



# Sandy Point News

Autumn 2021

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Volume 21, Issue 1

## Sandy Point Community Power - Opens expressions of interest for a Peer-to-Peer Energy Trading Scheme

Sandy Point Community Power (SPCP) are calling for volunteer households, businesses, and community organisations in Sandy Point to pre-register to participate in an upcoming trial of the SPCP Energy Trading Scheme. The trial will enable you to participate as either a Generator-Consumer i.e. you have solar panels installed on your roof, or Consumer ie you don't yet have solar panels. Energy generated by Generator-Consumers will be exchanged with Consumers through a trading e-platform.

### How the trial will work

Firstly you sign up as a member of the scheme. Then, if you are a Generator-Consumer, power 'feed-in' to the grid from your panels will be exchanged with your neighbours. You will be paid the Scheme's feed-In tariff. The intent is that this tariff will be better than the minimum required by regulation. Whether you're a Generator-Consumer or Consumer, you will receive your power at the Scheme's 'Matched' rate. This rate will be competitive with offers from retailers. And a small percentage of each 'exchange' is deposited into the Community Fund to support other community projects. Everybody wins!

And if at any time there is not enough power being generated by members to match our demand, supply of the required extra energy will be guaranteed from other generators on the exchange platform at the same 'Matched' rates, or from our supporting electricity retailer.

### What are the advantages of pre-registration?

If you pre-register your interest in the trial, after we finalise arrangements, we will send you further information and give you first priority to formally register as a participant.

Further, at your request, we will compare your current electricity bill with the SPCP Scheme tariffs so that you will know if the scheme is right for you.

To pre-register, please contact us by sending an email to the following address: [energytrading@sandypoint.vic.au](mailto:energytrading@sandypoint.vic.au). As an added bonus, the first 25 trial participants will have their first year membership fee waived. So why not get in early to be part of our People Power initiative?



# POWER TO THE PEOPLE



# **Sandy Point Community Group: President's Report**



Another summer has been and gone - it was great to see so many enjoying the ambiance of Sandy Point again... but we could have done with a bit more sunshine and certainly less wind!

I always feel welcomed back to Sandy Point and love that I can just slot it again to the sporting & social events of table tennis, mahjong, tai chi, tennis etc. I am also very grateful to have reaped the benefits of the hard work the locals have put into their wonderful garden produce during lockdown. Nothing tastes better than home grown and I have enjoyed lemons, tomatoes, beans, zucchinis, cucumbers, apples, rhubarb, relish and even homemade quince paste (delicious!). Thanks to the regular rain, not only are the veggie gardens flourishing but the homes with their nurtured shrubs and plants are looking wonderful. I have had several visitors mention to me how great the township is looking - so well kept and pristine. Yes Sandy Point you have a lot to be proud of!

Although the Covid restrictions have had an adverse effect on some of our usual events – no sandcastle competition or Foodies Market this summer - it has been heartwarming to have been able to attend some Sandy Point Music events, even though numbers attending have been restricted and NO dancing allowed! We look forward to the return of the Art Show this Easter too.

We have locked in the date of Saturday January 8th 2022 for our Foodies & Artisan market and been delighted with a positive response from our regular vendors already eager to book in.

## **Annual General Meeting**

The SPCG AGM was held at the Community Centre on 30th January 2021. Minutes of this meeting can be viewed on our website at: <https://www.sandypoint.vic.au/page22.html>

## **Update on current projects/issues**

### **Sandy Point Community Power scheme**

We're excited to hear that the Sandy Point Community Power (SPCP) are calling for volunteer households, businesses, and community organisations in Sandy Point to pre-register to participate in an upcoming trial of the SPCP Energy Trading Scheme. See page 1 for details.

### **Community Garden**

It's wonderful to hear that our Community Garden is underway and this, with our many other projects will, when they come to fruition, benefit this amazing community of ours. See page 18 for details.

### **Skate Park**

The establishment of a small Skate Park in Sandy Point is a very important priority for SPCG and we are continuing to seek a range of funding opportunities in order to progress a feasibility study and concept designs to present to Council for approval. We will keep you informed of our progress with this project.

### **Sandy Point Signage Project**

This project is progressing well. A full report can be viewed on page 4

### **Sandy Point Koalas (WHISPA group)**

I attended a meeting of the WHISPA group which was well supported by a committed group of enthusiasts. The guest speaker Chris Daniels from SA's Cleland Wildlife Park gave a riveting talk via ZOOM, which prompted many questions and comments. Great to know that this group is continuing their work with our precious wildlife. More on page 9

### **Road resurfacing project**

As detailed on page 6 of this newsletter, a meeting has been held with Council's Engineering Coordinator, Paul Challis to discuss the poor state of our roads. We will let you know when we hear more from Council about this matter.

### **Waratah Way**

Michelle Jelleff, who has taken over the role of coordinating the project said that we will be working with Council and DEWLP to upgrade the environmental report and cultural heritage report and seek funding for the project.

Stay safe and happy, be kind to yourselves and others.

Kind regards, Anne

Anne Kinne, President, SPCG



# SANDY POINT

COMMUNITY CENTRE

## Sandy Point Community Centre & TP Taylor Reserve Committee of Management: Chairperson's Report

Slowly but surely, and within the COVIDSafe guidelines, The Centre is coming back to life.

Sandy Point Music have been busy, hosting The Little Quirks, the Winnie Blues and Ash Grunwald in March. Saije & Chris Aitkens will be performing on 10 April with the Pierce Bros back again in May. There was also a Classical Music Concert on 21 February, which was a first for the Community Centre, with the Affinity Quartet playing to a large audience. A real treat with Mendelssohn, Mozart and Shostakovich on the program.

For more details on upcoming music events please visit the Facebook page for [Sandy Point Music](https://www.facebook.com/sandypointmusic) or <https://www.sandypoint.vic.au/page56.html>

The weekly activities in The Centre have all resumed – so if you're interested in Tai Chi, Indoor Bowls, Pilates, Tennis, Table Tennis or enjoy a card game or board game have a look at the list of activities on the window of the Centre and on the website [www.sandypointcc.org.au](http://www.sandypointcc.org.au).

The Centre has purchased 2 new tennis nets and 2 winders which will be installed before Easter plus a new Table Tennis table. This equipment has been purchased with a grant from South Gippsland Shire Council.

It has been rewarding to have weddings that had to be cancelled in 2020 due to COVID being re-booked, plus a number of private events.

Don't forget to come and along to the 2021 Sandy Point Art Show which runs from Friday 2nd April to Monday 5th April – 10am to 5pm daily.

Di Cooper – Chairperson  
Sandy Point Community Centre



*The Affinity Quartet which played at Sandy Point recently.*

## Fancy a game of table tennis anyone?

There are now two table tennis tables at the Centre and it has been suggested that some folks – any age – may like to have a game of table Tennis in the evening, rather than during the day.

So what about we give the idea a trial run for four weeks on a Wednesday evening, starting Wednesday 14th April to Wednesday 12th May from 7.30pm – 9.30pm or whenever we run out of “puff”. Cost would be a gold coin donation.

It would be great if we could have some idea of who's interested and numbers, so please contact me at [info@sandypointcc.org.au](mailto:info@sandypointcc.org.au) or 0418 336 690 if you're interested or require further information.

Di Cooper  
Chairperson - Sandy Point Community Centre



# Sandy Point Signage Project

As mentioned in the Summer Edition of this newsletter, many attempts have been made unsuccessfully over the years to address new signage for Sandy Point.

However, recently a group of enthusiastic residents have been getting together and talking about finding a common artistic theme for signage connecting significant geographic locations, community landmarks and historical and cultural places in and around Sandy Point. This hasn't been the easiest task with the restrictions of COVID-19 but with Zoom meetings and emails ideas are starting to formulate.

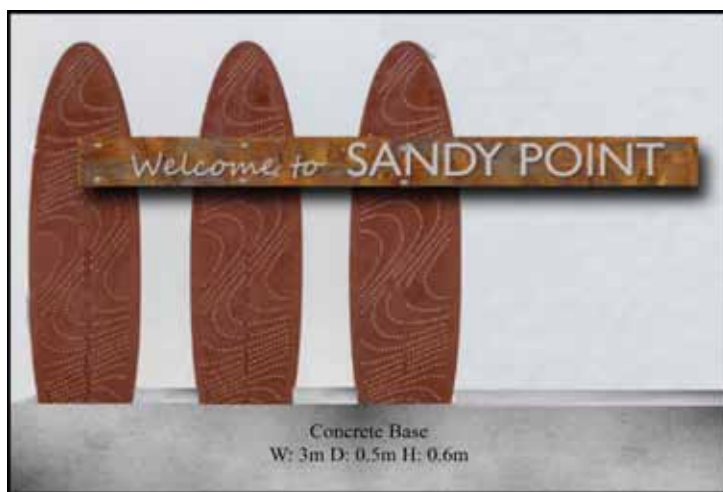


The group has now developed a plan which has been submitted to South Gippsland Shire Council for approval. The recommendations submitted involve using a theme based around surfboards.

## A new Welcome to Sandy Point Sign On Telopea Drive

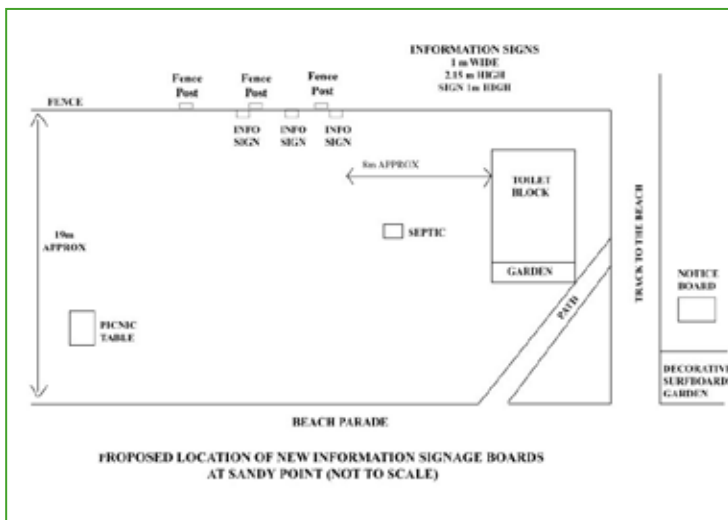
This will incorporate the theme of surfboards into a new "Welcome to Sandy Point" sign utilising the same footprint as the existing sign on Telopea Drive.

This sign will consist of 3 surfboards made with contrast digitally printed stainless steel on Corten steel. The horizontal "Welcome to Sandy Point" panel would have a digitally drilled pattern and text laser cut out or more prominent raised text on it. The sign would be mounted on a concrete base. The existing Council sign will remain.



## Information Signs

Three individual signs are proposed detailing the township and area's history, its fauna and the geography, ecology and flora of the area. The information signs are to be installed east of the toilet and shower amenity at the rear of the reserve along the fence line opposite the shops. The Foreshore Committee has approved this location. The proposed sign will be similar in style and construction to the Koala Sign on the Manuka track but wider to accommodate more information



## Revitalising existing Decorative Surfboards

This is in reality a separate project, as the surfboards were originally funded by a Government Grant in 2009 and funds were retained from this grant to allow for maintenance of the surfboards. Therefore Council approval is not required in order for us to give the surfboards a "facelift". The revitalising of the surfboards is still in the planning stage and the community will be consulted once the group has some firm ideas.

Di Cooper  
Project Co-ordinator





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# So what's happening about the poor state of our roads?

As a result of many complaints from residents about the poor state of our roads after the road resurfacing carried out early last year, a meeting was held in January with Council's Engineering Coordinator, Paul Challis. Council acknowledged that they too were very disappointed in the outcome of the resurfacing but they had no redress under the contract with the resurfacing contractor. Paul explained that as the original road surface was deteriorating and pot holing was occurring, they decided to redo the entire road surface. The original A Grade level Avon River aggregate used is no longer available and to achieve the light colour finish we requested, the contractor had sourced and used a B Grade product.



A complete road resurfacing cannot happen in the near future as the tar used needs time to harden before it can be replaced. Council is working with industry to source a suitable alternative aggregate. The area in front of the shops will be a priority and depending on the availability of contractors, work is hoped to commence within several months.

Council will get back to us with further options and emphasised that they are committed to work with us for a satisfactory outcome.

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**Sue and Andy Cumming  
5684 1362**

# Time for some weeding!

We recently published on our Facebook page a story about problems with the spread of Agapanthus in Sandy Point. Few people would realise that this pretty, easy to grow plant is in fact an Environmental Weed and is now becoming a serious problem in Sandy Point. It is classified as an Environmental Weed which is “a plant which threaten the values of natural ecosystems, can invade native plant communities and out compete them. This affects the balance of the entire ecosystem by reducing biodiversity, taking away vital food sources and habitat for native insects, bird life and fauna”.

The Fish Creek Community Composter group encouraged us to cut the heads off agapanthus after they had finished flowering and provided jute bags to store the heads in and return to them to feed to their massive new composter “Oscar”.

Similarly, a few issues ago we published an article about the problems of Mirror Bush (*Coprosma repens*) proliferation in Sandy Point.

Mirror bush spreads very easily, as you may have seen from the seedlings that keep coming up in your garden! Parks Victoria is now seeing it spread by birds to the Islands in Corner Inlet and into the Prom, so as residents of Sandy Point we should do our bit to reduce its presence in the township.

## So what can you do?

Use the South Gippsland Landcare Network’s list of noxious weeds at <https://www.sgln.net.au/south-gippsland-weeds/weed-identification> to identify those that must be controlled. In Victoria noxious weeds are plants which have been proclaimed under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994, which requires the Landholder to control or eradicate these weeds.

Many plants can be weeded by hand though large plants will need to be cut and the stumps treated immediately following cutting using Round Up (glyphosate) or other suitable herbicide.

Agapanthus heads and other environmental weeds like Mirror Bush should not be included in Council’s green waste bin as they need to go to land fill to prevent further spreading.

After you’ve removed the weeds, why not visit the local native nursery <https://www.narkabundah.com.au> for a selection of native plants that are well adapted to our coastal climate.



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## At last we've got it!

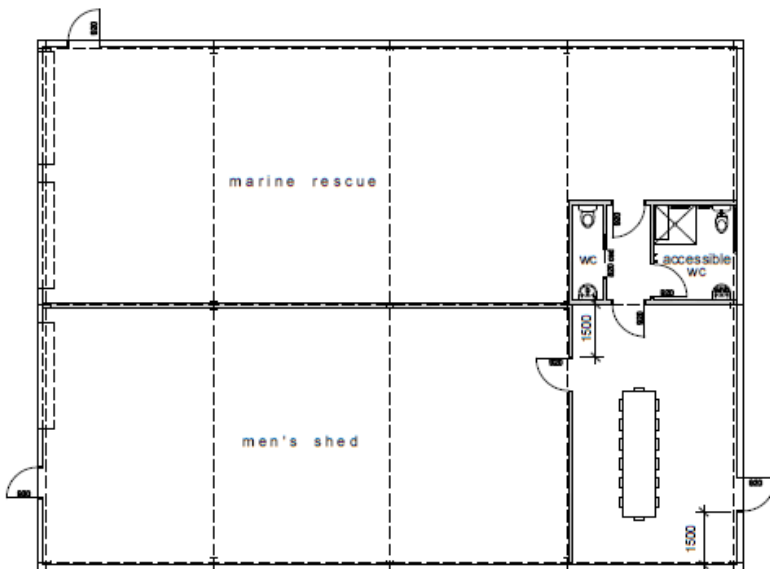
Council recently provided us with the much awaited Planning Approval for the internal fitout of the shed. We've also now registered for the required Building Permit, expected this week, and have engaged with a local builder to start on the works; so it's happening.

The internal construction will divide the large shed space down the middle to provide separate areas for Marine Rescue and the Men's Shed operations. A common meeting room, kitchen and bathroom will also be constructed. We've even started to look at how the various pieces of machinery, benches etc will be laid out within the space.

With Covid restrictions now being eased we've been able to have more regular face to face meetings. For those interested, us Shedders meet on Monday mornings from 9.00am to undertake whatever tasks are at hand or just to have a coffee and chat; important functions of a Men's Shed.

We recently held our AGM with most of the committee back for another year. We are also continuing with our monthly meetings: 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of the month at the Community Centre. We always seem to have a number of small jobs lined up for our working bees, to keep us busy, so why not sign up and join us?

Our project list has continued to grow so there are plenty of things to get on with. We would welcome new members and encourage anyone interested in joining our group to sign up. You can find out more details at <https://www.sandypoint.vic.au/page58.html> ; by sending an email to [spmensshed@gmail.com](mailto:spmensshed@gmail.com) or by writing to Sandy Point Community Men's Shed, c/- Post Office, Sandy Point, Victoria 3959



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The advertisement features a logo of a paint palette and brushes on the left. The text is arranged in a clean, professional layout.

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The advertisement has a blue and yellow color scheme. The company name 'JOHNOELEC' is in large, bold, yellow letters on a blue background. Below it, the services offered and contact information are listed in white and blue text.



# Manna Gums: they taste like chocolate to our koalas

As you will probably know, the Sandy Point Koala Group recently finished a three year project involving a \$50,000 grant from the Victorian State Govt to plant additional koala trees to connect up some isolated patches of trees and provide safer passage and future habitat for our current population of koalas.

We now need to create a long term plan for the further restoration and revegetating of areas of koala habitat. We also need to look at ways of improving our koalas' genetic health to ensure their long term survival.

## Genetic testing

Genetic testing conducted by Federation University during the period of the project has led to us understanding that genetic diversity in the Sandy Point koala population is significantly lower than koalas sampled from other areas of Victoria. The low level of genetic diversity in our koala population is likely driven by its isolation and consequent lack of recent koala migration into the area. Inbreeding may or may not currently play a role in the population's low diversity and warrants further investigation. Questions such as whether the high incidence of sarcoptic mange in the population is related to the population's low level of genetic diversity also remain to be answered.

As a result of this we are conducting further genetic testing to help us understand if the problems our koalas are facing with mange is due to their genetic makeup.

## New plantings and maintenance of food trees

Over 2,700 trees were planted over more than 2.5 hectares of farm land, coastal reserve, and private blocks during the three year Koala Action Project but continuing to improve and extend koala habitat to support the local koala population is very important for the future preservation of our koalas.

To help us decide what steps to take next, we held a community meeting on 14 March. At this meeting we had a Zoom get together with koala expert Chris Daniels (Dept Environment and Water SA and CEO of Cleland Wildlife Park's [International Koala Centre of Excellence](https://www.clelandwildlifepark.com.au/)) and discussed with him the issues facing our koalas.

Some of you will have seen him featured in an episode of Catalyst in February this year: "Are we killing our koalas?" (<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/catalyst>). If not, we recommend you to watch it.

Chris suggested we should have a variety of trees for koalas to forage on rather than just coast manna gum. They may love our coast manna gum but there is the risk if they rely too heavily on one species, it might become a problem if some disease was to affect this species of tree in the future. He thinks we should be planting a variety of species like they have in their part of South Australia, including perhaps SA Blue Gum, River Red Gum, Stringybark and the Western Australian Platypus Gum and he gave us contact details of experts in this field who should be able to advise us on what might suit our particular area of Victoria. He advised us however that if we did introduce other species of food trees into Sandy Point it would also be necessary to deal with the potential gut flora issues as well. His team at Cleland Wildlife Park are working on this and will be able to advise us how to manage this problem.

*(Continued on page 10)*



## Sandy Point Art Gallery & Gallery Cottage

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

(Continued from page 9)

## Tree corridors and translocation

These are more long term ideas that Chris suggested might be considered by our group. Because of our koalas' very narrow genetic diversity Chris suggested we might like to investigate planting tree corridors as a means of connecting our koalas to other groups, preferably in the Strzeleckis.

Alternatively we could translocate koalas from other areas into ours. This is a field of work that his team at the Cleland Wildlife Park in South Australia are currently working on. (View the [Catalyst episode](#) for more about this.)

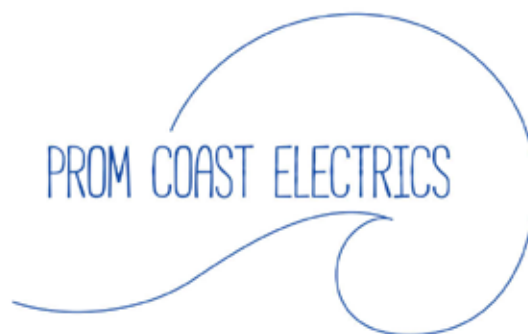
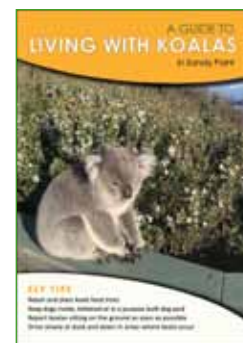
## Want to get involved with our group and help our koalas?

➔ Regular **tree plantings maintenance works** are needed to ensure that trees already planted remain healthy. We're hoping to hold our **first working bee on Sat 17th April commencing at 9.30am** but this is not yet finalised. If you'd like to be involved, please contact us by emailing: [sandypointkoalas@gmail.com](mailto:sandypointkoalas@gmail.com) and we'll send you the details when we have them.

➔ We have also set the date for the **2021 Koala Count**. It will be held on **Sunday 26th September from 9.30am**. If you'd like to be involved in this please contact us by emailing [sandypointkoalas@gmail.com](mailto:sandypointkoalas@gmail.com)

➔ Get informed about how you can help koalas and other wildlife, by having **wildlife-friendly fences, planting trees** at your place, knowing **what to do with sick and injured wildlife, driving carefully at night** and **keeping your dog away from wildlife** – see our “Living with Koalas in Sandy Point” brochure and other information at <https://www.sandypoint.vic.au/koalas.html>

➔ Finally, If you see sick or injured wildlife, please report it to Wildlife Victoria immediately on 03 8400 7300 , through their website <https://www.wildlifelifevictoria.org.au/>, or download the “**Snap Send Solve**” app and report it under “injured native animals”.



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# Waratah Marine Search and Rescue vessel replacement update

After a great deal of thought and consideration, the Waratah Marine Search and Rescue (WMSAR) Committee of Management have unanimously decided to decline the offer of a NAIAD 8.5m from Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) as a replacement for the existing RHIB rescue vessel.

Although an amazing boat with extensive emergency and rescue functionality, it was agreed the NAIAD would not be able to meet the needs inherent to the environment we service due to its size and weight. Prompt beach launches across a range of tides and locations is an essential requirement for a Waratah Bay rescue vessel and the NAIAD cannot deliver the flexibility offered by the existing Zodiac RHIB.

Capital challenges associated with modifying the existing storage facilities and upgrading the tow vehicle to a truck, in conjunction with a developing organisational structure and crew capability, were also deciding factors in making this decision.

It must be noted that this decision came from a place of maturity, certainly not from the heart, as all WMSAR members were extremely appreciative and excited to be welcoming an amazing NAIAD. However, progressing with this vessel would not have allowed us to provide an optimal rescue service.

WMSAR recently met with Life Saving Victoria (LSV) and EMV, the two governing bodies for WMSAR, and was given assurances that we will be involved with future decisions as to allocation of the most appropriate resources for the local service.

We are currently in discussions as to what vessel/combination will best take into account our necessary beach launch locations, hazards associated with crossing the bar at the mouth of Shallow Inlet and the requirement for both protected and open water off-shore rescue capability. In the meanwhile, the existing Zodiac RHIB with twin 60hp engines is equipped with an extensive array of rescue equipment and, with a trained and experienced crew, will continue the rescue service from the Rob O'Brien Waratah MSAR Base in the facility shared with the Sandy Point Men's Shed group.



*Top: The first problem with the NAIAD 8.5m was that it was proved to be too tall for the shed.*

*Middle: A new truck would also have been needed to tow the boat.*

*Bottom: The NAIAD 8.5m is an amazing boat but not able to meet the needs of our service.*

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# Help us to help everyone enjoy our beach!

In 2017 the Sandy Point Community Group with the aid of a grant from the South Gippsland Shire Council purchased a beach wheelchair for use free of charge on the main surf beach at Sandy Point.

Since then we've had quite a few people, some disabled and others elderly and unable to walk over the dunes to the beach, use our specially designed wheelchair with its large balloon tyres.

It's also been borrowed by the Waratah Beach Camp for a disabled student so he could join the rest of his class on the main beach. They gave us a lovely donation in gratitude for this service.

Bookings at the moment are taken by me, Di Cornwell, and I arrange to meet the people at the shed by the tennis courts where the wheelchair is housed, get them to fill out the necessary forms and show them how to use the wheelchair. I usually accompany them over the dunes and along the track by the surf lifesaving club onto the beach, then meet them back at the shed when they have finished with the chair.

I am looking for volunteers to help me with this community service. It is not an onerous task but is in fact extremely rewarding and the feedback from people who have borrowed the chair is always wonderful.

I am happy to keep on as the initial contact person but would like to find some other people to help with the rest of the booking process.

So if you have the time to help me out with this I would love to hear from you. Ideally I would like to build up a roster of people I can call on, so please – and particularly if you have a day “free” most weeks when you can help me - do get in touch. You can call me on 0437 392 277 or send me an email at [sandypointbeachwheelchair@gmail.com](mailto:sandypointbeachwheelchair@gmail.com)

Di Cornwell



*Top: Adrian van Rossum Bottom: Peter Atrill*

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## Hurray! Live music is back in Sandy Point

Despite the limitations imposed by COVID particularly on the number of people allowed at music events and sadly, no dancing allowed, Sandy Point Music was able in December to start holding music nights once more. Artists had found it hard to travel within Australia let alone of course going overseas and after a year of lockdowns and border closures musicians were desperate to start playing gigs again. So, America's loss – Sandy Point's gain!

Here are some of Donna Killeen's wonderful reviews of the gigs played since the first took place just before Christmas. The photos are also by Donna.



### The Pierce Bros

We kicked off the summer season with an almighty bang! December 18th marked our return to music with not one, but two concerts performed by the multi-talented and energetic Pierce Brothers. These brothers needed a full stage to house their energy and talent. It was full of guitars, mandolins, didgeridoos, drums, harmonicas, somersaults, hair flicking theatrics and of course wonderful amazing lyrics and music. The perfect support act was Darcy Spiller and Jackson McCrae. Darcy has the voice of a songbird with the strength of a harmonic orchestra, except there was no orchestra, just Darcy.

Sensational and well worth the 8 month wait.

### Michael Waugh, Jacob McGuffie and Matt Glass

What a treat! Matt kicked off the night with lyrics and music, which perfectly set the mood, in fact you were sorry to hear his last song.

Then Michael jumped on stage like a lion being released from a cage. It's been a long time since musicians have been allowed on stage and he gave us his best plus a request.

After his solo performance he invited Jacob onto the stage for the remainder of the evening. A wonderful night by this talented duo, who later invited Matt, accompanied with his mandolin, back onto the stage to play two new songs to finish the night.

So great to see such passionate musicians back out doing what they (and we) love.



### The Little Quirks

What a return to music with the Little Quirks, who are anything but little - though we will give them quirky!

From the second beat in they let rip with a commanding stage presence full of fun and energy whilst belting out great music. Who jumps, sings and plays guitar all at once? Little Quirks do.

Local talent, Fiona Currum and Bec Bones opened the night with their perfectly matched voices and skilful instrumental talent. Welcome back to the sound of music.

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### Winnie Blues

With the return to another night of music comes the return of the Winnie Blues and one of our favourite locals Alice Potts (nee Beatty) and Cameron Potts. Yes they married one year ago. Congratulations Mr & Mrs Potts.

Judging by their performance on stage, you would be forgiven for thinking they had just met. Such passion for each other, their music and the audience.

It was a beautiful performance with a great night of lyrics, humor and incredibly harmonious voices. You could listen to the Winnie Blues all night.



Fresh from the Prom Coast Music Festival, No Promises warmed up the stage with skillful acoustic guitar work and songs. Thanks Janine and Eric for sharing your brand of music.

### Ash Grunwald and Nick Carver

In March Sandy Point hosted one of the legends of Australian blues. Ash Grunwald has released nine studio albums over twenty years, five of which have been nominated for ARIA Music awards. He'd most likely be playing overseas right now if it wasn't for Covid, but America's loss was Sandy Point's gain.

Support was Nick Carver, a local music teacher from Foster, who more than held his own with a selection of numbers from his new album. Some of his pupils in the audience were giggling at his bad language – all justified in the name of art!



### Upcoming Gigs

Saturday 10th April – Saije and Chris Aitkin

Saturday 21 May – The Pierce Bros return to Sandy Point

See our webpage at <https://www.sandypoint.vic.au/page56.html> for more details on how to book for these events.

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# Waratah Beach Surf Life Saving Club highlights from the 2020/21 Season

Summer 2020/21 has been a very different one for all members of the community, and the Waratah Beach Surf Life Saving Club at Sandy Point is no exception. Capably led by Club Captain Keegan Clarke, it is a credit to all WBSLSC members and supporters that they remained focused and energised despite the challenges presented this season in preparing and delivering an exceptionally high standard volunteer-based beach lifesaving service.

## Season wrap from WBSLSC Club Captain, Keegan Clarke

This season I expected there to be a large drop-off in numbers returning to patrol due to Covid restrictions and perceived challenges however we were pleasantly surprised; 111 members returned to requalify for their Bronze Medalion and we had 596 financial members signed up for 2020/21. These are incredible numbers, especially in a year with so many Covid-related challenges.

Many in the local community may not be aware that all clubs faced significant challenges preparing for and delivering Covid-safe patrols within state and LSV guidelines due to:

- Limited numbers allowed to patrol at any one time
- The way in which patrol was structured and set-up
- Restrictions on accommodation at the clubhouse (integral to patroller WBSLSC attendance)

With the guidance and overseeing by Club COVIDSafe coordinator Danny Millton and the combined efforts of the leadership team and active members we were able to ensure a safe and successful return to patrol.



Club Champs is one of the many highlights of the surf lifesaving season where WBSLSC members compete against each-other to achieve age group event titles of Club Champion and Ironman/Ironwoman. There were many concerns at the start of the season that this popular club event may not go ahead, particularly given that other clubs had announced cancellation of their club champs. Nonetheless, with help from a number of life members, we organised and held a successful Club Champs. Jackson Pavanello was the open male age champion and the open female age champion was won by Bridget Duncan. And this year a new club event, the Barbour Trophy, was added to the calendar, a 1500m open age group swim for fastest male and female. Well done to winners Ben Makowski and Penny Neville. Next year the Barbour Trophy will be included as part of the annual Current Cruiser swim.

Robert O'Brien, one of our ex-Club Presidents, sadly passed away in March last year. Rob was involved in Lifesaving for 22 incredible years. As a traditional lifesaving way of commemorating those who have passed, we held a paddle out. The Rob O'Brien Paddle Out was an event where all 70 people attending paddled out behind the break and then formed a circle. As the circle was formed, the LSV helicopter flew overhead and once a few words were said, rosemary was thrown into the circle. A memorial function was held afterwards at the Warabar and Rob's family was presented with his posthumous LSV life membership certificate.

From over 3000 hours patrolled, and with 4 weekends to go, happily this season we have only needed to complete one rescue which was actually in front of the Lifesaving club.

## Nippers

A raft of new COVID safety procedures saw some big changes to Nippers this year. Interestingly, as with a lot of learnings around COVID, many of the changes that we needed to implement this year are likely to continue into the future. Nippers, parents/guardians and the entire Nipper team embraced the new 'marshal on the beach' format and keeping with age groups in designated areas and within COVID safe group limits.



*(Continued on page 16)*

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Despite the increased organisational load of set up and pack up, the new format did mean that our program ran a lot more efficiently, with Age Managers and Water Safety running activities that were modified for each group. We missed some activities like the Nipper Film Night, but overall, the vibe, enjoyment and enthusiasm to be a part of the program was evident across all sessions.

We are extremely grateful to everyone for rolling with the COVID safety procedures including marshalling on the beach, QR coding into each session, staying within age groups and designated areas, socially distancing, following signage and flags/bunting, sanitization of high touch areas on equipment and the list goes on...and on. With everyone's commitment, we delivered a COVID safe program whilst at the same time focussing on our mottos of 'safety first, do your personal best, work as a team and have fun'.

This year we welcomed 161 Nippers across 103 families to the program.

## **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training**

The Club received approval of a grant from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal for \$10,000 to run Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training for Club leaders and leaders within the community. We were extremely proud to spearhead this initiative (a first for a Life Saving Club in Victoria) and received great feedback from participants.

With 1 in 5 Australians experiencing a mental illness of some kind every year, statistically, we are sure to be working with one or more members of the community or members of the Club and colleagues who are experiencing a mental health issue. In addition, the statistics suggest that mental health issues in the South Gippsland region are above the State average.

The MHFA training gives participants tools to raise awareness and respond appropriately to people who are experiencing a range of mental health issues. Participants learn about the signs and symptoms of common and disabling mental health problems in adults, how to provide initial help, where and how to get professional help, what sort of help has been shown by research to be effective, and how to provide first aid in a crisis situation.

If you are interested in attending future courses you can contact Natalie Ashdown at [nippers@waratahbeach.com.au](mailto:nippers@waratahbeach.com.au)

## **IRB Racing**

IRB racing is a key event on the club calendar and with the 2020 season cancelled, members from across the region have been eagerly preparing for the 2021 season. So far preparation has been going very well with 34 people training from 3 different clubs and an accumulated total of approximately 500 training hours. This season much of our equipment has been upgraded, making us more competitive than ever. The first carnival of the season was scheduled to be at South Melbourne however this event was unfortunately cancelled due to the prevailing 5-day lockdown, we had 18 people entered for this event.

## **2021 Season dates and locations**

- Sunday 9th May: Mordialloc LSC
- Sunday 23rd May: Ocean Grove SLSC
- Sunday 6th June: South Melbourne LSC
- Saturday 19th and 20th June: Lorne SLSC
- STATE CHAMPIONSHIP  
Friday 2nd - Sunday 4th July: Lorne SLSC
- NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP  
22nd - 25th July: Fingal Bay SLSC (NSW)



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## 2021 WIN Network Current Cruiser

This year's WBSLSC Current Cruiser Fundraiser was strongly supported by sponsors and participants despite the 'virtual' nature of the event. Though a new website (thanks GT Design Studio), a virtual event space was created that was very much alive which attracted 70 participants and 20 sponsors.

Local swimmers were joined by regional, interstate and even overseas participants who swam in the ocean, the inlet, rivers and even backyard pools, with ages ranging from 9 to 70+, and included members of several surf and swimming clubs. With prevailing covid restrictions we were unable to run many of our regular fundraising events so this contribution has significantly boosted our ability to maintain essential equipment and invest in new and replacement gear for life saving and training.

Community feedback confirms a significant amount of sponsor promotion has been generated through the WIN Network television commercials, television news, Current Cruiser website and event t-shirts. We are very much looking forward to building on these channels to provide greater value for sponsors in 2022 when we will hold the Current Cruiser in a traditional format.

The Waratah Beach Surf Life Saving Club extends our most sincere gratitude to all sponsors, participants and sponsors of the 2021 WIN Network (Virtual) Current Cruiser. If anyone missed out on an event t-shirt, we have a few leftover shirts available for \$10 each.



## Waratah Marine Search and Rescue

On a number of occasions throughout the season we undertook training exercises and activities with the Waratah MSAR service which was a great experience and is sound preparation for combined emergency support. Transfer of crew between the Waratah MSAR RHIB and WBSLSC IRBs on the water and recovering swimmers from the water into the RHIB were great activities, as was a simulated stranding and hypothermia scenario at the far reaches of Shallow Inlet. We also took the opportunity

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to be present when the LSV helicopter was training with Waratah MSAR to practice extracting crew from the RHIB on the water, it's always great to see the chopper in action and up close. Anyone interested in being involved with Waratah MSAR should make contact, there are plenty of opportunities to become qualified crew and be involved in training exercises all year round.

## Community Garden update

Things are progressing well with the new Community Garden project. The wicking beds have been ordered and we are just waiting for them to be completed. We have organised a meeting for Easter Sunday to discuss the purchasing of plants and have purchased all the garden equipment we will need. This is now handily stored in the shed next to the tennis courts, right next to where we will be setting up the garden. We are hopeful we will be able to set the beds up and start planting soon after Easter.

Please get in touch with us if you'd like to join in.

Doug and Liz Brown

(dlbrown@live.com.au)

*It won't be long before we are setting up our wicking beds. The picture on the left was taken during the set up of the Bungam Community Garden in Albury.*



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## **Please make a donation to our local wildlife carer, Sue Moore**

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Shelter Inc**

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## Membership Application and Renewal Form

for the Sandy Point Community Group (SPCG)  
website: [www.sandypoint.vic.au](http://www.sandypoint.vic.au)  
email: sandypoint.membership@gmail.com

### Membership renewal

Could you please complete the form below and return it to us so we can confirm your details on our membership list.

### New members

Please complete all the details in the form below and return to us.

	Person 1	Person 2
Family Name		
First name(s)		
Local Address (Sandy Point)		
Postal Address (if different to above)		
Phone (home)		
Mobile		
Email		

- Do you wish to receive our Newsletter by email? Yes  No
- Do you wish to receive other information from us by email? Yes  No
- Would you like our Newsletter posted to you for an extra \$10 per year? Yes  No
- Is there any way in which you would like to contribute to the work of the SPCG?
  
- Are there any issues you would like the Committee to consider?

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**Membership is \$10 per person or \$20 per family living at the same address. Please add \$10 onto your payment if you have indicated above that you would like the Newsletter mailed to you.**

### Payment options

- Direct deposit into SPCG Inc. Bendigo Bank account BSB 633 000 Account 1440 68590
  - Please identify your deposit by using your Initial and Surname.
  - Save your completed application form and email to sandypoint.membership@gmail.com
- Cheque made out to SPCG Inc. and mailed with a printed copy of this form to:
  - Sandy Point Community Group, Sandy Point, Vic 3959