



President's Report 2017/18 to AGM

Your elected committee has worked extensively over the year towards the Chamber purpose of developing the economic well-being of Apollo Bay.

The highlights of the year have been:

- Active political advocacy
- Engaging more productively with the Colac Otway Shire council and management.
- Setting and working to achieve our 2018-2020 Destination Action Plan
- Our two festivals

Advocacy

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

Engagement has been extensive including with:

- Sarah Henderson, Federal MP for Corangamite
- Libby Coker, ALP candidate for Corangamite
- Richard Riordan, State MP for Polwarth
- Colac Otway Shire Mayor and councillors, CEO and General Managers
- Elaine Carbines, G21 CEO
- Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, Chair and CEO
- Regional Development Victoria, Regional Manager

Action for AB

- We initiated the formation of a lobbying alliance – Action for Apollo Bay.
- Members are the Chamber, Harbour Users Group, Skenes Creek Advancement Association, and Otway Coast Committee.
- Our group has worked closely with the Colac Otway Mayor and CEO through monthly strategy meetings for the last 5 or 6 months. The COS support has been significant.
- We have achieved a Federal commitment under the City Deal of \$12 million to fund the long sort after development of the Harbour and \$5 million for the Discovery Trail between Skenes Creek and Wild Dog Creek. This was achieved after convincing Sarah Henderson of the merits and her in turn getting the support of the Government. For this we are most appreciative.



Destination Action Plan 2018-2020

- The new plan has been developed following two meetings of 23 community leaders facilitated by consultant Bill Fox.
- We finalised the 2018-2020 Apollo Bay Destination Action Plan in February.
- The localised DAP's are an initiative of the Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism. GORRT have entrusted the Chamber to take it on.
- In addition to our Executive Committee working to achieve the Plan we have been supported by a handful of others that have agreed to be the champions on some of the set actions – Tim Cobb (Discovery Trail & Marriners Falls), Bob Knowles (Do It Like a Local), Holly Humphries (Chinese visitors) and Markus Nolle (Harbour remediation & development).
- We are working our way through it and are very pleased on the progress towards the big ticket items.

Seafood Festival

- We appointed a new Festival Director (Bek Malherbe) and SF Committee to conduct the 2019 event. We thank them for their work.
- We had a new location for the main event being the harbour, which was important in connecting more closely with our fishing industry.
- The format included not only the Harbour Day but also the Seafood Dinner in the Mechanics Hall and “Conversations on the Edge” that was particularly targeted at those in the industry.
- The event was a successful start to a new format although it did run at a loss.
- We have something very positive to build upon and have confidence it will be taken further by the new co Directors, Markus Nolle and Bill Fraser.

WinterWild

- This was its second year. This time held on two weekends a fortnight apart in August.
- Again under the direction of Roderick Poole an extremely exciting range of creative, and somewhat unique, performing arts events were held in and around Apollo Bay.
- The development of a new festival is a challenging one. The growth and recognition of WinterWild is a credit to Roderick, our WW Committee and the many volunteers.
- Like our Seafood Festival a very significant promotion of Apollo Bay has been achieved through Statewide publicity.

GOR Marathon

- This event, while no longer in the hands of the Chamber, continues to develop under the management of IMG.

Amy's Gran Fondo

- The AGF has been a concern to most people in Apollo Bay each year that this cycling event has been held.
- Concerns have been the closing of both our east and north access roads. Impacting the community and causing very negative impacts upon businesses, as tourists are generally unable to get into our town during the event.
- The Shire Council has recognised our concerns and voted to no longer support in event. Regrettably the event organisers have failed to respond to the concerns and intend to endeavour to push to continue the event in our region, continuing the disruption.
- We are working to get this fixed.

COS Rates

- In September 2017 we held a Rates Forum.
- Following that we made a presentation to the Colac Otway Council on their rates review.
- Our argument is that we are contributing a disproportionate amount of rates per property given that the focus of the council's spending is in Colac.
- The Shire responded by doing an analysis which found that we were contributing one quarter of the Shire's rates income yet only getting one eighth of their spending.

COS Parking and Traffic Strategy

- This has been an important initiative that responded to concerns we raised.
- Amongst other things it will address, what to date has been a lack of planned solutions for the numerous buses stopping in AB.
- It is covering all of the Shire's communities along the Great Ocean Road.
- It has involved an extensive consultancy costing \$150,000.
- Recommendations will be made public in mid December.

Apollo Bay Infrastructure Plan

- COS have committed funds to do a comprehensive plan.
- It is very pleasing that the Otway Coast Committee are joining in so that the plan is integrated. OCC are contributing approx. \$80k that they had to do a foreshore precinct plan.
- Additionally amongst other things it will plan for improvements to the amenity along our shops/hospitality strip, planning for a replacement pre-school, review of our sporting facilities as well as the harbour development.
- A consultant will be appointed before year's end.



Great Ocean Road Authority

- We have inputted to this consultation.
- The bipartisan commitment by Vic Labor and Coalition means we will see this in place in the next year or so.
- It is a significant step forward, but we still have concerns that there will be a governance demarcation depending on which side of the road. We felt that a GOR Shire would have been a better solution.

Sarah Henderson

This year has seen some massive Federal Government financial commitments that have only come through the support of our local member, Sarah Henderson. She has been a terrific supporter of Apollo Bay. We have been fortunate to have her.

- \$2 mill to create Wildlife Wonders at Marengo. Followed by a matching \$2.5 mill from Victorian Government.
- \$12 mill for our Harbour development
- \$5 mill for the Skenes Creek Discovery Trail
- \$200,000 towards the heated indoor pool

Executive Committee

In May we received the resignation of two Executive Committee members - John Riches and Daniel Kay. John was the Vice President having previously led the Chamber as President for a few years up to 2016. In Daniel's case he moved to Canada due work assignment. We thank them both for their contributions. Lisa Stephenson stepped up to the position of Vice President.

The Chamber has been very well served by our Executive Officer, Roderick Poole. I think him for his contribution and support to me.

In closing I want to acknowledge the Executive Committee and our supporters who have worked for this community over the past year.

President John Gorman, on behalf of the Executive Committee

Lisa Stephenson, Sylvia Rennick, Emily Stephens, Trish Goodlet, Nick Polgeest, Michael Nyhof, Denis Morrissey and Charles Lear

15 November 2018