

PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO

# ADVERTISER

YOUR COMMUNITY VOICE!

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

\$1.80 Incl. GST

# Merry Christmas



**HAPPY  
NEW YEAR**

Merry Christmas from  
our families to yours, and  
here's to a 2025 filled with  
all things wonderful!  
— The Advertiser Team

*Next week is our  
last edition for 2024*



# Merry Christmas

& HAPPY NEW YEAR

## PRINTITFAST

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year in 2025.

Thank you to all our customers for your amazing support throughout 2024!

PRINT IT FAST WILL BE CLOSED

December 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024 - January 13<sup>th</sup> 2025  
We will be open for pickups only December 18, 19, 20  
Christmas Closure from midday December 23<sup>rd</sup>  
Production will recommence January 13<sup>th</sup>  
with doors reopening January 14<sup>th</sup>

January 24<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> 2025  
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FROM THE TEAM AT NEW WAVE CONCRETING

# Season's Greetings

from the team at



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San Remo | Cowes | Wonthaggi



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*Maddy & Charlotte*

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# Merry Christmas

& HAPPY NEW YEAR

## Melina BATH MP

NATIONALS MEMBER FOR EASTERN VICTORIA REGION

May we all give and receive the gift of kindness at Christmas time.

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2/181 Franklin St, Traralgon  
 melina.bath@parliament.vic.gov.au  
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Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

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# Merry Christmas

& HAPPY NEW YEAR

## The spirit of Christmas

Christmas is just around the corner, and our local community is embracing the spirit of the season.

*It's been heart-warming to see the support for local giving trees and Christmas fundraisers designed to help those doing it tough in our community.*

*There are so many special Christmas events and activities happening all across the island; please turn to our centre page for some of the highlights.*

*The team at the Advertiser would like to thank all our readers and advertisers for their support throughout 2024. We certainly couldn't have done it without you.*



### Merry Christmas from your Community Banks!

Your local Community Banks of **San Remo, Cowes and Grantville** wish you a wonderful Christmas and a safe, happy and healthy 2025.

Our branches will be closed from COB Tuesday 24 December, and reopen Friday 27 December. Branches will also be closed on Wednesday, January 1, 2025.

San Remo: 5678 5833 Cowes: 5952 3383  
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**Seasons Greetings!**

Thank you for your support throughout the year.

We wish our community a wonderful holiday season and a New Year full of joy, happiness and memorable moments.

From the team at PHILLIP ISLAND NATURE PARKS

Phillip Island NATURE PARKS

[penguins.org.au](http://penguins.org.au)  
#PhillipIslandNP

f t i

Wishing you all a Joyous Festive Season



and a year filled with Kindness & Good Health

As the year draws to a close, I want to thank our amazing community for showing your continued generosity of spirit, valuing all our volunteers; as to our first responders and health care workers, supporting local fundraisers, our local clubs, groups and organisations and checking in with those you love and cherish.

The collective kindness exemplifies our community is at the heart and our true community colours keep on shining through.

Sadly, we have community members doing it tough or facing the first Christmas without that beautiful someone by their side. If this is you, please reach out and let others know - you are not alone. My team and I are here to help too.

This is the true spirit of Christmas.

As we reconnect with family and friends to celebrate the festive season, please look out for each other, support your local businesses, show appreciation for our retail and hospitality workers and please take care on the roads and in our waters. A reminder to also be bush fire prepared and download the VicEmergency app.

My family and I wish you and those you cherish a joyous reuniting season and a year filled with kindness, positive experiences and good health.

 **jordan crugnale mp**  
T: 5672 4755 [jordan.crugnale@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:jordan.crugnale@parliament.vic.gov.au) 9 McBride Ave, Wonthaggi 3995



RayWhite.

MAY YOUR DAYS BE

## Merry & Bright

Kristien, Leah & the team at  
**Ray White Phillip Island**  
wish everyone a safe and Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year.

We look forward to working with you  
in 2025

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# Merry Christmas

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KYLIE, DARREN AND THE TEAM AT FLOWERS OF PHILLIP ISLAND WOULD LIKE TO WISH OUR WONDERFUL COMMUNITY A SAFE AND HAPPY NEW YEAR. WE WILL BE CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY AND BOXING DAY WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT.

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Merry Christmas

From the team at Shima Salon, Cowes

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# Merry Christmas

& HAPPY NEW YEAR

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From the crew at Wildlife Coast Cruises

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Team BSD   

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**RUSSELL BROADBENT**  
Federal Member for Monash

*Merry Christmas*


FROM MY FAMILY TO YOURS

The gift of love.  
The gift of peace.  
The gift of happiness.  
May all these be yours  
this holiday season.

Authorised by Russell Broadbent MP, Independent Federal Member for Monash, Warragul

*"On behalf of my wife Nancie and my family, I wish all Islanders and their loved ones a happy and safe festive season."*

Ronnie Bauer  
Councillor for the Island Ward



PO Box 996, Cowes, 3922  
Ph: 0439 535 282  
email: Ron.Bauer@basscoast.vic.gov.au  
Authorised by Ronnie Bauer, PO Box 996, Cowes 3922

## Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season from everyone at Westernport Water


Westernport Water's Customer Service Centre at Newhaven will be closed on the following days:

- 24 December 2024 (from 12pm)
- 25 December 2024
- 26 December 2024
- 27 December 2024
- 1 January 2025

However, as an essential service provider, we provide emergency support 24/7, 365 days a year. If you need to contact us urgently about your water or wastewater service, please call 1800 249 090.

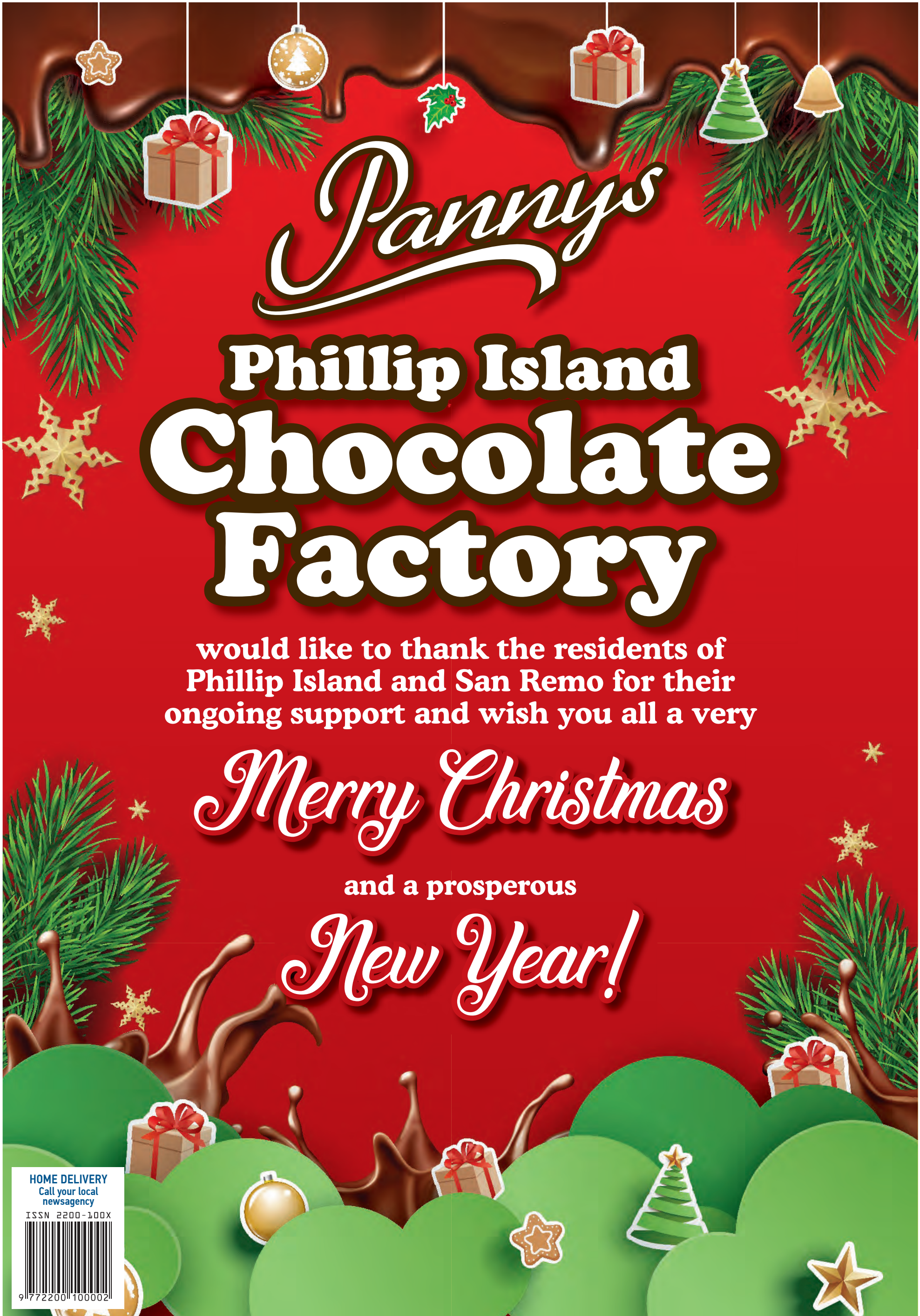


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*Season's Greetings*





*Pannys*

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Phillip Island and San Remo for their  
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*Merry Christmas*

and a prosperous

*New Year!*

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PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO

# ADVERTISER

YOUR COMMUNITY VOICE!

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

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The final DAL will have a major impact across Phillip Island, with developers hoping to get the green light for vast new housing developments at Cape Woolamai's airport land, Newhaven West, Smiths Beach, Ventnor and San Remo.

## PLANNING

The State Government has again – for the fourth time – extended the deadline for finalising the long-anticipated Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) project.

One local described the constant delays as “farcical”, with Bass Coast first declared a DAL in 2019, aiming to lock in town boundaries, and tighten planning controls to protect significant landscapes.

The DAL's final hurdle, the Statement of Planning Policy (SPP) was expected last year but was extended to October this year.

But last week Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale MP confirmed the draft SPP had again been given an extension, despite in October saying details would be finalised by November, when it was to be endorsed by public entities such as Bass Coast Shire, with the final public SPP

expected by April 2025.

“I am once again extremely disappointed we will not be able to finalise the DAL documentation to seek both endorsement from the responsible public authorities and inform communities about the final boundaries, as was stated to happen by the end of November,” Ms Crugnale said last week.

“I know the community want certainty and this update does not provide that right now.

“I am assured work is progressing and am in constant communication with the Minister for Planning's office and as soon as I am able to share an additional update I will.”

Ms Crugnale said she shared people's “frustration” and was not able to give any further timeline “at this stage”.

“I can assure everyone this is a priority for government and the work will be done,” she had said previously.

“The Bass Coast SPP will

safeguard environmental, landscape and cultural values and encourage good neighbourhood design, while not putting communities in areas of environment risk.”

She said the SPP would provide a blueprint for the liveability of the Bass Coast for the next 50 years and ensure housing growth and infrastructure investment occurred in the right locations.

As reported, in August Planning Minister Sonya Kilkenny refused to speculate on specifics of the DAL's final release when asked by the Advertiser.

“I don't have a timeline. It's a priority. It will happen,” Ms Kilkenny said, putting an end to rumours the whole project had been shelved.

As to why there had been such a significant delay, the Minister said it was a “complex matter”.

### Impact

The draft SPP recommended locking in town boundaries

and tightening planning controls to protect significant landscapes, with six areas declared state or regionally significant including the coast and hinterland between Cape Woolamai and Ventnor, as well as the Rhyll Inlet, and areas north of Cowes-Rhyll Road to Newhaven.

During the public consultation in 2022, 747 written public submissions were received and the former Minister for Planning referred the draft SPP and all written submissions to a standing advisory committee for independent advice.

In May last year the independent planning panel hearings for the DAL closed, after listening to more than 70 parties and 30 witnesses over two months.

Panel members carried out several days of site inspections across Phillip Island, San Remo and Bass Coast before submitting its report recom-

mendations to the Planning Minister last June.

The final DAL will have a major impact across Phillip Island, with developers arguing to get the green light for vast new housing developments at Cape Woolamai's airport land, Newhaven West, Smiths Beach, Ventnor and San Remo.

In February councillors voted on a submission, supplied by the Department of Planning, which provides new landscape details suggesting Ventnor and San Remo in particular could be expanded.

Under the new details, San Remo looks set to almost double in size, with the town boundary extended through to Punchbowl Road.

And Ventnor west may become another controversial battleground, with the government potentially recommending expansion for housing, a move not supported by the community or council.

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<h1>PHILLIP ISLAND</h1> <p>7 DAY WEATHER FORECAST</p>	Wed/Dec11  CLOUDY 15 20	Thu/Dec12  CLOUDY 15 22	Fri/Dec13  PARTLY CLOUDY 16 22	Sat/Dec14  PARTLY CLOUDY 15 21	Sun/Dec15  PARTLY CLOUDY 15 23	Mon/Dec16  SUNNY 16 29	Tue/Dec17  SUNNY 16 24
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Property investor and well-known figure on *The Block*, Adrian Portelli, at the auction at 113-119 Justice Road. Portelli has been charged in South Australia with running an unlawful lottery.

## Block buyer in hot water

### REAL ESTATE

The billionaire property investor who bought all five Cowes houses auctioned in the reality TV show *The Block* has been charged with running an unlawful lottery.

Well-known figure on *The Block*, Adrian Portelli forked out more than \$15 million on November 9 to secure the entire property, with all five houses then listed on his LMCT+ website.

The website is currently selling tickets in a giveaway for the public to have a chance to win the entire resort or choose \$8m in prize money, with entries to the giveaway closing December 26.

However last week it was reported Mr Portelli will face a South Australian court after being charged with running an unlawful lottery.

LMCT+ is described as a “shopping tool and rewards club”, offering shopping discounts for a monthly fee, with members allegedly granted entry into monthly draws where cash and prizes can be won.

According to ABC news, Mr Portelli and his company, Xclusive Tech Pty Ltd, face 19 charges of person conducting/assist in the conduct of an unlawful lottery.

The charges range in date from January 2023 to May this year, with Xclusive Tech charged over several lotteries that offered properties from *The Block* as a major prize.

Under South Australia’s Lotteries Act 2019, any lottery not licensed in the state is unlawful, with organisers facing a maximum penalty of \$10,000.

Mr Portelli is due to face court on January 15 next year.

## Island beaches considered for Top 10 list

### TOURISM

Australia’s Beach Ambassador made a surprise visit to Phillip Island this week as part of his nationwide search of 12,000 beaches to determine the Top 10 for 2025.

Coastal veteran Brad Farmer AM, who has been writing about beaches for 40 years says, “Phillip Island is an ideal destination for inbound international tourist post-Covid”.

During his visit, Brad inspected a shortlist of beaches on Phillip Island including Cowes, Smiths, Red Rocks and Kitty Miller Bay.

The Top 10 beaches list, a study Brad undertakes each year for Tourism Australia, showcases the best beach destinations and celebrates the diversity of Aus-

tralian beaches.

Last year, Squeaky Beach at Wilsons Prom was crowned the number one beach in Australia.

During his visit, Brad caught up with local surfers and former members of the Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve committee, Graeme Burgan and Phil Wright, to discuss local issues.

The Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve was declared in 2013, when Brad Farmer was chair of the National Surfing Reserves.

He attended the community celebration at Woolamai Beach, where surfing superstar Layne Beachley and the then Minister for Environment and Climate Change and Youth Affairs, Ryan Smith MP, launched the reserve.



Australia’s Beach Ambassador Brad Farmer AM with Graeme Burgan and Phil Wright. Brad visited Phillip Island this week, as part of his search to determine the Top 10 best beaches for 2025.

### POLICE BRIEFS

#### Slashed tyres at San Remo resort

Police are currently investigating an incident at the Silverwater Resort in San Remo, where the two right side tyres of a Toyota Camry were slashed. It is alleged the offence took place between 9am and 3pm as the car was parked near the rooms in one of the resorts.

#### Schoolies well behaved

Police said there were no major incidents during the schoolies period, with all celebrating school-leavers generally well behaved. Schoolies numbers were estimated to be down on previous years, with attendees engaging and “very friendly” with local police.

#### Accident

A 23-year-old male from Cape Woolamai was flown by air ambulance to the Royal Melbourne Hospital with life threatening injuries after a serious collision in Wonthaggi on December 4.

A 26-year-old male from Wonthaggi was taken to the Dandenong Hospital with serious injuries.

Police believe that at approximately 7.25pm, a black Holden Commodore ute collided with a gum tree and other structures, including a sign and a fence, near the intersection of Bilson Street and Haglethorn Street.

If you have any information regarding this collision, including the actions of the ute prior to the collision, please contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or at: [www.crimestoppersvic.com.au/report-a-crime/](http://www.crimestoppersvic.com.au/report-a-crime/)

Police from the Wonthaggi Police Station are investigating the collision.

### Melaleuca Lodge Auxiliary SUMMER SECONDHAND BOOK SALE

Saturday 28th December 2024 to Saturday January 25th 2025  
Open Daily 10am-1pm



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Watchorn Road Cowes  
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Jean 0422 491 265

## Melina BATH MP

THE NATIONALS MEMBER FOR EASTERN VICTORIA REGION

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# Rhyll jetty will undergo major makeover

**PROJECTS**

Rhyll jetty will undergo a multi-million-dollar upgrade, including a new pontoon and a wider landing zone for cruise ship passengers, with plans released by Parks Victoria last week.

The yet-to-be-funded redesign comes after a year of technical investigations and community consultation.

News of the proposed upgrade, however, was met with protests by some residents, who asked why the Rhyll jetty was prioritised above the closed Newhaven jetty.

Parks Victoria said the upgrade was needed because the jetty is approaching the end of its life and needed to support a "range of water-based tourism and recreational activities", including tour operators and short-term berthing for cruise ship tenders and recreational vessels.

"It plays a significant role in supporting wildlife cruises, cruise ship tenders, recreational boating and fishing as well as promenading for the local community," Parks Victoria states.

"The number of passengers arriving at Rhyll has significant economic benefits, enhances its sta-

tus as a desirable tourist destination, and provides for the Rhyll Community Association who welcome visitors and promote tourism at Rhyll."

The authority also said the jetty needed to be designed for "local wave climate and climate change impacts such as sea level rise".

The final Rhyll Local Area Port Plan does not propose any dredging, with the proposed jetty on the same footprint as the existing jetty.

The plan provides berthing and pedestrian access across the full tidal range and includes:

- A widened landing zone, which will reduce congestion and allow for crowd dispersal
- Improved safety and accessibility with solar lighting, a new disability compliant gangway, and handrails on both sides
- A jetty head with a symmetrical pontoon design, using the existing pontoon and a new pontoon to the east
- The berths created by the new pontoon will be shared between tourism operators and recreational users

"Although the wave and tidal climate at Rhyll is not severe, determining the appropriate wave loading will

be a significant factor in the detailed design phase," the plan states.

The upgrade will depend on securing funding, planning and necessary approvals, and further consultation with stakeholders.

**Consultation**

A jetty was constructed at the site in 1877 and has been replaced several times, with the current structure built in the 1980s.

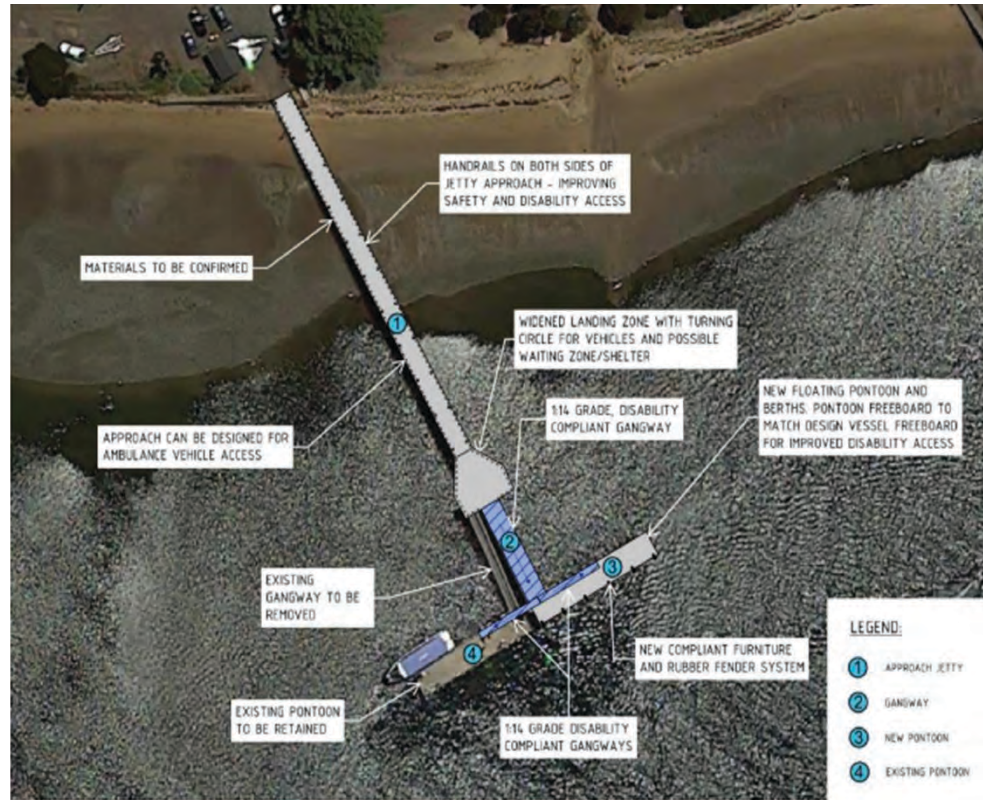
Parks Victoria said the heritage character would be maintained, with construction materials decided through detailed design.

"As a jetty within a small fishing village founded in the 19th century, the preferred design solution will reflect this existing character," the authority said.

Community consultation on the draft plan ran in July and August on Engage Victoria, which was viewed 650 times, with 29 submissions received.

Results showed 64 per cent of participants supported the design, with the most important feature nominated as "maintaining the character of the jetty".

The second highest-ranked response was providing a "safe and well-maintained facility", and the third highest-ranked



The preferred design solution for Rhyll jetty includes a new pontoon to the east and a widened landing zone, which will reduce congestion and allow for crowd dispersal of cruise ship passengers.

"access for all tide berthing".

The most common activity nominated was boating followed by exercising or sightseeing.

More than half of participants (64 per cent) were male, the majority (96 per cent) were aged 35 years, and most participants (68

per cent) were residents of Phillip Island, with 25 per cent visitors.

The jetty plan follows the \$4.5 million upgrade of the Rhyll ramp for boats in 2022 by the shire, which manages the foreshore, ramp and parking.

Earlier this year the final Phillip Island and San

Remo Destination Management Plan Towards 2033 was released, flagging the Cowes jetty for a priority upgrade, especially for cruise ship tenders; in addition to an upgrade for the Rhyll port infrastructure as an "economically viable cruise ship-destination plan".

# Toilets to reopen for Christmas

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

Bass Coast Shire Council has confirmed the public toilets on the Cowes foreshore will be reopened to the public by December 20. In October, council stated it expected the work on the toilet block to be completed by the first week of December.

The toilets have been closed since late September, with contractors undertaking waterproofing and repairs.

The project included grinding and filling the slab, installing a waterproof membrane and paving tiles, internal painting and reinstating handrails.

Council was harshly criticised by local businesses and community members for the timing of

the closure, which included the busy MotoGP weekend, and the original timeline which stated the toilets would be closed until January.

That was then amended to late December, with council saying it would reopen before Christmas, and defending the timing of the project.

"The scheduling of this project was deliberate to both allow the works to be completed during the best weather while balancing community need for the toilet to be open during the peak summer season (late December 2024 to January 2025)," a council spokesperson said in October.

"The slab needs to be as dry as possible to perform these works. Temperature and predicted rain-

fall had to be taken into account and therefore this work could not be completed during winter months due to frequent rainfall and the resulting damp conditions.

"These works are to prevent the unplanned closure of the toilets after rain that has occurred frequently over recent years."

This week, a council spokesperson said the toilets will be open by December 20.

"Ideally the top section will be finished as well; there is a small chance there might still be some items that will require the temporary fencing to stay up," they said.

"We are really hopeful this won't be the case but for public safety, we will need to be conservative."



Council has confirmed the toilet block on the Cowes foreshore will reopen by December 20, although there is a "small chance" that the temporary fencing may remain in place.

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# Ninety-six per cent chance of drowning: report

## LIFESAVING

The 2023/24 annual drowning report released by Life Saving Victoria (LSV) last Wednesday said there is a 96 per cent likelihood of one or more drowning fatalities in Bass Coast Shire this summer.

The fatal drowning summary, which ranks Bass Coast second highest, is based on incidents since 2014/15 within Victorian LGAs where more than five incidents have occurred.

Last summer, six people drowned across Bass Coast – which is designated as a “local government area hotspot”. The Mornington Peninsula, which saw eight drownings over the 2023/24 season, was the only LGA in Victoria with more drownings than Bass Coast.

Of the six drownings across Bass Coast last summer, five were on Phillip Island, including four people who died at Forrest Caves in what was the worst incidence of mass drowning in the state in nearly two decades.

Speaking at a media conference at the LSV headquarters in Port Melbourne last Wednesday, Dr Hannah Calverley said 54 people had lost their lives in Victorian waterways last year.

“These are real tragic reminders that water safety should be at the forefront of everybody’s minds, particularly as we head into the warmer weather,” said the LSV Manager of Research and Evaluation.

“Each of these numbers represents a real issue. Real people, real communities, and real families that are affected by drowning. And first and fore-



An annual LSV report has said there is a 96 per cent likelihood of one or more drowning fatalities in Bass Coast Shire this summer, with a record number of multicultural drownings recorded last summer.

most, we need to express our sincere condolences to those affected.”

### Multicultural drowning record

The report reveals a substantial increase in both the number of young and multicultural Victorians drowning in the state.

Fatal drownings among culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people was the highest on record in the last year ending July 1, with 21

people losing their lives. Jagjeet Singh Anaand, Suhani Anaand, Kirti Bedi and Reema Sondi, the four people who died at Forrest Caves in January, were among the tragic losses behind that statistic.

Dr Calverley said last year was the “worst summer on record” for drowning in Victoria with many lives lost in coastal settings.

“Tragically, many were swimming outside of the patrolled areas or outside of patrol times.”

There were also ten fatal drownings of people aged 15-24 last year, which is double the ten-year average.

“Many of these incidents involved these young people simply going and trying to have fun with their friends in coastal settings during the summertime, and perhaps unintentionally taking risks,” Dr Calverley said.

The CEO of LSV said “our community collectively shudders at this sharp increase in drowning deaths, particularly

among teenagers and young adults. We need a community-wide effort to reach out to our young people and halt this disturbing trend.

“We must support our multicultural communities by breaking down language and cultural barriers, building water safety abilities and fostering role models so all Victorians can enjoy the water safely.”

### Local action

The drownings at Forrest Caves last year saw renewed calls from the local community for improved signage at local beaches, with new, upgraded signs installed at beaches controlled by Phillip Island Nature Parks in the lead up to summer.

According to a spokesperson from the Nature Parks, the new beach entry signs incorporate “all the changes recommended” in the 2019 Blackspot Coastal Risk Assessment Report.

In the lead up to summer, the Nature Parks and Bass Coast Shire Council began a public awareness campaign for beach safety.

Every booked visitor with Nature Parks through to April 2025 will receive a reminder to download the Surf Life Saving Beachsafe app – which provides tailored information on both patrolled and unpatrolled beaches.

Nature Parks have also launched a new safety website page. Under the “beach safety” tab on the webpage, Nature Parks direct visitors to download the Beachsafe app and provide several generic safety messages. A list of beaches where “swimming is not advised” is also provided.

# Latrobe Valley or Melbourne for medical services?

## HEALTH

Phillip Island residents have been urged to lobby the Victorian Health Minister to fight an imminent health services merger that could see locals sent east to the Latrobe Valley for medical visits, rather than to Melbourne.

The Phillip Island Medical and Health Action Group (PIMHAG) last week made the “call to action”, after concerns Minister Mary-Anne Thomas was set to decide on the merger before Christmas.

Under a review of health services in Victoria conducted this year, Bass Coast Health (BCH) is recommended to join the Gippsland local health network, based out of the Latrobe Valley.

PIMHAG spokesperson Linda Marston said former BCH CEO Jan Child had strongly advocated to instead be part of Bayside, which includes Alfred Health, Kooweerup Regional Health Service, and Peninsula Health.

Linda said with Ms Child departing the role in October, “we have lost a very strong advocate”, adding BCH board and management supported Ms Child’s position.

She said 99 per cent of locals needing health services currently travelled north along the Bass Highway, and not east across Gippsland.

“The vast majority of resi-



Residents should consider whether they want specialists from the Latrobe Valley or The Alfred visiting the new community hospital, to be opened in 2025.

dents from the island and San Remo have relatives and friends in the Melbourne suburbs and on the Peninsula, so they have family support and accommodation if needed. They do not have them in Traralgon,” Linda said in a letter to Minister Thomas last week.

“Phillip Island has three million visitors a year, the majority from Melbourne, who may re-

ceive treatment from BCH but then head home for further care if required.

“There is also no public transport that people can take from the island to attend appointments without an overnight stay.”

The letter stated if health services moved to Traralgon, it would “not result in the community using them” and would

“not result in efficiencies”.

Linda told the Advertiser residents should consider whether they wanted specialists from the Latrobe Valley or The Alfred visiting the new community hospital, to be opened in 2025.

Linda said State MP for Bass Jordan Crugnale supported PIMHAG’s position and the Victorian Government “should

remember this is a marginal seat”.

“If the Minister’s decision upsets enough people there will be political ramifications.

“We want the government to support us and do the right thing by us.”

To write to the Minister, email: [mary-anne.thomas@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:mary-anne.thomas@parliament.vic.gov.au) or [minister.health@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:minister.health@health.vic.gov.au)



# Most dangerous island beaches: Colonnades

Last summer, six people tragically lost their lives at beaches across the Bass Coast, as drowning figures across the country continue to rise.

This summer, the Advertiser's summer safety series highlights some of the island's most dangerous beaches for visitors and anyone not familiar with local conditions.

This week, we speak to locals and emergency services about the Colonnades at Cape Woolamai.

On Christmas Eve 2018, a mother watched on from the shore as her husband and 20-year-old son were swept away by a rip at the Colonnades. Tragically, after being retrieved from the water, both father and son were declared dead at the scene.

The Colonnades is an unpatrolled stretch of beach, to the west of the Woolamai surf beach. The area is renowned for its dangerous rips. It is rated as "highly hazardous" by the BeachSafe app, which describes it as "an exposed high energy beach used by surfers and fishers, but unsuitable for safe bathing".

One senior lifesaver who responded to the 2018 rescue, who requested not to be named, was cooking a Christmas Eve dinner for their family when the call came through about an incident at the Colonnades.

The senior lifesaver, who retrieved one of the bodies from the water, said around 10 volunteer members, some under the age of eighteen, arrived to respond to the emergency. By the time the senior lifesaver arrived on the scene, one body had been retrieved from the water while a co-ordination of rescue services

searched for the second.

"I can't remember who spotted him, but someone saw his body in the rip. So in the end I went in on the board, and there were some members of the public on the rocks because it was just mega low-tide by then," the senior lifesaver said.

"And we grabbed him and got him out, but he was dead by the time we got him."

## Response capabilities

As Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club (WBSLSC) President Jason Close explained, if a member of the public needs to call for help from lifesavers, they must dial 000. It is then a case of saying where the incident is taking place and describing the emergency, the Club President said. If lifesaving assistance is required, Life Saving Victoria (LSV) communications will then contact the club's emergency response contacts, and those in the area will respond. The Club President said whilst emergency procedures exist for volunteers to respond to incidents which are after hours or at unpatrolled beaches, there are a number of reasons why these emergencies



On Christmas Eve 2018, a father and his 20-year-old son were swept away by a rip at the Colonnades. After being retrieved from the water, both were declared dead at the scene.

are much more difficult to respond to. The time it takes to call for help, the time for the volunteer lifesavers to retrieve and set up rescue equipment, and then the time to travel to the rescue location are all factors which mean when help arrives, it may already be too late.

"For these reasons, the safest option is only to swim at a patrolled beach, between the flags, between patrol hours," Jason said.

"This way lifesavers are there on the beach with their rescue equipment, can see you and can respond immediately if you get into trouble."

The senior lifesaver who retrieved one body during the 2018 Christmas Eve Colonnades rescue, said that particular incident "did get under my skin a bit".

"I think the Christmas Eve (incident), it's a time when you're re-

flecting on family and that other families don't get to go home," the senior lifesaver said.

"I remember feeling afterwards – whenever I've been to a drowning – I then get pretty protective the next day and week.

"When you see people swimming outside the flags you get quite an emotional response, wishing that they had better instructions or were making better decisions for themselves."

## Lingering community impact

Local surfing legend Glyndyn Ringrose lives on the doorstep of the Colonnades, and said the Christmas Eve rescue and other very close calls at the beach still weigh heavily on the minds of the community.

"Yeah, I'm always looking, always watching people, and I think that goes for most people who are surfers, and a lot of surf-

ers go down here," Glyndyn said. "There's a lot of guys who would run out and save someone at the drop of a hat if they had to – if they saw them in trouble."

Of the Christmas Eve rescue, Glyndyn said "I wish I was there. If only there was somebody, a local who knew what was going on around, (the victims) probably wouldn't have been in the water. They would have been fine."

Recently in an interview with the Advertiser, the CEO of Life Saving Victoria lauded the efforts of local surfers and community members who perform unsung rescues and take proactive preventative measures such as advising people not to swim or surf at a particular beach. Glyndyn said he has performed several rescues where the victims didn't even realise how much trouble they were in.

"As soon as your feet leave the ground, you've got no real reference point of where you are except if you're using visual reference points.

"When you're looking at a mass of water, it feels like you're not really moving. But when you look visually back at the land, you can see how fast you're being swept out."

Woolamai Beach Club President Jason Close said Phillip Island has so many beautiful surf beaches, but unfortunately the conditions and the remoteness of many of them makes swimming dangerous.

"It makes so much sense to swim at a patrolled beach, and no sense not to."

Next week: Berrys Beach.

## NO ONE'S UNSINKABLE

To all those Unsinkable Guys out there –

You might think it's safe to have a few drinks around water, skip the life jacket when you're out on the boat or go for a swim without checking the conditions.

But statistics prove that 4 out of 5 drownings are men.

Just remember that no one's unsinkable.

Q UNSINKABLE GUY

RETHINK  
TAKING RISKS  
AROUND  
WATER

VICTORIA  
State  
Government



# Gambling – is there a local benefit?

## GAMBLING

As gambling losses in Bass Coast Shire continues to rise, figures from the last financial year show the poker machines at Phillip Island RSL generated the highest revenue in the shire.

The venue not only reported the highest player losses – \$7.5 million – but also had the highest revenue per machine of any of the five gaming venues in Bass Coast.

However the President of the Phillip Island RSL (PIRSL), Peter Paul, cited ways in which the not-for-profit organisation gives back to the community.

Mr Paul said overall the pokies were “absolutely” a net-benefit to the community.

“The revenue generated through our gaming machines plays a crucial role in enabling us to support both our veterans and the wider community,” the Phillip Island RSL President said, adding the venue complied with all legislation.

Of the \$7.5 million lost by players at the RSL gaming machines, Mr Paul said after government taxation the annual income generated by the venue from pokies was just over \$4 million (\$4,030,687).

Of this amount, Mr Paul said 71.5 per cent was returned to the community.

“These funds enable us to provide significant welfare support, particularly through our veteran assistance programs, which lie at the heart of our mission.”

By law, each year all venues with poker machines must lodge an audited “community benefit statement” with the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (see separate story).

A community benefit statement allows clubs to claim benefits under several differ-



The President of the Phillip Island RSL has this week explained the venue's electronic gaming machine poker machine revenue, citing ways in which the not-for-profit organisation gives back to the community, and saying the pokies were “absolutely” a net-benefit to the community.

ent categories (Class A, B and C), and verifies whether the community benefit provided by the club is equal to at least 8.33 per cent of its net gaming machine revenue.

Mr Paul confirmed that the RSL's latest community benefit statement included charitable donations and assistance to well over twenty local groups, clubs, schools and societies ranging from \$500 to over \$20,000.

“We are proud to have sponsored local community groups with over \$80,000 in 2023/24 and contributed three dialysis

chairs to the new Community Hospital to enhance local healthcare infrastructure,” Mr Paul said.

“Our welfare initiatives also include maintaining a fleet of vehicles, costing over \$120,000 annually, to transport veterans to essential medical appointments both locally and in Melbourne.”

Other community benefit claims by the RSL include over \$130,000 in meal subsidies and complimentary memberships for Veterans over 80 years of age.

In total, just under \$500,000 (\$494,498)

was claimed by the RSL in the Class A “direct community benefits” category in the last financial year.

In the Class B category (“indirect community benefits”) the RSL claimed over \$1.3 million in staff wages, nearly \$70,000 in advertising costs, over \$35,000 in cleaning expenses, and \$8000 on an ice-cream machine. A number of other operational costs were also claimed such as gas, electricity and superannuation.

All the items claimed are legal under the current Community Benefit Scheme.



## What is the Community Benefit Scheme?

### GAMBLING

By law, each year all venues with poker machines must lodge an audited “community benefit statement” with the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission.

The Community Benefit Scheme, provides significant tax cuts to clubs with gaming machines, providing they re-invest 8.33 per cent of gaming revenue back into the community.

The scheme is split into two main classes: A and B. Class A refers to “direct community benefits”, and venue operators are able to claim 100 per cent of these items.

Class B claims are categorised as “indirect community benefits” and can include staff wages and venue operational expenses.

The scheme has come under increased scrutiny across the state in recent weeks, particularly for claims made in the Class B category.

Gambling opponents say the scheme can't repair the “social and economic harm” of gambling, describing it as “simply a public relations opportunity for venues” and a way to buy “social licence”.

The state's gaming minister Melissa Horne has acknowledged concerns about “misuse” of the scheme and triggered a review into the process.

A gambling expert at Monash University, Charles Livingstone, recently assessed statements from 35 Victorian clubs and found only 1.2 per cent – or \$2.5 million – of all expenditure claimed “was actually attributable to genuine charitable and philanthropic purposes”.

“A somewhat more substantial sum of \$39 million – or 74.6 per cent of claimed benefits – went to the running costs of the clubs and their facilities,” Livingstone said.

He said clubs “ramped up their claims in order to demonstrate how much they contribute to good works”.

As the club with the highest gambling income in the shire, Phillip Island RSL claimed over \$1.4 million in the contentious Class B category last financial year.

A prominent San Remo small business owner said this week he strongly supported the review.

He said it was unfair poker machine venues could access tax benefits on restaurant business expenses such as staff wages; to the disadvantage of competitors in the hospitality industry who could not.

“We're sweating it out, while they're raking it in.”

He said other restaurants, concerned about the rising cost of food and ingredients, and staff wages, were not bolstered by gambling revenue.

## Gambling under review

### GAMBLING

Local Member for Bass, Jordan Crugnale has responded to concerns about the increasing losses from poker machines across the shire.

Data released recently by the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC) reveal gambling losses across the shire's five gaming venues rose to over \$20 million in the last financial year.

Ms Crugnale said the amount of money lost in the shire was “beyond staggering”. “Whilst it is a legitimate form of gambling, there is so much harm and this has consequences not just for the person gambling but everyone around them.”

“People become more socially isolated, their mental health and wellbeing slides, they might be going without meals, not able to provide for their kids, pay bills and so forth.”

Ms Crugnale said the State Government had introduced new gambling reforms this year.

In September it mandated closure of gaming areas in pubs and clubs between the hours of 4am and 10am.

In November a new bill was passed which the government said was designed to “reduce gambling harm”.

Measures include reducing the spin rate of poker machines, reducing the amount of money that can be loaded into a machine at one time from \$1000 to \$100, and mandatory pre-commitment limits.

She said the introduction of carded play will allow patrons to set limits on the amount they are willing to lose, and ensure money being put through the machines is tracked, to stop money laundering through gaming venues.

### Community benefit?

Ms Crugnale addressed concerns about the claims made by venues through the Community Benefit Scheme.

“Our reforms provide important protections for people using gaming ma-



Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale said the government would be reviewing the Community Benefit Scheme for venues with poker machines, saying some of the community benefit claims were questionable.

chines and for their loved ones but we always need to do more,” she said.

“The Community Benefits Statement is an important mechanism to guarantee clubs are actually investing back into the communities they're hosted by, to ensure more people can benefit from the revenue they bring in.”

“Following concerns raised around the misuse of Community Benefits Statements, we are undertaking a review and will publicly consult on how to improve the system.”

“It needs improving, it needs an overhaul,” Ms Crugnale continued.

“Pokie venues and their operators need to do better, and personally I would love to see them gone altogether.”

“I commend clubs and establishments that phase them out and turn towards a family friendly enterprise – we have seen this with pubs, even footy clubs too.”





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# Nature Parks unofficially celebrates full recovery

## TOURISM

Visitors to Phillip Island Nature Parks have returned to pre-Covid levels, with more than a million tourists in the past year, while a profit was recorded for the first time in recent years.

PINP's 2023-24 annual report unofficially marks the end of a long post-pandemic recovery, with an 18 per cent increase on visitors compared to 2022-23, international visitors "far exceeding expectations" and visitation returning to levels consistent with 2018-19.

And for the first year since 2020, Nature Parks didn't receive any operational funding from the State Government, which was required in the wake of Covid.

The Penguin Parade consistently sold out over summer and Easter, setting a record with nearly three weeks of sell-out nights between December and January, and 20 nights in February.

Nature Parks achieved a net profit of \$2.3 million, up from the \$1.9 million loss of the previous year, with a 35 per cent increase in total commercial revenue.

The closure of the Antarctic Journey in January at the Nobbies Centre had an estimated financial impact of \$300,000, however the launch of Ben & Jerry's ice creamery in November contributed to revenue growth.

Following several years of redundancies during the pandemic, Nature Parks in the past year had 210 employees, compared to 260 in 2017 and 170 in 2021-22.

The top five markets for the year were China, Singapore, United States, Hong Kong and United Kingdom, with arrivals from New Zealand, South Korea and India exceeding January 2019 levels.

Holiday travel surpassed "visiting friends and relatives" as



According to the Nature Parks 2023-24 Annual Report visitors have returned to pre-Covid levels, with more than a million tourists in the past year, while a profit was recorded for the first time in recent years.

the primary purpose for short-term arrivals.

The annual report shows travel and entertainment costs rose to \$168,000 from \$116,000 the year before, which follows the re-emergence of the international tourism market, and "valuable sources of revenue" from key events.

## Penguins

The world's largest colony of little penguins is now estimated at 37,000 at Summerland, despite facing setbacks in the breeding season that saw an "unprecedented surge" in ocean temperature and a strong El Niño event, causing food shortages and elevated chick mortality.

A nightly average of 1379 little penguins crossed the beach at the Penguin Parade in 2023-24, which was about six per cent

lower than the previous year.

Penguins travelled further than in previous years, with one recorded passing by Wilsons Promontory, "the longest trip we've recorded to date during a breeding season".

PINP researchers analysed 11 breeding seasons of little penguins, with results showing reduced human activity during COVID-19 restrictions had minimal impact on the population, but increased marine traffic negatively impacted foraging efficiency.

The report also highlights new research that shows the little penguin population faces the threat of 80 potential hazards (see separate story).

## Wildlife

According to the annual report, the wildlife rehabilitation

team responded to 1196 calls for wildlife rescues and advice, cared for 70 little penguins and rescued and cared for 547 other native wildlife from 82 species.

There were nine trips to Seal Rocks resulting in 37 entangled seals spotted, with 13 captured and released from the entangling material.

The top three entanglement materials were recreational fishing line, line and hook and white garden mesh around their necks.

Since the "bins on boats" project, the annual average number of trawl net entanglements at Seal Rocks has reduced from 7.3 (1997-2018) to 2.2 (2019-2024). There were 42 drone surveys over Seal Rocks using thermal sensors to track entangled seals, and currently a PhD study is examining the

long-term effects of entanglement in marine debris on seals.

The report shows there are 16 koalas at the Koala Conservation Reserve, including three joeys, with critical care for two koalas from Healesville Sanctuary.

PINP's endangered species work has seen the numbers of Eastern barred bandicoots spread across the island, with the population now in the thousands.

In 2023-24, two feral cats were removed during nighttime surveys on Summerland Peninsula, 30 cameras were installed with AI technology to send live alerts when feral cats were at Observation Point, while feral cat detection dogs helped remove 10 feral cats from around Phillip Island.

PINP's sailing drone completed its first season, clocking up 3000km in 35 trips, collecting 1.5 TB of data on the food supply of little penguins, which will now be analysed by experts from France, Sweden and Monaco.

Nature Parks received \$8 million from the State Government to repair assets at the Penguin Parade, and the Nobbies and PINP invested \$4.6 million into conservation and research.

There were 255 volunteers who contributed 10,700 hours of volunteer work, and a further 14 local businesses joined the 'Dark Sky so Shearwaters Fly' campaign to help ensure a safe start to the migration of the short-tailed shearwaters.

Nature Parks has a fleet of 36 cars, with fuel use increasing by about five per cent in the past year, with greenhouse gas emissions from transport increasing by more than five per cent, with the organisation planning to move to electric vehicles.

## Little penguins face big risks

### ENVIRONMENT

Phillip Island's little penguin population faces the threat of 80 potential hazards, according to a Melbourne University study.

The Disease Risk Assessment for Little Penguins study, highlighted in the 2023-24 Phillip Island Nature Parks annual report (see separate story), identified 80 hazards of concern, both infectious and non-infectious.

The study ranked each hazard in importance, with five high risk hazards, including avian influenza, oiling, predation from marine and terrestrial predators and bushfire.

There were 21 medium risk hazards including pollutants and contaminants, such as "forever chemicals" PFAS, as well as environmental stressors such as climate change and habitat loss, heat stress, and tourism.

Oil, wildfire, and predation were the most significant non-infectious hazards identified, for which PINP already has contingency plans.

There were six moderate-high risk human health hazards, including Ross River virus, and avian chlamydia.

The report was written by vet scientists and recommends disease risk management such as biosecurity practices, veterinary examination, and "active man-



Penguin numbers at Phillip Island had varied substantially in the past century, from 12,000 in the 1970s when the average life expectancy was 6.5 years. Now the Summerland population is estimated at 37,000, with penguins as old as 25.

agement for identified hazards with a focus on HPAI (avian influenza) as the most time sensitive hazard".

The report stated penguin numbers at Phillip Island had varied substantially in the past century, from about 200,000 adults in 1917, to 12,000 in the 1970s when the annual mortality rate was 14 per cent, with an average life expectancy of 6.5

years.

Since then, little penguin numbers have recovered significantly (population is currently estimated at 37,000), and wild little penguins as old as 25 have been observed at Summerland.

While several Victorian populations are currently thriving, other populations are decreasing including Gabo and Middle Islands.

## Nature Parks branching out to Melbourne?

### TOURISM

Phillip Island Nature Parks has been flagged to extend its penguin expertise to Melbourne's penguin colony.

In an interview on ABC radio last week, a spokesperson for Earthcare St Kilda – the not-for-profit group which has managed the St Kilda colony – told listeners the State Government was endorsing PINP to take over management.

The Earthcare spokesperson said they were in negotiations with PINP "when they were putting together their proposal" and PINP were "very non-committal" about Earthcare volunteers' role in the future management of the St Kilda colony.

A colony of about 1400 little penguins live at the breakwater at St Kilda Pier, which has been undergoing a \$53 million renovation, including tiered seating, timber decking, and

a penguin viewing area.

PINP CEO Catherine Basterfield last week said they were working with Parks Victoria "to establish a vision for the new penguin viewing area".

"As a world-leading penguin ecotourism and conservation provider, Phillip Island Nature Parks worked closely with Parks Victoria to provide expert advice on penguin welfare and improved viewing experiences throughout the construction of St Kilda Pier," Ms Basterfield said.

"Should the Victorian Government formally appoint Nature Parks, we would welcome the opportunity to manage the penguin viewing experience and will continue to support the invaluable efforts of volunteers in protection of the pier's precious little penguin colony."

The Victorian Government last week confirmed there will be no fee to see the penguins.



# Neighbourhood Battery locations announced

## ENERGY

Renewable energy specialist Mondo has confirmed seven locations to install neighbourhood batteries on Phillip Island.

It said the neighbourhood-scale batteries' locations were chosen in consultation with the community and will provide additional energy storage capacity for locally generated solar power.

The batteries will be installed at:

- Battery 1: Berninnet, 91-97 Thompson Ave, Cowes
- Battery 2: Kembla Pasadena, 1 Kembla Rd, Cowes
- Battery 3: Seagrass Everton, Opposite 11 Seagrass Ave, Cowes
- Battery 4: Goodwood Elvington, Opposite 75 Goodwood Drive, Cowes
- Battery 5: Recreation Reserve, Cnr Hallway Dr and Hoad St, Wimbledon Heights
- Battery 6: Bass Coast Shire Council Depot, 105 Settlement Rd, Cowes
- Battery 7: Katherine Circuit, 50 Katherine Circuit

Mondo said the sites were predominantly selected based on areas of the island that have an existing high uptake of rooftop solar, "or where there was a possibility of increased energy network activity because of electrification".

As part of the community consultation, Mondo spokesperson said the company door knocked all surrounding neighbours twice and left letters if they weren't in attendance.

"We also held two public meet-

ings with another next public meeting to take place in the next six weeks," they said.

The spokesperson said a number of criteria were used to select the locations for the batteries, including siting them in areas where space wasn't a concern – for example in reserves and public spaces – and maintaining a good distance from homes.

Areas with a strong uptake of rooftop solar are ideal for batteries, Mondo stated, and based on these two factors, most of the batteries are located in housing estates "where population density is a little higher than the rest of the island".

## Important role

Victorian Energy Minister Lily D'Ambrosio visited Phillip Island in March 2024 to announce \$2.1 million in State Government funding to install these batteries through the 100 Neighbourhood Batteries Program.

Five of the seven batteries will each store 205 kWh of electricity, which is the amount of energy used by 11 houses for 24 hours. Two of these batteries will each have a storage capacity of 410 kWh to accommodate larger transformers and a high density of solar installations.

Mondo General Manager, Dhammika Adihetty said neighbourhood-scale batteries will play an important role as we shift more renewable energy into the electricity grid.

"Typically, these batteries will charge during the day when the renewable energy from solar



Victorian Energy Minister Lily D'Ambrosio visited Phillip Island in March 2024 to announce funding to install seven batteries through the Neighbourhood Batteries Program, with the location of the batteries announced this week.

panels is plentiful, and often the market price for electricity is low. This stored power is then released back to the grid when demand for power is at its highest, often in the early evening," said Mr Adihetty.

The project has been a collaboration between Mondo, Bass Coast Shire Council, Totally Renewable Phillip Island and the Victorian State Government.

Mondo said Phillip Island had been an integral part of its community energy focus over the past six years, stating that since 2021 it has invested more than \$10 million to install and energise a 5MW/10MWh distribution bat-

tery on Phillip Island.

"Mondo is looking forward to continuing to support the Phillip Island community achieve their renewable energy goals," said Mr Adihetty.

When the funding was announced, then Mayor Clare Le Serve alluding to "islanding" the battery at Berninnet, to provide an alternative power source during outages.

In April, Bass Coast Shire Council confirmed it was looking at options for providing a continuous electricity supply to Berninnet during power outages.

This would involve additional

costs, not covered by the original funding.

Mondo said it was currently working with the council to determine if batteries installed at significant Council buildings could provide back-up power during an outage.

There was \$600,000 included in the current budget for climate change action plan projects, including for standalone solar and battery systems at community facilities.

The neighbourhood batteries will be installed from February and fully operational by August 2025.

# Western Port claims another billion-dollar scalp?

## INDUSTRY

Plans to build the world's largest hydrogen demonstration project, in Western Port, look set for collapse.

Starting in March 2021, the Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain Pilot Project (HESC) was to turn Latrobe Valley brown coal into hydrogen, with the cooled volatile gas piped more than 150km to the Port of Hastings and shipped on the specially-built Suiso Frontier to Japan by Kawasaki Heavy Industries.

HESC was supported by a \$2.35 billion investment from the Japanese government and \$50 million in start-up investment from the Victorian government in 2018.



Plans to build the world's largest hydrogen demonstration project, in Western Port, look set for collapse. In 2023 the Australian Transport Safety Bureau released a report into a "serious incident" fire onboard the Suiso Frontier in Western Port, while it was carrying the highly volatile hydrogen.

However last week Japanese news outlet Nikkei reported Kawasaki Heavy Industries had withdrawn from the trial, because it had become "difficult to

procure hydrogen in Australia within the deadline".

"With the completion of the demonstration test by fiscal year 2030, as originally scheduled, be-

ing an absolute requirement for ensuring competitiveness, the company has changed hydrogen procurement to domestic," Nikkei reported.

The Phillip Island Conservation Society (PICS) said the hydrogen project was "greenwashing": a "climate destructive carbon intensive industry" that would use "unproven and high-risk carbon capture and storage under Bass Strait".

Victorian Greens leader Ellen Sandell said it was time for the project to be scrapped, saying the "disastrous coal project has never stacked up environmentally or economically".

In 2021 the State Government rejected a planned AGL gas plant, and in 2017 successive State Gov-

ernment plans to expand the Port of Hastings were refused.

The Federal Government in January refused a State Government plan to build a wind turbine hub in the bay, as it would pose an "unacceptable" and "irreversible" risk to the bay, a plan which the State Government is now re-viving.

HESC was a partnership between international fossil energy companies, Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd, Royal Dutch Shell and AGL.

In 2023 the Australian Transport Safety Bureau released a report into a "serious incident" fire onboard the Suiso Frontier in Western Port, while it was carrying the highly volatile hydrogen during a test run.

## RHYLL TWILIGHT MARKET

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Rotary



Club of  
Phillip Island &  
San Remo

in conjunction with  
Rhyll Community Association





The Rotary Club's sausage sizzle chief sizzlers are, from left: Gary, Kathryn, Rob, Peter, Peter, Garry, Leonie and Bill.

# PICAL fundraising "urgent"

## COMMUNITY

PICAL faces an "urgent" need for support, with the committee of management releasing a statement last week calling for funding to keep "doors open and services running".

Following the recent funding crises, the Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre has a target to raise \$80,000 in the next eight months.

To kick off the campaign, Phillip Island Rotary Club's Cowes op shop gave all sales made on Saturday to PICAL, in addition to a sausage sizzle, music and a collection box for any donations, raising \$3476.

The committee of management - in a statement released on the weekend - said without external support, there was "a real risk of not being able to meet the community's needs".

"As demand rises, the organisation is struggling to keep up and urgently requires additional resources to continue its vital work," the statement reads.

"The need for action is urgent. Social media has been buzzing with people expressing their determination to "save PICAL".

"While this support is encouraging, it is now time for those words to be turned into action. If people are truly committed to helping, we are calling on businesses, affluent individuals, and community leaders to dig deep and contribute financially to ensure PICAL can continue its services this holiday season."

In the last two years the neighbourhood house has: distributed 9000 food hampers, cooked 11,000 meals, and helped 7000 food pantry users "who



Rotary Club of Phillip Island president Gea Lovell (right) with PICAL board member Christine Ash at the op shop fundraiser on Saturday. Following the recent crisis, PICAL is now "urgently" fundraising with an \$80,000 target.

aren't certain where their next meal will come from, sadly half of these people are children".

PICAL has also helped 350 people in dire situations experiencing homelessness, fleeing family violence or other personal trauma and helped more than 120 people to find employment.

### Crisis

As reported, the crisis began a month ago when PICAL declared impending insolvency, unable to meet debts incurred from an "administrative inaccuracy", underpaying wages to employees for more than a decade, "based on information at the time".

After initially being thrown a lifeline by Neighbourhood Houses Gippsland and Bass Coast Shire, to continue services if PICAL was forced to wind up, the crisis then concluded when PICAL announced they were

able to meet their debts.

Now, following a "revised understanding" from legal and financial advice, PICAL has reassured staff wage payments are now fully compliant, while all past staff impacted from the previous liability will be paid by July 2025.

Committee of management president Graeme Turner said more fundraisers would be held in 2025, while donations can also be made at any time through the PICAL website.

The website donation page details how the organisation is "under significant strain".

"We are asking for your support, this will enable us to continue helping more than 60 people that visit PICAL every weekday and to keep delivering our support services."

Details: [pical.org.au/copy-of-get-involved](http://pical.org.au/copy-of-get-involved)



Carolyne-Jane, Serene Beauty, part of the PICES 50x50 Exhibition from December 14-27 at Berninnet.

# Fifty artists on display

## ART

Get ready to immerse yourself in a stunning showcase of artistic talent at the PICES 50x50 Exhibition from December 14-27 at Berninnet.

Featuring the work of 50 accomplished artists, this new and exciting event offers a treasure trove of small, affordable artworks perfect for art lovers, collectors, and gift-givers alike.

Visitors will have the chance to explore a diverse array of media, including painting, photography, pottery, printmaking, sculpture, and textiles.

A PICES spokesperson said "each piece reflects the unique vision of artists from Bass Coast, Gippsland, and beyond, and celebrates the vibrancy and creativity of the local and regional art communities".

"Whether you're seeking a bold statement piece or a subtle and intimate work, there's something for everyone at this exhibition," they said.

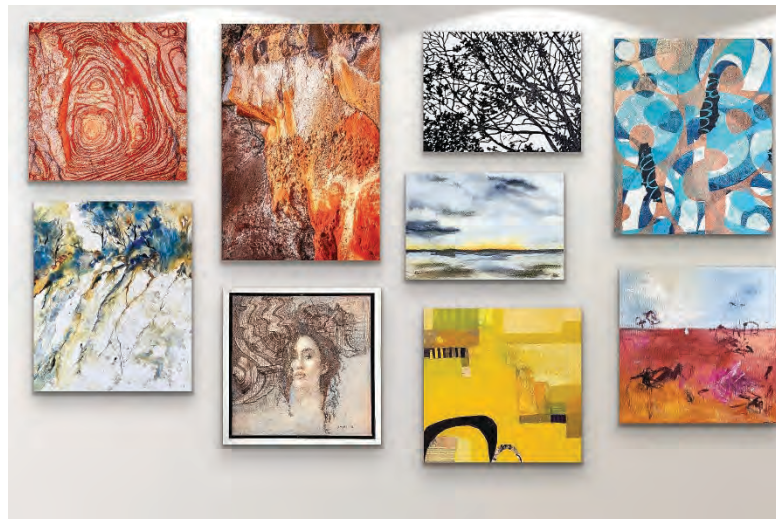
With the holiday season upon us, the PICES 50x50 Exhibition is the ideal destination for finding that one-of-a-kind Christmas gift.

"Discover meaningful, handmade artworks that are sure to delight and inspire your loved ones, all while supporting talented artists and the arts," PICES stated.

"Don't miss this opportunity to experience the beauty and variety of small-scale art at its finest."

The PICES 50x50 Exhibition. Berninnet Art Gallery, 91-97 Thompson Avenue, Cowes, December 14 - 27.

[www.pices.com.au](http://www.pices.com.au)



PICES 50x50 Exhibition from December 14-27 at Berninnet features work from 50 accomplished artists from the local region.



# PICES 50X50 Art Exhibition

50 exciting artists from Bass Coast and beyond  
Affordable and Unique Artworks

Small contemporary artworks featuring 2D and 3D works - Painting, Photography, Pottery, Printmaking, Sculpture and Textile, ideal for that special Xmas gift.



[www.pices.com.au](http://www.pices.com.au)



December 14 - January 1, 2025. Open Daily 10am - 4pm (closed Xmas day)  
Berninnet Art Gallery, 91-97 Thompson Avenue, Cowes Vic 3922

Bringing contemporary art to the community





## Stitched up: another successful exhibition



Marj Wagland's quilt *Cityscape* was the big favourite with visitors, taking out the People's Choice award.

### PATCHWORK

Congratulations to Marj Wagland and Deborah Burville who took home awards at the Phillip Island Patchworkers exhibition last month.

Marj Wagland was the Viewers Choice winner, while Deborah Burville received the President's Choice award.

The exhibition, held over the Melbourne Cup long weekend raised

over \$6000 which will go to help local emergency services.

There were more than 50 quilts on display at the exhibition which attracted 350 visitors, who enjoyed 161 Devonshire teas, as well as the quilt display.

At the event, the Bass Coast Op Shop sold over \$1000 worth of items on its trade table, with the funds going to support Bass Coast Health.

# UK sax virtuoso plays San Remo

### MUSIC

Tom Waters, son of Honky Tonk king Ben Waters brings Brush With The Blues to Australia, teaming up with Australia's Geoff Achison.

The tour includes a show at the Westernport Hotel on March 7. Tickets are \$45 and are available through the hotel's website.

The young rising British star in the world of rhythm and blues, jazz, funk, blues, Latin and roots music is joining forces with one of Australia's blues legends to bring an exhilarating, one-of-a-kind musical experience Australia this summer.

The Brush With The Blues tour will see saxophone virtuoso Tom Waters – the prodigiously talented son of renowned UK pianist Ben Waters – and iconic blues guitarist Geoff Achison combine their remarkable talents in a show that promises to break new ground in the worlds of blues, country, rock and funky jazz.

It's not every day that you witness a collaboration between such unique and celebrated musicians, each bringing their own distinct style to the stage. This isn't just a concert – it's a dynamic fusion of masterful musicianship, where tradition meets innovation, and two distinct musical voices transcend generational boundaries and come together in perfect harmony.

Waters is a graduate of the prestigious Royal Academy of Music in London. He has already recorded or played with legends like The Rolling Stones, Jeff Beck, George Thorogood, Ray Davies and the BB King All Stars. His list of collaborators reads like a who's who of rock 'n' roll royalty, and he's also a regular with Jools Holland's R&B Orchestra.



Tom Waters and Geoff Achison present Brush With The Blues at the Westernport Hotel on March 7.

Named one of the UK's Top 5 "Young Blues Artists of the Year" by the UK Blues Federation for 2024, Tom is a force to be reckoned with on the sax. This tour comes as he prepares to release his debut album, featuring contributions from Jools Holland, Chanel Haynes, the Cinelli Brothers, Ariel Posen and of course, Geoff Achison.

On the other hand, Achison is an iconic figure in blues and roots music. Starting out under the tutelage of Australian blues legend Dutch Tilders, Geoff has carved out his own path, blending blues, soul, funk, and folk into a signature sound that has captivated audiences worldwide. With a career spanning decades and comparisons to greats like Eric Clapton, JJ Cale, and The Allman Brothers Band, he is on the verge of releasing his 14th album.

Together, their Brush With The Blues tour promises an unforgettable showcase of blues, country, rock, and funky jazz, both performing original tracks from their extensive catalogues, alongside timeless roots classics, in a show dedicated to the late Jeff Beck, with whom Tom has shared the stage. The tour name is a nod to a Jeff Beck piece that Tom performed live, with Jeff, at London's Ronnie Scott's Club.

Don't miss this rare opportunity to witness two masters at the top of their game, blending their talents for a truly unique and exhilarating performance.

Brush With The Blues, Friday, March 7, Westernport Hotel, San Remo

Tickets: \$45 at [www.thewesternport.com.au/#gigs](http://www.thewesternport.com.au/#gigs)

/Sponsored article/

## GIG GUIDE

14/12 FLUX 16. FT TETRAMETH - \$20+BF

15/12 NICK CHARLES

21/12 TIM HANEGAN DUO

22/12 STEVE ROMIG

28/12 SECOND HAND NEWS

FLEETWOOD MAC TRIBUTE - \$25+BF

11/01 MARK SEYMOUR

& THE UNDERTOW - 9PM \$55+BF

24/01 THE PIERCE BROTHERS - 9PM \$40+BF

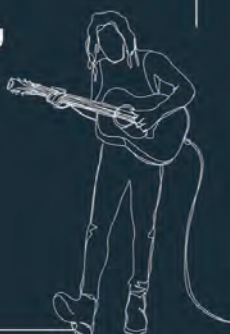
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SUNDAY NIGHT  
SUNDAY ROAST

MONDAY - SATURDAY  
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# TRIVIA NIGHT

DATE **CHRISTMAS EDITION** TIME  
DEC 18 7-9PM



Woolamai Beach  
Surf Life Saving Club

\$20 per ticket, support Deb  
Leonard's Independent campaign



**DeLeonard**  
INDEPENDENT

FOR MORE INFO & TICKETS: [www.trybooking.com/CXSOG](http://www.trybooking.com/CXSOG)

Authorised by D. Leonard, Cowes 3922

## PUT YOUR FOOT DOWN

Phillip Island SATURDAY  
14 DECEMBER 2024

Join us to make a  
powerful impact for  
pancreatic cancer

WHERE Phillip Island RSL

TIME 10:30am 11:00am  
Event starts Walk commences

DISTANCE 4-5km

Hosted by Phillip Island  
Community Walk Team

Please dress passionately in purple to show your support!

SCAN TO REGISTER







The Journey to Bethlehem installation which depicts the birth of Jesus will be on display in the grounds of St Philip's Anglican Church in Thompson Avenue from December 12.

## Journey to Bethlehem returns

### CHRISTMAS

The congregation of St Philip's Anglican Church in Cowes is again presenting its Christmas display, Journey to Bethlehem. The installation which depicts the birth of Jesus will be on display in the grounds of the church in Thompson Avenue from December 12. Everyone is invited to come along and join with the congregation to celebrate Christmas.

"This year's installation will have the addition of a tree, an ideal place to gather and sing some carols, which will take place during the markets on December 14 and 21," a spokesperson for the church said. "Everyone is invited to come and add a star to the tree too." There are a number of special services planned for Christmas, beginning with the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols on December 22.

There will be a special family service on Christmas Eve, where children can dress up and be part of the story. Costumes are supplied on arrival, or come in your own. "It is easy to think of the Christmas season being all about reindeer, elves and snowflakes, but the story began over 2000 years ago and we want to share the hope and joy of the season with you." Details: [anglicanparish@bass-phillipisland.org](mailto:anglicanparish@bass-phillipisland.org)



Don't miss the CWA Twilight branch's delicious Christmas stall at the Cowes Craft Market at St Philip's this Saturday, December 14.

## Get some Christmas goodies

### CWA

Don't miss your chance to stock up on some delicious Christmas goodies this weekend. The Phillip Island Twilight Branch has a stall at the Cowes Craft Market at St Philip's on Saturday December 14. Treat yourself to a delicious selection of home-baked goods, including Christmas cakes, puddings, as well as preserves - which are perfect Christmas gifts. "Our stall will have our fabulous Christmas baking and feature our show scones, gingerbread, shortbread, sauces, preserves and jams," said president Sally Ann Matthews. "We will be easy to find in our green marquee with large CWA logo." There is also a Christmas Raffle filled with treats, including Christmas baking. "Please assist us support vulnerable women, children and families in our community," said Sally Ann.

## San Remo's festive celebration

### CHRISTMAS

San Remo Community Bank Carols will be held on the Foreshore from 5pm on Friday, December 20. The San Remo District Tourism and Business Association is running the popular community event and Secretary Paul Cooper said the night promised to be a special Christmas celebration. The festivities start at 5pm and run until 9.30pm. Alongside the regular carols, live acts include The Times and Bern & Mandy. There will be performances by the children from San Remo Primary School and San Remo Kindergarten, and a special appearance by Santa. Throughout the evening there will be Christmas content on the big screen, so bring a chair or blanket and come along to the San Remo foreshore for a community Christmas like no other. The evening is sponsored by the Bendigo Bank and Bass Coast Shire Council.



San Remo Community Bank Carols will be held on the Foreshore from 5pm on Friday, December 20. Bring a chair or blanket and enjoy a special community Christmas.

## Santa is coming to town

### CHRISTMAS

The annual CFA community Santa Run returns on Sunday, December 22. The little ones will be thrilled to see Santa in their street in the lead up to Christmas Day. Santa, transported by a local fire truck, will arrive for his tour of Cowes estates at approximately 11.50, beginning at Ramada Resort and then ending at Erehwon Point around 4pm. From Ramada, Santa will travel to: Seagrove Estate park (12pm), Seaview Holiday park (12.25pm), Wimbledon Heights park (12.30pm), Anchor Belle Park (12.45pm), Park Lane (12.50pm), Anderson Boat Ramp (1.05pm), Sunset Strip Reserve (1.15pm), NRMA Park (1.30pm), Smiths Beach Store (1.40pm), Beach Park (1.55pm), Ventnor Beach park (2.05pm), Amaroo Park (2.20pm), Anchorage Camp Park (2.30pm), Bushy Park (2.45pm), Whytesands Park (2.55pm), Silverleaves Store (3.10pm), Rhyll Boat Ramp (3.20pm), Kahloa Park (3.35pm), Shearwater Park (3.45pm), Erehwon Point (4pm). Come along and say hello to Santa, as he spreads his message of Christmas cheer across the island. All times are approximate. Keep an eye on the Phillip Island CFA Facebook page for any updates, as times might change due to operational requirements or weather conditions.

## Christmas giving continues

### COMMUNITY

In addition to the assistance provided to people experiencing poverty throughout the year, St Vincent de Paul volunteers have been working tirelessly to create Christmas food hampers and gift assistance for those in the community who are experiencing hardship. Newhaven College helped St Vinnies by collecting toys from the College and broader community under the Wardy's Newhaven College Christmas Tree. Now residing in Blue Hills Residences Retirement Village in Cranbourne, John Ward, the founder of the Christmas Tree, sent his greetings and special thanks. "Thank you to all who have responded to the tree and kept a Newhaven College tradition going for another year." Last week St Vincent de Paul volunteers, Mary Stack (President), Hess and Monica Bekema, Linda Sparkes and Cathy and Howard Jones visited the school to collect the donations. They said 160 local families will be "the happy recipients of the gifts donated" and expressed their appreciation for the College and broader community. "We would like to thank all the community, businesses, charities and craft groups, including Rhyll



St Vincent de Paul volunteers collecting the generous donations from under Wardy's Newhaven College Christmas Tree. Mary Stack (President), Hess and Monica Bekema, Linda Sparkes, Cathy and Howard Jones

Boomerang Bags and Newhaven College for their generous donations to our Christmas Giving tree. "The gifts and donated goods enabled us to help families in San Remo/Cowes that required support during the Christmas period." When clients of St Vincent de Paul come to collect their Christmas hampers, they can also select toys that are age appropriate for their children. St Vincent de Paul also thanked Aldi Cowes and San Remo IGA for their generous contributions.

Newhaven College Principal, Mr Tony Corr said the college was pleased to support St Vincent de Paul on their Christmas toy collection each year. "Our school community is very aware of the very important work that St Vincent de Paul do and understand that these donations can make such a significant difference to many children and families. "We hope to continue to support St Vincent de Paul for many years to come."

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE CHRISTMAS LUNCH WITH OTHERS IN OUR COMMUNITY?**

Join us at St John's Uniting Church, corner of Chapel St and Warley Ave, Cowes at 12:00pm on Wednesday 25th December.

Places are limited so reserve your seat at PICAL by phone on 5952 1131 or call into their office at 16 Warley Ave by 18th December.

Brought to you by St John's Uniting Church and Cowes Community Meal



## CARING FOR SAM'S CHILDREN

This Christmas, support the fundraiser for Sam Fraser's children, to help cover the cost of their care and education. To donate, go to [gofund.me/b6e777cb](http://gofund.me/b6e777cb), or search [gofundme.com](http://gofundme.com) for "Caring for Sams Children".

## Join St John's for Christmas lunch

### CHRISTMAS

St John's Uniting Church in Cowes is again hosting its free Christmas Day lunch. The volunteer team at St John's Uniting Church is promising a full festive spread. After running the meal each Monday night at the church hall during school term, the community meal team will be combining their volunteer skills to hold the yuletide lunch at 12pm, Wednesday December 25 on the corner of Chapel Street and Warley Avenue. To attend, reserve your place at PICAL by phoning 03 5952 1131 or call into the PICAL office at 16 Warley Avenue by December 18.



St John's Uniting Church in Cowes is again hosting its free Christmas Day lunch. To reserve your place phone PICAL 03 5952 1131 or call into the office by December 18.

## Great Xmas presents.

Christmas special, \$80 for two books plus a free Advertiser online subscription (valued at \$70). Available at the Advertiser office, 60 Chapel St, Cowes or [www.pisra.com.au/subscriptions#subscriptions](http://www.pisra.com.au/subscriptions#subscriptions)

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# College sets foundation for 2025 Prep students

## EDUCATION

Newhaven College is already thinking about 2025 and is excited to welcome its incoming Prep students next year

Understanding the importance of starting strong, the College said it has invested in valuable resources and established a partnership between the College and home to ensure students are well-prepared for their educational journey.

That College's commitment begins with introducing School Readiness Bags and comprehensive presentations for parents. These initiatives are designed to provide families with essential information and resources to support their child's transition into school.

The bags contain educational resources "aimed at developing fundamental skills needed for the first year of school", the College stated.

Items include tools for reinforcing correct handwriting techniques, starting points for writing letters, fine motor development activities, books, name cards, maths resources, workbooks and pencil grips.

"I am learning just as much as my kindergarten student in forming good



Prep Teacher Fiona Smart's hands on approach in Prep helps students thrive.

habits and knowing what to do and how to help," one parent, Tamara said.

"These resources have been invaluable in preparing us both for the start of school. It has been wonderful to see how excited my child was to utilise the resources provided.

"Every other day he's asking for his reader and wanting to practice and play. It's really boosting his confidence and enthusiasm for the start of school."

### Transition program

In addition to the School Readiness Bags, the College has implemented a Transition Program for parents and students.

"This program includes parent information sessions on literacy, numeracy and school readiness

and a Prep Information session," the school stated.

"While parents gain valuable insights, students participate in transition days, spending time with their future peers, teachers and support staff. The final Orientation Day ensures that students, teachers and parents are familiar with every part of the program."

As they look forward to the new school year, the College said it is confident these initiatives will create a strong foundation for Prep students.

For further information about Newhaven College, go to 'Book a Tour' on the Newhaven College website or contact the Admissions Officer, Bec Anderson on 03 5956 7505 or admissions@newhavencol.vic.edu.au.

# College's million dollar upgrade

## EDUCATION

Newhaven College has received a \$1 million grant through the Australian Government's Capital Grants program.

The grant will fund the refurbishment and extension of the junior school building to create an additional two classrooms and an outdoor learning area.

Announcing the funding, Senator for Victoria Jess Walsh said the new facilities "will provide school staff, teachers and students at Newhaven College with better, more modern spaces in which to work, teach and learn".

Senator Walsh said the new facilities will benefit the students currently at Newhaven College, as well as the many students who will follow in future years.

"I congratulate Newhaven College on their successful grant application and look forward to seeing the positive impact these new facilities will have on the school community."



Newhaven College has received a \$1 million grant through the Australian Government's Capital Grants program to refurbish and extend the junior school building.

College Principal, Tony Corr said the school was very grateful to receive the funding.

"Newhaven College is thankful to the Australian Government for providing funding through the Capital Grants Program to go towards improvements in our Junior School.

"Not only will it mean two additional classrooms to cater for increasing demand, it will enable significant improvements to the

current facility which will improve our student's learning experience," he said.

"This will include a newly designed playground that fosters play, collaboration and active learning for all junior school students."

More information about the Capital Grants Program can be found at: [www.education.gov.au/payments-and-grants-schools/capital-grants-non-government-schools](http://www.education.gov.au/payments-and-grants-schools/capital-grants-non-government-schools).



*Christmas*  
**PHOTO SHOOT**

**Rhyll Twilight Market**  
**13 December**

Phillip Island Health Hub Auxiliary will be running a Christmas digital photo shoot with the amazing Peter Fogarty! 📷

Cost: \$25 for 1/3 digital photos

Time: 4pm-8pm

To book contact Sue on 0409 948 738

All funds raised go to the Phillip Island Health Hub.





**Sunday**  
**December 22**



**PHILLIP ISLAND**  
**CFA 2024**  
**SANTA RUN**

RAMADA RESORT	11:50AM
SEAGROVE ESTATE PARK	12:00PM
SEAVIEW HOLIDAY PARK	12:25PM
WIMBLEDON HEIGHTS PARK	12:30PM
ANCHOR BELLE PARK	12:45PM
PARK LANE	12:50PM
ANDERSON BOAT RAMP	1:05PM
SUNSET STRIP RESERVE	1:15PM
NRMA PARK	1:30PM
SMITH BEACH STORE	1:40PM
BEACH PARK	1:55PM
VENTNOR BEACH PARK	2:05PM
AMAROO PARK	2:20PM
ANCHORAGE CAMP PARK	2:30PM
BUSHY PARK	2:45PM
WHYTESANDS PARK	2:55PM
SILVERLEAVES STORE	3:10PM
RHYLL BOAT RAMP	3:20PM
KAHLOA PARK	3:35PM
SHEARWATER PARK	3:45PM
EREWHON POINT PARK	4:00PM

**\*\*ALL TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE. SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OR WEATHER CONDITIONS**



# Veteran event in Cowes

## COMMUNITY

A free sausage sizzle for veterans and their families has been rescheduled for Sunday, December 15.

The Veterans Family Sausage Sizzle, previously postponed, will run 12pm-2pm at Erehwon Point and is organised by Cowes' resident Will Dwyer, who cancelled the November event following a death in his family.

Will was in the army from 2019 to 2021 and earlier this year started a Facebook page – Phillip Island Veterans – to connect with other local veterans and build a support network, with the sausage sizzle the first event for the group.

“This is the first organised event, with the focus on families but everyone is welcome. Down the track we will hold more activities like surf days or yoga classes, we're open to suggestions,” Will said.

The 40-year-old father-of-four said in the army there were a range of support networks and once veterans leave it can be difficult.



Will Dwyer with two of his four children Brin (standing) and Paddy. The army veteran runs Phillip Island Veterans and on December 15 is running the group's first event.

“The army is very community oriented. When you need help, people are there for you, so when I left, the lack of that network was one of the first things I noticed,” said Will, whose wife Julia is currently studying to be a speech pathologist.

post service life are unique, especially while trying to raise a young family.

“Being able to connect with those in similar situations to share advice and lived experience can be a great help.”

Details on the Phillip Island Veterans Facebook page.



Cape Woolamai's Nevis Zorzut had her hot and spicy business Pickle My Chili on display at the food event.



Island Cookie Box was a lockdown project of Cowes resident Brooke O'Mara, who started the sweet treats business in 2020.

# Food and drink event a winner

## TOURISM

Thousands of visitors flooded through the doors of Berninnet on Sunday for the inaugural Local Flavours Food and Drink Showcase.

Hosted by celebrity chef Shane Delia, the free event offered tastings, cooking

demonstrations, and the chance to meet local producers.

Visitors were tempted by offerings including Phillip Island Meadery, Cape Woolamai's Pickle My Chili and Island Cookie Box, based out of Cowes, as well as offerings from further afield from gin to bread, cheese and wine.



Island Beer is made by Luke Smith at his Green Gully brewery in Coghlan Road. Luke at Sunday's Berninnet event with his brother Micah (right).



Phillip Island Meadery had a range of honey products on show thanks to Cassy (left) and Stevie.

## FINANCIAL LITERACY MADE SIMPLE

# Christmas Cheer

## - Without Breaking the Bank

By David Caporale,  
Chief Investment Officer of RELCapital

The festive season is upon us, and while Christmas is a time for joy, family, and togetherness, it can also bring financial stress. Between gift shopping, festive meals, and decorations, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the costs. But let's take a moment to remember what the season is truly about: creating memories with loved ones. With a little planning, we can celebrate without emptying our wallets—and even find gifts that give back.

### Savvy Spending in the Festive Season

First, let's tackle the shopping frenzy. Before you dash into the stores or scroll endlessly online, set a budget and stick to it. It might not sound festive, but financial peace of mind beats the regret of an overblown credit card bill. Look for deals early—many retailers offer pre-Christmas discounts that rival Boxing Day sales. Apps and browser extensions like Honey or CamelCamelCamel can help track price drops, ensuring you get the best deals without the legwork.

Another tip? Consider pooling resources with family members for group gifts. Instead of buying individual presents for everyone, pitch in for something special the whole family can enjoy, like a board game or movie night kit.

### Gifts That Keep On Giving

Instead of traditional gifts that cost money without much return, why not think outside the (gift) box? Consider presents that could help your loved ones make or save money:

- **For the budding entrepreneur:** A starter kit for a hobby they've been curious about—knitting supplies, baking tools, or even a small art set. Who knows? It could spark a passion that leads to extra income.
- **For kids and teens:** A piggy bank or savings jar paired with a little starter cash. Throw in a book about money

basics to make it a teaching moment.

- **For adults:** Subscription services that add value—like an audiobook platform for the commuter, a budgeting app for the financially conscious, or a class in a skill they've always wanted to learn.

Homemade gifts can also be surprisingly meaningful. A jar of homemade cookies, a custom photo calendar, or a handwritten coupon for a home-cooked meal can be far more cherished than something store-bought.

### First and foremost: Time

Let's not forget: the most valuable gift you can give is your time. Instead of focusing on things, why not invest in experiences? Plan a family hike, a movie marathon, or a Christmas baking day. These moments create the kind of memories that don't come with a price tag.

If you're hosting Christmas dinner, consider a potluck approach. Asking each guest to bring a dish not only lightens your workload but also shares the cost. Plus, it's a great way to enjoy a variety of family recipes and traditions.

### The True Spirit of the Season

The pressures of holiday spending can sometimes overshadow what Christmas is really about. It's easy to get swept up in commercials that suggest happiness comes wrapped in a bow, but joy doesn't come from stuff—it comes from connection. A heartfelt letter, a genuine conversation, or simply being present can mean more than any gift.

This Christmas, let's focus on what matters: kindness, togetherness, and gratitude. By being mindful of our spending, creative with our gift-giving, and intentional about our time, we can make this festive season meaningful without breaking the bank.

After all, the best things in life aren't things.

**RELI Capital wish all the readers of the Phillip Island & San Remo Advertiser a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.**

*The information above does not constitute financial or other professional advice and is general in nature. It does not take into account your specific circumstances and should not be acted on without a full understanding of your current situation and future goals and objectives by a fully qualified financial advisor. Before you make any decision about whether to acquire a certain financial product, you should obtain and read the relevant product disclosure statement.*



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# Cowes Primary School shines

**EDUCATION**

Cowes Primary School's end-of-year Music Concert was a spectacular celebration, drawing close to 2000 people to enjoy an unforgettable evening of music, community, and festive cheer.

The night began on a high note with a wonderful performance from the school choir under the guidance of Alice Hurst.

"The students were absolutely brilliant, taking to the stage with confidence and enthusiasm," said the school spokesperson.

"Every student had the opportunity to perform, and their dedication and energy made their families and teachers incredibly proud.

"Special thanks go to Mr Fox for his outstanding efforts in organising the event, ensuring it all came together seamlessly.

"A huge thank-you also to the teachers and ES staff who supported students and worked behind the scenes to make the night such a success.

"The evening wouldn't have been the same without the incredible work of Mr. Duyker

and Lana, who kept the crowd entertained as our fantastic MCs. Their energy and professionalism ensured the evening flowed beautifully."

Cowes Primary School is deeply grateful to the Phillip Island Fire Brigade and Westernport Water for their generous support, which added so much to the night.

With perfect weather and the joyful sound of Christmas carols ringing through the air, the concert was a wonderful celebration and certainly a night to remember.



The School Choir performed at the end of year concert. More photos at [pisra.com.au/education](http://pisra.com.au/education).



Room 18 Year 6 performing "Bye Bye Bye" by NSYNC as part of the end of year concert at Cowes Primary.



Room 17 Year 6 performing "Smooth Criminal" by Michael Jackson for the end of year concert at Cowes Primary.



Preps took to the stage.



Jameson drumming at the Cowes Primary School Music Concert.



MC Lana interviewing some of the Prep students at the Cowes Primary School end of year concert.



Phillip Island Bowling Club Representatives at the Cowes Primary School volunteers' morning tea.

## Cowes Primary thanks volunteers

**EDUCATION**

Cowes Primary School hosted a special event to acknowledge the volunteer support from its school community. Volunteers were thanked with a morning tea in the school

gymnasium.

"The generous contributions each of our volunteers have made in our 150th year has played a special part in the overall success of Cowes Primary," a school spokesperson said.

## Breakfast Club wraps up another successful year

**EDUCATION**

The Cowes Primary School community has celebrated another fantastic year of the Wednesday morning Breakfast Club, delivered by the dedicated team at the Phillip Island RSL.

This program continues to provide not just a hearty breakfast but also a warm and welcoming start to the day for students, fostering a sense of connection and care.

Last Wednesday's Breakfast

Club was particularly special, as staff and students were delighted to see Bruce Shelton back behind the counter, serving up breakfast with his signature smile.

Bruce, a founding member of the Breakfast Club program, coordinated it for over a decade. His passion and commitment to the initiative have left a lasting legacy, and he speaks fondly of the program's positive impact on both RSL members and students.

Bruce's return was a wonderful reminder of the strong partnership between the school and the RSL, which has enriched the lives of so many over the years.

"We extend our heartfelt thanks to Bruce, the RSL team, and all the volunteers who have contributed to making the Breakfast Club a valued tradition," said Cowes Primary Principal Rodney McKenzie.

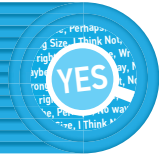
"Here's to another year of community spirit and delicious breakfasts!"



Principal Rodney McKenzie (left) thanked the dedicated team from the Phillip Island RSL for providing another year of the Wednesday morning Breakfast club, including Bruce Shelton (centre), one of the program's founding members.



# CLASSIFIEDS SEEK, BUY AND SELL



## HEALTH MATTERS

### Celebrative Perioperative nurses

During Perioperative Nurses Week from November 10 – 16, Bass Coast Health (BCH) celebrated the skilled and expert nurses helping to bring quality surgical services to the people of Bass Coast.

BCH said the nurses are with patients throughout their surgical journey, starting with their visit to the elective surgery access unit at Wonthaggi Hospital, where they ensure patients are fully informed about their procedure and are well enough to have it.

To learn more about surgery at BCH, go to: [basscoasthealth.org.au/services/surgical-services](http://basscoasthealth.org.au/services/surgical-services)

### Diabetes team expands

During World Diabetes Day on November 14, Bass Coast Health (BCH) announced an expanded team of Credentialed Diabetes Educators (CDE).

BCH's service offers support for a range of diabetes and pre-diabetes related conditions. These include: Management of type 1, type 2, gestational diabetes and pre-diabetes; Lifestyle changes; Blood glucose monitoring and interpretation of blood glucose levels in relation to food, physical activity and medication; Management of unstable blood glucose levels; Changes in medications and/or beginning insulin or other injectable diabetes medications; Use of new glucose monitoring technologies; Prevention and management of diabetes complications; Sick day management advice; Travel advice.

For more information about BCH's diabetes service, go to: [basscoasthealth.org.au/diabetes](http://basscoasthealth.org.au/diabetes)

### Smoking on the rise in Bass Coast

A new report has tracked the rates of smoking and vaping in each Victorian local council area.

According to the report, 4550 adults, or 13.6 per cent of the Bass Coast population smoke tobacco daily, while 15.5 per cent of the population are currently smoking.

The level of vaping in the shire is much lower, with an estimated 1514 adults, or 4.5 per cent of the population.

### BCH cardiac care

Bass Coast Health (BCH) is delivering a range of cardiology services to the community of Bass Coast.

BCH offers atrial fibrillation, chronic and rapid access cardiology clinics with cardiologists from The Alfred, drawing on the expertise and resources of this leading Victorian tertiary health service. The cardiologists visit BCH's Wonthaggi Hospital site weekly and monthly in Cowes.

To make an appointment with any of BCH's cardiology services, ask your medical practitioner to email a referral to [access@basscoasthealth.org.au](mailto:access@basscoasthealth.org.au).

### Restart a heart

The Heart Safe Community program aims to improve survival rates for cardiac arrest, by working with communities to raise awareness, teach residents how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and use an automated external defibrillator (AED), promote GoodSAM and install new publicly accessible AEDs.

Details: [www.ambulance.vic.gov.au/community/community-partnerships/heart-safe-communities/](http://www.ambulance.vic.gov.au/community/community-partnerships/heart-safe-communities/)

### Breast cancer support

BCH offers the full suite of breast cancer care, from consultations through to surgery and chemotherapy. BCH's partnership with Alfred Health enables patients to see first-class oncologists from Alfred Health at Wonthaggi Hospital and undergo surgery in the new state-of-the-art hospital. Patients receive chemotherapy and immunotherapy at the L Rigby Centre, a dedicated cancer and infusion service.

BCH also has the services of McGrath Breast Care Nurse Taryn Robinson, funded by the McGrath Foundation, to support, inform and help patients undergoing breast cancer treatment.

Read the full stories at [pisra.com.au/health-wellbeing](http://pisra.com.au/health-wellbeing)

### DEATHS

#### DAVIS, Kaye:

Passed away peacefully at home on Dec. 3, 2024 after a short illness.

Loved wife of Bert.

A loved mother, Nana, sister and friend, who will be so dearly missed.

As per Kaye's wishes a private cremation was held.

#### HOPMAN (nee Kohler), Otteline Gerardine 'Ottie':

18.02.1929 – 04.12.2024

Loving wife of Johannes (John) (dec.).

Mother and mother-in-law of Rob & Merle, Maryann & Max, Gwen, Carol & Gus.

Proud grandmother of 6 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

R.I.P Ottie

#### LALOR, James (Jim):

4/7/1934 – 26/11/2024

Loving Husband to Joan (Jo dec.)

Father to Ben, and Kate (dec.)

Loving Grandfather (Panka) to Kiki and Banjo.

Beloved partner of Jan and stepfather to Jono, and dear friend of Carly.

Much loved Grandpa (Panko) to Arti.

We will miss you.

A Celebration of Jim's life will be held at Cowes Bowling Club on Sunday 12th January, 2025 from 1pm – 4pm

#### MCGILP, Patricia Helen (Trish):

Passed away peacefully on December 5th 2024 at Cowes aged 94.

Loved wife of Duncan, mother of Suzy, Neil and Ewen.

Grandmother of Sam and dearly loved by Maddie, Tim, Yui, Jordan, Winnie and Liz.

### FUNERALS

#### HOPMAN:

The Funeral Service for Mrs. Otteline (Ottie) Hopman will be held at St. John's Uniting Church, Chapel Street, Cowes on THURSDAY (Dec. 12, 2024) commencing at 2:00pm. At the conclusion of the service the funeral will leave for the Phillip Island Cemetery. For live-streaming link go to [www.handley-andandersonfunerals.com.au](http://www.handley-andandersonfunerals.com.au)

Handley & Anderson  
FUNERAL DIRECTORS

#### McGILP:

Requiem Mass for the *Repose of the Soul* of Mrs. Patricia Helen McGilp will be offered at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Thompson Avenue, Cowes on FRIDAY (Dec. 13, 2024) commencing at 12noon. Rosary will be recited in the Church at 11:30am prior to Mass. At the conclusion Mass the funeral will leave for the Phillip Island Cemetery.

Handley & Anderson  
FUNERAL DIRECTORS

### PUBLIC NOTICES

**ISLAND CRAFT MARKET**  
Thompson Ave., Cowes

The next market is on Sat, Dec 14 9am-2pm

Inquiries: Monica 0412 710 276

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS:** Weekly meetings Bass Coast Shire, Wonthaggi – Tuesday 8pm; AA Cowes Big Book meeting at St Philip's Church (opp. Coles) – Tuesday 7pm, 0417 317 470; Salvation Army building, McKenzie St., Wonthaggi, Saturday 11am, 5672 3627. Phone head office 9429 1833.

### GARAGE SALES

## SHED SALE

COWES, 9 Birdwood Ave. Saturday 14th December 9.00am – 1.00pm

#### FURNITURE

Glass Kitchen Table  
Black Leather recliners x 2  
Electric Chair lift  
TV unit & sideboard + more

#### SPORTING EQUIPMENT

Electric treadmill  
Table Tennis Table  
Bike + more

#### ELECTRICAL

Miele Dryer  
Westinghouse142L Chest Freezer  
Dog Kennels and lots more

### SITUATIONS VACANT

## HOUSEKEEPER

Casual Position

Experience preferred but not essential – just a good attitude.

On the job training will be a major part of the job from the beginning.

5 to 12 hours/week mainly on Friday, some Saturday work may also be required once proficient.

Heidi & Stuart Hawking, Resort Managers  
Island Breeze Resort  
Cowes. Vic. 3922

Tel: 03 5952 2188 | Mob: 0417 364 876  
Email: [islandbreeze@holidayconcepts.com.au](mailto:islandbreeze@holidayconcepts.com.au)



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## IT TECHNICIAN

Full Time Position

– 38 hours (5 days) per week  
Commencing 28/01/2025  
Job Vacancy ID: 1456222

## MATHS/SCIENCE TEACHER

Family Leave – Full Time Position

– 38 hours (5 days) per week  
Commencing 28/01/2025  
Job Vacancy ID: 1456272

Bass Coast College is seeking suitably qualified staff to join its team in 2025 for the above positions. Applications can be made via DET Recruitment Online

For further information please contact  
Leith Cummins – College Principal  
(5611 4000)

### SITUATIONS VACANT

THE  
waterboy  
— CAFE —

### HEAD CHEF WANTED

The Waterboy café is seeking a Head Chef to manage all aspects of our café kitchen, reliable, highly motivated with excellent communication skills. Breakfast, lunch only, no nights.

If this sounds like you, we want you!

Email resume to [info@thewaterboycafe.com.au](mailto:info@thewaterboycafe.com.au)

## PHILLIP ISLAND GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT



We are seeking applications for the position of:

### Casual Cleaners

Staff will assist in the daily cleanliness, preparation and presentation of the venue's facilities and infrastructure.

Working to a 7-day roster, including weekends and after hours work, these roles would suit someone looking for regular shifts predominantly in the afternoon or early evenings.

To apply, email your resume to [info@phillipislandcircuit.com.au](mailto:info@phillipislandcircuit.com.au)



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

Newhaven College is seeking applications for:

### TEACHER OF BRASS

Part-Time (0.4FTE) fixed term with the possibility of ongoing.

For more information and details on requirements, duties and responsibilities, visit our website or contact Director of Music, Matthew Goss via email: [matthew.goss@newhavencol.vic.edu.au](mailto:matthew.goss@newhavencol.vic.edu.au)

Commencement 24 January 2025 for the academic year. Applications to be submitted to: [matthew.goss@newhavencol.vic.edu.au](mailto:matthew.goss@newhavencol.vic.edu.au)

Applications close Wednesday 18 December, 12pm

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.

### PUBLIC NOTICES

## Phillip Island Conservation Society Inc. – AGM

5th of January at 1.30PM – 3.30PM  
Berninnet (Large Community Room)  
Thompson Avenue COWES 3922

For further information and enquires email: [phillipisland-conservation@gmail.com](mailto:phillipisland-conservation@gmail.com) or phone the secretary 0400 986 504



### SITUATIONS VACANT

## CHEF WANTED

Chef needed at Cafe Lugano, with at least 2 years working experience and formal qualifications.

Contact:

[cafeluganocowes@gmail.com](mailto:cafeluganocowes@gmail.com)





Twenty-one Newhaven College Year 9 students received NAPLAN Certificates of Achievement in Reading and/or Numeracy. Back L-R: Ethan Stephenson, Aidan Smyth, Poppy Miles, Grace Farley, Thomas Reich, Lucas Jungwirth, Ruby Taylor. Middle L-R: Lachlan Kelly, Josie Taylor, Sequoia Patterson, Ania Falzon, Inez Parmington, Brianna Turton, Milla Walker. Front L-R: Lucas Rowson-Pickett, Mia Thompson, Aidan Kelly, Georgia Slidders, Ethan Rhee, Piper O'Brien. Absent: Zoe Paterson

# NAPLAN results released nationwide

## EDUCATION

NAPLAN (National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy) results have been released across Australia, with local schools pleased with their results. The results saw district schools fare generally well against nationwide averages, with a number of improvements seen across several different areas.

This year NAPLAN moved online for the first time and was modified to an 'adaptive test' model. The adaptive test means if a student continues to get questions right, the questions become harder, or if the student gets questions wrong, the test becomes easier.

Emma Harris, assistant college principal at Bass Coast College (BCC), said adaptive testing allowed students more opportunity to demonstrate what they know.

"The data gained is far more accurate than in previous NAPLAN assessments and gives teachers a clearer understanding of specific areas of strength and areas for students to develop."

Ms Harris said BCC performed well in Year 9 reading, spelling and numeracy subjects. The Year 7 cohort also made improvements on last year in writing, spelling, grammar and numeracy.

"Over the last two years BCC has designed and implemented a new learning model and strengthened teacher capacity in high impact teaching strategies and data literacy," the BCC assistant principal said. Year 7 students at Newhaven College were 'above' or 'well above' the national average in reading, writing, grammar and numeracy.

Newhaven College Director of Learning Karen Milkins-Hendry said 21 Newhaven College Year 9 students received NAPLAN certificates of achievement in

reading and/or numeracy.

She said a new model of learning based on the science of reading had been integrated into the junior school.

"The adaptive nature of NAPLAN testing supports our move to adaptive-PAT testing as well, which targets where a student's next learning step is with greater accuracy," Mrs Milkins-Hendry said.

### One of many measures

Rod McKenzie, principal of Cowes Primary School, said his school uses "a range of data to understand how students are achieving against the curriculum, and then teach to their point of need."

Mr McKenzie said in writing results at Cowes Primary, 85 per cent of students placed in either the exceeding or strong level between 2023 and 2024. The CPS Year 5 cohort were also above or well above the national average for reading and grammar. Mr McKenzie cited new initiatives in literacy as having a positive influence on the school's data.

Catherine Blackford, principal of Our Lady Star of the Sea, said writing had been a priority for the school this year. "However, we have a variety of assessments that we use to measure the development of each student," Ms Blackford said.

Year 3 San Remo Primary students performed above or well above the national average in writing, grammar and numeracy. Improvements were also made in Year 5 in writing and spelling.

"We continue to provide a strong phonetic approach to reading and continue to provide a strong mathematics curriculum," San Remo Primary School Principal Karen Bowmaker said.

Year 3 students at Newhaven Primary School were above or well above the national average in reading, writing, spelling, and numeracy.

# Federal election: what matters to you?

## CANDIDATE

Phillip Island lawyer and Monash federal election candidate Deb Leonard held a meet-and-greet in Cowes on Monday.

Deb, who is running her second campaign for Monash, met local residents at Island Wholefoods to discuss key issues in the election. She said from door knocks and meet-and-greets hot topics were a community pool, cost-of-living and climate change.

"Instead of subsidising fossil fuels, we should instead support solar power and batteries on houses, rentals, business and school, which would bring down power prices across the board, as well as emissions," Deb said.

"There are a range of solutions to cost of living, such as cracking down on the supermarket duopoly, stemming their anti-competitive practices."

In August, Voices for Monash (V4M) announced Deb as their candidate after she picked up 10.98 per cent of the vote at the last federal election.

Deb said independent candidates were able to attract "far more government funding", citing the success of independent Helen Haines securing "tens of millions of dollars in federal funding for roads and pothole fixes in her electorate".

Deb said top of her priority list would be a Phillip Island pool, better roads and improved mental health services.

"I know how important an aquatic cen-



Island residents, from left Ian, Tony, Bernie and Neroli met Voices for Monash (V4M) candidate Deb Leonard (right) at Island Wholefoods on Monday to discuss critical issues in the 2025 federal election.

tre is to our community and will advocate for funding to get it built.

"Resident feedback will directly influence my policies," she added, encouraging locals to fill out a survey on her website to highlight key issues. With a date yet to be confirmed for the upcoming election, Deb said it could be as early as March 2025, or be held in May.

Details: [debleonard4monash.com.au/monash](http://debleonard4monash.com.au/monash)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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



### Health concerns

Bass Coast Health (BCH) has established an outstanding, inclusive environment for community input and culture, an achievement many other health services would envy. Over the past eight years, a strong foundation of mutual respect and trust has been carefully built through open and honest communication.

Is the BCH Board fully aware of the significant impact of the departure of Jan Child as CEO?

One wonders why two Board members have resigned in recent times.

While the appointment of Simonne Alexander as interim CEO is welcomed given her experience at the Alfred Hospital and the partnership developed with this metropolitan facility in recent years, the community must be reassured that her focus will remain firmly on local service delivery.

It is crucial that she remains accessible to address local needs, to engage with the community, and to provide unwavering support to the dedicated staff managing the daily operations of Bass Coast Health.

Our previous CEO set a remarkably high standard of availability, transparency and commitment, often exceeding the demands of a full-time position. Her departure has left many community members concerned about the continuity of leadership and the potential loss of momentum in service delivery and community engagement.

The current Board faces a significant challenge to build trust and confidence in its decision-making processes. The community, with its long memory and deep investment in Bass Coast Health is vocal in its dissatisfaction. Clear, transparent communication and proactive damage control measures are urgently needed to reassure the community and to demonstrate that their concerns are being taken seriously.

H Adams, San Remo

### Cost of living crisis: roots in privatisation

When I was a young man, I banked with the Commonwealth Bank (government owned), insured my GIO, (Government Insurance Office) and had health insurance with Medibank Private (government owned).

You could drive across Melbourne without paying a toll. Rail travel was cheap in government owned and operated the trains. My grandparents and parents lived in Housing Commission houses.

There was no cost-of-living crisis, no housing crisis because both state and Commonwealth governments kept prices down simply by being part of the market and ensured supply of housing by building and managing what was required.

I attended University at no cost and had no student debt. Unlike today.

Then privatisation and user pays were introduced by state and Commonwealth governments. Government owned banks were sold. Medibank Private was sold. GIO was sold. Commonwealth Employment Service was replaced with a privatised Job Network which was more expensive and less successful.

The corporations celebrated and their prices rose. This of course also fuelled the exorbitant CEO and executive remuneration packages, a reduction in service and closure of branches as businesses embarked on a culture of profit maximisation.

Power stations were sold. Even the power transmission lines were sold. Leading to power prices rising every year. Under the Liberal Government major ports were either sold or leased out, raising the cost of both imports and exports.

It is no wonder that there is a cost-of-living crisis. Both Labor and Liberal/National governments, have quietly sold the farm.

To solve the cost-of-living crisis, Governments need to re-enter the market in essential services. Establish Australia Post Bank incorporating Insurance and Medibank Private. These will reduce cost of living.

To provide more rental housing and take pressure off and costs, re-establish Housing Commissions in each state under the original Victorian model. The Commission had planning powers, could develop land and build houses. There was even a house factory. The Commission saved costs at every step.

These are my thoughts but what do I know?

I will be supporting Independent Deb Leonard this election.

Ian Campbell, Raymond Island

## PHILLIP ISLAND MARINE

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**14 BEACH RD, RHYLL PHILLIP ISLAND**



# Strong results from Sharks

From page 24

Peter Cleary and Jackson Allen took the new ball and quickly came under fire from some aggressive batting.

Both bowlers held their nerve and Jackson got through a six over spell focusing on his line and length.

Dan McCausland came on and quickly created several chances that went begging.

Looking for a breakthrough, the ball was thrown to Ben O'Brien in his much-anticipated debut for the club.

Incredibly he struck with his first delivery in senior cricket and broke the opening stand.

Ben also removed the other opener in his following over, thanks to a great leg side catch from Dave Ivy.

From here the Island Sharks began to pick up regular wickets throughout the innings.

Two wickets to D-Mac gave the side an opportunity to see all the bowlers.

Ryan Hughes, Bryden Marshall and Drew Fusinato all bowled well and each got wickets.

Bud Marshall finished with 2 for 6, off six overs as Bass were restricted to 105 off their 35 overs.

Bud and Tom Blackwell opened the batting and set about chasing down the score.

Bud was first to go after a partnership of 25 for the first wicket.

This brought Drew Fusinato to the wicket and these two did the bulk of the work to chase down the score.

Blackwell played shots all-round the ground before falling on 58 and Drew hit some excellent shots square of the wicket to finish on 37 not out.

The Sharks passing the score two wickets down.

Good to get a win under their belts as the Sharks prepare for games leading into Christmas.

## C2

The Sharks returned to Rhyll to take on MDU.



Three generations of O'Brien's competing in the C1 Sharks' match against Bass over the weekend. From left: Ben, Andy and Jackson.

It was a special day, with Captain Cleary playing alongside his son Liam for the first time, along with father and son debutants Shane and Max Carville playing together.

Katie Cambell, who has been dominating in the women's side, was also making her debut.

Cleary lost the toss and the Sharks were sent out to field.

Kleverkamp and Cleary opened the bowling. Kleverkamp struck early when Francis took a sharp catch in the gully.

Sonny Williams was introduced into the attack and bowled his seven overs straight.

Despite not taking a wicket, he bowled a brilliant spell.

Peter Francis only went for nine runs off his seven overs as the Sharks kept the scoring to minimum.

The crowd got excited as Max Carville came on to bowl, he also bowled a tight spell without luck.

Katie did much the same with her four overs at the other end.

It was not until the last over that Cleary knocked over the MDU skipper, then combined with Katie Cambell to get a run out. MDU finished their 35 overs on 3/134.

Niven and Francis proceeded to open the batting for the Sharks and as usual, they got off to a steady start.

Niven ran out of lives and was run out just before the drinks break for 23 – a fantastic 64 run opening partnership.

The in form Seb DiFalco strolled to the crease as he and Francis kept the runs flowing.

Peter passed 50 to the delight of the local crowd.

Seb smashed his way to 23, before he got bowled.

Liam Cleary on debut didn't trouble the scorers and Sonny Williams hit the winning runs, as he and Francis got the Sharks over the line.

Peter Francis ended on 73 not out – a magnificent innings. The Sharks taking victory with four overs to spare.



Congratulations to the Phillip Island Golf Club's 2024 men's champion, Scott Lethbridge.

## Results from the green

### GOLF

#### Tuesday, December 3

##### Men's Stableford Front 9x2

Overall winner: Brett Pascoe (22) with 42 pts.

A Grade winner: Phillip Bencraft (10) with 36 pts C/B.

B Grade winner: Neil Williams (17) with 35 pts C/B.

C Grade winner: Brett Pascoe (22) with 42 pts.

BDL: 33 pts C/B.

NTP: 5th Brent Scott, 7th Rob Wood, 5th Robert Sparkman, 7th Paul Ledwith.

##### Men's 9H Stableford

Overall winner: David Gladman (18) with 17 pts

C/B from Harold Jackson (36) with 17 pts C/B.

BDL: 15 pts C/B.

#### Wednesday, December 4

Women's 13H Christmas Breakup

#### Thursday, December 5

##### Open 18H Stableford

Overall winner: Kai Cashman (17) with 41 pts.

A Grade winner: Scott Lethbridge (2) with 39 pts C/B.

B Grade winner: Kai Cashman (17) with 41 pts.

C Grade winner: Cecil Andrews (25) with 40 pts.

BDL: 33 pts C/B.

NTP: 5th Mark Dykes, 7th Ron Young, 10th Warren Dickie, 17th Colin Mackrell.

Great score: Scott Lethbridge – Eagle Hole 1 (6 balls).

Great score: Jack Ross –

Eagle Hole 13 (6 balls).

##### Open 9H Stableford

Winner: Karen Egan (38) with 22 pts from Richie Nettleton (28) with 20 pts C/B.

A Grade winner: Phillip BDL: 15 pts.

#### Saturday, December 7

##### Men's 18H Stableford Life Member Plate

Overall winner: Peter Ablett (10) with 42 pts.

A Grade winner: Peter Ablett (10) with 42 pts.

B Grade winner: Michael Taylor (14) with 39 pts C/B.

C Grade winner: Phil Foster (22) with 40 pts.

BDL: 34 pts C/B.

NTP: 5th Chris Lawrence, 7th Leigh Hayhurst, 10th Geoff Daff, 17th Mario Amato.

Life Member Plate Winners: Phillip Ellard, Chris Lawrence, Joel Panozzo and Greg Hyndman 112.

##### Women's 18H Stableford

Overall winner: Joanne Disher (21) with 42 pts from Rhonda Boyd (20) with 38 pts C/B.

BDL: 32 pts C/B.

NTP: 5th Lesley Meadowcroft, 7th Michelle Pardo, 10th Sue Wood, 17th Vicki Amato.

##### Open 9H Stableford

Overall winner: Karen Egan (39) with 23 pts from Patrick Owens (22) with 17 pts C/B.

#### Sunday, December 8

##### Open 18H Stableford

Overall winner: Brady Ross (3) with 38 pts from Max Mattock (15) with 36 pts.

BDL: 34 pts.

# Final Gippsland meet for SGB

## SWIMMING

There was excitement in the pool at Traralgon for the final GSI of 2024.

A special training session was held for the Camp 21 swimmers, who were selected to receive extra training and give their best to achieve qualifying times for the upcoming State Sprints and Countries.

Nine SGB swimmers were part of the Camp 21 training session and time trials: Penelope, Heidi, Tristan, Caiden, Mitchell, Milla, Abbie, Archie and Georgia.

The club give their thanks Coaches Lorri and Trin, along with the other Gippsland Coaches for supporting swimmers – they had a fantastic experience.

The event was a smaller meet, without many of the State qualified swimmers who are resting up for the Victorian State Age Championships next weekend.

This made a great meet for the younger swimmers as it was a shorter day.

They made the most of the day and Coach Caiden was very pleased



Caitlin and Taylan congratulate Abbie on her time trial swim as part of the Camp 21 program.

with the young team, who all put in their best with many PBs as well as several qualifying times.

This is the last event for the year in Gippsland with racing continuing

in the new year.

Amongst rest time, January has two important championships for the club with many competitors heading to Melbourne and Mildura.



Congratulations to Emma Hall, the Phillip Island Golf Club's 2024 ladies' champion.

## Euchre results

Ladies' winner: Phyllis Staples with seven wins.

Men's winner: Carl Smith with seven wins.

Encouragement award: Kay Gilbert.

With one more week of competition remaining for the year, the results for both men's and ladies' is far from decided.

The club hopes everyone can make it for the final night prior to their dinner on Friday December 13.

## Red Rocks results

### GOLF

#### Sunday, December 8

Par: 1st Craig Rumble (13) +3, 2nd Doug Collins (14) even, 3rd Ian Murray (18) even.



# Club's sixth comp wraps up for Christmas

## ANGLING

The Rhyll-Phillip Island Angling Club (RPIAC) hosted its sixth angling competition of the 2024/25 season over the weekend of December 7 and 8.

Despite tough weather conditions, with high winds and rain challenging the determination of participants, the event lured enthusiastic anglers for one last competition prior to Christmas. The weigh-ins at the club-rooms on both days brought an array of impressive catches.

A total of 32 fish were weighed in and the weekend's species included snapper, King George whiting, flathead, salmon, trevally, sharks, tuna and calamari.

Members across all age groups were there, underscoring the club's commitment to promoting responsible and sustainable angling, and fostering a love of fishing among its youngest members.

In the Squidgies Mixed Bag Points competition (for anglers aged nine and under) Saige Nicolaci claimed the win with two fish earning 40 points, while Byron Griffin and Harley Griffin each caught one fish, earning 20 points each as runners-up.

In the Junior category for anglers aged 10 to 16, Manny Fahnle blitzed the points and weight competitions with a King George whiting earning 1442 points (515g) and a snapper weighing an impressive 2645g respectively.

The Senior Points competitions showcased strong performances, with Carrienne Peatey winning the female category with a King George whiting worth 812 points (290g) and Trevor Gleeson securing the male category with a hefty King George whiting worth 1876 points (670g).

In the Senior Weight com-

petitions, Kate Jinnette landed a snapper weighing 1585g and Albert Abram reeled-in a 3900g snapper. The shark category saw a standout catch by Frank Kastoras, whose school shark tipped the scales at 17,200g.

With the first Game Fish prize for the season, James Nicolaci brought home a clean 4100g tuna and Alexander Bowden won the squid/cuttlefish competition with a 1465g calamari.

The Secret Weight Prize went to Steve Degering for his 435g King George whiting, coming closest to the secret weight of 442g.

In keeping with post competition feasts, a barbecue meal was provided for members and was kindly sponsored by Bakers Delight Cowes.

The weekend's volunteers ensured a grand close to the weekend and a great start to the festive season, creating a welcoming atmosphere for members and supporters to celebrate the weekend's achievements.

With the fishing season heating up there are still four \$1000 first-to-catch incentives up for grabs for members who land extraordinary catches during competition weekends, which meet or exceed the nominated weights: snapper (10kg), gummy shark (20kg), mulloway (25kg) and kingfish (25kg).

The RPIAC angling competition resumes on January 18-19, 2025 and there are many opportunities to participate in the weekend competitions and compete for the club championships.

The RPIAC wishes everyone safe and enjoyable fishing throughout the holiday season.

For further updates on upcoming events and competitions, visit [www.rpiac.com](http://www.rpiac.com)



Saige Nicolaci won the Squidgies Mixed Bag competition with two fish worth 40 points.



Manny Fahnle won both the Junior Points and Junior Weight competitions with a King George whiting worth 1442 points (515g) and a snapper weighing 2645g, respectively.



Frank Kastoras won the shark competition with a massive 17,200g school shark.



Albert Abram won the Senior Male Heaviest Weight competition with a 3900g snapper.



The 2025 football coaching team, led by Cam Pedersen (centre) has been announced.

# Club gets ready for a big season

## FOOTBALL/NETBALL

At the recent AGM, Chris Ross returned as President of the Phillip Island Football Netball Club (PIFNC) in what is shaping up to be a big year.

Last year, the club brought home the flag for the U18s, with both the U16s and Seniors making it through to the Grand Final.

The Seniors have made five Grand Final appearance between 2017 and 2024, including premier-ship wins in 2017 and 2018, and are hoping to consolidate their position as league leaders in the 2025 season.

Head coach Cam Pedersen has returned, with the club announcing the senior coaching team, as well as Reserves, Under 18s and Under 16s last month.

Once again, the club faces a disrupted pre-season, unable to train on the Cowes oval, as the turf is currently being replaced.

President Chris Ross said club representatives are meeting with the council this week regarding the grounds and facilities.

Chris said he's also hoping to get an update on plans for developing the new sports hub at the corner of Phillip Island and Ventnor roads.

Under the current masterplan, new ovals are not due to be constructed for at least a decade, but there have been increasing calls for the timeline to be moved forward.

Currently, under the council's masterplan for the sports hub, it could be 20 years before work begins on new ovals.

However the club says immediate action is needed because of the island's population explosion, especially given they are once again unable to access the one only oval at the Cowes Rec Reserve this summer.

With well over 1000 PIFNC members and around 700 players across football and netball, the club is bursting at the seams, and cannot all be accommodated at the current ground.

Being unable to access the oval for pre-season training for another year, means once again pre-season football training will be held at Newhaven College.

"We can't thank them enough for allowing us to use the facilities," Chris said.

Chris confirmed the council



Anthea Bennet (PIFNC Netball Operations manager) with new senior netball coach Hollie Castagna and President Chris Ross.

had asked the club to hold all junior games and training at the Newhaven College grounds during the 2025 season.

To do that would require "a huge effort" by club volunteers said Chris, and would also have a detrimental impact on the club's ability to raise vital funds through its canteen, as well on the social cohesion which is created through access post matches to social room facilities.

"Even if we can get access to the school canteen space, our already hard working volunteers would have to bring stuff over from the footy club every Sunday morning, then pack it all up and take it back that night."

The potential loss of revenue from canteen sales on game day would also be a huge blow.

"The canteen brings in a massive amount of revenue, so it would be a really significant hit to the club's budget if we lose one day of canteen revenue," Chris said.

In the lead up to the 2025 season, Chris said the club would warmly welcome new sponsors.

"Sponsorships are always welcome. They are the lifeblood of a community football club.

"We have a big range of sponsorship opportunities and various packages and are keen to talk to anyone who is interested," Chris said.

He also urged people to support the 2025 Cowes Classic on February 8.

"This is a great fundraiser for the club. And if there's anyone out there who would like to volunteer to help run the day, please contact us."

## 2025 team

Hollie Castagna has been appointed as Senior Netball head coach.

"After being around the club this year, Hollie is stepping up into the coaching role and will be a massive asset to all grades," PIFNC said in a statement on its Facebook page.

"She has plenty of experience and accolades under her belt, so we look forward to her bringing her wealth of knowledge to the 2025 season."

President Chris Ross said there will be some exciting netball player announcements in the next few weeks.

On the football side of things, the coaching team for 2025 is in place, led by Head Coach Cam Pedersen.

He is joined by line coaches Damien Holmes, Brendan Kimber, Daniel Larsson and Scott Huther and Development coach Dean Blake.

The Reserves will be coached by Brad Thompson, James Nicolaci and Luke Davies.

Jack Taylor and Hayden Bruce will coach the U18s while Tarryn Allan is coach of the U16s.

The club announced a raft of key players have re-signed and will return for the 2025 season: including Daniel Pearce, Mark Griffin, Jaymie Youle, Jack Taylor, Hayden Bruce and Charlie Bruce.

Two new recruits will also join the Bulldogs line up.

Matthew O'Sullivan will join from Benteigh FC, with a background in Gaelic Football.

"The 6'5" Irish player is quick, has elite skills and will play a key position for us next year," the Club said.

He's joined by Colm Brennan, who also has a background in Gaelic Football.

"Colm spent 2024 playing for St Kilda City FC and has great skills using the ball on both sides of his body. Standing at 6'2" he will be a strong key position player for us in 2025," the Club stated.

At the recent AGM, Chris Ross was elected President, with Ray Mattock elected Vice President (football) and Naz O'Brien Vice President (netball).

Other roles include Secretary: Glenn Plymin; Treasurer: Jodie Ross; Football Operations: Scott Huther; Netball Operations: Anthea Bennett and committee members Daniel Larsson, Martin Leacy, Andrew McMillan, Brad Martindale, Kate Williams.

# TIDE GUIDE

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

	WED 11 DEC	THU 12 DEC	FRI 13 DEC	SAT 14 DEC	SUN 15 DEC	MON 16 DEC	TUE 17 DEC
LOW	1:48 am 0.87 m	2:45 am 1.04 m	3:50 am 1.19 m	5:04 am 1.29 m	HIGH 12:56 am 2.91 m	HIGH 2:00 am 3.03 m	HIGH 3:00 am 3.11 m
HIGH	8:25 am 2.73 m	HIGH 9:11 am 2.65 m	HIGH 10:06 am 2.57 m	HIGH 11:10 am 2.51 m	LOW 6:22 am 1.31 m	LOW 7:34 am 1.26 m	LOW 8:37 am 1.17 m
LOW	2:26 pm 0.68 m	LOW 3:18 pm 0.59 m	LOW 4:18 pm 0.50 m	LOW 5:24 pm 0.43 m	HIGH 12:19 pm 2.49 m	HIGH 1:27 pm 2.51 m	HIGH 2:30 pm 2.55 m
HIGH	9:22 pm 2.57 m	HIGH 10:34 pm 2.65 m	HIGH 11:46 pm 2.77 m		LOW 6:31 pm 0.35 m	LOW 7:35 pm 0.30 m	LOW 8:33 pm 0.28 m

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A Grade's Max Royal working hard during the Sharks' clash against OMK.

# Strong results from Sharks

## CRICKET

### A Grade

After yet another wash out last week, finally the weather evaded local cricketers as the Island Sharks took on OMK at Newhaven.

OMK boasted the deepest batting line-up in the competition and had no hesitation batting first after winning the toss.

Max Royal opened the bowling with immediate impact claiming the first wicket and third ball of the day thanks to a nice catch by Kurt Lane in the slips.

The in-form Ethan Lamers strode to the crease fresh off a triple figure score and hoped to replicate that performance, but Royal had other ideas, testing Lamers' patience and finding the edge for a single figure score.

With George McCausland bowling tightly down the other end the pressure was well and truly on the Diggers' top order.

Royal was able to pick up another key wicket as the diving Daniel Mock was able to hang onto a catch to have OMK 3 for 28.

Some tight bowling halted the run-rate, although a partnership did begin to grow before some brilliance in the field by Lane, who was able to affect a run-out to give the Sharks their fourth wicket for just 60 runs.

Royal was brought back into the attack and was again able to draw a false shot as Zac Brown parked himself under a highball with success to snare Royal's fourth wicket.

The over before afternoon tea usually is a dull affair, however Zac Brown was able to produce a brain fade from the opposition's Captain with the help of Kohen Beaumont (with shades of his winter antics on the footy field), taking a blinder over his head and running back near the boundary.



A special day for the C2 Sharks. From left: Sonny Williams (hit the winning runs), father and son debutants Max and Shane Carville, Liam Cleary made his debut with his dad and Captain, Mick Cleary, along with Katie Cambell who made her debut.

The happy Sharks went into the long break full of confidence with six wickets for just 81 runs.

After tea, the runs dried up as the Diggers tried to regain some momentum.

The next 23 overs went for just 24 runs before OMK was dismissed for 105 off 54 overs. Zac Brown finished with two wickets.

The main destroyer of the day was Max Royal who finished with incredible figures of 6 for 17 off 19 overs with 11 maidens.

This left the Island crew 21 overs to bat.

With usual opener Brodie Johnston nursing a hamstring, he decided to put his feet up and let young gun Kohen Beaumont face the new ball alongside Lochie Cleeland.

The pair got off to a great start before losing the first wicket with the score on 27 when Beaumont was dismissed.

Daniel Mock joined his great mate rather shakily however, the pair were able to get the scoreboard ticking.

Cleeland regularly found the boundary as he made his way to an unbeaten 43 as the Sharks finished the day one wicket down for 74, needing just 32 more for victory.

### B1

After the long drive up to Nerrena with some ominous weather looming the Sharks were keen to continue their great start to the season and hopefully get a full game of cricket in.

After losing the toss and being sent into bowl the Sharks were on the attack early with youngsters Jobe Williams and Tim Niven opening the bowling.

The pair bowled well making runs extremely hard to come by before a short burst of rain saw play stop.

After a quick break the Sharks took to the field again in tricky conditions with the pitch damp and the outfield wet.

Both bowlers continued to bowl well before a change of bowler was made with the experienced Dave Womersley coming into the attack for Williams.

Womersley bowled an incredible spell of controlled pace bowling and the pressure created at his end meant Niven could capitalise and broke through ripping the bails off the stump with a perfect ball to have Nerrena at 1-18.

Niven and Womersley made it near on impossible for the batsman to score from this point onwards frustrat-

ing them with the run rate dropping below two an over before another breakthrough was made with some excellent fielding from first gamer Lawrence Ferrari, throwing the stumps down for a run out.

From there Williams was brought back into the attack along with Tarryn Allan and the pair began to get on a roll both taking wickets before the lunch break.

And after the break the Sharks continued their roll continuing to take wickets and making scoring near on impossible.

Eventually bowling out Nerrena for 119 off 57 overs with key contributors Niven and Allan both taking three wickets and Williams finishing with two – all the bowlers bowling incredibly well.

The Sharks then had to navigate a tricky 13 over period with the bat.

Lawrence Ferrari and Tharidu Asurumuni were sent into bat.

The boys were looking good before Ferrari was bowled by a seed which brought out Sarith Angelo.

Unfortunately for Angelo he also copped an unplayable Yorker on his first ball and was out bowled as well.

This brought youngster Jobe Williams to the crease and along with Asurumuni the pair successfully navigated the remaining overs leaving the Sharks 2-27 needing 92 to win next week.

### C1

The trip to Bass continued the trend of families playing in the same team.

This week the Sharks had three generations representing the side as Ben O'Brien got to play with his dad, Andy and his nephew Jackson Allen.

Bass won the toss and elected to bat.

Continued page 22

**ALEX SCOTT  
AND STAFF**

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