



# AIDA

APRIL 2012 NEWSLETTER



## President's Report 2011

Presented at the AGM on 13 February 2012

I would like to start by reading the first sentence of AIDA's mission statement:

*The Aireys Inlet and District Association Inc. (AIDA) seeks to ensure environmentally sensitive use of the area as a coastal and rural resort or haven that retains its unique charm.*

Each year, much of AIDA's energy is spent trying to educate local government and state bureaucracies about the critical importance of this mission within the local community. In this we are fortunate to be able to rely on the thoughts and comments of our membership to reinforce that commitment. So, on behalf of the committee, I would like to thank all our members for their involvement and support, and to encourage each of you to continue to spread the word about AIDA and its activities, because our strength is only in your support.

It is now again my pleasure to review the year that was, and report on the activities and achievements of the AIDA committee, and in doing so, to outline broadly some of the variety of issues that confronted us during 2011.

I will start with the committee. New members who joined us following last year's AGM have added a new

*\* Editor's note: Some of the issues discussed in this report have progressed significantly since the AGM and are updated elsewhere in this newsletter.*

dimension to the executive, bringing multiple viewpoints and ideas that have made it a very positive year for AIDA. We have confronted technology by initiating an AIDA website, and for this we must extend our grateful thanks to Perry Gaylard for hosting us on his site. We now send a majority of our newsletters by email and are able to contact our members quickly and to send information of any contentious matters. We have also introduced pictorial content into the newsletter and will soon be contributing a regular feature to one of our community papers with a column outlining local historical stories, which will be published with the AIDA logo. The AIDA lapel pins are an innovative idea and have come up really well, and we are working towards car stickers with the AIDA logo for distribution to our membership.

As reported last year, AIDA is no longer able to distribute questionnaires throughout the community due to the application of the *Privacy Act* by Surfcoast Shire. (And it is understood that they are not the only council to have done so.) This has affected our ability to continue to collect and collate linear data from residents and therefore to be able to assess how stable local viewpoints are over time, thus strengthening argument on certain issues. It has also affected other local agencies in their capacity to either fundraise or gather information – for example Lorne Hospital and

the Aireys CFA. At the last AGM, Mark Dreyfus, the federal member for Isaacs, promised to seek advice on this issue, and did so, coming back with an opinion from the Privacy Commissioner that gave hope of a way around the Act. AIDA wrote to the CEO of the Surfcoast Shire with this advice, and after meeting with the CEO of the Lorne Hospital, has been joined in this action by the hospital. We are hopeful of a positive response from the shire and thank Mark Dreyfus most sincerely for his time and advice on this issue.

As also outlined in last year's president's report, the State Government Panel Report on implementation of the Aireys Inlet Commercial Areas Urban Design Guidelines was at that stage before council. AIDA was concerned that if the panel's recommendations were put into practice it would be to the detriment of the commercial areas of Aireys Inlet and against the outcomes of the extensive community consultation which had taken place. In April 2011 council submitted their response to the minister, which did not accept all of the panel's recommendations and retained the integrity of their original proposal. AIDA has been disappointed to find that the submission is still before the state government awaiting approval, some nine months after being sent. We were additionally concerned to hear at the VCAT hearing on the supermarket proposal, that counsel for the supermarket had made direct representation to the planning minister to reject the council's proposal on the grounds that it was inconsistent with the panel recommendations. Recent correspondence with council shows no clear knowledge as to when the final decision is to be made, but their officers share our concern at the delay. They have asked that a decision be made as soon as possible due to the length of time between submission and now.

In the last issue of the AIDA newsletter, you may have read an article outlining our concerns about parking issues in the top and bottom shops area, which have been compounded by applications for retail development within the bottom shops, which sought and were granted parking waivers. Parking will also be an issue in the top shops area when the apartments/offices planned for behind the general store are built, when the land to the left of the general store is developed, and when potentially the empty commercial land beside the post office is developed. From a meeting with council officers, it would appear that there can be no real planning as to possible acquisition of land for parking or even payment for waivers of retail parking spaces until a traffic management plan is undertaken by council. Following several submissions and meetings

with council, we understand that a proposal for allocation of funds for such a plan has been put down for the next budget. So, in an effort to get some accurate figures on the number of parked cars, AIDA has undertaken traffic counts of all car parks in Aireys Inlet on a Thursday and following Saturday between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm now on three occasions, covering both the off season and more recently the busy January period, and will continue these at regular intervals over the next twelve months. These figures will be helpful to us to use in consideration of any future commercial applications, and indeed show that all parking areas are under stress at certain times, that parking is occurring outside designated areas, and that both top and bottom shop areas can be full, not necessarily in peak periods. And this is before the wine bar opens, before any possible reapplication from the supermarket, and before the aforementioned development at the top shops. We will continue to share these results with council and push for a well-thought-out approach to a problem that will only worsen over time.

Redevelopment of the Skate Park car park has been budgeted for implementation in 2012-13, with planning occurring in this financial year. As you are aware, parking in this area has been poorly planned and to an extent ad hoc, and so the proposal to redevelop the area was very welcome. AIDA had submitted a response to the Split Point Masterplan and had asked to be kept informed of the design process to allow us to be sure of continued community involvement. I would like to give some background to this, as this issue has become contentious.

In late October the shire's infrastructure officers invited AIDA to send representatives to a meeting at the Aireys Reserve to review the preliminary plans for redevelopment. On seeing plans for two related options involving car and long-vehicle parking in the car park itself, it became clear to the AIDA committee members that they were unacceptable because they required a long exit sweep which would have resulted in a significant loss of the grassy area of the reserve. Recent community action had led to the rerouting of the Surf Coast Walk when it threatened open space, so AIDA was pretty clear as to likely reaction to this loss. AIDA's suggestion at this point was that long vehicles should be parked on the Great Ocean Road, perhaps adjacent to the V-line bus stop opposite the eastern end of the bottom shops, where already established vegetation would screen vehicles from the houses, and alighting passengers would be given the opportunity to contribute economically to the community by visiting the bottom shops as well as the lighthouse. The shire representatives then suggested a lay-by on the

Great Ocean Road adjacent to the Skate Park car park, but the VicRoads representative appeared concerned at the placement near the curve of the road and suggested movement of the lay-by a bit (to use his words) westward. The meeting then concluded with agreement that the two lay-by options would be considered and a revised plan prepared for further consultation.

AIDA received the revised plan and notice of the community consultation only shortly before the date of the consultation. Our enquiries to councillors and local residents raised concern that very few members of the public had actually been contacted and so we used our mailing list to alert members of the meeting and sent out a short summary of the state of play. AIDA was shocked when study of the proposal showed how far 'westward' the lay-by, now lay-byes, had been moved and how much this location would impact on views to the valley. Community feedback has confirmed the lack of support and anger at the thought of buses and other long vehicles parked along the Great Ocean Road at that point. Other suggestions for large-vehicle parking have been put forward by residents and sent to council. In discussion yesterday with local councillors, the current positioning for the lay-byes was unacceptable to all, and this

opinion will be relayed by them to council officers. The potential to extend the consultation time was discussed, but members should be aware that the closing date for feedback is currently 31 January. Any comment should be addressed to the council email site or post office box.

Public submissions for the Surf Coast Pathways Strategy Review closed in August 2011. AIDA was active in the formulation of the 2006 Pathways Strategy and welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the review. It was of concern that although meetings were held in June and July and advertisements placed in the newspapers, individual ratepayers were not notified, thus limiting community input. AIDA has always supported the current Pathways Strategy because it included only gravel pathways throughout Aireys Inlet and to Eastern View. Our 2011 submission again set this as a priority, and, amongst other things, emphasised the need for an informal curved design for paths, retention



of shared roadways where practicable, completion of pathway links throughout the district and establishment of additional pedestrian crossings over the Great Ocean Road. It has been disappointing to us that there has been no outcome from this review, and that the council website still says that 'a report recommending a revised strategy will be made to council in November 2011'. It is easy to be cynical, but our apprehension is that this revised strategy will be released quietly and that the review will contain the need for concrete paths in Aireys. This desire for concrete has been signalled in meetings with council officers. A concrete aggregate is to be the

surface for the pathway along the Great Ocean Road from the bottom shops to Fairhaven, and has been proposed for some paths in Precinct 2. Our view remains that these paths are not wanted by the community, are not necessary, and will forever change the natural environment which is Aireys Inlet.

Most of the planning issues have been outlined in our newsletters, and again we have to report the continuing pressure for development which is outside the provisions of the Surfcoast Planning Scheme – usually very large houses on smallish blocks. We remain concerned at the variance of decisions between different planning officers within

the shire and the precedent that is being set by this variance. We have participated in on-site meetings where agreement has been reached, and have gone to VCAT to oppose some more outrageous proposals. Each month we are sent a list of new applications, and each month we must decide the good from the bad.

One decision which must be acknowledged was the VCAT decision to disallow the application for the development of the supermarket. As you are aware, AIDA supported council in its opposition to this proposal, in that it failed to abide by the planning provisions. Despite counsel for the supermarket seeking to exclude AIDA from the proceedings based on our being a 'third party' applicant, we were able to speak on the issue of parking and obviously did so with great clarity as the basis of rejection was to be that 'on balance the reduction of parking sought was too great in this constrained location, that the interface with the Painkalac Creek corridor could

be improved, and other design details require resolution'. We understand that the applicant will be resubmitting the proposal for a supermarket in this location, and hope this time for adherence to the planning scheme and a sensible and intelligent response to parking issues.

In conclusion, I would like to express the executive's thanks to our councillors, especially our three local representatives. Their support and interest can always be counted on, and their tireless work on behalf of the Aireys community has to be recognised.

I would also like to thank the members of the AIDA committee. I started by identifying the input of the new members, but the enthusiasm and hard work of the entire committee is something special, and the

expertise, knowledge and good humour of committee members makes it such a pleasure (and I might say, a major learning curve) to be a member and chair of this committee.

I would also like to thank Nan McNab for her very professional editing and layout of our newsletters. This involves a lot of work and we are indebted to her.

And many thanks also to Lecki Ord who took over managing our membership, and has probably bitten off more than she expected, but has done an excellent job. We are now completely organised in this area.

And again, thank you to you, our members, for your support, input and encouragement during 2011. We couldn't have done it without you.



## Coastal Management Plan

The Great Ocean Road Coastal Committee has been working towards a Coastal Management Plan for the 37 km of foreshore that they manage. A draft plan will be released in late May or early June on the GORCC website <http://www.gorcc.com.au/>. The plan, when finalised, will be used to guide the sustainable management of our coast over the next five years and beyond.

As noted in our last newsletter, GORCC has carried out extensive community consultation via workshops

and surveys, a detailed report of which is also on their website. In addition GORCC has worked with a Community Reference Group and an Agency Reference Group to collect additional data and obtain directions. All this information was assembled and used to write the first draft of the Coastal Management Plan, which will form the basis for the next round of community consultation. AIDA encourages you to have your say.

*Gary Johnson*

## Planning

Our planning report is dominated by proposals for locations on the Great Ocean Road.

### Shop and Apartment 44 Great Ocean Road

This vacant block is located to the west of the Post Office at the top shops. The proposal includes two shops on the ground floor and two apartments above them. One shop will be for the chemist. See the perspective drawing below, from the Great Ocean Road.

AIDA is supportive of this application for many reasons. In contrast to a number of recent commercial proposals, no parking waiver is being requested. There will be parking behind the building for the tenants of the apartments and shops. Setbacks and building height are within guidelines. AIDA congratulated the applicant on a considerate proposal that does not push the boundaries. Additionally there may also be opportunities for off-street parking, but this is subject to negotiations with council.



### Tourist Accommodation 33 Great Ocean Road

On the opposite side of the Great Ocean Road from the top shops, an unusual proposal has been recommended by the planning officer and supported by the shire's planning committee. The application is for a two-storey building consisting of two dwellings and a caretaker facility. The former are intended for short-term self-contained accommodation.

The officer considers the building to be '... comparable to a large single residence and generally

complies with modified standards of ...' the neighbourhood character overlay. He believes that it is appropriate tourist accommodation adjacent to a commercial centre and public transportation. It is also close to the caravan park. The following condition was imposed: 'The caretaker's house ... must only be occupied by a person employed in the operation of the accommodation business ... and their partner &/or family member.'

### Former Surf Shop and Hardware 83–85 Great Ocean Road

The purchasers of the former surf shop (85 Great Ocean Road) have made many internal modifications to the shop in creating Freestone's Roadhaven. Roadhaven consists of a shop that faces the Great Ocean Road and sells vehicle-related products, a restaurant overlooking the Painkalac Creek and a vehicle display in between. AIDA was supportive of this development except for the failure to meet the parking requirement. The owner of another property at the bottom shops has taken the Freestones to VCAT over the parking issue. The hearing was held on 5 April. If all goes well for the owners, construction will begin on the restaurant's deck overlooking the creek.

The Freestones have also bought the site of the former hardware (83 Great Ocean Road). This purchase gives them an opportunity to informally use some of the hardware land for parking for the Roadhaven. This is potentially a very neat solution that will overcome their parking problems at the bottom shops. The roofing and panels in the building containing asbestos are being removed by accredited workers. The hardware will be extensively renovated in an Edwardian style with weatherboard cladding. The intention of the business is not to compete with Bunnings but to be a community hardware that caters to local trades and seeks niche markets. The Freestones welcome suggestions as to products to carry and services they might provide.

### Surf Life Saving Club 370 Great Ocean Road

Last drinks and food were served in the old clubhouse on 25 February. The building is now vacant and surrounded by a security fence. Building tender documents were issued to a short list of builders and the club awaits their reply. It is anticipated that demolition of the existing building will begin in late May.

## 11 Inlet Crescent

AIDA objected to the proposal for this property on several grounds including excessive plot ratio, insufficient front setback, and presence of a double storey in sensitive Painkalac Creek estuary zone where upper storey setback is required but not found in this application. The planning officer recommended that the application be rejected on the grounds of multiple non-compliance, with many points in common with AIDA and with a few more. Despite these failures, the planning committee authorised the application, considering it demonstrated 'excellence of design and exemplary coastal architecture'.

Gary Johnson

## Back to Square 1 in Precinct 2

There has been high drama in the saga of Precinct 2, Aireys Inlet. Council's proposed Special Charge Scheme – to fund drainage, road and pathways works – has been rejected by a majority of affected property owners and the scheme will not now go ahead.

Precinct 2 is, loosely, bounded by Bambra Road, Philip Street, the Great Ocean Road, Aireys Street, Pearse Road and McConachy Road. Objections from 188 owners were received for the 311 properties in the scheme – a total of 60 per cent in opposition. Under Section 163B (6) and (7) of the *Local Government Act*, council cannot now declare the scheme in its current form due to a majority of property owners objecting to the scheme.

An extremely well-organised team of local owners coordinated most of the objections in the face of many difficulties, including privacy regulations resulting in their not having access to absentee property owners' addresses.

The hearing of the submissions from objectors was conducted by council on 13 April 2012. A report will now be prepared for council summarising all the submissions made and recommending a decision on how the scheme might be revised in light of the submissions made. On 23 May 2012 council will then determine the future of the scheme.

AIDA made a strong submission to council regarding the inconsistency of the scope of the proposed scheme with earlier recommendations by council's Precinct 2 citizens' jury and also with the preservation of the informal coastal character of Aireys Inlet and District. Our submission read:

AIDA wishes to express its concerns to council in respect of:

- the failure of proper process in considering and acting on the recommendations of the Precinct 2 citizens' jury in accordance with council's terms of reference. We raised this matter previously with the infrastructure department, in our letter of September 2010, but received no acknowledgement or reply; and
- our primary objective as an association, which is to conserve the environment and natural qualities of our district, and specifically protect and enhance the informal coastal character of our townships.

## The Citizens' Jury Process

AIDA supports the citizens' jury model of local consultation on the design of proposed works programs, which in our view was well implemented by council for the Precinct 1 Special Charge Scheme in 2007.

However, for Precinct 2, we believe that the undertakings made by council in its citizens' jury's terms of reference, i.e. to:

- *Accept and use the Citizens' Jury report as the key decision-making tool in progressing the ... Scheme, and*
- *Provide reasons if Council resolves to amend or not accept any of the recommendations of the Jury*

have not been followed by council. A key area where this process was not followed was in determining the appropriate extent of road sealing in the current scheme.

As published on council's website, the citizens' jury initially proposed the sealing of 125 metres of the precinct's gravel roads, limited to the intersection of Pearse Road and Aireys Street.

Subsequently, after the reconvening of the jury at its request in mid-2009, and following further expert advice, the jury decided unanimously to increase the extent of sealing in Aireys Street and made split decisions on increasing the extent of sealing of Pearse Road and the sealing of part of Philip Street – together comprising the sealing of 690 metres of the precinct's gravel roads.

Subsequently, the officer's report to council at its 22 July 2009 meeting recommended that the jury's findings be supported, but with the additional sealing of the full lengths of Pearse Road, Beach Road and Philip Street, a total of 1,450 metres of the precinct's gravel roads. However, no attempt was made to provide reasons for these recommendations, which more than doubled the length of road sealing in the proposed special charge scheme. In the conclusion to the officer's report this substantial increase in scope was disingenuously and misleadingly described to

council as being a 'minor variation' of the citizens' jury's recommendations. This was disingenuous since it was well known at the time that the extent of road sealing was a highly contentious matter, both within the jury and also within the wider local community.

Following an additional community consultation process then established by council outside the citizens' jury process, and carried out in August–October 2010, 97 submissions opposed the then proposed scheme and 56 were in favour. Nevertheless, council resolved at its meeting of 23 November 2011 to give notice of its intention to declare the Precinct 2 Special Charge Scheme. However, once again, the extent of the scheme, as proposed in the officer's report and given public notice of by council, was further increased from its previously increased scope at the time of the consultation, and now also included the sealing of most of Aireys Street. This further additional scope increased the extent of road sealing recommended by the citizens' jury by more than 150 per cent – or 1,050 metres.

As before, the officer's report, and council's resolution, made no attempt to justify this recommendation, nor to '*provide reasons*' for significantly amending the recommendations of the citizens' jury, as specified in its terms of reference.

As citizens' jury deliberations require a high level of dedicated volunteer input and time from well-intentioned members of the local community, and a considerable effort and expense by council to conduct, the failure to properly follow the terms of reference have led in this case to community cynicism regarding council's motives, and therefore to an even higher level of opposition to the whole scheme, which in our view is unfortunate, as we believe the scheme includes a number of infrastructure improvements which are in fact required in the precinct.

## Local Character

The charge given to the Precinct 2 citizens' jury by council was to determine '*what road and drainage work do we need / want / can afford which preserves / enhances the environment.*'

AIDA is deeply concerned that the proposed scope of road sealing in the Special Charge Scheme fails completely to recognise and preserve – let alone enhance – the well-documented preferred local character of our area.

Informal gravel roads, vegetated nature strips and casual shared pedestrian use of roadways are central elements of the local character of Aireys Inlet to

Eastern View – as recognised, we believe, by both the community and the council. Supporting this policy, and giving it extra weight, the preservation of the unique character of Victoria's coastal townships is also an important objective of the Victorian Coastal Strategy. But this local character is under constant threat, and there are a number of challenges, circumstances and forces acting to degrade it.

For example, in the year 2000, 72 per cent of local residential roads were gravel and only 28 per cent were bituminised. But over the next five years, our gravel roads had been whittled back to 68 per cent. By 2010, on the completion of the Fairhaven Roads and Drainage Scheme (for which AIDA also opposed the sealing of roads) the proportion of our district's residential gravel roads had been further reduced to just 55 per cent – with an associated increase of 5.5 km in bituminised residential road surfacing – all in only ten years.

The graph on the next page illustrates this progressive bituminisation of our area's residential streets over the past decade and also shows the future impact of the present scope of the Precinct 2 Scheme.

One additional result of this process is that as local character is eroded in this way, it is very hard, or even impossible, to ever restore it.

Currently, in 2012, Precinct 2 roads are 52 per cent gravel and 48 per cent sealed (made up of Bambra Road and the smaller sealed roads in precinct subdivisions). The overall 'feel' of the precinct is still of pleasantly informal gravel roads with indigenously vegetated nature strips. However, council's proposed scheme will permanently transform and suburbanise this character, leaving only 20 per cent of the precinct's roads in gravel (limited to the northern end of the precinct) and 80 per cent of the roads constructed with a bitumen seal.

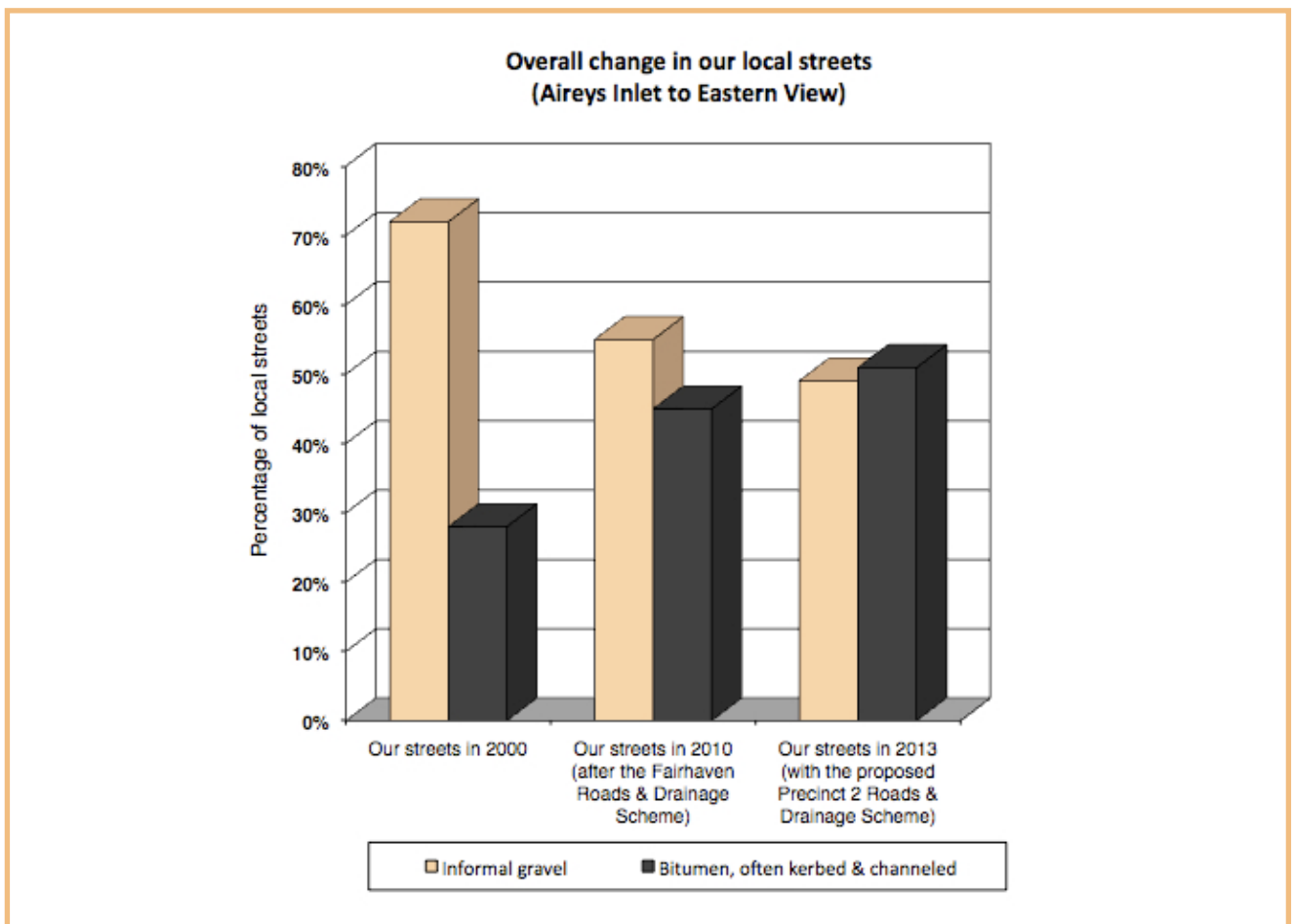
An additional problem with this trend is that sealed streets encourage increased local vehicle speeds, and also reduce tyre noise, which signals approaching vehicles to pedestrians. In a situation where most residential streets are, and will continue to be, shared by family groups as pedestrian paths, sealed roads will reduce pedestrian safety and local amenity.

AIDA believes that with such compelling reasons to preserve and enhance the local character of Aireys Inlet and district it should not be beyond our abilities within the shire to develop or identify ways of achieving this. After all, one of the citizens' jury's expert witnesses, George Giummarra, who is Australia's foremost expert on the design of unsealed roads, has already provided his opinion to the citizens' jury that this is achievable.

It is clear that unless the remorseless process of bituminising and concreting our township's roads and paths is recognised and reversed we are destined to become just another suburb situated along the Great

Ocean Road. AIDA appeals to council to act to protect Aireys Inlet's local character before it is too late, and not allow this to happen.

*Ian Godfrey*



## Which Path to Follow?



The Surfcoast Shire's draft 2012 Pathway Strategy Review – updating the 2006 version – was released recently. However, at their 22 February meeting Surfcoast Shire councillors decided to confer on whether to amend its Pathways Strategy, or to drop it altogether and consider new ways of planning and funding pathways. The strategy has been controversial, especially since last year residents in Jan Juc rejected levies for footpaths, which many had opposed. In recent years AIDA has made detailed submissions to the shire, supporting pathways which are either gravel or 'natural' (mown grass) and necessary to facilitate pedestrian access. We have consistently opposed other surfaces as out of keeping with the preferred rural character of our communities.

A noteworthy quote from the draft strategy, when referring to town paths, indicates that the message from the community got through. 'Other less urbanized towns such as Aireys Inlet and Moriac have been identified



with gravel town paths.' Our near neighbour, Anglesea, will get sealed town paths.

Although the fate of the draft strategy is yet to be decided, members of AIDA may be interested to see the relevant documents on the shire website: search under 'Pathways Strategy' for the 2012 Review, especially Part B, which has the full list of the shire's desired pathways. There are 86 paths listed for consideration for construction in Aireys Inlet and district. Only four of these were scheduled for completion by the shire in the ten-year period of the strategy. The priority paths, giving path code, location and surface type, are:

PP1538 From 21 Inlet Crescent to 89 Great Ocean Road, concrete.

PP1198 Near Skate Park to Painkalac Bridge, gravel

PP1162 From Great Ocean Road to Bambra Road along eastern side of Painkalac Creek, gravel

PP1207 Aireys Street to Eagle Rock Parade beside Sandy Gully, surface not specified but probably gravel

The full list of 86 paths for Aireys and Fairhaven also includes pathways to be funded by other land managers including VicRoads, DSE and GORCC. We note that work has begun on the extension of the Surf Coast Walk between the end of the Painkalac Wetland Trail and Fairhaven Beach, near the Surf Life Saving Club's beach access road. This development, reported in GORCC's *Coast News* (for March), will enable people to walk from Aireys Inlet to Fairhaven without using the Great Ocean Road. There is no indication when the other land managers will do their work but we hope some of the VicRoads crossings will be coordinated with other works like the Skate Park car park.

*Peter McPhee and Gary Johnson*

## Membership Renewal

We've had a great response to our membership renewal follow up during the last month and now 80 per cent of our members have renewed for this year. This means our support is high and it seems that our members appreciate the results of the committee's activities.

I will chase up once more at the middle of the year, but after that you may lose your newsletters if you haven't renewed. Send a cheque to me at:  
1702/1 William Street, Melbourne 3000 or pay on line to our bank account. Email me if you need details:

[lecki1@mac.com](mailto:lecki1@mac.com)

*Lecki Ord*

## Claire Roberts

*In Memoriam: Claire Roberts,  
who died on 7 February in her ninety-fourth year.*



Claire Allen Noble, later Roberts, was born in Geelong, grew up near Birregurra, went to school in Geelong, and then moved to Harrow where she and her husband brought up their four children on a sheep property.

She came to live in Aireys permanently in 1975 after her mother died, but Angahook had long been a Noble family house and she was descended from old Anglesea and Aireys families.

Everyone remarks about how modest, humble and self-effacing she was, never putting herself forward. But she was clear sighted and thoughtful, had good ideas and made positive suggestions. She loved working with others and was an effective team member, but took leadership when it was necessary. She knew how to build a community.

She was at the forefront of the establishment of the Tennis Club in 1977, along with Judith Venables, Jim Winter, and others.

She started the first Aireys book club, which is still going, and was actively involved with the Anglesea and District Historical Society.

Last year Claire received the Red Cross Gilt Rosette in recognition of over sixty years of active service, including meals on wheels, transport service, caring for those in need, bush fire support, and fundraising.

She was an active member of AIDA. Her cousin, Ian Noble, was AIDA's first president in 1966. She was invaluable to AIDA as the person who knew so much history of the place.

Claire seemed completely attuned to the natural world, observant, knowledgeable and active in its conservation. Together with Ted Faggetter, she

founded the Friends of Angahook–Lorne State Park to support the move to make it a national park, which happened in 2005.

We will never forget Claire's bravery in fighting the Ash Wednesday fire and trying to save her home, and all her family history. And we remember her resilience and resourcefulness in rebuilding her house and re-establishing her garden.

You could say Claire Roberts was the soul and spirit of Aireys Inlet, down the hill in Angahook – her lovely house and tranquil garden – under the tall trees by the Allen Noble Reserve, named after her father. We will miss her very much, but remember her with gratitude and admiration.

*Rachel Faggetter*

## Bus Behaving Badly



One could be forgiven for thinking that, with several explicit signs on access points indicating that Lighthouse Road and Federal Street were for cars and not large vehicles, that a bus would not get trapped at the base of the lighthouse.

Or maybe you would expect that the 'disabled parking only' and 'local traffic only' signs on Federal Street would be meaningful. Well think again and look at the photo below ...



## Split Point Lighthouse Precinct Update

During the last few months, attention in the Lighthouse Precinct has been on the upcoming redevelopment of the Aireys Inlet Reserve area. The reserve, which includes a large, open grassy sward with delightful views to the inlet, sand dunes, cliffs, lighthouse and ocean, holds special significance for many residents as it is one of the few recreational spaces in the area. It is the training ground for the Aireys Inlet Eels and home to the skate park, children's playground and barbeque facilities, as well as providing a venue for many other community activities. The reserve and its surrounds also provide facilities for visitors: school groups enjoy kayaking and other activities in the inlet, and for many tourists it is the perfect place to stop for a break.

It was therefore not surprising that many residents paid close attention when the Surf Coast Shire released their preliminary plans for 'Aireys Inlet Reserve and Skate Park Car Park Improvements' in late December 2011. As Barbara Fletcher reported in her President's Address to the AIDA AGM in January (see the first article of this newsletter) the aspect of the proposed plans that caused most community concern was the placement of long-vehicle parking lay-bys on the Great Ocean Road west of the bottom shops in a location that would impact greatly on views to the Painkalac Valley.

Other very contentious aspects were the construction of concrete paths within the reserve, the sealing of the car park in asphalt with associated concrete curbing and drains, and last but not least, the construction of a viewing platform on the inlet edge in the form of a giant hand cradling a timber boat.

Following the shire's public consultation at the reserve in early January, AIDA prepared a submission to the shire that not only raised the problem issues outlined above, but also objected to the plan for significant widening of the Great Ocean Road in the area. Furthermore, AIDA proposed that long-vehicle parking on the Great Ocean Road could be accommodated in a lay-by opposite the bottom shops and strongly supported suggestions from the community for additional parking facilities for long vehicles in the area west of the Painkalac Bridge.

On 26 March 2012, the shire released revised options for the Aireys Inlet Reserve and Skate Park Car Park Improvements on their website as part of the agenda papers and appendices for the 28 March council meeting. Detailed review of the new proposals indicated

that significant improvements had been incorporated into the plans: AIDA was very pleased that:

- i the long-vehicle parking had been moved eastward on the Great Ocean Road into the bottom shops area where valley views would not be threatened,
- ii the use of concrete paths had been abandoned in favour of Gherang gravel (the same material used by GORCC for the Surf Coast Walk),
- iii that vegetation removal would be minimised, and
- iv that the viewing platform and associated branch pathway would not be constructed.

However AIDA was very concerned that proposals for asphalt sealing of the car park and associated concrete curbing and drains were retained. Furthermore AIDA was disappointed that short shrift had been given to community suggestions for long-vehicle parking west of the Painkalac Creek. Concerns about widening of the Great Ocean Road were not addressed in the shire's revised plan as such works are the sole purview of VicRoads.

AIDA's responses were circulated to shire councillors shortly before the council meeting, but at the meeting it was learned that our three local councillors had already formulated their own response in the form of a detailed resolution, which was passed unanimously and may be viewed on the Surfcoast Shire website [http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/My\\_Council/Agendas\\_Minutes/Council\\_Agendas\\_Minutes](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/My_Council/Agendas_Minutes/Council_Agendas_Minutes). With respect to specific features of the improvement works, AIDA is very pleased that the resolution endorses the use of 'gravel pave' for the car park as a surface most in line with the natural values of the precinct, and that shire officers are requested to maximise the use of the existing gravel parking areas on both sides of the Great Ocean Road west of the Painkalac Bridge for bus and long-vehicle parking. The latter is of importance since the resolution also removes essentially all provision for long-vehicle parking on the Great Ocean Road in the bottom shops area, which AIDA had hoped would eliminate the negative impact of long vehicles entering the Lighthouse Precinct. As it now stands, mini-buses (12 or fewer passengers including the driver) that can be accommodated in car-parking spaces will be permitted access to all parts of the precinct. Larger buses will be restricted to 'drop-off' only, and must travel only around the lower level of the precinct, entering at Inlet Crescent south and exiting back onto the Great Ocean Road at Inlet Crescent north. No parking for large vehicles (including large campervans and cars

with caravans) will be available within the precinct. It is obvious that directional and regulatory signage will be crucial to traffic management in the area and AIDA has very recently attended a workshop hosted by shire infrastructure officers aimed at optimising traffic management while reversing the proliferation of signs of all sorts within the precinct.

Also included in the resolution are clauses that will greatly improve the appearance of the Great Ocean Road and surrounding verges in the bottom shops area and the Painkalac Valley. Minimal vegetation removal is to occur in the design and construction work and a revegetation plan is to be developed to soften and screen the car park and pathways. In addition, a landscaping plan is to be prepared for the verge along both sides of the Great Ocean Road between the Painkalac Bridge and the Skate Park and Food Store

to prevent ongoing 'overflow' parking at peak times and to soften and screen the proposed pathways along the Great Ocean Road. Furthermore, VicRoads will be requested that prior to the start of any design work for the pedestrian refuge or any proposed road widening, council and the broader Aireys Inlet community have the opportunity to contribute to the design of the proposed infrastructure solutions.

Finally, and of continuing importance into the future, a crucial and very welcome feature of the council resolution is that all future infrastructure solutions in sensitive coastal areas should have a design approach in sympathy with the local neighbourhood character and that engagement with communities occur prior to the start of design work to ensure communities contribute to proposed infrastructure solutions. BRAVO!

*Frieda Wachsmann and Mary-Jane Gething*



## AIDA Committee 2012

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