

PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO

ADVERTISER

Your Community Voice!

Wednesday, October 20, 2021

\$1.60 Incl. GST



Lost locks for Sam

On Sunday, cheered on by friends and family, Cape Woolamai's Kade Wiggins shaved his head to raise money for the Peter Mac Foundation.

The fundraiser was in support of his friend Sam Docherty, who

is undergoing chemotherapy after a secondary testicular cancer occurrence.

Thanking all those who joined him at the Westernport Hotel, Kade encouraged everyone to dig deep for this worthy cause.

"What I've done today is nothing compared to what those with cancer go through every day."

The final fundraising tally for Kade's big shave included \$1804 in cash on the day, with around \$800 donated online – a total of around

\$2600.

The fundraiser is part of a bigger campaign, organised by Sam's AFL teammate and Carlton co-captain Patrick Cripps.

Cripps set up the fundraiser, with Carlton players shaving their

heads, hoping to raise \$50,000, but that target was quickly smashed.

To date, the fundraiser for Sam Docherty has raised over \$186,000. You can still donate at fundraise.petermac.org.au/sam-docherty

Cultural Centre costs skyrocket

The cost to build the new Cowes Cultural Centre has risen to \$27.2 million, an \$8.2 million increase from the original estimate.

Bass Coast Shire Council announced the new figure last Friday, saying a tender for the construction would go before the October Council meeting this week.

Bass Coast Mayor, Cr Brett Tessari defended the cost blow out, saying the final design was "completely changed from the original concept", and due to the pandemic, construction costs had risen by 40 per cent.

He reinforced the council's commitment to the project, describing the new building as the "jewel in the crown" of the shire, but said he expected there would be criticism of the cost increase.

"It's easy to look at that (the numbers), but the project is completely different to what we originally looked at."

"The design changed after meeting with different groups and discussing what they wanted, and it reflects what they asked for."

"We've saved trees, saved the

grassed area, there's more floor space and it's more economical to run."

The response from the community was swift, with many brutal in their assessment of the council's handling of the project (see separate story).

Funded

Despite the cost increase, Cr Tessari said the project is fully funded, with the state government contributing \$3.3 million, \$5 million from the Federal government and a \$10 million low-interest loan from the Community Infrastructure Loan Scheme.

That leaves \$8.3 million to be covered from Council reserves.

"We agreed we were going to build this and if we had to, fund it ourselves out of borrowings and reserves. That's what we've done," Cr Tessari said.

The new design, by Jackson Clements Burrows Architects includes a library, 250-seat theatre, gallery, café and community hall, as well as meeting and gathering spaces.

The Mayor said the design considered world-leading sustainability principles, to ensure it aligned with

Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

"The architects have created a building that not only looks good but will be good to the planet."

"Because of its design, it is estimated there will be a 60 to 70 per cent reduction in operational energy requirement over its lifetime, in turn, reducing our operating cost."

Cr Tessari said "a lot of homework" had gone into the project, including visiting facilities in Cranbourne and Bendigo.

Continued page 11

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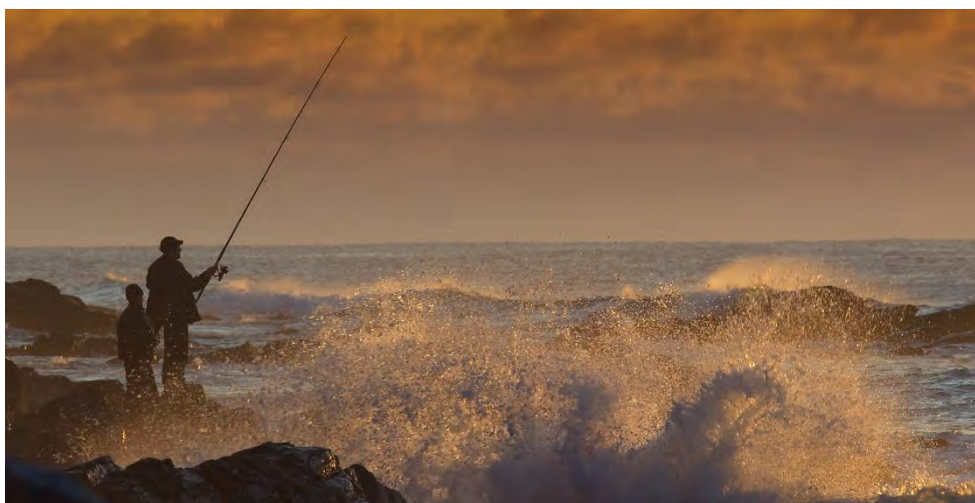
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MOSTLY SUNNY	SHOWER OR TWO	SHOWERS - EASING	SHOWER OR TWO	SHOWER OR TWO	MOSTLY SUNNY	SUNNY
11 21	12 21	13 18	12 16	11 15	10 14	9 18



Punchbowl and the rocks at the southern end of Potters Hill Road in San Remo are part of a proposed two-year trial to require fishers to wear lifejackets at high-risk locations.

San Remo in fishing safety trial

Two popular San Remo fishing locations will be included in a proposed trial into fishing safety. The Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) is seeking feedback on a proposal to require fishers to wear lifejackets when fishing at certain high-risk locations during a two-year trial.

It says tragically many rock fishers have died after being swept off coastal rock shelves and the new discussion paper is aimed to improve safety. Punchbowl and the rocks at the southern end of Potters Hill Road in San Remo will be included in the trial.

At the start of 2020, a fisherman was killed when he was washed off the rocks at Punchbowl Road, the third such death in four months.

Since 2000 there have been six deaths of anglers

at Punchbowl, which represents a third of all rock fishing deaths in Victoria in the last two decades.

VFA Chief Executive Officer Travis Dowling said evidence was irrefutable that wearing a life jacket substantially reduced the risk of drowning if a fisher is swept off the rocks.

"Mandating the wearing of life jackets may be necessary to keep more people safe and avoid the preventable loss of life," Mr Dowling said.

"The proposal is to require fishers wear a lifejacket when fishing at nine dangerous locations, which have been selected based on previous rock fishing related deaths and near fatal incidents.

"We are keen to understand community views on this proposal and have released a Discussion Paper for public comment. Any changes would be supported by a revamped public education campaign to encourage safe rock fishing and inform coastal fishers about appropriate safety measures.

"At the end of the day, we want to help keep recreational fishing fun and safe."

Sites to be included in the trial:

- Punchbowl Rocks (near San Remo)
- Rocks at the southern end of Potters Hill Road (San Remo)
- Rock platform near the blow holes carpark at Cape Bridgewater
- Dragon's Head at Rye back beach
- Bush Rangers Bay rocks, east of Cape Schanck
- Cape Schanck Lighthouse rocks
- Sorrento back beach rocks
- Artillery Rocks, west of Lorne
- Rock platform opposite Sheoak Falls, south of Lorne

Should the trial proceed, the VFA will work with key recreational fishing groups on an education program with the aim of having any new arrangements in place by December 2021.

The Discussion Paper is available at www.vfa.vic.gov.au/rockfishing and feedback can be sent to haveyoursay@vfa.vic.gov.au by 5pm on November 19.

Just how many cases do we have?

On Monday, Gippsland Region Public Health Unit (GRPHU) reported there were 395 active cases in Gippsland.

Baw Baw had the biggest case load (199), followed by Latrobe (158), with Bass Coast recording just 10 cases.

While the GRPHU case numbers for Baw Baw and Latrobe matched those reported on the state government coronavirus.vic.gov.au site, the numbers for Bass Coast are starkly different.

According to the state government website there were 21 active cases in our shire, up from 16 last Friday.

Previously Bass Coast Health CEO Jan Child said a disparity in numbers could be due to a test being registered to a Bass Coast address, while the patient was currently residing or isolating elsewhere.

In addition, some of the 3984-postcode area (which covers the Waterline through to Lang Lang and Monomeith) falls across two local government areas, and not all of the area is under the GRPHU jurisdiction.

According to the state government breakdown by postcode, as of Monday, 3984 (Waterline area) is recording the highest number of cases (11) in the shire. Seven active cases are in 3995 (Wonthaggi and surrounds) and two in Inverloch. On Phillip Island, there are two cases in 3922 (Cowes and surrounds), and one in 3925 (San Remo, Newhaven, Cape Woolamai).

Whichever figures you follow, it's clear there is Covid in the shire, and health authorities are urging anyone with symptoms to come forward for testing.

Viral fragments have been detected in the Wonthaggi wastewater in six tests conducted between October 5 and 13, and were detected in Cowes wastewater on October 12.

Based on figures on the state government Coronavirus website, cases tripled in Bass Coast in the first two weeks of October, but there are currently no exposure sites listed for the shire.

GRPHU advised there are now more than 900 primary close contacts throughout Gippsland, and five Covid patients in Latrobe Regional Hospital, including two in ICU. GRPHU provide regular updates on case numbers and exposure sites on its Facebook page.

State government Covid figures at www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/victorian-coronavirus-covid-19-data

Gippsland shires 90% and rising

Vaccination rates across Gippsland continue to climb with all six shires now recording 90 per cent or more of the population receiving their first dose.

Every shire except Latrobe is also past the 70 per cent mark for second doses.

Bass Coast is leading the way, with 77.7 per cent of the population fully vaccinated,

followed closely by East Gippsland on 75.3 per cent.

Four of the six shires now have vaccinated over 95 per cent of the eligible population.

Despite the rising local case numbers, the strong vaccination figures should help provide protection for residents as the state begins to open up this week.

GIPPSLAND VACCINATION RATES – AS OF OCTOBER 18

LGA	% received first dose	% received second dose
Bass Coast	>95	77.7
East Gippsland	>95	75.3
South Gippsland	>95	73.7
Wellington	94	70.9
Baw Baw	>95	70.5
Latrobe	90.5	62.6

As of October 18, every Gippsland council had passed the 90 per cent mark for first doses of Covid vaccines.

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Vaccine venue: trial will help business

Management at a Cowes hospital-ity venue say they agreed to take part in regional Victoria's vaccine "passport" trial to help staff mental health and to earn an income after months of closure.

Manager of North Pier Kimberley Brown said while she was aware of criticism on social media "from people that don't agree with this way forward", opening the venue to fully vaccinated patrons was best for the businesses.

"This is what has been planned by the government to get Victoria open again, and if it's the difference between us sitting at home waiting – or working – then we will work," Kimberley said.

"My staffs' mental health and physical health is more important than a few bad reviews."

She said North Pier had been closed for nine weeks, and open and closed off-and-on prior to that.

Current restrictions – of only 10 people inside and 30 people outside – was weather dependent and "certainly not profitable for us".

Whereas under the vaccine passport trial, 30 people were allowed inside and 100 people outside.

"So when we were given the opportunity to move into the next phase of restrictions easing ahead of others, under the trial opportunity, it meant we could open the doors and get some staff back to work," Kimberley said.

"It is still not much for us given our capacity is 500+, but if it meant getting a few staff working and organised for what's ahead on the state government's 'road map' when we reach 70 per cent double dose vaccination threshold, we took it. We just want to get back to work."

She said the flow on impact for North Pier's opening would see other businesses, such as suppliers and contractors also getting back to work.

"Businesses will need to adapt as we move to a vaccinated economy, so we are helping to test the systems and



Manager of North Pier Kimberley Brown said antivaxxers from Melbourne and interstate had trolled the venue for taking part in the vaccination "passport" trial, especially after she appeared on Channel 7 and 9 news.

technology to make that transition. "The trial will help identify any issues and find solutions before Victoria starts to reopen, and we can provide that feedback back to the government."

Customer responses

Kimberley said patrons proved they were fully vaccinated using either the Service Victoria app, a COVID-19 digital certificate displayed on a smartphone, a printed version of their COVID-19 digital certificate, immunisation history statement or a medical exception certificate from their GP.

She said North Pier staff had been acting as tech support, helping customers connect their proof of vaccination to their Services Vic app "while they sit and have a drink and food".

"But mostly people have already

been able to do it and come prepared," she added.

She said North Pier had been "overwhelmed with support" from patrons.

"I think people want to feel some normality and get back to living their lives."

Food and beverage staff Sian Bates and George Anderson were happy to be back at work, although George said it was "obviously difficult with new regulations and rules".

Sian said while some customers had been "annoyed" with having to show their vaccination certificates, most have been "kind and happy to participate and just want to get back to normal".

Criticism

Phillip Island social media ran hot last week with debate about the vaccination passport trial, with many

anti-vaxxers describing it as "segregation" and "discrimination", with others saying the business should be "shamed".

"Shame on these places for putting their hand up for this. Shame on anyone vaxxed or not who supports this," wrote one.

However, these comments saw others rally in support of North Pier, saying the trial allowed business to be viable again.

"I for one support North Pier," wrote Andre Jack.

"Good on them for leading the way. It's your choice to be vaxxed, or not, and the choice you make has consequences."

Ali Mac agreed saying "people are yelling about freedom of choice, yet don't like it when businesses choose what to do".

Others highlighted that this was

part of the new economy to support the health system.

"Maybe they should actually spend time in hospital or speak to people who work in Covid wards before they complain about their lack of freedom and choice, because their choices are impacting other people in a far worse way than not going to the pub for a drink."

Kimberley said antivaxxers from Melbourne and interstate had trolled the venue for taking part in the vaccination "passport" trial, especially after she appeared on Channel 7 and 9 news.

But she added "I'm not worried about them at all".

"In the first week we've not had anyone come in and make trouble and if it wasn't for this initiative the business wouldn't be open until November."

Trial

Churchill Island Café was also included in the trial, which is seeing 15 venues in six local government areas operate with higher capacity and density limits under the "vaccinated economy".

According to the state government, the trials will allow testing of the vaccine certification technology, confirm the processes for establishing vaccination status, as well as fine-tuning training for staff and support for business owners.

Victorians can add their COVID-19 digital certificate to the Service Victoria app through MyGov or the Express Medicare Plus App.

Regionally based trial case managers from the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions will provide direct assistance to each business as they prepare to welcome patrons and customers, and throughout the trials.

The venues will test settings attached to the 80 per cent double-vaccination mark on Victoria's Roadmap to Deliver the National Plan – a threshold due to be achieved on or before November 5.

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Carpark technology to be installed in Cowes

Bass Coast Shire is rolling out car parking sensor technology in Cowes, in a crackdown likely to see an increase in parking fines.

The \$300,000 "Smart Parking" project – quietly announced on a shire web page this month – will see about 500 car parks in Thompson Avenue, Chapel Street, The Esplanade and the Cowes Transit Centre installed from February 2022.

By comparison, in Wonthaggi there will be 225 on-street bays.

The project is already coping widespread criticism, with some saying the shire was tone deaf to community needs (see separate story).

Shire CEO Ali Wastie said the tender for the project would be released this month, which will see vehicle detection sensors linked to six Cowes digital street signs to guide drivers to available parking, and be supported by a parking availability app.

Ms Wastie said the technology "can be used to aid enforcement", adding it "is not paid parking".

"The Smart Parking project implementation will support the current parking restrictions and no enforcement action can be taken against drivers who adhere to the restrictions," Ms Wastie said.

"Smart Parking does help make enforcement more efficient and the sensor technology will let us know exactly how long a car has been parked in a parking bay.

"Paid parking would need to be a further consideration of council and include detailed community engagement."

She said the technology was being rolled out because "we have heard that traffic and parking demand is an issue for our community and businesses".

"Improved access to parking supports our local businesses by improving access and parking bay turnover, which ultimately means greater numbers of visitors in these centres."

The technology rollout comes in the wake of increased pressure on Cowes infrastructure, with a current planning application for a six-storey, \$12 million hotel proposal in Thompson Avenue seeking to cut 46 car parks – a waiver on half the legally-required parking.



How to ease the squeeze on congestion in Cowes? The shire thinks smart parking technology is the answer.

Last month Bass Coast Shire waived its own parking requirements for the redeveloped Cowes Cultural Centre. The increased floor area of the new centre also requires an additional 46 parking spaces, which the shire has applied to waive.

"Fair, equitable"

According to the shire, the technology will minimise parking over-stays, "giving fairer access to parking bays at high demand locations".

The technology does not identify or register vehicle number plates.

The optional app will let drivers pre-plan parking, while six Variable Message Signs

(VMS - digital signage) will be installed in Cowes to display real-time parking availability, for drivers who don't use the app.

The shire will monitor the usage of Smart Parking and "evaluate the benefits of providing real-time parking availability to drivers and assess the impact on travel times, congestion and resident and visitor experience in this busy precinct".

Similar projects in other areas showed Smart Parking guidance could save 2.5 minutes each trip, adding up to over 600 hours saved per month in peak season, "providing more time for shopping and recreation".

"Smart Parking helps reduce non-compliant parking where drivers over-stay and prevent

the next person from parking and it can reduce the number of cars cruising for a park.

"This can benefit everyone and reduce our emissions, creating a more sustainable and efficient city."

Installation of parking bay sensors, technology equipment and signs on poles, painting of sensor numbers in parking bays will start in February/March 2022, following the appointment of a successful tender in December. Operational testing of smart parking sensors, LED signs and guidance app will begin in March and the service will be launched mid-2022.

The \$300,000 is included in the 2021/22 capital works budget.

CFA training returns

It might have looked like an emergency at the Cowes Early Learning Centre last week, but it was actually an important training session for the Phillip Island fire brigade.

Bec Quarrell from the brigade said with restrictions easing, the crews were able to return to training sessions to maintain their skills.

"Last Tuesday night, our members attended the local early learning centre and primary school," she said.

"This allowed us to increase our local knowledge of the buildings, location of water sources and complete our skills maintenance."

For updates and fire safety tips, follow the Phillip Island Fire Brigade Facebook page or visit cfa.vic.gov.au.



Last week, the Phillip Island Fire Brigade trained at the Cowes ELC, to increase their knowledge of the building and water sources in case of an emergency.

Opposition to "Smart Parking" in Cowes

Judging by community responses on social media, ratepayers weren't buying the shire's Smart Parking concept, with several even suggesting residents needed to petition against it.

Mieke Briggs said the technology was "revenue raising", questioning why Cowes will receive 497 parking bay sensors compared to 225 in Wonthaggi.

"I think the only ones who will love this are parking inspectors as the sensor automatically lets them know when you've overstayed your time limit," Mieke said.

Naomi Anderson said the technology was a waste of money when funds would be better used to add three more kerbside bin collections in summer.

Elaine Hamilton agreed, asking why the shire couldn't find "anything more positive to spend the money on".

"Don't they realise Covid has stressed everyone enough? Or ask the rate payers what their preference would be," she said.

Sharon Matthews reiterated the comments saying the shire couldn't do extra bin collections, "but can continue to increase our already high rates and now gouge us even harder with parking fees".

Others echoed these sentiments, with Christine Dilger wondering "who asked for smart

parking?"

Ken Hailey said the technology was only needed for Christmas and Easter, "otherwise it's very rarely needed".

"Why do this to sleepy Cowes?" Ken said.

"Outside peak times elderly people will park in good faith and if they stay more than an hour will be booked.

"It will put people off coming here. It's the tip of the iceberg."

Ken said parking technology worked in metropolitan Melbourne because traders supported it and it was also a source of revenue for city councils.

"But in a rural shire, you've got to be kidding," Ken said.

"I'd like to know the genuine reason they're introducing this. Is the aim revenue? Where is the consultation with the community?"

He said his research showed each sensor bay cost about \$70 to maintain each year and also had a failure rate of about five per cent, with many fines disputed or challenged in court.

There were a few voices of support, including from Rob Burns, who said it was fair unless it was a precursor to paid parking, while Tracy Archer said the signage helped to find a car park quickly.



Skills maintenance is an important part of the brigade's training program.

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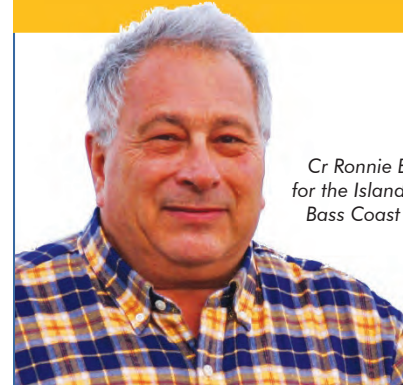
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Tree lopping under investigation at caravan park

Bass Coast Shire is investigating the destruction of mature gum trees at the former Islander Caravan Park in Cowes, after resident anger at the unexpected “denuded skyline”.

The new owners of the site have defended the action, saying they didn’t need a permit, adding dead trees were removed for safety before they kick-start the caravan park with 49 new cabins and a pool complex.

Earlier this month resident Jonette Wauchope said she was shocked to see bulldozers level trees at 137 Thompson Avenue including a “very much alive magnificent” grey gum.

“There were many trees on the site. I used to love the large gums as the birds would congregate there each morning and evening. It was a real haven for them,” Jonette said.

“Surely some of the trees could have been saved.”

Cowes resident Wendy Bojkowski agreed, saying the trees were “brutally removed without any thought, consultation or planning”.

“A drive into town will reveal another denuded skyline. Another flock of birds desperately looking for shelter,” Wendy said.

“Are we going to be just another Gold Coast?”

“It is not progress to cover every square metre of the earth in concrete and glass. This is driven by greed, but you cannot put a price on trees.”

Investigation

Shire CEO Ali Wastie last week said the removal of vegetation at 137 Thompson Avenue was under investigation.

“The land is within a Vegetation Protection Overlay and is also subject to the native vegetation removal requirements within the Planning Scheme,” Ms Wastie said.

“As our investigation is still active, we cannot provide details of the alleged breach.”

Ms Wastie said the shire took “illegal vegetation removal seriously” and had long advocated the maximum fine for an individual should be



Cowes residents are frustrated at the continual levelling of trees for development, with one saying: “It is not progress to cover every square metre of the earth in concrete and glass. This is driven by greed; you cannot put a price on trees.”

significantly increased.

Ms Wastie said the shire did not currently have any applications for the use of the land at 137 Thompson Avenue, or for subdivision.

Phillip Island Conservation Society president Jeff Nottle said they were “always concerned with the seemingly relentless removal of mature trees” for urban development.

“Loss of urban tree coverage, important habitat and biodiversity are some the costs while the gains are often just another building or another car park,” Jeff said.

“Council needs to act now to protect what we have left and introduce strategies to ensure we all gain the benefits of greater tree coverage.”

PICS presented to council in 2019 on the need for a strategy to maintain and improve urban forests, with other shires having detailed strategies.

Developer response

The land, formerly the Islander Caravan Park, is owned by Holiday Lifestyle Cowes, a company which also has caravan parks in St Leonards, Portland and Werribee.

According to one of its Melbourne directors, Lauren Clarke, while they negotiated the lease to the land last year, they only settled on the property last month.

Previous advertisements for the site marketed it as an “affordable accommodation village ideal for retirees and first home buyers”, with house and land from \$350,000.

But Lauren said their plans were now to establish 49 cabins on the site which would not require a permit, as it was previously a caravan park with 95 sites.

She said in coming months they would apply for a planning permit for a 600m² facility including an outdoor pool, barbecue area, kitchen, toilet block, showers and laundry.

Lauren said trees had been removed because they were in poor condition and posed a safety risk to neighbours and none were on the list of trees requiring a permit in the vegetation protection overlay.

“There was an arborist report from the previous owners that showed most of the trees in poor condition,” Lauren said.

She said the arborist found no high value trees on the site and many were rated as having ‘no’, ‘low or low-moderate’ retention value.

“Several trees have fallen and caused damage to property. One fell onto a neighbouring property and destroyed 50 metres of shared boundary fencing, one fell across our internal roadway, narrowly missing existing caravans and one large tree fell within the rear of the property, which fortunately was vacant land.

“Owners of homes at the rear of the property have complained to us on numerous occasions, about the dangerous nature and risk associated with the trees near their property boundary.

“The visually significant and healthy trees fronting Thompson Avenue remain.”

She said they hoped to be open to tourists from 2022 and intended to plant up to 150 new plants.



A beautiful sunrise can’t hide the tree dieback in Oswin Roberts Reserve, a problem happening across the island.

Mass gum dieback across island

The death of large numbers of eucalypts across Phillip Island has conservationists scratching their heads, with calls for a renewed revegetation push to ensure enough gum trees for the future.

Phillip Island Landcare confirmed they were investigating gum dieback, after residents took to social media to question the problem.

Susan Turville wrote on Facebook she had noticed a lot of gums around the island “look like they are dying”, asking whether others had noticed the problem.

Carol Griffiths responded that it had been a problem for a while and she was unsure of the cause, to which others posed their own theories from bugs to drought, possum browsing and growing urbanisation.

Phillip Island Landcare’s Lisa Wangman said they were working with the Nature Parks, coastal groups and local farmers to investigate the problem.

“There are many potential causes, insects, possums, water tables, salinity, drought, wet, fungus, for example,” Lisa said.

“Soil tests haven’t shown phytophthora to be a cause and it’s happening on many parts of the island. More research is needed.”

Bass Coast Landcare Network project coordinator Jye Andersen said there was no easy way of observing why dieback occurred be-

cause there were so many different possibilities requiring research.

“Scientific studies are important to ensure we learn from these changes and do our best to prevent them in the future,” he said.

Jye said the dieback highlighted the importance of continuing to revegetate “to ensure adequate regeneration is occurring and our ecosystems are equipped to cope with mass dieback events and other similar environmental catastrophes”.

Phillip Island Conservation Society president Jeff Nottle called on the shire to maintain and improve our urban forest.

“Urban forest strategies exist in many other municipalities,” Jeff said.

“Our council needs to act now to protect what we have left and introduce strategies to ensure we all gain the benefits of greater tree coverage and that council meets its own urban greening actions in the Bass Coast Climate Action Plan.”

Social media comments also highlighted the damage possums and other animals do to young saplings, with gardeners urging people to erect tree guards or apply metal sleeves to trunks to stop browsing.

Resident Ben Miles added after he applied tree guards, possums still “jumped up to the branches from any surrounding launchpad”, adding legal tree netting had proved the most effective.

Kinder demand booms

A \$650,000 extension to the Phillip Island Early Learning Centre has this month finished construction, ahead of the roll out of funded three-year-old kinder next year.

PIELC coordinator Karen Treppo said the building received a state government grant and included water tanks, a sensory bush tucker garden and could hold up to 38 children, larger than current rooms that hold 25.

She said while the centre already provided 3.5 hours of three-year-old kindergarten per child per week, the expansion was needed because in 2022 that would be increased to five hours of state government-funded kinder.

“By 2029 we have to increase that to 15 hours, but with the expansion we hope to have 15 hours by 2023,” Karen said.

The extension is the second in the PIELC’s history, which was first opened in 2012 and received a new portable for four and five-year-olds in 2020.

“Ever since we opened we have had huge demand and always had a wait list. We opened with 106 children per day and next year we’ll have 170 per day but potentially a total of 300 in a week because of our varied programs,” she said.

“We’ve definitely had more of an in-



Expanded three-year-old kindergarten – as well as demand from a growing population – has seen a third expansion to the Phillip Island Early Learning Centre. Centre coordinator Karen Treppo at the new extension, which finished construction this month.

crease since Covid and people moving to the area.”

Karen said the new extension would officially be opened to children in 2022.

As part of the state government changes to pre-school and kindergarten, Karen said the centre no

longer manages enrolments, which have instead gone to a central enrolment system run by the Bass Coast Shire.

“Parents can request their preferred kindergarten and which sessions.

“It ensures each child will get kinder.”



The funding will cover replacement of the roof, installation of a new skylight and asbestos removal at the San Remo site.

Roof relief for health service

Bass Coast Health’s Community Building in San Remo will receive some much-needed repairs, thanks to state government funding.

Last week, local MP Jordan Crugnale announced Bass Coast Health would receive \$160,270 to rebuild internal and external components of the roof of the San Remo Community Building.

A spokesperson said Bass Coast Health was grateful to receive the funding, which would be used to replace the roof on an older part of the San Remo site.

“The works will entail the replacement of the roof, installation of a new skylight and asbestos remov-

al,” the spokesperson said.

“The current roof is prone to leaking and has reached the end of its useful life. Bass Coast Health is aiming to finalise the contractor and award the job in the next few weeks.”

It is hoped the works will be completed by late January/early February 2022.

The project is one of 105 rural projects funded under the state government’s Regional Health Infrastructure fund.

More information on projects funded by the RHIF at: vhba.vic.gov.au/health/regional-facilities/regional-health-infrastructure-fund.



Bringing the outside in

For the residents of Banfields in Cowes, every week is a festival. There's a dazzling array of activities on offer, to keep residents entertained, engaged and connected.

The Covid pandemic presented the Lifestyle Team at Banfields, led by Robyn Montague, with a few challenges, with residents not able to enjoy normal outings.

Instead, the team brought the outside in, mixing one-off special events with regular activities.

The Golden Ladies Morning Tea brings a hint of Melbourne's famous Windsor Hotel High Tea to Cowes.

Held once a month, the morning tea boasts white tablecloths, Royal Doulton crockery and matching serviettes and the ladies enjoy gorgeous cakes, including old fashion favourites such as traditional Butterfly cupcakes, lamingtons, passionfruit sponge and chocolate ripple cakes.

"The women enjoy reminiscing about recipes they used, or ones they got from their mothers," said Robyn.

"It's wonderful to see the memories flooding back.

"And they love the beautiful crockery. The colours are so vibrant, which they don't get in our regular dining room where everything is white.

"In their own homes, they all had crockery they'd bring out for special occasions, so they really enjoy these special touches."

Between 10 and 12 women get together for the morning tea, with numbers currently capped due to Covid-safe plans.

While the women enjoy tea and "girl talk", the men haven't been neglected. Over in Banfield's Activity Hub a Men's Business group play darts, cards, scrabble or shuffleboard.

"The big favourite is darts," Robyn said.

"Many of them played when they were younger, and they were very keen to get back into it."

She said there was much laughter and friendly ribbing at the first darts session, with most players not even able to land a dart on the board.

"They loved that they were all so terrible at the beginning. But they've built up their arms and strength and now, several months later, everyone is on the board. It just goes to show, you're never too old to get back into something," Robyn said.

The group is coordinated by Lifestyle Team member Brady, making it an all-male affair.

"The men don't socialise as much naturally, so this session is a chance for them all to in-

teract with each other and talk about work and hobbies."

For all the fun and laughter, there is a serious purpose behind both the activities.

It provides a chance for residents to interact in environments that stimulate their interests, and all the reminiscing and games are great for brain power and memory.

With movement restricted due to Covid, Robyn and her team had to come up with inventive ways to give their residents outings without leaving Banfields.

Devonshire Teas held in the dining room – "it's all in gingham, so it's like a picnic" – and Pancake Day are very popular.

Another big favourite is Pie Day, where the team orders in pies from the Newhaven Bakery.

"The pies are served in a paper bag, with the residents' names written on them," Robyn laughed.

"There's sauce on the table, and plates, but everyone loves eating them out of the bag. Because we can't go out with Covid, we do as much as we can to bring a sense of fun."

That also means enjoying a Chinese meal, or eating fish and chips wrapped in paper – "we tear a hole in the top and they put their hands into the steaming bag".

Plus Robyn and her team – Janice, Shevorn, Brady, Sonia, Julie, Lisa and newest members Anita and Debra – have created some unique events this year, including a Grand Final party and Olympic Games events – to help residents navigate their way through the Covid challenges.

"We recently did a resident survey and the majority said they feel safe, happy and confident that they know what is going on," said Robyn.

"Our focus is on their mental health and wellbeing."



Mary enjoying her Golden Ladies Morning Tea held each month at Banfields.



Banfield's residents Richard, Ian, Ernie and Don warm up for a game of darts as part of Men's Business.

The Victorian Seniors Festival is back

The Victorian government's Seniors Festival is back with a diverse selection of performances and conversations available online and on the radio.

This year the festival has returned with a bang, with music, plays, talks and shows from a range of Victorian entertainers. The 2021 festival theme, Keep'n On, recognises the resilience of our seniors after a difficult 18 months.

Seniors are invited to take a walk down memory lane with Ross Skiffington and Sam Angelico, who will perform magic acts from their days at the Last Laugh Comedy Club in Melbourne.

Festival newcomers include Gunditjmarra man David Arden playing his new transcendent solo material, Djoliba Rattler Quartet with their upbeat West African-inspired music, and Jacob Papadopoulos and Sarita McHarg's enticing India meets Greece collaboration.

Cross-generational collaboration is a focus of the online In Conversation series.

Elizabeth Chong – celebrated Chinese-born Australian chef still going strong in her nineties – teams up with granddaughter Teresa Duddy, and percussionist Duré Dara chats to vocalist Carolyn Connors about the joys of more than 20 years performing together.

This year marks the launch of the new Victorian Seniors Festival Reimagined podcast – Women, Arts and Activism – which dives into historical events and the lives of inspiring women from different cultures.

Radio content this year includes Lux Radio Theatre presenting Fergus Hume's Victorian classic, The Mystery of a Hansom Cab, and Sandy Greenwood's powerful and award-winning play The Matriarch.

Regional Victorians will also have the opportunity to attend in-person events where

restrictions allow.

This year's festival builds on the success of the 2020 festival, which was reimagined in response to the pandemic as a longer online and radio event.

The annual seniors free public transport week – a fixture of the festival – will return once restrictions allow.

Seniors can listen in via their local community radio station or tune into video broadcasts and radio programs from the comfort of their own home until the end of the year via the festival website.

For the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, Regional senior Victorians can also reconnect again through a range of local, in person events.

Victorian seniors can tune into a wide range of content and find their local event via the Festival website: www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/2021-victorian-seniors-festival-reimagined

BANFIELDS
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Banfields Aged Care is a luxury and boutique residential aged care facility. It is family-owned and operated by 2nd and 3rd generation family members who have been involved in providing premium aged care for over 60 years.

Features include:

- Single, spacious rooms with ensuite bathrooms and comfortable living area
- Suites with fully equipped kitchenettes and lounge area for a larger style of living
- Spacious lounge, sitting and dining areas within the fully air conditioned facility
- Telephone and Foxtel connection points in every room
- Ample car parking
- Courtyards and outdoor sitting areas
- Hairdressing & Beauty Salon
- Chapel (non denominational)
- Theatre / Cinema
- Café and Bar
- Physiotherapy room and Gym
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AUSTRALIAN
AGED CARE

Bass Coast Sustainability Festival ‘Reimagined’ for 2021

There are exciting times ahead for Bass Coast and surrounds, as Bass Coast Landcare Network prepares to host this year's Sustainability Festival, ‘Reimagined’.

After multiple postponements of the Festival, Landcare staff focussed on what they could do, in a Covid safe way within ever-changing restrictions. This led to switching up the format from the traditional big, single day event of the past.

This year, local groups, businesses, and organisations have been invited to host either online or live events over a six-week period, framed by an Opening Launch event on October 23 and closing with a Produce Market at the River Garden in Bass on December 5.

The theme for the 2021 Festival is ‘Future Homes and Farms for 2040 – Empowering People to Adapt’. This topic extends the question, “What would a comfortable home or profitable farm look like in 2040 and what will we have to do to get there?”

Our amazing community was certainly up for the challenge to answer this question, with applications for over 60 online and in person events, all designed to empower us to act now for a more comfortable future.

Many have stepped outside of the square, themselves adapting to online formats that suit the changing world we find ourselves in.

“Although there have been less opportunities to attend events in person this year, the beauty of online events is that they are accessible to anyone, anywhere,” said Lisa Wangman, Festival organiser with the Bass Coast Landcare Network.

“This year we can give our local community the ability to speak to a massive audience, to share their



Zoe Geyer, Totally Renewable Phillip Island will be part of the online launch of the Bass Coast Sustainability Festival ‘Reimagined’ on October 23, starting at 4.30pm.

products, mission or passions, in a way we haven't seen before.”

Launch

The Festival will be launched by Bass Coast Shire Mayor, Cr Brett Tessari, on October 23 in an online event, starting at 4.30pm.

BCLN is excited to announce that the launch will be hosted by television favourite and Junior Landcare ambassador, Costa Georgiadis, and will also feature Dr Susie Burke covering the important topic of mental health during a changing climate.

After a Welcome to Country from the Bunurong Land Council, keynote speakers will be followed by a series of informative shorter presentations

from Bass Coast Shire Council, Zoe Geyer representing Totally Renewable Phillip Island, Paul Haar representing CERES Fair Wood and Jasmin Rooks representing the youth of Bass Coast.

The launch event will flow straight into a fantastic program featuring a whole host of topics around sustainability. There is a huge range of organisations and topics that will be covered in this year's festival with something for everybody.

Westernport Biosphere foundation, Energy Innovation Cooperative, Bass Coast Climate Action Network, Gippsland Community Power hub and Mitchell House are just a few of the community organisations in-



Another of the festival's fabulous presenters, Dr Susie Burke from the University of Queensland will speak at the launch about the important topic of mental health during a changing climate.

involved so far.

Events focussing on transport, energy, carbon, education and carbon farming will be hosted by Totally Renewable Phillip Island in partnership with other organisations.

Events on local food systems, housing, gardens, cloth nappies, planting for bees, local birds, water, social sustainability, available rebates, waste reducing products and more, hosted by a range of organisations, businesses and groups, can be viewed in this year's Festival program.

Another new category in the program this year is, ‘Available Anytime’, a curated list of links to existing online resources and content relating to sustainability including recorded

webinars and video clips.

After six sustainable weeks of events, the Festival will draw to a close on Sunday December 5, with a produce market to be held at the River Garden in Bass.

The River Garden is an exciting space, with swales of vegetables, herbs and fruit trees, a nuttery and orchard, and a resident nursery business, all surrounded by the beautiful Bass River. It's the perfect space to sell produce surrounded by innovative demonstrations of produce growing!

Applications are open for stallholders for the produce market, so if you grow, make or bake, you can express your interest by filling out an application form on the Festival website.

“Hosting a stall at the market is a great opportunity to not only sell produce but to connect directly with future customers. People can connect with the face of your business and learn how and why you do what you do,” said Lisa.

If you would like to discover, learn about and implement sustainable actions into your life to save yourself some hard-earned cash or increase your comfort, then there is definitely something in this year's festival for you.

This event is supported by Bass Coast Shire Council, Westernport Water and the Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning through the Supporting our Regions to Adapt program.

For more information about the Sustainability Festival and to view the Event Program, head to www.basscoastlandcare.org.au/sustainabilityfestival2021.html

/ Sponsored Article /

Sustainability FESTIVAL

“Reimagined”

**Launch event Sat 23rd Oct
4.30pm - 6.30pm**

Hosted online by television favourite and Junior Landcare ambassador, Costa Georgiadis

Featuring Dr Susie Burke covering the important topic of mental health during a changing climate

Local speakers and more...

Over 60 online & in-person events bought to you by local Groups, Organisations and Businesses

**Final event Sun 5th Dec
8am - 1pm**

Produce market at The River Garden in Bass

Successful Community Support Program applicants

Seven local not-for-profit organisations, including community groups, sporting clubs and schools will share in \$14,500 in sponsorship funding from round one of Westernport Water's Community Support Program for the 2021-22 financial year.

Successful applicants secured funding support for projects and initiatives including tree planting, environment and water conservation, drinking fountains, and hydration kits for healthy living.

The successful applicants are:

- Phillip Island Fire Brigade
- Phillip Island and District Basketball Association

- Cowes Yacht Club
- Powlett River Primary School
- Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club
- Kernot Grantville Fire Brigade
- Bass Valley Community Group

“I would like to congratulate the successful applicants and thank those who took the time to apply,” said Dona Tantirimudalige, Managing Director of Westernport Water

“Westernport Water prides itself on being active in the community, particularly when it comes to supporting healthier people, healthier communities and a healthier planet.

“Our sponsorship recognis-

es community groups that are doing great work. Their actions and initiatives will make an impact and help to build positive social and environmental change.”

Ms Tantirimudalige announced applications for the second round for the Community Support Program would open on December 1 until January 30, 2022, for projects that can be delivered by June 30, 2022.”

Guidelines and information on how to apply is available on the Westernport Water website – www.westernportwater.com.au. Just search Community Support Program.

/ Sponsored Article /

Community Support Program

Westernport Water is proud to announce that over \$14,500 will be distributed to 7 community organisations for round one of our Community Support Program for 2021-22.

Recipients:

- Powlett River Primary School
- Kernot Grantville Fire Brigade
- Bass Valley Community Group
- Phillip Island Fire Brigade
- Cowes Yacht Club
- Phillip Island and District Basketball Association
- Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club

Round 2

Applications are open from 1 December 2021 to 30 January 2022 to community groups, sports clubs or not-for profit organisations looking for funding support for their next event, activity or project to 1 July 2022.



www.basscoastlandcare.org.au/sustainabilityfestival2021



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning





A community battery, like this one erected in WA, will offer a more reliable electricity supply for the island, especially during peak periods, and provide a new renewable energy opportunity.



Council is holding a Detox your Home event on Sunday, October 31 at Wonthaggi, where you can safely dispose of unwanted toxic chemicals. Photo courtesy of Sustainability Victoria.

Island in line for community battery

Phillip Island is one step closer to a renewable energy future and strengthened power reliability.

AusNet Services and Mondo are pleased to announce a proposal for Philip Island's first battery energy storage system and invite the community to attend an online information session on Sunday, October 24 at 11am to hear about the exciting new proposal.

The Phillip Island Community Energy Storage System, (PICESS), will offer greater reliability in electricity supply for the island, especially during peak holiday periods and also provide a new world of renewable energy opportunity.

AusNet is focussed on innovative new technologies to provide network reliability and resiliency for communities. Mondo won the right to deliver this innovative solution for AusNet through a competitive tender process.

Under this proposal AusNet Services and Mondo are working with community groups Totally Renewable Phillip Island (TRPI) and the Energy Innovation Cooperative to

understand how a community battery will create value for the residents of Phillip Island.

Jodie Hallam, General Manager of Energy Services, Mondo believes the 10MWh Lithium-Ion Phosphate battery will form the foundation for a future energy eco system of locally generated electricity.

"Mondo is excited to be supporting the co-design of the future of energy for the residents of Phillip Island and believe in the value of distributed energy resources to support the creation of new energy eco-systems for customers and communities alike," said Ms Hallam.

The Victorian government has also awarded the Energy Innovation Cooperative, in partnership with TRPI and Mondo, up to \$550,000 in grants through the Neighbourhood Battery Initiative grant program, to conduct feasibility studies and trials.

The first grant will investigate the installation of up to ten street level Low Voltage batteries to further stabilise the island's power and increase the electricity networks capacity to host renewable energy.

The second funding stream will trial ways electricity tariffs can be used in combination with the PIC-ESS to provide locals 'virtual storage.' Both initiatives will include a substantial community outreach program to seek diverse views on community energy and will be the basis for future innovations.

Mary Whelan, Chair of TRPI said, "The announcement of this battery is thrilling for the member groups of Totally Renewable Phillip Island.

"It is terrific to see our plans and targets take shape, and we are looking forward to cooperatively uncovering the ways the battery being introduced by AusNet and Mondo, can turbo charge our sprint toward 100 per cent renewable energy."

Bass Coast Shire Council has also taken a key role in working with Mondo, reviewing suitable options for battery sites.

To register for the first event held online head to Event Brite and search for battery launch. www.phillip-island-picess-launch-online-event.eventbrite.com.au / Sponsored Article /

Detox your home this spring

Bass Coast Shire Council is encouraging the community to dispose of unwanted household chemicals at the Detox your Home event, coming to Wonthaggi on Sunday, October 31.

Detox your Home is a free and convenient service for householders to safely dispose of unwanted toxic chemicals. Detox your Home events are designed to accept a specific range of highly toxic household chemicals that aren't normally accepted at most transfer stations because they pose a high risk when combined or stored in large volumes.

Toxic household chemicals, such as cleaning products, pool chemicals, pesticides and herbicides can be disposed of during the event. Paint, fluorescent lights and batteries are not accepted.

To check the full list of what is accepted and to register for the Wonthaggi event, head to www.detox-wonthaggi2021.eventbrite.com.au.

Storage and disposal

Safe storage and disposal of household chemicals is essential to avoid harm to you, your family, pets

and the environment.

It's dangerous to throw chemical products out with your regular rubbish collection as they could explode, ignite, leak or mix with other chemicals.

Pouring household chemicals down the drain will pollute waterways, harm animals and vegetation, contaminate the water supply and make rivers and beaches unsafe for swimming.

Detox your Home events are staffed by experts who understand how to safely manage toxic household chemicals.

Chemicals are safely stored during the event and then transported to a licensed facility for processing.

With your safety in mind, Detox your Home events are now drive-through (no walk-ins) and contactless, supported by a Covid-safe plan. Registration is essential.

There is also a Detox your Home event being held at the Koonwarra Transfer Station on the same day that Bass Coast residents and property owners can register for.

For more information on Detox your Home, contact council.

Have a coffee and a chat about what is going on here in Bass Coast!

Sustainability FESTIVAL

Coffee Chats With TRPI in

Coronet Bay
3rd Dec (Cafe TBC)

Corinella
26th Nov (Cafe TBC)

Cowes
25th + 27th Nov & 2nd + 4th Dec
Cafe's sites are yet to be confirmed

all links on website
totallyrenewablephillipisland.weebly.com

Phillip Island Community Energy Storage System! (PICESS) Community engagement Pop Up Events

TRPI, Energy Innovation Coop and Mondo are offering a range of sessions to introduce PICESS, plus an on-line launch this Sunday 24th of October, as part of the 2021 Bass Coast Sustainability Festival.

Go to totallyrenewablephillipisland.weebly.com to find out more about this exciting project and what it can do to stabilise our electricity grid.

Totally Renewable Phillip Island

Community working together

Access to Wonthaggi Hospital and COVID testing

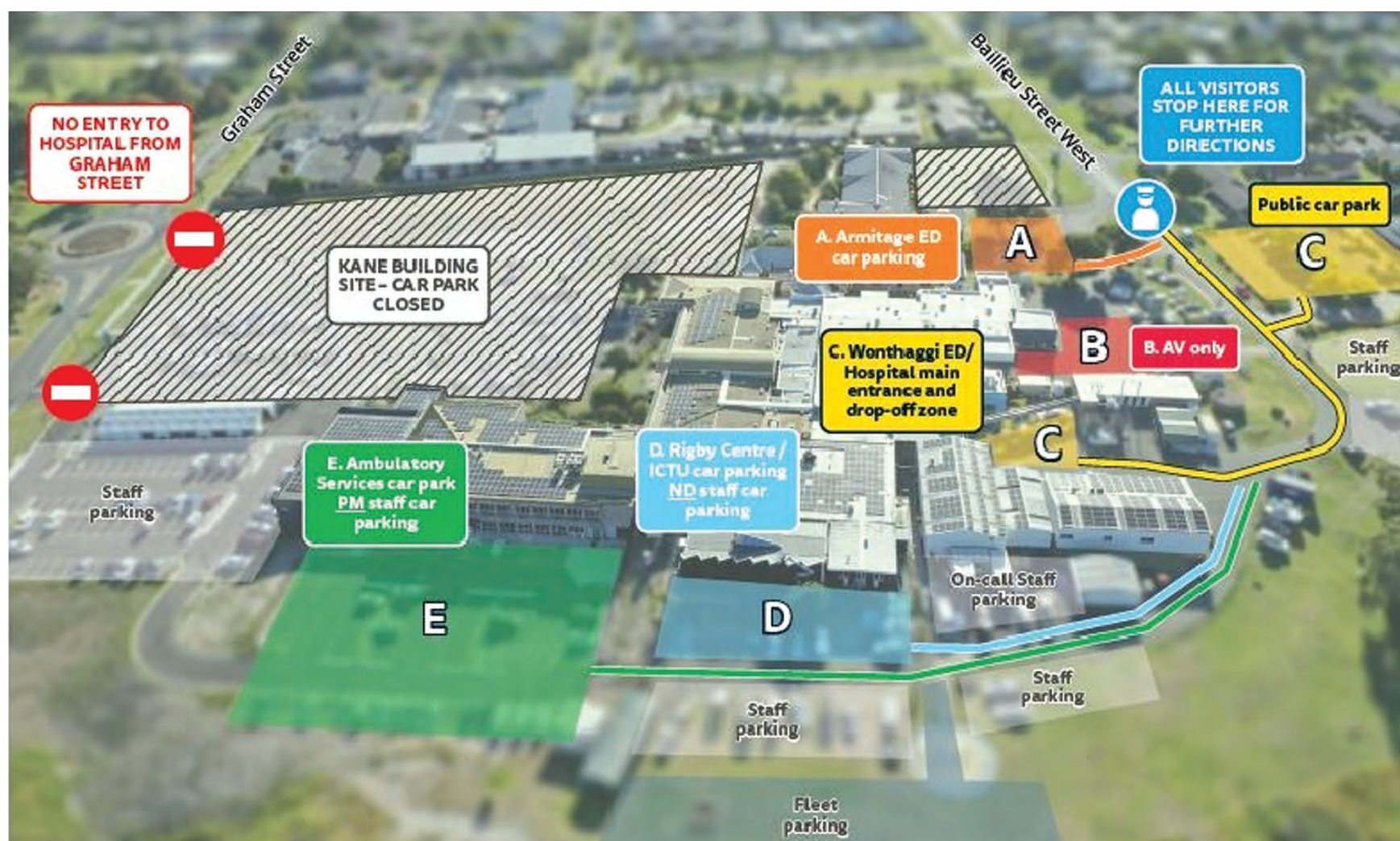
Main entrance for Wonthaggi Hospital via Baillieu Street West

- Construction has started on a new car park and entrance for your expanded Wonthaggi Hospital. As a result, the front of Wonthaggi Hospital has temporarily closed.
- A temporary new main entrance at the rear of Wonthaggi Hospital opened on October 11, accessible only via Baillieu Street West.
- In Baillieu Street West, drivers will be stopped at a Concierge Station to meet our BCH Traffic Management team.
- Access to Emergency, Radiology, Pathology, Theatre and all inpatient wards including maternity will be via the rear entrance.
- Public parking is allocated at Kirrak House.
- Community members will walk via a safe and guided pathway past the Ambulance Entry to reception area C in front of Wonthaggi Hospital's Theatre entry.
- Patient drop off and collection will be via the Supply driveway or Ambulatory Care entrance.
- Community with suspected or confirmed COVID will be treated in our temporary Emergency Ward in Armitage House.
- Access to the L. Rigby Centre and Allied Health will also be via Baillieu Street West.
- We expect the new car park to be complete by the end of December 2021.



Wonthaggi Hospital Changed Car Parking Arrangements

NO ENTRY from Graham Street as of **October 11, 2021**
NEW ENTRY from Baillieu Street West as shown



BCH COVID Testing Tent now in Watt Street

To accommodate the expanded construction site, from 9 October the COVID Testing Tent relocated from the front car park at Wonthaggi Hospital to the former McBride Campus of Wonthaggi Secondary College. Access is via Watt Street. The tent will continue to operate 9am to 4pm, 7 days a week.

In an emergency please call 000.

Contact Wonthaggi Hospital on 5671 3333.

For general queries email publicrelations@basscoasthealth.org.au



Cultural Centre costs skyrocket

From page 1

"We travelled and asked questions of people who have gone through a similar process."

Cr Tessari said the extra \$8 million was justified, "if people are willing to listen", listing his top three reasons as:

- the sustainability and efficiency of the design which would save money in the long run, by decreasing electricity and running costs

- the cost of landscaping and furnishings, not part of the original budget, are now included

- the new design had a larger footprint and more space

"We would have been criticised if we built the original, which wasn't what the community wanted," he said.

"Whichever way we turn we will be criticised. But we've taken our time to design a special building."

"When we voted for the original concept two years ago, who knew we were going to have a pandemic and a construction freefall, with prices going through the roof."

Goosebumps

Cr Tessari said although there were vocal critics of the project, he said most people he spoke to were "very excited by it".

"You hear too much about arts and culture being left behind in this pandemic. This is us saying, we've got your back."

"I get goosebumps thinking about driving down Thompson Avenue and seeing that building," he said.

Although Cr Tessari believes council has exhausted funding options for the build itself, it would "continue to advocate for funding to make sure we



The new design of the Cowes Cultural Centre will cost \$8.2 million more than the original \$19 million proposal. The \$27.2 million project is the largest in the shire's history.

bring the sort of shows to the Cultural Centre that are suitable for the kind of building we are going to build".

While he agreed there would be a "certain amount of commercial use" of the building, he said community groups would be able to utilise the space, saying he hoped people would "embrace and love it".

The council confirmed the fee structure for the new facilities would be provided in early 2022.

A consistent concern from community groups is that a similar fee structure to the Wonthaggi Union Theatre (particularly around the ticketing costs), would make it unviable for many small groups to use the centre.

"Council is always conscious of fairness and access regarding fees and charges in its fa-

cilities and continues to seek a balance between managing facilities, their costs and ensuring access," CEO Ali Wastie said.

"It is intended that the Cowes Cultural and Community Centre will be activated for long parts of the day, all through the week, by all parts of the community."

"Council is currently developing its Service Plan. This will guide programming and potential use of the centre, including community hire. As with all Council Community facilities, the focus is to enable dynamic activation of the facility."

If the tender is awarded at the October meeting, work is expected to begin in November, after the Heritage Centre and Library building is demolished. Ms Wastie said the preferred

builder has indicated a preference to use as much labour, materials and plant from the Bass Coast region as possible.

"Utilising industry groups, there will be briefings arranged and conducted for local contractors and subcontractors to be identified and engaged in the build," she said.

"The preferred builder also offers a site management cadet program for local apprentices."

Previously the council said the Cultural Centre would be open by December 2022, but the project opening has now been pushed back to February 2023.

According to Bass Coast Shire Council, during construction, the centre will generate 69 jobs and 30 ongoing jobs once built, as well as \$51.8 million in economic benefit over the life of the project.



The announcement of the new \$27.2 million budget for the Cowes Cultural Centre has been greeted with a mix of dismay, concern and scorn.

Price hike condemned

The announcement of the new budget for the Cowes Cultural Centre has been greeted with a mix of dismay, concern and scorn.

Peter Paul, President of Island Voice was shocked by the size of the increase.

"Like all Islanders, Island Voice is enthusiastically looking forward to see the cultural heart of our Island, the new Cowes Cultural Centre, built," Peter said.

"Due to post-Covid difficulties in sourcing building materials, we anticipated that there would be some cost increase required."

"However, we are shocked by the size of this increase, \$8.2 million or 42 per cent of the original cost, and are disappointed that Bass Coast Shire Council has announced that completion will be delayed until 2023."

"We look forward to seeing Council release more information to the community explaining why the increase is so large, what extra benefits it will bring and the necessity for an extension to the planned completion date."

When Bass Coast Shire Council announced the new \$27.2 million budget for the Cowes Cultural Centre, Mayor Cr Brett Tessari said he expected a negative response.

The community didn't disappoint, with residents flooding the Advertiser's Facebook page voicing their disapproval of the \$8.2 million increase.

Many were not surprised to see the building costs had increased but were critical the old building had already been torn down, leaving no option but to proceed, despite the rising costs.

Eddie Drohmomirecki said it was government contracts 101 in variations, "but a 43 per cent increase must be reviewed", while Julie Newman said it needed to be "investigated in full".

Luke Johnson was scathing in his criticism. "Poor planning and budgeting is the only reason for project costs to be so high," he said.

"When you have the chance to spend other people's money no expense is spared. And after all is said and done, the people that should be held to account will get to keep their jobs and this will be just another story of mismanaged funds."

Robert Langford called for the CEO to resign, Sally Hankin said the decision-making process needed to be investigated while Shaun Ewbank described it as "robbery" saying it was "time to make some cuts".

Many were concerned that the massive increase in the budget would mean more pain for ratepayers.

"Well guess our rates are going to double next year," said Deb Amor.

"Another rate rise coming up?" questioned Grazyna Mackiewicz and Anne Schade said, "it better not reflect on our rates to make up the shortfall".

Graham Swallow predicted this was just the start of the pain. "Watch this space while they are building. Then you will really see it 'skyrocket'," he said.

At least one resident managed to find some humour in the situation.

"Oh, so they are going to build the pool in there, are they," she quipped.

Centre supporters rally

The new building proposal is not without its supporters.

The Phillip Island Conservation Society (PICS) applauded the decision by council to increase the building's sustainability credentials.

"PICS are delighted to see the Council finally walking the talk in relation to sustainable design, reducing emissions, climate change and potential reversal of global warming with an energy positive Passivhaus design," said President Jeff Nottle.

"The retention of significant trees on the site demonstrates listening to the community and recognition of the need to retain and enhance our urban tree canopy."

"PICS looks forward to the opportunity to use spaces for promoting and educating the

Island's natural assets and promoting PICS arts initiatives."

Belinda Phillips, from Marina Mouse's Dancing House also voiced her support.

"I think it is absolutely wonderful for the arts sector to be recognised and the great importance that performing arts, culture, creative arts and visual arts can bring to a community."

"The next step when it has been developed, is filling it with an inclusive program that will enrich the entire community for all ages and diversities. I am very excited about it."

Local artist Marian Quigley described the new centre as "a wonderful community asset - one which is long overdue", saying it was "very exciting" the project was about to get underway.

Barbara Moje applauded the decision to build the centre to Passivhaus standard, so it would have "almost no energy bills".

"It is a very attractive building and I envy Cowes for it immensely! The building price rises in the pandemic have been a serious challenge everywhere. Hopefully a suitable tenderer will be found. Congrats BCSC, good choice of architect and design."

Big budgets, big blow outs

A blow out in costs for major projects is not an exclusive problem for Bass Coast Shire Council.

Research from the Grattan Institute shows that major transport projects in Australia usually have a budget increase of around 30 per cent.

Marion Terrill, Transport and Cities Program Director at the Grattan Institute recently told The Age newspaper that "bigger projects are more complex and they tend to overrun not only by more in dollar terms, but by a bigger percentage as well."

Ms Terrill said even after contracts are signed (which is not the case with the Cultural Centre - the tender for the building should be decided at this week's council meeting), it's not uncommon for governments to spend more than they originally told the public.



Artists and conservationists voice their support for the new project, despite the budget increasing by \$8.2 million on the original estimates.

Council Update



Detox Your Home 31 October

Has it been a while since you cleaned out your cupboards or garden shed? Well, now might be the perfect time to do it, with a Detox Your Home event coming to the Wonthaggi Transfer Station on Sunday, 31 October, from 1.00pm to 4.00pm. These events provide an opportunity to safely dispose of detergents, poisons, pesticides, cleaning products and other household chemicals that you no longer need, for free. Please note, you must register for this event. To check the full list of what can be accepted, and to register, head to www.detoxwonthaggi2021.eventbrite.com.au.

Bass Coast Australia Day Awards nominations now open

Nominations are now open for the 2022 Bass Coast Australia Day Awards for Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year. It has been another challenging year, but it has not stopped the many beautiful acts of caring, selflessness, giving and compassion from individuals within our community. Visit www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/ausday2022 to nominate someone, or to read the guidelines. Nominations close on Thursday, 25 November 2021 and the finalists and winners will be announced on Wednesday, 19 January 2022.

Bass Coast Shire Council, 76 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi | DX 34903 Wonthaggi | PO Box 118, Wonthaggi VIC 3995 | 1300 BCOAST (226 278) or (03) 5671 2211 or via the National Relay Service (for people with speech or hearing difficulties) on 13 36 77 | basscoast@basscoast.vic.gov.au | www.basscoast.vic.gov.au



Quiet treasure a perfect family home

This property is located in a fantastic location, tucked away in a quiet tree-lined court in Cowes, only a stone's throw from the beach.

This home could be a place to be treasured as a family home or genuine escape from the city, with four large bedrooms, all with built in robes, two bathrooms, and two separate living zones.

The property is perfect for entertaining family friends on the large north facing decking area.

And the large and treed

block is perfect for those seeking additional parking area for boats /caravans or extra guests.

The house is set well back from the street in a quiet setting, perfect and ready for you to enjoy.

Inspection by appointment only.

**Contact: Kendall O'Garey,
First National, 5952 3922
Address: 6 Koonwarra Court,
Cowes
Expression Of Interest by
November 15, 2021 at 1pm**



Escape from the city and make your home in this four bedroom house in a quiet Cowes location.



The kitchen has stainless steel appliances and ample storage for a family's needs.



Two separate living areas and a large north-facing deck make this home ideal for entertainment.



The house includes four large bedrooms, two bathrooms and two separate living areas.



One of two bathrooms in this treasured family home, which is ready for you to enjoy.



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SOLD
2/6 Albert Street, Cowes

Nestled in this extremely quiet setting is this modern and large townhouse/home. With room for all the family and friends your biggest decision will be what to do and where to go on Phillip Island. Created with luxury in mind set over two levels, it has the potential to earn an excellent income or just private use for your family. The beach access is but a short stroll and the Cowes main street is just as close. An added benefit is the room to work from home and still enjoy the perfect lifestyle.

UNINTERRUPTED VIEWS ON COVETED ACRE



SOLD



SOLD
1 Bellevue Court, Kilcunda

Nestled into the hillside, this luxury and much sought after pocket of Kilcunda, you will enjoy breathtaking views along the coast, while being fully protected from the elements. With reserve crown land on two boundaries, these incredible views will never be built out. Just over an hour's drive from Melbourne's South Eastern suburbs, the property exudes peace and privacy, creating the perfect work from home environment.

This home is flooded with light and has a welcoming and open feel with stylish presentation and attention to detail in its quality finishes including European appliances and polished timber flooring.

WHAT A FIND!



SOLD



SOLD
Kenwyn Court, Cowes

Located in a lovely quiet location with excellent access to beautiful Cowes foreshore, this single level perfect family home has been tastefully renovated and meticulously cared for, the court position is perfect for children or grandchildren. With three bedrooms, two bathrooms, office, split systems, wood fire, lovely outdoor entertaining areas, double garage, double carport, room for boat/caravan. Walk to beach, cafes & restaurants! Low maintenance - nothing left to do. Inspection is a must!

www.phillipislandfn.com.au

OPEN 7 DAYS

60 Thompson Ave, Cowes

5952 3922



Situated minutes away from the main shopping precinct, schools and public transport, this meticulously maintained home is ideal for a family.



The well-appointed kitchen offers quality appliances and ample storage space.

Ideal family home

Ideal for a family looking for that something special, this home is located in a highly sought-after pocket of Cowes. Situated minutes away from the main shopping precinct, schools and public transport, this meticulously maintained home will steal your heart from the moment you first lay eyes on it!

Presented to the market in perfect condition, this home comprises three living/lounge areas and boasting four bedrooms, master with full ensuite and great size walk-in robe, second bathroom with shower and

bath and a well-appointed kitchen that offers quality appliances and ample storage space.

Nestled within a family-oriented neighbourhood and situated on an expansive 704m² allotment with carefully maintained and excellently presented gardens, this home is ready for you to move in to and reap the rewards.

Contact: Joshua Dunstan, OBrien Real Estate, 0407 558 933
Address: 3 Bradley Court, Cowes
Price: \$980,000 - \$1,050,000



The house has three living/lounge areas and four bedrooms.



A large outdoor deck opens off the kitchen living area and is perfect for summer entertaining.



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52-54 Thompson Avenue
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Wonthaggi Arts Centre

EXHIBITIONS

Noel Counihan, Robert Smith and Wonthaggi



NOEL COUNIHAN
ROBERT SMITH
AND WONTHAGGI

27 JULY - 19 NOV 2021

WONTHAGGI UNION COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE
96 GRAHAM ST WONTHAGGI

The exhibition, Noel Counihan, Robert Smith and Wonthaggi, features 26 works drawn from the Collection by curator Ken Scarlett OAM, an expert in Australian art and sculpture.

The exhibition focuses on the work of Noel Counihan, which reflects the impact of spending time in the mines of Wonthaggi during World War II.

Expanding the research into the artistic lineage of Counihan's work, the exhibition presents some significant works from renowned international artists such as Francisco Goya, Käthe Kollwitz and Honore Daumier, whose style and interests would have influenced Counihan.

Through this research, the exhibition reveals the core humanist values present in the Robert Smith Collection, and its direct relevance to the history of Wonthaggi.

wonthaggiartscentre.com

- You can purchase tickets at our Box Office or online
- Please view our COVID Safe guidelines on our website

Wonthaggi Union Community Arts Centre

96 Graham St, Wonthaggi 3995
phone: 03 5671 2470



THE PULSE

Events, entertainment and community news

Prom Country Art and Photography Show

Entries to the Rotary Club of Leongatha's 45th Annual Arts Prom Country Art and Photography Show are now open.

The three-week exhibition runs from January 15 until February 5, 2022 at the Leongatha Memorial Hall.

Following on from a most successful Art Show last January and February, the organisers are accepting entries for the 2022 show up until December 14.

Apart from the opportunity to display your work to an interested audience, the show has a great record of buyers over its long history.

The show attracts over 550 entries from artists and photographers from across Gippsland, Melbourne, regional Victoria and interstate, with new and established artists of all ages welcome to enter.

Prize money totals over \$6000 which include awards for various mediums, pho-



Rotarians Paul Beck and David John holding last year's People's Choice winner by Heather Snowden.

tography, 3D (eg sculpture), junior sections and All Abilities section.

You can enter online and get more information by visiting www.leonartshow.com.au.

The show will be run under the relevant Covid restrictions at the time.

A raffle will also be held and proceeds, together with other money made over the event, go towards worthy local charities and services.

Don't miss participating in this major South Gippsland event. For more information email info@leonartshow.com.au.

Kindy indigenous fundraiser

Four-year-olds at the Phillip Island Early Learning Centre raised \$175 for Indigenous literacy this month.

Kindergarten teacher Andrea Blair Dempsey said as part of Indigenous Children's Literacy Day, a Covid-delayed fundraiser was held, with more than 200 families donating hundreds of second-hand children's books.

"We then ran a book swap for a gold coin donation, with funds going to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation," she said.

Adult books were also donated, with a table now set up at the entrance to the ELC, where families can grab a book for a donation.



Cowes Primary School preps attended the fundraiser for the book swap at the early learning centre last week.

Helping locals manage their 'money go-round'

New sessions at Wonthaggi and Corinella aim to help people build their financial awareness and skills so they can make the best use of the money they have and avoid unnecessary expenses.

The Bass Coast Community Foundation have teamed up with Mitchell House in Wonthaggi and the Corinella Community Centre to help address the need for financial capability services in Bass Coast.

Bass Coast Community Foundation Executive Officer Kirsty Mawer said the sessions will be run by an expert financial capability counsellor who will tailor the sessions to the needs of attendees, ensuring each person gets the help they need.

"Over the last decade there are more low-income households in the Bass Coast re-

gion, and Covid is having a disproportionate effect on many of our single parent households, renters, and young people," she said.

"Talking to local service providers, we know there are many people who will hugely benefit from a bit of help to better manage their money."

"There are also many people whose jobs in hospitality, retail or tourism have been shut down for months during the pandemic. As the situation changes, and businesses re-open to a new normal, we want to make sure those people have a firm understanding of what they can do to maximise their finances."

Some sessions will also offer legal advice by lawyers from Gippsland Community Legal Services.

"But this is just a first step, we urgently need a local,

community-based financial capability counsellor who can provide these resources and advice on an ongoing basis," she said.

This is part of the Bass Coast Community Foundation's work; working with the local community to advocate in areas of identified community need.

The upcoming sessions are being held once a month at Corinella and Wonthaggi for six months. Lunch is provided. Covid safe practices apply. Reserve your place by contacting the centre directly.

For more information about the Bass Coast Community Foundation go to bccf.org.au or follow their Facebook page.

Session dates and times:

- Corinella and District Community Centre - 48 Smythe Street, Corinella. November 9, December 14, January 11, February 8, March 8, April 12. RSVP (03) 5678 0777.

- Mitchell House - 6 Murray Street, Wonthaggi. November 17, December 14, January 19, February 16, March 16, April 20. RSVP (03) 5672 3731.

Melaleuca Lodge Secondhand Book Sale

Open 10-12 every Saturday

BILLS BOOK SHED

1 Watchorn Road, COWES (off Settlement Road)

0437 949 029



Jude Mayall from Wild Food Farm is a finalist in the Female Leaders Award at the Gippsland Food & Fibre Awards, one of three categories where the Wild Food Farm is a finalist.

Wild Food Farm finalists

The Wild Food Farm at Rhyll is a finalist in multiple categories at this year's Gippsland Food and Fibre Awards.

Sam Ruzicka is one of four finalists in the Young Leader category, while Jude Mayall is in the running for the Female Leader award.

The Wild Food Farm is also a finalist in the Driving Innovation category.

The awards attracted 111 entries across nine categories from businesses spread throughout each of the six Local Government areas across Gippsland.

Young Leader finalists alongside Wild Food Farm's Sam Ruzicka are Chris Gascoigne (Dennison Foods), Rachel Sangailo (East Gippsland Coffee Roasters) and Max Vaux (Rosedale Butchers).

The prize is the opportunity to complete a TRAIL Emerging Leaders Leadership program, run by the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation.

Vying for the Female Leader award are Jude Mayall (Wild Food Farm), Alexandra Keith (Bulmer Farms), Laura Eddington (Little Bumble Wraps) and Shelley Walker (South Gippsland Dairy).

The winner will be invited to take part in the Women's Leadership Program, run by Leadership Victoria.

The Wild Food Farm is also up for an award in the Driving Innovation category, along with Flooding Creek Fungi, Gurney's Cider and Macalister Demonstration Farm.

Food and drink - finalists: (Less than 10 employees) Burra Brewing Company, Eaglehawk Farm Produce, East Gippsland Coffee Roasters, Tone Made. (Over 10 employees) Burra Foods, Pure Harvest and Dennison Foods

Sustainability, Land Use and Water finalists: Burra Foods, Flooding Creek Fungi, Just Add Trees, Gurneys Cider and the Prom Coast Food Collective.

Building Capability finalists: Burra Brewing Co., Gurneys Cider, Flooding Creek Fungi and Prom Coast Food Collective.

Exporting Award finalists: Little Bumble, Pure Harvest, South Gippsland Dairy and Victoria Valley Meats.

Fibre Industry Award finalists: Just Add Trees, Little Bumble, Great Alpine Flowers and Alberton Timber.

Every finalist is in contention to take home the Gippsland Agribusiness of the Year Award, which includes a \$5000 cash prize, as well as an Agri-food consulting opportunity with category sponsor partner KPMG Australia.

Winners will be announced online via the Food & Fibre Gippsland website and social media channels on Friday, November 19.

Congratulations Jude and Sam on being finalists and good luck on the big night!

Details at www.foodandfibregippsland.com.au

Concrete changes in Thompson Avenue

Thompson Avenue was a hive of activity last week, as work got underway to replace lights under some of the iconic Golden Cypress trees. But there was some heavy lifting going on alongside the electrical works.

Local company New Wave Concreting was called in to remove and replace a few small bays of exposed aggregate.

Vince Colella from Cowes Electrical Services said the work was done to allow his electrical team to access and alter the existing wiring.

As part of the alterations, the existing wiring, which is part of an SP AusNet asset needed to be relocated.

Vince said a massive amount of paperwork and communication with AusNet Services had been done to get the work underway.

“All the digging and concrete work is now done, and we’ve completed work on the existing switchboard,” he said.

“The next stage is connecting the lights.”

The recent wet weather had caused some delays to the project, which is now expected to be completed by mid-November.

The existing up lights will be replaced with new LED lights and an electrical pit at each cypress tree will be installed, to accommodate a 240-volt twin weather-proof outlet.

The upgrade means the annual Christmas lights display will be able to connect to the new power outlets.

Project details available at www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/services/projects/cowes-in-ground-up-lights-thompson-avenue



Work to replace lights and upgrade power outlets along Thompson Avenue got underway last week and is expected to be completed by mid-November.



The concrete was removed to allow the existing wiring to be altered so new LED lighting can be installed.

KEEP IT LOCAL

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AUTOMOTIVE

HOME



Service Centre

Phillip Island Tyre Service

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Local builder Craig Martin now juggles his construction business with commercial fishing on the Sharon Lee II.



San Remo commercial fisherman Stewart Garner (left) built the Sharon Lee II in the early '70s and would take a five-year-old Craig Martin fishing with his family. Craig has more recently taken over the boat and the commercial wrasse fishing licence from his old family friend.

From builder to commercial fisherman

Anyone with a pair of binoculars at Smiths Beach earlier this month would have just been able to spy Cape Woolamai's Craig Martin on board his commercial fishing boat, the Sharon Lee II, a couple of kilometres offshore.

"Because we have a commercial wrasse licence, we fish sustainably with rod and reel, usually within two to three kilometres of the shoreline of Phillip Island, down to Wilsons Prom," Craig says, on his phone, on board the Sharon Lee II.

The 53-year-old says the trip was his first in several months.

"Some of my earliest memories are fishing with dad and Stewie on the Sharon Lee."

"In a normal year we'd catch two to three tonnes of wrasse, from a year-round catch. The fish are sold live for Sydney and Melbourne restaurants," he explains.

"But since Covid, there hasn't been the demand from restaurants."

Lucky for Craig, the easing of Covid restrictions for regional Victoria meant he could re-start his Island Offshore Charters, operating fishing tours for a Covid-safe minimum of six regional visitors (although they are licensed to hold 23 passengers).

"We catch whiting, snapper, gummy, anything really in Western Port or offshore in Bass Strait. With six passengers, though, it doesn't really cover costs."

So lucky for Craig that he didn't give up his other career: as a builder with his company CAM Constructions.

For nearly four decades Craig has worked in the building industry, initially as a carpenter, which included making boardwalks and beach ac-



Craig Martin has joined San Remo's fishing fleet, taking over commercial fishing boat the Sharon Lee II from old family friend Stewart Garner.

cess stairs for the Phillip Island Nature Parks in the '90s.

In 2004 he started his own company, with such projects as building the trout farm at Rhyll.

Craig says when he first moved to Cape Woolamai in 1989 – moving there full-time in 1993 – he was a keen surfer, but had always fished.

Sharon Lee II

In fact, some of Craig's earliest fishing memories were of going out as a five-year-old with his dad and his dad's mate – San Remo commercial fisherman Stewart Garner – on board the Sharon Lee II.

"Some of my earliest memories are fishing with dad and Stewie on the Sharon Lee. Stewie would give my brother and me a can of Fanta and in rough weather put us below deck and we'd get so crook. He thought it was great fun.

"As a commercial fisherman, Stewie initially caught cotta, but later, whiting, snapper and he even ran charters and more recently fished commercially for wrasse as well.

"He was also a carpenter and in 1970 he built the Sharon Lee in San Remo with his own hands."

So when Stewie wanted to retire five years ago, Craig jumped at the opportunity to buy the 11 metre timber boat – which weighs 16 tonnes – as well as the wrasse licence.

"I didn't even have to think about it. I knew he'd looked after the boat and knew it was in good condition,"

Craig admits, adding there was also a touch of nostalgia about the purchase of the Sharon Lee II.

"When you get in your 50s, building can be demanding on the body so I thought commercial fishing would be the perfect job to take me to retirement."

Craig says he catches up with 80-year-old Stewie each week for a cup of tea and the old seafarer continues to share his wisdom.

He says while recreational angling comes naturally, to become a commercial fisher he was required to obtain his coxswain licence, going to boat school seven days a week for three weeks to learn life rafting

through to navigation and fire-fighting, as well as first aid.

"I hadn't been to school for 30 years and I was in the hotel the first night after school thinking 'I've forgotten everything we learnt today and I'm going to fail this'."

Craig's wife Tracey – who works

He catches up with 80-year-old Stewie each week for a cup of tea and the old seafarer continues to share his wisdom.

for Nature Parks in food services – is also a keen angler, and often joins her husband on commercial fishing trips, with the couple aiming to fish together in coming years, alongside their three deckhands.

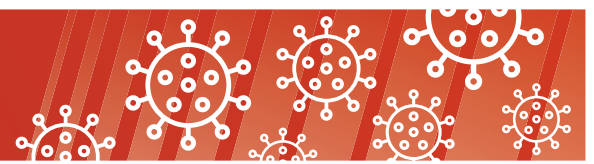
He says the career change was initially difficult, especially juggling the two jobs, but there hasn't been a moment of regret.

"The initial period was hard because we were busy building and taking on a second business meant many long office hours after returning from days of fishing. Sometimes it's a juggle, out fishing, taking calls from tradies to keep the building business going. I think I am a bit of a workaholic sometimes.

"But I'm glad I've done it. I love it. When I'm on the water I don't see it as work, because I enjoy it so much. Even though it's about making an income, I see fishing as my down time.

"I'll often come back in after a fishing charter, drop the passengers off, and head out again for a fish myself.

"If I had to choose between a fishing rod and hammer, it's a rod without doubt. But I still have a few years of building left in me."



Class action – students return to school

From dogs in schools, to wearing masks or learning from home ... schools and students have discovered the true meaning of the word adaptable during the pandemic.

Emerging from lockdown and learning to live with Covid means yet again, schools are having to adjust the way they operate.

Regional schools started term four with all grades back for at least part of the week. Only Preps to Grade 2 were in the classroom every day, with other grades juggling a combination of at-school and remote learning.

Last week, Cowes Primary School Principal, Rod McKenzie, told the Advertiser he was proud of the way his teachers responded to the educational changes announced by the government.

"The quick nature in which some of the changes need to be implemented is challenging, but staff have worked really hard to make them happen," he said.

As if to prove the point, two days after our interview, the government announced from October 21, all students in regional Victoria would return full time to onsite learning, as Victoria reached the 70 per cent double dose target.

Despite all the challenges, the overwhelming emotion when students returned this term was joy.

"There's no question the vast majority of students are excited to be back," said Rod.

"The more we can have them on-site, the better."

Even without having all students on site, the school has instigated

new procedures to keep students as safe as possible.

"At recess, currently we've got the senior grades playing in separate areas to the Preps to Grade 2, and utilising separate toilets," Rod explained.

In the classrooms, a combination of louvre windows and open doors is helping keep the rooms well ventilated and fortunately the majority of the school's classrooms are modern.

"Even the dome building, the oldest on site, had all its windows updated in the past three years," Rod said.

"Luckily we have large grounds, our buildings are physically spaced and we have multiple entry and exit points.

"We've also put in new outdoor seating so students have access to space in shaded areas."

With all grades returning to on-site learning, the school will look at options for staggered drop off and pick up times, to limit parent and student interaction.

Nerves

This week, the state government announced a raft of mental health supports for schools, including therapy dogs in classrooms, which Rod welcomed.

"We haven't heard any details, but we've previously had a school dog and it was very well received by students and was a great support," he said.

While students are happy to be back at school, Rod said the impact of the past 18 months was different for each child.



As Victoria reaches the 70 per cent double dose milestone this week, the government announced from October 21, all students in regional Victoria would return full time to onsite learning.

"Some students are a little bit nervous to be back, having spent so long off-site. They're used to being home with mum or dad, and that's certainly created nerves amongst some."

He believes it's too early to assess the impact on the children's learning, but he was relieved the government had agreed to continue tutoring funding for 2022.

"It's been really good to have that additional support for students," he said.

The tutors work in the classroom to support groups of students and

assist teachers. They also provide tutoring to small groups of students to do targeted work, focused on literacy and numeracy.

This week brings another new challenge, with masks inside now mandatory for all students from Grade 3 and beyond.

"Not everyone agrees in the current climate, but most parents understand it's not the school who is making the decisions or setting the parameters around what is required," Rod said.

"Some students are already wearing them. Some parents will really

see these as essential, while others will see it differently.

"Everyone's navigated these changes for a long time, and for some, fatigue has set in," he said.

"Fingers crossed we can navigate our way to the end of the year without any cases."

For all the challenges and uncertainty, Rod said the entire staff was thrilled to have the students back on site.

"The overwhelming response has been we're all happy to be back," he said.

"It's certainly been a lot noisier."

Plea to follow public health directives to save lives

As cases continue to rise in Bass Coast and Gippsland, the community is being urged to continue to wear face masks and not gather in homes, in order to save local lives.

"We have noticed an increase in the number of people flouting public health directives by not wearing masks and also coming together in homes," Bass Coast Health CEO Jan Child said.

"Doing so significantly heightens the risk of the extremely virulent Delta strain of Covid spreading and infecting you or your partner, children, family or friends."

Covid spreads via droplets and by not wearing a mask, you can spread the virus to others and also contract it.

Masks must fit you well and be worn properly by covering your mouth and nose, without gaps.

"A mask could be all that stands between you and an Intensive



Bass Coast Health CEO Jan Child is urging people to continue to wear face masks to keep our community safe as the COVID pandemic escalates in our community.

Care Unit at best, and death at worst," Ms Child said.

Covid also spreads easily in confined spaces, such as houses, and that's why visitors continue to not be permitted in private homes.

"We have seen how a few par-

ties in private homes for the AFL grand final led to Covid spreading and that is proof that the virus spreads easily inside," Ms Child said.

"I understand that it is hard not being able to see family and friends, but please stay in touch with them by video or phone calls – for their safety and for yours."

People who do not wear a face mask when required and do not have a lawful exemption can be fined \$200.

People found to be breaching gathering directions in the home or outside can be fined \$5452.

Ms Child is also encouraging people to be vaccinated if they have not done so already.

"While vaccination builds community resilience, it does not stop the spread of the virus. We are preparing for a surge in cases in the next few months. Now is not the time to drop the ball," she said.

Understanding Tier 1 exposure sites

As the state opens up and Victorians learn to live with Covid, the way cases and exposure sites are dealt with is changing.

Not all Tier 1 exposure sites will be publicly listed, and Gippsland Region Public Health Unit (GRPHU) has provided an explanation of why.

Tier 1 exposure sites may not be listed if all contacts are tracked down – if everyone there was identified and contacted quickly.

"In any situation when we are confident that we've reached everyone through our partners, then we won't need to publish it," a GRPHU spokesperson said.

"Listing dozens of exposure sites with very low risk of transmission can cause confusion, panic and unnecessary alarm. We are focussing the public's attention on those where we believe there's a true risk."

Tier 1 sites of concern, where not everyone has been accounted for quickly, will be listed. This is a form of public health announcement where the community is asked to act – isolate, get tested, follow advice from the Department of Health.

"As COVID-19 is becoming more

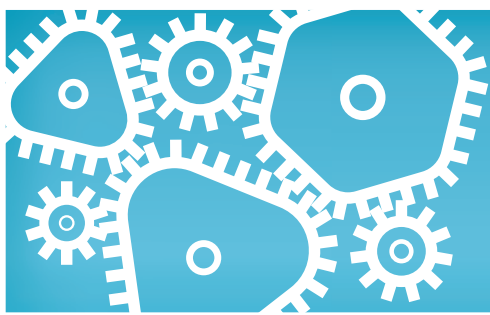
entrenched in the community, we understand it may become more common to see people finding out information from their employers, their friends or families and for themselves to share this information on various social platforms," the spokesperson said.

"We acknowledge the proactive approach of some businesses who have had a positive case attend their site to make their community aware as a precautionary measure. This is exactly what it is, it provides an awareness that the community needs to remain vigilant – monitor for symptoms and continue practicing CovidSafe behaviours more diligently.

"This is not an automatic direction to get tested and isolate."

People who are identified as a Primary Close Contact linked to a potential exposure site will be contacted by the Department of Health and given the necessary advice and information.

Of course, testing is also recommended for those experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, however minor.



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“Game changer” or “restoration”?

In the twenty-six years we’ve lived at Smiths Beach we have seen the walkway from Smiths Beach Road to St Bede’s slowly eroded.

Firstly, signs claimed the area was “unsafe” and that the land, called “Cypress Lodge” belonged to St Bede’s, but we were permitted, at our own risk, to use it.

Then came a permanent boom-gate at St Bede’s followed by a fence and locked gate at the Smiths Beach end. St Bede’s finally erected an iron fence around its premises.

Having been on your committee we were under the impression that this walkway was to extend to Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach, a much safer alternative to walking the unmade roads as they now exist.

It is our opinion that the proposed walkway is too close to the existing homes and that this walkway would be better situated further away. There is an enormous rabbit warren situated in the centre of this area of land and it needs eradication. Solve two problems: get rid of the rabbit warren and erect the walkway in the centre of this contentious piece of real estate.

Judith and Mike Doyle, Smiths Beach

Mental health, COVID-19 and gambling harm

The Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation found three-quarters of people who seek help for gambling also have a mental illness. Forty-one percent of people who seek treatment for mental illness also gamble. About half of those people experience a range of consequences as a result.

This is what we call gambling harm. Gambling harm can include gambling more money or time than you can afford, financial difficulties, loss of assets, relationship breakdowns, and anxiety or depression. The severity can range from momentary feelings of guilt or regret through to extreme outcomes like bankruptcy.

According to Victoria’s state-wide mental health and gambling harm service, Gambling Minds, about three in four people who seek help for gambling harm also have a mental illness. Sadly, nearly one in five people who are affected by gambling harm can experience suicidal thoughts.

People with mental illness have reported using gambling as a way of soothing their stress or a means of “getting away” during COVID-19 restrictions. More and more people are presenting for the first time to Gambling Minds with anxiety and depression. Many presenting for help are experiencing a loss of self-worth and increased feelings of isolation.

Gambling can lead to financial difficulties which can amplify feelings of worthlessness. The sense of needing to “win losses back” can become stronger. This is the vicious cycle of gambling harm and poor mental health.

The Gambler’s Help team at Latrobe Community Health Service is urging anyone who feels anxious, helpless, or overwhelmed because of gambling to seek help. We provide free, confidential services to anyone who lives, works, or studies in Gippsland. We can help you change your mindset, get your finances back on track, and link you in with other health and community services.

Phone 1800 242 696, Monday to Friday during business hours. You can also phone the 24/7, state-wide Gambler’s Help hotline on 1800 858 858. If you or someone you know is experiencing suicidal thoughts contact Lifeline on 13 11 14.

*Emily Koppen, Gambler’s Help Community Engagement Officer
Latrobe Community Health Service*

What’s permitted?

My application to attend our house at Ventnor was declined.

Advice was that only people with houses in bushfire zones could attend.

What advice has been issued by the Chief Health Officer which states that only people owning houses in bushfire zones can visit homes on Phillip Island?

It seems an extraordinary distinction. Which government can make such a distinction!

Ken Atchison, Brunswick

Time zone rejection questioned

In the past few days it has been posted in social media that the request for shortening of off-leash beach access time zones/calendar dates has been rejected by Bass Coast Shire Council (BCSC).

The areas in question are the off-leash area of Cape Woolamai Beach (Cleeland Bight) between Palm Beach Avenue access track 350m south to Southport Avenue access track and the Cowes West beach between Yacht Club access track 340 metres to McKenzie Road access track.

Both of these areas have date/time restrictions of December 1 to April 30 and there have been many submissions – Friends of Surf Beach and Sunderland Bay included (via DAMP) – that these time zones should and can easily be shortened back to reflect more sensible dates.

Given that most of these beaches have very light or no traffic whatsoever from early to mid-February onwards it is quite sensible and feasible to do.

According to social media posts the rejection of this request is based on the presence of the Short Tailed Shearwater and a directive from Phillip Island Nature Park (PINP) to reject the above date variance requests. The two off leash areas in question are nowhere near the rookeries and have no impact whatsoever on their existence.

To state the rejection of shortening the time zones is due to the presence of Short Tailed Shearwaters and Rookeries is entirely incorrect and a nonsensical premise.

We question the motivation of this decision as it just adds to the continuing divide in the community that BCSC has been nurturing for well over a decade.

We request that the shortening of time zones is again reviewed and enacted upon as soon as possible.

Ann Grose, Friends of Surf Beach and Sunderland Bay

Ludicrous bin decision

I find it inconceivable that Bass Coast Shire cannot accept the need for a minimum of two additional bin clearances over the holiday period.

Through most of this year the number of bins to be emptied each week must have dropped by 70 per cent.

So councillors how about giving ratepayers back something in return? I cannot believe the concocted figures tabled before the council vote. BCSC come clean with the ratepayers and wake up to provide an adequate service.

It is ludicrous that the vote for additional bin clearances was lost because a councillor abstained from voting – and further, that councillors who voted against Cr Ronnie Bauer’s motion did not see through falsified figures and a common sense vote.

Phillip Island is promoted as a tourist destination yet obviously rubbish, dead wildlife on the side of the road for weeks on end, and exorbitant rates all lead to environmental issues that are not being adequately managed. Go for it again Ronnie and hopefully you are more successful.

W.Stanley, Cowes



Enjoying the Newhaven College Year 11 welcome back lunch (from left to right): Willamina, Ella and Seisha.

Year 11 students return

Newhaven College welcomed back Year 11 students with a catered luncheon by the VCE Food Studies class.

Students studied the design process as part of their course and prepared the food in the Colleges Food Technology Centre. Their focus was to create finger food for all Year 11 students and their teachers to celebrate their return from remote learning.

They took into consideration students with food in-

tolerances and food preferences, the COVID-19 restrictions around social distancing and sharing of food and other constraints such as the limited preparation time.

The result was a beautiful feast complete with both savoury and sweet favourites eaten outside in the sunshine.

It was wonderful to see students supporting each other and it definitely brought a smile to everyone’s faces.

College alive with the sound of music!

Returning Newhaven College students have filled the school with music from the College bands and ensembles.

Unit 4 VCE Music Performance, second year VCE VET Music Performance students and their ensembles, supported by committed parents and teachers, worked hard during lockdown to keep rehearsing towards some truly outstanding performances.

The final performance event is usually held at The Westernport Hotel, but due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Music Department arranged for the performances to be held onsite and live streamed it to the College community.

Students performed a variety of music including 70’s rock, indie folk-rock, blues rock, beat-box looping, classic metal, brass/sax quartet and cabaret show. Teachers, staff, and students also enjoyed lunchtime performances from the music students as they prepare for their upcoming performance exams.

Building work is progressing on the College’s new Performing Arts Wing, which is due to be completed early next year.

The state-of-the-art facility will include a keyboard lab, black box theatre, recording studio, hair and makeup studio, rehearsal hall, and teaching spaces for small groups, ensembles, or private music lessons.



Orlando from blues rock band Wangjangles.



Our Lady Star of the Sea Preps in the bird hide which looks out over the school biodiversity area.

Students flock to bird watch

The students at Our Lady Star of the Sea celebrated World Migratory Bird Day last week.

The school has an amazing view of the Ramsar listed Rhyll wetlands and the students discovered why it is protected and how they can help assist the plight of migratory birds.

The students were very excited to visit the school’s very own bird hide which looks out over the school bio-

diversity area.

They used their new binoculars and excellent observation skills to record Wood Ducks, Cape Barren Geese, Purple Swamp Hens, Galahs, Ibis, Magpies and a Magpie Lark.

Finally, they learnt how simply reducing rubbish, and putting any rubbish in the bin, will help the survival of birds at school and beyond.

THE ADVERTISER, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021 21

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Newhaven College is an independent co-educational school on Phillip Island offering quality education for students from Prep to Year 12.

Cleaning Tender

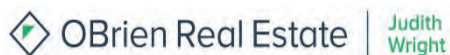
We are looking for interested parties willing to tender their cleaning services for the next three (3) years.

Applicants must be qualified with relevant experience and fulfil the selection criteria.

Tender documents can be downloaded from our website www.newhavencol.vic.edu.au/About/Work-at-Newhaven

Closing date: 4pm, Friday 12 November 2021.
Late submissions will not be considered.

Newhaven College is a child safe environment. Every child has a right to be safe, and at the College we have a zero tolerance for child safety risks (including child abuse and reportable conduct). As such, preferred applicants will be subject to child protection screening, background and reference checks, verification of identity checks and must adhere to the College's child safe practices, as outlined in the Child Protection Program policies available on the College website.



A fantastic opportunity exists at a leading real estate office for an enthusiastic individual who is keen to push their career in the industry to the next level as a sales agent. OBrien Real Estate Judith Wright provides a great platform for career minded individuals to succeed in any area of real estate. We offer excellent support systems, in office & external training and a wonderful dynamic team environment.

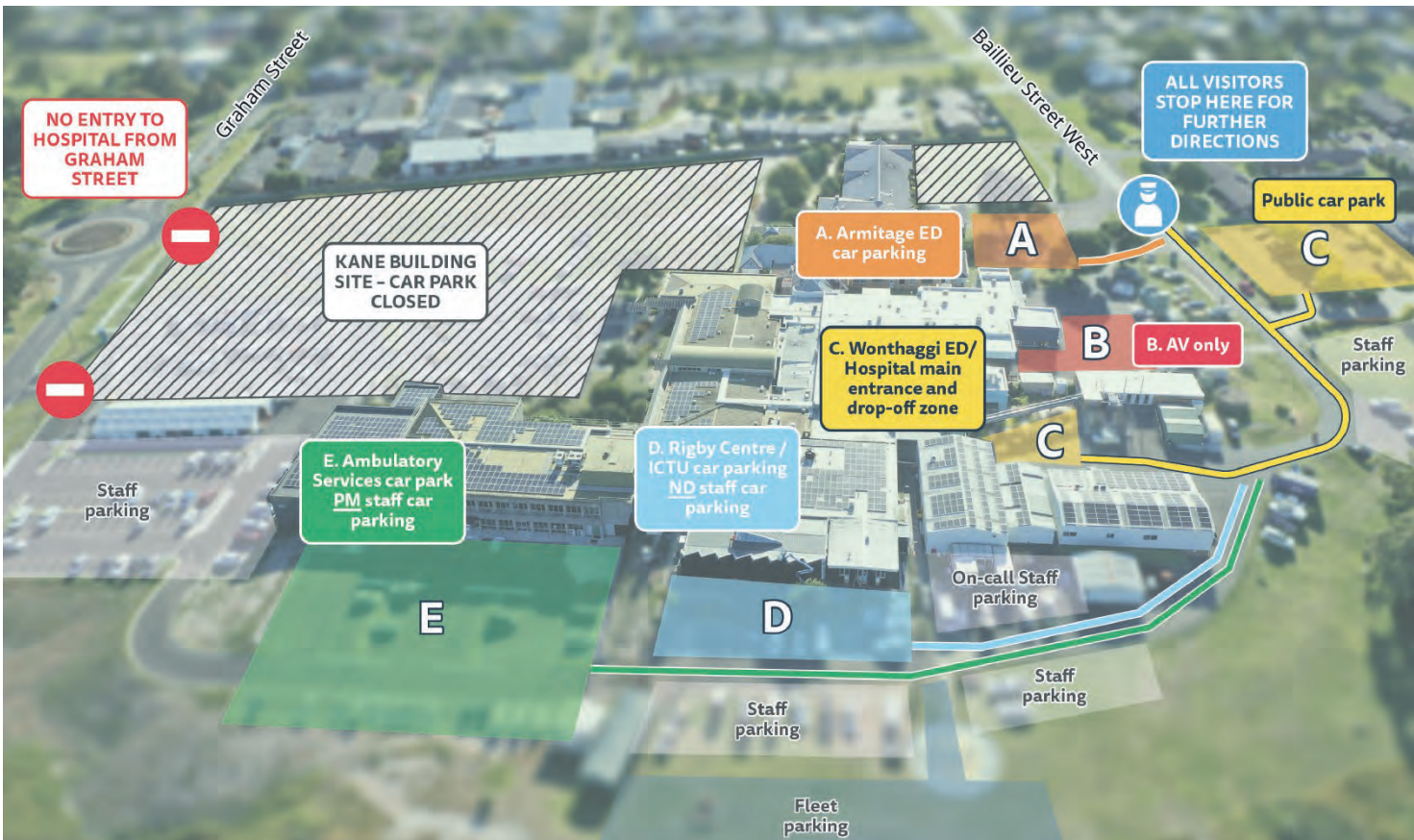
OBrien Real Estate Judith Wright has achieved great success, with 25 years experience on Phillip island, we have a large team of 30 and are heavily guided by our values:

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Please submit your resume to joshua.dunstan@obrienrealestate.com.au along with a cover letter detailing why we should consider you as our newest member of this dynamic team.



A map showing access to the Wonthaggi Hospital via Baillieu Street West and carparking arrangements.

Hospital changes run smoothly

Bass Coast Health has thanked the community for their patience and support following major changes to local services over the last week.

Patients and visitors to the hospital have been directed to a new entry, after Kane Constructions commenced work on the new car park at the front of the hospital.

The new car park is expected to be ready by Christmas and will provide additional parking, including eight accessible car parks.

"No matter when we did these car park improvements, we would have created some access issues," said CEO Jan Child.

"Closing the whole of the Graham Street entrance and relocating the main entrance to the rear of the hospital via Baillieu Street West meant we could reduce the amount of inconvenience for our community."

A traffic management team has been in place to help guide people to the new entrance.

"Of course we have had some learnings from the first week and we have already made changes that will streamline the entrances for everyone," Ms Child said.

"We continue to ask everyone to be patient and kind whilst we improve our health service."

"A huge thanks to everyone for their patience as we improve our facilities and a special shout out to our neighbours who have been very tolerant and understanding. Their support is very much appreciated."

From last Saturday, the Covid testing tent was moved from Wonthaggi Hospital to the former McBride Campus of Wonthaggi Secondary College, accessible via Watt Street.

The testing tent will be open 9am-4pm, seven days a week and there is ample space for vehicles.



Jess Bodiam of Event Operations Group tells Jess Bell-Weeks of Leongatha how to access Wonthaggi Hospital via the temporary entrance in Baillieu Street West.

Ratepayer survey on rates cap

Ratepayers are being asked to provide feedback on the state government's rate capping mechanism.

In 2016, the government introduced rate capping to restrict the amount that councils can raise in rates each year.

The local government rate cap is a legislative mechanism set out in the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) and needs to be reviewed by December 2021.

Grosvenor Performance Group has been engaged by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) to undertake an independent review of the Local Government Rate Capping Mechanism. It will submit an independent review report to the Minister for Local Government and the Assistant Treasurer at the conclusion of the review.

The review will consider:

- whether the mechanism for setting a cap on rates set out in Part 8A of the Local Government Act (the Act) is still appropriate; and
- whether Part 8A of the Act is effective or needs to be amended.

In addition, the review will assess all parts of the Rate Capping Mechanism, with specific reference to:

- the provision of advice by the Essential Services Commission (ESC) and government agencies to the Minister for Local Government in the setting of the rate cap (s 185D of the Act);
- the use of the base average rate as the basis for applying the rate cap (s 185B of the Act); and
- the process by which councils apply to the ESC for a higher cap and a decision is made by the ESC, including the timing, appropriateness of guidance and other communications provided by the ESC as part of the process (s 185E of the Act).

The review will not consider:

- the government's policy of capping local government rate increases in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI);
- the quality or merit of previous individual applications by councils to the ESC for a higher cap (both successful and unsuccessful) or a review of any decisions by the ESC with regard to individual applications

by councils;

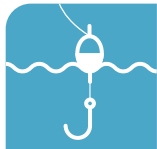
- the previous decisions by the Minister for Local Government in setting the rate cap amount;

It will also not consider matters that were within the scope of the 2019-20 Local Government Rating System Review including:

- current local government rates and charges levied under the Local Government Act 1989 and a number of other pieces of state legislation;
- the rating system's interaction with the state's taxation, valuation and other systems;
- current rating exemptions and concessions;
- the autonomy of councils to apply the rating system to meet local needs; and
- current exemptions and discounts for local government rates.

To read more on this topic, please visit www.esc.vic.gov.au/local-government/information-ratepayers.

The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete and closes on Sunday, November 14 at 5pm.



AROUND THE BAY

WITH JIM'S BAIT AND TACKLE

Responsibility and etiquette!

Two simple words but the two things that we get the most complaints about from customers. Normally when I bring these topics up the first comments we get is, "the people from Melbourne just don't care" unfortunately for those who use this excuse it just isn't valid at the moment, not that it is anytime.

I am losing track of the calls or comments from customers about both of these issues.

The question of etiquette is a simple one that starts at the boat ramp. It should be second nature: be ready, don't wait until you are backed down the ramp to put all your gear in the boat; hang back in the line; wave people past.

If possible and there are two of you to launch your boat – one drive it out of the way while the other parks the car. Don't tie it up two metres from the back of the trailer so no one can use that ramp until you come back.

Same when you get back. Load your boat then take your fish to the tables to clean them. This keeps the jetty clear for those who are on their own to tie up.

If you see someone struggling offer to give them a hand, this will be the quickest way for you to use the ramp. Standing there yelling at them doesn't achieve much.

I could write a whole page on etiquette once you are on the water but the main one is just give others space.

Don't anchor on top of them and give a bit of distance to those trolling or at anchor already. Very simple to do and will take a massive few minutes out of your day.

Unfortunately, responsibility is the one that is standing out at the moment and for all the wrong reasons. Again most of the time it's something that only takes a few minutes or a bit of care.

We all know the responsibility to follow the rules and regulations and while we are a fishing tackle shop, we don't actually make or enforce these rules. Next time you are at the filleting table and see someone with undersize fish don't call us because there is nothing we can do, call the fisheries number.

There seems to be plenty of bait bags getting washed up on the beaches and seen floating on the water.

We have all been guilty of not securing our rubbish and occasionally it will blow off a bait board or jetty but the excuse "the shops don't give out plastic bags anymore, so we have nothing to put our rubbish in" doesn't really wash.

The other excuse for leaving or dropping rubbish is "if the council supplied more bins I would have somewhere to put it". While this is something I actually agree with and something we will be chasing further once we get through this Covid problem, it still isn't an excuse for leaving rubbish around.

By far the biggest complaint of late has been the state of the filleting tables.

Two things people don't take enough responsibility for are disposing of your fish frames and offal and the state you leave the cleaning table in.

Cleaning tables have been removed from boat ramps for reasons like this because of the unpleasant odour residents have to put up with.

It's again very simple. Make sure you throw everything well past the high-water mark, not just at the bottom of the table and wash the table down when you are finished.

Excuses include "doesn't matter the birds will get it", "the tide just washes it back in" (needs to be in the water at least for that to happen), "there wasn't any water" and "I was in a hurry", but the best is "the



Amanda with a quality 7kg snapper from a quick evening fish during the week.

council should be sending someone around to keep things clean".

There is no excuse really and again only takes a few more minutes to do the right thing.

I do agree with the comment from almost everyone that the facilities are pathetic and again something we will be chasing up after we get past period.

Having travelled through SA and WA and seen the importance given to the boating sector there in both ramp facilities and cleaning tables it really is embarrassing to see what we have.

I will again expect a few calls about the above, but I have always said if customers have something they would like mentioned I will write about it, especially when several of the same complaints come in.

Normally I do these opinion pieces when it has been a slow week of reports, but it's been anything but with plenty of good numbers of the three main species for this time of the year, snapper, whiting, calamari.

It was a week of good quality fish and good numbers, some even bagging out, but it has been a week of having the opportunity to just go.

The forecast and the actual were considerably different at times making it very difficult for those who don't live close to the water.

For those who do and were able to take advantage there will be plenty of fish in the freezer and the best part is with these conditions you are generally only out for a handful of hours and not an all-day session.

There was of course plenty who missed out, but that's just fishing.

Snapper were best in the deep water during the early morning this week while the afternoon fish came from the shallows then after dark produced them from all over.

They still haven't really fired up yet but are showing signs every day that it won't be long.

The odd one has been reported from the corals area and I think it will still be a couple of weeks before they move down to this part of the bay.

Whiting reports were a mixture of deep and shallow, but the time of the day didn't make much difference as we had reports from both at the same time.

The bigger fish were deep as they usually are and those fishing deep reported trevally and pinkies from the same place.

Shallow was a mixture of sizes but all in good condition no matter the depth.

The numbers were still nothing to write home about and if it wasn't for the quality many might not have even chased them.

Calamari finally look as if they have turned up and the numbers were very good this week from both land and boat/kayak.

Almost every spot you would expect to find them you did, with a mixture of sizes but much more consistency in the size than previous weeks.

The best method is still baited jigs, but artificial jigs weren't that far behind, especially when the water cleared up.

Rhyll-Phillip Island Angling Club Fishing competition

With no time to wait and no venue for weight, the second Rhyll-Phillip Island Angling Club (RPIAC) angling competition for the 2021/2022 season was held over the weekend.

Again, with the RPIAC weigh-in room closed, the competition was conducted using the CovidSafe format where anglers submitted photographs of catches instead, showing the total length and the weekend's code-word ("Highland").

With a helping hand from the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) all the RPIAC eligible species were included, and Fisheries Research data was used to convert each fish length to an estimated total weight.

The weight estimates were used to determine the weekend's competition winners.

Thankfully regional Victorians are able take part in outdoor recreational activities like fishing although the weather dictates the participation and success.

Whilst Saturday was sub-optimal the conditions improved to fantastic, just as the competition's closing time of 5.30 pm on Sunday approached.

The Weigh-in Masters, Russ Gallagher and Norm Trickey received entries for 25 fish, including the usual variety of species.

King George whiting were the most common, whilst snapper, barracouta, salmon, pike, and mackerel were out and about.

The Squidgies competition, for budding anglers aged nine or younger, had some worthy mixed bags for the weekend competition.

Zachary Gomm entered two fish worth 40 points (King George whiting and snapper) to finish in second place.

The reigning Squidgie Club

Champion, Denver Firth, entered three fish (barracouta, mackerel and King George whiting) worth 50 points to secure first place.

The Junior competition, for anglers aged 10 to 16, was a win-win situation for Kate McCausland. Kate won the Junior Weight and Junior Points competitions after catching a salmon with an estimated weight of 770 grams (41 cm), and a King George whiting worth 672 points (estimated weight 240 grams, 34 cm), respectively.

The Senior Heaviest Weight contests were won by Steve Bland, for an impressive snapper with an estimated weight of 4338 grams (71.5 cm), and Carriane Peatey, for a splendid snapper with an estimated weight of 1249 grams (45 cm).

The Senior Points competitions were won by Pat Gleeson and Heidi McCausland, for some wandering salmon worth 1822 points (estimated weight 1822 grams, 55 cm), and 886 points (estimated weight 886 grams, 43 cm), respectively.

The Senior Shark competition was uncontested, whilst Sam Orr was closest to the mark for the Secret Weight competition (secret weight 353 grams) for a smiling mackerel with an estimated weight of 316 grams (31.5 cm).

Special thanks to the team at VFA, for their valued assistance, and well-done to all the angling members and supporters who made it possible to continue with the angling competition.

The next competition is scheduled to occur on the weekend of November 6 and 7.

For further information about the club and competitions please visit www.rpiac.com.

Cricket coaching team revealed

Mick Cleary is returning as the Woolworths Junior/Master Blaster coordinator and Dave Womersley also returns as the U15s coach.

New to the coaching roles are U12s

coaches – Ash Larcombe and Daryl Hughes, plus U17s coach – Connor Epifano. Tarryn Allan and Luke Marshall (not pictured) are the new junior cricket coordinators for the season.

PLAYER PROFILE

NAME: Adam Miller
OCCUPATION: Mayor of Coronet Bay
FAMILY: Wife Steph and daughter Grace
FAVOURITE BEVERAGE: Melbourne Bitter
FAVOURITE CRICKETER: Colin De Grandhomme
WHAT OTHER CLUBS HAVE YOU PLAYED WITH?: Poowong Loch CC
BEST LOCAL PLAYER YOU'VE PLAYED WITH?: Blair Hunter
BEST PI CRICKETER YOU'VE SEEN?: Geoff Odgers
WHICH ACTOR WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE?: Seth Rogen
HIGHEST SCORE: How long have you got?
WHAT'S THE FUNNIEST THING YOU'VE SEEN ON THE FIELD?: Ash Stride (umpire) giving me a run off my pad to get 200 off the last ball
IF I COULD BE ONE PERSON FOR A DAY, WHO WOULD I BE?: Dave Portnoy
WHAT WOULD YOU LAST MEAL BE?: Cheese Pizza from Gradi at Crown
FAVOURITE TV SHOW?: Peaky Blinders and Football Factory...I can't split them
IF YOU COULD INVITE FIVE PEOPLE TO DINNER, WHO WOULD THEY BE?: Eminem, Michael Jordan, Jim Jefferies, Robert De Niro, Lucky Luciano
WHAT WOULD BE YOUR PERFECT CONCERT LINEUP: Eminem, Fooles then finish with Michael Jackson
WHAT WOULD BE YOUR PERFECT WEEKEND OF SPORT?: September 25th, 2021
ONE SPORTING EVENT YOU DREAM OF GOING TO?: Has to be game 7 of the NBA Finals
IF YOU COULD TURN BACK TIME AND CHANGE ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?: I reckon I'd tell Steve Irwin not to go into work today
WHAT YOU SPEND YOUR LAST \$20 ON?: Tattslootto Tickets

MICK CLEARY
WOOLWORTHS JUNIOR CO-ORDINATOR

ASH LARCOMBE **DARYL HUGHES**
UNDER 12'S COACHES

DAVE WOMERSLEY
UNDER 15'S COACH

CONNOR EPIFANO
UNDER 17'S COACH

TIDE GUIDE

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

WED 20 OCT	THU 21 OCT	FRI 22 OCT	SAT 23 OCT	SUN 24 OCT	MON 25 OCT	TUE 26 OCT
HIGH 1:03 am 2.50 m	HIGH 2:09 am 2.67 m	HIGH 3:01 am 2.84 m	HIGH 3:46 am 2.95 m	HIGH 4:24 am 3.02 m	HIGH 4:58 am 3.05 m	HIGH 5:30 am 3.04 m
LOW 6:47 am 1.02 m	LOW 7:52 am 0.98 m	LOW 8:45 am 0.93 m	LOW 9:30 am 0.90 m	LOW 10:07 am 0.89 m	LOW 10:41 am 0.90 m	LOW 11:14 am 0.91 m
HIGH 1:26 pm 2.54 m	HIGH 2:18 pm 2.60 m	HIGH 3:02 pm 2.63 m	HIGH 3:38 pm 2.65 m	HIGH 4:10 pm 2.67 m	HIGH 4:40 pm 2.67 m	HIGH 5:11 pm 2.67 m
LOW 7:17 pm 0.85 m	LOW 8:08 pm 0.69 m	LOW 8:51 pm 0.57 m	LOW 9:29 pm 0.49 m	LOW 10:02 pm 0.44 m	LOW 10:36 pm 0.42 m	LOW 11:09 pm 0.43 m

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A \$157,500 grant from the Federal government will help Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club carry out much needed improvements to the coastal environment, including maintenance of the all-abilities access ramp.

Another great grant for Woolamai Beach SLS Club

The Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club has received a grant of \$157,500 to improve the Clubhouse environs at Cape Woolamai. The grant application was prepared in collaboration with the Phillip Island Nature Park and is part of a \$315,000 project. The grant from the Australian Government's Building Better Regions Fund was announced last week by Mr Russell Broadbent MP, the Member for Monash. The Building Better Regions Fund supports the Australian Government's commitment to create jobs, Club Vice-President Mr Stafford Smith said the club was thrilled to receive the funding, which would help it to carry out much needed improvements "to the sensitive coastal environs" which surround the club.

"We are looking forward to working in partnership with the Phillip Island Nature Park and other authorities," he said. "The Club is also very grateful for the support of Mr Russell Broadbent MP and Regional Development Victoria for the project." The club said the funding will help to:

- Enhance the environs of the Woolamai Beach SLSC;
- Better protect the sensitive coastal environment;
- Revegetate and stabilise the dune system which surrounds the Clubhouse;
- Improve and streamline access to the beach, Clubhouse and public toilet facilities;
- Assist the operational needs of an important surf rescue facility which services the Bass Coast region;

- Improve the overall visitor experience to one of Victoria's major tourist destinations;
- Implement several actions of the Phillip Island Nature Parks' Cape Woolamai Coastal Reserves Master Plan.

Work will include dune stabilisation, revegetation, beach access improvements, construction of a retaining wall, maintenance of the all-abilities access ramp, repairs to the toilet access path and constructing a bin enclosure. The projects will take place between 2021 and 2024. The Club prepared the grant application with the support of the Phillip Island Nature Parks and all projects will be constructed with the relevant approvals and under the supervision of the Phillip Island Nature Parks. Volunteer life savers from the

Club's Sustainability Committee will also assist with revegetation work and ongoing maintenance around the Clubhouse. The Clubhouse at Cape Woolamai is located within the Phillip Island Nature Parks and is also in Victoria's only National Surfing Reserve. Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club is Gippsland's largest surf life saving club in terms of membership, area patrolled and number of rescues. It is the only surf life saving club on Phillip Island and its volunteers patrol some of Victoria's most dangerous beaches. The Clubhouse was built in 2002-03 and over recent years the harsh coastal environment has led to the need for some significant maintenance of the building and its surrounds.

Register for Nippers

Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club's Nippers program is back again this summer and registrations open soon. "Our hugely popular intensive program teaches children aged 6 to 13 years surf education, lifesaving skills, and fitness, in a safe and fun environment" says Charles Tuchtan, club Director of Junior Development. "The program will again operate with reduced numbers and CovidSafe practices and protocols in line with requirements set by Life Saving Victoria." The Nippers program will run from Wednesday, December 29 to Wednesday, January 5, 2022 at both Cleeland Bight Beach and Smiths Beach. Registrations for the program open online at 7pm on Monday, October 25, and places fill fast. To find out more information and to register for Nippers, visit www.woolamaibeach.org.au/nippers.



Registrations for the popular Nippers program opens on October 25 at 7pm and places are expected to fill quickly. Image courtesy of Ivan Webb.

**ALEX SCOTT
AND STAFF**

4/75 CHAPEL STREET, COWES



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