



AIDA

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Urquhart Bluff • Aireys Inlet • Fairhaven • Moggs Creek • Eastern View



President's report to AGM 2018

Saturday 28 April

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional lands of the Wadawurrung people and pay my respect to their elders both past and present.

Welcome to our ward councillors, Libby Coker and Margot Smith, and the shire's CEO, Keith Baillie. Once again, we thank you for giving us your Saturday afternoon. We really appreciate the support you give AIDA and the responses we receive from you, and the shire's staff, on the many issues we raise with you each year. Cr Clive Goldsworthy was also invited but again is an apology.

Welcome to all AIDA members. At this time last year we were anxiously waiting for the shire's response to two applications to change the protections over the Painkalac Valley, and we were relieved with the outcomes, which retain all these protections.

However, as usual the valley remains very much the

centre of our attention. Many of you will be aware that AIDA and ANGAIR came together a couple of years ago to form 'The Painkalac Project' (TPP) to explore the possibility of public fundraising to purchase the valley blocks that are for sale. Unfortunately, TPP has not yet been able to reach an agreement with the owner, who is now proceeding to put a house on each of the three blocks. TPP is now investigating whether it is possible, and whether we can get agreement, for the majority of the wetlands to be vested in council with a Trust for Nature covenant over it.

In the meantime, the shire has begun investigating the potential for a walking track in the Painkalac Nature Reserve to link to a revitalised area along the creek behind the Bottom Shops. AIDA will be joining TPP on the project working group and will advocate for a comprehensive community consultation program as part of the project. Should the currently privately owned valley wetlands be successfully vested in council this

walking track could be extended into the valley. Care will be needed to ensure that any new walking tracks do not impinge on existing flora and fauna and that we keep uppermost in our planning the original goal of regenerating and interpreting the wetlands.

Our newsletters this year reported on the results of the audit of compliance with the Painkalac Valley Conservation Management Plan (CMP) conducted by the shire. One of the requirements of the CMP is that the large ephemeral wetlands must be fenced before any houses are built. This fencing has been installed and we were looking forward to watching the wetlands regenerate. However, we were concerned to see horses still grazing within the fenced areas. We raised our concerns with the shire's planning department and were surprised to hear that as the CMP doesn't specify that grazing is not allowed it may continue for parts of the year. We are seeking legal advice about the interpretation of the wording in the CMP.

AIDA recently made a submission to the Great Ocean Road Taskforce, which has been asked by the state government to look at governance issues for the Great Ocean Road and consult with the Traditional Owners, responsible public entities, key stakeholders and the community. The taskforce will report within twelve months, making recommendations about boosting tourism expenditure and investment along the Great Ocean Road, better support for local communities to benefit from the tourist economy, and to maintain appropriate environmental and landscape protections.

In my president's report last year I said that communities like ours need to be in the conversation about the increasing numbers of tourists along the Great Ocean Road. Tourism along the road must be environmentally and socially sustainable. There are too many examples from overseas where the sheer number of tourists has severely degraded the place being visited, the experience and lives of the local community.

It is reassuring that the taskforce recognises the need to slow down visitors travelling along the Great Ocean Road and to increase the amount these tourists spend. However, it is disappointing to read that the taskforce seems to accept that visitor numbers will continue to increase and that it is not tasked with seeking mechanisms to limit this increase.

It is unrealistic to imagine that the road, the environment and our communities can continue to accommodate increasing numbers of tourists without diminishing the experience for all. We suggested that the taskforce look at examples from overseas where tolls and booking systems are used as a way of controlling tourist numbers.

In our submission we argued strongly for the focus to be on sustainable tourism and for the

encouragement of 'slow tourism'. We need fewer tourists, but for those who do come, to stay longer.

Increasing numbers of tourists do not build a sustainable tourism industry.

The UN's Sustainable Tourism Strategy is very clear about this. There is a desperate need for the taskforce to investigate overseas experiences of mass tourism and what is being done to make tourism sustainable in other places, especially environmentally sensitive landscapes.

The Great Ocean Road is certainly a fragile landscape not capable of sustaining mass tourism while maintaining its environmental and social sustainability.

Studies of the impact of tourism the world over demonstrate that uncontrolled short-term visits by large numbers of tourists benefit only a few businesses, impose needs for facilities which are expensive for local councils, and have negative effects on the environment and local residents.

What we don't need is an increase in the numbers making the one-day dash from Melbourne to the Twelve Apostles and back. Our submission also suggested the taskforce should look at increasing the use of the inland route as a viable way to access the attractions along the Great Ocean Road.

We also asked for recommendations to find ways to stop tourists from continuing to pour down the Great Ocean Road on Code Red and Extreme Fire Days when many of us are following the CFA advice and leaving.

The number of tourists along the road has already increased markedly over the past ten years. It is vitally important for our community that tourism is sustainable and a continuing increase in the number of day-tourists is not facilitated by the taskforce's recommendations.

One of the most significant issues we have dealt with this year is the Unsealed Road and Street Network Strategy that has been developed by the shire. This will be used to assist the shire with its decisions about which unsealed roads should be preserved and which could be sealed.

AIDA submitted a comprehensive response with many suggested changes. A few weeks ago we were provided with the final draft and were pleased to see that some of our suggestions and requested changes had been accepted; however, we were troubled to see that our major concern was not addressed. This is that local community perceptions and values, and the preference for unsealed streets in the shire's Planning Scheme, as an important part of local character, should be included in the strategy's multi-criteria decision-making assessment tool. Currently they are not.

In our surveys the community consistently tells us that the unmade roads in our area are highly valued

by most people and are seen as an integral part of our neighbourhood character. We wrote to the shire with our concerns about this omission and are hopeful of a positive response.

The committee wrote to VicRoads following the release of its first plans for the Moggs Creek Bridge replacement. We were very pleased that VicRoads is consulting with the community about these works and that many of our suggestions were included into the updated plans. Our remaining concern is that VicRoads is still planning a pedestrian refuge, which will require a light and associated degradation of night views for residents, and so we are hoping they will abandon plans for the refuge.

As an aside, when we met with VicRoads recently about the Moggs Creek Bridge, I raised the failed landscaping at the Fairhaven Underpass, where most of the larger plants have died. I was assured that replacement planting will be done over this winter or spring.

During the year the committee continued to review all the planning applications for our area from Urquhart Bluff to Eastern View and was involved in two VCAT appeals. We have also been involved in consultations about the future of the Memorial Arch, the older people's housing proposal for Fraser Drive, and the federal government's Black Spot Program, as well as some continued discussions about the new pedestrian refuge at the Bottom Shops and the repainting and landscaping at the Fairhaven Underpass. We also had meetings with the State Planning Minister, Dick Wynne; Richard Riordan, the State Member for Polwarth; and the new CEO of GORRC, Vanessa Schernickau, as well

as several meetings with VicRoads and with the shire and our ward councillors.

It is with great relief that we note that the Aireys area will be getting enhanced mobile phone coverage under the federal government's Black Spot Program. AIDA has been advocating for this for many years and we are very pleased that the new facility will be operating by the end of the year.

We ended last year with 467 members, which was our highest membership for many years. It is our membership that gives AIDA its strength. I hope all of last year's members renew their membership. Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join up if they agree with our aims and objectives.

Our thanks go to the many shire staff with whom we have had dealings during the year. In a small community like ours it is amazing to see how often issues arise which see the AIDA committee writing to or calling the shire.

Our thanks also go to Nan McNab who continues to give her professional touch to our newsletters. Nan has been producing the AIDA newsletter for an extraordinary fifteen years.

I will finish with thanks to all the AIDA committee members for their hard work during the year. We are fortunate to have such a range of expertise among our members. It is with some sadness that I have to report that four of our committee are leaving us for various reasons – Angela Berry, Gretel Lamont, Adam Rudy and Greg Day. Their input and expertise will be missed and I thank them all for what they have given us.

Charlotte Allen
President

Annual general meeting

The Aireys inlet & District Association Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday 28 April 2018 and attended by forty-two AIDA members and five guests. AIDA president Charlotte Allen welcomed councillors Margot Smith and Libby Coker and CEO of the Surf Coast Shire Keith Baillie to speak on current issues.

Margot and Libby said they would welcome AIDA's feedback on the council draft budget. Consultation on the future use of the Alcoa site in Anglesea is continuing. Margot noted that feedback from the Anglesea community showed a consensus against too much development and support for maintaining the diversity and character of the area.

Keith Baillie said that a current issue of interest to AIDA is Alcoa's reopening of Coalmine Road, which until

about ten years ago was used mostly by locals as a back way to Aireys via its connection to Bambra Road. The road is in a very poor state and would need significant expenditure before reopening to traffic. Use of the road as an Anglesea bypass could impact properties along Distillery Creek Road and Bambra Road.

Keith Baillie then raised the management of the Great Ocean Road as another issue likely to be of interest to AIDA. Currently governance of the GOR is by sixteen different authorities. A state government-initiated GOR taskforce, under the bipartisan joint chairmanship of ex-transport ministers Peter Bachelor and Terry Mulder, is considering the possibility of an overarching authority for the whole length of the GOR. Questions include how this would interact with the current authorities. Requirements for funding investments on and along the GOR raise the issue of how growth in tourist

numbers can be managed and revenue generated without unreasonably affecting residents of the region and changing the desirable character of the coast and its communities. Keith Baillie is on the taskforce representing the Surf Coast Shire. NB: AIDA's submission to the GOR taskforce is included in this newsletter.

Finally Keith Baillie noted that increases in council rates are capped at 2.5 per cent in line with the CPI. The garbage charge is a particular difficulty with the costs increasing dramatically, but council intends to maintain recycling services.

Several AIDA members commented on the Painkalac Valley, supporting public ownership and rehabilitation of the valley land but cautioning about the pathway and the effect of increased tourist numbers on the resident kangaroos and birdlife.

In response to a question about aged-care services for elderly people in the area, Margot Smith and Keith Baillie said that changes legislated as part of 'My Aged Care' will lead to increased privatisation. Council is still working out its role under requirements for competitive neutrality. The main change is that each person is empowered to choose their provider and council needs to decide if it will be a provider or not. However, council's position is that it will not leave the market and abandon people with no access to services. The current level of subsidy is about \$1.4 million.

AIDA community meeting

A motion was proposed 'that the AIDA Committee consider holding the AGM in early January each year or, if this is not practical due to concerns about days of high

fire risk, hold a community meeting in early January'.

After considerable discussion the motion was passed unanimously with advice to the committee that the members present at the meeting strongly supported there being two meetings each year, a community meeting or forum in January sponsored by AIDA and the AGM later in the first half of the year, preferably during the Easter school holidays.

The AGM was followed by short presentations from two students who are doing PhD research relevant to our area. Ross Wissing is investigating the role of the home garden in sustainably meeting human and ecological needs in urban Geelong. Krista Bonfantine, a watershed ecologist, shared a brief description of her research project, which is focused on the Painkalac Creek.

Membership fee and due date

The AIDA membership fee will remain at \$10 per voting member, i.e. a single membership will be \$10 and a family membership \$20, and the due date will remain 1 January.

Committee members for 2018–2019

Charlotte Allen thanked retiring committee members Angela Berry, Greg Day, Gretel Lamont and Adam Rudy for their service and then reported that, there being no more than one person nominated for each position on the committee, the persons listed below were declared to have been elected to the new committee. Chris Ryan sent a nomination form after the meeting and has joined the committee.

AIDA committee 2018–19

President	Charlotte Allen	c.allen@bigpond.net.au
Vice-president	Gary Johnson	garycj@internode.on.net
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Great Ocean Road Taskforce

Submission

AIDA made the following submission to the Great Ocean Road Taskforce on 12 April 2018.

This submission to the Great Ocean Road Taskforce on the future management of the entire road is made on behalf of The Aireys Inlet and District Association (AIDA).

AIDA welcomes the establishment of this taskforce.

We note that its objectives are to:

1. Review the effectiveness of current Great Ocean Road governance arrangements.
2. Undertake extensive consultation with the Traditional Owners of Country, responsible public entities, key stakeholders and the community.
3. Report to the Victorian Government within twelve months with recommended reforms to governance arrangements for the Great Ocean Road and its landscapes.
4. Make recommendations on governance reforms to:
 - a. boost tourism expenditure and investment along the Great Ocean Road
 - b. better support local communities to benefit from the visitation economy
 - c. maintain appropriate environmental and landscape protections.'

An introduction to AIDA

AIDA's chief area of interest is the preservation and improvement of the coastal environment, its hinterland, foreshore and coastal communities from Urquhart Bluff to Eastern View. AIDA was established more than 50 years ago and has about 450 members from the area. Our members are a mix of permanent residents and those with holiday homes. AIDA works closely with the Surf Coast Shire on all planning matters, including the development of policies such as the area's structure plan and neighbourhood character guidelines.

AIDA seeks the maintenance of the low-key, non-suburban characteristics of our area, protection of the night sky and the natural environment and its flora and fauna. The landscapes and largely unspoiled views of our area must be fully protected from unsympathetic developments, a recent example of which is the Fairhaven Underpass. This, and works such as the enlarged roundabout with lights in Anglesea, introduce unfortunate suburban elements into the environment.

AIDA does not see the need for any major infrastructure changes in our area except building additional public toilets near the community hall in Aireys Inlet. We would not support any project to widen the Great Ocean Road.

AIDA has a significant interest in this taskforce's objectives and trust that our submission will be considered carefully during the taskforce's deliberations.

AIDA's comments and recommendations

Our first recommendation is that the focus of the taskforce should be broadened to include the many benefits of promoting the use of the inland routes to access the various attractions of the Great Ocean Road. This 'regional' approach would have the benefits of:

Reducing the traffic demand along the Great Ocean Road itself, allowing it to retain its classic two-lane scenic qualities,

Creating completely new, alternative tourism-related developments and economic growth across the whole Princess Highway to Great Ocean Road region,

Removing many of the buses and large vehicles from directly using the Great Ocean Road,

Greatly increasing bush fire safety and providing alternative escape options, and

Reducing road accident related blockages of the Great Ocean Road in the peak season.

In your survey, you asked the following question: 'Do you work for, own or operate a business, or are you a member of a community organisation that benefits from visitors to the Great Ocean Road Region? Please describe the key issues.'

AIDA is a significant and important local community organisation but we do not benefit from the tourists who visit our area. It is unfortunate that community organisations, or members of the public, have not specifically been asked to comment on this question as we also have issues with tourists in the area. We recognise the economic importance of the tourist dollar but there is also a desperate need to recognise the negative impacts of mass tourism on the local community. These include road and parking congestion and over-crowding of public spaces, poor driving practices, and unauthorised toilet stops. There is a need to recognise these negative impacts, and any planning for the Great Ocean Road needs to include strategies to reduce these.

We believe there is a need to find a mechanism to control the increasing number of tourists travelling the Great Ocean Road, particularly those who make it a day trip from Melbourne. We would welcome a discussion about finding ways to limit the numbers of tourists accessing the road, whether by car, minibus or large bus.

It is unrealistic to imagine that the road, the environment and our communities can continue to accommodate increasing numbers of tourists without diminishing the experience for all.

The taskforce must ensure that it investigates plentiful examples from overseas where visitor numbers are controlled, rather than assuming – as stated in the taskforce terms of reference – that the final objective is to increase tourism expenditure and investment and the take of the tourist dollar. There are many popular tourist destinations where numbers are limited either through tolls (Torndirrup National Park near Albany WA or Yosemite National Park in the US) or the need to book (Alhambra, Granada, Spain).

The environmental impacts of mass tourism have been shown in many places around the world to be not economically or socially sustainable. Increasing numbers of tourists do not build a sustainable tourism industry. The UN's Sustainable Tourism Strategy is very clear about this. There is a desperate need for the taskforce to investigate overseas experiences of mass tourism and what is being done to make tourism sustainable in other places, especially environmentally sensitive landscapes.

The Great Ocean Road is certainly a fragile landscape not capable of sustaining mass tourism while maintaining its environmental and social sustainability.

Attracting tourists travelling by car (or public transport) to stay longer on the Great Ocean Road would provide much greater benefit to the local economy than encouraging greater numbers (and bus loads) of day visitors. Call it 'nature-based tourism', 'ecotourism' or 'slow tourism', many townships on the coast have all the attributes required to attract visitors for a multi-day holiday – not in the summer season when the area is already crowded and accommodation fully booked, but throughout the rest of the year when the area remains exquisitely beautiful but accommodation is plentiful and facilities are underused.

One of AIDA's major aims has long been 'to promote Aireys Inlet as a destination for nature-based tourism that offers a variety of walking experiences including our beaches, cliff platforms, wetlands, estuary and river, and bush trails in the National and Forest Parks of the hinterland'. To this end, AIDA has been very active in promoting the development and maintenance of a network of walking paths and unsealed shared roadways that link all parts of the township to the coastal and hinterland walking trails.

However, it is obvious that large numbers of people will destroy the landscape (flora and fauna) they have come to see and it is important that the taskforce focuses on slow tourism and not mass tourism.

Fire safety

AIDA asks that the taskforce make recommendations about not travelling along the Great Ocean Road during

days of Extreme Fire Danger and Code Red. Most of those who live on the coast, or have holiday homes there, have a fire plan for these days and for many it is to leave, and leave early, as recommended by the CFA. It is crazy, and frightening, to see cars, buses and minivans full of tourists travelling down the Great Ocean Road heading to the Twelve Apostles on these days while the locals, following their fire plan and advice of the CFA, are leaving the area and heading towards Geelong.

These tourists would have no idea what to do in the event of a fire and a mechanism needs to be found to prevent their access to the coast on days of Extreme Fire Danger or Code Red.

Chapter three – the case for change

This chapter recognises the importance of local communities but is largely about accommodating greater numbers of tourists. The taskforce terms of reference are inherently contradictory, seeking to both 'boost tourism expenditure and investment along the Great Ocean Road [and] better support local communities to benefit from the visitation economy' and to 'maintain appropriate environmental and landscape protections'. How will these conflicting aims be reconciled?

We believe more emphasis should be placed on the well-being of local communities. While we recognise the need for an integrated decision-making framework or body for the whole of the Great Ocean Road, we are concerned that this could reduce AIDA's ability to be involved in the decision-making about development or change in our area. At the moment we have a significant input into decisions that affect our area and, through this, AIDA has been able to protect and maintain the low-key, non-urbanised nature of our coastal communities, which is so highly valued by residents and visitors alike.

AIDA requests that an environmental impact statement be prepared before there is any consideration of boosting tourism expenditure. This could investigate ways of supporting local communities to benefit from the visitor economy and maintaining landscape and environmental protections. A wide selection of professionals could contribute including geographers, geologists, engineers, scientists, etc.

We note, too, that there have been repeated and often wasteful attempts to clarify and reform responsibilities for this coast, most recently in the 2017 revisions to the Marine and Coastal Act. Are these now to be set aside?

AIDA is pleased that this taskforce has been established and agrees that there is a need for a

change to the way the Great Ocean Road is managed but we would hope that any solutions fully consider the needs of those who live along the road as well as tourists and that our recommendations and comments about the dangers of mass tourism are carefully considered.

If you require clarification of any of AIDA's points or further information please contact me on 0418 567 977 or at c.allen@bigpond.net.au

Yours sincerely

Charlotte Allen, President, AIDA

Coalmine Road community meeting

As part of the rehabilitation works at its former coal mine near Anglesea, Alcoa is required to realign and enable the reopening of Coalmine Road. (The road has been closed for some years as the edge of the coal mine was too close to the road.)

The realignment works will take place shortly and raise a question for the Surf Coast Shire: Should Coalmine Road remain blocked off, should it be available for emergency vehicles only, or should it be reopened for general traffic?

The reopening of Coalmine Road would allow vehicles to travel along it to Distillery Creek Road and onto Bambra Road or Old Coach Road, effectively providing a bypass around Anglesea. This could be very popular over the summer months in particular to avoid the ongoing traffic jams at the Anglesea roundabout.

We have also been advised that the increasingly popular GPS devices take note of traffic flows and the more traffic they record the more likely they are to direct traffic along a route. This could mean the inexorable growth of traffic along Coalmine Road, Distillery Creek Road, and Bambra Road, especially if the necessary roadworks included making it a bitumen road.

The AIDA committee is very concerned about the potential for a huge increase in traffic down Bambra Road, Bimbadeen Drive and Old Coach Road should Coalmine Road be reopened and improvements made to Distillery Creek Road. We believe it is inappropriate for Anglesea's traffic problem to be redirected into our community.

The shire has yet to consider whether or not Coalmine Road should be reopened and the AIDA committee wants to make sure the community has an opportunity to have its view heard prior to any discussion and decision by the shire.

AIDA is hosting a Community Meeting in the Aireys Inlet Hall on Saturday 4 August at 11.00 am to discuss the issue.

The Surf Coast Shire's CEO, Keith Baillie, and Anglesea

Ward Councillors, Libby Coker and Margot Smith, have agreed to come to the meeting to discuss the options and take questions and listen to your feedback.

This is an important issue for our community and the meeting will be open to AIDA members and non-members. We encourage as many AIDA members as possible to attend.

Charlotte Allen

Walk the Painkalac

Surf Coast Shire is currently undertaking a feasibility study for the development of walking opportunities within the Painkalac Valley including the existing Painkalac Nature Reserve. Included as part of the project scope is an investigation into the opportunity to create a revitalised area along the creek bank behind the Bottom Shops as a destination point from which people could set out on a walk, or walks, and to improve integration with the shopping precinct and open space. A project working group has been formed as part of the project governance to help provide information and feedback into the project. AIDA is part of, and directly represented on, the Project Working Group. Prior to consulting with the broader community the feasibility of any proposal needs to be tested. In order to determine the feasibility of any of the proposals the shire must consult with other key external land management agencies such as Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, which also have responsibilities over the area.

Once the feasibility of any proposal has been tested with the other agencies and authorities it is intended an opportunity will be provided for the broader community to review any proposal and to share their views.

Gary Johnson



Painkalac valley

In our March newsletter we reported that the owner of the three valley blocks was proceeding to build a house on each. Construction of the first of these houses, on Lot 1, has commenced.



We anticipate that the house on Lot 2 will be built soon. As many will be aware, Lot 3 has been sold to the owners of Blazing Saddles who sent this message to AIDA members:

To the AIDA community

We have recently purchased the 84 acre lot 23–79 Bambra Rd. While we understand that some members would have liked to have seen this land brought in to public hands it has been on the market for 10 years and this has not eventuated. Many people will be pleased it remains as open grazing land.

Aireys has been our home for 30 years. We are integrally connected to the community and to our unique environment. Our aim is to continue grazing while restoring and rehabilitating key areas. We will be seeking advice about how best to achieve this. There may be future opportunity for some areas to be seeded back to public ownership and we remain open to discussions regarding this.

Our previous purchase was met with distrust and miscommunication. After decades of adversarial conduct between AIDA and John Allen, we believe our purchase is a positive step forward. A communicative and respectful dialogue in to the future is welcomed.

Yours sincerely

Tim & Caroline Wood

Conservation Management Plan

AIDA will continue to be vigilant to ensure that all the conditions in the Section 173 agreement and in the CMP continue to be met.

As mentioned in the President's Report to the AGM, AIDA sought and received legal advice about the shire's interpretation of the wording in the CMP with regards to the now fenced ephemeral wetlands in the Painkalac Valley. (The shire believes that grazing at times of the year is still permitted.) While grazing of stock is not explicitly prohibited by the CMP, our lawyers agreed that it was not the intention of the tribunal for grazing

to continue once the wetlands had been fenced. We provided our legal advice to the shire and will be meeting with them soon to discuss the issue.

Charlotte Allen

Unsealed road and street network strategy

At the Surf Coast Shire Council meeting of 22 May council adopted the Unsealed Road And Street Network Strategy.

The new strategy is a combination of the Sealed Road Network Management Plan 2015 and the Unsealed Road Network Strategy, which is the outcome of a report commissioned by council from consultants, AECOM.

This strategy is aimed at better management of council's 574 km of unsealed roads to replace an *ad hoc* response to residents' requests for the sealing of roads.

AECOMM has designed an assessment tool to help better identify unsealed roads that require attention. This tool takes into account strategic importance, for example a school bus route; road surface conditions; severity of vehicle crashes; population growth; benefit to bordering dwellings; and traffic volumes. Each of these criteria is assigned a weighting to arrive at a final score.

Of major concern to AIDA is that the strategy does not take into account neighbourhood character. AIDA can see no reason why neighbourhood character was not included as one of the assessment tools. The final draft of the report did acknowledge that local community response to upgrades should always be considered, but sadly this paragraph was removed in the council agenda (adopted) copy of the strategy.

Local roads that were previously ear-marked for sealing, but then rejected due to residents' concerns, have scored highly on the assessment tool. This may be in part due to the omission of a neighbourhood character criterion, but the result is that these roads may now be reconsidered for sealing when they were previously unequivocally rejected.

Local community sentiment is well-documented both by the shire and AIDA. AIDA's questionnaires of resident viewpoints over the last thirty years, the Statement of Neighbourhood Character in the Planning Scheme, and the decisions of two council citizens' juries on local road sealing all support the maintenance of unsealed roads.

Another concern for AIDA was the paucity and inaccuracy of data, which results in the traffic volume scores being questionable. Data for many unsealed roads do not exist, or where they do exist, measurements were not taken consistently, nor did they take into account seasonal variation.

The sealing of a road is mainly funded by a special

rate or charge scheme. The adoption of the scheme assumes there is a benefit to residents, but does not take into account the benefit of retaining an unsealed road. It has been a long-held belief by AIDA that sealing of a road may be detrimental to residents due to increased traffic volumes and speed in residential streets, as well as loss of neighbourhood character. This has been proven true where streets have been unsympathetically sealed in the past. The cost to residents, who are often opposed to the sealing of their road, is yet another compelling reason why community attitudes should have been included in the tool.

At the council meeting of 22 May AIDA decided to approach councillors with a question with notice addressed to councillors and council officers. The question asked was:

AIDA is concerned that the strategy's proposals as applied to Aireys Inlet and district's streets fail to reflect their preferred local character – as per the Statement of Neighbourhood Character in the Planning Scheme, the decisions of two council citizens' juries on local road sealing and the 75 per cent majority view expressed by local residents in AIDA's opinion surveys. Sadly 23 per cent of local streets have been sealed since the inclusion of the Neighbourhood Character Overlay in the Planning Scheme and the Unsealed Road and Street Network Strategy's proposals would further reduce unsealed local streets to around only 20 per cent.

AIDA requests council does not adopt the Unsealed Road and Street Network Strategy until it can be demonstrated that the strategy's proposals reflect the preferred character of Aireys Inlet to Eastern View's streets

How can the proposed strategy be modified to better value and protect the character of unsealed streets in our area as preferred in the Planning Scheme and as strongly valued by local residents?

The question was answered by Anne Howard, General Manager Governance and Infrastructure. Anne said that the strategy should not be considered as a piece of work that is directed at trying to seal unsealed roads, but rather about recognising roads that need investment, and that this investment will not always be about the sealing of a road. She said many factors, including neighbourhood character, would be considered when determining the appropriate treatment for a road, only one of which was sealing.

Later, when the adoption of the strategy was being debated by councillors, both councillors Coker and Smith reiterated this, both using Aireys as an example of where treatments such as clearing roadside vegetation may be preferred to sealing. Both

mentioned safety as a major factor in deciding if a road will be targeted.

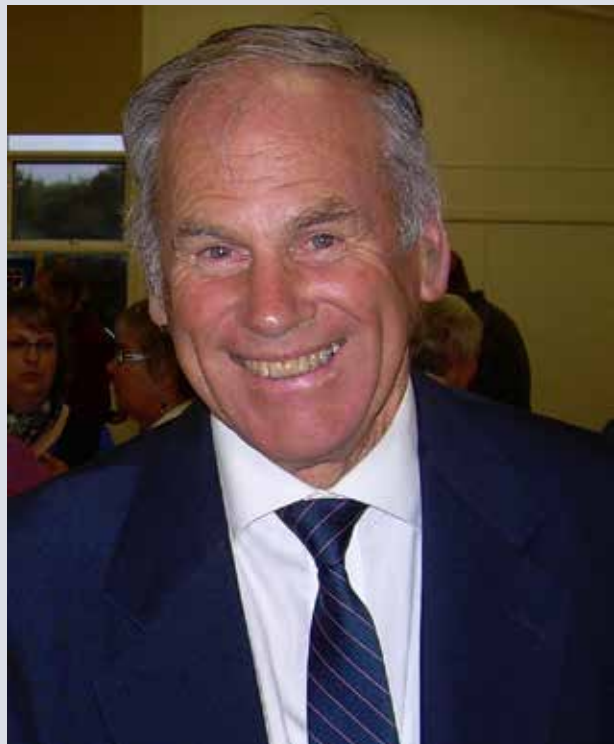
In summary, we have views expressed by councillors and a council officer about the importance of considering neighbourhood character in deciding whether a road should be sealed, but an inadequate assessment tool. We will now have to wait and see what the outcome will be, especially in regard to our highly valued unsealed roads, previously considered and then subsequently rejected for sealing.

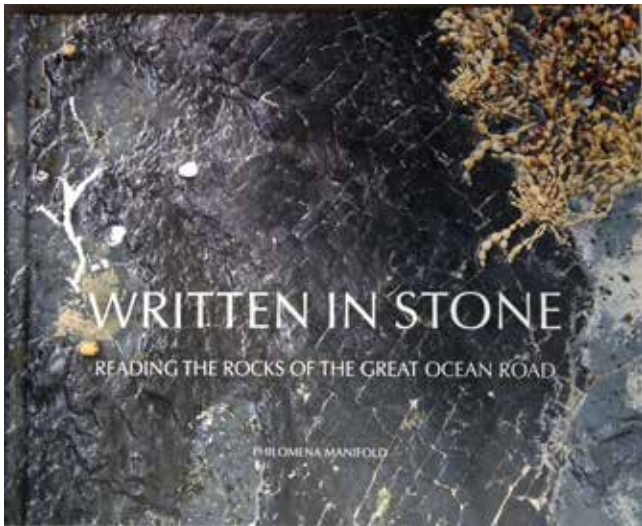
Frieda Wachsmann

Vale Lachie Richardson

Aireys Inlet has lost a long-term resident and AIDA has lost one of our longest-term supporters. Lachie Richardson died on 1 June. Lachie's experience at Aireys Inlet began in the early 1930s when he and his family camped at a clifftop hollow on a property now owned by the Costas. A few years later his father and grandfather began building on Federal Street. Lachie's knowledge of the coast and its tracks was second to none. He was active in many community organisations including ANGAIR, AIDA, The Anglesea and District Historical Society and the Uniting Church. Those whose lives he touched will have many reasons to regret his passing.

Gary Johnson



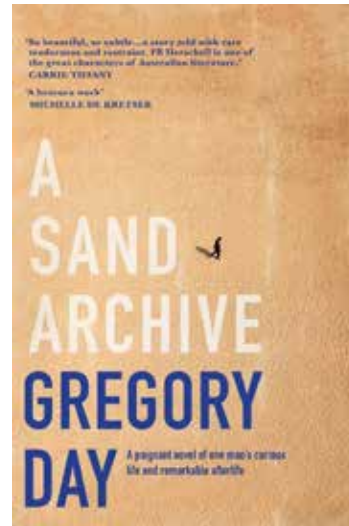


Written in Stone

Walking along the rock platforms between Urquhart Bluff and Aireys at low tide is an exhilarating and awesome experience. You can't help but wonder at the natural forces that formed and shaped both the lava-like floor and the ochre coloured sandy cliffs, where straggly heath plants hang out of the crevices above you.

Philomena Manifold has written a stunning book about the geology of the Great Ocean Road, tracing the country between Torquay to Warrnambool. Illustrated with her own sketches and beautiful photographs the book describes what is there and why it looks like it does in clear but technical prose. The photographs are both illustrative and detailed, showing the patterns of sand, rocks and shells as well as views along the cliffs. She describes hidden gullies and historical features, some of which will be known to local residents, but a lot will be new. Reading the book is a delight, and following its path and exploring new places will be a future adventure. The book was self-published through crowd funding.

Lecki Ord



A Sand Archive

AIDA member Gregory Day has written a captivating and thought-provoking new novel, *A Sand Archive* (Picador, 2018). This beautiful, haunting story centres on a young Geelong engineer, FB Herschell, engaged by the Country Roads Board to investigate ways of stabilising roads along the sandy shores of the southern Victorian coastline, including from Anglesea to Eastern View. His researches take him to Paris during the upheavals of 1968, to the bay of Arcachon in southwestern France and its shifting shores and giant sand dunes, and to a great romantic passion. We learn much about marram grass, French philosophy and politics, and the history of our part of the Great Ocean Road.

Like earlier novels – *Ron McCoy's Sea of Diamonds*, *The Patron Saint of Eels* and *The Grand Hotel* – this is an engrossing story imbued with an intense sensitivity to this area and the layers of history that have created it. They are an invitation to us to think anew about the landscape we are so fortunate to know. *A Sand Archive* is strongly recommended to AIDA members and friends.

Peter McPhee

