



PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO

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YOUR COMMUNITY VOICE!

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

\$1.80 Incl. GST



Making a splash

Photo: Alia Schonberg (@sch0ny)

Nicolò Bulega celebrated his win at the World Superbikes Championship at the Phillip Island Circuit on the weekend. See the full race report in Sport (page 23) and locals enjoying the action trackside on page 9.

Cowes to Ventnor trail goes cold

COUNCIL

The proposed Cowes to Ventnor walking trail has been put on ice, after councillors supported a motion to protect the shoreline vegetation between the two areas.

At the February council meeting, Cr Tim O'Brien moved the motion that the "proposed coastal Cowes/Ventnor trail be removed from proposed future projects".

In the Tracks and Trails strategy adopted by the previous council in November 2022, a trail along the foreshore between Cowes and Ventnor was identified as a high priority.

At the time, there was a concerted community campaign opposing the trail, with the Phillip Island Conservation Society (PICS) also not supporting the proposal due to its impacts on sensitive flora, fauna and dunes. PICS said the foreshore reserve provided an "essential and finite" corridor for wildlife.



The proposed walking trail along the foreshore between Cowes and Ventnor has been put on ice, after councillors supported a motion to protect the shoreline vegetation between the two areas.

Cr O'Brien's motion called on the value of the foreshore reserves to be recognised, and to ensure the foreshore from Osbourne Road in Cowes to Grossard Point in Ventnor "be protected in perpetuity from shoreline development".

Cr O'Brien said much of the shoreline was under threat and degraded.

"This is not an appropriate environment to be putting a track and trail through," he said.

"Money would be better spent in rehabilitating that shoreline. We should be directing funding to where it is needed."

Other concerns included the creation of informal access tracks - with Cr O'Brien saying a trail

would open up more parts of the coastline to these unofficial paths.

The motion called on management of the foreshore to "include appropriate oversight and community engagement relating to formal and informal beach access paths to preserve the integrity of vegetation along coastal dunes and sand banks".

Cr O'Brien also raised concerns about the removal of indigenous vegetation along the foreshore.

"Council should recognise it is under threat, and it should be protected," he said.

The motion addressed concerns about risks to habitat and shorelines, and noted that foreshores along north-facing beaches were threatened by "both erosion and the impact of development".

"We have very little foreshore vegetation left and with the current rapid rate of erosion we must do everything we can to

protect it," he said.

He urged council to look at alternative "low impact" ways to get around, saying "we already have good paths that should be linked up".

"Our efforts would be better put into making sure our roads are safe."

The motion included a council officer's comment which noted the current trail identified in the strategy "is unfunded and due diligence and feasibility assessment have not been undertaken".

No other councillors spoke to the motion, with Cr Bauer leaving the room for the discussion, after declaring a conflict of interest, as his Cowes property backs onto the foreshore.

Channel Challenge
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Black Dog Ride: "Watch your mates"

MENTAL HEALTH

The following article discusses suicide and suicide prevention.

In conjunction with the World Superbikes Championship at the Phillip Island Track, the Black Dog Ride (BDR) saw around 50 motorcycle enthusiasts open up conversations to raise awareness of depression and suicide prevention across the island.

The group rode in a convoy from NSW to Victoria, culminating in their arrival at the Phillip Island track where they hosted a stall as the designated "charity of choice" for the international event.

BDR Victorian State Coordinator, Bernie Garvey, said the group had dozens of conversations with eventgoers and community members at the stall and across the island about mental health issues.

Across South-West Gippsland, which includes Phillip Island and San Remo, an estimated 60 people died by suicide between 2019 and 2023. The rate of suicide is considerably higher than in inner metropolitan areas, and many in the community carry the great burden of pain left behind when someone takes their own life.

Across the country, three million Australians are living with depression or anxiety and one in five Australians experience a mental health condition each year. Eight Australians take their lives each day, with more than 3000 lives lost to suicide each year.

They're grim statistics that Bernie and the BDR are determined to change by raising awareness of mental ill health and fostering conversations – especially in rural and regional communities.



Geoff Grove, Clive Dawes, Leanne and Tony Farrel of BDR in front of Winston – the black dog mascot named after Winston Churchill, who coined the phrase 'black dog' to describe depression.

How to help

"You need to watch your mates," Bernie said.

"And if there's a change in their attitude, if there's a change in the way they interact with you, or don't interact and they pull away for a while, then it's time to ring them and say: 'hey, how're you doing?'"

"It's very easy to become insular when you're not feeling your best, so having that first conversation is what I would suggest people do every time. If you know someone is really struggling, direct them to see their GP."

Bernie said for a lot of people who struggle with mental ill health, and especially men, it can be a difficult con-

versation to have, but even voicing your struggles out loud to another person can be cathartic and hugely important.

Bernie also said it doesn't have to come to the point of suicide, and that the earlier you open up the easier it can be.

"You need to have that conversation, no matter how hard it might be or how hard someone tries to push you away.

"It doesn't have to be every five minutes, but it needs to be often enough that that person understands you care, and that there are people in this world that care about them."

According to Lifeline Australia, if you think someone might be suicidal, ask them directly: "are you thinking about suicide?"

Don't be afraid to do this, Lifeline says, it shows you care and will decrease their risk because someone is willing to talk about it. Make sure you ask directly and unambiguously.

If they say yes, they are suicidal, listen to them and allow them to express how they are feeling.

Bernie said it is also important to ensure you yourself are in a healthy enough mind frame to have those conversations.

Resources

A number of free, anonymous support services exist for those who are struggling or know someone struggling with depression.

- Lifeline on 13 11 14
- Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467
- MensLine on 1300 78 99 78
- Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800
- Mates in Construction on 1300 642 111
- StandBy – Support After Suicide on 1300 727 247

A comprehensive list of support services can be found on the Black Dog Ride website at: blackdogride.org.au/view/crisis-support

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Fisheries gutted by government

FISHING

A ground swell of opposition is building against the State Government plan to close five fisheries offices in Western Port and Port Phillip bays (including Cowes) and fire 27 staff.

The four staff in the Cowes office have been told their roles will be terminated, and the building will be sold.

The fishing industry, recreational fishing groups, former staff, conservationists, the Liberals, Nationals, unions and the Victorian National Parks Association have all condemned the proposal (read more in separate story).

A community petition, started last week, calling for the changes to be rolled back, has already attracted close to 10,000 signatures.

Local resident Kevin Brown, the former Victorian Chief Fisheries Officer said if the changes go ahead Victoria will be the only state or territory in Australia that won't have a dedicated fisheries officer workforce.

He said the risks to fisheries stock and marine parks is immense, as is the potential impact on boating safety.

He said the Victoria Fisheries Authority (VFA) claim it was changing the focus of Fisheries to compliance was "utter rubbish".

"That has always been the focus."

He also expressed discomfort with the government's figure of 90 per cent compliance.

"That may be the case for people fishing with a rod and a line, but the biggest problem in Victoria has always been the illegal and unregulated commercial catch.

"In one dive, a diver can take several thousand dollars of abalone," Kevin explained.

He said the illegal fishing industry also targeted rock lobster, snapper, whiting and squids.

"These are taken in huge quantities.

"This is where I have some difficulty in the use of stats. One person fishing who takes one undersized fish is used as a stat," he said.

"One person who dives and takes 3000 abalone is one stat.

"One has an enormous impact on resources compared to the other."



Local resident Kevin Brown, the former Victorian Chief Fisheries Officer said if the changes go ahead to close fisheries offices and fire 27 staff, Victoria will be the only state or territory in Australia without a dedicated fisheries officer workforce.

Refocus

In a statement on its website, Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) said the changes were, in part, in response to the removal of the 700-tonne commercial net fishery in Port Phillip Bay.

This was echoed by CEO Travis Dowling in an interview on ABC Radio 774 Melbourne, where he said half of the role of fisheries officers had been to manage that fishery, but that was no longer needed.

He said the focus for officers would now be more on recreational fishers, and represented "a significant change in how fisheries are managed".

He pointed to the existence of the Major Fisheries Crime Unit, which would target high level criminals.

"There are bad eggs going out deliberately and taking heaps of abalone or snapper. We are going to go hard on those guys. We have been going hard on them."

However Kevin Brown is sceptical of this explanation.

"The Crime Unit has existed for years, and has been slightly downgraded," he said.

"They are desk based and rely on the reports submitted, on almost a daily basis, from fisheries officers."

He said the officers were the "eyes and ears on the water", and with less officers, working from remote locations, "who is going to see the illegal activity when it's going on?"

He said the fisheries officers who are being dismissed won't go into the crime unit in Melbourne. "They are being offered the opportunity to express interest in the role of an engagement officer, at alternative locations.

"At best, one in three can be selected."

But he's not confident any of the officers would be re-employed.

"This change in focus is being done for budget savings.

"Why would you employ officers at the top of the salary range, with skills the community engagement job doesn't require? Plus you would have to deal with disaffected officers.

"I have dealt with government departments for years, I believe I know how the selection will go."

He said the officers who have lost their jobs would probably have to look at moving interstate if they wanted to stay in the field.

"Some will get on the tools. Some will look at mining. Others are just scratching their heads and feeling sick. They've put their life's efforts into this."

Criminal

In the past, Kevin said fisheries officers use to complete a 22-week intensive induction training, but that has been abolished.

He said if they had people in the field, such as the community engagement officers, without the appropriate level of training to tackle major crime, it could be a legal time bomb for the department to manage.

Monitoring and preventing the major impacts to fisheries and resources was often dangerous and difficult work.

"For example, nighttime work along the coast in abalone theft.

"These are people who will do anything to avoid detection. Officers have been subjected to intimidation and threats."

He said the proposal would al-

low an illegal fisheries trade to flourish.

"If these changes go through, the fisheries trade will blow up like the tobacco trade.

"You don't have to bring resources over the border. You don't risk police involvement. You can just come down the coast and take whatever you want.

"Just go and look at the fish market. Whiting is around \$90 per kilo, snapper is \$70 per kilo. You don't need a lot (of fish) to start making a lot of money."

Compliance

The government said its restructuring was based, in part, on current "record high compliance levels" with fishing rules and regulations, but Kevin said the decision could undermine that.

"With any compliance program, there's three components: you've got to have clear and reasonable rules; you have to have a realistic chance of being caught and; the penalty has to be sufficient to deter.

"Take away any of those and it doesn't work.

"Voluntary compliance sounds lovely, but there's not yet a demonstrated example of where it has ever worked.

"Human nature and available profit mean that this is going to follow suit. This program will not work.

"It just shows a lack of understanding of how the actual compliance program works on the ground," he said.

The decision to slash the number of fisheries officers in Port Phillip and Westernport bays could also mean the government is renegeing on commitments it made to the fishing industry.

"As part of the negotiations to introduce marine parks in Victoria, to get the abalone industry on board, the government said they would provide an upgraded compliance program, with more fisheries officers in the field," Kevin said.

As the abalone industry was losing access to waters within the marine parks, the government promised a higher level of protection for their livelihood.

"They did the same for the entire fishing fraternity when marine licences were introduced.

"The government gave an unequivocal promise that there would be more officers in the field.

"And that was an ongoing commitment."

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The Opposition, unions and environmental groups have called for the State Government to reverse its decision to restructure the Victorian Fisheries Authority, including cutting staff and closing offices at Cowes, Mornington, Braeside, Altona and (partly) Queenscliff.

Calls for VFA restructure to halt

FISHING

The opposition, unions and environmental groups have called for the State Government to reverse its decision to restructure the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA).

The restructure includes reducing the number of staff and offices on Port Phillip Bay, and closing existing stations at Cowes, Mornington, Braeside, Altona and (partly) Queenscliff.

Three new offices will be established at Tooradin, Carrum and St Leonards. Staff numbers will drop from 192 to 157.

Despite the VFA website stating "this is a proposal only and is currently out for consultation with our affected team members", the four staff at the Cowes office were told they would all lose their jobs, and the office and patrol boats would be sold.

Member for Bass, Jordan Crugnale said she has received many calls and emails about the proposed changes.

"I very much appreciate the time community members have taken to write to me raising their concerns regarding the proposed restructure of the VFA," Ms Crugnale said.

"As a strong advocate for the fishing and boating community in our area, I will be taking all correspondence to the Minister for Outdoor Recreation."

Ms Crugnale said as the proposal was "currently out for consultation with affected staff members and the relevant union", she needed to respect the process and would not be able to comment further.

Sam Groth, Deputy Opposition Leader and member for Nepean, said the changes were "dramatically weakening enforcement efforts" and would leave marine environments, rec-

reational fishers and boaters at greater risk.

"These cuts mean fewer inspections, less oversight, and a greater chance of illegal fishing and environmental damage.

"It's a slap in the face to the responsible fishers who do the right thing and expect the rules to be enforced fairly."

National MP Melina Bath said the decision was budget driven "with Labor scrambling to save money due to soaring state debt".

"The economic and social prosperity of our coastal communities in eastern Victoria is linked to the effective regulation of our beautiful marine ecosystems.

"No one in my electorate wants to see our recreation and commercial fishing industries negatively impacted through a lack of responsible fishing management.

"Labor's budget cuts to fisheries enforcement must not lead to an increase in illegal poaching," Ms Bath said.

Disaster

The Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) said the cuts could spell disaster for Victorian marine life.

"These devastating cuts will leave Victoria's marine national parks and sanctuaries wide open to illegal fishing, spelling disaster for our precious marine ecosystems," said VNPA Nature Conservation Campaigner Shannon Hurley.

"With marine parks already showing a 56 per cent non-compliance rate, it's incomprehensible that the government would slash the number of officers responsible for protecting these areas.

"Victoria already has the lowest marine protection of any Australian state, with only 5.3 per cent of state waters protected

in no-take marine national parks and sanctuaries."

Ms Hurley described the fisheries officers as "our eyes and ears on the water", protecting vulnerable species from illegal and unregulated fishing.

She said the cuts come on the back of Parks Victoria facing \$95 million in budget cuts (and an estimated 100 job losses), while the Office of the Conservation Regulator had already lost 33 staff.

"Once again we're seeing our wildlife, parks and environment suffer from damaging and short-sighted budget decisions. We need more enforcement, not less.

"The government must at least reverse these cuts if it's serious about protecting Victoria's precious wildlife and marine areas."

Union

The Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) that represents the fisheries officers facing termination also believes the changes will negatively impact fisheries and the marine environment.

The union said the fisheries officers provided a vital service, ensuring fishing was sustainable.

"They enhance the environment by ensuring other agencies, water corporations, councils and the community are aware of issues that arise.

"Our fishing officers are on the ground keeping an eye on and reporting concerns that need to be addressed quickly."

They called on the government to put a stop to the restructure, stating "CPSU has a meeting scheduled with the Minister to discuss ongoing vacancies in the VFA, we are looking forward to discussing our concerns about vacancies and the impacts on Victoria".



Last October this tree fell on Ventnor Road causing significant damage to a car and minor injuries to the driver. Since then, Department of Transport and Planning said its crews have inspected the road 20 times.

Ventnor Road inspections

ROAD SAFETY

In response to another fallen tree on Ventnor Road this month, the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) has confirmed there have been 20 inspections of the road in the past five months.

"Managing roadside trees and vegetation is an important part of our ongoing maintenance program, which is why we have crews undertaking inspections along Ventnor Road every week," said Beth Liley, Executive Director (Gippsland), Department of Transport and Planning.

"Our crews will remove or undertake trimming to trees and vegetation if there is a risk posed to road users."

The department said between October 1, 2024 and February

12, 2025 there have been 20 inspections conducted by DTP crews.

They did not confirm how many trees or limbs had been removed, but stated crews will remove or trim trees if they are impacting on the safe operation of the road, or if there's an immediate likelihood of trees or branches falling on the road.

In early February a tree fell, blocking traffic. In September and October last year, two drivers narrowly escaped injury when large gums fell as they were driving down the road at night. One driver sustained minor injuries, with her car significantly damaged.

"We encourage members of the community to notify DTP of any hazards or concerns on the arterial road network by calling 13 11 70," the department said.

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Future uncertain despite Newhaven Jetty's 'Castle moment'

INFRASTRUCTURE

The petition to save the Newhaven Jetty was debated in the upper house of state parliament last Wednesday, in what Amanda Keilar described as "a bit of a 'Castle moment' for little old Newhaven".

Amanda, along with Saltwater owner Ben Dennis and Lisa Webster also met with the Minister for Ports and Freight, Melissa Horne, and local member Jordan Crugnale to discuss the future of the much-loved community asset.

The debate lasted for almost half an hour, with members on both sides of parliament weighing in on the issue and recognising the jetty for the important role it played for the community and tourism industry.

However, the future of the jetty – which was closed without notice and indefinitely in May last year – is still uncertain, with no concrete resolutions or promises made.

The debate came off the back of a petition, spearheaded by San Remo resident and local fishing advocate Amanda Keilar, which was signed by over 3500 residents and sponsored by Melina Bath, the National's Member for Eastern Victoria. The number of residents who signed the petition was commented on by multiple members of parliament, who said it was an "incredible community achievement" and an obvious testament to the importance of the jetty.

Ms Bath said the "popular, land-based and disability-friendly" jetty had been "serving its community for decades," and that it is "a mecca for anglers, tourists" and



Lisa Webster, Ben Dennis, the Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne, local member for Bass Jordan Crugnale and Amanda Keilar spoke before the petition to save the Newhaven Jetty was debated in state parliament.

those wishing to enjoy nature.

Meeting with Minister

Amanda Keilar said before the petition was to be debated, local member for Bass Jordan Crugnale had organised a meeting with the relevant Minister for Ports and Freight, Melissa Horne.

"It was a very brief meeting in the dining room over a cup of coffee," Amanda said, "but we left that meeting quite positive."

According to Amanda, Ms Horne MP said her office was going to look into the

visual assessment which deemed the jetty not fit for purpose, and also look into where funding for the jetty may be available.

While no promises were made, Amanda said along with Ben and Lisa, she was "remaining positive that something comes out of the meeting with Melissa Horne".

"We just impressed upon (Ms Horne) how the community is really, really fearful that the jetty will be left to rot and stay closed, because the southern arm was locked up and never fixed," Amanda said.

Freedom of Information (FOI) documents obtained by the office of Melina Bath MP show that the Newhaven Jetty once ranked number two on an internal priority list, second after a jetty in Middle Brighton which received \$24 million in funding in 2021.

"We said (to the Minister) it's our little slice of paradise; how do we get it back up the priority list?" Amanda said.

After the meeting, the local member for Bass Jordan Crugnale said "last year we made the difficult but necessary decision to close this much loved and highly utilised community asset to protect public safety."

"I have spoken with many very passionate and active locals, organisations and businesses that love the jetty ... the conversations and advocacy continues," Ms Crugnale said.

The road ahead

With no promises made or deadlines for action established, Amanda said it was now about "keeping the issue alive".

"If we don't hear from the Minister within the month we'll definitely be getting on to the Minister and saying 'how have you got along?'" Amanda said.

"And just keep putting pressure on where we can. Because not everybody owns a boat, and not everybody can ably fish off a beach, so we need these old jetties."

When leading the debate, Ms Bath said "this government absolutely must take this petition, understand the community sentiment and work with this community to find a way to reopen the jetty."

Ventnor Road gets pathway funding

INFRASTRUCTURE

A new shared pathway along Ventnor Road has received \$980,000 funding from the Federal Government.

The money was awarded to Bass Coast Shire Council, to design and construct the road, creating a two kilometre long, 2.5-metre-wide concrete path.

Together with an existing path, this will form 4.5 kilometres of continuous shared pathway.

The pathway will be constructed on Ventnor Road, between Pyramid Rock Road and Phillip Island Road, running past the Hilton Chadwick Reserve and the land designated for the new sports hub.

Another small section will be constructed near the intersection with Berrys Beach Road.

The grant is from the Active Transport Program run by the Federal Government.

"This \$980,000 in funding from the Federal Government will provide Phillip Island locals and visitors with safer and more accessible active transport options when travelling from Cowes to Ventnor," Senator Jess Walsh said.

"The Ventnor Road construction will improve access across the island, offering better routes for both cyclists and pedestrians."

Bass Coast Shire Council welcomed the funding, with Mayor, Cr Rochelle Halstead saying the project will deliver significant benefits to the community.

"This is a fantastic investment in Phillip Island's active transport network. Shared pathways



The red circles on this map show where the two-kilometre shared pathway along Ventnor Road, which received \$980,000 funding from the Federal Government, will be constructed.

like this not only provide safer connections between townships but also support healthier, more sustainable ways for people to get around," Cr Halstead said.

"We know there is strong demand for better walking and cycling infrastructure in Bass Coast, and this funding will help us deliver a high-quality path that meets the needs of

both locals and visitors."

The council said the shared pathway aligns with its Tracks and Trails Strategy and commitment to creating connected, accessible, and liveable communities by providing safe and inclusive transport options.

Construction is expected to commence following the detailed design phase.

The news comes just one day after Bass Coast Shire Councilors voted unanimously to accept a motion by Cr Tim O'Brien to stop the proposed Cowes to Ventnor foreshore walking trail, saying it must "be removed from proposed future projects".

Previously the Tracks and Trails Strategy had listed that walking trail as a high priority.

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An amendment to a planning application by the Phillip Island RSL, which saw the patronage for the redevelopment of the existing building rise from 700 to 800 patrons was approved by councillors at the February meeting.

RSL amendment approved; parking waiver queried

PLANNING

An amendment to a planning application by the Phillip Island RSL saw the patronage for the redevelopment of the existing building rise from 700 to 800 patrons.

Councillors voted to approve the amended plans for a \$5.9 million redevelopment, which now includes kids party rooms and a bridal area.

The plans amend a previously approved \$5 million permit, revealed in August 2023, that included expanding the bistro, and building an enclosed, carpeted seated bistro area. Seeking an increase in the maximum number of patrons by 100, triggered a parallel planning requirement of 30 new car spaces, although the new plans make no allowance for more car parks.

The application said the existing 176 spaces on site would be able to accommodate the RSL upgrade, and did not request a parking waiver.

However officers said by increasing the patron number by 100, "in accordance with Clause 52.06-

3", a planning permit was required for a waiver of an additional 30 parking spaces.

The report said there was a requirement of 0.3 car parking spaces per patron, and "therefore the proposition of increasing the maximum patronage by 100 people requires the provision of an additional 30 car parking spaces".

The officers recommended the waiver, based on the existing parking, surveys of occupancy rates and the use of a courtesy bus by the venue, which generally serviced 50-60 people per day.

Officers recommended the permit be approved, subject to 21 conditions, including an amended landscape plan, increased fence height along the eastern boundary, provision of eight bicycle spaces, waste and noise management plans.

Cr Ronnie Bauer moved the motion, noting car parking waivers were "a hot topic" on the island.

"However here we have an unusual case," he said.

"The applicant has not asked for or even wanted

any car waivers.

"The RSL has informed me and the other Ward councillors that their existing car parking arrangements would fulfill the necessary parking requirements for this development.

"It is the statutory requirements of Bass Coast Shire that is imposing the 30 car waivers.

"The word waiver is now associated with the notion of more cars on the island. That is not the case here.

"These are not waivers, they are exemptions. It is rare that a development does not ask for additional parking. The extension being proposed by the RSL is a benefit to the community," Cr Bauer said.

"The RSL committee of management's consideration in relation to the parking situation for this development should be commended."

Cr John Temby said in general, he supported Cr Bauer's comments, but the notion of waivers worried him.

"We need a whole of shire approach, so no development goes ahead without appropriate parking."



A petition presented at the February council meeting called for a road and drainage upgrade for Anglers Road in Sunderland Bay, with 52 per cent of the property owners willing to contribute financially to the upgrade. Photo: Google Maps.

Petitions: road upgrade, noisy rental

COUNCIL

The contentious issues of unsealed roads and noisy holiday rental properties were on the agenda again at the February council meeting.

Two petitions were presented for consideration. The first called for a road and drainage upgrade for Anglers Road in Sunderland Bay, with 52 per cent of the property owners saying they were willing to financially contribute to the project.

The street was eligible for consideration under the Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy 2024.

Councillors voted to receive the petition and for officers to work with the head petitioner and other property owners to find a preferred treatment option, and potential costs.

Anglers Road now joins

Dover Street in Sunderland Bay, Dunvegan Crescent in Surf Beach, The Esplanade (from Sunderland Bay Road to Batman Street); The Esplanade (from Zephyr Court to Sunderland Bay Road); and Links Street that have petitioned for an upgrade.

Individual streets sought upgrades after the special charge scheme for Surf Beach and Sunderland Bay was abandoned in 2023.

Last year, councillors approved a revised policy, which allows large road upgrade projects to be broken into smaller ones and community-initiated road projects to be made easier.

Holiday hell

Eighty-two people signed a petition calling for council to cancel the registration of a short stay rental in Corinella.

The petition stated is-

sues with the property included (but were not limited to): road safety breaches, anti-social behaviour, noise, environmental health issues and the impact on the amenity and mental health of surrounding neighbours.

Cr John Temby said people had the right to have "local amenity suitable for a quiet, relaxing, safe environment".

"We need a mechanism to make it stop and ensure it doesn't occur in other places."

Cr Jan Thompson, who was attending the meeting online, also supported the petition, however technical issues meant her comments were not audible on the live stream.

Councillors voted to accept the petition, and asked for a report into the issues to be presented to the March council meeting.

Y out, Aligned Leisure in

COUNCIL

Bass Coast Shire Council has appointed Aligned Leisure to manage the Phillip Island Leisure Centre and Bass Coast Aquatic Centre from July 1.

Council said the appointment was the result of a competitive tender process, and Aligned Leisure "will deliver inclusive, and high-quality programs both within the facilities and out in the community".

CEO Greg Box said Aligned Leisure is a highly capable, community-focused organisation with a strong track record in facility management and working in community.

"We're excited to partner with Aligned Leisure, leaders in the aquatics and leisure industry, currently operating 46 facilities across Australia," Mr Box said.



The Y no more. From July 1, Aligned Leisure will take over management of the Phillip Island Leisure Centre and Bass Coast Aquatic Centre.

Mr Box thanked YMCA Victoria for their years of dedicated service to the Bass Coast community.

"Our priority is to ensure a smooth transition, working closely with both YMCA Victoria and Aligned Leisure to maintain seamless access to our facilities."

Council said staff em-

ployed at the centres have been advised and plans are in place to support them through the transition process.

"All members and stakeholders will be contacted in the coming weeks with details about the transition," a council spokesperson stated.



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Question everything: February meeting

COUNCIL

Sit back and get comfortable – that was the advice from Mayor, Cr Rochelle Halstead as she waded through the mountain of questions at the February council meeting.

“Have you brought a pillow,” she asked the gallery.

There were over 40 questions, ranging from catering costs for council meetings to Silverleaves erosion, development concerns, parking waivers, speed limit reviews and dog parks. All were answered by CEO Greg Box.

The 11 questions relating to Silverleaves coastal erosion were answered as a block.

The questions covered: what council would do if homes were inundated; consideration of buy backs, lowered rates; construction of the rockwall which contributed to the loss of Silverleaves’ shoreline; trigger for determining emergency works; role of DEECA; topographical information; minimising risk of inundation; measuring foreshore loss; securing state and federal funding and; has Silverleaves coastal erosion been formally identified as a strategic risk.

All questions received the same response, which noted a significant portion of Silverleaves has had a Land Subject to Inundation overlay since 2017. “Council officers have continued to meet with concerned residents and respond to enquiries.”

Council also said it continued to work closely with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) to

monitor changes in the Silverleaves coastline. Officers and councillors continue to meet and communicate with DEECA and the relevant Minister.

“The proposed works at Silverleaves are primarily aimed at preserving the foreshore reserve, as public open space. These works are being designed and led by DEECA. Council will continue to advocate for a timely, evidence-based response, and provide delivery support when the design, permits and approvals are complete, and adequate funding made available.”

The answer also confirmed council had called on state and federal governments for resources and continues to advocate for a state-wide Coastal Inundation and Erosion Control, in an overlay similar to the Bushfire Management Overlay.

Kim White asked if the coastal erosion retreat policy in Council’s Advocacy document will be reviewed and amended. Council responded the advocacy priorities will be reviewed as part of the development of the four-year Council Plan.

Dogs

Eve Kelly questioned if an ecological survey had been done of the San Remo foreshore before it was “open to dogs 24 hours a day” and if council would consider reassessing the hours, as the dunes were a habitat for wombats.

Council said it regularly reviews all off-leash regulations and was developing a new Domestic Animal Management Plan this year. “Consideration of the hours



Erosion on the Silverleaves foreshore dominated question time at the February council meeting, with 11 of the 40-plus questions relating to the topic.

at San Remo and other beaches will be included in this process.”

Ann Grose asked what were the infrastructure and design constraints that stopped council applying for funding for a dog park on the Carnival land site.

Council said the site required “further design and delivery of critical connecting civil infrastructure, such as roads, site drainage, carparking etc, prior to being able to apply for funding. Council continues further designs work to position the site for future funding opportunities.”

Peter Fogarty questioned enforcement of people not complying with regulations around domestic animal ownership, and would councillors support additional funding for community safety officers.

Council said all relevant regulations were enforced, including domestic animal regulations and staffing levels were regularly reviewed through the budget process.

Parking

Ross Bencraft questioned the 900-parking space waiver for the new Isle of Wight development in Cowes, asking where the 900 cars would be “alternatively accommodated?”

Council noted the scale of parking proposed was only one element of the planning decision, alongside contribution to employment and the local economy, and that “submission of a green travel plan is a condition of the permit”.

Craig Rogers asked why the de-

velopment at 151 Marine Parade in San Remo had been allowed to “eliminate onsite parking”.

Council said: “Limited site constraints restrict the ability to cater for on-site car parking. A planning permit for the proposal was issued whilst considering the broader policy direction for Marine Parade.”

In response to a question from Ross Bencraft, Council advised there had been 22 planning permits issued for commercial developments between January 2021 and December 2024.

This has resulted in a total of “approximately 1209 car parking spaces waived; this includes 900 for the Isle of Wight development.”

Recreation reserve

John Cantone asked how council could justify 30 years of neglecting essential sports facilities on Phillip Island.

In response, council noted approximately \$4 million had been invested in sporting infrastructure upgrades on the island since 2018, and “council continues to advocate to state and federal governments for funding to deliver new sporting infrastructure across the shire”.

Joe Waralow asked for the progress on a turning lane into the Hilton Chadwick Reserve.

Council said a new entry and turning lane designs were being finalised and council will then work with Department of Transport and Planning to obtain permits.

All questions and responses are available in the minutes on the council website.

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An artist's impression of the proposed hotel on Warley Avenue, Cowes. The application for the hotel and retail space was refused at the February council meeting, with councillors concerned about a parking waiver and traffic impacts.

Parking issues sink hotel and retail development

COUNCIL

Parking was again in the spotlight, with councillors refusing a permit for a hotel and retail premises in Warley Avenue.

In November last year, plans for a new, \$2.5 million, triple-storey hotel planned for Cowes, alongside a large national retailer on Thompson Avenue, were released.

A planning permit for 13 Warley Avenue and 44-46 and 48 Thompson Avenue covered the development of a residential modular hotel and use of the land for a restricted retail premises, and reduction in car parking.

The hotel on Warley Avenue included 15 suites, prefabricated and modular construction and will be just over 10 metres high, and 576sqm in size.

Although council officers recommended approving the development – including a waiver of six car parking spaces – subject to 37 conditions, Cr Ronnie Bauer moved an alternative motion, refusing the permit.

The motion said the proposal

was inconsistent with provision of parking and impacts of traffic under the Bass Coast Planning Scheme.

Cr Bauer said the application required an additional six car parks “to fulfill its obligations under the planning scheme”, saying the developer had tried to “do this by stealth”.

“I don’t accept this as a suitable compromise,” Cr Bauer said. “It again puts the squeeze on our community for the precious few car spots we have in the Thompson Avenue area.”

Cr Bauer noted even the officer’s report noted “the line ball nature of this waiver”, describing six of the spaces as “mildly non-compliant with the Standard”.

“Even if the waivers are contained on private land, the building of a residential hotel increases the traffic burden in Cowes,” said Cr Bauer.

“For every car waiver, there has to be a positive for the community – be it a monetary offset or some other quid pro quo.

“That is a discussion that has to be had. Otherwise Cowes

simply cannot cope.”

Cr Brett Tessari seconded the alternative motion, while admitting he was normally “pro-development”.

“But it has to be done in the right context and area,” he said.

“I fight to save parking in the main street in Wonthaggi, so it would be hypocritical not to support this. It’s a shire-wide issue and something we need to address.”

Cr Tim O’Brien said the parking waiver issue for the application was an “entirely different proposition” to the RSL planning permit.

“The bottom end of Cowes is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate because of the pressure of cars.

“It’s time to put a stake in the ground in terms of car parking waivers, particularly in that area.

“It’s time this policy was reviewed and we stop these waivers.

“It’s time we have solutions in place, so if developers are not providing car parking on site, they are providing it somewhere.”

Greens join the race for Monash

ELECTION

Hot on the heels of Labor’s candidate announcement last week, local Greens members have pre-selected semi-retired teacher Terence Steele as their candidate for Monash in the upcoming federal election.

The Greens gained a 2.7 per cent swing in Monash at the last election, with Mat Morgan choosing not to re-contest after being elected to Bass Coast Shire Council late last year.

Terence and The Greens are hoping to hold a significant share of the vote again at this election, knowing that Greens’ preference flows could play a significant role on election night.

Terence and his wife Linda have owned a small patch of land in South Gippsland for over 20 years.

“The beautiful region that we call home is under threat from climate inaction by both major parties. I became aware of the devastating effects as an avid gardener and recognised that to affect real change, I needed to get involved.

“In a wealthy country like ours, we should have world-class public health, education, and affordable housing. I joined the Greens movement for a fair-



The Greens have preselected semi-retired teacher Terence Steele from South Gippsland as their candidate for Monash in the upcoming federal election.

er future so my children and grandchildren can live in a better world,” Steele said.

“The Greens are also the only party fighting to save our farms from fracking.

“We are facing the very real threat of a Dutton government bringing nuclear to Gippsland.

“I was present at the first ever anti-nuclear demonstration in Australia and The Greens will be doing everything we can to keep Dutton and his dangerous agenda out of government.”

A spokesperson from the Bass Coast Greens has acknowl-

edged the extensive field campaign being run by independent Deb Leonard has resulted in some regular Greens volunteers moving over to her campaign.

“The Greens have demonstrated in parliament that we’re capable of working constructively with the crossbench and ‘teal’ MPs to secure better outcomes for everyday people.

“Here in Monash, we’ll be focusing on keeping Dutton’s Liberal candidate out of office, and are happy to see a strong independent candidate putting up a good fight.”



Former Bass Coast Shire Council Mayor Neville Goodwin OAM is being remembered as a community champion, who was dedicated to serving the people of Bass Coast.

“Community champion”: Former mayor farewell

COUNCIL

Former Bass Coast Shire Council Mayor Neville Goodwin OAM is being remembered as a community champion, who was dedicated to serving the people of Bass Coast.

Neville died at home on February 18, aged 82, surrounded by his family.

His passing was acknowledged at last week’s council meeting, with current Mayor, Cr Rochelle Halstead paying tribute to his contribution to the shire.

“The Bass Coast community has lost a dedicated leader, tireless advocate, and true community champion with the passing of Neville Goodwin OAM,” Cr Halstead said.

“Neville’s legacy is one of unwavering service, generosity, and commitment to the people and places he cared so deeply about.”

“Neville played a pivotal role in shaping the Bass Coast we know today.

“As a Commissioner during the amalgamation of councils and later serving as a Councillor for the Shire of Bass (1992-1994) and the Bass Coast Shire Council (2003-2008), including multiple terms as Mayor, Neville was a passionate advocate for his community. He worked at every level to ensure residents were supported, infrastructure was improved, and the region continued to thrive.”

Cr Halstead said outside of local government, he made a vast contribution to the community.

“He was a driving force behind many important initiatives, serving as a Board Member of Bass Coast Health, a dedicated member of the Rotary Club of Wonthaggi, a leader within the Grantville Hall Committee, and a longstanding Board Member of the National Vietnam Veterans Museum.

“Neville also served as Chair for Ken Smith’s election campaign while Ken was the Member for South Eastern Province.

“Neville had an extraordinary ability to bring people together and make things happen. He was so well respected across all political parties that if there was a need, he could simply pick up the phone, and things would move. That was the power he held through the relationships he built and the respect he earned.

“His ability to connect with

people, advocate for causes, and get things done was simply remarkable.”

Cr Halstead said his absence would leave a significant void.

“It’s hard not to ask the question – who do we call now when we need something done? Neville was truly one of a kind; impressive, hardworking, and deeply committed to his community.

“His success and dedication were also made possible through the incredible support of his wife, Lyn. Together, they were a formidable team. Lyn was often the quiet presence behind the scenes, but her unwavering support played a vital role in everything Neville achieved.

“To Lyn, Rachelle, Wayne, and Daniel, we extend our deepest and most heartfelt condolences during this sad time. Neville’s legacy will live on in the many lives he touched, the projects he championed, and the community he helped build.

“Vale Neville Goodwin OAM – your contributions will never be forgotten.”

Achievements

Neville served as a councillor on the Bass Coast Shire Council for three terms including multiple terms as Mayor.

He was the Chair, Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, and was Local Government Commissioner, in the City of Wyndham, from 1994-1997, following the amalgamation of Victorian councils by the Kennett government.

At community level, other positions held included: Member, Rotary Club of Werribee; President, Loch Football Club; President, Loch Football Club Trustees; President, Bass Valley and Wonthaggi District Football League; President, Rotary Club of Wonthaggi; and committee member, Grantville Market, for approximately more than two decades.

He was named Bass Coast Shire Council’s Citizen of the Year in 2012, and Mayor Emeritus, by the Municipal Association of Victoria.

Neville Goodwin was awarded an OAM in 2016 for his service to local government and the community of Bass Coast.

A memorial service will be held at the Town Hall in Wonthaggi on Wednesday, February 26 at 2pm.

A sea change for Superbike riders

SUPERBIKES

On Wednesday last week, World Superbike and Australian Superbike riders were taken out on a thundercat speedboat tour of Cape Woolamai.

While most of the riders are well acquainted with the island, having raced here several times before, for many it was their first time seeing the island from out on the ocean.

Swiss rider for team Yamaha, Dominique Aegerter, was in awe of the beautiful Cape and bright blue ocean.

"I've come to the island many times, but this is my first time out on a boat. It's beautiful. I live in Switzerland and we don't have any sea, so it's really nice to have a look around here, and beautiful weather," the Swiss rider said.

"It was my first time on a speedboat like this, when you fly a little bit it's quite scary, and when he does the corners quite fast you need to hold on a bit, but it was a lot of fun."

Owner of Ocean Adventures, Brendan Jones, said he thought "it would have been like a teacup ride at the carnival for those riders," but "they all said it was pretty fast, which is a big (thumbs) up coming from them."

Historic victory

Australian Superbike rider Tara Morrison, who on the weekend claimed her first overall podium position in an ASBK round, clearly enjoyed the thrill of flying around the Cape in a boat at high speed.

"It was beautiful," Tara said of the Cape.

"Phillip Island is really cool, not just because of the track but also the scenery and natural environment."

Days after, Tara made history on the Phillip Island track, becoming the first female to win an ASBK Supersport 300 race.

"I'm the only female entered in this round of all classes, but it feels good," Tara said.

"I would like to have a few more of us out here, the more we have the better it is for the sport, but it's good to represent. And I hope I do all the other girls proud."

Tara said Phillip Island was one of her favourite tracks on the circuit, due to its fast and flowing nature.

"I'm a really big fan of fast, flowy tracks. I just like being on the gas, brakes aren't my thing most of the time."



On Wednesday last week, World Superbike and Australian Superbike riders were taken out on a thundercat speedboat tour of Cape Woolamai. Owner of Ocean Adventures, Brendan Jones, said he "thought it would have been like a teacup ride at the carnival for those riders."



Tara Morrison (left) made history on the Phillip Island track, becoming the first female to win an ASBK Supersport 300 race, here with Tayla Relph from the Phillip Island track.



Wayne Gardner and his son Remi, with Kim Storey from Destination Phillip Island. Photo: Nici Cahill, Snapshot Photography.

Tara said she expected more female riders to soon come into the male-dominated sport.

"I've got lots of (female) friends in (motor)sport, and racing is just that next step that they've gotta

make. From riding on the road to riding on the track, and then going to a race meet and racing against the guys.

"It can be a bit daunting, but the sport is slowly moving up."



Locals Mark, Claude and Melony were enjoying the beautiful weather with a couple of cleansing ales.



For more photos, visit pisra.com.au/sport

Bass Coast Mayor, Cr Rochelle Halstead got close to the action in Pit Lane at the WSBK on the weekend. Photo: Nici Cahill, Snapshot Photography.



Rosa Scarlato at Pinos, with Nicolo Bulega and girlfriend Camilla and Serafino Foti, the manager of the Ducati team, with flowers and a magnum of DOC prosecco, personally signed by Nicolo Bulega.

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ity of earning income as well as having the use of the property for personal use at designated times.

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18 KENWYN COURT, COWES
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When land and house size matter, this very large home sits in a quiet court with excellent beach access. The north facing balcony flows to the upstairs second living area and kitchen.
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5 FRANKLYN STREET, RHYLL
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 \$950,000

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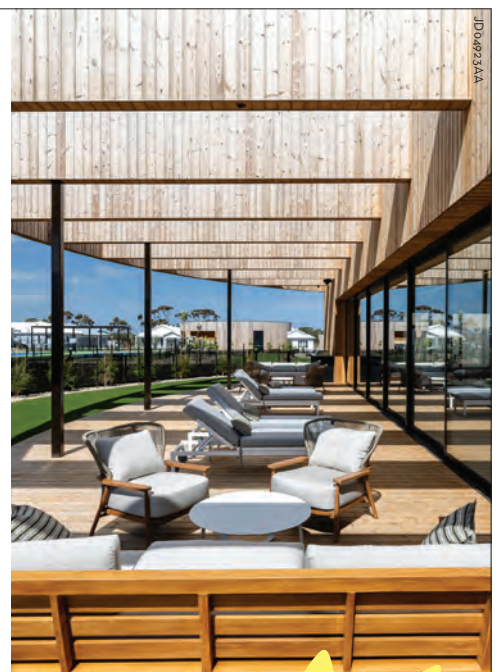
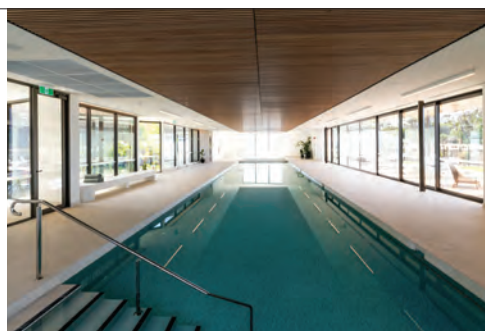


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CHANNEL CHALLENGE

CHANNEL CHALLENGE

Aquathon and huge community day

Aquathon and huge community day

Record Numbers in the 2025 San Remo Channel Challenge

Entries are expected to close early for this weekend's San Remo Channel Challenge, the final event of the Bass Coast Series.

The first two legs of the Bass Coast series have not disappointed, with good weather and large crowds, with local athletes dominating so far.

A record number of participants are expected to compete in the 39th running of the San Remo Channel Challenge. With temperatures predicted in the mid-20s, the series is heating up in what is sure to be a jostle to the finish line.

After taking out the two lead-up events in this exciting series, can local legends Zoe Adams and Justin Tilley make it three

from three?

Scheduled for a 2pm start on the sandy San Remo shore, organisers are confident this race won't disappoint, with a few tweaks that may see race records tumble.

For the first time there will be an Elite Mixed Wave who will hit the water first, with a cap of 750 competitors in the water to ensure water safety is not compromised.

This means that with at least 80 relay teams expected, there will almost certainly be a new record number of around 830 competitors - 750 swimmers and another 80 who only do the run.

As usual, there will be a large number of lifesavers

from the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club (WBSLSC) keeping a watchful eye out on everyone racing to cross the channel before the tide turns.

There is also the prospect that a surge of entries early this week could see a capacity field reached and registrations closed off prior to the end of the week for the first time in the event's history.

The organisers see this as a good problem to have and it will help consolidate the reputation of the Channel Challenge as Victoria's No 1 Aquathon. The high number of entries also mean that the Race Centre at the San Remo Hotel will be open on Friday evening as well as on the Race Day

itself, to keep the congestion down.

Organisers ask that competitors please do not leave it late to come in and collect their gear on Race Day.

Highlights

Other highlights for this year's event include seeing Brian Dallinger attempting to maintain his unbroken record as the only person to complete all 39 versions of the Channel Challenge held between 1986 and 2025.

Brian's intention is to get through this year's event and then complete the 40th version planned for next year, before he retires and hangs up his goggles for good. He will

be joined by his good mate, Ron Nicholson from the WBSLSC, who also aims to hand over the running of the iconic event to the younger generation after next year's race.

The organisers are pleased to have Bobby Bajram, an Australian considered to be one of the world's most extreme athletes with a disability (Multiple Sclerosis) attend the event as the guest starter. Bobby has been training with some of the Woolamai lifesavers on the sand dunes at Cape Woolamai for his quest to climb Mount Everest and plant an Australian and WBSLSC flag on the summit.

The Channel Challenge is all about consistency

and perseverance, and not just to beat the tide. The total prize pool of \$4000 for the Bass Coast Series will be divided amongst the top point scorers over the three races across 20 different categories, and the scores are super tight.

Scoreboard

There's only two points separating the Open Senior Male category with local athlete Bailey Sutherland leading Andre Hetebrug after finishing less than a minute ahead of him in the recent Cowes Classic.

In the Open Senior Female category, local athlete and legend Zoe Adams is four points ahead of Stella Crawford-Rustin,

with locals Bethany Barrett and Tiarne Ellingworth tussling for third.

The junior categories see three local boys Finlay Cameron, River Henderson and Archer Cameron fighting for the points in both the Open Junior Male and Local Junior Male sections, whilst Coral Kratzmann is likely to take out the Open Junior Female award with Abbey Clarke and Zoe Scott fighting out the Local Junior Female category.

In the master's competition local Sarah Smith is leading the Open Female Master category by four points ahead of Lara Cann. This will be a tight race, with Lara's impressive improvement closing

the gap between the two when they recently raced in Cowes.

In the Open Male Masters category, for competitors 40-49 years of age, Justin Tilley is ahead on points and looks to be in good form (taking out the overall win at Cowes and Cape Paterson), but that won't stop his closest rival, Mark Rowe, putting in his all as he battles to cross the line in front.

The Open and Local Female Veterans contests both see some new blood in the age group this year, with Jo-anne Elvish and Lauren Pett leading the Open Female Veterans and local athlete Suzie Herrington narrowly ahead of Rebeka Fincher and Emma Moore. With 47 seconds separating all three of them in Cowes it's sure to come down to the line on Saturday.

In the Open Male Veterans category (50 - 59) we have Paul Taylor ahead of our regular visitor from Melbourne, Aurel Wachter, by four points having crossed the line in front in both earlier events. They are just ahead of three local competitors - Marcus Bond, Andy Chisholm and Scott Aitken - and Paul is the favourite to take home the title while Marcus looks comfortably in front to take out the Local Male Veterans contest.

Last year saw the introduction of the 'Super Veterans', or O/60 category, and it's fair to say it was very popular. In the Open Super Veterans categories both male and female categories have clear leaders with local identity Rob 'Boots' Fleisner and regular swimming star Janice Stephens having won at both Cape Paterson and Cowes.

Both took out their categories last year and look hard to beat, although local Carolyn Rushford, leading the Local Super Female Veterans is only

eight points behind and Local Super Male Veterans Malcolm Reed and Robert Mathews are also within eight points of 'Boots' - it's sure to be a great race.

Series

The Bass Coast Series has been a very successful and popular feature of the summer events and is completely sponsored and funded by the Bass Coast Shire Council who should be congratulated on this innovative creation, organisers said.

The prizes for the Bass Coast Series will be handed out during the Presentations for the Channel Challenge event at 4pm on the main stage, to the Western side of the San Remo Hotel.

At the end of this event, the hard-working team from the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club can pack up after a very successful Bass Coast Series which has seen record participation numbers and great racing in all events.

The Woolamai Beach and Cape Paterson SLSC's, along with the Phillip Island Netball Football Club, wish to thank their hardworking volunteers who have helped put these events together and ensured that they are conducted safely.

They also thank all those sponsors, supporters and participants who contribute to the ongoing success of the Bass Coast Aquathon events now entrenched on the summer calendar.

Race Centre:
San Remo Hotel - Opening Times (Remember to bring your runners in)
Friday February 28:
5.30pm - 8pm
Saturday March 1:
9am - 1.30pm
Race starts: 2pm



Competitors take to the water in the 38th Channel Challenge in 2024. This year a record number of competitors are expected to register for the event. Photo: Nici Cahill, Snapshot Photography.



2025 CHANNEL CHALLENGE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 28TH:

5.30pm - 8.00pm: Race Centre Open - San Remo Hotel.
Collection of Race Packs.

SATURDAY MARCH 1ST:

8.00am: PISR Rotary Market opens: Arts, Crafts and General Stalls

9.00am: Race Centre Opens - San Remo Hotel.
Race Packs - Online Registrations only.

12.00noon: Heats - Men's & Women's Tug-Of-War, Foreshore

1.30pm: Race Centre closes

1.45pm: Competitors Race Briefing at Start

2.00PM: 39TH CHANNEL CHALLENGE STARTS

3.00pm: Music at San Remo Hotel - the Laing Brothers.

3.15pm: Finals - Tug-Of-War - Men and Women, Foreshore

4.00pm: Presentations on Stage - San Remo Hotel



This year, Brian Dallinger is attempting to be the first person to complete all 39 Channel Challenges. Here at the 2024 event, Brian (second from right) with Chris Dallinger, Brian Tancheff, Archie, and Lachie Dallinger.



Once again, local competitors are expected to feature strongly across all age categories. At the 2024 event (from left) Billy Yusko, Rob Fleisner, Justin Tilley and Finlay Cameron. Rob, Justin and Finlay are all in the running to win their respective categories, with Justin hoping to make it three from three, after winning at Cowes and Cape Paterson.



Volunteers from WBSLSC again will be out on the water making sure all the competitors made it safely across to the other side. Photo: Nici Cahill, Snapshot Photography.

Best of luck to all Channel Challenge participants!

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Changed traffic conditions, San Remo Channel Challenge

Traffic conditions will be changed as part of traffic management and safety precautions for this event. On Saturday, 1 March:

- Marine Parade will be closed between Bergin Grove and Woolamai Grove from 9.30am until 4.00pm
- Bergin Grove will be closed between Mary Grove and Marine Parade from 1.30pm until 2.30pm
- Parking restrictions will apply in Bergin Grove
- One way traffic on the San Remo Bridge will be in place between 1.50pm and 2.40pm.

Race starts at 2.00pm

For any enquires please contact our Senior Visitor Economy and Events Officer, Janine Temme on the 1300 BCOAST (226 278) or (03) 5671 2211.

BASS COAST

CHANNEL CHALLENGE

Aquathon and huge community day



Bobby Bajram (third from right) with some Woolamai Beach surf lifesavers. Bobby has been training with the club as part of his preparation to climb Mt Everest in May and will be the guest starter at this year's Channel Challenge.

Bobby on the starter's gun

The honorary race starter for this year's San Remo Channel Challenge is Bobby Bajram.

Bobby was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis at the age of 13. Since then, he has experienced periods of blindness and impaired mobility.

He's also become a passionate advocate for disability, proving that determination and support can help overcome extraordinary barriers.

Now the 51-year-old, who is legally blind, is training to climb Mount Everest.

He said he set himself the challenge, to show that MS doesn't rule his life, to raise disability awareness and to encourage those with disabilities to take action to improve their lives.

As part of his training for the incredible climb, Bobby has been training with surf lifesavers at Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club (WBSLSC).

His regime includes walking on sand (to build up leg muscles), resistance training in the water, and paddling a board to increase upper body strength.

He also trains at a gym in a climate-controlled room to mimic the Everest

atmosphere.

WBSLSC President Jason Close said the club was thrilled to have Bobby Bajram as a Club Ambassador and the honorary race starter at this year's Channel Challenge.

"Bobby is an inspirational figure who has overcome so many challenges in life to achieve feats many would never believe possible," Jason said.

"Bobby began his journey with our club more than six years ago. This season he has trained with us on several occasions showing an incredible level of determination, doing work in the water, on boards and on the beach.

"At our annual Blue Zinc Patrol Dinner, Bobby gave an inspiring presentation to about 50 of our members and shared many personal stories of how his disability has shaped his life, his ups and downs and how he has motivated himself and achieved so much.

"Bobby is an incredible ambassador for people with disabilities and his efforts to raise money for disability causes, advocate for technological advancements to assist and empower people with disabilities is truly admirable,"

Jason continued.

"Bobby delivers a simple message to all he meets. Despite the odds, he just has a crack at everything, never gives up and shows people that anything is possible.

"It is a really powerful message, not just to those with disabilities, but to all people."

Jason said he had full faith in Bobby's ability to achieve his goals.

"We are looking forward to seeing Bobby achieve many more feats such as climbing Mount Everest in 2026 and then attempting to qualify as a swimmer in the 2028 Paralympics.

"After spending a bit of time with Bobby, if he says he is going to do it, then he will do it."

Earlier this year, Bobby told ABC Gippsland that "everyone has their own Everest".

"Whether it's getting a job, or running a marathon or losing weight or building a car - whatever it is, just give it a go. You're a winner if you just give it a go."

You can follow Bobby's Everest journey on Facebook: www.facebook.com/BobbyBajramMountEverest2013

Bass Coast Series placings

The winners of the 2025 Bass Coast Series will be decided at the San Remo Channel Challenge. Here's the leader board as it stands, going into Saturday's race.

JUNIOR FEMALE - ALL	HETEBRUEG Andre 48	VETERAN MALE - ALL	TAYLOR Paul 56
KRATZMANN Coral 48	RUSHFORD Henry 25	WACHTER Aurel 52	BIBBY Anthony 48
JUNIOR FEMALE - LOCAL	MASTERS FEMALE - ALL	BOND Marcus 37	MALONEY Brett 37
CLARKE Abbey 28	SMITH Sarah 54	VETERAN MALE - LOCAL	BOND Marcus 52
SCOTT Zoe 26	CANN Lara 50	CHISHOLM Andy 46	AITKEN Scott 42
JUNIOR MALE - ALL/ JUNIOR MALE - LOCAL	MALONEY Lorna 38	HEXT Chris 35	GOW Stephen 34
CAMERON Finlay 54 / 54	MASTERS FEMALE - LOCAL	SUPER VETERAN FEMALE - ALL	STEPHENS Janice 56
HENDERSON River 46 / 58	SMITH Sarah 56	RUSHFORD Carolyn 48	SUPER VETERAN FEMALE - LOCAL
CAMERON Archer 36 / 38	MASTERS MALE - ALL	RUSHFORD Carolyn 54	SUPER VETERAN MALE - ALL
BROUWERS Jaxon 34 / 37	TILLEY Justin 56	FLEISNER Rob 56	TENNANT Ross 50
TRAPPETT Parker 25 / 31	ROWE Mark 52	REED Malcolm 44	MATTHEWS Robert 42
SENIOR FEMALE - ALL	BARRY Bill 48	YUSKO Bill 34	SUPER VETERAN MALE - LOCAL
ADAMS Zoe 54	HART Jozz 37	SUPER VETERAN MALE - ALL	FLEISNER Rob 56
CRAWFORD-RUST Stella 50	MASTERS MALE - LOCAL	TENNANT Ross 50	REED Malcolm 44
BARRETT Bethany 44	TILLEY Justin 56	MATTHEWS Robert 42	YUSKO Bill 34
ELLINGWORTH Tiarnie 41	ROWE Mark 52	SUPER VETERAN MALE - LOCAL	FLEISNER Rob 56
MALONEY Erin 41	HART Jozz 37	REED Malcolm 50	MATTHEWS Robert 48
SENIOR FEMALE - LOCAL	EDWARDS Jordan 34	MATTHEWS Robert 48	YUSKO Bill 39
ADAMS Zoe 54	FISHER Daniel 33	SUPER VETERAN MALE - LOCAL	FLEISNER Rob 56
BARRETT Bethany 44	VETERAN FEMALE - ALL	REED Malcolm 50	MATTHEWS Robert 48
ELLINGWORTH Tiarnie 41	ELVISH Jo-anne 54	MATTHEWS Robert 48	YUSKO Bill 39
WAIN Mackenzie 42	PETT Lauren 50	SUPER VETERAN MALE - LOCAL	FLEISNER Rob 56
BOLDING Sophie 37	HERRINGTON Suzie 42	REED Malcolm 50	MATTHEWS Robert 48
SENIOR MALE - ALL	HEISLERS Jeny 42	MATTHEWS Robert 48	YUSKO Bill 39
SUTHERLAND Bailey 42	VETERAN FEMALE - LOCAL	YUSKO Bill 39	
HETEBRUEG Andre 40	HERRINGTON Suzie 56		
DISTON Mitchell 37	FINCHER Rebeka 52		
SENIOR MALE - LOCAL	MOORE Emma 48		
SUTHERLAND Bailey 48	BURNS Kellie 44		

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Friends of the Koalas (FOK) are holding their annual Clean Up Day event on Sunday March 2, meeting at Harbison Road at 10am. The group regularly cleans up the area and say it picks up "a surprising amount of rubbish each time".

Friends of Koalas clean up

COMMUNITY

Friends of the Koalas (FOK) are holding their annual Clean Up Day event on Sunday March 2.

The group will meet for its regular rubbish collection on Harbison Road, part of Coghlan Road, and the pathway outside the Koala Conservation Reserve, from 10am to 12 noon.

To lend a hand, please meet at the corner of Harbison Road and Coghlan Road at 10am to register. Wear sunscreen, hat and sensible shoes. Gloves will be provided.

"FOK has been cleaning up this area for over 25 years and still picks up a surprising amount of rubbish each time," a group spokesperson said.

"All welcome to join us.

For more information contact FOK on 0419 552 385.

Garlic festival moves to new home

EVENT

The South Gippsland Garlic Festival (formerly the Meeniyan Garlic Festival) – Victoria's biggest celebration of Australian garlic – will be held at its new home in the vibrant South Gippsland town of Korumburra during the Labour Day long weekend of Saturday March 8.

The festival, which began in 2017 in Meeniyan will celebrate its fifth year in a new location (after a two year hiatus during the pandemic, and a year off in 2024), but with the same intention – to showcase and educate visitors about the huge array of garlic varieties grown in Australia, how to cultivate it at home, and how to use it in the kitchen.

Victoria is the perfect location for the event, as the state takes the lead in terms of production volume*, with 32 per cent of Australia's total fresh garlic (874 tonnes, \$6.8m value) grown here. Gippsland is also a hot spot for garlic growing, with the number of growers increasing year on year.

This year's Festival will host 80 stallholders, including a dedicated Garlic Street, featuring Aussie growers like Garlic Kingdom and Pure Garlic, who will be selling fresh and preserved garlic products. There will be food vendors cooking up garlic dishes, plus local chef demonstrations, and an educational hub headed up by the Australian Garlic Industry Association – the Garlic University – which includes a presentation by industry authority Penny Woodward, and a series of presentations on small farm and commercial growing.

The Garlic Festival Bar will also make a return, where Gippsland winemakers, brewers, and distilleries – including Fleet Wines, Gurneys Cider, Burra Brewing, Mates Gin – will pour perfectly paired beverages for attendees, plus live local entertainment on the Festival Stage, free kids



The South Gippsland Garlic Festival will be held at its new home in Korumburra during the Labour Day long weekend of Saturday March 8.

activities including a visit from Bluey, and more.

Kitchen

This year's Garlic Festival Kitchen, hosted by former Masterchef contestant and self-confessed garlic lover Simon Toohey, will welcome for the first time co-head chefs Jodie Odrowaz and Michael Clark from Messmates Dining in Warragul (recently awarded The Age Good Food Guide Regional Restaurant of the Year 2024), and Atsu Tanaka from local Korumburra Japanese cafe Tsuko (at The Coterie).

Alejandro Saravia, Gippsland Food and Beverage Ambassador, and chef/owner of Farmers Daughters and Morena restaurants will also return to the kitchen. During live demonstrations, the chefs

will cook up their favourite allium-based dishes, showcasing a variety of Aussie garlic, with recipes garlic lovers can then recreate at home.

And it doesn't stop at the Festival grounds. The entire town of Korumburra will join the celebrations, with pubs, cafes, breweries, bakeries, and small goods suppliers showcasing their own unique Aussie garlic creations and products on the day.

John Olliff, Chair of the Australian Garlic Industry Association, and long-time garlic producer at Freshwater Creek Garlic, says the festival will be an educational hub, with presentations around growing, curing and storing garlic, plus a chance for punters to buy some of Australia's best garlic straight from the source.

"This is such an exciting event for the Garlic Industry Association of Australia.

"It presents an opportunity to provide information to all levels of garlic growers, or simply garlic lovers, and will showcase the varieties and characteristics of our exceptional Australian grown garlic.

"Rarely do so many growers come together to showcase such a rich array of garlic cultivars, with so many different flavours and uses.

"The 2025 festival is shaping up to be the best yet!" said Olliff.

The South Gippsland Garlic Festival, Saturday March 8 (Labour Day long weekend), at Korumburra Showgrounds, Sanders Street, from 9am – 6pm.

Tickets: Adults \$15, children \$5, family (2 adults 2 kids) \$35, concession \$10, children under three free.

Parking is available in surrounding streets, and this is a dog friendly event.

Tickets available now via southgippslandgarlicfestival.au

Instagram: [@southgippslandgarlicfest](https://www.instagram.com/southgippslandgarlicfest)

*According to the Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook 2022/2023

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09/03 THE LAING BROTHERS 4 -7PM

09/03 JACK BOTTS - 8PM \$45+BF

16/03 ANNA SCIONTI - 5PM

23/03 HEY GRINGO - 5PM

28/03 MAJALEN - 8PM \$20+BF

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Korumburra Showgrounds

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Concession - \$10, Family* - \$35

Family: 2 adults, 2 children (3-16)

www.southgippslandgarlicfestival.au





For more photos, visit pisra.com.au/education

Uncle Steve Ulula Parker performs a smoking ceremony for Newhaven College Year 9 students, marking the commencement of their learnings about Indigenous culture and environmental sustainability.

News from Newhaven

EDUCATION

Newhaven College has launched a new subject at the Year 9 Environmental Centre, which they described as a “significant step in enhancing students’ understanding of the natural world and Indigenous culture”.

The new subject, integrated into the Year 9 curriculum, is designed to provide hands-on learning about environmental sustainability, conservation and cultural heritage.

As part of the launch, students were welcomed to Country by Boonwurrung Elder, Uncle Steve Ulula Parker, including a traditional Smoking Ceremony.

This was followed by a session introducing students to traditional language and knowledge.

Welcome

The College hosted its annual Parents Welcome Drinks on the first Friday of term. Around 120 guests were entertained by Middle School teacher Aaron Chaston on guitar, as they enjoyed canapes and drinks, served by staff and volunteers



Parents Jessica and Brad Janson enjoyed reconnecting with Rachael and Allan Cameron over a drink and canape at the annual Welcome Drinks. Each couple has three students attending the College.

from the Parents and Friends Association.

Principal Tony Corr welcomed everyone to the new year at Newhaven College.

“I would like to thank all parents and caregivers for their attendance. We know the key to success in a child’s education is the partnership of school and home and these events help build that connection,” he said.



FOSER held its first working bee of the year last month, targeting thistle and stinkwort at Scenic Estate. The next working bee is on March 2.

Friends tackle weeds at Scenic Estate

ENVIRONMENT

The first gathering of Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve (FOSER) for 2025 last month was a success, despite hot weather. Eight dedicated volunteers braved the conditions to join leaders John Eddy and Meg Anderson for the working bee.

“Many thanks as always to John Eddy for his thorough planning and organisation – site visits, weed maps, tools and more,” said Meg.

“We dead-headed then dug out many medium to large thistles from a persistent patch just north of the wetland, in the southwest corner grassland and along the boardwalk.

“We also pulled out loads of small stinkwort plants from a persistent patch under the power line that John calls ‘Stinkwort Flats’. It was great to remove these before they flower and release seed.”

The group finished up with a catch up and morning tea at the picnic area.

The next working bee is on Sunday March 2 for FOSE’s Clean Up Australia Day effort at the reserve.

Garage Sale

Sunday, 9 March, 2025
9.00am to 2.00pm
31 Jansson Road, Rhyll

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- Fashions on the Fields • Children’s activities • Face painting

With thanks to the Phillip Island & San Remo Advertiser for their continued support

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DEATHS



DUGGAN, Robert:



22.10.1948 - 21.02.2025

The most supportive, loving and caring husband, Dad & Grandad with a heart of pure gold.

Adored by all that knew you and admired for your beautiful way, resilience and determination.

Family was always first, you were our biggest supporter and we were all so lucky to have you in our lives.

We love you, cherished in our hearts forever.

Your Barbara

Steven, Rachel, Ella, Oliver.

Trish, Michael, Georgie, Olive, Emily.

Josie, Josh, Isabelle and Patrick.

Thank you to all the wonderful staff at Melaleuca Lodge who looked after him as if he was their own x

Privately cremated.

DUGGAN, Rob:

The best brother-in-law and uncle anyone could ask for.

Every milestone, birthday, family holiday memories you were part of.

Our girls adored you and you will be forever in our hearts.

Rod, Kathy, Bec, Al, Jess, Alex, Sophie and Reeve.

Go Blues!!

DUGGAN, Rob:

Maaate

so many wonderful memories over so many years.

Despite the fight and adversities we never heard you complain. Thanks for being such a great mate.

Our love and condolences to Barb, Steve, Trish, Josie and their families.

John, Barb and Kaye

BONNICI, Emmanuel (Manny):

passed away suddenly on the 15th of February 2025 aged 65.

Dear friend of Jane.

Loved father of Ashley and Dallas, Caitlyn and James. Grandfather to Ariah, Finley, Evelyn and Grayson. Much loved brother to all of his brothers and sisters and their families. Rest in peace.

ECUYER, Rod: "The Chop."

Butcher and Friend for More than 30 years. With sadness The Marks family

DEATHS

NEALE, Maureen Rosina:

Passed away peacefully on Feb. 22, 2025 surrounded by her loving family. Loved wife of Ron (dec.). Loving Mum to Cheryl, Steph and Leanne. Adored Nanna and Great Nanna to all her grandchildren. Forever in our Hearts.

THOMPSON, Wayne:

17.5.53 - 20.2.2025 Beloved Husband to Helen, adored father of Kellie and Jaclyn. Much loved and respected Father In Law of Chris Logie and Chris Vagai Cherished Cuppie and Pa of Wayne (jnr), Alex and Helen (jnr) Rest in peace my love, until we meet again Please go to www.handleyardandersonfunerals.com.au

WINNETT, Janet Peggy:

25/07/1946 - 20/02/2025 Passed away peacefully on 20 February 2025 Beloved wife of Cliff and Loving Mother of Jamie and Taryn and Nana to Edie, Arlo and Banjo A wonderful life of sharing and giving Forever in our hearts

FUNERALS

BONNICI:

The funeral service for Emmanuel (Manny) Bonnici will be held at the Rose Chapel, Gippsland Memorial Park Crematorium, Cemetery Rd Traralgon, on Wednesday 26th February 2025, commencing at 11am. This service will also be livestreamed, please go to John Galbraith Funerals Facebook page or Gippsland Memorial Park Website and click on link provided.



NEALE:

The Funeral Service for Mrs. Maureen Rosina Neale will be held at St. John's Uniting Church, Chapel Street, Cowes on FRIDAY (Feb. 28, 2025) commencing at 11:00am. A Private Cremation will follow.

For livestreaming link to go www.handleyardandersonfunerals.com.au



WINNETT:

The Funeral Service for Mrs. Janet Peggy Winnett will be held at Handley & Anderson Chapel, 3085 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Wonthaggi on MONDAY (March 3, 2025) commencing at 11:00am.

A Private Cremation will follow.

Please wear something colourful.



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GLaWAC considers that being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage is a genuine occupational requirement for this position

We are looking for three passionate community members to join the Supporting Healing for Families (SHFF) Initiative, a program that amplifies community voices in the journey of individual and collective healing.

These roles are auspiced by GLaWAC, meaning GLaWAC will provide salary and IT support, but your day-to-day work will be directed by the Inner Gippsland Healing Model (IGHM) team.

As a Community Engagement Worker, you will design, deliver, and evaluate community engagement training and healing activities as outlined by IGHM. Your focus will be on strengthening connections to culture, supporting community resilience, and promoting healing through education and awareness.

Your role will involve strong community engagement and relationship-building within three Local Government Areas —Latrobe Valley, West Gippsland (Baw Baw), and South Gippsland/Bass Coast – and you will ensure mob-based best practice principles and integrity are upheld while working within locally developed cultural protocols.

You will have:

- A strong understanding of the Healing Model.
- Deep respect for confidentiality, integrity, and cultural safety.
- Experience working both independently and as part of a team.
- Strong interpersonal, written, and verbal communication skills.
- Good time management, organisational, and administrative skills.
- Experience working with community-based committees and stakeholders.

Applications close: Sunday 9th March

To apply, send a resume and cover letter to [Mardi Edwards at jobs@glawac.com.au](mailto:Mardi.Edwards@glawac.com.au)

JD0511AA

GARAGE SALES



Phillip Island Group Fundraiser

Garage Sale

Sunday, 9 March, 2025
9.00am to 2.00pm
31 Jansson Road, Rhyll

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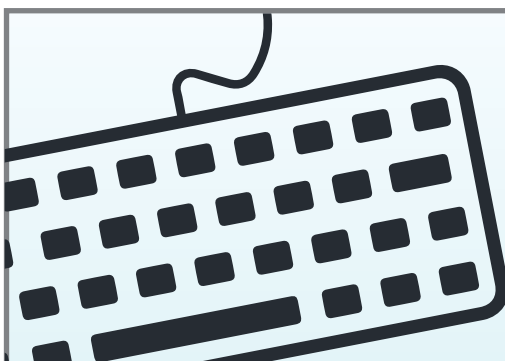
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PUBLIC NOTICES

FRIENDS OF THE THOMPSON AVENUE GOLDEN CYPRESS AGM

Wednesday 26th February, 1pm,
22 Morgan Street, Cowes.
New members welcome, if interested, please message 0419 469 236.
Thank you, Marnie.

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Phillip Island Classic once again an international event

MOTORSPORT

With entries from every state in Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the USA, the Phillip Island Classic once again takes its place in the world of historic racing.

This outstanding event, running over three days from March 7 to 9, attracts crowds of almost 30,000.

A big crowd attraction at this family friendly event will be some cars not previously seen in Australia, and they will certainly not disappoint the expected bumper crowd.

The recently arrived spectacular 917-30 Porsche, one of the fastest cars of the 1970's, will compete over the weekend in March. The Porsche 917 cars dominated the Can-Am series in 1973 and this 5374cc flat 12-cylinder, air cooled turbo-charged 917-30 Chassis 005 will be one to watch.

Also racing will be the 1958 Mk1 Prototype Lola which raced at Goodwood in the TT, taking pole position in 1958. The wonderfully styled and nimble Lola owned by Mrs Susan Ahlers since 2013, is presented in its original polished aluminium body that has never been painted. This first ever Mk1 Lola was built by the famous British entrepreneur, engineer, founder and chief engineer of Lola cars, Eric Broadley. Eric is regarded as arguably the most influential automotive designer of the post-war period.

The Lola will be driven at Phillip Island by Billy Bellinger, founder of UK based JB Sports Engineering, a driver of many years' experience working on Morgans and historic sports and racing cars. A production Lola Mk1 was raced by Sam Dymond, Penrite at the 2024 Phillip Island Classic

Probably the most famous Morgan in the world, the 1962 Morgan Plus 4 - TOK 258 of Keith Ahlers, powered with a 2 litre Triumph TR4 engine, raced and won its category in the 1962 Le Mans 24 hour race. It was the only Morgan entered in a field of 55 cars of which only 18 finished.

This world famous Le Mans car will be driven for the first time at Phillip Island by Keith Ahlers, owner and widely experienced British race car driver who has also won the FIA Historic Sports Car



With entries from every state in Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the USA, the Phillip Island Classic is running over three days from March 7 to 9.

Championship in 2016, 2017 and 2018 driving a Cooper Monaco King Cobra.

Keith owns and races a number of prestige historic race cars and believes in racing them and presenting them widely to the public wherever possible.

Engineer Billy Bellinger looks after, prepares and often races various classics including Keith Ahlers' Cooper King Cobra, Morgan Plus 4 TOK 258, Morgan SLR and Moss Box Plus 8.

From the USA, the Phillip Island Classic Festival of Motorsport will feature the #00 Corvette Special AKA Old Yella V Sports and the 1971 Datsun 510 of Ernie and Elaine Nagamatsu.

The Datsun 510 revolutionised sedan racing in America in the early 1970s and the #00 Corvette was been produced as a tribute to the original 00 Corvette raced by legendary Dave MacDonald. Both will race at Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit for the first time in Australia.

The event will also feature some of the finest five litre super cars with the likelihood of one the strongest fields in this category ever seen at Phillip Island in highly competitive racing.

Tickets for this major event will be available at the gate over the weekend and also online via the VHRR website: www.vhrr.com.au/phillip-island/classic

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A perfect day at Corinella

BOWLS

Following last week's cancellation due to the weather, it was great to see 43 of our players turning up at Corinella.

The weather was perfect rising to a mild 21 or 22 for the day. Chris prepared the green, before as well as after the game.

He also selflessly looked after all our thirsty bowlers over the day.

The bowlers were welcomed by Pauline and John as Peter and David prepared the teams. They are so appreciated for all the hard work they put in week after week.

On the green there was lots of laughter and banter across all the rinks.

Some excellent bowling could be seen almost everywhere. A couple of wrong bias bowls for the day, but these are always welcome as they assist the RCH each year.

Winners on a wonderful score of 36 were: Rob Paganoni (S), Frank d'Unienville (2), Gillian Harper (3) and



Winners of midweek bowls played at Corinella were Rob Paganoni (S), Frank d'Unienville (2), Gillian Harper (3) and Elaine Williams (L).

Elaine Williams (L).

Runners up on a score of 32 were: Peter Thorley (L), Michael Dady (S), Raff Meranti (3) and Bill Williams (2).

Best One Game for the day on a score of 19 were: Frank Grant (L), Brenda Moloney (3) and Magri (S).

Thanks also goes to Margaret for all her efforts in the kitchen; it is lovely to have so many volunteers each and every week.

Before we go, we all look

forward to seeing many of our members win pennant finals, so for the next three weeks or so we will just say "Good Luck" to all our players. And to all those who don't quite make it in the finals, what a great year it was for you all.

Next week we will be meeting once again at San Remo. Please be on site by 10am to allow our organisers time to arrange the teams. Until then, good luck and stay safe.

Second Deb Rielly Run for the Kids: another great family day

RUNNING

The Deb Rielly Run for the Kids at Kilcunda on February 23 was a great community day with seasoned competitive runners mixing freely with casual runners, walkers and kids of all ages.

The introduction this year of official timing and a half marathon was really well received and saw this year's field of participants reach 230, an increase of 25 per cent. The age of participants ranged from 82 to babies in pushers.

With the weather forecast predicting high temperatures for the morning of the event, the half marathon competitors took off an hour earlier than scheduled.

This saw most of them cross the finish line around 10am and before temperatures began to climb. The half marathon which took in part of the George Bass Walk and Kilcunda Rail Trail was a hit with those who took part and helped showcase some amazing Bass Coast scenery.

This year's event saw significant interest from team entries, and it was great to see the different groups urging each other on.

Organisers said the whole day had a very relaxed casual atmosphere



Jen Pomphrey and Sophie Bolding cross the Kilcunda Trestle bridge as part of the Deb Rielly Run for the Kids event on February 23.

and with the Bass Strait backdrop and the Kilcunda Trestle Bridge was in a fantastic setting.

Organised by the Dalyston Football Netball Club (DFNC) and other community volunteer groups, the day perpetuated the memory of Deb Rielly and her amazing contribution to the community.

DFNC is extremely grateful to Bass Coast Shire Council, SJD Homes, Alex Scott and Staff, Voyage Fitness and the Kilcunda General Store for their fantastic support.

Winners

Half Marathon: Male: Bill Barry. Female: Anna Cardillo.

10km run: Open Male: Matt Walkerden. Open Female: Michelle Harris. Youngest competitor 14 year old Eamon O'Keefe.

5km run: Open Male: Jessie Lumby. Open Female: Claire Hunt. Senior Male: Matt Brosnan. Senior Female: Faye Zappa. Junior Boy: Jack Calafiore. Junior Female: Skylah Taylor.

2km run: Junior boy: Oliver Beckett (9 years). Junior Girl: Hazel Sharp Family Award: Cuman Family.

More photos, plus results for Cricket, Darts, Euchre, Golf and Tenpin at pisra.com.au/sport

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Local surfers success at the Longboard Titles (from left): Ben Gerard Taylor, Sian Adnam, Jacquie Chambers, Graeme Burgan and Natalie Van Der Heyden. Photo: Andrew Lidsey (@bunpix).



Ebony Maier and Natalie Van Der Heyden finished second and third in the Open Women's category. Photo: Andrew Lidsey (@bunpix).



Abbey Mueller and Georgie Clough patiently marshalled.

Islanders excel in longboard comp

SURFING

Ben Considine and Bea Conroy have claimed the opening round of the Victorian Longboard Titles on Phillip Island.

Local surfers dominated the event, securing podium spots in six categories.

This included wins by Jacquie Chambers (O/50 Women),

Sian Adnam (O/60 Women) and Graeme Burgan (O/70 Open)

In the Open Women's, Bea Conroy finished in first spot, ahead of Phillip Island's Ebony Maier, with another local Natalie Van Der Heyden in third place.

In the O/40s Men, Ben Gerard Taylor took out third spot, with Natalie Van Der Heyden doing the

same in the O/40 Women's event.

In the O/70s Men, as well as Graeme Burgan scoring top spot, Bob Hoskings came third.

The final round will be held at Point Impossible on the Surf Coast on May 17 and 18. Entries are open now via surfingvic.com/events.

Full results can be found at www.surfingvic.com/live

Phillip Island club carnival

SWIMMING

On Sunday February 16, Phillip Island Swimming Club hosted the third SGSA carnival of the 2024/25 season.

Swimmers faced a chilly start to the morning where extra towels and warm clothes were needed. Swimming at our home carnival is always a great introduction into the carnival season for our new junior swimmers and we had many take advantage of the opportunity.

It was great to see some new families around the club and all were eager to help out wherever they could.

By the time the raffle and \$100 lucky number were drawn the sun was shining and the sausages generously donated again by San Remo Butchers were going down a treat with everyone.

Overall, the club had a successful day in and out of the pool with helpers and swimmers giving it their all.

The PISC committee would like to thank all of the local businesses for their amazing donations for the day.

Surf Beach Swim School, G'Day Tiger, Phillip Island Ten Pin Bowling, Clip n Climb, The San Remo Hotel, San Remo Fisherman's Co Op, Wildlife Cruises, Priceline Pharmacy, Island Surfboards, Silverwater Winery, Is-



Laila Hadrian showing off her win.

land Surf Shack, Flowers of Phillip Island, Phillip Island Swim School, Island Equipment Hire, Isola Di Capri, Purple Hen Winery and The Wooli Tavern.

Also again thank you again for your continued support San Remo Butchers, Phillip Island Bakery and Blue Gum for supplying sausages, bread and gas for our BBQ.

Last but not least thank you to all of our family volunteers who help set up, pack up, time keep and are just happy to help out doing anything and cheering on the kids.

The club is filled with such great support, so thank you everyone.



Year 12 students Andrew Nowell, Joey Thompson, Edward Kratz, Jack Middleton, Gabriel di Falco, Archie Robson from McHaffie House had fun by dressing for the occasion. More photos at pisra.com.au/sport

Newhaven College starts the year with a splash

SWIMMING

Newhaven College held its first House event of the year, with the Years 7-12 swimming carnival, held at the Korumburra Outdoor Pool. Students Archie Smyth, Isabella Lynch, Billy Fisher and Maximillian Brocklesby broke

school records, making it one of the most successful swimming events ever.

There were smaller House competitions held at the indoor pool in Wonthaggi, with junior school students competing in separate events for Years 5 and 6, and Years 2 to 4.

Students from Year 10 assisted the younger swimmers, "enriching the experience for all with positivity and enthusiasm", a College spokesperson said.

"These fun events will contribute to the important House tally, further motivating students to be involved."



Year 12 Clarke got into the spirit of the day without much serious swimming going on in their races.

QS 3000 event next month

SURFING

After 12 months of competition at over a dozen events, the race to the 2025 World Surf League (WSL) Challenger Series (CS) for competitors in Asia Pacific will culminate at the all-new Phillip Island Pro Qualifying Series (QS) 3000 event from March 17 - 22.

The event will be co-sanctioned between the Australia / Oceania and Asia regions.

This means it is set to attract competitors from over 10 countries in the region, all hoping to book a spot on the 2025 Challenger Series, the ultimate battleground for surfers vying to qualify for the elite Championship Tour (CT) in 2026.

"Phillip Island is an incredible area for surfing and has a rich history of hosting competitions right up to the elite level, so it's a great location to decide the regional representatives for the WSL Challenger Series in 2025," said Andrew Stark, WSL APAC President.

"WSL would like to sincerely thank the Victorian Government for their valued support of this event and their commitment to

professional surfing throughout the state of Victoria.

"With the new WSL Phillip Island Pro Qualifying Series and Pro Junior event, Victoria now plays host to 4 WSL events annually, including events on the WSL Longboard Tour, and the Championship Tour with the historic Rip Curl Pro Bells Beach."

The Australia / Oceania region offers Challenger Series spots for seven men and four women, and five men and three women for the Asia region. The Phillip Island Pro will play as one of the most important events of the season for competitors and one of the most exciting for fans.

The event will also launch the 2025 Australia / Oceania Pro Junior Series, with over 100 of the region's best 20-and-under talent expected to compete in the inaugural Phillip Island Pro Junior, which will run within the same window.

There will be local wildcards on offer for the event.

The 2025 Phillip Island Pro QS 3000 will run at Cape Woolamai from March 17 - 22. For more information, please visit WorldSurfLeague.com.



Consistency is key. Nicolò Bulega has set incredible pace for the factory Ducati team as the season gets underway. Photo: Alia Schonberg (@schOny).



Nicolò Bulega deep in conversation with his Ducati team prior to lights out for Race 1 on Saturday afternoon. Photo: Alia Schonberg (@schOny).

Three-for-three: Bulega stuns in WorldSBK Round 1

By Alia Schonberg

MOTORSPORT

Round 1 of the 2025 MOTUL FIM Superbike World Championship made its grand return to the Phillip Island Circuit last week with 49,512 overall attendees flowing through the gates to catch a glimpse of the adrenaline fuelled world class racing.

Kicking off the event and the first round of the season, the final lot of pre-season testing took place over February 17 and 18.

Dominant throughout the WorldSBK categories test sessions, Nicolò Bulega (Aruba.it Racing Ducati) topped all four charts over the two days and completed a total of 107 laps.

The sophomore WorldSBK competitor set consistent pace, showcasing his talents as the only rider to tip into a 1'28 lap time – a prediction of what was to come for the Italian in the days that followed.

Moving further on into the week, Friday kicked off in sunny conditions for the world class free practice sessions.

Bulega hit the tarmac and topped the time sheets throughout all three sessions on his factory Ducati, again consistently clocking into the 1'28s.

Second on the charts for Free Practice 1 and 2, Andrea Iannone (Team Pata Go Eleven) clocked a best time of 1'29.196 during FP2 (and 1'29.289 during FP1).

Alvaro Bautista (Aruba.it Racing Ducati) rounded out the top three in FP1 with 1'29.515, whilst Toprak Razgatlioglu (ROKiT BMW Motor-



Home hero Remy Gardner had a tough time out on the tarmac. The Aussie qualified for Race 1 just inside the top 10 at ninth on the grid. However his commendable efforts came to an early end after suffering a technical issue during the second half of the 20-lapper, resulting in a DNF for the factory Yamaha rider at the end of Lap 12. A similar fate was at hand for Race 2, with Gardner crashing as he headed into Turn 1 on Lap 16 (also ending with a DNF). Photo: Alia Schonberg (@schOny).

rad) slotted into third during FP2 at 1'29.599.

In FP3 Razgatlioglu set the second fastest pace (1'29.106), whilst Bautista was relegated to third (1'29.128).

Home hero, Remy Gardner (GYTR GRT Yamaha) placed 16th at the end of both FP1 and FP2 before pushing up to ninth in FP3 with a best of 1'29.565.

Saturday

As practice wrapped, the upcoming Tissot Superpole took to the forefront

of everyone's minds.

In sweltering Saturday conditions, Bulega's consistent skill and speed prevailed as the factory Ducati rider took out victory, in turn claiming pole position for the afternoon's first main race of the categories season (Race 1).

Alongside the Italian, 2024 World Champion Razgatlioglu and Iannone made up row one of the grid.

At lights out Bulega fended off the rest of the field creating a comfort-



The WorldSBK field heading through Turn 11 during Race 2 on Sunday afternoon. Photo: Alia Schonberg (@schOny).

able four-second gap in the process after taking the holeshot at Turn 1, solidifying his lead for the 20-lap race and setting the pace for his three-for-three that came to fruition in the 24-hours that followed.

Looking down to the remainder of the troop, Razgatlioglu ensued his battle for second against Iannone, Bautista and Scott Redding (MGM BONOVO Racing).

Razgatlioglu held the pace and crossed the finish line with P2 secured, nearly five seconds behind Bulega.

Bautista followed in third with just under three-tenths of a second separating the factory Ducati rider and second placed Razgatlioglu.

Excelling in the independent manufacturers, Danilo Petrucci (Barni Spark Racing) crossed the line in fourth place 1.7 seconds later.

Redding tailed closely behind, rounding out the top five for Race 1.

Gardner qualified for Race 1 just inside the top 10 at ninth on the grid.

However his commendable efforts came to an early end after suffering a technical issue dur-

ing the second half of the 20-lapper, resulting in a DNF for the factory Yamaha rider at the end of Lap 12.

Sunday

Heading into Sunday's Tissot Superpole Race and the day's main event, Race 2, riders were met with a much needed southerly cool change as they took to the grid for their final competitions of the Australian round.

Sunday's Superpole Race was to be a Ducati top three, with pole-sitter, Bulega's victory streak continuing in the 10-lap sprint after a battle for first against Iannone, putting away 12 points on top of his 25 from Race 1.

By the time the chequered flag was waved a nearly three-second gap had emerged between the two Italians, relegating Iannone to second place whilst Petrucci piloted his satellite Ducati to third another two-and-a-half seconds later.

Crossing the line to complete the top five, Redding took out fourth – a strong result as the Brit gets comfortable with his new Ducati machinery and Sam Lowes (ELF Marc VDS Racing)

followed in fifth with just under two-tenths of a second separating the pair.

In the final race for the round, Bulega put away his first hat-trick during the late afternoon's Race 2.

The Italian crushed any competition that might have had their eyes on a race win across the entire weekend.

Crossing the finish line at the Phillip Island Circuit for the final time this season, a 2.6 second gap had emerged between Bulega and his Ducati teammate, Bautista who took out second place.

In third, Iannone piloted his satellite Ducati over the line 1.3 seconds later – also taking out first in the 20-lapper for the independents.

Redding and Petrucci took out fourth and fifth.

Bulega entered Parc Ferme ecstatic at the results, greeting his Ducati team with hugs and smiles.

His stellar performance sets him well and truly in lead of the riders' championship with a rock solid 62 points in the bag – 26 ahead of Bautista and 27 ahead of Iannone who sit one-point apart in second and third.

The Italian taking out three-for-three and topping every respective test and practice time sheet sets the standard beyond high for the rest of the grid as they gear up for Round 2 in Portugal on March 28 – 30.

To see more WorldSBK news and the week's WorldSSP news go to www.worldsbk.com

For the week's Australian Superbike, Australian Supersport and Australian Supersport 300 news go to www.asbk.com.au

TIDE GUIDE

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

WED 26 FEB	THU 27 FEB	FRI 28 FEB	SAT 1 MAR	SUN 2 MAR	MON 3 MAR	TUE 4 MAR
LOW 4:25 am 1.46 m	HIGH 12:22 am 2.51 m	HIGH 1:31 am 2.60 m	HIGH 2:31 am 2.72 m	HIGH 3:23 am 2.82 m	HIGH 4:09 am 2.89 m	HIGH 4:51 am 2.92 m
HIGH 10:25 am 2.29 m	LOW 5:43 am 1.44 m	LOW 7:04 am 1.30 m	LOW 8:12 am 1.08 m	LOW 9:07 am 0.81 m	LOW 9:56 am 0.56 m	LOW 10:42 am 0.35 m
LOW 4:38 pm 0.74 m	HIGH 11:50 am 2.27 m	HIGH 1:20 pm 2.37 m	HIGH 2:37 pm 2.56 m	HIGH 3:42 pm 2.77 m	HIGH 4:39 pm 2.95 m	HIGH 5:30 pm 3.08 m
	LOW 5:58 pm 0.77 m	LOW 7:16 pm 0.74 m	LOW 8:25 pm 0.68 m	LOW 9:23 pm 0.65 m	LOW 10:15 pm 0.65 m	LOW 11:04 pm 0.68 m

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Congratulations to the PIDCC Women's Cricket team who made it to the Grand Finals. Unfortunately the team fell five runs short to Koonwarra, who took out the Premiership.

PIDCC Women's Grand Final

CRICKET

McMahon Reserve was in mint condition for the Women's Cricket Grand Final against Koonwarra on Sunday.

Captain Bec won the toss and sent Young Gun Sienna, Speed Star Winnie and the ever-reliable Grace to open the attack.

But Koonwarra brought their best and the Island needed to steady.

The Island women tightened their fielding and when Jess clean bowled the opposition, the Island were back in the game.

Another wicket from Sienna, and Rosanna's deter-

mination behind the wickets resulted in a quality run out.

Winnie then joined the action when her quick thinking brought about another run out.

Kate and Jane patrolled the inner circle, while B and Claudia both bowled tight overs.

With Grace's amazing leadership in the field, the Island kept the opposition to 124 runs at the end of their innings.

The Islands top batter, Grace, opened the innings and got off to a great start.

She hit the boundary four times, while Sienna picked up the singles.

The pair were 32 after four overs. Jane and Kate ran their

legs off, with Jane only taking a breath to slog a boundary.

The Island were 53 after eight overs.

Big hitter Jess then added another three boundaries to the teams' total, while Claudia kept the strike ticking over.

The Island were 79 after 12 overs.

Bec and B both hit well-placed boundaries and kept the runs flowing.

The Island were 98 as the last pair went into bat. Rosanna hit two sensational boundaries, and Winnie ran until there was nothing left to give.

The final score saw the Island Women fall five runs short; Koonwarra the de-

served winners on the day. Congratulations to both teams on an amazing game.

Congratulations to Grace (22), Rosanna (18) and Jess (16) the Island's top run scorers.

The pick of the bowlers were Sienna 1/20 (4) and Jess 1/14 (2).

The PIDCC Women's Cricket Team would like to thank team sponsors, Luke Marshall Cabinets and Phillip Island Ten Pin Bowling and Entertainment Centre.

As well as Mick, Peter and Dean for coaching, umpiring and scoring every week.

Thank you also to LDCA, the official umpires and scorers.

Tough day on the pitch for C2 cricketers

C2 CRICKET

The C graders headed to Meenyan on a scorching hot day to play MDU in the round 11 clash.

As the mercury nudged 40, the Sharks went into bat.

Francis and Manning opened the batting and as usual got off to a solid start.

Jonty made a quality 20 but was caught at the first of many drinks breaks.

Niven joined Francis and

the pair put on a great 65 run partnership, broken when Niven was bowled for 30.

Sachin came and went for three, and Francis succumbed to a calf injury and retired hurt for 53.

Cleary (19), Carville (5) and DeFalco (9 n.o.) all chased some fast runs at the end.

Parry finished on 22 n.o. including a massive six over long on.

The Sharks made 171.

The temperature was not dropping as the Sharks headed out to field.

Sonny Mac and Sachin opened the bowling. They both bowled superbly, and Sonny was rewarded with a wicket.

Sachin bowled seven overs 0/11. MDU, started building some momentum until Captain Cleary came on and got two quick wickets halting the charge.

Francis then took a sharp

caught and bowled.

Liam Cleary fielded brilliantly and bowled his first ever senior overs.

MDU steadied and passed the Sharks' total with two overs to spare.

On a really tough day, the C graders battled hard in the stifling heat.

Player of the match: Peter Francis.

Match scores at pisra.com.au/sport

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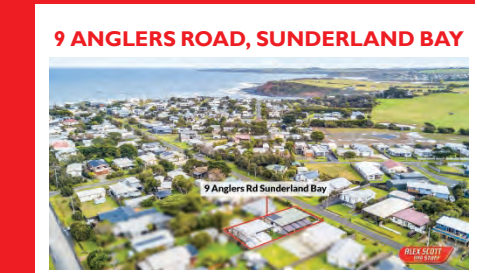


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