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SBA NEWSLETTER WINTER 2015

These grey, cold and gloomy weather days of winter tests our will-power to get out of bed each morning to put on those warm winter woollies. We recall memories of frozen puddles, mittens, cold ears and noses and then think that wintry days have been like that forever. There was nothing like that hot chocolate drink from Mum when we got home. Whatever happened to chilblains?

Enjoying Life at Smiths Beach

Tested the newly sealed section of Smiths Beach Road that is north of the Back Beach Road. You can now drive/walk/ride your bike all the way from our S/B Store to the Golf Course without having to travel gravel. That means no more muddy tyres and flying stones. The only serious problem is the crossing of the most dangerous intersection on Phillip Island at Fiveways. It is where our newly paved S/B Road crosses the main Tourist Road into Cowes and enters the picturesque Coghlan's Road.

A right-hand turn just as you enter here would take you into the prettiest road on the Island that is Harbison Road. It was so popular with visitors seeking koalas that tourist buses have been banned from using it. Kids on their bikes have been seen doing their own koala spotting peering over the green fence of the Koala Conservation Centre just around this corner.

Recently, having read about the Phillip Island Nature Parks upgrade to the Oswin Roberts Reserve, it was time to check it out for ourselves. Drive along this beautiful bush road for a kilometre or so you will come to a white chicory kiln on the right. The magnificent Reserve with its car-park and descriptive shelter (Melway map 632 B4) is opposite. It is the largest area of remnant bushland on Phillip Island.

In the splendid booklet entitled 'Come For A Walk! - Exploring Phillip Island', the Walk number Seven tells us that a Mrs Oswin Roberts donated this land for koala welfare and habitat preservation. There are few koalas to be seen among the tall eucalypts there these days but the area is rich in its birdlife, plantlife and many other animals.

There are three well-signposted trails for your choosing. On the wide pebbled gravel walkways, you have the choice of a walk for a half-hour, one hour or one that is one-and-a-half hours (4.5km). This latter one takes you over to the Cowes-Rhyll Road and back. By the way, the car-park at this road is another point of entry for your future explorations.

On our one-hour walk, we saw many Swamp Wallabies, Blue Wrens and the Grey Fantails fanning their tails and heard frequent lovely birdcalls from the eucalypts, Swamp Paperbarks and Sheoaks. A family that we met with a child in a pusher showed us a photo they had just taken of a Copperhead snake in a tree.

Other families of happy cyclists were enjoying the newly laid pathways as we took in the sights, sounds, smells and healthy peaceful contemplation of the bush. Try it for yourselves soon.

.Keep Oswin Roberts Reserve and the many other delightful Phillip Island reserves in mind for your visitors and they will remember it as one of our many famous 'Natural Attractions.'

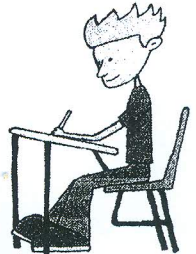
Kind regards,
Ian Shand

St Bede's College – Cypress Lodge

Dominic Langdon, the Business Manager of St Bede's College at Mentone tells us about their property on the clifftop at YCW Beach called Cypress Lodge.

The College owns and manages the foreshore property which was purchased in 1977. It is used as a camp site. In terms 1 & 2 our year 7 and year 8's use the camp. At other times of the year the camp site is used for music, geography, history and outdoor educational camps. The College offers limited access to other schools associated with St Bede's College for the use of the site. The College also attempts to have the site occupied on most weekends of the year by staff.

The popularity and usefulness of Cypress Lodge encourages the College to maintain it in its current state. The College has no plans to change the usage of the site. The College refurbished the property in 2008 and is planning to complete the refurbishment of the building in 2016/17. This will not increase the size or capacity of the camp site, so as to meet with council requirements and the College future needs.



Two Smiths Beach Surfing Champions

Two kids who learnt to ride waves at our beach – Nikki van Dijk and her 16 year old brother Joe competed at this year's Bells Beach Rip Curl Pro. Joe was a wild-card entry and competed in the same heat as the eventual four times winner, Mick Fanning. Nikki has this year been competing on the international scene with the world's top women surfers.



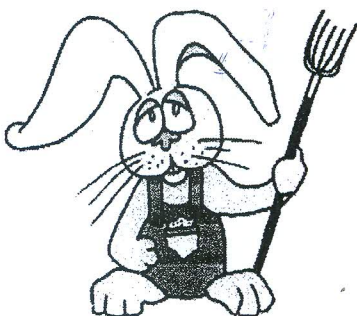
Our Smiths Beach Rabbits

SBA member, Richelle McKenzie provided a newspaper article that says that 'scientists have a novel solution to Australia's greenhouse gas dilemma – kill more rabbits. A government funded study has found that controlling our rabbits is cheaper than planting new trees. The Invasive Animals Co-op Research Centre and the NSW Primary Industries Department found feral animal control would help our nation's multi-party goal of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions by 5per cent by 2020. The capture and storage of atmospheric carbon in vegetation and soils is called biosequestration and it is accepted as a way to achieving this target by tree planting and modified agricultural practices.

The report found that feral rabbits, camels and goats had big impacts in their consumption of native bush as food and by their reducing their number could provide a more cost effective investment for the government by allowing increased vegetation to grow.

Scientists are also putting the final touches to a more potent rabbit calicivirus.'

For the reduction of rabbits at Smiths Beach, the Phillip Island Nature Parks are working together with BCSC and the Phillip Island Landcare on a rabbit strategy to deal with this infestation epidemic. So far, Churchill Island is considered to be 'rabbit free.'



Three Cheers for Our New Road

The three "R's", Rates, Rubbish and Roads are the regular headaches of all municipal councils and shires. The main whinges at Smiths Beach after complaining about the high cost of our rates is "When are we getting our roads made?" A compromise of sorts has occurred with the completion of the sealing of the north stretch of Smiths Beach Road that meets the Tourist Road into Cowes. According to an article in the 'Advertiser', the road is to receive a full seal. This means that it will get a primer seal this financial year and its final seal in 2015-16 in accordance with standard practice. The BCSC budget for the works will be \$35,000 as part of the Rural Roads Upgrade Program and our road had been given this high priority for completion.

So how does this affect us? The road will cross the dangerous 'Fiveways' intersection that our SBA has always said that it needs to have a roundabout for the safety of pedestrians and all vehicles. Once the word gets around, there will be an increased traffic flow on Smiths Beach Road North. It has often been said that nothing will change until there is a fatality there.

Smiths Beach Lifesaving Tower Project

For the past three summers, the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club has extended its voluntary patrols from Woolamai Beach to also cover Smiths Beach. This extension has been part of a response to the demand for services at Smiths Beach which, as we know, is one of the most popular family surf beaches in Victoria.

These voluntary patrols have also enabled the Club to learn much about the beach and understand what infrastructure would be required to make these patrols an on-going part of the work the Club's volunteers do each summer.

It quickly became clear that to be effective, Lifesavers needed three things.

First, they needed an elevated position from which to observe the water.

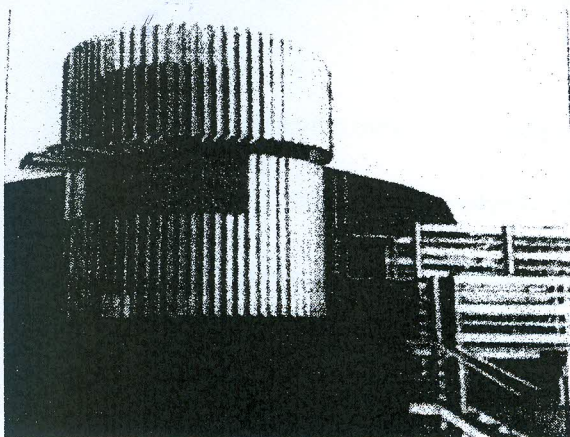
Second, they needed a place to treat first-aid patients.

Thirdly, they needed a place that could shelter lifesavers from inclement or extreme weather.

After an initial design did not receive a positive response from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and the Phillip Island Nature Parks, the Club has re-designed a proposed response to the above requirements.

The new concept design has been developed by Tract Consulting, a leading landscape architecture firm that has also supported developments at the Penguin Parade.

Tract has provided their input on a pro-bono basis.



Features of the design include a circular sculptural form and will be clad in vertical timber battens that functionally shade and protect the walls whilst fitting in with the environment.

It will be located to the west of the access ramp and attached to the existing structure.

Steps are currently being undertaken for community consultation to confirm that the design will be enthusiastically approved by everyone. Once all approvals have been in place, we are hoping that the community will once again rally behind this worthwhile initiative.

Wild Oceans. EcoBoat Adventures

Last December, the Phillip Island Nature Parks, in partnership with Wild Life Coast Cruises, launched two new EcoBoat Adventure tours. They allow visitors to travel at high speed, 27 knots, to Seal Rocks which gives you more time to experience the area. With over 20 years of experience, the 'Sea Sprinter's' operator, John Dickie and the ranger guides are experts at finding seals, whales, dolphins, penguins and other seabirds on the way. Seating up to 47 people and operating year round, the powerful world-class RIB (Rigid-hulled Inflatable Boat) is also equipped with underwater cameras, giving you the best views above and below the water. It leaves the Cowes jetty up to three times a day in Summer and within 20 minutes, you are passing the Summerland Peninsula and watching the antics of playful fur seals swimming around you at the Nobbies and Seal Rocks.

The EcoBoat Express completes the trip there and back to Cowes in one hour.

The EcoBoat Adventure may operate seasonally and will have returned in 1.5hrs as it has travelled around to see the Blowhole on the south coast as well.

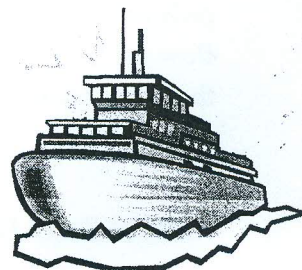
There are age, height and health restrictions on application for such high speed travelling.

Prices start at \$85 per adult. To find out more, visit penguins.org.au, head to a Phillip Island Nature Parks visitor centre, or drop by the EcoBoat Adventures office at Cowes jetty

It is possible to obtain a 10% discount using your RACV membership.

To book, visit our [Buy Tickets](#) page or phone 5951 2800

The 'Kasey Lee' ferry is still making trips to Seal Rocks but at a slower pace.



Free Easter Eggs and Plants

On Easter Saturday morning, SBA Committee members took part in our annual 'meet the people' (in brackets, our Membership Drive). As usual, we handed out copies of our SBA Newsletter and other useful information about Smiths Beach. These were accompanied with Easter eggs for the kids and plants in tubes for everyone else. We managed to enrol ten past and new members so the morning was considered to be a successful one. Thanks go to the helpers.

Do You Use the "Do Not Call" Register?

Those annoying telephone callers were restricted when you used the DNC Register. The phone numbers of this service however was set to expire after six years. The good news is that restriction is now permanent and now that once you register your number, those pesky commercial marketers will now never be able to call that number again. If your number isn't on the register yet, you can visit www.donotcall.gov.au or phone 1300 792 958. Now, enjoy your meal!!

Odd jottings

Did you notice that it was a rather quiet summer this year? There were only a few "Scorchers" that filled our beach. (a lot quieter for the lifeguards.)

Have you committed a random act of kindness lately? Maybe one per week?

Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

How about making a mid-year resolution? Why only concentrate on being a better person at the beginning of the year?

If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.

Don't forget to be awesome.

The View From Here by Cr Phil Wright— Phillip Island Strategies – June 2015

Background As Melbourne's population doubles, the visitor demand on the Island is likely to increase rapidly over the next 30 years. Council has worked hard over the past three years to change the administration and develop a 10 year financial plan. To guide the growth, there are five strategies that are intended to work together to ensure that the natural assets of the island are managed to ensure future generations have a healthier and more natural recreation area to enjoy.

1..Tourism Strategy The Tourism Policy is the glue that binds and we have recently adopted a Terms of Reference for a consultancy that has the primary objective to : develop a vision that reflects the tourism needs and aspirations of the community. It recognises Phillip Island as a unique place of environmental significance. In summary, the strategy will define the future of the island in the convergence of the context of two key words: 'environment' and 'economy.'
Community consultation is due before Christmas and will develop long term business plans to cater for the various tourist groups:- International, Interstate, Melbourne-day trippers, Melbourne-short stay, Melbourne- holiday homes, Motor Enthusiasts, Arts & Events.
Phillip Island is the region of Victoria most dependent on tourism

2. Rural Land Use Strategy The RLUS for the mainland is likely to be adopted in the next two months but the tourism component of Phillip Island rural land will be conducted with the Tourism Strategy.

The principal state strategic planning document is the Gippsland Growth Strategy and while most of the shire is "protect key agricultural land" the island is shaded yellow "support tourism associated with landscape and environment".

My own intention is to create a special Phillip Island zone that allows for trade-offs whereby the landowner is entitled to a small portion of the farm for a tourism facility (3%), 30% is for native vegetation with public access (mainly on cliff tops) and the balance stays farmland. This discussion has a long way to go.

3. South Coast's Key Area Plans This is an excellent PINP initiative that will see detailed plans for all beaches and focusses on the South Coast path joining the Nobbies to Woolamai and increase access to the magnificent coastal views on either side of Smiths Beach.

4. Natural Environment Sustainability Strategy The intent is to reduce weeds and increase high quality vegetation, improve the quality of creeks and oceans, prevent coastal construction that destroys views, reduces noise and reduces waste generated by business.

5. Cowes Activity Centre Plan The plan is due for adoption next month with funds in the budget to commence the transformation of Cowes into the high quality coastal township it deserves to be.

All good stuff and all requiring strong community input. The future is in your hands if you only speak up. Volunteers to manage the two new key reserves of Scenic Estate (was once known as Chinaman's Estate on the Tourist Road) and Smiths Beach South-East Reserve will be invited shortly. Please put your hand up.

With the tides getting higher each year, walkers are now walking on wrong side of fence at Smiths Beach to keep their feet dry. Please remember we have been planting in there for 30 years and if the tide is too high please don't break down plants as had happened on the Queens Birthday weekend.

PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO ADVERTISER

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Publication No.
VBF 9005897
Registered by
Australia Post.

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Winter Warnings

Are you prepared for the risk of a home fire this winter? As the weather gets colder, the use of heaters, electric blankets and other electrical equipment increases. Chimneys and flues should have been cleaned as obstructions such as bird nests could block the flow of smoke. Stating the obvious tells us that fire screens should be in front of all open fires and heaters and items that could catch fire such as clothing and curtains should be at least one metre away from your heaters. Of course too, you take extra care with supervising children in the kitchen and near all forms of heating.

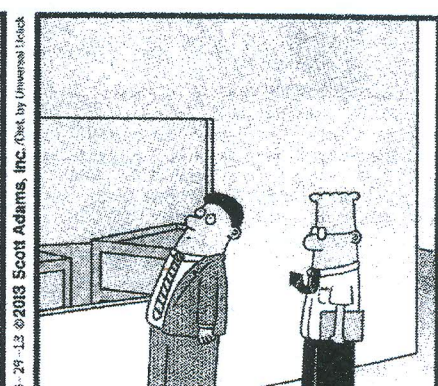
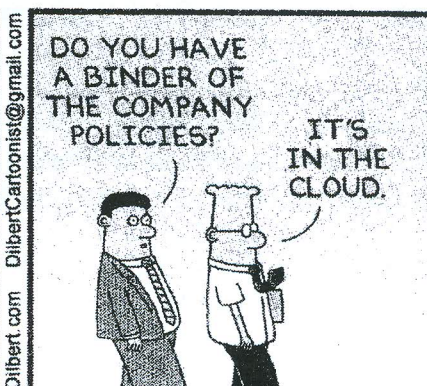
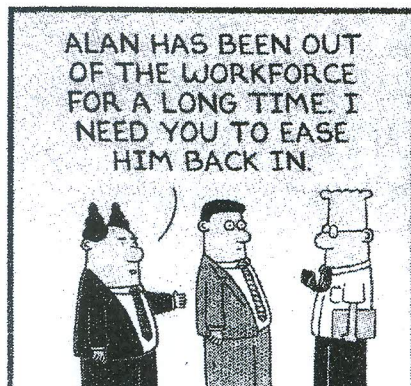
Our gas appliances should be serviced and checked each year. Leaking Carbon Monoxide has been dubbed 'the silent killer.' Room ventilation should be adequate. Before going to bed or leaving the house, take extra care by turning off heaters. Only working smoke alarms save lives. Test them regularly.

Fire Safety



DILBERT

by Scott Adams



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