas wallabies make it almost impossible to grow trees."

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Broadbent faithful gathers in Newhaven

FEDERAL ELECTION

On a cold and wet Sunday, a group of around 25 Russell Broadbent faithful from across the electorate assembled under the rotunda at Grayden's Reserve in Newhaven.

For the past three years in parliament, Mr Broadbent has been an outspoken critic of the government's COVID-19 response and has made consistent calls for a Royal Commission to be held.

Many attendees were also highly sceptical of the mandatory vaccines, and expressed their thanks to Mr Broadbent for his advocacy on their behalf.

"We stood our ground and you're going to be correct in the standards you took on behalf of yourselves, your families... so I want to thank you for that for a start," Mr Broadbent told the crowd to assenting nods and murmurs.

Mr Broadbent fielded a range of questions, with the group reflecting a distrust of government,

authority and institutions.

"I expect to get in (to Federal parliament)," Mr Broadbent said, "but if I don't get in, there won't be a voice in the lower house on behalf of these people."

"There won't be someone standing there saying 'there's a price for my support of any government of the day'."

Mr Broadbent said all voices should be represented, no matter how marginal.

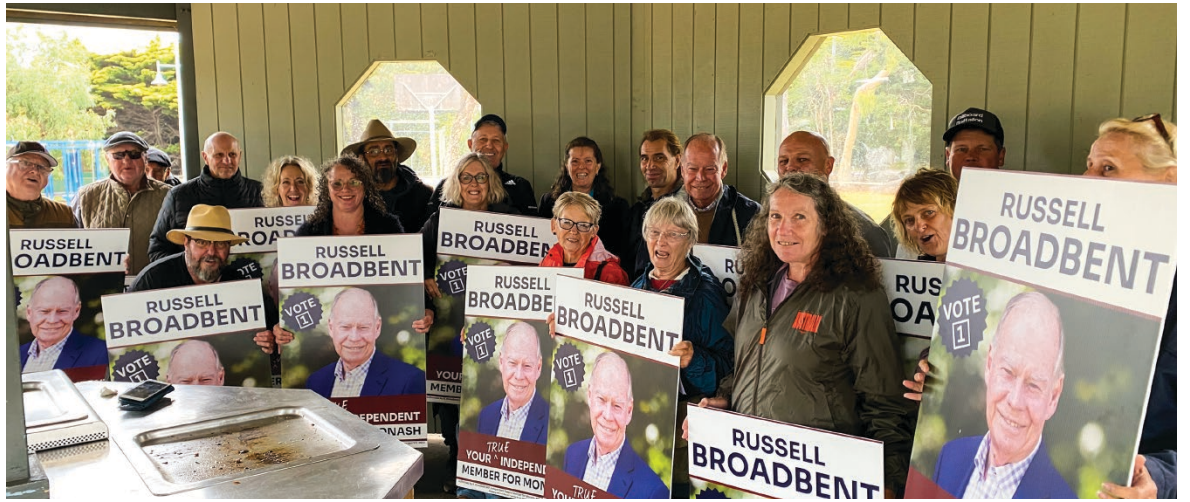
"This group, we're not even 1 per cent of the whole population," he said.

Election strategy

With seven candidates now officially in the running for the Federal seat of Monash at the upcoming election, there has been speculation about how preferences will impact the race.

Mr Broadbent stated his willingness to place independent Deb Leonard second on his 'how to vote' cards, dependent on Deb doing the same.

"She's got an offer. If she



For the past three years in parliament, Russell Broadbent has been an outspoken critic of the government's COVID-19 response.

doesn't take it, she goes right down the card," Mr Broadbent said.

Notwithstanding Deb Leonard, Mr Broadbent said his preferences would flow as follows: "One Nation two, Family First three and after that who knows."

Mr Broadbent said Greens

would be last, Labor second last, and Liberal third last.

The incumbent candidate also explained to the crowd their preferences did not have to be dictated by how to vote cards, and they could nominate candidates in any order they saw fit.

Mr Broadbent has stated he

will be running a "minimalist" campaign and not accepting any donations.

The federal member for Monash was a long-term Liberal backbencher who quit the party in late 2023 after losing the Liberal preselection vote (161 to 16) to Mary Aldred.

Wooli Tavern staff assault

CRIME

Cowes Police are appealing to the community to help identify a male who assaulted a staff member on duty at the Wooli Tavern in Cape Woolamai last month.

On February 12 at about 9:30 pm, a male entered the licenced premises at the Wooli Tavern and then threw a glass of beer on one of the staff workers before running out of the premises.

Police are hoping to identify and speak to the male depicted in the CCTV footage images.

It is believed the male was part of a group of people in attendance at the venue after attending a wake earlier in the day at the Cape Woolamai Board Riders Club.

The male is described as Caucasian, aged in his 30s,



wearing a brown t-shirt, denim shorts, black cap, and black and white shoes.

Anyone who has any information on the identity of this



male or witnessed the incident should make a report via Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000, or contact the Cowes Police Station on 5952 2037.

Recycling pays, so cash in and clean up

Single-use drink containers are a major source of litter in the environment, polluting waterways, harming wildlife and costing millions in clean-up efforts each year.

Drink containers account for 15 per cent of litter nationwide, according to Clean Up Australia's annual Litter Report.

But container deposit schemes across Australia and the world are having a significant impact on litter reduction.

Since launching in November 2023, Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme (CDS Vic) has processed almost 1.5 billion drink containers - returning \$150 million to Victorians and raising \$1.5 million for local charities, schools and community groups.

The scheme is a recycling program that gives back to the planet, your community and your pocket.

Keen recyclers are collecting and returning eligible drink bottles, cans and cartons at local return points for a 10-cent refund per item. While it might not sound like much, it quickly adds up.

Drink containers are processed to make new products, working towards a circular economy.

Donate

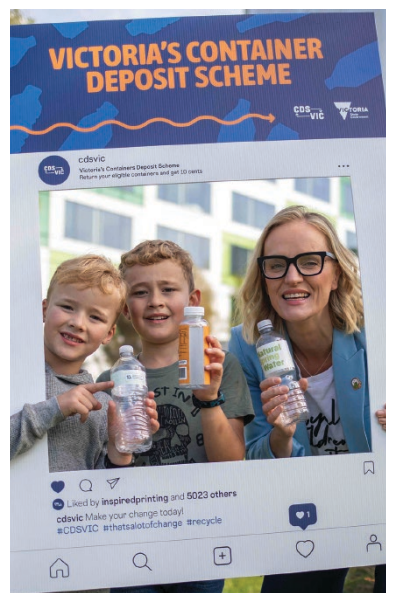
The Christmas holidays saw the scheme's highest volume of containers returned on record.

Weekly returns usually average around 20 million, but Victorians returned around 30 million containers almost every week over the summer.

With the Easter holidays approaching, Victorians have another chance to cash in big while keeping communities clean.

Following record-breaking container returns over Christmas, another surge is expected as families and friends gather to celebrate, says Jim Round, CEO of scheme coordinator VicReturn.

"This Easter, let's turn our empty drink containers into extra cash while making a real impact on the environment," he said.



Twin brothers Sonny (left) and Lennie, pictured with Rebecca Cowan, Executive Director of the Good Friday Appeal, have raised hundreds of dollars for the Good Friday Appeal through Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme.

"By recycling through CDS Vic, every bottle, can, or carton returned helps keep Victoria clean and puts money back in your pocket."

Schools, sporting and community groups, and not-for-profit organisations have embraced the initiative as a fundraising tool.

At Easter, consider donating refunds to The Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal.

As a registered scheme donation partner, the Good Friday Appeal has raised over \$72,000 through the scheme to date.

Rebecca Cowan, Executive Director of the Good Friday Appeal, said donating containers was another way to contribute to the Good Friday Appeal.

"For 94 years, the community has come together to raise funds for the Good Friday Appeal, supporting sick children and providing lifesaving medical care at The Royal Children's Hospital."

Visit cdsvic.org.au to learn more about the scheme and find your nearest refund point.

/sponsored article/



The turf on the Cowes oval, which was looking lush in February, is now looking patchy and dry thanks to flocks of hungry birds.

Birds devouring oval

RECREATION

The turf restoration works on the Cowes Recreation Reserve are looking a little worse for wear.

But the damage isn't because of sport, but rather birds. The lush greens on display in February have been replaced with patches of brown or yellowed grass.

The local football club has been unable to use the ground over summer, but hope to be able to return to the oval for this year's football season.

However, in the absence of human use, flocks of corellas have opportunistically foraged on the surface for the last few weeks, undoing some of the recent im-

provements on the oval.

A Bass Coast Shire spokesperson said the birds were causing "extensive damage".

"We are looking at options to protect the turf," the spokesperson said.

"Next week the team will be over sowing the ground with perennial ryegrass suitable for sports fields to give the ground the best opportunity to gain full coverage for the busy season ahead."



"I'm not tied to party politics, I'm only focused on getting the best outcomes for our region," said independent candidate for Monash Deb Leonard at the release of her climate policy on the weekend.

Leonard releases climate policy

FEDERAL ELECTION

Independent candidate for Monash, Deb Leonard, unveiled her climate and environment policy on Sunday to 100 supporters in Wonthaggi.

The policy, shaped by feedback from conversations with local residents, outlines Deb's vision to support Monash in tackling climate impacts, while seizing opportunities in the clean energy transition.

"Our community faces the impacts of climate

change firsthand through extreme weather, coastal erosion, and rising energy costs," Ms Leonard said.

"We need practical action that protects our environment while creating local opportunities. I will support science-based climate action at national, state and local levels."

Key initiatives announced include increased solar and battery subsidies for households and businesses to lower power bills and provide reliable energy through power outages.

"My policy will bring down power bills, create hundreds of good local jobs, and help safeguard our precious natural environment."

"Here in Monash, we know the energy transition is happening. The question is: will our community benefit, or will we be left behind?"

"I'm not tied to party politics, I'm only focused on getting the best outcomes for our region."

Supporters made calls to voters and hit the streets to talk to voters about the

issues affecting them and how they would like to be represented.

Deb said her policy had been shaped by thousands of surveys and conversations with locals.

"As an independent, my job is to listen to the community and fight for our needs in Parliament."

"Monash has been taken for granted as a safe seat for too long. It's time we had a representative who puts us first and gets results."

Details: debleonard.com.au



Mayor elected to state's peak council group

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Bass Coast Mayor Rochelle Halstead has been elected as the regional board director for the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), representing Gippsland.

The MAV is Victoria's peak body for local government, advocating for councils and supporting them in delivering essential services to their communities.

As regional board director, Cr Halstead said she would play a key role in ensuring the priorities of Gippsland councils were represented at the state level. She said she would collaborate with board members, advocate for policy changes,

and work to address key regional challenges such as coastal protection, infrastructure development, economic growth, and community well-being. "Local government plays a vital role in shaping the future of our regional townships, and I look forward to working with MAV and my fellow councillors to ensure regional voices are heard and supported," she said.

"This appointment reinforces Bass Coast Shire Council's proactive leadership in the local government sector."

Cr Halstead also serves as OneGippsland deputy chair, the region's peak advocacy body.



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A range of changes to the Marine Parade commercial area are proposed, including supporting building heights up to five storeys on the southern side and redevelopment of several key sites. Pic: Magnier Media

San Remo to double: new roads, shops, services needed

From page 1

Marine Parade

Under the structure plan, Marine Parade’s retail area will be expanded and revitalised. An Urban Design Framework, included in the plan, proposes a range of changes to the Marine Parade commercial area, including supporting building heights up to five storeys on the southern side. The framework states the San Remo Hotel, 151 Marine Parade (and 55 Park Road) and the IGA supermarket are sites for redevelopment (and the Westernport Hotel as an “important strategic site”). It says the jetty car park should have parking removed

from the foreshore edge to allow a new waterfront deck, alongside a new foreshore events space and new landscape amphitheatre set into the hill. Currently San Remo’s 27 hectares of Crown foreshore is overseen by a committee of management, through the state government, with the framework mooting the management be transferred to council, “either under a new committee of management or land transfer arrangement”. The plan proposes to rezone some land parcels, including at 6-20 Mary Grove to the Mixed Use Zone to allow small-scale commercial development “if the market demand is generated”.

Services

To meet the population growth, the structure plan provides a range of studies that outline further services and infrastructure that will be required. It states a “substantial upgrade” is needed to the sewer system, along with the power network. “AusNet can handle some growth, but full development requires a zone substation and further power alternatives,” the plan says, adding that service providers need to be engaged to co-ordinate upgrades. Council must advocate to the State Government for a local ambulance service in San Remo.

Private early years providers are needed to increase access to long day care and kindergarten, while there will likely be demand for public high schools beyond year 9. Existing aged care providers need to be consulted to understand capacities. Accommodation and tourism developments should be encouraged on peripheral rural land such as wellness retreats, and farm gates. **Consultation** In 2023 council carried out community consultation on the structure plan, receiving 137 social mapping markers. In 2024 31 different stakeholders were consulted includ-

ing businesses, schools and authorities, and a Community Reference Group was established with 12 members. Feedback has included the need to improve Marine Pde and improved infrastructure, as well as better car parking and upgrading underutilised areas such as the Recreation Reserve. Once the draft plan consultation closes on April 28, submissions will form part of the Final San Remo Structure Plan, which will go to council later this year. If councillors choose to adopt the final plan with no changes, officers will begin a Planning Scheme Amendment. Details: <https://engage.bass-coast.vic.gov.au/sanremoplan>

San Remo needs a green makeover

POPULATION

San Remo has experienced “substantial” vegetation loss and future population growth will need to include open spaces and tree planting, according to the San Remo structure plan. The plan says 800 hectares of vegetation has been cleared since settlement and there is “little to no vegetation present on most private parcels”, which leaves “minimal opportunity for ecosystems to establish”. And San Remo has the lowest canopy cover of all urban areas in Bass Coast with less than 20 per cent urban forest cover, less

than half of the 40 per cent shire target. “A recurring concern throughout community consultation has been the perceived lack of public open space in San Remo,” the plan states. One of the worst serviced areas is the eastern end of Island View Estate (east of Moondara Drive) and Elevation Crescent, with residents relying on drainage reserves and the path along Phillip Island Road for outdoor recreation. As a result, the plan says significant open spaces will be created within a five-minute walk or 400m of homes, as well as

wildlife corridors, which will see planning controls to minimise development impacts. “Establishing these biolinks in San Remo would significantly improve the area’s social, cultural, and environmental well-being,” the plan says. There will be a continuous walking track along the southern coastline, with vegetation, along farm property boundaries. San Remo is also vulnerable to climate change impacts including increased localised urban heat from buildings and hard surfacing, with the rate of heat induced medical episodes



The plan says 800 hectares of vegetation has been cleared since settlement and there is “little to no vegetation present on most private parcels”.

set to increase with the frequency and intensity of heatwaves. “Paired with the fact San Remo lacks significant tree canopy cover, (this) requires serious attention to mitigate ongoing issues.

“San Remo’s coastal location also makes it highly susceptible to erosion, storm surges, and tidal forces. “Mitigation strategies such as dune restoration, seawalls, and beach nourishment is crucial.”

Recreation centre proposed overhaul

POPULATION

The structure plan goes into detail about the potential to redevelop San Remo’s recreation centre. “This precinct occupies a huge piece of land in the centre of San Remo, and is currently highly under-utilised due to a lack of funding and strategic planning,” it states. “This land has the potential to be reimagined in order to better serve the existing and future community.

“The San Remo Recreation Centre has the potential to function as a valuable multi-use community space.” The centre currently houses meeting rooms, a pavilion, indoor squash courts, an indoor-multi-use stadium, outdoor tennis courts and the San Remo Bowls Club. The plan proposes a number of redevelopment scenarios, including a fenced dog park, expanding the tennis club and bowls club, as well as creating a new multi-purpose recreation and community

hub, co-locating services and facilities in one location, with a community park. If redevelopment with the state government isn’t achievable, “council should consider a small community centre”, with a single multi-purpose court, including netball, and four additional tennis courts. “A comprehensive sports and recreation needs assessment is recommended to determine the optimal configuration and usage of these future facilities.”



“The San Remo Recreation Centre “has the potential to be reimagined in order to better serve the existing and future community”, the plan states.

Parking, speed limits, new roads to be overhauled

POPULATION

San Remo has a “high level of road fatalities and serious injuries”, with Phillip Island Road and Back Beach Road hotspots for crashes.

And traffic will grow by more than 60 per cent to 2041, with projected traffic growth set to exceed capacity at several San Remo intersections.

That’s according to the draft San Remo structure plan, which zeroes in on traffic safety, and road solutions to population growth, including introducing new roads, parking limits and controls, and even proposes commercial e-scooters and e-bikes like in Melbourne.

The structure plan includes a study on crash statistics that states while road safety in San Remo has “slowly improved over the last few decades”, between 2019 and 2023, there were 13 crashes, involving 38 people.

“The most reported type of crash are rear ends (vehicles in the same lane), and head on collisions (not overtaking),” the study says.

“People who walk or cycle in San Remo are more likely to experience more severe injuries in a crash. For example, a crash on Phillip Island Road resulted in a pedestrian fatality.”

The study says except for one accident, all crashes occurred during the day with good light conditions.

“These factors indicate the existing road environment may encourage motorists to drive at high speeds, or that motorists are practicing unsafe road behaviours.”

The structure plan has the hierarchy in San Remo “to prioritise pedestrians, public transport, cyclists, freight and private vehicles, in that order”.

It recommends speeds reduce to 30km/h on all local streets and to 15km/h on a new proposed shared zone connecting Marine Pde and Mary Grove, improved crossing safety at intersections and mid-block, and a cohesive cycling network.

Squeeze

The structure plan also includes detailed analysis of population growth on roads, finding capacity will be exceeded at the Phillip Island Road intersections with Bergin Grove, Back Beach Road, and Potters Hill Road.

The assessment found the Potters Hill Road and Phillip Island Road intersection currently dips to a 46 second average wait time in the PM peak hour with wait times as long as nine minutes.

The assessment recommends adopting VicRoad’s planned improvements - released in 2020 - for the Bergin Grove and Back Beach Road intersections.

It proposes installing traffic signals at the Potters Hill Road intersection.

In the San Remo east growth area, there may be a new east-west connector road continuing Shetland Heights Road from Potters Hill Road to Punch Bowl Road or the eastern settlement boundary.

There may also be a new north-south connector road heading south from Phillip Island Road, ideally at or around 425 Phillip Island Road.

Parking

“The supply and management of car parking in San Remo is a perennial problem,” the plan states.

There are about 730 car parking bays within a short walk of Marine Parade, the foreshore, Recreation Reserve and Lions Park.

“Occupancy often reaches 100 per cent in high-demand locations.”

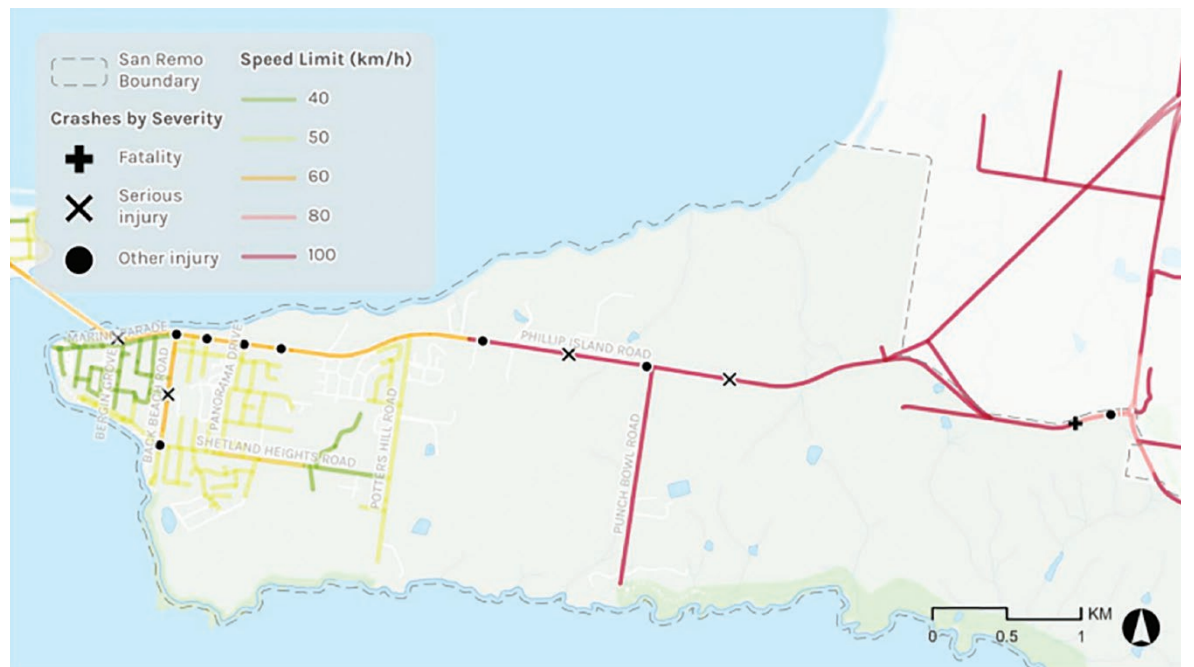
As a result, the plan proposes new or more restricted time restrictions to boost car turnover in high-demand areas.

It recommends a parking permit system for businesses and residents with time-restricted parking on their streets.

Parking overstay detection technology and electronic signage may be introduced, like that rolled out in Cowes and Wonthaggi.



In 2020 Regional Roads Victoria released revised plans to upgrade roads in San Remo, which have since gathered dust and are yet to be funded. The new structure plans calls for the funding and rollout of the plans, which include widening the Phillip Island Road to four lanes between San Remo Parade and Bergin Grove.



San Remo crashes by severity, 2019-2023

There is a long list of proposed changes to parking restrictions and parking supply including on Marine Parade which will see two-hour parking at the south side of street, west of Bergin Grove; north

side of street, west of Bergin Grove (including parking at Fisherman’s Co-op; and south side of street, east of Bergin Grove.

The plan recommends the formalisation of car parking

at Davis Point, the San Remo Recreation Reserve and Lions Park.

It reiterates the need for on-demand public transport, similar to hailing an uber and improved public transport.

San Remo east “growth front”

GROWING PAINS

San Remo currently covers 200 hectares with just over 1000 homes, and about 520 vacant lots in the town boundary able to be developed.

The plan states San Remo “is currently experiencing significant growth” - more than other surrounding areas - with a 4.06 per cent annual increase seeing the population swell from 1,090 in 2011 to about 1,760 in 2023.

By 2041 the total population will be up to 3,840, with retirees projected to make up 39 per cent of the population.

“San Remo must find ways to attract and retain a younger demographic, address housing affordability, and ensure adequate services and infrastructure are in place to support its growing and ageing population,” it states.

Growth spiked during the pandemic, “leading to a sharp increase in house prices and rental rates”.

The median house price in San Remo is “significantly higher than the regional average, making it one of the most expensive peri-urban areas in Victoria”.

As of 2022, the median house price in San Remo was \$1.02 million, nearly double the median for Regional Victoria (\$580,000).

Median rents are about \$450 per week, with a limited supply of rentals and holiday homes and short-term holiday rental accommodation putting pressure on the market.

“Methods currently available, particularly through the planning system, have not been able to adequately address, control or manage holiday homes and short-term holiday rental accommodation issues in San Remo,” the plan explains.

Population

A further 150 hectares is set to open for subdivision to Punch

Bowl Rd, which will see up to 1200 new lots, according to the San Remo structure plan.

It states the expected future boundary of San Remo will be either Punch Bowl Road “or a point west of that depending on the outcomes” of the state government’s Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) plan, which is soon to be released after successive delays.

“The exact size of the growth front will be determined by the State Government via the Bass Coast Statement of Planning Policy (DAL),” the plan states.

The growth will see a new east-west connector road continuing Shetland Heights Road from Potters Hill Road to Punch Bowl Road or the eastern settlement boundary.

There will also be a new north-south connector road heading south from Phillip Island Road, ideally at or around 425 Phillip Island Road.

The “growth front” will re-

quire development of a range of services, including a new “convenience centre” or commercial area east of Potters Hill Road providing: 2,400m² of retail and 1,000m² of non-retail commercial space “without compromising the Marine Parade’s primacy”, as well as medical and childcare centres.

There will be a park of at least 10,000m², “which also provides recreational opportunities to residents west of Potters Hill Road”.

A small community centre will be built, “if an adequately sized centre cannot be provided in the established area of town”.

New homes in San Remo East, within an 800m walkable distance of the convenience centre, will see a density of 15 to 20 dwellings per hectare.

Beyond the 800m walkable area, there will be a mix of conventional housing and lower-density lifestyle housing.

And along the southern ridgeline overlooking Bass Strait, and the eastern settlement boundary, there will be lower density lifestyle living.

There will be potential need for a new 15MVA power substation, as well as a solar network with battery storage and fibre access NBN

DAL

As reported in 2023 during the DAL panel hearing, where 747 public submissions were presented, the owners of 140 Punchbowl Road, Springway Corporate Group, believed to be a Chinese investor, were seeking for their 124ha property to be included in San Remo’s town boundaries.

Two neighbouring landowners on the Phillip Island Road, who have a total 78 hectares (Adrian Abrahams and Franlaw Pty Ltd) - between the Springway property and the Silverwater Resort - were also seeking for their land to be open for housing development.

The lawyer representing owners of land between Potters Hill and Punchbowl roads at the time argued the lack of community opposition to more housing development in San Remo showed there was support for an extension of the town’s boundaries.

Phillip Island Gym: one year on

HEALTH

Just over a year ago, Monica Alfing and her team took over what was formerly Grip Fitness and began a journey of transformation.

Today, Phillip Island Gym has grown, not just in size, but in impact.

Over the past year, they have added more machines, more equipment, and more classes to help their members get the most out of their training.

Monica said the biggest change was the atmosphere that now defines the space,

with the team welcoming all ages and all levels, “a place where everyone can feel comfortable working toward their fitness goals”.

“At Phillip Island Gym, the goal has always been more than just offering a space to train - it’s about helping people transform their health, build strength, and create a lifestyle that makes them feel their best,” Monica said.

“Strength training and exercise are life-changing, improving both physical and mental well-being, and the team is dedicated to making this knowledge more accessible and impactful than ever

before.”

She said they continued to expand their expertise to offer more support, guidance, and education to members.

In the coming months and years, they will be bringing in more specialised trainers, expanding knowledge in rehabilitation, strength, and weight loss, and providing more tools to help people achieve fitness goals.

The team of personal trainers and instructors continues to grow, ensuring members have access to support and encouragement-whether they’re focused on building muscle, losing weight, recov-

ering from an injury, or simply feeling stronger and healthier.

“And we’re not stopping here. Something exciting is coming soon, and we can’t wait to share it with the community at the end of this month,” she said.

“Stay tuned for the big reveal.”

To celebrate, Phillip Island Gym is offering a limited-time deal: from March 20 to April 3, new members can sign up for a 1-year membership for just \$17.50 per week.

/Sponsored article/

Melbourne to Cowes fundraising run

FUNDRAISER

A single-day run from Melbourne to Cowes on March 27 will raise funds to fight cancer, inspired by the death of a San Remo resident last year.

Melbourne butcher Cam Moore is dedicating his running challenge to his family friend, San Remo’s Les Blick, who passed away in November from cancer.

The 32-year-old has so far in March has run just under 200km, which is the Cancer Council’s March Charge challenge.

He will complete the challenge in a single-day 120km run from Chelsea Heights to Cowes on March 27, leaving home about 2.30am to be in San Remo by about mid-day.

Once Cam reaches San Remo, he will wear a bucket on his back, open for donations.

The run will end in a fundraising meal at Ocean Reach Brewery, where \$5 from each \$37.50 meal will be donated to the “Cammy March Charge”.

Cam said he grew up holidaying at his family’s caravan in Rhyll and Ventnor and chose to run to support the Cancer Council challenge.

“I’ve chosen this run and distance to help honor my friends and family close to me who have and still are battling cancer, more recently the Blick family, who lost dear Les.

“In doing this run I want to highlight the message to keep fighting and pushing. Les Blick’s son Jordan said his mother still lives in San Remo, moving there with Les about 10 years ago, and owning a holiday house in Ventnor for about 15 years before.

To donate: www.themarchcharge.com.au/fundraisers/cammoore/2025



Cam Moore (pictured centre) is running from Melbourne to Cowes on March 27 to raise funds for cancer after the death of his family friend, San Remo resident Les Blick. Les’ children Cam (left), and Jordan are pictured with Cam.



Cam Moore is running from Melbourne to Cowes on March 27.

Rotary seeks past fellows

Rotary Phillip Island and San Remo is calling on past recipients of the prestigious Paul Harris Fellow award to reconnect with the club and join a special celebration dinner in their honour.

The Paul Harris Fellow recognition is one of Rotary International’s highest honours, awarded to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to their community or to Rotary’s humanitarian efforts.

Named after Rotary’s founder, the award acknowledges those who exemplify Rotary’s motto, “Service Above Self.”

While often presented to Rotarians, it is also awarded to community members whose actions have significantly benefited others.

If you or someone you know has received this honour, the club invites you to attend the Paul Harris Fellow Celebration Dinner on April 14, 6pm, at Rusty Water Brewery. Details: contact Rotary Phillip Island and San Remo president@rotarypisr.org.au



Celebration of our Paul Harris Fellows

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Class of 2005 alumni, Nicola Canil (with Chloe), Sam Onley (with Harvey), Jade Potter (with Sadie), Kaytlyn, Arnika Martin and Kasey Dickie return to Newhaven College with the next generation, celebrating the tradition of learning as their children follow in their footsteps.



During Newhaven College's open day on March 15, student tour leaders Andrew Nowell, Edward Scott and Hunter Janson led prospective families on tours of the campus and facilities.

Newhaven College's alumni reunion and open day

EDUCATION

Newhaven College's 83-acre campus was on full display last Saturday, as the school hosted its annual open day, as well as alumni reunions.

It was one of the busiest open days held, with hundreds of prospective parents and students attending, while gradu-

ates from years 1985, 1995, 2005 and 2015 were also welcomed at alumni reunions.

Tours were led by current student leaders, some as young as year 4.

Highlights included the equestrian display near the Year 9 Environmental Centre, the MTB Bike Academy track built last year by students and volunteers, and the gym, with displays of the school's surf and tennis academies.

The junior and middle school choirs were on show, along with the trade centre making little wooden cars and cookies at food tech.

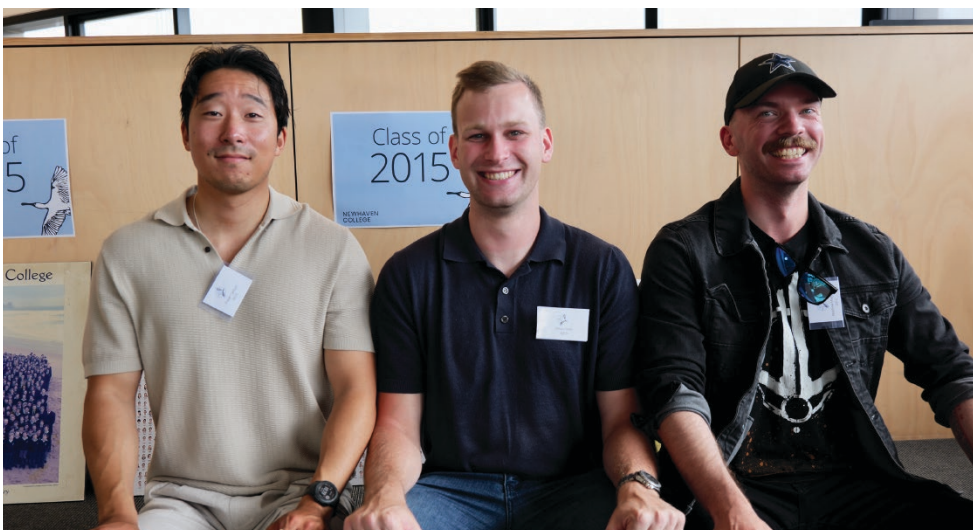
Science staff provided fun activities such as making ice cream with liquid nitrogen, budding artists made clay sculptures in the specialist wing and were greeted by the school's top performers in the performing arts wing.

Newhaven College tours can be arranged through the college's admissions team, contact Bec Anderson at admissions@newhavencol.vic.edu.au, 5956 7505 or book online through the Newhaven College website.

Also on Saturday, the school welcomed back alumni from the classes of 1985 (40 years), 1995 (30 years), 2005 (20 years), and 2015 (10 years).



In 1985 16 students graduated from Newhaven College and 40 years on, 10 of those students returned to reconnect. Back row: Carol Olsen, Lisa Huitson, Tresna Cuttriss, Robert Gresham, Darren Ayling Front row: Jacqui Zuidema, Mikaela Power, Anita Dikkenberg, Cheryl Dowson and Ellen Cheeseman.



Class of 2015 reunion: past students Fraser Carlson, Ethan Slade and Matthew Sheppard. Matthew made his way from his home in Darwin for the event.

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good Friday appeal
THE ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

GEORGE BASS

WALK

FOR THE

KIDS

Walk for The Kids is a community event raising money for the Royal Children's Hospital. Choose from the two walks below:

1) George Bass Coastal Walk:
DISTANCE | 7.5km
 Starting in Kilcunda, ending at Punch Bowl Rd in San Remo. Shuttle busses will be running from 9am onwards.

2) San Remo Town Walk:
DISTANCE | 3 km
 Includes the chance to win an Easter hamper!

Join us afterwards at The San Remo Hotel
 Kids Games | Live Music | Silent Auction

WHEN:
 9am Good Friday,
 18th April 2025

REGISTRATIONS:
 Register on the day,
 8am at the San Remo Hotel or via the QR code below.

CALL 5678 5352 or EMAIL
walkforthekidsanremo@gmail.com



The "Bridge Walk for Reconciliation" in 2022, where more than a thousand community members walked across the bridge.

NAIDOC celebration on Millowl

COMMUNITY

Bass Coast Reconciliation Network is working to Close the Gap across the region and is excited to announce the first Ngangga on Phillip Island.

The free event will celebrate NAIDOC Week on July 6 and will see First Nations-owned stallholders, volunteers, community organisations, musicians and artists come together to celebrate culture through fun activities, games, live music, deadly information and support, arts, crafts and more.

Aligning with the 2025 NAIDOC theme of Next Generation, Strength, Vision and Legacy, Ngangga aims to empower young people and families to celebrate, experience and learn more of our shared history.

The one-day festival will run from 12pm-7pm at Bernenneit in Cowes, starting with a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony.

Everyone is invited to come along and

be part of the day-long activities, to be followed by an evening performance from Uncle Kutcha Edwards (tickets required) at Bernenneit.

The network is currently seeking expressions of interest from First Nations stallholders and performers to take part in Ngangga.

You can now register your organisation, business, and/or community group's interest to be a stallholder, provide a live performance, or lead a cultural activity at the event by completing the online form on the Bass Coast Shire website/Reconciliation.

Applications close Sunday, April 6.

Ngangga - meaning to hear, to understand, to listen in Boonwurrung language - welcomes First Nations Peoples with our allies and supporters, residents and tourists to share our history, celebrate culture, ancestors and elders, and elevate the voices and visibility of First Nations Peoples.

The event will create an exciting future for next generations through supporting

young people to work to self-determination and economic prosperity.

Bass Coast Reconciliation Network has run many reconciliation events in-

cluding a Bridge Walk for Reconciliation in 2022 where more than 1000 community members walked across the bridge from San Remo to Phillip Island.

Archies Creek goes western

MUSIC

The most dangerous show in town is back at Archie's Creek Hotel this March with a deadly new set list of Spaghetti Western soundtracks ready to fire from the hip.

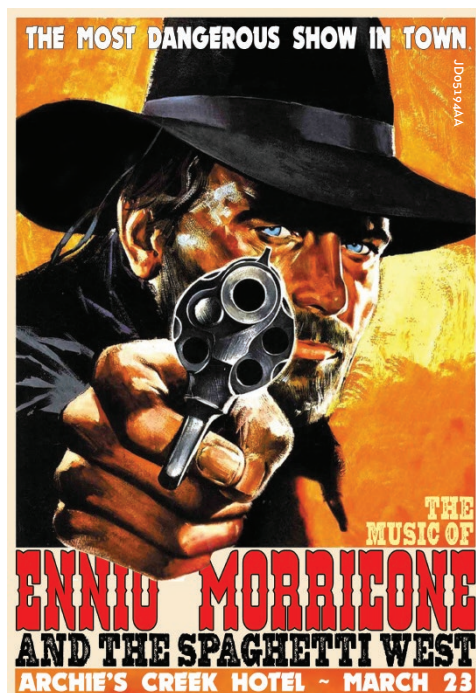
After sold out shows across Victoria and NSW, 12-piece posse The Counterfeit return to the Creek for a Sunday afternoon matinee to perform some of cinema's most legendary scores, live on stage.

From the sweeping grandeur of *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* to the haunting melodies of *Once Upon a Time in the West*, *The Counterfeit* will immerse you in the unforgettable soundscapes that have left an indelible mark on film history.

The performance features the vocals of Ballarat's Freya Josephine Hollick.

The Music of Ennio Morricone & the Spaghetti West is on March 23, with doors opening 2.30pm for a showtime 3pm.

Tickets: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1334686?embed>



ARCHIES CREEK HOTEL

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March

FRI 21/3	OZONE STREET & NICK CARVER
SAT 22/3	YOU AM I
SAT 22/3	UNDERScore - SALLY FORD & THE IDIOMATICS, WAYNE MACAULEY w/ BRIAN NANKERVIS & JANE CLIFTON
SUN 23/3	COUNTERFEIT - THE MUSIC OF ENNIO MORRICONE & THE SPAGHETTI WEST FEATURING FREYA JOSEPHINE HOLLICK
MON 24/3	SWEET TALK
SAT 29/3	THE BROTHER BROTHERS (USA)
SUN 30/3	SARAH BLASKO

April

FRI 4/4	KEVIN WELCH & HEATH CULLEN
SAT 5/4	BATHING IN THE CREEK FESTIVAL FEATURING QUEENIE, QUALITY USED CARS, VELVET BLOOM, SUNSHINE DJ & MUCH, MUCH MORE!
SUN 6/4	DOG TRUMPET + JOHNNY GOES TO CHURCH
FRI 11/4	HUSSY HICKS
FRI 18/4	ED KUEPPER
SAT 19/4	PETER BAIRD ALBUM LAUNCH
FRI 25/4	SHAUN KIRK
SAT 26/4	MORELAND CITY SOUL REVUE
SUN 27/4	MESS ESQUE

ARCHIES CREEK HOTEL SHOWS BEING ADDED DAILY SO BEST TO CHECK THE WEBSITE!!!
 89-91 ARCHIES CREEK ROAD / WWW.ARCHIESCREEKARTS.COM.AU

Harvest Festival event at PICO

COMMUNITY

It's harvest time at the Phillip Island Community Orchard and an open day will be held on Sunday April 6, 10am to 2pm.

The community is invited to help celebrate a productive year of growing fruit and vegetables, with activities for the family to enjoy.

Teams can come and make a scarecrow between 10am and midday, with 10 full-size and five smaller scarecrow frames available to dress and decorate.

All materials will be supplied, but participants are encouraged to bring their own recycled clothing to add an individual touch. Head to the PICO website for details and to register.

Do you have an excess of fresh grown produce and don't know what to do with it?

Orchard members, Anne and Peter Balfe, will be sharing information and tips on preserving, pickling and fermenting your fresh produce, and the rewards of having a well-stocked pantry year-round, with the talk starting at 10.30am.

A display of weird and wonderful fruit and vegetables will also feature on the day.

With so many unusual and rare heirloom vegetables and fruiting plants available, we invite people



Community members enjoyed the produce on offer at the Phillip Island Community Orchard's open day last year.

to bring along anything unusual they have grown to show.

A vote will take place to decide on the most popular.

Animals of Oz, loved by people of all ages, will have their native animal interactive sessions operating from midday until 2pm.

There will also be hot food and drinks available and a produce stall with fresh organic fruit and veges, preserves, pickles, jams and potted plants for sale. PICO partners, Westernport Water, will have their hydration station set-up and live music will be performed by Travis and Noah Thompson from midday. The event is an opportunity for the community to visit the orchard and see the work of PICO, which is a non-profit organisation established in 2013 that operates on membership.

There are more than 90 members who volunteer their time to cultivate and maintain the half-hectare orchard on Westernport Water land.

Members give time and effort to maintain the orchard and reap the benefits of the fruit and vegetables produced, with excess turned into preserves for fundraising, or donated to charity. Aside from the open day, the orchard is only open for the general public to visit when there are working bees, held on the fourth Saturday of the month.

So come along on April 6 to 18-40 Hallway Drive, Wimbeldon Heights (behind the reserve). Parking will be in the street. Details on the Harvest Festival or the orchard: islandorchard.wordpress.com/ or <http://www.facebook.com/islandorchard>

PICAL in the cold with freezer

COMMUNITY

Got an old upright freezer you don't need?

Then PICAL would like to be the new owner.

Last week one of the neighbourhood centre's old freezers stopped working and according to manager David Rooks is now "beyond repair."

"PICAL is now looking to the community to see if anyone has an upright freezer they can help support us," David said.

PICAL uses four freezers and four fridges for its food relief pantry.

"With more than 1000kg of food coming in and out of the pantry each week all the fridges and freezers are well used," said David, adding they had checked with the Lions Club Steptoe Emporium and Facebook but none were available.



Theresa Ford, volunteer at PICAL, who is sad about their broken freezer.

"If anyone has an upright freezer to donate or sell at a value price PICAL would love to hear from you."

"Alternatively, you may wish to donate funds to help support our purchase."

Donations can be at reception on online.

Phone reception: 5952 1131 or David: on 0400 655 540.

Movie Club: Amelia Perez

COMMUNITY

The Phillip Island Movie Club's next film, on March 26 at 7.30pm, is Amelia Perez (2024), a musical set in present-day Mexico that tells the story of Manitas Del Monte (played by Karla Sofía Gascón).

It runs for 2hrs 10 mins and is rated R.

The film was written and directed by Jacques Audiard and is an international production.

Emilia Pérez tells the story of a murderous and terrifying drug kingpin who has recently consolidated power by annihilating competitors and buying off politicians.

Without giving away a spoiler, suffice to say the film is a musical set in the comedy, crime, thriller and drama genres.

You will need to throw plausibility aside to enjoy the ride. Please note the film begins at 7.30pm, our new starting time for 2025.

It is a private event and members must present their PIMC membership ticket and Trybooking receipt to enter. If you haven't collected your PIMC membership ticket yet we will be issuing tickets from 7pm.

GIG GUIDE

22/03 RAMBLE - 9PM

23/03 HEY GRINGO - 5PM

29/03 THE AVENUE ENSEMBLE - 9PM

30/03 LIVE MUSIC TBC - 5PM

02/04 ZIGGY ALBERTS - 8:30PM \$86+BF

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Ngangga To listen To hear To understand

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Use the QR CODE or link below to register your interest by Sunday 6 April
<https://forms.office.com/r/rV3pM9JfsV>

QUESTIONS?

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Trail support

Contrary to the recent council decision, I believe that a trail between Cowes and Ventnor is compatible with the rehabilitation of our foreshore.

There has been a noticeable loss of native foreshore vegetation over several years.

The foreshore is weed infested, has areas of cleared vegetation, and there are numerous informal paths to the beach. A shared trail would provide access to install fencing, protect and re-vegetate sensitive sand dunes critical for foreshore stabilisation. A shared path with fencing would also cut off informal paths, funnelling people to council maintained paths.

I am concerned that this previously high priority trail has been prematurely removed from future projects, without due consideration as to ways of achieving an environmentally responsive solution, one that can be supported by a broader cross-section of the community.

It is such a shame to deprive the whole community of what could be a much loved trail.

Lisa Bendtsen, Ventnor

Nuclear risk

The controversy over the Chinese warships that circumnavigated Australia a few weeks ago, prompted former Australian Defence Forces Chief Chris Barrie to say nuclear power stations should not be built in Australia, as they would make the country more vulnerable in an attack.

He said "every nuclear power facility is a potential dirty bomb because rupture of containment facilities can cause devastating damage".

"With the proposed power stations all located within a 100km of the coast, they are clear and accessible targets."

I suppose by this he means enemy submarines or ships could launch missiles that target each of Dutton's seven proposed nuclear sites and destroy them.

If this was the case, then a significant part probably 10 per cent (38 per cent if you believe the fanciful Frontier Economics report prepared for the LNP) of our electricity supply could be knocked out in a few hours of a simultaneous coordinated attack.

If that were the case, then the released radioactivity would make these sites almost impossible to repair for years and

possibly release radioactive isotopes into the surrounding countryside, creating further no-go zones.

If the most senior defence people in the country are saying this, then it should be an open and shut case, especially when renewable energy is so much cheaper, reliable and spreads wealth around rural areas that are missing out economically with the present centralised electricity grid.

But the Coalition have form in ignoring specialist advice.

For example, Dutton rejecting the CSIRO and AEMO about nuclear costs and timeframes.

Not to mention the 30 or more years of climate science denial that has resulted in the slow roll out of renewable energy that may lead to a shortfall of electricity supply in later this decade.

But don't expect the LNP to take responsibility if a shortfall does occur.

Dan Caffrey, Traralgon

Candidate clarification

I recently learned that my previous response (about why I left the ALP) was included in your paper, and I have since been approached by several individuals regarding a specific comment I made about a particular group.

I would like to take this opportunity to clarify my thoughts and address any potential misunderstandings that may have arisen.

I want to emphasise I hold no opposition to any religion and in no way intend to disrespect or criticise anyone's religious beliefs.

I have a deep respect for individual faiths and fully recognise the significant role religion plays in the lives of many.

My intent was never to undermine or challenge any particular belief system but rather to encourage a more thorough examination of the issue.

I trust this clarification will help clear up any confusion.

Furthermore, I would like to state clearly my position is not one of opposition to Muslims or any other religion.

I strongly believe religion should remain separate from the important work of serving our community.

However, I find myself questioning the involvement of Labor Party volunteers in the local elections.

Specifically, I am curious as to why they chose to support one candidate out of the three

in the same ward (all ALP members), and why their assistance continued from the early stages of the campaign to the final day of voting.

Why were the other candidates overlooked in this support?

Additionally, given the ALP did not officially endorse any of us, I am concerned about their intervention in the process.

Finally, I must express my concern regarding the targeting of my campaign materials.

It was deeply troubling to find that only my posters were destroyed, defaced, torn, or removed, while the materials of other candidates remained largely undisturbed.

This experience has opened my eyes to the blatant interference by a major political party, which ultimately led to my decision to leave the ALP.

Kuljeet Kaur Robinson, For MONASH, Pauline Hanson's One Nation

(Authorised by: K.Robinson, Warragul)

Support for lowering speed

Regarding the proposed changes to speed limits in Cowes east.

The change to 30km/h limit in not so large - in inner urban areas, it makes serious sense.

It means there will no longer be a fight between cars/trucks/buses and bikes, including ebikes, all travelling at a safe, slower speed.

If there is a collision, it won't be fatal.

Looks like Toyota might have got it right this time with "Oh what a feeling".

ABC TV news last week reported that 30km/h actually smooths traffic flow so that travel time is not longer.

At 40km and even 60km travel time takes longer because of random start/stop events with other vehicles.

Google is continuously logging this data from passing smart phones so it's reliable.

So how do we feel about 30kmh limit on Thompson Ave, Cowes?

Everybody says currently it's too dangerous, for pedestrians and cyclists, whether young or old.

So can we just do it please?

Bernie McComb, Cowes

Federal election candidate

I am planning to be a single-issue candidate for the western alliance in the seat of Monash.

The American people have become dangerously erratic and without necessarily wish-

ing to, they are vandalising their own democracy and the western alliance with it. That is our problem.

The western alliance is the foundation of freedom, democracy and prosperity for Australia just as it is for Australia and even for non-aligned countries in our region.

Ukraine is fighting for its freedom because it dared to aspire to these things we have taken for granted.

No one can tell the future, but the present moment looks like it could be an historic one.

People in the street mostly know this but our election candidates apparently do not.

Nor do our leaders in Canberra have much to say, more concerned that we somehow escape the US tariffs that everyone else, friend and foe, are being subjected to.

The problem in America started with Trump, but it has infected a large fraction of the American people.

Our political leaders should reach out to the American people, that they should have more respect for themselves, their country and their institutions.

They should have done so in 2020 when Trump falsely claimed their electoral process was corrupted.

I have asked other candidates, most particularly Russell Broadbent, to take up this issue.

If they will not, I feel I must run.

At the same time, I hope to promote discussion forums the candidates and voters can take part in.

This is not a council election. It is not about dog parks.

If we can have proper forums we can move past silly election advertising and look at the real issues that other candidates have raised, such as economic ones.

Slogans do not cut it, "corflutes" with candidates faces on it do not help, and flyers in your letter box with lots of colours but no information do not advance the discussion.

Robert Durkacz, Cape Woolamai

Closing the Gap Day

This Thursday, March 20, is Closing the Gap Day.

Closing the Gap was meant to improve the lives of First Nations people, to help them share in 'the good life' by removing systemic barriers.

In 2025, we find rates of suicide, child removals, early childhood development and

adult incarceration have deteriorated since the establishment of a new baseline in 2018/19.

All Australian governments and the Coalition of Peaks (non-government First Nations peak bodies and independent statutory authorities) signed the new agreement, with new targets, new governance reforms, and greater involvement of Indigenous communities, with cultural elements of importance, such as language and connection to land.

However, by 2023 only four out of the 19 targets were being met.

Reviewing the reforms, the Productivity Commission found the commitment to shared decision-making has rarely been achieved: the transformation of government organisations has barely begun and accountability for delivering on the commitments in the agreement is lacking.

Several analyses of Closing the Gap found that First Nations' voices and needs were not listened to.

Their disadvantages were seen as personal issues rather than recognising larger problems like racism or discrimination, thus blaming the individual for their struggles.

Further, Closing the Gap assume wrongly all First Nations people are the same.

Each community or individual has different needs.

Successful solutions often come from programs created by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people.

The issues of Indigenous poverty and disadvantage are complex, and are closely linked to lack of opportunity, invisibility to the mainstream community, racism and dispossession relating to the effects of colonisation and the (often forced) disconnection from country, community and culture.

Despite these systemic factors, there is still strength and determination throughout the community.

The focus must shift to self-determination, which will enable First Nations to take control of their lives and their families, find their places in the mainstream economy, and develop practice models that reflect their priorities and cultural values.

Dr Bev Munro, Wiradjuri woman and Co-chair of Bass Coast Reconciliation Network
Dr Marg Lynn, Secretary of Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group

San Remo Library's International Women's Day event

COMMUNITY

San Remo Library hosted an International Women's Day event last week, with 45 girls from San Remo, Newhaven, and Cowes primary schools for a morning of conversation about leadership, action, and change.

Sarah Jury from Myli - My Community Library led the panel discussion, featuring local author and illustrator Meg Humphrys alongside Bass Coast College students Tahlia

Thomas (Year 9) and Tamsin Watson (Year 7).

Meg, the author and illustrator of *When Water Lost Her Way* and *Wave of Change*, shared her experiences in environmental sustainability and water management, encouraging students to think about the impact they can have.

Tahlia and Tamsin shared their experiences in leadership and sport, highlighting the strides being made towards gender equality.



The International Women's Day event at San Remo Library last week, with a range of speakers.



The Phillip Island Bowling Club wrapped up their 2025 Corporate Bowls competition recently with an exciting evening of nail-biting finals with team Victor Bravos (pictured) managing to win in a tiebreaker over DTM Bulldogs to take the season championship. Sponsor of the event David Fusinato, of Haymes Paint Shop in Cowes, congratulates the Victor Bravos team on their victory.

Corporate competition wraps up season

BOWLS

The Phillip Island Bowling Club's 2025 Corporate Bowls season concluded with an evening of nail-biting finals.

In the semifinals, Victor Bravos ended up dominating the scoreboard however did not have it all their own way with Island Homes making them earn every shot.

DTM Bulldogs got out to an early lead in their semi before Blue Steel fought back to force the game to an extra end tie-break.

The Bulldogs took the win with a resting touch to take them into the final.

In a tense and even final, both sides continued to alternate end wins, with tight heads and a few big conversion shots keeping the game level throughout.

A close measure on

the final end resulted in a draw and for the second time in the night an extra end tie-break was required.

With the banter flying between the teams and a raucous crowd shouting support Victor Bravos managed to win the tie-breaker and take the season championship.

Congratulations to both Victor Bravos and DTM Bulldogs for putting on a great exhibition of quality bowls.

Eighteen of the non-finalists played a fast-paced round of one end matches against eight other teams.

Players enjoyed the social yet competitive atmosphere.

With six wins from eight games the lightning premiership was won by the Redundants.

The club would like to thank Haymes Paint Shop

for their sponsorship of the competition, Bakers Delight for providing the bread for a weekly sausage sizzle, Hilltop Farms for an ever-changing variety of meat trays for raffle and all the teams for their ongoing support of our club.

Additionally a shoutout to the club's dedicated volunteer crew: Derek, Steve, Newk, Brownny and Marko for outstanding bar work, Christine, Chrissy, Jen, Kerrie and Kim for their kitchen-craft and miles of pushing delivery carts, Wayne, Sponge, Hoff and Al for sizzling sausages to varying degrees of doneness, Lindsay for preparing the greens and competition setup, and Mighty Max the master raffle seller.

The club look forward to doing it all again in 2026.



The Phillip Island Croquet Club are hosting a weekly social game on Thursday afternoons. Recently the club had a group of backpackers take part in competition.

Social Thursday afternoon competition

CROQUET

The Phillip Island Croquet Club are hosting a Thursday social after-

noon of competition.

Games commence at 4pm and follow up with dinner at 7pm (bring your own meal).

Come along on a Thursday before the end of March (weather permitting) for a great afternoon.



Paula Davidson receives the Encouragement Award from President Caroline Shaw.

News from the table

BRIDGE

In a heartwarming moment at this year's Phillip Island Bridge Club annual general meeting, Paula Davidson was honoured with the Richard Mears Encouragement Award.

Despite having only played competition bridge with the club for six months, Paula has shown remarkable improvement.

After retiring, she sought mental stimulation and found it in the game of bridge.

An ad in the local paper led her to the club where she underwent lessons and supervised practice sessions before diving into competitive play.

Paula describes bridge

as a challenging yet rewarding game, with the thrill of winning a hand being the highlight of her experience.

The Phillip Island Bridge Club holds competition bridge on Monday and Wednesday afternoons.

New members regardless of experience are encouraged to join.

For more information contact the club's President, Caroline Shaw on 0418 369 557.

Results

Duplicate with 5.5 tables (Monday March 10): 1st Paul Waylen and Anne Ferrari 59.72 per cent, 2nd Greg Nicholson and Jean Barbour 57.87 per cent

and 3rd Deb Anglim and Shirley Stewart 53.24 per cent.

Nationwide with 5.5 tables (Wednesday March 12): 1st Moya Crowley and Caroline Shaw 61.46 per cent, Marion Wellwood and Anne Ferrari 58.85 per cent and 3rd Graeme and Wendy McKergow 56.25 per cent.

Euchre results

Ladies' winner: Caroline with seven wins.

Men's winner: Ian with five wins.

Encouragement award: Laurie Jones.



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

Island Summer Triples

BOWLS

The Phillip Island Bowling Club hosted their sec-

ond last Summer Triples competition for the season on March 11. Both greens were full with all bowlers

having their eye on the prize.

Runners up: Peter Forrest, Marilyn Forrest and Daryl White. Congratulations to winners: John Newcombe, Giulio Marcolongo and Frankie Cimino.



The SGB team who took part in the three-day competition at Warragul.



SGB's Girls A and B medley relay team who placed in second and third over Warragul's competition weekend. Pictured (from back left): Bec, Izzy, Harper and Bel. Front: Sienna, Maggie, Tayah and Holly.

SGB hold their own against Gippsland's powerhouse clubs

SWIMMING

The best of Gippsland swimming was on display at Warragul over the long weekend as 112 South Gippsland Bass Swim Club (SGB) competitors joined the rest of the region's swimmers in the three-day championship.

A hectic weekend saw club members aged between seven and 51 years of age compete in a range of distances.

Competition was fierce, with three of the top 10 regional swim clubs at the event.

There were no easy wins, but certainly plenty of smiles after the events with many SGB competitors in heats with club mates.

Heats were held in the morning and the top eight returned at night to swim in finals and team relays.

SGB showed their depth, fielding up to 10 teams in some relays and coming away with several medals.

The SGB swimmers gave their best in warm conditions.

For many it is the final meet of the year before the autumn break in which competitors have a few weeks off competition.

It's a fantastic chance to see how much they have improved on their times beginning of the start of the Long Course season back in October.

Awards

Jedda Taggell was awarded the Jane Mitchell

Encouragement Award for females, finishing in six finals for the meet.

The Alan Harlow Trophy for the most points achieved by an U14 female was won by Emily Croatto with a total of 54 points.

The Jewell Family Trophy was taken home by Rahni Matheson as the top female with 87 points.

The Noelle Brajkovic Trophy for Outstanding Achievement Outside of Gippsland by a swimmer aged 14 and under went to Archie Smyth for his performance/s at the Victorian Countries and States throughout the season.

SGB are still hot on the heels of Traralgon, who won the Ken and Pat Hewat Premiership Trophy for the most points overall with SGB placing second for the seventh year in a row.

The team celebrated with their annual Gippies' Championships Dinner at the Warragul Industrials Clubrooms where parents could catch up and competitors could enjoy some down time with friends.

Coach Dylan was pleased with their efforts stating that "some of our competitors had huge schedules, doing their age competitions plus open events and to see them medalling in both, long into the meet was inspiring for the little kids".

"I want to thank the families for their support, timekeeping and helping around the club.

"We have had a num-

ber of our older swimmers make finals or medal for the first time which was wonderful.

"It goes to show that persistence pays off.

"Some are here for their fifth or sixth time and it was one of the highlights for me over the weekend."

Coach Lorri said that "I just love seeing all the little kids having a go in the under eights and tens events.

"It seems such a long way for them and they are just so proud when they finish.

"When they do the relays the whole club gets behind them, cheering from the sidelines. It's such a fun atmosphere."

For Coach Sam, who has been coming to the championships for many years, watching the kids she coached as juniors find success as older competitors is always a joy.

"Watching their swimming journey, from little kids just making it down to the other end, to teenagers coming home with finals or national times is just so pleasing to see."

As the Long Course Season comes to an end, there is just the All-Juniors Finals and the National Championships to go for the swimmers before a well-deserved break.

For the Phillip Island golf, Red Rocks golf and tenpin league results visit pisra.com.au/sport

Sharks steaming into finals

CRICKET

The A grade boys are heading into another finals campaign on a four-game winning streak on the back of an all-round team dominance of Leongatha Town led by their glorious skipper's unbeaten 100 not out.

Week one saw the Sharks lose the toss and be sent into the field. Niven (Tim) and McCausland opened up and got the sharks going.

Leongatha Town are notorious fast aggressive starters with a lot of firepower at the top of the order.

After their start, the skipper turned to the Islands most experienced bowler Royal to stem the tide.

Royal struck twice with some sharp fielding by Johnston, whilst Brown was beginning to find his groove up the other.

Brown got the next, followed by Royal getting his third.

Lane replaced Brown and got the Islands fifth right before the tea break, again caught in the deep by Johnston.

Town at 5-90 looked to be struggling before a solid partnership wrestled back momentum.

Madusanka was the highlight for Town making a classy 85 to get Town up near a competitive total.

Lane and Royal were tasked with bowling the innings out and both continued to take regular wickets.

Some late hitting grew the total to 236 all out.

Royal finished 17/2/5/58, a brilliant effort.

Lane was equally as de-



Great win for A grade cricketers, securing their place in the finals, pictured on the left is Captain Daniel Mock after making another 100.

structive 17.4/0/4/55.

With 236 on the board, the Island came back hungry to chase down the below par total.

Lane and Cleeland opened and batted with solid defence and powerful hitting.

0-60 was looking strong, before Lane found the only fielder on the boundary, followed shortly by Johnston who failed to trouble the scorer.

Mock joined Cleeland and the veterans steadied the ship, until Cleeland got a jaffa and was bowled for 37.

Birthday boy Niven (Tom) also fell to a sharp catch which brought Black in with his skipper.

A solid partnership on either side of the tea break gained momentum back for the Sharks.

Black missed timed an on drive and departed for 20.

The momentum was well and truly back for the Island which allowed Beaumont to join Mock and apply serious pressure

to Leongatha bowling and fielding. Timing and hard running from the young calf and the old bull put the game on ice for the Sharks.

Beaumont unfortunately fell just before getting the total for 41, his best innings for the Sharks.

Royal was next, with one goal in mind, steering the Sharks home whilst allowing captain Mock reach triple figures.

All stars aligned with Mock reaching his hundred with the winning runs, delighting the Sharks watching from the stands.

Finals time is here, and the Sharks are full of confidence to try to go for their fourth title in a row.

The mixture of young and experienced has delivered a unified team who find the most enjoyment out of their teammate's success.

A real sign of a champion team.

Phillip Island plays Wonthaggi Club this Saturday / Sunday.

Go Sharks.



Congratulations to last week's winners on 36 points: Peter McWilliams (3), Brenda Moloney (2), Amanda Bozelle (L) and Michael Dady (S).

Midweek at Lang Lang

BOWLS

The South West Gippsland Bowls Group headed out to Lang Lang last for their regular midweek competition.

The green was in sparkling condition thanks to Neville who set it up for players.

Players were welcomed by Pauline and Vern while Peter arranged the teams.

Throughout the days play, a few wrong bias bowls added to the RCH

tin thanks to the club's charitable individuals.

A shoutout from the club to Vern for standing in as President for the week.

Results

Congratulations to last week's winners on 36 points: Peter McWilliams (3), Brenda Moloney (2), Amanda Bozelle (L) and Michael Dady (S).

Runners up on 32 points: Peter Thorley (L), Laurie Bell (3), Frank

D'Unienville (2) and Tony Heppleston (S).

Best one game winners on 19 points: Mark Hanrahan (S), Alan Mofum (L) and Neil Andreatta (3).

The club would like to thank their hard-working volunteers who are loved by all for their efforts.

A special thanks to Marianne and Colin for their work in the bar and to Aggie in the kitchen.

This week the club will meet at Corinella to fight it out for team of the week.



The Island's U16 Girls: Macy, Tierlin, Rachel, Brinkley, Violet, Adele, Scarlett, Amy, Madi, Kate and Pip.

RIPS take on Country Championships

BASKETBALL

Last weekend saw the season finale for Phillip Island's U16 and U18 RIPS teams as they headed to the Basketball Victoria Country Championships.

Playing against the best teams representing their country towns in the state, all sides put up a fantastic fight and represented Phillip Island proudly.

U16 Girls

The Phillip Island U16 Girls put in a strong effort at the Country Championships, battling through each game with strong energy despite falling short by close margins throughout the tournament. Their final game was a nail-biter, coming down to the wire before going down by just one point.

The team give their thanks to Coach Rachel for her basketball knowledge, dedication and for making the weekend an enjoyable and rewarding one for them.

U16 Boys

Despite the U16 boys going down against Wangaratta in the Grand Final the team are still smiling.

After a weekend of many ups and downs it's nice to look back with a smile.

The respect, maturity, teamwork and bonding these young adults showed was inspiring. A thank you to all the parents, grandparents, fellow teams and families who came to watch the boys each tournament. Additionally a thank you from the team to Tim for his assistance and coaching.



Coach Kris and the Island's U18 Boys, Blake, Darcy, Euan, Max, Jack, Jack, Henry and Harvey.

U18 Boys

The U18 Boys had a great weekend finishing out the season at the Country Championships.

They had some strong wins on the first day but couldn't bring home a win in the finals. For a season plagued with injuries and illness it was wonderful to see the whole team coming together with great teamwork throughout the tournament.

A thank you from the team to Kris for her expertise and commitment to coaching the boys this season.



The Island's U16 Boys, runners up in the Country Championships Division 4.

New RPIAC record set for kingfish catch

FISHING

With light winds and great weather on Saturday, and wind and abundant rain on Sunday, the eleventh Rhyll-Phillip Island Angling Club (RPIAC) angling competition for the 2024/25 season held over March 15 and 16 was a great success.

Anglers ventured around the waters of Phillip Island in search of some worthy catches.

At the close of weigh-in at 5pm on Sunday the weekend's tally was 39 fish, one shark, one game fish, and one cephalopod ensuring the weekend's weigh-in masters, Martin Xuereb, Duncan Firth and Paul Goodwin were fully engaged.

The eligible species caught throughout the weekend included King George whiting, snapper, kingfish, salmon, mackerel, flathead, gummy shark and cuttlefish.

RPIAC encourages all anglers to develop skills and awareness of sustainable and responsible angling and welcomes young anglers to engage in their angling competitions, offering complementary membership to children aged 16 and under.

Participation involves bringing eligible species caught during the competition weekend to weigh-in at the RPIAC clubroom.

The weigh-in windows provided a forum for lively conversations and fishing tales to reveal the secrets of the deep, the weekend's hotspots and the best techniques.

Thanks to volunteers, Jill, Lorraine, Karen, Julie and Ron, anglers and supporters were re-energised with beverages, barbecue sausages and baked potatoes with cheese and coleslaw after the post-competition presentation.

Results

The Squidgie Mixed Bag Points competition, for participants aged nine and under was another magnificent contest with Byron Griffin winning the Squidgies competition with one fish worth 20 points.

The Junior competition for anglers aged 10 to 16, saw Ryan Brett claim prizes for the Junior Weight and Junior Points competitions.

Ryan caught a great 1225g snapper and a mon-



James Nicolaci set a new RPIAC record for a kingfish with a gross weight of 16200g surpassing the previous record of 15250g.

ster mackerel worth 1015 points (725g).

The Senior Heaviest Weight competitions were won with some impressive catches.

Robert Monk and Lauren Wright delivered the biggest and the best in the weight competition, weighing-in a 1935g snapper and a 710g salmon respectively.

The Senior Points competitions were won by Michael Stefanakis and Anne-Marie Richards with some chunky King George whiting.

Michael weighed-in a beast worth 1722 points (615g) and Anne-Marie had a beastie worth 1456 points (520g).

The gummy shark of the weekend with a clean weight of 3025g was caught by Brendan Garlepp to win the shark prize.

James Nicolaci impressed everyone, setting a new RPIAC record for a kingfish with a gross weight of 16200g, surpassing the previous record of 15250g.

James' kingfish won the game fish prize with a clean weight of 14600g.

The Squid/Cuttlefish competition was won by Robert Monk who caught a kraken cuttlefish weighing 3220g.

The Secret Weight prize

was awarded to Sam Orr for his 565g King George whiting which was closest to the weekend's magic number (562g).

With one more fishing competition remaining in the season, the odds of claiming an RPIAC Extraordinary Catch Incentive are fading.

Each competition weekend has angling members mindful of the \$1000 first-to-catch prizes for eligible species that equal or exceed the nominated weight.

Only one of these have been claimed this season (King George whiting greater than 1000g) and some possibilities remain: snapper (10kg), gummy shark (20kg), mullo-way (25kg) and kingfish (25kg).

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 final angling competition of the season will be held over March 29 and 30 where the Squidgie and Junior Club Champions will be announced.

For further information about the club, events, competitions and rules visit the website: www.rpiac.com

TIDE GUIDE

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

WED 19 MAR	THU 20 MAR	FRI 21 MAR	SAT 22 MAR	SUN 23 MAR	MON 24 MAR	TUE 25 MAR
HIGH 5:00 am 2.71 m	HIGH 5:27 am 2.71 m	HIGH 5:55 am 2.70 m	LOW 12:24 am 1.00 m	LOW 12:56 am 1.07 m	LOW 1:29 am 1.16 m	LOW 2:04 am 1.24 m
LOW 10:57 am 0.53 m	LOW 11:27 am 0.48 m	LOW 11:58 am 0.46 m	HIGH 6:24 am 2.67 m	HIGH 6:55 am 2.62 m	HIGH 7:27 am 2.54 m	HIGH 8:04 am 2.46 m
HIGH 5:43 pm 2.92 m	HIGH 6:15 pm 2.94 m	HIGH 6:47 pm 2.92 m	LOW 12:28 pm 0.48 m	LOW 12:59 pm 0.51 m	LOW 1:30 pm 0.57 m	LOW 2:08 pm 0.63 m
LOW 11:22 pm 0.93 m	LOW 11:53 pm 0.96 m		HIGH 7:21 pm 2.87 m	HIGH 7:58 pm 2.78 m	HIGH 8:38 pm 2.68 m	HIGH 9:25 pm 2.59 m

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Some familiar faces from the island's surfing community, at the NSR exhibition on the weekend. From left: Simon Wilson, Steve Vajda, Mark Johnson, Tom Tyrell, Bill Andrews and Pete Cartwright.

Everything's swell at the surf film festival

SURFING

Surf lovers were treated to a feast of surfing at the second Bass Coast Surf Film Festival on March 14 and 15.

The festival, which ran over two days at Berninnet, included 10 films from around the globe, plus an exhibition of surfing memorabilia from the island's rich surfing history, presented by the National Surfing Reserve committee.

On display were boards from local collections, including Phillip Island's first surfboards (surf planers), the remnants of a surfboard ridden by Glyndyn Ringrose on the world circuit, boards by champion kneeboarder and shaper Neil Luke and a 1962 board by Terry Klemm and Reg Bell.

The boards came from the collections of Laurie Thomson, Julie Box, the Harris Family and Glyndyn Ringrose.

Across the two days, several hundred people enjoyed the surf film festival and exhibition, and on Saturday evening were entertained by local band the Foxy Junes.



Rebekah Fincher in front of two of her father Dave Fincher's boards, part of the NSR exhibition of island surfing memorabilia at the Surf Film Festival.

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