



President's Report

Your elected committee has worked extensively over the year towards the Chamber purpose of developing the economic well-being of Apollo Bay. A big thank you to my fellow committee members: John Riches, Phil Barlett, Sylvia Rennick, Nick Polgeest, Trish Goodlet, Emily Stephens, Charles Lear, Denis Morrissy and Daniel Kay.

Advocacy

We have been very active in articulating the needs of Apollo Bay with politicians and authorities.

Engagement has been extensive, including specifically with:

- Sarah Henderson, Federal MP for Corangamite
- Richard Riordan, State MP for Polwarth
- Colac Otway Shire Mayor and councillors, CEO and General Managers
- John Eren, State Minister for Tourism and Sport
- Steve Ciobo, Federal Minister for Tourism and Trade
- Elain Carbines, CEO
- Otway Coast Committee
- Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, Chair and CEO
- DEWLP, Regional Manager
- Regional Development Victoria , Regional Manager
- VicRoads, Regional Manager

Festivals

Winterwild Apollo Bay

- This new initiative of the Chamber has proven to be a great addition to our events calendar. It has been warmly embraced by the community with many people getting involved as volunteers and partners. Its marketing strategy to attract tourism in the off-season has been welcomed by businesses.
- The event was made possible by the Regional Development Victoria allocating bushfire recovery grant of \$100,000.
- Great credit to our Executive Officer, Roderick Poole, who took on the role of festival director and formed a team of people who with great creativity and enthusiasm brought together four weekends of arts events the likes of which the Bay has never seen before.
- We are hopeful with this continued enthusiasm and support of our community the event with grow.



Apollo Bay Seafood & Local Produce Festival

- This year it was expanded to a two day event in February.
- The Committee organised a great event which was unfortunately impacted by rain.
- The founding committee have done a wonderful job over seven years, but decided that new people should take it forward.
- A new Committee has been formed to take the festival in a new direction in 2018 lead by new Festival Organiser Bek Malherbe.

A Day in the Bay

- This is our Australia Day event. Led by former Chamber Secretary Jo Birley and a small team of volunteers, it grew in 2017 to be the Shire's event for Australia Day allowing an expansion of the entertainment and included a citizenship ceremony.

GOR Marathon

- IMG have grown the event this year. With a State grant they are creating new activities at the Lorne end. This is because the Apollo Bay accommodation is at capacity.

Amy Gran Fondo

- This cycling event has proven to be very negative in regard to community and tourist access with both the Great Ocean Road and Forest-Skenes Creek road being closed for extended periods. The economic impact is unacceptable. As a result of our representations the organisers created new events in AB this year.
- Despite this the 2017 event still had very significant issues and our Committee has advised the Shire that the impact upon the Bay is huge and that our view is that it should not be allowed to continue in its current form.

GOR closures

- Following the Christmas Wye River fire that closed the Great Ocean Road for a couple of weeks we had the major landslip event in mid-September 2016 that resulted in our tourist feeder access being closed for another three weeks.
- Businesses were severely impacted.



Marketing Campaign

- In late 2016 we formed a sub-committee to solicit business contributions to a marketing campaign using social and print media.
- The committee decided that a prominent bill board linked to our “I Am Apollo Bay” branding was the go.
- Chosen was one of Melbourne’s best location being on the Princes Freeway on the northern approach to the Westgate/ Western Ring road interchange.
- The exposure for over a month was significant.

Walking Trails

- We are very pleased be working with the Skenes Creek Advancement Committee to achieve the AB2SC Discovery Trail. A feasibility study has attracted funding and is underway.
- We also worked with a small group from Wye River on a grant submission to create a major walk from Aireys Inlet to Apollo Bay. That would join the Surf Coat walk to the Great Ocean Walk. While the grant application was not successful we are hopeful it will be pursued.

ABCC Q&A

- This was a new initiative to create an opportunity for our members and the community to be informed and engaged in relevant topics.
- Two dinner meetings were held in June and September with the topics tourism drivers and our fishing industry.

COS Rates consultation

- We recently presented to the Colac Otway Council on their rates review.
- Our argument is that we are contributing a disproportionate amount of rates per property given the focus of the Council’s spending in Colac.

Foreshore Drinking Fountains

- The Chamber was successful in getting a grant from the Shire to install new drinking fountains on the foreshore.

Destination Action Plan 2018-2020

- A second and updated DAP has been worked on in the last few months.



- Localised DAPs are a Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism initiative.
- GORRT has entrusted the AB plan to the Chamber to oversee.
- The new plan has been facilitated at meetings by Bill Fox along with community leaders.
- We will work to implement it involving our community.

President John Gorman

On behalf the Executive Committee

20.11.17