

CONTEXT

Bass Coast Shire Heritage Gaps Review and Prioritisation Framework

Stage 1

Final Report

Report prepared for Bass Coast Shire Council

October 2020



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Cover images (listed row by row, from left to right, beginning at the top-left corner):

A photograph showing the main street of Inverloch with a hotel on the left and the 'Two Views' Guest House at the end of the street (source: Hoppen c1920s-30s, Museums Victoria); Union Theatre – [add source]; A lithograph titled 'Habitation de pecheurs de phoques au Port Western (Nouvelle Hollande.)' showing sealers at Western Port (source: Langlumé 1833, SLV); A photograph showing an archway over Graham St, Wonthaggi reading 'Welcome Home' to commemorate the men who served and and/or died in World War 1 (source: Harvey 1927, SLV); A photograph showing a crowd at the opening of the Cowes War memorial on Anzac Day 1920. (source: Phillip Island and District Historical Society Inc. 1920, VC); A photograph of the State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi showing a fenced of dam in the foreground, and coal mine with poppet head, smoke stacks and huts behind (source: Darge 1910, SLV); A postcard showing Cowes pier and township (source: Vivian c1940s-1950s, SLV); A photograph showing the loading of coal at Powlett River Coalfields, Inverloch (source: Darge 1910, SLV); A photograph showing the Palais and General Store at Inverloch, Victoria (source: Rose Stenograph Co. c1920-1954, SLV)

Report Register

The following report register documents the development and issue of the report entitled 'Bass Coast Shire Heritage Gaps Review and Prioritisation Framework—Stage 1', undertaken by Context in accordance with its quality management system.

Job No.	Issue No.	Notes/Description	Issue Date
2551	1	Preliminary Draft Report for discussion	20 May 2020
2551	2	Revised Draft Report (incorporating fieldwork findings)	14 July 2020
2551	3	Final Report	26 October 2020

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Context

Executive Summary

Purpose

Context has prepared this Heritage Gaps Review and Prioritisation Framework for Bass Coast Shire Council (Council). The aim of the Gaps Review is to identify and document post-contact places and precincts of potential heritage significance across the Bass Coast Shire. The second phase of this project involves the formulation of a Prioritisation Framework and Action Plan to guide Council in decision-making regarding future Stage 2 heritage studies and other heritage projects. The timeframe for the Prioritisation Framework and Action Plan is at least the next five years. The framework groups heritage places by theme and priority, and has considered risks, threats and impacts on potential heritage places in relation to priority projects in Council's pipeline of strategic work.

Key findings

Individual places

A total of 311 individual places are recommended for further investigation and detailed assessment. This includes:

- 163 residential places;
- 15 commercial places;
- 37 community places;
- 30 landscape sites;
- 9 industrial places;
- 10 infrastructure/transport-related sites;
- 20 archaeological places;
- 27 trees.

Precincts

There are 2 potential new precincts recommended for detailed assessment:

- Potential relocated houses precinct, Carapooka Way/Victorian Court, Cowes
- Silverleaves Residential Precinct, 12-22 Silverleaves Avenue, Silverleaves.

Group/serial listings

There are two potential group/serial listings recommended for detailed assessment:

- Cowes Commercial Group Listing, comprising several early and reasonably intact shop buildings along Thompsons Street between the Esplanade and Chapel Street. There is no visually cohesive precinct due to infill development, but these could form a logical group.
- A-frame Houses Serial Listing, comprising 8 A-frame houses in Cowes, Dalyston, Inverloch and Rhyll. Together they are potentially significant as part of the experimental beach house

phenomenon including those adapted or copied from published sources, and prefabricated, pre-cut or standardised project house units.

Existing heritage places

Review of existing heritage places has identified:

- The need to review and update most of Bass Coast's existing heritage place citations to correct errors such as incorrect addresses, but also so they align with guidance in Planning Practice Note 1 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' (August 2018) (PPN1), which requires:
 - the assessment of the heritage value of the heritage place to use the recognised heritage criteria;
 - the documentation for each heritage place to include a Statement of Significance that clearly establishes the importance of the place (using the format of 'What is significant?'; 'How is it significant?'; and 'Why is it significant?');
 - all heritage place citations to be securely stored within the Hermes database.
- The need to review the Heritage Overlay curtilage and boundaries of some places to ensure all significant elements of the place are protected.
- The need to remove some places from the HO as they have since been demolished or substantially altered.

Recommendations

The Gaps Review has identified various gaps—including geographic and typological/thematic—in current heritage protection across the Shire, as well as the need for review of existing heritage study documentation.

These have been considered in relation to existing threats and competing planning objectives and prioritised amongst themselves. In addition, advice on the most efficient and effective approaches to future heritage work has been provided, including the harnessing of existing skills and knowledge amongst Council staff. This has informed the creation of a prioritised work plan to guide Council over the next five or more years.

The proposed draft action plan, in order of priority, is as follows:

1.1 Very high priority

- Prepare an updated and more comprehensive Thematic Environmental History, based on the draft framework of themes provided in Section 2.2.1, to enhance understanding of the historical themes and sub-themes in the municipality. This should precede any Stage 2 detailed assessments/studies.
- Assess 'very high priority' potential places and precincts (see Appendix A).

1.2 High priority

- Develop a Heritage Strategy to guide future heritage work.

- Prepare a Significant Tree study, building on existing work undertaken in Phillip Island by Phillip Island Conservation Society in collaboration with Bass Coast branch of National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and Council, and from this work consider developing a Bass Coast Shire Significant Tree Register.
- Assess 'high priority' potential places (see Appendix A).

1.3 Medium priority and longer-term tasks

- Assess 'medium priority' potential places (see Appendix A).
- Assess 'low priority' potential places (see Appendix A).

1.4 Ongoing

- Correct anomalies in existing heritage overlay mapping and extent of sites, and citations from existing heritage studies.
- Maintain HERMES database as a central point for all existing and new heritage citations.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Purpose

Context has prepared this Heritage Gaps Review and Prioritisation Framework for Bass Coast Shire Council. The purpose of the Gaps Review was to identify and document post-contact places and precincts of potential heritage significance across the Bass Coast Shire. An additional part of this project was the formulation of a Prioritisation Framework and Action Plan to guide Council in decision-making regarding future Stage 2 heritage studies and other heritage projects, over at least the next five years. The framework categorises places according to theme and priority, and has considered risks, threats and impacts on potential heritage places in relation to priority projects in Council's pipeline of strategic work.

2.2 Background and brief

Bass Coast Shire was formed in 1994 by the amalgamation of the former Shire of Bass, the Shire of Phillip Island, parts of the former shires of Korumburra and Woorayl, and the former Borough of Wonthaggi. The present municipal area covers 865 square kilometres in south-west Gippsland.

The *Bass Coast Shire Heritage Study Stage 1* (the Stage 1 study) was undertaken in 2002 by Allom Lovell & Associates. The 2002 Stage 1 study initially identified 651 potentially significant heritage places across the municipality. Since then, 165 places have been added to the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (HO) of the Bass Coast Planning Scheme following detailed heritage studies and the associated Planning Scheme Amendments:

- *Bass Coast Shire Heritage Study Stage 2*, 2004 (implemented by C64);
- *Bass Coast Shire Post-Panel Implementation Study*, 2009 (implemented by C137)

Currently there are a total of 171 sites protected by the HO in Bass Coast Shire, in 166 individual places, four precincts and one serial listing (Phillip Island chicory kilns).

The outstanding 486 heritage places have not been further investigated and there are no planning controls in place to trigger consideration of heritage significance for these sites. Further to this, other places of potential cultural heritage significance, such as Aboriginal heritage sites and significant trees, have not been investigated in previous heritage studies.

In 2018-19, Council officers carried out an audit of the outstanding places identified in the 2002 Stage 1 study but not further investigated in Stage 2, to determine whether these places still exist or have been substantially altered. Postwar holiday houses in Cape Paterson also require assessment.

The Heritage Gaps Review and Prioritisation Framework is set out as a high priority action in the Bass Coast Planning Scheme Review (2018), and included as an initiative in the 2019/2020 Council budget.

Key tasks for this project were to investigate the gaps, review Bass Coast's existing heritage controls and the outstanding 486 sites initially identified as part of the Stage 1 study, and also develop a framework for prioritising places for further investigation.

2.3 Approach and methodology

This report has been prepared in accordance with *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* (2013) (the *Burra Charter*) and the Victoria Planning Provisions Practice Note No. 1 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' (2018) (the 'Practice Note').

The approach to the identification of gaps and the formulation of a prioritised action plan for future heritage projects has included:

- Windscreen surveys of Archies Creek, Cape Paterson, Dalyston, Inverloch, Phillip Island, South Dudley, Wonthaggi and Wonthaggi North.
- Consultation with local historical societies, the Bass Coast branch of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), community groups and the wider general public through a community nomination process for potential heritage places.
- Desktop review of previous heritage studies, thematic/typological studies, registers and other key strategic documents.

2.3.1 Resources

Sources of local history

A wide range of general history sources and local history sources were also consulted as part of the desktop review. This included mostly published sources (both primary and secondary resources), but also some archival material. The chief holdings consulted included the State Library of Victoria (books, maps, photographs; Victorian Government Gazette online); Public Record Office Victoria (digitised parish plans, Historic Plan Collection; other maps and plans; various state and local government records; historic photographs); Trove (historic photos, local newspaper articles); National Library of Australia (ephemera, maps and plans, images); Prahran Mechanics Library (publications; information on local mechanics institutes); Collections Victoria (historic photographs) and Museum Victoria (historic photographs).

'People' sources

Local knowledge has been harnessed through targeted engagement with local historical societies and the Bass Coast branch of the National Trust of Australia (Vic.).

2.3.2 Refining the list

All places on the list provided by Council, plus any identified during the desktop review, were checked to see if they were already protected on the Bass Coast Heritage Overlay (HO), by an individual HO, or included in an HO precinct with a status of either Significant or Contributory.

The checking process involved either matching the street address against the HO listings in the HERMES* database or the Schedule to the Bass Coast Heritage Overlay, or utilising the Land Vic 'Planning Maps Online' showing the extent of Heritage Overlays.

* HERMES, the 'HERitage Management Electronic System', was launched by Heritage Victoria in 2009 as a central database to collect information about heritage places in Victoria. It is used both by Heritage Victoria and local councils to

There were several places or groups of places that were removed from the list of places for further investigation as a result of this process. These were:

- Places confirmed to be demolished, in the first instance via Council's Heritage Sites Audit, 2018-2019, and then via fieldwork, Nearmap aerial imagery software and/or Google Streetview, where there is little or no chance of archaeological remains. That is, where the site has been significantly disturbed owing to the construction of a new building.
- Places confirmed to be extensively altered, particularly where principal views to the street were affected (primarily utilising desktop sources as above). This included places where original exterior walls and roof cladding and/or windows had been replaced unsympathetically (not like-for-like), an overly dominant or visible extension had been added, or where the majority of decorative details (such as a front verandah) had been removed or rebuilt in a different form.
- Places that could not be located and/or accessed, and properly ground-truthed through the Council's Heritage Sites Audit 2018-2019.
- Places located outside of the study area, for example six places in Kongwak, located in the South Gippsland Shire local government area.

Places and precincts already protected on the HO were investigated separate to this list. The approach to reviewing existing heritage places and precincts is provided in Section 2.5.

Moveable heritage, such as honour boards, which cannot be protected individually (as objects) through a heritage overlay, were removed unless they could be considered as part of a heritage-listed place. Where this was the case, the listings were amalgamated; for instance, the Wonthaggi RSL Hall (protected in site-specific HO154) holds an extensive collection of honour boards and memorabilia. It is recommended that the collection is referenced in a revised citation and Statement of Significance for HO154.

2.4 Limitations

2.4.1 Scope

This study focuses on post-contact heritage places in the Shire of Bass Coast. While recommendations have been made in this report for key studies into the topics of Aboriginal heritage and post-contact archaeology, no identification of such places has been undertaken as part of this work. Aboriginal heritage places should be investigated and assessed in consultation with Traditional Owner organisations.

2.4.2 Heritage Sites Audit, 2018-2019

It must be clarified here that listing this resource in the Limitations section of the report does not intend to disparage the valuable work of Council officers by any means—the Audit has enabled the project team to ground-truth potential places and ascertain their likely integrity in comparison to their first survey in the 2002 Stage 1 study, where the sites were located and accessed. The restrictions associated with COVID 19, which were rolled out during the course of the study, meant that part of

store information about places that are already protected on the Victorian Heritage Register or a municipal Heritage Overlay, as well as those that have been identified but not yet assessed and/or protected. Much of this information is available to the public via the Victorian Heritage Database (the 'front end' of HERMES) at <http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/>.

the Review was reliant on Nearmap aerial imagery software and Google Streetview/Maps. This increased the importance of the earlier work carried out by Council. The limitation refers to the fact that while Council's Audit work was conducted relatively recently, outdated coverage of the Bass Coast Shire in Nearmap aerial imagery and Google Streetview/Maps meant that not all places could be confirmed as extant or accurately ground-truthed for this Review. As a result, there is a possibility that some of the places identified and recommended to progress to detailed assessment in future Stage 2 studies, may no longer be extant. Further, the Audit lists 73 places that could not be located: these sites have been removed from the list of places.

2.4.3 COVID-19

In March–April 2020, with the heightened risks and restrictions associated with COVID-19, it was decided that the project team could not safely travel to Bass Coast Shire whilst adhering to government health regulations. As a result, the second and third rounds of planned fieldwork (to investigate Inverloch and Phillip Island and surrounds, and the smaller towns in the middle-north of the municipality) were delayed, and in-person interviews with local historical societies and the Bass Coast branch of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) could not go ahead at the times initially scheduled. Alternative options in place of the cancelled fieldwork included a combination of desktop survey methods and consultation via telephone and email with local historical societies and individuals. Restrictions were alleviated in June 2020 and the project team was able to carry out windscreen surveys of Inverloch, Kilcunda, Phillip Island (Cowes, Silverleaves and Rhyll), San Remo and Surf Beach.

As mentioned in the section above (Section 1.4.2), outdated coverage of aerial and streetview imagery presented a limitation, restricting the capacity to appropriately ground-truth the places unable to be located in Council's Heritage Places Audit, but also those more remotely located places that could not be viewed from the street.

In light of this situation, it will be important to allow flexibility in future studies to ensure that firstly, these sites are suitably ground-truthed, and can be excluded early in a future Stage 2 study after documentation and a proper site inspection if it is found that they do not warrant detailed investigation and inclusion in the HO; and, secondly, that further potential places that have not been identified through this Stage 1 study can be added and investigated.

2.5 Style and terminology

2.5.1 Style and grammar

This report adopts the Commonwealth of Australia, *Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers* (2002) as its primary reference guide for style and grammar.

2.5.2 Abbreviations

AHC	Australian Heritage Commission
HERCON	Heritage Council Criteria for the Assessment of Cultural Heritage Significance
HERMES	<u>HER</u> itage <u>M</u> anagement <u>E</u> lectronic <u>S</u> ystem
HO	Heritage Overlay
MSS	Municipal Strategic Statement

NTSTR	National Trust Significant Tree Register
PPN	Planning Practice Note
PSP	Precinct Structure Plan
RSL	Returned and Services League
VHI	Victorian Heritage Inventory
VHR	Victorian Heritage Register

2.6 Project team

This report has been authored by Jessica Antolino, Context, and reviewed by Dr Christina Dyson.

3.0 Heritage Gaps Review

3.1 Introduction

This section examines Bass Coast's existing heritage studies and Clause 43.01 Schedule to the Heritage Overlay documentation to identify gaps in the existing heritage protection program.

3.2 Desktop review

3.2.1 Thematic Environmental History

A Thematic Environmental History for Bass Coast was prepared in 2002 as part of the *Bass Coast Shire Heritage Study Stage 1* by Allom Lovell & Associates, and revised in 2004 as part of a subsequent Stage 2 study. In 2009, supplementary sections on the Coal Mine Residential Precinct in Wonthaggi and the development of Cape Paterson were prepared by Built Heritage as part of the *Post-Panel Implementation Study*.

The final framework of themes devised in the 2004 Stage 2 study, as well as the 2009 themes, are compared with the Heritage Victoria guidelines, *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes* (2011) in Table below, revealing some gaps and inconsistencies.

Table 2.1 Comparing the Heritage Victoria *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes* (2011) with the Bass Coast historical themes (2004, 2009).

	Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes (2011)		Bass Coast historical themes (2004; 2009)
1 Shaping Victoria's environment	1.1 Tracing climate and topographical change 1.2 Tracing the emergence of Victoria's plants and animals 1.3 Understanding scientifically diverse environments 1.4 Creation stories and defining country 1.5 Living with natural processes 1.6 Appreciating and protecting Victoria's natural wonders	3 Contact 19 Natural Areas & Public Land	- 19.1 Parks and reserves 19.2 Scientific Investigation (or 9.5) 19.3 Forest management 19.4 Environmental degradation
2 Peopling Victoria's places and landscapes	2.1 Living as Victoria's original inhabitants 2.2 Exploring, surveying and mapping 2.3 Adapting to diverse environments 2.4 Arriving in a new land 2.5 Migrating and making a home 2.6 Maintaining distinctive cultures	2 Exploration 4 The Port Phillip District of New South Wales	2.1 Navigating and claiming the coastline 2.2 Hinterland 2.3 The Port Phillip Association -

	Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes (2011)		Bass Coast historical themes (2004; 2009)
	2.7 Promoting settlement 2.8 Fighting for identity	5 Early European Trade, Exploration and Settlements 6 Settlement and naming of 'Gipps' Land'	5.1 Sealers and whalers 5.2 First European settlement – Churchill Island 5.3 French Island – British or French sovereignty 5.4 Corinella settlement 5.5 Flagstaff settlement 6.1 Pastoralists – sheep and squatters 6.2 Selectors' struggles
3 Connecting Victorians by transport and communications	3.1 Establishing pathways 3.2 Travelling by water 3.3 Linking Victorians by rail 3.4 Linking Victorians by road in the 20th century 3.5 Travelling by tram 3.6 Linking Victorians by air 3.7 Establishing and maintaining communications	12 Transport & Communication	12.1 Shipping transport 12.2 Roads 12.3 Railways 12.3.1 Wonthaggi Railway Station 12.3.2 Railway housing 12.4 Bridges 12.4.1 Kilcunda Bridge 12.4.2 Phillip Island bridges 12.4.3 Bridge at Bass 12.5 Post offices and telephone exchanges
4 Transforming and managing land and natural resources	4.1 Living off the land 4.2 Living from the sea 4.3 Grazing and raising livestock 4.4 Farming 4.5 Gold mining 4.6 Exploiting other mineral, forest and water resources 4.7 Transforming the land and waterways	7 Resource Use 8 Coast Resources – Fishing at San Remo 9 Quarrying 10 Primary Production	7.1 Timber and forest products 7.2 Coal 7.2.1 State Coal Mine 7.2.2 Kilcunda - - 10.1 Grazing 10.2 Dairying – Butter and cheese factories 10.3 Chicory – 'Scathing a Living' 10.4 Vineyards

8 Building community life	8.1 Maintaining spiritual life 8.2 Educating people 8.3 Providing health and welfare services 8.4 Forming community organisations 8.5 Preserving traditions and commemorating 8.6 Marking the phases of life	16 Cultural & Society	16.1 Religion 16.2 Memorials 16.3 Cemeteries
9 Shaping cultural and creative life	9.1 Participating in sport and recreation 9.2 Nurturing a vibrant arts scene 9.3 Achieving distinction in the arts 9.4 Creating popular culture 9.5 Advancing knowledge	17 Sport & Recreation	17.1 Sports 17.2 Phillip Island – Car and Bike Racing 17.3 Clubs and associations

The Thematic Environmental History for Bass Coast Shire prepared by Allom Lovell & Associates (revised 2004) provides broad coverage of most of the key areas of importance in terms of historical development of Bass Coast Shire, however it lacks a tight and logical structure. As it was written prior to the guidelines provided in *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes* (2011), the 2004 framework is somewhat loose in terms of how it defines a theme and a sub-theme. The *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes* guidelines encourage historical development to be structured thematically rather than chronologically. Although at times the themes may appear to follow a loose chronological order, they should remain thematic aspects of development and not slip into chronological stages.

A number of themes included in the 2004 thematic history warrant more detailed examination, including the development of tourism and the extent of community life and activities. There are also some gaps in the historical themes covered by the 2004 Thematic Environmental History, including aspects of local history that would be considered important to include and acknowledge. For example, there is insufficient discussion of Aboriginal life in the period following first contact with Europeans in the 1790s, and little acknowledgement of Aboriginal–settler contact and conflict from this early period through to the c.1860s. Another gap is the theme of work and working life, which was critical to the area, for example in relation to the Wonthaggi State Coal Mine, but also in regards to the timber industry, fishing, rural labour, and various itinerant types of work. Augmenting the scope of the thematic history in order to reflect more local historical detail as well as the broader history of the area would provide Bass Coast Shire with a valuable document and a useful tool for future heritage planning.

Tightening the structure of the thematic framework and adding some supplementary elements would be a first step towards revising the thematic environmental history for Bass Coast Shire. A more comprehensive and logical structure of themes and sub-themes, based on what was prepared by Allom Lovell, could be set out as follows (Table 2.2), and this could serve as the foundation for the preparation of a comprehensive and updated Thematic Environmental History in the near future:

Table 2.2. Revision of Bass Coast Historic Themes (adapted from Allom Lovell & Associates, 2004).

Historical Theme	Historical Sub-themes
1 An ancient land	1.1 The evolution of the sea coast, coal seams
2 Living on Country	2.1 Bunurong Country
3 Exploration	3.1 Convict-era settlements 3.2 Settling the Port Phillip District
4 Resources from the sea	4.1 Whaling and sealing 4.2 Fishing
5 Aboriginal-settler contact and conflict	
6 Resources from the land	6.1 Timber and forest products 6.2 Coal 6.3 Stone (quarrying)
7 Primary production	7.1 Pastoral industry 7.2 Wheat-growing 7.3 Land selection and small farming 7.4 Dairy industry 7.5 Chicory 7.6 Vineyards
8 Manufacturing	8.1 Brick-making 8.2 Butter and cheese factories 8.3 Food manufacturing
9 Transport and communications	9.1 Steamers, ferries and barges 9.2 Roads and bridges 9.3 Railways 9.4 Post and telegraph offices 9.5 Telephone exchanges
10 Building towns, villages and settlements	10.1 Small settlements 10.2 Larger towns 10.3 Coastal villages 10.4 Domestic style: houses and gardens
11 Government services and administration	11.1 Local government 11.2 Education 11.3 Justice 11.4 Water supply 11.5 Health and welfare 11.6 Defence

12 Social institutions	12.1 Churches 12.2 Cemeteries 12.3 Mechanics Institutes 12.4 Social clubs
13 Arts and culture	13.1 Art galleries and studios 13.2 Theatres and cinemas 13.3 Cultural organisations 13.4 Public monuments
14 Sport and recreation	14.1 Local sports clubs 14.2 Horse-racing 14.3 Swimming and surfing 14.4 Motor-car and motor-bike racing
15 Holidays and tourism	15.1 Hotels and guesthouses 15.2 Tourism – coastal towns 15.3 Holiday houses
16 Appreciating the natural environment	16.1 Establishing nature reserves and national parks 16.2 Palaeontology 16.3 Conservation movement 16.4 Adapting to climate change

New sources

Additional historical sources have been published, or made available, since the 2004 review of the Bass Coast Thematic Environmental History. These have not been accessed for the purpose of this report, but it is recommended that they be considered in future revisions to the Thematic History:

Celebrating our Sporting Past. Vol 2: Stories inspired by images from Bass Coast's sporting and leisure history. Bass Coast Shire Council, [2007].

Hutchinson, John. *Inverloch: A place of great beauty, today and yesterday.* Inverloch Historical Society, Inverloch, 2017.

Reeves, Andrew. *Up from the Underworld: Coalminers and community in Wonthaggi 1909-1968,* Clayton, 2011.

There is also a wealth of historical material now available online, which was not the case when the Bass Coast Thematic Environmental History was first prepared in 2002. Many local historical societies and enthusiasts' groups have websites and Facebook pages, where historical information, documents and historical photos are posted. The collection of online digitised newspapers available through the Trove network of the National Library of Australia also contains a wealth of data relating to Bass Coast Shire. Local area newspapers available through Trove include the *Great Southern Advocate* and the *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*.

3.2.2 Non-statutory registers

A large number of other registers and inventories were also consulted, including those held by Heritage Victoria, the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) (including the Significant Tree Register), the Australian Heritage Council (particularly the now defunct Register of the National Estate), and the Avenues of Honour research project. Places not already included in the Council Audit list were added to the master list of potential places for consideration.

3.2.3 Bass Coast heritage studies

Bass Coast Shire Heritage Study Stage 1, 2002

This Stage 1 study was undertaken in 2002 by Allom Lovell & Associates. The study comprises three volumes: introduction and recommendations; a thematic environmental history; and datasheets for over 550 individual places. In total, the study identified 651 potentially significant heritage places across the municipality, including some groups of buildings i.e. the whole of Churchill Island and former Amess family property, off Phillip Island; St Pauls Mission for Boys, Newhaven; the State Coal Mine precincts, Wonthaggi; various churches; schools; reserves and a significant number of potential archaeological sites.

Bass Coast Shire Heritage Study Stage 2, 2004

Funding for a Stage 2 study was approved in 2004, and 165 places identified in the Stage 1 proceeded to full assessment, also carried out by Allom Lovell & Associates. These places were selected from the Stage 1 list to include places under threat, places of outstanding distinction and a representative sample of places across the Shire. It was not intended to be full corpus of heritage places and was only ever intended as a first batch of places from the Stage 1 list. Places were assessed against defunct Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) criteria, which have since been superseded by the Heritage Council Criteria for the Assessment of Cultural Heritage Significance (HERCON), and now by the criteria included in PPN1 as the model criteria that should be used for all new heritage assessment work. These assessment criteria were adopted at the 1998 Conference on Heritage, and by the Heritage Council of Victoria in 2008, and are substantially based on the AHC criteria. Places assessed by the 2004 Stage 2 study were also given a letter grading (A-C). The Thematic Environmental History was also revised as part of the 2004 Stage 2 study.

The study provides useful notes on thresholds for assessing heritage places. Places in the Shire are typically architecturally modest, which often reflects the limited means of settlers and the transient population (i.e. holiday-makers), and are late examples of an architectural style compared to examples in major centres. Further, many places have been altered, but there needs to be a high tolerance for change, and the study concludes:

To place too great a weight on physical condition in the municipality would be inappropriate with the result that many places would not meet a threshold for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay. This would do a disservice to the municipality's heritage assets.

The take-home message from the study seems to be that a key aspect of cultural significance of heritage places in the Shire lies in the ability of places to demonstrate history, evolution and often struggling development of the area rather than their intrinsic architectural merit, which is often quite modest.

The completed Stage 2 study was adopted by Council in 2005, and interim heritage controls were granted. Council established a submissions review committee to consider submissions as part of the public exhibition process. As a result, a number of individual places and one precinct were withdrawn on the recommendations of the committee. The remaining submissions were presented before an independent panel in October–November 2007. In January 2008 the C64 Panel report made a number of recommendations to review, reconsider or reassess a number of properties and precincts identified in the Stage 2 heritage study.

Post-Panel Implementation Study, 2009

The Post-Panel Implementation Study, prepared by Built Heritage, involved reviewing and updating 28 individual place citations due to issues such as HO mapping anomalies, incorrect street addresses, historical or descriptive information, and errors in the assessment and/or comparative analysis sections. The study also included the preparation of new citations for primary significant places formerly within recommended Heritage Overlay precincts, and the preparation of new citations for post-war holiday houses in Cape Paterson.

The study identified 15 properties for Stage 2 assessment in Cape Paterson, but determined that there was no justification for a precinct as no groups of more than 5 early holiday homes in an intact and cohesive streetscape existed.

3.2.4 Heritage Sites Audit, 2018-2019

In 2018-2019, Council officers undertook an audit of 425 places identified in the 2002 Stage 1 heritage study but not further investigated through the 2004 Stage 2 study in an effort to confirm their existence and condition. Datasheets provide a useful comparison between the condition of places during their initial survey in the 2002 Stage 1 study, and that recorded in 2018–2019 in comparative photographs and comments recorded on the places' existence and condition in the field. This list informed the basis of the Heritage Gaps Review.

3.2.5 Thematic/typological studies

A large number of thematic and typological studies were consulted as part of the desktop review, including those prepared for Heritage Victoria (Twentieth-century Heritage, War Memorials, Industrial Heritage, Post-1940s Migration, Theatres, Motor Garages, and Piers and Jetties). There were also useful State-wide comparative studies available on public housing, railway stations, banks, bridges, churches, parks and gardens, public precincts, cemeteries, and other place types.

For various reasons there is not the depth of post-contact historical places listed for Bass Coast Shire than have been documented, for example, in other municipal areas. As a result, there are fewer places in Bass Coast Shire that have been identified in the various typological and thematic studies. Settlement in Bass Coast Shire developed on a modest scale and took place relatively late compared to other areas of Victoria. Whilst there was a European presence, and settlement, along this part of the coastline from an early period (c. early 1800s), settlement was relatively sparse and, in a sense, remote. Large parts of Bass Coast Shire were relatively inaccessible, being heavily timbered and close to steep cliffs. To the north, the vast wetlands of the Koo-Wee-Rup Swamp also posed a barrier of sorts, and early transport routes used by the fishing industry and coal production were by sea. Small villages emerged in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, which served local farming and timber interests. The largest towns, Inverloch and Wonthaggi, developed in a large part through the early twentieth century, and are only modestly sized amongst a network of smaller hamlets.

Whilst there is now a rich diversity of places in Bass Coast Shire on the HO or identified as being of potential heritage significance, the built fabric of the Shire is, generally speaking, architecturally modest. Bass Coast is also less well endowed with the types of places that were traditionally regarded as being of high heritage value, for example, pastoral homesteads, early churches and elaborate Victorian-era residences. In addition, Bass Coast has a strong history of manual work, such as timber-felling, coal-mining and fishing; these industries are not strongly associated with or reliant upon built structures, and where these structures do exist they were often makeshift or replaceable. Furthermore, Bass Coast has had a relatively low socio-economic base through the second part of the twentieth century, with many workers dependent on industries that were in decline (e.g. coal-mining) or which had a low income base. The popularity of the area for holiday-makers has also meant a less permanent population base at certain times of the year, which has meant different demands and development patterns on those towns. This is not to diminish the heritage that exists but helps to explain why these aspects of Bass Coast's heritage may not have received attention previously and has not been picked up in thematic and typological studies.

3.3 Fieldwork

The purpose of the fieldwork component was to verify the location, status and potential significance of places identified through this study and previous work undertaken by or on behalf of Council. Fieldwork also presented an opportunity to discover potential heritage places or precincts that had not previously been identified through desktop methods.

To assist with the field survey, maps were prepared of each area showing the existing extent of the Heritage Overlay (so time was not wasted 'identifying' these places), as well as the places/precincts from Council's Heritage Places Audit.

As noted in section 1.4 above, the later rounds of planned fieldwork (to investigate Inverloch and Phillip Island and surrounds, and the smaller towns in the middle-north of the municipality) were delayed due to the heightened risks and restrictions associated with COVID-19. Limited field surveys (by car) were undertaken in the towns of Archies Creek, Cape Paterson, Dalyston, Inverloch, Kilcunda, Phillip Island (Cowes, Silverleaves, Rhyll), San Remo, South Dudley, Surf Beach, Wonthaggi and Wonthaggi North. In addition to fieldwork, the project team was reliant on desktop sources such as Nearmap aerial imagery, Google Maps and Streetview to identify potential heritage places and precincts. Consultation with some local historical society members and the Bass Coast branch of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) also provided assistance with ground-truthing potential heritage places.

67 potential places recommended to proceed to Stage 2 assessment were identified through fieldwork. These are listed in Appendix A.

3.4 Community nomination process

A public 'call for nominations' for heritage places was publicised on Council's website for four weeks in March–April 2020. Direct invitations to nominate places were also sent to the following community groups ahead of the public nomination process going 'live' on Council's website:

- Bass Coast branch of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
- Phillip Island and District Historical Society Inc.
- Bass Valley Historical Society Inc.
- RSL, General

- Friends of Churchill Island
- Friends of the State Coal Mine Inc.
- Gippsland Historical Model Railway
- Inverloch Historical Society Inc.
- Phillip Island Conservation Society
- Phillip Island and District Genealogical Society Inc.
- RSL, Inverloch
- RSL, Phillip Island
- RSL, Wonthaggi Branch
- South Gippsland Historical Network
- Wonthaggi and District Historical Society
- Wonthaggi Genealogy Inc.

Approximately 94 places were identified through community nominations, some of which had already been identified in the Stage 1 study or were already protected on the Heritage Overlay. 36 community-nominated places are recommended to proceed to Stage 2 assessment. These are listed in Appendix A.

3.5 Review of existing heritage controls

3.5.1 Heritage Overlay anomalies

The existing heritage places in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay were reviewed in consultation with Mapshare (VicPlan), Nearmap aerial imagery software and Google Streetview/Maps to confirm that HO listing and mapping remains relevant and accurate. The citations for all existing heritage places and precincts were also briefly reviewed.

A number of discrepancies were identified, including:

- The need for review and updating of all existing heritage citations to correct minor errors such as addresses, but also to align with guidance in Planning Practice Note 1 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' (August 2018) (PPN1), which requires:
 - the documentation for each heritage place to include a Statement of Significance that clearly establishes the importance of the place (in What? How? Why? format) and addresses the recognised heritage criteria.
 - all heritage citations to be securely stored within the Hermes database.
- The need to review the HO curtilage and boundaries of some places to ensure all significant elements of the site are protected
- The need to remove some places from the HO as they have since been demolished or substantially altered, including:
 - HO30 58 Cuthbert Street, Corinella (demolished);
 - HO56 34-35 Stradbroke Avenue, Cowes (demolished);
 - HO86 73 The Esplanade, Inverloch (extremely altered).

3.6 Gaps in existing HO protection

Gaps in the current Bass Coast Heritage Overlay have been examined according to:

- type/historical theme; and
- geographic coverage across the municipality.

3.6.1 Typological/thematic

There are a number of place types that are not well represented in the Shire of Bass Coast's HO. There is, overall, a dominance of residential buildings and, to a much lesser extent, of commercial and community buildings. Poorly represented place types include civic, industrial and transport-related sites. There are no places on the HO that are included specifically for their importance as post-contact Aboriginal sites. There is some inclusion of postwar housing, but given the importance of this theme in the history of the study area, more weight could be given to this period of housing. Trees are not well covered on the HO, with only the Avenue of Golden Cypress in Cowes included.

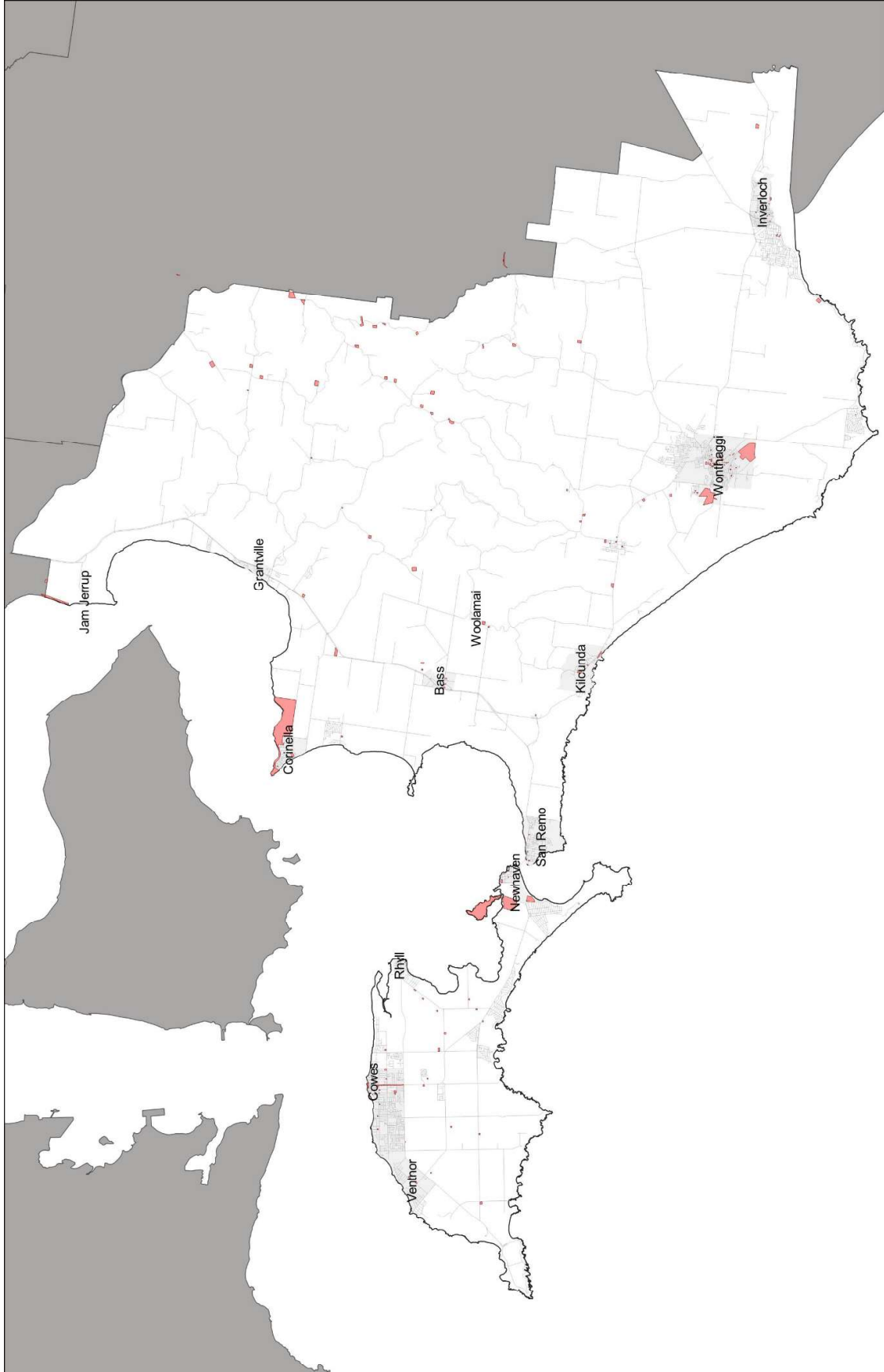
3.6.2 Geographic

The existing heritage overlay coverage is largely concentrated in the major townships and in Phillip Island with some sparse coverage, typically of agricultural places or small-town civic buildings, within the hinterland (see map on next page). The major townships of Wonthaggi and Cowes have considerable coverage, however Wonthaggi North is fairly underrepresented. The other main centres (noted as main centres on the Bass Coast Shire website) of Inverloch, San Remo and Grantville have considerably less coverage relative to their size and density. Grantville is not represented at all on the HO.

Significant geographic gaps include the lack of coverage in the northern part of the Shire and of coastal pockets, or hamlets, such as the southern side of Phillip Island, including Surf Beach and Cape Woolamai, Cape Paterson, Coronet Bay and Jam Jerrup.

Existing coverage is generally related to individual built properties, however there is some coverage of larger scale sites which incorporate both built and/or natural features such as the Wonthaggi State Coal Mine precincts; Churchill Island; 1826 Settlement site, Corinella; Newhaven entrance to Churchill Island; Lang Lang Foreshore; Cowes Foreshore and the Avenue of Golden Cypress, Cowes.

Existing Heritage Overlay coverage—Bass Coast Shire



4.0 Prioritisation Framework

4.1 Introduction

This section provides the rationale for prioritising future heritage projects and associated tasks over a five-year period. First, it provides a summary of the strategic planning context set out in the Bass Coast Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS), then examines the role of heritage in Council's current and planned strategic planning projects and structure planning processes. Finally, the section summarises the criteria devised in determining the assessment matrix for measuring risk and urgency for a range of studies to be undertaken in the next five years.

4.2 Strategic planning context

Clause 21.05-4 in the Bass Coast Planning Scheme lists heritage as a valued aspect of Bass Coast's built form and character:

The strategies and objectives outlined in this clause apply to all forms of development, including residential, commercial and industrial development. Housing, particularly in areas where there are increased housing densities, needs to respond to its context in terms of character, cultural heritage, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.

Clause 21.05-7 discusses the importance of protecting heritage places in the Shire:

The protection of sites of heritage and cultural significance helps to provide character and identity to townships and landscapes and in certain situations contributes to the tourism potential of the municipality.

Heritage consists of archaeological sites such as Aboriginal sacred sites, scarred trees and artefact sites, and historic sites such as buildings, bridges and trees. In Victoria, all Aboriginal archaeological relics and sites are protected and the legal custodians of such sites should be consulted in the management of these sites. Rising sea levels have the potential to adversely impact areas of Aboriginal heritage.

Clause 22.03 discusses the importance of heritage places and precincts within the Shire:

The Municipal Strategic Statement provides a key strategic direction to protect, enhance and manage significant heritage assets in Bass Coast. The conservation and management of significant heritage assets in Bass Coast assists in understanding the past, enriches the present and is of value to future generations.

The heritage places and precincts within the Shire of Bass Coast provide tangible links with the past; they demonstrate various important phases in the development of individual towns and the municipality, and can also provide evidence of now-obsolete aspects of daily life. Heritage places and precincts are thus valuable and irreplaceable elements which contribute to the creation of a sense of place and connectivity to the past for the local community. Heritage places and precincts also enrich the experience of tourists and other visitors. The conservation, protection and maintenance of this heritage has community, economic and cultural significance to the towns and rural areas of the Shire.

Key heritage concerns identified in relation to future land use and development include:

- new residential development pressure;
- differing community attitudes (with some seeing heritage as an asset, while others viewing it as a barrier);
- threats from inappropriate development of heritage places;

- gaps in heritage assessment that leave places of potential heritage value unprotected.

In terms of growth and development pressure, the MSS sets out Strategic Framework Plans for each of the townships in Bass Coast, which provide specific guidance about future land use. A Settlement Hierarchy for the municipality has been developed as part of the Victorian Coastal Strategy (2008) and is included in Clause 21.02-1 Growth of Towns. The Settlement Hierarchy sets out the strategic directions and development opportunities in the Shire. This is reproduced in Appendix B of this report.

More broadly speaking, each of the local areas in the Shire have been categorised into three main classes according to planned growth, which is useful for immediately identifying priority areas for future heritage projects, including Stage 2 studies and work to ensure that citations and policy for existing heritage places are strengthened and clarified as required in these areas.

High Growth Regional Centre	Wonthaggi	
Moderate Growth Settlements	Inverloch	Cowes and Silverleaves
	San Remo	Ventnor
	Newhaven	Grantville
Low Growth Settlements	Rhyll	Corinella
	Wimbledon Heights	Coronet Bay
	Cape Woolamai	Bass
	Dalyston	Kilcunda
	Cape Paterson	Harmers Haven
	Jam Jerrup	Smiths Beach, Sunderland
	Pioneer Bay/Gurdies	Bay, Sunset Strip and Surf
	Tenby Point	Beach

4.3 Bass Coast Towards 2030

Bass Coast Towards 2030 lists aspirational statements of what Bass Coast will look and feel like by 2030. In relation to heritage, it lists the following aspirations:

A window on the history of Victoria

Bass Coast proudly presents a window on the history of Victoria. From the dinosaur fossils in Inverloch, the cultural heritage of the local indigenous community, early settlement at Corinella and Bass, the first black coal mine in Wonthaggi to the first site of European farming on Churchill Island, they are all located in our front yard.

Our rich history is preserved and protected. Our built environment has been developed sensitively to acknowledge the significance of Bass Coast's heritage.

Everyone has a deep appreciation of the history of people and places throughout the Shire. Residents and visitors from all over the world share the experience of the many significant historical sites and buildings. Among these is the opportunity to stand side-by-side with the dinosaur whose footprints were laid 115 million years ago when this land was inside the Antarctic Circle or learn about the kitchens of the first Australians that have been in the Shire for 40,000 years. They are significant tourism attractions in their own right. They continue to tell the story of Victoria's struggles and achievements.

4.4 Activity centre and structure planning

In May 2020, Council provided information on several active and proposed Strategic Planning Projects planned for the municipality. These projects have been developed to strategically address issues facing the specific towns, including community needs and aspirations. The projects need to address the preferred future direction for growth, whilst protecting and enhancing the elements which make the towns distinctive and functional. Heritage should be considered as a priority when developing these plans to ensure the adequate protection and recognition of the Shire's heritage assets. The following Strategic Planning Projects could pose a threat to heritage places and should include heritage impact assessments as part of their considerations.

- Distinctive Areas and Landscapes
- Smith's Beach Master Plan
- Cowes Activity Centre Plan Review
- Wonthaggi Activity Centre Plan
- Wonthaggi North East Growth Area / PSP

4.4.1 Wonthaggi Activity Centre Plan

The draft Wonthaggi Activity Centre Plan aims to enhance the quality and the character of the Wonthaggi town centre and reinforce the town's status as a Regional Centre. It builds on work undertaken by the Future Wonthaggi Focus Group in 2016 which looked at understanding what makes Wonthaggi a great place to be, and a series of community-led placemaking activities that took place in Apex Park and McBride Avenue in 2018. It involves a combination of capital works projects, planning recommendations and advocacy items to be delivered over one to ten plus years.

4.4.2 Wonthaggi North East Development

A Planning Scheme Amendment is currently being prepared for the Wonthaggi North East Growth Area/Precinct Structure Plan, which affects land to the north east of Wonthaggi and will facilitate the development of approximately 5000 new lots to cater for 30-50 years' growth.

4.4.3 Wonthaggi Structure Plan and Dalyston Structure Plan 2018

The Wonthaggi Structure Plan notes an action to 'Investigate buildings which feature heritage significance, that are not currently protected by the Heritage Overlay', and includes 85 sites of potential heritage significance as identified in Council's Heritage Sites Audit in an appendix.

4.5 Draft Assessment Matrix

4.5.1 Developing the matrix

Consideration of the strategic documentation discussed above has informed the development of a draft assessment matrix. The matrix has been devised to assess risk associated with development pressure against different levels of potential heritage significance, in order to establish priorities for planning future heritage projects and associated tasks. Categories were formulated according to levels of potential risk and potential for heritage significance and are set out below.

Key factors considered when defining the categories for potential degree of risk to heritage places were:

- Places that are experiencing development pressure now or are expected to be at risk of development in the near future;
- Places located in areas of the Shire that are subject to a low level of development pressure;
- Existing heritage places located in areas expecting significant development pressure, with citations requiring a review to rectify gaps or weaknesses in citations (in particular, the format of Statements of Significance), as these can easily convert to losses when combined with new development.

Key factors considered when defining the categories for potential heritage significance were:

- High: places that are rare or underrepresented in the HO (typologically or thematically), and/or are located in an area with poor HO coverage.
- Medium: places that are underrepresented in the HO (typologically or thematically), and/or are located in an area with moderate HO coverage.
- Low: places that are well represented in the HO (typologically or thematically).

Note that this is a draft framework and is intended to be further developed following feedback from Councillors and Council officers.

Table 3.1 Assessment Matrix for Prioritising Places in Appendix A

Potential degree of risk to places	Potential for heritage significance		
	HIGH POTENTIAL	MEDIUM POTENTIAL	LOW POTENTIAL
HIGH RISK	Very high priority (could include on-going work)	High priority work	Medium priority work
MEDIUM RISK	High priority work	Medium priority work	Low-medium priority
LOW RISK	Medium priority work	Low-medium priority	No immediate action

Very high priority = complete within 1-2 years, potentially as part of broader Strategic Planning Projects

High priority = complete within 3 years

Medium priority = complete within 3-5 years

Low-medium priority = complete within 5-7 years

4.5.2 Prioritisation of heritage sites for further assessment

The prioritisation of heritage places and precincts identified as part of this heritage review was carried out according to a range of factors.

As noted above, a preliminary sieve was applied according to the location of places within the municipality, and their relative development pressure. For instance, places located in Wonthaggi and Wonthaggi North were given an initial 'very high priority' grading, considering the locality's designation as a 'regional centre' with 'high spatial growth capacity', and where large scale residential growth is encouraged.

Places were also considered, in the context of their location, in terms of their rarity or as part of a typology that is underrepresented on the Heritage Overlay. This required a nuanced balancing of several factors. For instance, while residential places are considered to be well-represented on the HO, there are few interwar houses surviving in Inverloch, therefore this type of place is considered to be rare or at risk of disappearing, and were given a higher priority grading than Edwardian and interwar-era houses in Wonthaggi for example, of which there are many already protected in the HO.

Where possible, a further level of priority was then considered according to places identified as either particularly early, rare or fine examples, or with potential for exceptionally strong historic or other heritage values. This was determined via either the windscreen surveys conducted in the field, or available desktop sources.

5.0 Draft Action Plan

The proposed draft action plan, in order of priority, is as follows:

5.1 Very high priority

- Prepare an updated and more comprehensive Thematic Environmental History, based on the draft framework of themes provided in Section 2.2.1, to enhance understanding of the historical themes and sub-themes in the municipality. This should precede any Stage 2 detailed assessments/studies.
- Assess 'very high priority' potential places and precincts (see Appendix A).

5.2 High priority

- Develop a Heritage Strategy to guide future heritage work.
- Prepare a Significant Tree study, building on existing work undertaken in Phillip Island by Phillip Island Conservation Society in collaboration with Bass Coast branch of National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and Council, and from this work consider developing a Bass Coast Shire Significant Tree Register.
- Assess 'high priority' potential places (see Appendix A).

5.3 Medium priority and longer-term tasks

- Assess 'medium priority' potential places (see Appendix A).
- Assess 'low priority' potential places (see Appendix A).

5.4 Ongoing

- Correct anomalies in existing heritage overlay mapping and extent of sites, and citations from existing heritage studies.
- Maintain HERMES database as a central point for all existing and new heritage citations.

5.5 Other recommendations

It is also recommended that Council undertake the following in relation to existing heritage places:

- Review and update most of Bass Coast's existing heritage place citations to correct errors such as incorrect addresses, but also to align with guidance in Planning Practice Note 1 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' (August 2018) (PPN1), which requires:
 - the assessment of the heritage value of the heritage place to use the recognised heritage criteria;

- the documentation for each heritage place to include a Statement of Significance that clearly establishes the importance of the place (using the format of 'What is significant?'; 'How is it significant?'; and 'Why is it significant?');
 - all heritage place citations to be securely stored within the Hermes database.
- Review the Heritage Overlay curtilage and boundaries of some places to ensure all significant elements of the place are protected.
- Remove some places from the HO as they have since been demolished or substantially altered, including:
 - HO30 58 Cuthbert Street, Corinella (demolished);
 - HO56 34-35 Stradbroke Avenue, Cowes (demolished);
 - HO86 73 The Esplanade, Inverloch (extremely altered).

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Victorian Places: <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/>

Appendix B—Settlement Hierarchy

As set out in Clause 21.02 in the Bass Coast Planning Scheme, the table below sets out a Settlement Hierarchy, developed for the purpose of detailing the strategic direction and development opportunities in the Shire.

Settlement	Definition	Expansion and infill capacity
Wonthaggi	Regional Centre: A settlement with large, diverse population and housing base with all essential services, including education, hospitals Wonthaggi High spatial growth capacity Encourage large scale residential growth within township boundary particularly within the north east growth area and interchange points for public transport. Large employment bases with strong connections with surrounding settlements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High spatial growth capacity • Encourage large scale residential growth within township boundary particularly within the north-east growth area
Cowes San Remo	District Towns: Settlements with large and diverse populations. All essential services are provided to surrounding settlements. Variety of Cowes San Remo Moderate spatial growth capacity Encourage some growth beyond urban zoned land and infill development within township boundary housing and moderate employment base. Popular visitor destinations as closer to Melbourne. Popular retirement destinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate spatial growth capacity • Encourage some growth beyond urban zoned land and infill development within township boundary
Grantville	Towns: A settlement with population levels that vary in line with general services. Diversity of demography and housing. Moderate to high Grantville Moderate spatial growth capacity Encourage some growth beyond urban zoned land and infill development within township boundary levels holiday home ownership. Popular retirement/lifestyle destination closer to Melbourne. Basic medical facilities. Strong employment relationship with larger settlements nearby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate spatial growth capacity • Encourage some growth beyond urban zoned land and infill development within township boundary
Inverloch	Town: A settlement with moderate population levels and seasonal fluctuations. Access to basic services. Sewer connections vary. Inverloch Low spatial growth capacity Encourage growth within existing urban or appropriately zoned land, primarily through infill capacity and defined settlement boundaries Moderate to high levels of holiday home ownership in settlements closer to Melbourne or regional centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low spatial growth capacity • Encourage growth within existing urban or appropriately zoned land, primarily through infill capacity and defined settlement boundaries
Cape Paterson Coronet Bay Corinella	Village: A settlement with moderate population levels and seasonal fluctuations. Access to basic services. Sewer connections vary. Moderate to high levels of holiday home ownership in settlements closer to Melbourne or regional centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low spatial growth capacity • Encourage growth within existing urban or appropriately zoned land, primarily through infill capacity and defined settlement boundaries

<p>Kilcunda Dalyston Rhyll Ventnor</p>	<p>Hamlet: Settlements with low, seasonal population levels, located in a singular urban zone. Generally no sewer connection or major Kilcunda, Dalyston, Rhyll Low spatial growth capacity Encourage growth within existing urban or appropriately zoned land, primarily through infill capacity and defined settlement boundaries services, and limited accommodation. High levels of holiday home ownership closer to Melbourne.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low spatial growth capacity • Encourage growth within existing urban or appropriately zoned land, primarily through infill capacity and defined settlement boundaries
<p>Smiths Beach Sunset Strip Sunderland Bay Cape Woolamai Tenby Point Pioneer Bay/The Gurdies Harmers Haven</p>	<p>Hamlet: Settlements with low, seasonal population levels, located in a singular urban zone. Generally no sewer connection or major Smiths Beach Sunset Strip Sunderland Bay No spatial growth capacity Any growth must be within existing urban or appropriately zoned land, primarily through infill capacity and defined settlement boundaries services, and limited accommodation. High levels of holiday home ownership closer to Melbourne.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No spatial growth capacity • Any growth must be within existing urban or appropriately zoned land, primarily through infill capacity and defined settlement boundaries

Appendix C—Draft Chronology for Bass Coast Shire

Local events (Bass)	Date	Victorian events
	\$40,000BP+	Human occupation of south-eastern Australia
	1798	George Bass navigates the Western Port coastline
Lt. James Grant stays on Churchill Island; sows wheat	1801	Matthew Flinders navigates the coastline of Victoria
Nicolas Baudin 'discovers' and names French Island	1802	
	1803	Convict settlement at Sullivans Cove (Sorrento)
	1800-1830s	Sealing and whaling camps on the south coast of Vic.
Settlement at Corinella by Cpt Samuel James Wright	1826	
Explorer William Hovell discovers coal at Cape Paterson	1826	
Corinella convict settlement		
	1835	John Batman and others take up land at Port Phillip
	1836	Port Phillip District of the Colony of NSW is declared.
	1836	Official settlement of Melbourne
Pastoral expansion into Western Port	1838	
Daniel Bunce explore the area, led by Aboriginal guides	1839	
	1840s	Paul Strezelecki explores Gippsland from NSW
Pastoral runs at Western Port gain some freehold rights	1847	Pre-emptive rights granted to pastoral licensees
	1851	Colony of Victoria established
	1851	Beginning of the gold rushes in Victoria
Powlett River coal fields	1859-1864	
First schools established?	1850s	
	1860s-70s	Victorian land selection acts encourage small farming
Common School opened at Inverloch	1866	
Town of Grantville surveyed	1870	
Ferry service from Mornington Peninsula to Cowes	1870s	Severe drought in Victoria
	1872	<i>Education Act (Vic.)</i>
	1878	Gippsland railway opened – Melbourne to Sale
Post office opened at Inverloch	1883	
	1884	<i>Water Act (Vic.)</i>
Township of Andersons Inlet (Inverloch) proclaimed	1886	
Railway from Melbourne into South Gippsland	1890	Economic depression in Victoria
Butter factories established in dairying districts	1890s	
	1890s	Plan for draining Koo-Wee-Rup Swamp
Mechanics Institute built at Dalyston	1890s	Closer Settlement acts
Coal-mining leases taken up in Bass Coast Shire	1890s+	

Local events (Bass)	Date	Victorian events
	1901	Federation of the Australian colonies
Closer settlement in the area	1903	<i>Closer Settlement Act (Vic.)</i>
Australia's first dinosaur bone discovered at Inverloch	1903	
Wonthaggi State Coal Mine established	1910	
Borough of Wonthaggi established	1911	
Wonthaggi Workingmen's Club established	1911	
Wonthaggi Hospital established	1914	
	1914–18	First World War
Soldier settlement schemes	1917	<i>Discharged Soldier Settlement Act (Vic.)</i>
	1919	Brown coal-mining commences at Yallourn
Development of Wonthaggi and Inverloch townships	1920s	
Guesthouses established at Cowes	1920s	
Wonthaggi Technical School opened	1922	
First car-race at Phillip Island	1928	
	1929	Onset of the Great Depression
Wonthaggi Mine Disaster (13 miners killed)	1931	
Swimming beach and surf life-saving at Cape Paterson	1930s	
Wonthaggi Miners' Strike	1934	
Bridge built from Phillip Island to the mainland	1940	Second World War
	1939–45	Postwar immigration to Victoria
	1946+	
National coal dispute fought by Wonthaggi miners	1949	
New car-racing track built at Phillip Island	1952	
Beach houses built at Cowes, Inverloch etc	1950s	
Beginnings of Wonthaggi & District Historical Society	1950s	
Closure of the Wonthaggi Coal Mine	1968	
South Gippsland Conservation Society established	1976	
Housing development in parts of Bass, including Grantville, Phillip Island, and elsewhere	1970s	
Development of Venus Bay & other coastal resorts	1970s–80s	
Bunurong Coastal Park established	1984	
Bass Shire Council formed by the amalgamation of the former Shire of Bass, the Shire of Phillip Island, parts of the former shires of Korumburra and Woorayl, and the former Borough of Wonthaggi	1994	
Dinosaur fossil site opened at Inverloch	1991	
Residential growth across a number of towns	1990s	



Bass Coast Thematic Environmental History

Final Report

Prepared for Bass Coast Shire Council

January 2022

GNL
HERITAGE

Acknowledgement of Country

We respect and acknowledge the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, their lands and waterways, their rich cultural heritage and their deep connection to Country, and we acknowledge their Elders past and present. We are committed to truth-telling and to engaging with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation to support the protection of their culture and heritage. We strongly advocate social and cultural justice and support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Cultural warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this report may contain images or names of First Nations people who have passed away.

Report register

The following report register documents the development of this report, in accordance with GML's Quality Management System.

Project	Issue No.	Notes/Description	Issue Date
2851	1	Draft Report	12 October 2021
2851	2	Final Report	12 January 2022
2851	3	Revised Final Report	20 January 2022

Quality assurance

The report has been reviewed and approved for issue in accordance with the GML quality assurance policy and procedures.

Indigenous cultural and intellectual property

We acknowledge and respect the inherent rights and interests of the First Peoples in Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right to be acknowledged and attributed for their contribution to knowledge but also respect their rights to confidentiality. We recognise our ongoing obligations to respect, protect and uphold the continuation of First Peoples rights in the materials contributed as part of this project.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

In July 2021, Bass Coast Shire Council engaged GML Heritage (formerly trading as Context) to complete a comprehensive and updated Thematic Environmental History of the Bass Coast Shire. This work builds on the Bass Coast Shire Heritage Gaps Review and Prioritisation Framework, prepared by Context in 2020, which recommended the preparation of a Thematic Environmental History as a very high priority action, which must precede any Stage 2 detailed heritage assessments and studies.

1.2 Project scope and methodology

The scope of the project included researching and writing a Thematic Environmental History of the Bass Coast Shire, which outlines the historical development of the area from European settlement through to the present day.

This Thematic Environmental History builds on previous heritage reports prepared for the Bass Coast Shire Council, primarily the Thematic Environmental History for Bass Coast Shire Council prepared in 2002 as part of the *Bass Coast Shire Heritage Study Stage 1* by Allom Lovell & Associates and revised in 2004 as part of a subsequent Stage 2 study.

The development of the Thematic Environmental History is intended to be an initial step in a strategic process to review the post-contact heritage of the municipality, ensuring that the land use and settlement patterns of the area are captured and set within a broad thematic framework, which can be used to better compare, understand and substantiate the heritage values of individual places, areas and themes within the municipality.

The key tasks associated with preparing this report included the following:

- Further review of sources of historical information relevant to the Shire of Bass Coast, including the review of recent historical literature since the 2004 report was prepared, and compilation of a bibliography for the Thematic Environmental History.
- In-depth historical research, covering a range of sources, including primary and secondary historical resources; historical maps, plans and images, and other reports and information sourced from local groups and selected stakeholders.
- Refinement of the draft Key Historical Themes (post-contact period) for the Shire of Bass Coast that were identified in the 2020 Bass Coast Shire Heritage Gaps Review and Prioritisation Framework.
- Online consultation workshops with knowledgeable members of the local community. The workshops provided an overview of the draft Thematic Environmental History and sought comments and additional resources from the community to incorporate into the final report.
- Incorporating written feedback from Bass Coast Shire Council and key stakeholder groups from the draft report.

This Thematic Environmental History includes some background on the rich Aboriginal history and heritage of Bass Coast and the wider area, but this is limited as a full investigation into this subject is outside the scope of this work.

1.3 Study area

The study area is the municipal area of the Shire of Bass Coast as shown below:



Figure 1.1 Map of the Bass Coast Shire. (Source: Bass Coast Shire Council, 2021)

1.4 Limitations

1.4.1 COVID-19

Due to government restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, access to archival resources was significantly impacted between July and October 2021. As a result, historical research was largely restricted to online resources and what could be sourced through local libraries. Government restrictions eased from November 2021, which allowed for increased access to archival resources.

1.4.2 Site visit

A site visit to the Bass Coast Shire was outside the scope of works and not undertaken. Google Street View and high-resolution aerial photography, such as Nearmap, were used to gain a deeper understanding of the study area.

1.4.3 Project team

This report was prepared by Dr Helen Doyle and Freya Keam, with input from Sophia Hanger and Juliet Berry of GML Heritage Victoria Pty Ltd.

1.5 Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the assistance of the following organisations and individuals:

- The Bass Coast Shire Council project team, including Ellen Whatley, Rewa Smith, Kate MacDougall and Kerryn Ladell.

- Irene Williams, Fay Quilford, and Sam Gatto, Wonthaggi and District Historical Society.
- John Hutchinson, Inverloch Historical Society Inc.
- Leah Tempany, Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.
- Pamela Rothfield, John Jansson and Christine Grayden, Phillip Island & District Historical Society Inc.
- Rod Gallagher, Wonthaggi Returned Services League (RSL).
- Josephine Nottle, Josephine Kent, Jeff Nottle and Anne Davie, Phillip Island Conservation Society.
- Ross Lloyd, Bass Coast Branch of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).
- Linda Cuttriss.
- Phil Wright.

1.6 Abbreviations and shortened forms

BP	Before Present
CRB	Country Roads Board
GMH	General Motors Holden
HMS	(On) His / Her Majesty's Service
NLA	National Library of Australia
n.d.	no date
n.k.	not known
PICS	Phillip Island Conservation Society
PIARC	Phillip Island Auto Racing Club
PIDHS	Phillip Island & District Historical Society
PINP	Phillip Island Nature Park
PROV	Public Record Office Victoria
RSL	Returned Services League
SGCS	South Gippsland Conservation Society
SLV	State Library Victoria
VGG	Victorian Government Gazette
VPRS	Victorian Public Record Series
VHR	Victorian Heritage Register
VPP	Victorian Parliamentary Papers

1.7 Terminology and glossary

Bunurong	The name of the Aboriginal people who are the Traditional Owners of Bass Coast Shire
Bunurong Coast	An area of coastline that approximates the boundary of the Bunurong National Park at Inverloch
Boonwurrung	The language of the Bunurong, who are the Traditional Owners of Bass Coast Shire
groyne	Timber sea wall structure
midden	This is formed from the refuse thrown away during food preparation and consumption. Over time, a shellfish midden builds up into a large deposit. Aboriginal middens are considered archaeological sites.
navvy	A person employed in railway construction
pelagic	Of or relating to the open sea
super feet	A former imperial unit of measurement used in sawmilling, indicating a piece of timber is 1 ft x 1 ft x 1in in dimension
Western Port	The term Western Port is used in reference to the bay. The term 'Western Port' will be retained when quoting from historical or quoted source material

2 Background to the Thematic Environmental History

2.1 Determining historical themes

Historical themes are a useful tool in understanding and assessing heritage significance. Connecting places to themes provides a broader context for their history.

A history of the Bass Coast Shire is presented here, which is structured around historical themes. A thematic, rather than chronological, approach to the history has been adopted because it provides context and linkages between people, places and stories, both in the development of an overall history and for use in future heritage planning for the area, including interpretation. A thematic history also serves the following functions:

- to tie together pieces of historical information into a meaningful structure
- to identify important patterns and developments across time periods
- to provide a clear and meaningful context for changes in the physical and social fabric of a place or area over time
- to guide future heritage-related work for a particular place or area—for example, understanding the heritage significance of a place or precinct; heritage interpretation; and place-making and place-naming.

2.2 Draft historical themes for Bass Coast Shire

A set of historical themes for Bass Coast Shire have been developed for this report. The historical themes that were developed for the 2004 Allom Lovell & Associates study have been revised and reshaped, drawing on the following:

- additional historical research, enabling a deeper understanding of the history of the municipality
- review by Bass Coast Shire Council and community stakeholders.

Table 3.1 Historical themes for Bass Coast Shire

Historical themes	Historical sub-themes	Representative places*
Bunurong Country		
Tracing the development of the landscape	Formation of Westernport Bay Geology Coastal landforms Soils Vegetation	Flat Rocks, Inverloch Eagle Rock Cape Woolamai
Possession and dispossession	European exploration Convict-era settlements Invading Bunurong Country Establishing the Port Phillip District Exploration post-1836	Corinella settlement site (1826) Settlement site, Churchill Island Fort Dumaresq, Phillip Island
Resources from the sea	Sealing and whaling Fishing Oyster dredging Mangroves (barilla)	Seal Rocks, Phillip Island San Remo jetty Rhyll

Land settlement	Pastoralism Agriculture and farming Dairying Chicory Orchards and vineyards	Wollomai House, Newhaven (VHR) Chicory kilns, Phillip Island
Resources from the land	Timber and forest products Coal-mining Quarrying Sand mining Salt production	Grantville jetty State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi (VHR) Quarry site, Cape Woolamai Saltworks (earthworks), Bass River Evidence of timber tramways, Grantville
Building towns and settlements	Small settlements Larger towns Commercial development Residential development	San Remo Hotel, San Remo Ocean View Hotel, Kilcunda
Industry and manufacturing	Brickmaking Flour mills Boat-building Butter and cheese factories Automotive industry Clothing and textile factories Light manufacturing	General Motors Holden Proving Ground, Lang Lang Archies Creek Butter Factory
Transport and communications	Operating steamers, ferries and barges Establishing roads and bridges Building railways Air travel Providing post and telegraph offices	Kilcunda Rail Bridge Former Wonthaggi Railway Station (VHR) Wonthaggi Post Office Jetty Shed, Cowes
Government services and administration	Local government Education Policing and local courts Water supply and sanitation Defence	Inverloch Primary School Wonthaggi Police Station and Court House
Health and welfare	Hospitals and health services Women and children's welfare Newhaven Boys Home Cemeteries	Cowes Hospital Women's comfort station, Wonthaggi Newhaven Boys Home San Remo Cemetery Grantville Cemetery
Community life	Churches Mechanics Institutes and public halls Social Clubs Theatre and cinema Community services Recognising local history and erecting monuments Honouring war veterans	Church of the Ascension, Inverloch Anglican Church, Cowes Bass Monument, Rhyll Union Theatre, Wonthaggi RSL, Wonthaggi
Sports and recreation	Sporting clubs and activities	Swimming enclosure, Inverloch

	Horse-racing Swimming and surfing Boating and yachting Motor-car and motor-bike racing	Wonthaggi tennis club Phillip Island Car Racing Circuit
Arts and culture	Artists' and writers' impressions Cultural organisations	
Tourists and holidaymaking	Early tourism Holiday accommodation Tourist attractions Country estates	Inverloch Foreshore Reserve San Remo Rotunda Amess House, Churchill Island
Facing the challenges of the natural environment	Shipwrecks Facing danger and disaster Adapting to climate change	Inverloch Rocket Shed Lighthouse, The Nobbies
Understanding and appreciating the natural environment	Discovering natural history Keeping weather records Acclimatisation Establishing nature reserves and national parks Conservation movement Palaeontology	Cape Paterson Flat Rocks, Inverloch

*The places listed in this column as examples are 'representative places' only and do not necessarily indicate a particular level of significance. Nor are these examples comprehensive.

2.3 Timeline of the development of the Shire of Bass Coast

Local events (Bass Coast Shire)	Date	Victorian events
	40,000BP+	Human occupation of south-eastern Australia
George Bass navigates Western Port Bay	1798	Matthew Flinders navigates the coastline of Victoria
Lt James Grant stays on Churchill Island; sows seeds and sows wheat	1801	
	1802	Nicolas Baudin 'discovers' and names French Island Convict settlement at Sullivans Cove (Sorrento) Sealing and whaling camps on the south coast of Vic.
Settlement at Corinella by Cpt Samuel James Wright	1803	
Explorer William Hovell discovers coal at Cape Paterson	1800-1830s	
Corinella convict settlement	1826	
	1826	
Samuel Anderson and brothers settle at the Bass River	1835	John Batman and others take up land at Port Phillip
	1836	Port Phillip District of the Colony of NSW is declared.
	1836	Official settlement of Melbourne
Pastoral expansion into the Western Port District	1838	
Daniel Bunce explores the area, led by Aboriginal guides	1839	

Local events (Bass Coast Shire)	Date	Victorian events
Explorer Paul Strzelecki seeks refuge at Corinella	1840	Paul Strzelecki explores Gippsland from NSW
Commissioner Powlett's party crosses the Bass River	1841	
Pastoral runs at Western Port gain some freehold rights	1847	Pre-emptive rights granted to pastoral licensees
	1851	Colony of Victoria established
	1851	Beginning of the gold rushes in Victoria
Powlett River coal fields	1859-1864	
	1863	<i>Local Government Act (Vic.)</i>
Gold mining leases taken up in Bass Shire	1860s-70s	Land selection acts encourage small farming
Common School opened at Inverloch	1860s+	
	1866	
Town of Grantville surveyed	1870	
Ferry service from Mornington Peninsula to Cowes	1870s	Severe drought in Victoria
	1872	<i>Education Act (Vic.)</i>
	1878	Gippsland railway opened – Melbourne to Sale
	1884	
Township of Anderson's Inlet (Inverloch) proclaimed	1886	<i>Water Act (Vic.)</i>
Railway from Melbourne into South Gippsland	1890	Economic depression in Victoria
Butter factories established	1890s	
	1890s	Plan for draining Koo Wee Rup Swamp
Mechanics institute built at Dalyston	1890s	Closer settlement
	1901	Federation of the Australian colonies
Closer settlement in the area	1903	<i>Closer Settlement Act (Vic.)</i>
Australia's first dinosaur bone discovered at Inverloch	1903	
Wonthaggi State Coal Mine established	1909	<i>Mines Act</i>
Railway extended to Wonthaggi	1910	
Borough of Wonthaggi established	1911	
Wonthaggi Workingmen's Club established	1911	
Wonthaggi Hospital established	1914	
	1914-18	First World War
Soldier settlement schemes	1917	<i>Discharged Soldier Settlement Act (Vic.)</i>
	1919	Brown coal-mining commences at Yallourn
Development of Wonthaggi and Inverloch townships	1920s	
Guesthouses established at Cowes	1920s	
Wonthaggi Technical School opened	1922	
First motor car-race at Phillip Island	1928	
	1929	Onset of the Great Depression
Wonthaggi Miners' Strike	1934	
Wonthaggi Mine Disaster (13 miners killed)	1937	
Surf lifesaving at Cape Paterson	1930s	

Local events (Bass Coast Shire)	Date	Victorian events
Road bridge built from Phillip Island to the mainland	1940 1939–45 1946+	Second World War Postwar immigration to Victoria
National coal dispute fought by Wonthaggi miners	1949	
New car-racing track built at Phillip Island	1952	
Beach houses built at Cowes, Inverloch etc	1950s	
Beginnings of Wonthaggi & District Historical Society	1950s	
Closure of the Wonthaggi Coal Mine	1968	
New road bridge from Phillip Island to the mainland built	1969	
South Gippsland Conservation Society established	1976	Development of Venus Bay & other coastal resorts
Housing development, including at Grantville, Phillip Island,	1970s 1970s–80s	
Bunurong Coastal Park established	1984	
Dinosaur fossil site opened at Inverloch	1991	
Establishment of Bass Coast Shire	1994	
Phillip Island Nature Parks established	1996	
Residential growth in several towns in Bass Coast Shire	1990s	

2.4 Community consultation

In August 2021, Bass Coast Shire Council circulated an email to targeted stakeholders on behalf of GML requesting initial input to inform the draft Thematic Environment History. These stakeholders included:

- Wonthaggi & District Historical Society
- Inverloch Historical Society Inc
- Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc
- Friends of the State Coal Mine Inc
- Gippsland Historical Model Railway
- Bass Valley Historical Society Inc
- Phillip Island & District Genealogical Society Inc
- Phillip Island & District Historical Society Inc
- Wonthaggi Genealogy Inc
- Bass Coast Branch of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
- Heritage Victoria
- South Gippsland Historical Network
- Wonthaggi Returned Services League (RSL)
- Phillip Island Returned Services League (RSL)
- Inverloch Returned Services League (RSL)
- Phillip Island Conservation Society
- Pamela Rothfield
- Linda Cuttriss
- Phil Wright.

At this time, the draft historical themes for Bass Coast Shire had been prepared for stakeholder review and the following information was sought:

- Consideration as to whether the draft themes adequately covered the history of Bass Coast Shire and whether there were any gaps in the thematic framework
- Assistance in identifying any critical historical sources: eg books, journals, newsletters
- Assistance in sourcing useful historical images or maps
- Information about important local historical events, organisations or clubs.

Following this GML received written input from:

- Wonthaggi and District Historical Society
- Inverloch Historical Society Inc.
- Friends of Churchill Island Society Inc.
- Phillip Island & District Historical Society Inc.
- Wonthaggi Returned Services League (RSL)
- Phillip Island Conservation Society
- Bass Coast Branch of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
- Linda Cuttriss
- Phil Wright.

Following the submission of the draft Thematic Environmental History, the document was circulated to stakeholders for review. Bass Coast Shire Council invited stakeholders to attend a one-hour workshop facilitated by GML consultants Helen Doyle and Freya Keam. The workshops were held on 20 and 27 October, and stakeholders were invited to attend one or both sessions.

The workshops included a presentation on the draft Thematic Environmental History, which discussed GML's findings and gaps that required further historical research. This was followed by an interactive exercise using Miro, an online whiteboard platform, where attendees were invited to provide verbal input, which was virtually pinned to a map of Bass Coast Shire. Input that was mapped during the sessions included additional historical information which addressed identified gaps and additional resources to consult.

Stakeholders were also invited to provide more detailed written feedback to Bass Coast Shire Council. Once this input was received it was collated by Council and provided to GML as one set of consolidated comments. GML received comments from the following stakeholders:

- Wonthaggi and District Historical Society
- Phillip Island & District Historical Society
- Bass Coast Branch of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
- Linda Cuttriss.

GML addressed corrections and errors raised in the comments and endeavoured to respond to all comments.

3 Thematic Environmental History of Bass Coast

3.1 Bunurong Country

The Bass Coast Shire occupies the traditional country of the Bunurong people (of the Boonwurrung language group), who are one of the five tribes that make up the Kulin Nation. The area of the Bass River between Western Port Bay and the Dandenongs would have been the territory of the Yallock willam clan.¹



Figure 3.1. Map showing the country of the East Kulin language areas. (Source: Gary Presland, *First People*, 2010, p. 14)

The human occupation of this area of Victoria has seen significant change through Deep Time, including significant sea level rise during the last Ice Age, or glacial event, around 8000–10,000 years BP. Before this, Tasmania was accessible from the mainland via the Bassian Plain. As the sea level rose, this plain was inundated, cutting Tasmania off from the mainland and creating the Bass Strait Islands. Port Phillip Bay and the shallower Western Port Bay were also formed during this time, along with Phillip Island,

¹ Gary Presland 2010, *First People: The Eastern Kulin of Melbourne, Port Phillip and Central Victoria*, Museum Victoria, Melbourne, p. 24; Ian D. Clark 1990, *Aboriginal Languages and Clans: An historical atlas of Western and Central Victoria, 1800–1900*, Department of Geography and Environmental Science, Monash University, Clayton, p. 365; Gary Presland 2008, 'Boon Wurrung' in eMelbourne: <https://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00214b.htm>

French Island and Churchill Island. Before it was inundated this land bridge enabled human movement to continue between the mainland and the land that is now Tasmania.

Bunurong people live at one with the environment and are guided by a deep spiritual connection to the land and waters. Many plants and animals were sacred and had special uses. In traditional culture the Bunurong lived in small bands, moving to seasonal camps as necessary, and meeting up with other groups for purposes such as trade, marriages and meetings. In addition to plant foods and meat from mammals and birds, people heavily relied on food resources from the sea. Their diet included fish (notably blackfish and eels) and shellfish, including crayfish and mussels, as well as seals and, occasionally, whales. Midden sites along the coast, for example at Kilcunda, are important physical evidence of this long history.² William Thomas noted that the Bunurong were largely land-based although in ‘former times’ there would build very large canoes to go to French Island to obtain birds’ eggs.³ During the summer they also visited Phillip Island, where they obtained plentiful shellfish, mutton birds and small marsupials.⁴

The area attracted a diverse range of birdlife, including ducks and the coastal mutton birds that nested in sheltered areas of the beach. Birds (and their eggs) were sourced from the mudflats, mangroves and the low-lying salt marsh and swamps, while the heathlands were home to a variety of smaller marsupials, such as wallabies, as well as vertebrates. The now rare water rat, a water-based mammal, was also common in the area. The timbered country further inland provided a habitat for larger marsupials, such as kangaroos, as well as possums, koalas and wombats.

Some of the plant species characteristic of the area included Coast Tea-tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*), Coast Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*), Swamp Paper bark (*Melaleuca ericifolia*), Moonah (*Melaleuca lanceolata*), and various eucalypts, wattles, heaths, reeds and mangroves. In the higher timbered areas, which were dominated by Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) and eucalypts, there would have been tree-ferns in the understorey.

At the time the British invaded their country in the 1830s, Bunurong people occupied a large area of country, their territory covering a large part of present-day Melbourne, extending to the Werribee River in the west, as well as the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port, and including the waters of Port Phillip Bay and Western Port Bay. Settlers referred to them variously as the ‘Westernport tribe’, the ‘coastal tribe’ or the ‘Port Phillip tribe’. The Bunurong had close ties with the Wurundjeri clans who occupied the country to their north, with whom they traded and met with for ceremonial purposes and to arrange marriages.

Certain clans of the Ganai or Kurnai people (now known as the Gunaikurnai), that occupied the country to the east (across much of Gippsland), were reportedly the enemy of the Bunurong. An affray believed to have occurred in the early 1830s had resulted in a large number of Bunurong casualties.⁵ An area of country on the east side of the Bass Coast Shire, possibly where it joined the Gunaikurnai territory, was regarded as ‘bad country’ and to be avoided. Robert Brough Smyth noted in the 1870s that ‘East of

² A midden is essentially the refuse thrown away when eating a meal. Over time, a shellfish midden builds up into a large deposit and is considered an archaeological site.

³ Denise Gaughwin and Hilary Sullivan 1984, ‘Aboriginal Boundaries and Movements in Western Port, Victoria’, *Aboriginal History*, vol. 8, no. 1/2, 1984, p. 91.

⁴ Phillip Island District Historical Society website. <https://pidhs.org.au/>

⁵ Daniel Bunce recounts this episode in *Report of the Select Committee on the Aborigines*, 1859, p. 54. See also Hugh Jamieson 1853 in T.F. Bride (ed.) 1898, *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*, Trustees of the Public Library, Melbourne.

Western Port there is a tract of wild country — debatable ground — which was the scene of many battles in former times.’⁶

Snippets of Bunurong language have been preserved in the placenames of the area. Many of these words were recorded by William Thomas while he was serving as the Assistant Protector of Aborigines for the Western Port District from 1839. These placenames and their meanings are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 3.1 Recorded Aboriginal placenames in Bass Coast Shire and surrounds. (Places outside Bass Coast Shire are indicated with square brackets.) These are all assumed to be Boon Wurrung words except where otherwise stated.

Aboriginal placename	Translation / meaning (if known)	Current English name	Reference and notes
Beang Gurr		Phillip Island	Gliddon 1968
Corriang (see also Millowl and Worne)		Phillip Island	William Thomas map, 1840
Corinella	‘running water’	Corinella	c1826 Possibly recorded by William Hovell; Blake 1977
Jam Jerrup	n.k.		
[Jouap] (see also Powel)	n.k.	French Island	William Thomas map, 1840
[Jumbunna]	‘meeting or conference’	Jumbunna	Railway map 1907 (outside LGA); Blake 1977
Kilcunda	‘word for an exclamation’	Kilcunda	Blake 1977
[Kirrak]	Kick	Kirrak	Blake 1977
[Kongwak]	Word referring to ‘catching’	Kongwak	Blake 1977
[Koo-Wee-Rup]	‘plenty of blackfish’	Koo Wee Rup	Blake 1977
Lang Lang (Laang Laang)	Stones, stony; ‘group of trees’ (Blake)	Lang Lang	Blake 1977
Millowl		Phillip Island	PIDHS
[Nurlmootak]	n.k.	River Hill	William Thomas map, 1840; a large hill to the east of area; catchment of the Bass River
[Powel] (see also Jouap)	n.k.	French Island	Haydon 1846
Weandon Yallock	[Weandon] waterway	Bass River	William Thomas map, 1840
Wonthaggi	‘to pull along’ (Blake); ‘home’	Wonthaggi	Blake 1977; Used as a parish name from c1840
Woolamai*	schnapper fish; ‘sea horse’ (Woolomoi)	Cape Woolamai	Victorian Places website; George Bass believed to have taken word from the Eora people (NSW)
Worne (see also Corriang)	n.k.	Phillip Island	Haydon 1846

⁶ Robert Brough Smyth 1878, *The Aborigines of Victoria*, vol. 2, J. Ferres, Government Printer, Melbourne, p. 14.

(Note that these names and meanings have been taken from secondary source material, including William Thomas (1840), G.H. Haydon (1846) and Les Blake (1977), and these names have not been verified by the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.)

*Placename was bestowed by an early pastoralist, likely the McHaffie brothers. The name came from an Aboriginal language around Sydney and is not a Bunurong word.

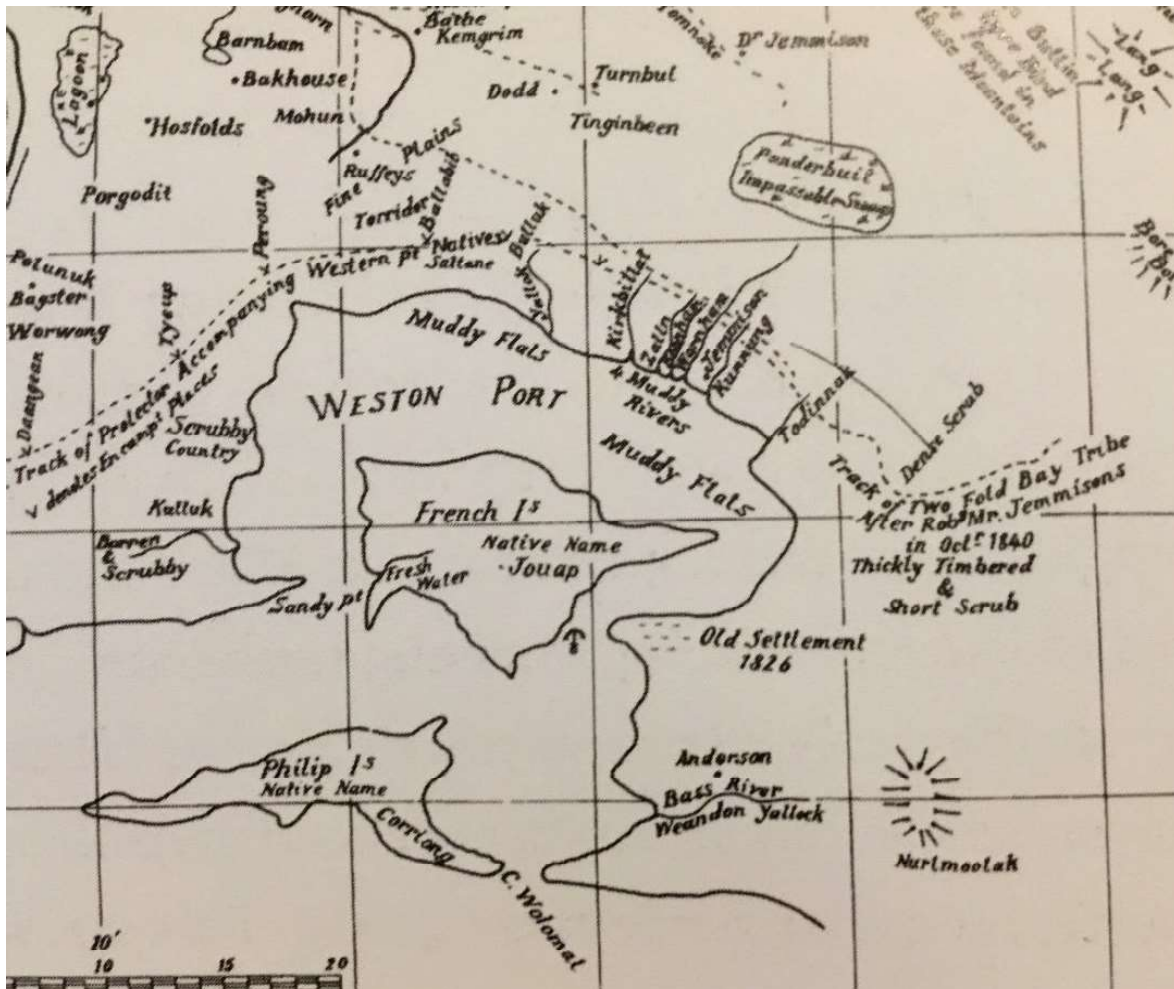


Figure 3.2 Detail from William Thomas's map of the Western Port District, 1840, showing some of the Aboriginal placenames of the area. (Source: taken from Gary Presland, *First People*, 2010)

3.2 Tracing the development of the landscape

3.2.1 Overview

The Bass Coast region is geologically complex with a range of coastal landforms, escarpments and floodplains. It is part of the Gippsland Plain bioregion which includes flat low lying coastal and alluvial plains. The predominantly gently undulating landscape is dominated by barrier dunes, flood plains and swampy flats. Fault lines cut through the landscape in a southwest to northeast direction. The variety of geological features distributed across the Shire are broadly related to the movement at these fault lines. The landforms of the region have been sculpted by weathering and processes of erosion.

During the late Jurassic and early Cretaceous periods the vegetation was dominated by conifers and ferns and dinosaurs were common. Fossils found in Cretaceous rocks between Cape Paterson and Flat Rocks, near Inverloch, give an understanding of the flora and fauna during this period. From San Remo along the coast to Inverloch, are outcrops of Early Cretaceous sedimentary rocks. These rocks, dated approximately 115–200 million years old, represent sediments that accumulated on a vast rift valley that formed as Antarctica and Australia separated.⁷ The valley would have been vegetated with coniferous species such as tree ferns, cycads, araucarias and ginkgos.⁸

Australia moved further away from Antarctica during the Middle Cretaceous period. This resulted in stresses which caused significant folding, faulting and uplift of the early Cretaceous basin sediments. The Strzelecki Ranges were formed during this uplift. The ranges are comprised of rocks with a high feldspar content making them relatively susceptible to weathering. Both weathering and high levels of rainfall have led to the rounded form of the hills and typically deep soils surrounding the ranges.⁹

Exposed Cretaceous sandstone and shale rocks that were deposited 95–120 million years ago have formed steep, high headlands and cliffs around Cape Paterson.

During the early Pleistocene, widespread fluvial sedimentation occurred resulting in flood plain deposition from the Bass River.¹⁰ Quaternary calcareous sands were deposited along the Bunurong Coast during the Pleistocene epoch (1.5 million to 15,000 years ago) as sea levels fluctuated.

About 14,000 years ago, the land bridge connecting Tasmania to mainland Australia was inundated, thereby cutting off the land connection to Victoria.¹¹ The fluctuation of sea levels continued to influence sediment deposition during the Holocene period (less than 15,000 years ago). Unconsolidated dune sand deposited during this period cap the Pleistocene sediments along the Bunurong Coast.¹²

3.2.2 The formation of Western Port Bay

Western Port Bay occupies a basin (sunkland) produced by Quaternary downfaulting between the Tyabb Fault to the west, and the Heath Hill Fault to the east. Marine submergence during the Holocene period formed the broad outlines of the present bay formation. The Mornington Peninsula to the west,

⁷ Parks Victoria 2006, 'Bunurong Marine National Park Management Plan', July 2006, p. 16.

⁸ D. Spencer-Jones, M.A.H. Marsden, C.M. Barton and J.J. Carrillo-Rivera 1975, 'Geology of the Westernport Sunkland', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria*, vol. 87, pp. 43–68.

⁹ Agriculture Victoria 2019, *West Gippsland: Geology and geomorphology*.

¹⁰ Spencer-Jones et al. 1975, p. 61.

¹¹ Kurt Lambeck and John Chappell 2001, 'Sea Level Change through the Last Glacial Cycle', *Science*, vol. 292, April 2001, p. 685.

¹² Parks Victoria 2006, p. 16.

Phillip Island to the south, French Island in the centre, and the South Gippsland Highlands to the east were relatively elevated land areas which persisted after the submergence.

During the Eocene period, widespread volcanic activity occurred. Extensive lava flows of basalt were extruded across the Western Port Bay area, cloaking existing stream valleys and topography. These lava flows are likely to have discharged from surrounding eruption centres identified on Phillip Island, at Mount Ararat and in the Flinders and Cranbourne areas.¹³

Significant areas of the Western Port Sunkland and a large part of the floor of the bay are covered in Quaternary deposits.¹⁴

At the beginning of the Holocene period, 10,000 years ago, the sea level rose, flooding into the valleys, drowning the lowlands and surrounding islands, and eventually forming Western Port.¹⁵ As sea levels rose and formed the bay, the river system truncated. The eastern entrance to Western Port Bay is relatively narrow compared to the western entrance and is likely to have opened more recently at or near the time of high sea level in the Holocene period. High tidal velocities continued to scour and enlarge the opening since that time.¹⁶

The seaward margins of the Koo Wee Rup Swamp were trimmed back during the later stages of the Holocene marine submergence.¹⁷

The sea levels reached their present level about 6000 years ago, when French Island and Phillip Island, which were stranded plateau, were formed. Phillip Island had essentially assumed its present shape at this time. To the east of Phillip Island, a small undulating area of basalt persisted that formed Churchill Island. The sandy spit which runs east of Cowes to Observation Point (at Rhyll) was starting to build. A line of low bluffs ran west from Rhyll, extending towards the coast at Erehwon Point.¹⁸ It is likely that Cape Woolamai and the Summerland Peninsula were separated from Phillip Island at this time by narrow straits. About 5000 years ago, the sea level rose about one metre above the present level, and then dropped back. Basalt ledges around Phillip Island that stand just above the present high tide mark were probably shaped at this time.

Western Port Bay was initially a mostly sandy embayment. Through the dispersal of clay washing down freshwater swamps and the weathering of basalt cliffs, extensive tidal mudflats formed. As mud accumulated, mangroves began to colonise the shoreline areas and the mudflats extended further into the bay.¹⁹ These mudflats also provided habitat for seagrass meadows and allowed mangrove-fringed salt marshes to develop.²⁰ Western Port Bay is a marine rather than an estuarine system. It receives only a few small inflowing streams, with Bass River as the largest.

¹³ Spencer-Jones et al. 1975, 'Geology of the Westernport Sunkland', p. 53.

¹⁴ Spencer-Jones et al. 1975, p. 61.

¹⁵ L. Cuttriss and E. Bird 2021, *500 Million Years on Phillip Island*, KMBay Press, Cowes, p. 11.

¹⁶ Spencer-Jones et al. 1975, p. 47.

¹⁷ E.C.F. Bird 1986, 'Mangroves and intertidal morphology in Westernport Bay, Victoria, Australia', *Maritime Geology*, vol. 69, issues 3–4, January 1986, p. 254.

¹⁸ Cuttriss and Bird 2021, p. 14.

¹⁹ Bird 1986, p. 256.

²⁰ Cuttriss and Bird 2021, p. 16.



Figure 3.3 Detail of survey of Western Port by Henry Cox, prepared by Great Britain Hydrographic Department, 1867. (Source: State Library Victoria)

On Phillip Island, large volumes of sand have drifted across the entrances to former embayments, closing them off from the sea as lagoons. These lagoons then shrank and formed lakes and reedy marshes that created a wetland habitat for plants and animals.²¹

The Western Port sunkland is bound by the Mornington Peninsula Horst to the west and the South Gippsland Highlands to the east. The Mornington Peninsula Horst consists of Paleozoic sedimentary rock and granite. The main ridge reaches 300m in elevation and separates the Port Phillip and Western Port Sunklands. The South Gippsland Highlands consist of tilted blocks between the Bass, Heath Hill and other normal faults. It is primarily Mesozoic rocks with some Tertiary sediment cover. Today the Bass and Heath Hill Faults form pronounced topographic escarpments.

Within the Western Port Sunkland are several physiographic units.²²

- *Lang Lang lowlands*—A group of tilted blocks between the southeast corner of the Koo Wee Rup Plain and the Heath Hill Fault. Slightly undulating land, part of which is now below sea level.

²¹ Cuttriss and Bird 2021, p. 16.

²² J.J. Jenkin 1962, 'The Geology and Hydrology of the Western Port Area', *Underground Water Investigation Report, No. 5*, Geological Survey of Victoria, Melbourne, p. 23.

- *Central Ridge*—Composed of Mesozoic sedimentary rocks and early Tertiary volcanic and constitutes the elevated land on Phillip and French Islands. Faults such as the Tankerton, Wellington, Corinella and Brella control the margins.
- *Koo Wee Rup Plain*—Coastal flat low-lying plain covered by a thin layer of Quaternary fluvial and aeolian deposits.
- *The Bass Plain*—Comprising the flat alluvial plain of the Bass River which is incised along the down thrown side of the Bass Fault. It includes the parts of the delta which are above water.

3.2.3 Geology

The oldest rock in the region is Cambrian greenstone (500 million years old), which is found as outcrops on Phillip Island. Silurian sandstones and mudstones (430 million years old), and Devonian granite (400 million years old) are also found on Phillip Island along with Tertiary basalts which cover most of the island. Away from the coast, the mainland of Bass Coast Shire is dominated by Cretaceous sediments deposited about 135 million years ago. During the late Jurassic and early Cretaceous periods large amounts of sediment and swamp material were deposited into a basin. After a process of compaction this formed the coal seams that are found in the Wonthaggi area.²³

Under cool climatic conditions of the Lower Cretaceous period, fluvial and lake derived sediments spread across all of southern Victoria. Black coals accumulated on flat lying plains within the feldspathic sandstone and mudstones which comprise the Strzelecki Group.²⁴ Thin coal seams lying within Cretaceous sediments are visible along the cliffs.

Along the Bunurong coast, between Inverloch and the Tarwin River, there are Quaternary calcareous sands that were deposited in the Pleistocene and Holocene epochs when sea levels were fluctuating. Beach and dune formations date from the Pleistocene period.

3.2.4 Coastal landform processes

The rock formations along the coast were sculpted by rain and by the ocean. Wave action at the seaward margins of Phillip Island cut back steep cliffs and shaped wide rocky shore platforms. Softer outcrops of volcanic tuff were carved into coves and embayments such as Sunderland Bay and Kitty Miller Bay. This left rock stacks such as The Nobbies, Jessie Island and Pyramid Rock marooned offshore. Rock that was more resistant to weathering formed cliffs and headlands, such as Helen Head, Redcliff Head and Cape Woolamai.²⁵

Intertidal rock platforms at Cape Paterson have developed through weathering and erosion processes occurring above low tide level and affecting coastal sediment formations, which includes wind, waves, wetting and drying, salt crystallising, sea water solution, rainfall and run off. This has led to the development of the almost horizontal form of the shore platforms as these processes are restricted below intertidal levels.²⁶

²³ Bass Coast Landcare Network [n.d.], 'Soils of Bass Coast Region', <http://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au/>

²⁴ A.C. Hutton 2009, 'Geological Setting of Australasian Coal Deposits', in R. Kininmonth and E. Baafi (eds), *Australian Coal Mining Practice*, Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, Carlton, pp. 40–84: <https://ro.uow.edu.au/scipapers/733>, p. 68.

²⁵ Cuttriss and Bird 2021, p. 13.

²⁶ Bass Coast Shire 2002, 'Draft Cape Paterson Foreshore Management Plan', p. 14.



Figure 3.4 Detail from Victorian Geological Survey map of the area surrounding Port Phillip by A.R. Selwyn, dated 1856. (Source: State Library Victoria)



Figure 3.5 Hiscocks & Co., detail from plan of the County of Mornington, 1874. (Source: National Library of Australia)

3.2.5 Soil types

The soils in Bass Coast Shire are derived from the weathering or underlying rocks. A description and location of the key soil types in the region are listed below:

- **Flinders:** this is found on the undulating to hilly land on Phillip Island overlying early tertiary basalts. The surface soils are dark brownish grey clay loams or very fine sandy clay loams.
- **Dalmore:** this occurs northwest and southeast of Bass. These soils have very dark grey medium or heavy clay structures.
- **Monomeith:** this occurs extensively south and east of Bass. These surface soils are grey or brownish clay loams or light clays and prone to compaction in wet conditions.
- **Strzelecki:** this occurs west of Kilcunda, hugging the south end of the Strzelecki Ranges near Woolamai. These soils developed on Cretaceous mudstones and sandstones. Surface soils are dark greyish or brown clay loam with moderate organic matter.

- **Nyora:** grey or dark grey loamy sand surface soils with low to moderate amounts of organic matter.²⁷

3.2.6 Vegetation

Coastal vegetation in the Western Port area was typically mangrove-fringed salt marshes. And behind the salt marshes sat a zone of Swamp Paper Bark typically underlain with sandy beach deposits.²⁸

Early surveys show this vegetation sequence with mangroves and samphire (salt marsh). Areas of mangroves fringed the eastern coast of Western Port Bay in Pioneer Bay and along the east coast of Phillip Island. Between Jam Jerrup and Corinella, tea tree swamp extended inland across the low-lying areas behind the mangrove fringe, with several patches of bull rushes noted. From Corinella south to the mouth of the Bass River, the land was 'poor soil producing middling grass wooded with Stringy Bark'. The land surrounding the Bass River was noted as 'excellent land wooded with lightwood extending for half a mile on either bank, producing good grass'. South of the Bass River mouth towards San Remo and Kilcunda was 'poor soil thickly covered with Stringybark and underwood'. A forest of sheoak and an extensive heath occupied country to the east.

Vegetation on Phillip Island was predominately tea tree, with pockets of tea tree swamp, dense scrub of gum and tea tree or prickly tea tree. An expansive of mangroves fringed the Rhyll inlet. Shoaks and 'good producing grass' covered Cape Woolamai and open heathy land extended from this point along the southern coast of the island. A small patch of sheoak forest occurred on the western side of Phillip Island. Churchill Island was covered in dense Silver Tea Tree scrub. Areas of fresh water are scattered across the island.

²⁷ I.J. Sargaent 1975, 'Soil Survey Western Port Bay Catchment: Soil Survey Report No. 52', prepared by the Soil Section of the Division of Agricultural Chemistry, Department of Agriculture, as part of the Westernport Bay Environmental Study.

²⁸ Bird 1986, p. 256.

3.3 Possession and dispossession

3.3.1 European exploration

In the late eighteenth century, British navigators had not determined whether Tasmania was connected to the mainland or not and in late 1797. George Bass was sent to investigate the existence of a strait. He was provided with a whaleboat and six men and was given six weeks to sail from Port Jackson (Sydney) to the southern coast. Bass explored the coast from Twofold Bay to Wilsons Promontory. He entered and named Western Port Bay on 4 January 1798, where he stationed himself for two weeks to make repairs to his vessel and to explore the area. He returned to Port Jackson without having confirmed the existence of the strait, but he was able to draw a map of the bay, including a section of coastline between Bass River and Corinella.²⁹ Bass returned to Sydney in the same year, accompanying Matthew Flinders, and a memorial for this landing is maintained close to Rhyll pier.

In 1801, the Governor of New South Wales Philip Gidley King instructed Lieutenant James Grant to carry out a closer investigation of Western Port Bay in the *Lady Nelson*. During this mission Grant compassed Phillip Island and identified and explored Churchill Island.³⁰ Grant established a temporary base at Churchill Island, but this was soon abandoned. Later in 1801, Lieutenant Murray was directed to return to Western Port to continue exploring; he was the first known European to sail through Bass Strait.³¹

In 1802, French explorer Nicholas Baudin led a scientific expedition comprising two ships, *Géographe*, which he captained, and *Naturaliste*, captained by Hamelin. This was the first European expedition to recognise French Island as separate from the mainland.³² The French admired the island's harbour though noted its apparent lack of fresh water. They named this island *Île des Français*, and the island to its south, *Île des Anglais* (Phillip Island).

Having become aware of the presence of the French on the southern coastline of Victoria, British authorities in New South Wales began a second period of exploration and settlement.³³ Governor King decided that a permanent settlement should be established in order to assert British occupation and ownership, and to prevent others from attempting to settle. Lieutenant Governor David Collins was sent to Port Phillip Bay in 1803 to establish a settlement at Sullivan's Bay (Sorrento), which was also shortly abandoned. Over the next few years, Governor Paterson, Lieutenant Robbins and surveyor John Oxley were sent to investigate the potential of Port Phillip and Western Port. Oxley reported that Western Port was even less desirable than Port Phillip for a permanent settlement due to its lack of fresh water and poor soil.³⁴ The idea of settling at Western Port was then largely abandoned during the following two decades. In 1824 the explorers Hume and Hovell were dispatched from Sydney to explore Western Port, but they went too far west and mistook Port Phillip Bay for Western Port.³⁵

In 1826, the French were exploring the Australian coast, and were thought by the British to be identifying areas unoccupied by the British in order to potentially establish a French colony. The British identified Western Port as vulnerable to French occupation, as they knew the French had previously mapped this

²⁹ South Gippsland Pioneers Association 1966, *The Land of the Lyre Bird*, The Shire of Korumburra for the South Gippsland Development League, Korumburra, p. 1.

³⁰ P.J.F. Coutts 1983, *Corinella: A forgotten episode in Victorian history*, p. 9.

³¹ Coutts 1983, p. 9.

³² Coutts 1983, p. 9.

³³ Coutts 1983, p. 11.

³⁴ Coutts 1983, p. 11.

³⁵ South Gippsland Pioneers Association 1966, pp. 2, 4.

area, and as a result Governor Darling was directed to establish a settlement in Western Port Bay.³⁶ Captain Skelton, commanding *The Dragon*, and Captain F.A. Wetherall, commanding *HMS Fly*, arrived at Phillip Island on 9 November 1826. They were surprised to find sealers living on the island, stationed at Sealers Cove. After establishing defences and gun emplacements at Fort Dumaresq, they determined the location wasn't suitable for a settlement and moved to Settlement Point (Corinella). The Corinella settlement was short-lived and abandoned in 1828.³⁷

3.3.2 Convict-era settlements

Churchill Island

Lieutenant James Grant arrived at Western Port on the *Lady Nelson* in mid-March 1801, landing at a point near present-day Rhyll. From this location, he located another island, which he named after John Churchill who had supplied him with a variety of seeds before his departure. In his account of the expedition, James Grant reported,

I fell in with an island, pleasantly situated, and separated from the Main Island by a very narrow channel at low water... it is of gradual ascent, well covered with trees of a considerable height, and underwood. The situation of it was so pleasant, and the prospects round it so agreeable, that this, together with the richness of the soil, and the sheltered position of the spot, made me conceive the idea that it was excellently adapted for a garden. Having determined upon establishing a garden in the place, I thought it incumbent upon me to give the island the name of Churchill who supplied me with a variety of seeds of useful vegetables, together with the stones of the peaches, nectarines and the pepins or kernels of several sorts of apples, with an injunction to plant them for the future benefit of our fellowmen.³⁸

Grant and his party continued to investigate the coast and determined that Churchill Island was the most promising site for future development. The party built a blockhouse from logs for Grant as well as several huts and cleared an area of ground in order to plant seeds, including maize, wheat, peas, rice, coffee and potatoes.³⁹ Churchill Island is regarded as to be the site of the first European settlement in Victoria and the first attempt at agricultural production in Victoria, although occupation by the newcomers was brief.⁴⁰

On 5 December 1801, Lieutenant John Murray arrived at Western Port, following orders of Governor King to complete the charting of Bass Strait and the southern coastline that had been commenced by Grant. Lieutenant Murray was the first to venture through the strait. By 8 December, he had returned to Churchill Island and recorded:

I went in the gig to Churchill Island and there found everything as we left it—I mean the remains of our fires and huts. The wheat and corn that Lieutenant Grant had sown in April last was in full vigour, six feet high and almost ripe; the onions also were grown into seed; the potatoes have disappeared. I fancy that the different animals that inhabit the island

³⁶ Coutts 1983, pp. 11, 12.

³⁷ Coutts 1983, pp. 11–18.

³⁸ James Grant 1975, *The Narrative of a Voyage of Discovery performed in His Majesty's vessel The Lady Nelson, of sixty tons burthen, with sliding keels, in the years 1800, 1801, and 1802, to New South Wales*, facsimile, Heritage Publications, Melbourne (first published 1805), pp. 124–125.

³⁹ South Gippsland Pioneers Association 1966, p. 2.

⁴⁰ Churchill Island, Statement of Significance, Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/4852>; Coutts 1983, p. 9.

*must have eaten or otherwise destroyed them. I regretted not having time or men to spare to clear a large spot, and sow the wheat already grown, as the next crop would be large. I never saw finer wheat or corn in my life, the straw being very near as large as young sugar-cane.*⁴¹

Philip Island and Fort Dumaresq

George Bass and his crew were the first Europeans to explore Phillip Island, traversing the western coast of the island on foot. Bass made a rough sketch of the bay, which he named Western Port due to its geographical relationship to Sydney. The sketch included a large part of Phillip Island, but Port Phillip Bay was not yet documented.⁴² After this expedition, Phillip Island was largely disregarded by the newcomers, and the only Europeans remaining there were whalers and sealers.

By 1826, the British authorities in New South Wales felt an imminent threat from the French, led by Dumont d'Urville on the *Astrolabe*. There was also growing interest in the potential of Western Port after Hume and Hovell published a glowing account of the area in their report of their 1824–25 expedition, Newspaper reports described Western Port as the site of a 'coming metropolis'.⁴³ Hume and Hovell's favourable account, however, had misinterpreted their location: it related to a site on Corio Bay (Port Phillip Bay) rather than Western Port. The combination of a perceived threat and the appeal of Western Port led the Governor, Sir Ralph Darling, to order the establishment of 'a post of occupation' at Western Port in Victoria as well as at King George's Sound in Western Australia, which was another site considered vulnerable to French occupation. Captain Wetherall arrived at Western Port on 9 November 1826 on the *HMS Fly* and the *Dragon*, transporting 20 soldiers, 20 convicts, a few soldiers' wives and other women.⁴⁴ Captain Wright, Lieutenant Burchell and William Hovell accompanied the party to assist with identifying the land that Hovell had previously discovered with Hamilton Hume. A settlement was attempted at Fort Dumaresq (present-day Rhyll) where a fort and gun were established.⁴⁵ The Union Jack was raised on Fort Dumaresq on 3 December 1826 and Western Port officially declared a British settlement and part of the possessions of the British Crown.⁴⁶ The settlement was soon abandoned, however, due to its swampy location and lack of fresh water.

Corinella

Having initially chosen Rhyll to be the main settlement site in 1826, the party moved east, choosing Red Point (known as Settlement Point and now Corinella) which was located near fresh water at Guys Creek. The settlement was named Flagstaff. Almost immediately, an area of land was cleared, and temporary structures were built for accommodation and to protect the military stores. The convicts cleared and fenced nine acres of land, where maize and wheat were sown.⁴⁷ Captain Wright developed a plan for the settlement and commenced the erection of permanent buildings. The storekeeper, overseer and the commander of the settlement were entitled to cottages, whilst the troops and convicts lived in barracks.

⁴¹ Francis Peter Labilliere 1878, *Early History of the Colony of Victoria: The Logbooks of the Lady Nelson*, Samson, Low, Marsden, Searle & Rivington, London, p. 61.

⁴² 'Phillip Island', Victorian Places 2015, <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/phillip-island>.

⁴³ South Gippsland Pioneers Association 1966, pp. 2, 4.

⁴⁴ South Gippsland Pioneers Association 1966, p. 4.

⁴⁵ Phillip Island & District Historical Society, <https://pidhs.org.au/>.

⁴⁶ Labilliere 1878.

⁴⁷ Coutts 1983, pp. 18–19.

Women and children were put in family cottages.⁴⁸ Corinella is considered the first ‘town’ in Victoria on account of the planned building of permanent structures.

By March 1828, the threat posed by the French had diminished. The settlement struggled, with a poor supply of fresh water. The settlement was abandoned after less than two years, leaving behind fifty structures.⁴⁹ In the mid-1840s the site could be identified by ‘brick foundations of dwellings, the verandah posts of the commandant’s house, and the stump of the flagstaff’.⁵⁰ Bricks and other items were taken from the ruins and used by settlers in the 1840s.⁵¹

French Island

In January 1798, George Bass sighted French Island while exploring the southern coastline. When he returned, however, the map he produced only included the island’s southern point.⁵² In a subsequent expedition in 1800, John Murray was the first European to recognise French Island as an area of land separate from the mainland.⁵³ It was during a French scientific expedition led by Pierre Bernard Milius and Nicolas Baudin on *Le Naturaliste* that the Island was named by the French, *Île des Français*.

3.3.3 Invasion of Bunurong Country

In the early 1800s, British explorers and the motley crews from various British and American whaling and sealing vessels regarded the southern coastline and all its resources as theirs for the taking and ripe for exploitation. A comment from Frenchman Nicolas Baudin on *Le Geographe*, however, suggests a slightly different understanding about the Aboriginal occupation of the southern land; in a letter to the Governor of NSW, Baudin declared that this land belonged to the ‘native inhabitants’ and inferred that the British had no right to claim it.⁵⁴

From at least 1798, Bunurong people saw ships passing in Bass Strait and had encounters with the strangers who came ashore. This included sealers and whalers, and British naval officers and their crews and convict servants. Historian Ethel M. Shaw noted that Aboriginal people had told stories ‘of the strange white men, who came and settled for barely two years’: ‘The old people of the tribe remembered watching them and their strange ways. They had also heard of Captain Cook’s landing at Western Port Bay, and of other explorers’.⁵⁵

These intruders were members of sealing parties who camped on Phillip Island and the Bass Strait islands or were from the British and American whaling crews that worked in Bass Strait. Others were convicts or runaways. Some were based in Van Diemen’s Land to the south, which had been acquired by the British in 1802. As well as venturing illegally into territory that was not under British governance, these men were trespassing on Bunurong Country. It is likely that there were conflicts between the Bunurong and the sealers, but few records of this period exist. Sealers established camps on the Victorian coastline during hunting trips and returned regularly to these camps. They took Bunurong women as wives, usually by force, and used these women as unpaid labour in sourcing food and

⁴⁸ Coutts 1983, p. 106.

⁴⁹ Coutts 1983, p. 19.

⁵⁰ James Bonwick 1883, *The Port Phillip Settlement*, London, p. 109.

⁵¹ Haydon 1846, p. 123; Hughes 2000.

⁵² Robert Douglass Boys 1935, *First Years at Port Phillip: Preceded by a summary of historical events from 1768*, Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne, p. 4.

⁵³ Boys 1935, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Cited in Hughes 2000.

⁵⁵ Ethel M. Shaw 1943, ‘Barak: Last Aborigine of the Yarra Tribe’, *Healesville Guardian*, 25 September 1943, p. 1.

working in sealing camps. A number of sealers settled with Aboriginal women on the Bass Strait Islands, where they lived outside of British law.

The British established a military (and convict) settlement on the west side of Western Port Bay in 1826. Known as Settlement Point (now Corinella), this endured for many months under difficult conditions, including a lack of fresh water. During their stay the settlers had a number of encounters with the Bunurong. The settlement was abandoned in 1828.

The Port Phillip settlement was officially established in 1836, but there were few settlers in the Western Port area until the late 1840s, apart from squatters and pastoral workers. Timber cutters and wattle bark strippers may have encroached into the northern part of Bass Coast Shire but the southern area was relatively inaccessible on account of the inhospitable coastline. Aboriginal guides provided assistance in the early exploration of the area. A number of Bunurong men, including Derrimut, accompanied the naturalist and plant collector Daniel Bunce on a trip to Western Port in 1839, while six Aboriginal men from the Melbourne area accompanied G.H. Haydon on a trip to Port Albert via the Tarwin River in 1844.⁵⁶

From the late 1830s, when pastoralists began to push into this area, Aboriginal people experienced catastrophic change to the world they knew. Their country was taken from them by the newcomers and adapted for foreign purposes. The newcomers brought with them foreign diseases, alcohol and firearms, all of which proved detrimental.

Whereas reports of frontier violence in central and East Gippsland reached the authorities during the pastoral settlement period, there are fewer documentary accounts of violent encounters in the South Gippsland area. This region remained relatively isolated and sparsely settled as the area was not considered immediately suitable for pastoral purposes. Much of the country was sandy and other parts were largely inaccessible. While some conflicts were reported between settlers and Aboriginal people, others would have gone unreported. There are scant records of the sealers' occupation of the area, but it is assumed that their presence would have been a source of conflict with the Bunurong people, particularly as the sealers are known to have taken Bunurong women and children. John Wedge, who was a member of the Port Phillip Association, investigated the murder of Aboriginal people at Western Port in 1836.⁵⁷

The Chief Protector of Aborigines G.A. Robinson brought a group of seven Aboriginal people across from Van Diemen's Land with him to Port Phillip in 1838, including the Nuennonne woman Truganini. A year later, Truganini and several others had left Melbourne and were working on pastoral stations to the southeast, including in the Bass Coast area. Near the beach at Cape Paterson they were involved in an affray with two whalers (who were on their way back from Port Albert), and the two whalers were killed.⁵⁸ Two of the Aboriginal men, Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheener, were arrested and sentenced to death; theirs were the first public executions in Melbourne.

3.3.4 Establishing the Port Phillip District

After earlier abandoned efforts by the British to settle the area that is now Victoria (in 1803 and 1826), an official declaration of the Port Phillip District, forming part of the Colony of New South Wales, was

⁵⁶ An account is given in Daniel Bunce 1857, *Australasian Reminiscences*, and in Victoria, *Report of the Select Committee*, 1859; Williams 2002, p 18.

⁵⁷ Broome 2005, *Aboriginal Victorians*, p. 14.

⁵⁸ Cassandra Pybus 2020, *Truganini: Journey through the apocalypse*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, pp. 202–03.

made in 1836. This development had been forced by the illegal trespass at Port Phillip by a party of pastoral speculators from Van Diemen's Land a year earlier. Initially it was Western Port rather than Port Phillip that had attracted them. One of the two 'founders' of Port Phillip, John Batman, had applied unsuccessfully to take up land at Western Port in the mid-1820s. Rival 'founder', John Pascoe Fawkner, had stopped first in Western Port Bay in 1835 before deciding to settle at Port Phillip Bay. Unlike Port Phillip Bay, Western Port had been known and charted for some time. Hovell's report of 1826 had been particularly favourable. The sealers who had been working in Bass Strait for some time probably also provided favourable reports. For the land-hungry settlers in Van Diemen's Land who were devising schemes to obtain land across the strait, Western Port was a relatively close and promising location.

3.3.5 Exploration post-1836

In contrast to other early settlements at Port Phillip Bay and on Victoria's southwest coast, the British settlement of Bass Coast had a number of false starts. From 1836, during the first years of the Port Phillip settlement, Bass Coast experienced further delays in making significant progress.

Exploration by land in the late 1830s and early 1840s was challenging and sporadic due to the difficult terrain and obstacles to access. Some forays by horse and on foot were made into the Bass River area from the Melbourne side but poor records and surveys were made of these trips. On his expedition in Gippsland in 1840 the Polish explorer Paul Strzelecki became lost and retreated to the Bass area for a period, where he rested at the Anderson's station.⁵⁹

Early settlers in the area undertook extensive exploration of the area. In June 1840, Samuel Anderson sailed round the coast towards Wilsons Promontory and noted the large inlet that was almost blocked by a sand bar, where the Tarwin River enters Bass Strait. Later that year, Superintendent C.J. La Trobe sent Assistant Surveyor William Townsend and a survey party to map the inlet.⁶⁰ From 1841 to 1846 the coast was surveyed by Assistant Surveyor George Smythe, who named Point Smythe, Eagle's Nest and Petrel Rock.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Tony Hughes 2020, *Two Rivers Run: The story of Gippsland's first pioneer settler: Samuel Anderson*, self-published.

⁶⁰ Inverloch Historical Society 1980, *Inverloch: A patchwork of historical stories*, p. 1.

⁶¹ 'Inverloch', Victorian Places, <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/inverloch>, accessed online September 2021.

3.4 Resources from the sea

3.4.1 Sealing and whaling

Sealing and whaling began in Bass Strait as early as 1798 and these activities were among the earliest commercial operations in the area during the colonial period.⁶² Sealing was the first activity to be recognised by the British as a commercial prospect on the south coast of Victoria and in the context of Bass Coast Shire played a much more important role than whaling.

When George Bass was exploring the Western Port area in 1798 aboard the *Nautilus*, he was specifically interested in ascertaining seal numbers. Bass found seals in large numbers, particularly at a location on the eastern coast of Wilsons Promontory, named Sealers' Cove, and an island to the east of the Promontory, named Seal Island; both of which he named.⁶³ This trip to Bass Strait produced 9000 seal skins and several tons of seal oil.⁶⁴ Bass also found plenty of timber, which was useful for burning down large amounts of whale blubber. Large seal colonies were also found at Phillip Island.⁶⁵ These discoveries attracted British, French and American sealers, all intent on exploiting the rich resources of the coastline.

The French, arriving in Sydney on 9 September 1802 on the French schooner *Surprise*, led by Captain Alexandre Le Corre, were initially on a sealing voyage off the coast of New Holland but instead requested permission to hunt seals on the southern coastline (in Bass Strait). The British authorities in Sydney did not grant them permission on the basis that there had been no rules established regarding foreigners fishing and sealing on the coasts and islands of New South Wales. Later, however, the French were given special permission to hunt in locations where colonists had not been given 'exclusive rights', including on Cape Barren Island and King Island in Bass Strait.⁶⁶

By 1803, fourteen years after sealing had commenced in Bass Strait, the industry was fully established. Large numbers of seals were killed by sealers and seal numbers became dangerously low. As the seal population rapidly declined, whales became the main target.⁶⁷

Methods used in whaling and sealing depended on which species were being pursued. Colonial whalers used the traditional Basque method of bay whaling that was used by the British and Americans. For the Southern Right or Black Whale, a whaleboat with 5–11 oars was used. Once the whale had been sighted, the whalers would capture the whale using a two-headed harpoon. Another tactic was to kill the calf of a whale, in order to attract an adult cow who would come to the rescue. The whale was either brought to shore or left to sink. After thirty-six hours, the carcass would rise to the surface, when the whalers would then remove its blubber and bones. The pursuit of young calves led the Southern Right Whale to near extinction, which eventually led to the end of whaling in Victorian waters. Seals were much easier to locate and to kill, and hence much more vulnerable to being hunted. They formed readily visible colonies on the islands and rocks near the shore. Once captured, they were clubbed by a long,

⁶² Susan Chamberlain 1989, 'Sealing, Whaling, & Early Settlement of Victoria: An annotated bibliography of historical sources'.

⁶³ J.C.H. Gill 1967, 'Notes on the Sealing Industry of Early Australia', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, vol. 8, issue 2, p. 223.

⁶⁴ Gill 1967, p. 225.

⁶⁵ Jane Lennon, 'Rise and Fall of Port Albert', *See Australia*, vol. 2, no. 4, p. 176.

⁶⁶ Gill 1967, p. 229.

⁶⁷ Chamberlain 1989.

wooden club until unconscious, and their throats were slit. Horse pistols, shot guns and air rifles were also used.⁶⁸

As sealers and whalers began to better understand the migrating patterns of different species, they developed new techniques to achieve their aims. They stationed themselves in more remote locations, building permanent or semi-permanent huts or outposts. Such camps were noted at Phillip Island in the 1820s, at Sealers Cove and Rhyll, both by the British officials who had established the convict settlement at Corinella, and by the French.⁶⁹

Sealers at Western Port also relied on Aboriginal methods of catching seals and used Aboriginal women for this purpose. Bunurong women assisted the sealers around Western Port Bay by locating and navigating the largely inaccessible cliffs, islands and caves along the coast of Victoria and at Kangaroo Island in South Australia.⁷⁰ Sealers kidnapped Aboriginal women and used them as labour. John Briggs of the Bass Strait islands was known to have abducted Aboriginal women and children from the Westernport area, including Louisa Briggs.⁷¹

Once the numbers of seals and whales were depleted, the larger commercial operators no longer worked the area. They were quickly replaced by colonial gangs, described as “mottled group(s) of vagabond freebooters”, which were made up of convicts that had managed to escape Van Diemen’s Land, Aboriginal people, shipwrecked sailors and passengers, and wattle-bark gatherers.⁷² They led unruly lives on the ‘fringes of colonial society in remote and difficult locations’.⁷³ Sealing continued to be a lucrative trade, owing to the demand for seal skin, which was used to make hats and seal oil.⁷⁴

An archaeological survey on Phillip Island in late 1990s did not find any evidence of remains of sealers’ camps, however it is likely that the structures erected by sealers in the c1820s were of an impermanent nature and did not leave any residual physical fabric.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ Chamberlain 1989.

⁶⁹ Chamberlain 1997, pp. 16–17.

⁷⁰ Chamberlain 1989.

⁷¹ Lis Williams 2002, *Shifting Sands: Inverloch—a fascinating place*, South Gippsland Conservation Society Inc, Inverloch, p. 20.

⁷² Patrick Morgan 1997, *The Settling of Gippsland: A regional history*, Gippsland Municipalities Association, Leongatha, p. 25.

⁷³ Morgan 1997, p. 25.

⁷⁴ Gill 1967, p. 218.

⁷⁵ Karen Townrow 1997, *An Archaeological Survey of Sealing and Whaling Sites in Victoria*, Heritage Council of Victoria, Melbourne, pp. 24–25.



Figure 3.6 Louis de Sainson, Sealers' camp with Aboriginal women in background; the location is believed to be Phillip Island, c.1827. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H90.20/2)

3.4.2 Fishing

Fishing was one of the first industries established by early settlers in the area, with fishing in Western Port taking place before the official settlement of the district. A steady supply of fish was transported across the bay by boat for sale in Melbourne. Later, the advent of the railway enabled transportation of fresh fish to the Melbourne Fish Market which was located close to Flinders Street Station.

A community of fisherfolk was established at Griffiths Point (San Remo), and at Newhaven and Rhyll on Phillip Island, and a significant commercial fishing industry developed in the district. The Bass River also had a plentiful fish supply. Many fishermen occupied rudimentary huts. In the 1870s there were also Chinese fishermen living in camps at Newhaven, Phillip Island, and at Griffiths Point (San Remo), where they produced cured and dried fish, some of which they sent home to China.⁷⁶

The Western Port Fishermen's Co-operative was established at San Remo in 1945. Membership was open to local fisherman, who were financial members of the Victorian Professional Fisherman's League and who benefitted from pooling their hauls to broader markets.⁷⁷ The Co-operative represented commercial fisherman from San Remo, Newhaven, Corinella, Tooradin, Rhyll, Hastings and Lakes Entrance.⁷⁸ In the late 1940s the Co-operative had a fleet of about 50–60 Cousta boats operating in Western Port Bay. By the 1950s, some larger boats started operating from San Remo, such as long line boats for the Bass Strait Shark Fisheries and cray boats to fish King Island.⁷⁹

One of the first initiatives of the Fishermen's Co-operative was the establishment of a freezer at San Remo, to enable fisherman to deal directly with retailers. In 1950 the Co-operative needed to overcome disagreements and unite with Newhaven-based fisherman to secure a government subsidy of £3 for

⁷⁶ *Argus*, 9 April 1875, p. 6; Gliddon 1968, p. 54.

⁷⁷ *Gippsland Times*, 19 February 1948, p. 9; *Argus*, 20 January 1949, p. 10. Conflicting information states the Co-operative was formed in 1948.

⁷⁸ *Age*, 30 August 1950, p. 3.

⁷⁹ San Remo Fisherman's Co-operative 2018, <https://srfco.com.au/history/>

every £1 provided by the fisherman to finance the freezer.⁸⁰ Fishing remained an important local industry in Western Port up until the mid-twentieth century but began to decline from the 1960s.⁸¹ San Remo remains a base for commercial fishing and the Co-operative continues to operate, however the size of the fishing fleet was reduced from 1987 due to restricted fishing licenses and categories, and the reduction of net length.⁸²

Since 1955, the Blessing of the Fleet ceremony has taken place at San Remo Jetty. This is an annual tradition adopted by many fishing villages and ports throughout the world to bless the fishing fleet before the opening of the season. This tradition continues to be observed during the annual San Remo Fishing Festival.⁸³



Figure 3.7 Painting by J.B. Henderson, Fishermans hut, Cape Woolamai, [n.d.], c 1860s–70s. (Source: State Library of New South Wales)

3.4.3 Oyster dredging

From the 1840s, the waters near Rhyll and Corinella were sites for harvesting native flat oysters in Western Port. A small operation was commenced by the Andersons at Bass River in the 1840s.⁸⁴ From the 1850s, the St Kilda Oyster Company, operated by Walter Freeman and William Putwain, established their main operations at Rhyll (then Flagstaff Point). The oyster trade helped to establish a significant settlement at Rhyll where wooden cottages and fenced gardens were established. It is estimated that up to 100 people resided in this settlement and close to 30 vessels were engaged in the oystering trade.⁸⁵

Oyster dredging in Western Port Bay developed rapidly in the 1850s to accommodate local demand. Locals had acquired a taste for oysters and ‘oyster saloons’ became established in Melbourne and Geelong. Vendors selling oysters on the streets of Melbourne were also a common site. However, the

⁸⁰ *Herald*, 26 August 1950, p. 9.

⁸¹ Culture Victoria 2016, ‘Fishing Industry at Hastings’, <https://cv.vic.gov.au/stories/a-diverse-state/postcards-stories-from-the-mornington-peninsula/fishing-industry-at-hastings/>, accessed December 2021.

⁸² San Remo Fisherman’s Co-operative, 2018, <https://srfco.com.au/history/>

⁸³ San Remo Fishing Festival 2018, <https://srfishfest.com.au/>

⁸⁴ Hughes 2020.

⁸⁵ John Jansson 2021, Oyster Dredging.

abundant flat oyster beds were quickly exhausted and by the late 1850s they were commercially unviable.⁸⁶

Though perhaps reaching the peak of production in the 1850s, oyster production continued in Western Port as attempts were made to create and cultivate new artificial oyster beds.⁸⁷ A visit to an oyster farm at Western Port, or 'oyster nurseries' as they were often called, was reported in 1863. Transporting the oysters to Melbourne, which needed to be expedient, was enabled with a sea passage across to Stony Point.⁸⁸

Oyster dredging at Rhyll re-commenced around 1910 and reached a peak of activity in the 1920s. The industry was regulated by the Fisheries Department with daily quotas imposed.⁸⁹

3.4.4 Mangroves (barilla)

From the early 1840s, coastal mangroves were chopped and burned off the coast near Jam Jerrup to produce soda ash. This was an important compound used to manufacture products such as soaps and detergents. Richard Howitt noted that the mangroves at the northern end of Western Port Bay were burnt to make barilla for export in the early 1840s.⁹⁰ Mangroves and other salt-tolerant plants, referred to as 'barilla', were the primary source of soda ash in the nineteenth century. Barilla is also used to refer to the soda ash product itself.

Smythe's 1842 survey of the coast indicate mudflats in the area which supported the mangroves. Once chopped and burned, the barilla was shipped to England. The relatively cheap and convenient access to the mangroves led to their rapid depletion by the 1850s.⁹¹ The mangroves have now recovered, largely by moving inland and replacing saltmarsh.⁹²

⁸⁶ J.R. Ford and P. Hamer 2016, 'The forgotten shellfish reefs of coastal Victoria: Documenting the loss of a marine ecosystem over 200 years since European settlement', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria*, vol. 128, no. 1, p. 95.

⁸⁷ Ford and Hamer 2016, p. 99.

⁸⁸ *Age*, 5 November 1863, p. 5.

⁸⁹ Gliddon 1968, p. 257–58.

⁹⁰ Howitt 1845, p. 142.

⁹¹ National Trust of Australia (Victoria), file L10079.

⁹² Victorian National Parks Association 2014, 'Scenario Planning for the Westernport Bay Region, prepared for Bass, Scenario-Planning-for-Westernport-Bay.pdf, accessed October 2021.

3.5 Land settlement

3.5.1 Pastoralism

Pastoral settlement at Western Port and West Gippsland in the 1840s was slower than other pastoral districts of Victoria at the same distance from Melbourne. Settlers pushing into the Gippsland area encountered dense forests, tangled undergrowth, large swamps and morasses, and varied terrain. Access was poor and restricted to either treacherous overland routes or a sea passage with difficult coastal landing points. The Bass and Powlett rivers were often impassable.

In 1842, brothers John David and William McHaffie were granted a pastoral lease on Phillip Island. They later acquired a pre-emptive right of 640 acres of land around their homestead near Ventnor. They grazed sheep and introduced pheasants, deer and wallabies to the island. They are recognised as the first permanent British settlers on Phillip Island and they remained there until c.1867.⁹³

Other pastoral runs in the area included Red Bluff, Hurdy Gurdy, Westaway, Upper Plains, Weandron, Ross Creek, Two Rivers, Powlett, Powlett North, Ryanston and Ryanston South.⁹⁴ Westaway was close to Settlement Point or Corinella and was occupied by J Simpson in 1870.⁹⁵ The Wild Cattle run lay to the east. Cattle were released from Corinella when the settlement was abandoned in 1828, with the result that the area east of the Shire was designated the ‘Wild Cattle run’ in the 1840s.



Figure 3.8 Detail from Thomas Ham's *Squatting Map of Victoria*, 1852, showing Bass Coast Shire and its wider geographic context at that time. (Source: State Library Victoria)

Pastoral ventures did not lead to enormous wealth as was the case in other parts of Victoria. Following the granting of pre-emptive rights to holders of pastoral licences from 1847, and the slow accretion of

⁹³ Monument Australia, ‘Port Phillip First Settlement’.

<https://www.monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/landscape/settlement/display/97539-port-philip-first-settlement>.

⁹⁴ White 1974, pp. 85–88; Whitworth 1870, pp. 294, 416; Hughes 2020, p. 70.

⁹⁵ Whitworth 1870, p. 416.

other freehold land, there were, correspondingly, few large or ornate pastoral homesteads established in the area that is now Bass Coast Shire. Nevertheless, the Anderson brothers, who took up a pastoral lease for the purpose of farming rather than grazing, built a large timber homestead called Netherwood (not extant) at Bass. The McHaffie brothers also built a homestead on their estate, making use of some of the bricks left behind from the 1826 settlement on Phillip Island.⁹⁶ Captain John Cleeland, a former naval commander, settled at Phillip Island a significant time later but established himself as a pastoralist and horse breeder.⁹⁷ He built a fine homestead in 1876 called Wollomai House at Cape Woolamai (VHR 874).



Figure 3.9 J.B. Henderson, 'The Homestead, Phillip Island', believed to be the McHaffies' homestead, painted in the 1860s. (Source: State Library of New South Wales; information from Phillip Island District Historical Society)



⁹⁶ Gliddon 1968, p. 170.

⁹⁷ Gliddon 1968, pp. 222–23.

Figure 3.10. John Cleeland's Wollomai House near Newhaven, Phillip Island, photographed by John T. Collins, 1984. (Source: State Library Victoria, John T. Collins Collection, Accession No. H98.250/1155)

3.5.2 Agriculture and farming

As part of early, but ultimately unsuccessful, efforts to settle Western Port Bay, trials were undertaken in planting a variety of grains and vegetations. Cultivation was trialled by Lieutenant Grant on Churchill Island in 1801, and then at Settlement Point (Corinella) where crops were grown in 1826–27. These efforts were short-lived but they sparked promise about the capacity of the area for agricultural pursuits.⁹⁸

In October 1835, only a few months after the permanent settlement of Melbourne, the Scottish-born settler Samuel Anderson arrived in Western Port. His two brothers joined him, including Hugh Anderson in 1838.⁹⁹ The Andersons took up a pastoral lease on the Bass River but took no interest in grazing. Samuel Anderson reported to the colonial authorities that he believed much of the land along the coast towards the Tarwin River was too poor for grazing. They planted crops and fruit trees and were primarily occupied with cropping. They cleared several square miles of tea tree scrub where they cultivated wheat and built a flour mill operated by tidal power.¹⁰⁰ The Anderson brothers established a large farmhouse near San Remo known as Netherwood, after which Netherwood Lane is named, and continued to farm in the area for many more decades. Other settlers arrived to take up land in the Bass River area, which was encouraged by the sale of land for farming from the 1850s.

The first official settlement on French Island (outside the Bass Coast municipality) began with the arrival of British settlers in 1850. Whilst the Island proved to be a prime location to produce salt, chicory, milk, vegetables and seaweed, which all became significant exports, its isolation and harsh environment meant that settlers were unable to remain on the island for long periods of time.¹⁰¹

Churchill Island was purchased in 1854 by John Rogers who applied to the Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands to purchase Churchill Island along with Sandstone Island and Elizabeth Island. He operated Churchill Island as a working farm until 1860 and built two cottages that survive.¹⁰² From 1860 to 1866, Samuel Pickersgill and his family occupied the island, followed by John and Sarah Rogers who owned Churchill Island until 1872.

The land selection acts of the 1860s offered prospective small farmers the chance to own their own small farm. Until that time, the majority of productive land in Victoria was tied up for pastoral use and there was limited land under cultivation. Land selection enabled occupation before purchase, contingent upon certain improvements being made. Under the land acts of the 1860s selectors took up blocks on Phillip Island and in the Bass River and Cape Paterson areas in the late 1860s and 1870s. In country that was coal-bearing there was initially a restriction on selection, which delayed settlement.

Land selections on Phillip Island were first offered in 1868 with a ballot for the sale of the eastern half of the island, and the western half sold through ballot the following year. According to a newspaper report in 1868, the Government had refused to sell the land up to that time, with the exception of the McHaffie's 'pre-emptive right'. There were now 157 allotments in the ballot, comprising between 10 to 160 acres

⁹⁸ Haydon 1846, p. 123; Hughes 2000.

⁹⁹ Harry M. Peck 1942, *Memoirs of a Stockman*, Stockland Press, Melbourne, p. 155, pp. 157–59.

¹⁰⁰ Hughes 2020; Morgan 1997; Pybus 2020, p. 207.

¹⁰¹ Victorian Places, 'French Island', <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/french-island>.

¹⁰² *Argus*, 18 September 1869, p. 8.

each, and covering 7195 acres in total. At Rhyll (Fisherman's Point) there were 24 lots, and at the Eastern Passage 32 lots, averaging one to 14 acres each, all of which were set aside for those who held fishing licenses. Nearly all the 132 lottery tickets issued went to farmers, farm labourers and 'hard-working men', or 'persons desirous of obtaining perhaps one of the best sites in the whole colony for a sea-side residence', with just two 'ladies' securing land.¹⁰³ Selectors took up their blocks and tried to make a go of it. They cleared the land, built modest homes, usually a square-plan timber dwelling. Early settlers also built using wattle and daub. Fencing was probably also erected from split timber but with timber not in great supply on the island one resourceful settler made a 4-foot high sod fence.¹⁰⁴

The land selection acts were not an immediate success in establishing viable and productive small farms in the region, on account of poor access, difficult terrain, and for the most, land that was unviable as farmland in small holdings. On Phillip Island, selectors took up blocks of 120 acres. These generally proved inadequate on account of their small size and some blocks were amalgamated to make them viable. One settler, Irishman Patrick Phelan, was able to add to his original block and prosper.¹⁰⁵ So too did Scotsman William Harbison, who established Innis-Howen on the western end of the Island where, by 1880, he had amassed over 4000 acres.¹⁰⁶ The majority of selectors failed and were bought out, and by the 1880s, the ruins of a number of selectors' homes could be seen.¹⁰⁷

Land around Inverloch and Wonthaggi was taken up under the land act of 1884.¹⁰⁸ On the former Wild Cattle run near Wonthaggi, the Hollins brothers took up selections in 1885. Descendant Margaret Rixon recalled that the land was cleared using 'a huge roller pulled by bullocks' and then fired, and that 'huts of wattle and daub were built near fresh water springs'. Mixed farming was practised, largely grazing but also some cropping and dairying. Cows were hand-milked and the women made butter.¹⁰⁹ In the heavily timbered areas, log construction was probably also used for dwellings and farm buildings.

Despite the challenges and difficulties of life on a selection, over time, and with great effort, selectors overcame these initial difficulties, and on many properties the rich soil produced good crops or successful dairy farms were developed.

Land clearing in the heavily timbered area of South Gippsland was hastened by the invention of the stump jump plough in the 1890s which allowed for land riddled with tree stumps to be cultivated. This led to the development of extensive pastureland that advanced the progress of farming, especially dairying.¹¹⁰

¹⁰³ *Australasian*, 7 November 1868, p. 20.

¹⁰⁴ Gliddon 1968, pp. 172, 204.

¹⁰⁵ SAGCA: <https://sagca.org.au/the-ideal-summerland-golf-history-on-phillip-island/>

¹⁰⁶ Gliddon 1968, p. 224.

¹⁰⁷ *Argus*, 3 March 1888, p. 5.

¹⁰⁸ Newspaper article 1885; Kirrak Parish Plan, 1894 (SLV).

¹⁰⁹ Margaret Rixon (née Hollins), Wonthaggi and District Historical Society, 'Hollins Selections', Plod Essay, <https://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/2021/09/08/the-plod-essay-september-2021/>

¹¹⁰ Godbold 1989, pp. 6–7.



Figure 3.11 Scene on the Bass River, Western Port, photographed by Fred Kruger, circa late 1870s. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H41139/107)



Figure 3.12 Charles Bennett drawing titled 'A selector's farmhouse, Phillip Island', 1905. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H9179)



Figure 3.13 Farm buildings at Innis-Howen, Phillip Island. (Source: J.W. Gliddon, *Phillip Island in Picture and Story* 1968)



Figure 3.14 The Andersons' Netherwood on the Bass River. (Source: Hughes, *Two Rivers Run*, 2020, p. 124)

Agricultural shows

Support for agricultural development in the district was provided by a range of services, especially from the late-nineteenth century. These services were largely driven by the local farming community. At Woolamai (Bass) a site for agricultural show yards was set aside in 1884 for the purpose of the Bass District Woolamai Agricultural, Pastoral Society and Horticultural Society. At Grantville, the first agricultural show was held in the recreation reserve in 1885. This was the beginning of the Grantville Agricultural Society (later the Grantville and Jeetho Agricultural Society).¹¹¹ Successful shows were held each year until 1909 when the society fell into debt. The decision was made to close and relocate the show to another town. Following this, Dalyston was selected, and the Powlett River Agricultural Pastoral and Horticultural Society was formed. The first show was held in 1913.¹¹² The society was renamed several times during the twentieth century. In 1938 it became the Dalyston & District Show Society, in 1974 it became the Bass Valley Show Society, and in 1980 it became the Wonthaggi & District Agricultural, Horticultural & Pastoral Society. This followed the relocation of the show from Dalyston to Wonthaggi in 1976. The show continues to be held annually at Wonthaggi.¹¹³

3.5.3 Dairying

Dairy farms were developed following the selection acts. Small herds enabled farmers to earn additional income selling milk and hand-churned butter. Gippsland's tall timber forests needed to be cleared before a reliable grazing and dairy industry could be established. Extensive land-clearing was carried out in the 1870s. This was back-breaking work and achieved through ring-barking, felling and stump-grubbing with little suitable machinery. Once cleared, the rich nature of the country became apparent, including its suitability for dairying. By 1877, dairying was widely spread in Victoria but remained embryonic in Gippsland, where development was slower.¹¹⁴

Note: Dairying is further discussed in Section 4.7.4 Butter and cheese factories

3.5.4 Chicory

Chicory, which was a popular coffee substitute, was grown extensively on Phillip Island from the 1870s until the 1960s. The soil and climatic conditions on the island were ideal for its cultivation. The

¹¹¹ White 1974, pp. 77–78.

¹¹² White 1974, pp. 79–78.

¹¹³ Bass Coast Summer Agricultural Show 2020, 'History', <https://www.basscoastagshow.org.au/our-history>, accessed January 2022.

¹¹⁴ Godbold 1989, p. 13.

production of chicory was a significant local industry and supplied more than half of the total national market. Growers also often planted mustard in association with chicory.

The plant's tubular root was harvested and dried in purpose-built brick kilns. The first chicory crop on Phillip Island was harvested in 1870 and shipped to Melbourne to be dried and processed. John and Solomon West built the Island's first kiln and associated outbuildings in Cowes in 1878.¹¹⁵ The kiln was constructed of red clay bricks from the Robert Anderson's Hoffman kiln at Cowes. The kiln was 12 feet x 12 feet square in plan, with 15-foot vertical walls, and was topped by a 10' high square-pyramid roof. It comprised two levels, a lower level for the oven and a higher level for a grate to hold the chicory as it dried. This design would form the basis of other kilns built on Phillip Island.¹¹⁶ The second kiln was built by Joseph Richardson in 1880.¹¹⁷ The largest kiln on Phillip Island was built in 1890 and was also constructed from the locally sourced Anderson bricks. By the 1920s at least 25 kilns had been established on the island.¹¹⁸ Kilns constructed from the 1900s, while still conforming with the overall design, were of less structural substance. These were erected with a wattle and daub frame, and the walls were packed and rendered with a mud mixture, and the roof constructed of timber and galvanised iron. From the 1930s, kilns for constructed with concrete. The associated outbuildings also changed over time.¹¹⁹

The chicory kilns were fuelled with timber, which contributed to the rapid depletion of Phillip Island's remaining mature timber. Three imperial tons of timber were burnt to yield just one ton of dry chicory.¹²⁰ Harvesting chicory was a laborious and difficult task, and the process often involved whole families in the harvesting and drying process. Many farms included a few acres of chicory to supplement the main activity of the farm such as dairy, sheep or cattle production. The back-breaking nature of chicory production led some to give up and abandon their land. Most of this land was purchased by John Cleeland and William Harbison, who by 1882 owned more than half of the rural land on Phillip Island.¹²¹

In 1884, local farmer Duncan McGregor invented a 4cm wide spade-like blade he called a 'chicory devil' to assist with the extraction of the hardy chicory roots. The tool was used until 1930, before being replaced by horse-drawn plough and later with a tractor-drawn ripper.¹²²

From 1922, there was growing dissatisfaction from chicory growers regarding the overall marketing and profit returns of the industry. In response to this, the Phillip Island Chicory Growers Co-operative Association was established for the purpose of controlling the sale of chicory on the island. The growers would sell to the association, who would then sell onto merchants. However, the merchants boycotted the scheme and offered low prices. Because the association had no legal backing it was forced to abandon its position.¹²³ This led to the establishment in 1936, under the *Primary Products Act*, of the Chicory Marketing Board, which was designed to control the sale of chicory grown in Victoria and to fix the selling price to chicory users and merchants.¹²⁴ The peak of chicory production was in the 1940s. In 1944 it was noted in the Victorian Parliament that 'an enormous quantity' of chicory and root crops were

¹¹⁵ *South Bourke & Mornington Journal*, 12 June 1878, p. 3.

¹¹⁶ Evans et al. 1967, p. 107.

¹¹⁷ Bassett 2002, p. 41.

¹¹⁸ Australian Food Timeline, '1870 Chicory on Phillip Island', <https://australianfoodtimeline.com.au/1870-chicory-on-phillip-island/>, accessed online September 2021.

¹¹⁹ Evans et al. 1967, pp. 109–10.

¹²⁰ Cuttriss and Bird 2021, p. 32.

¹²¹ Cuttriss and Bird 2021, p. 32.

¹²² Jean Edgecombe 1989, *Phillip Island and Western Port Bay*, the author, Thornleigh (NSW), p. 21.

¹²³ White 1974, p. 146.

¹²⁴ White 1974, p. 146.

grown on Phillip Island and French Island.¹²⁵ With the introduction of instant coffee powder in 1947 the demand for coffee essence and chicory declined. The last crop of chicory was grown at Rhyll in 1987.¹²⁶

Approximately nine chicory kilns survive on Phillip Island today. One kiln in Ventnor was converted into a bed and breakfast in the 1990s. These kilns are included in the Heritage Overlay (HO128) and are located at Sunderland Bay, Newhaven, Cowes, Ventnor and Rhyll.



Figure 3.15 Photograph of chicory crop at Phillip Island with kiln in the background, c1960. (Source: Phillip Island & District Historical Society; Gliddon 1968)



Figure 3.16 Concrete chicory kiln in Rhyll, Phillip Island, photographed c1960. The kiln was built in the 1950s and was still operating in 1973. (Source: Phillip Island & District Historical Society).

3.5.5 Orchards and vineyards

Fruit trees were part of the typical farming property and grew well in the Bass Coast area. Fruit was grown by the Andersons at Bass River from the early period of settlement. Orchards were also established at Phillip Island and French Island in the nineteenth century. E.J. Brady noted in 1918 that cherries, apples and pears were grown in the Western Port district.¹²⁷

Grape-growing is a relatively recent industry to become established in the Bass Coast Shire. The Bass Valley, below the Strzelecki Ranges, has been found to have rich and fertile soil that is suitable for grape-growing. Bass River Wines established a vineyard near Glen Forbes in 1983 and continue to operate today.¹²⁸ The cool and temperate climate of Phillip Island has also supported the establishment of vineyards, several of which have been established in recent decades.

¹²⁵ VPP, Hansard 1944, p. 1594.

¹²⁶ Australian Food Timeline.

¹²⁷ Brady 1918, p. 309.

¹²⁸ Bass River Winery 2020, 'Our Story', <https://www.bassriverwinery.com/our-story>, accessed online October 2021.

3.6 Resources from the land

3.6.1 Timber and forest products

Wattle bark

Wattle bark was a valuable resource in the early colonial period as it was a key element in the process of tanning leather. It was first sourced from Western Port prior to the official settlement of Port Phillip, with Henry Reed sending a party of men to the area in 1830 to strip wattle-bark, which he then shipped to London.¹²⁹ Shipbuilder and sealer John Griffiths also made trips from Tasmania to Western Port in the hope of establishing a bark industry. Griffiths Point is named after him.¹³⁰ Whaler John Hart collected wattle bark at Griffiths Point (San Remo) in 1836, which he sold in Van Diemen's Land.¹³¹

Bass Valley

A significant timber industry was established in the early 1870s around Grantville, Queensferry and Bass, where extensive forests covered the hills east of the Bass River. At least two sawmills were based at Grantville before 1874.¹³² These forests were dominated by Southern Blue-gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*), Messmate Stringybark (*Eucalyptus obliqua*) and Blackwood, which were timbers known for their excellent qualities for building purposes. The area was also accessible by a cheap sea route.¹³³

An early problem within the industry was the transportation of the timber logs to the sawmill and then to the coast for transportation. Initially, bullock teams were used, and while somewhat successful in the summer, they completely broke down in the winter. This problem was quickly addressed through the establishment of a network of timber tramways, which were built and financed by private companies.

Sila Brazier's tramway started near Almurta and terminated at Grantville; Alexander Stewart's tramway started in the hills above Glen Forbes and terminated at Queensferry; the Pezet & Co. tramway started in the hills east of Bass and terminated at Bass Landing. This latter tramway was later sold and completed by Captain Lawrence Henderson. Small tramways were built off the main lines, splintering into new areas of forest as more and more timber was felled. These tramways also supported other sawmills in the areas, which connected to the main tramway. The infrastructure required for these tramways, including jetties and bridges, were funded privately by the respective companies. Jetties were built at Grantville, Queensferry, and Bass Landing. In 1876 the mills in the Grantville area, mainly the Brazier sawmill, employed 90 men and felled 90,000 super feet of timber per week.¹³⁴ Alexander Stewart established a sawmill near Glen Forbes in the early 1870s, which operated until 1886. This mill employed 25 men and cut on average 620,000 super feet of timber per year.¹³⁵

By the 1880s, the lack of suitable milling timber had become a problem, leading to some operators abandoning or selling their mills. Those who entered the timber industry did so under the assumption that the supply was plentiful. Instead, within a matter of years, the hills had been denuded of timber, making way for open pasture. By the early 1900s, all sawmills in the area had ceased operation. The

¹²⁹ *Portland Guardian*, 15 August 1929, p. 2.

¹³⁰ Wanda S. Stelmach 2014, 'Mud Flats and Flowing Tides: The History of the Newhaven Yacht Squadron', p. 7. (John Griffiths later settled at Port Fairy).

¹³¹ Phillip Island and San Remo Advertiser, <https://www.pisra.com.au/san-remo—its-fishing-history/san-remo-history>

¹³² Joseph White 1974, *One Hundred Years of History*, p. 62.

¹³³ White 1974, p. 62.

¹³⁴ White 1974, p. 63. Super feet is a former imperial unit of measurement used in sawmilling, indicating a piece of timber is 1 ft x 1 ft x 1 in in dimension.

¹³⁵ White 1974, p. 64.

gradual decline of the timber industry represented a boom and bust for the townships of Grantville and Queensferry, which had largely been established to support the industry.



Figure 3.17 'The Bass River Saw Mills, Queensferry, Western Port'. by Fred Kruger, published in the *Illustrated Australian News*, 21 February 1877. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. IAN21/02/77/20)

Wonthaggi and the State Coal Mine

From 1878 the northern areas of the Parish of Wonthaggi North were reserved for the Victorian Railways as they were covered in valuable Blackwood trees, which were favoured for the manufacture of railway carriages.¹³⁶

From 1909, enormous quantities of timber were required for the operation and development of the State Coal Mine. Timber was essential for underground working, including roof support, bracing, shaft lining, and timber sleepers attached to the rails for the skip haulages in the mines.¹³⁷

In February 1910 it was reported that 40 men were employed timber cutting and carting timber for the State Coal Mine.¹³⁸ A three-month supply of timber for the mine required 82,000 pieces of timber, the average length being 8 feet. The mine's demand for timber placed a considerable strain on local supply.

¹³⁶ White 1974, p. 80.

¹³⁷ Philip Harper 1987, *The Wonthaggi Coalfields: A story of the men and the mines*, Electrical Industry Advertising, Oak Park, pp. 25–27.

¹³⁸ *Powlett Express*, 18 February 1910, cited in Cash 2000

Timber workers began to search further afield in neighbouring forests, and eventually to forests near Nyora and as far south as Foster to service the mine.¹³⁹

In 1938, members of the Timber Workers' Union went on strike for two weeks, refusing to supply timber to the State Coal Mine, claiming that the Victorian Railways had given a portion of the new season's work to non-union contractors.¹⁴⁰

3.6.2 Coal-mining

Aboriginal people would have undoubtedly been aware of coal as it was clearly visible in seams close to the surface. The word for coal is *lourn*, from the language of the 'two Melbourne tribes'.¹⁴¹ The extent of the use of coal by the Bunurong, however, is not known.

Knowledge of the existence of coal outcrops across Gippsland was established during the early period of settlement. The earliest documented report of coal in Victoria was made by explorer William Hovell at Cape Paterson in 1825–26. These seams were re-discovered in 1837 by Samuel Anderson and Robert Massie. In 1840, Captain Cole mined a few tonnes of coal from the cliffs between San Remo and Kilcunda and sent it to Melbourne for appraisal.¹⁴²

It wasn't until 1852 that the newly established Colony of Victoria began actively searching for a local source of coal, to establish its own coal-mining industry and to reduce dependency on New South Wales. At this time, the Victorian Government offered a reward of £1000 for the discovery of a workable coal field in Victoria.¹⁴³ In 1853, when land was sold in the Cape Paterson to San Remo area, many allotments were marked as 'to search for coal' indicating government awareness of the undeveloped coal resource in this area.¹⁴⁴

Government geologist Alfred Selwyn was appointed to undertake a Geological Survey of Victoria in 1856. In 1858, he found coal north of Cape Paterson, indicating the possibility of further coal opportunities in the area.¹⁴⁵ During this time, various prospecting leases were provided, and several coal companies were established. The Victorian Coal Company operated in the vicinity of Cape Paterson from 1859 to 1864. This company was the first to achieve a commercial output of black coal in the Victoria.¹⁴⁶ The company raised about 2000 tons of coal, however eventually found that the coal seam was thinner than expected and ceased mining in 1864. The Western Port Coal Company was formed in 1865 to work a seam of coal at Kilcunda. The company originally used bullock teams to haul coal the 11 kms from the mine to San Remo for export to Melbourne. However, the condition of the roads quickly proved problematic. To solve this problem, the company built a wooden tramway from the mine to a jetty they built at San Remo. The company closed in 1883, having mined about 15,000 tons of black coal.¹⁴⁷ Government boring also took place at Corinella and Queensferry in 1867.¹⁴⁸ The Western Port Coal Company wound up in 1885 owing to the difficulties in transporting coal to Melbourne.¹⁴⁹

¹³⁹ Harper 1987, pp. 25–27.

¹⁴⁰ *Age*, 5 August 1938, p. 8.

¹⁴¹ Context 2019, *Latrobe Valley Social History*, DELWP, Melbourne, p. 18.

¹⁴² Jack Vines 2008, *Coal Mining Heritage Study in Victoria*, Heritage Council of Victoria, Melbourne, p. 60.

¹⁴³ Gannon 1934, *Powlett Express Souvenir 1934: Wonthaggi and district, past and present*, no page numbers.

¹⁴⁴ Vines 2008, p. 60.

¹⁴⁵ Vines 2008, p. 61.

¹⁴⁶ Vines 2008, p. 62.

¹⁴⁷ Vines 2008, p. 23.

¹⁴⁸ Vines 2008, p. 64.

¹⁴⁹ *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate*, 14 January 1885, p. 2.

Most coal extraction in the region was scattered and not reliable enough to sustain a local industry. The experience of coal mining in South Gippsland, whether for established companies or small lease holders, was characterised by the shared challenges of high production costs and inadequate capital, transport and infrastructure maintenance, and by faulty or unreliable coal seams.¹⁵⁰

By 1904 the Victorian Government faced the dual issues of a dwindling local coal supply and increasing dependence on NSW, where coal production was facing disruption by industrial action.¹⁵¹ As a result, great emphasis was directed into exploration, and in 1908, a geological team led by Stanley Hunter discovered abundant coal seams at Powlett River (west of Wonthaggi).¹⁵² The Victorian Government had carried out boring at Powlett River in 1858 as part of geological survey work, and between 1886 and 1889, but had met with only moderate success.¹⁵³



Figure 3.18 Loading coal at Inverloch, early 1900s. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No: H32042)

By 1909, the urgent need for Victoria to secure its own constant and reliable supply of coal was again emphasised by further strikes at coalfields in NSW. By mid-1909, the Victorian Railways had been reduced to using wood to fuel some locomotives, and there was rising concern that the ongoing shortage of coal would disrupt trade and other essential industries.¹⁵⁴ Following an emergency Cabinet meeting in November 1909, approval was granted to establish a State Coal Mine at the Powlett River Plains.¹⁵⁵

Within 12 months of its establishment, the State Coal Mine employed nearly 900 miners, a figure that grew rapidly to 1200 by 1912 and fluctuated around that mark for the next decade.¹⁵⁶ The peak employment period was 1925–26, when 1821 miners were employed.¹⁵⁷

The coal was originally carted to Inverloch by bullock team and then shipped to Melbourne. Equipment, materials and supplies were transported to the mine either via Inverloch or from the nearest railhead at

¹⁵⁰ White 1974, pp. 59–59; Gannon 1934, *Powlett Express Souvenir 1934*, no page numbers.

¹⁵¹ Andrew Reeves 2011, *Up from the Underworld: Coalminers and community in Wonthaggi 1909–1968*, Monash University Publishing, Clayton, p. 5.

¹⁵² Reeves 2011, p. 5.

¹⁵³ Vines 2008, p. 88.

¹⁵⁴ Reeves 2011, p. xvi.

¹⁵⁵ Reeves 2011, p. xvii.

¹⁵⁶ Reeves 2011, p. 7.

¹⁵⁷ Victorian Heritage Database 2006, 'Wonthaggi State Coal Mine (Eastern Precinct)', <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/14147>

Outtrim. By 25 November 1909, authority was given for the extension of the Nyora–Woolamai railway to the State Coal Mine.¹⁵⁸ The link reached the State Coal Mine by 22 February 1910.

In July 1911, the management of the State Coal Mine was transferred from the Mines Department to the Railways Commission, in accordance with the original intention for the State Coal Mine supply to be dedicated to the Victorian Railways for their use in powering locomotives.¹⁵⁹

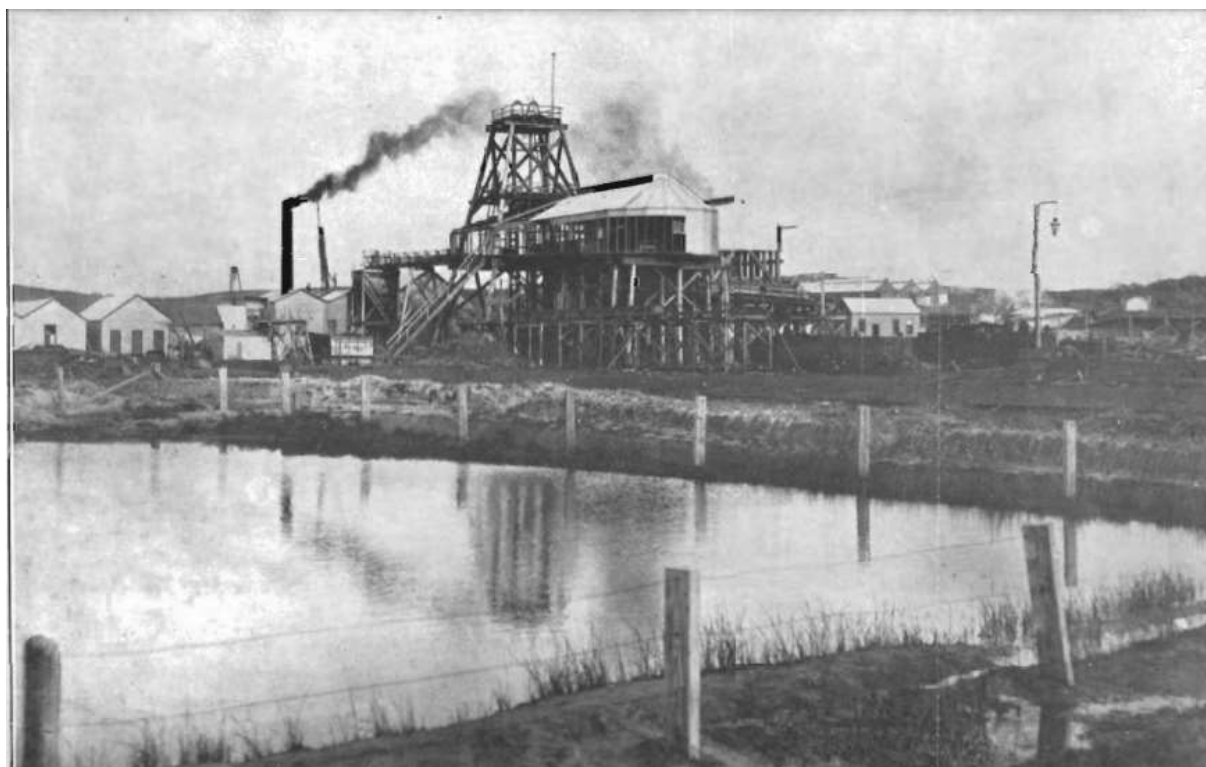


Figure 3.19 No 3 Shaft, State Coal Mine, 1910. (Source: *Annual Report of the General Manager of State Coal Mines*, 1910)

Total production from the State Coal Mine complex until its closure in 1968 was over 16.7 million tons. Early boring and drilling information at the Powlett River Coalfields, however, was hugely inaccurate and misleading. This gave the State Coal Mine management a false indication of the likely extent of the coalbeds and the thickness of the coal seams.¹⁶⁰ This resulted in considerable mining difficulties as coal seams became thinner and faulting required the establishment of new shafts and tunnels.

The State Coal Mine also had the issue that the coal was highly friable, resulting in a high proportion of ‘slack’ coal. This was unsuitable for use by the Victorian Railways who required large coal and could only burn slack coal in the stationary boilers at the Newport Power Station at Newport.¹⁶¹

This put considerable pressure on the miners to extract profitable supply, subjecting them to dangerous working conditions. The Wonthaggi Branch of the Federated Miners Union had a strong presence at the State Coal Mine. They regularly led industrial actions to improve these working conditions, as well as for fairer pay and leave benefits.

¹⁵⁸ Gannon 1934, no page numbers.

¹⁵⁹ Vines 2008, p. 91.

¹⁶⁰ Vines 2008, p. 92 and Harper 1987, p. 17.

¹⁶¹ Harper 1987, p. 17.

The government's favouring of the State Coal Mine meant that it posed a commercial threat to nearby coal mines at Jumbunna, Outtrim and Korumburra. Originally, the State Coal Mine was only intended to supply black coal to the Victorian Railways, and to be an emergency source in the event of NSW supply shortages. However, within five years, the State Coal Mine was selling slack coal (about 30–55 per cent of total production) on the open market below production costs. The Minister for Mines also went on to deny private coal mines further exploration leases in the South Gippsland area and provided developmental capital for the State Coal Mine through the State Treasury. The State Coal Mine was also able to offer higher and more attractive wages, possibly owing to the strong union organisation at Wonthaggi. These factors forced the surrounding mines at Jumbunna and Outtrim to scale down and eventually close.¹⁶²

The Victorian Government began to consider the closing of the State Coal Mine as early as 1939. This was due to continuing industrial disputes and high production costs. While the Mine was essential during World War II, by the mid-1950s, Victorian Railways was transitioning to diesel fuel and electrification, and the future of the State Coal Mine was under serious consideration. To avoid sudden mass unemployment at Wonthaggi, which was heavily dependent on mining, the slow closure of the State Coal Mine began in 1958. Early retirement was offered to workers who were aged 58 or older, and the mine eventually closed in 1968.¹⁶³

In the early to mid-twentieth century, several coal-mining operations were established in the Kilcunda district. These included Kilcunda Coal Mining from 1908 to 1914, the Outtrim-Howitt & British Consolidated Coal Mining Company from 1913 to 1921 and the (Kilcunda) Co-operative Colliery Ltd operated from 1910 to 1914. The South Gippsland Coal Company worked a tunnel operation at Kilcunda from 1921 to 1931, and these workings were later developed by the Victorian Coal Company. The Kilcunda Coal Mining Company operated from c1927 until 1946, when it was taken over by the Victorian Coal Mining Company, which operated until 1953. Coast Coal Kilcunda operated south of the old Kilcunda Coal Company's workings from 1947 until 1949. It was reopened by Mabilia Bros in 1952 and closed in 1966. Total coal output from the Kilcunda district until 1966 was about 450,000 tons.¹⁶⁴

In 1910, the Powlett–North Woolamai Colliers Co. began operations on the Powlett River north-west of Wonthaggi. This was known locally as the Daly Mine, after local landholder John Daly of Kilcunda, who was the leader of the group who established the mine. The mine wound up operations in May 1922, citing that the company's results had not been as successful as the original government bores had indicated.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Harper 1987, pp. 8–9.

¹⁶³ Vines 2008, pp. 93–94.

¹⁶⁴ Vines 2008, p. 68.

¹⁶⁵ White 1974, p. 73.



Figure 3.20 Coal miners playing cards in front of a poppet head at the State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi, in 1949. (Source: University of Melbourne Archives)

Miners' Union

Coalmining was the backbone of the Wonthaggi community until the closure of the State Coal Mine in 1968, and it is deeply etched into the local identity of the town. So too is unionism, which was established as quickly as the State Coal Mine itself and strongly influenced the history of the mine and shaped the development of the town of Wonthaggi and its wider community. Unionism underpinned the social fabric of the town and the wider area and established strong ties with the labour movement.

The Wonthaggi Branch of the Victorian Coal Miners Association was established on 24 December 1910 and was formally in operation by May of the following year.¹⁶⁶ From 1916, the Victorian Coal Miners Association was renamed the Australian Coal and Shale Employees' Federation and was often referred to as the Miners' Federation of Australia.

Strikes

The history of the State Coal Mine is punctuated with industrial action and a series of strikes. The union would often organise stop-work actions in response to pay disputes and health and safety concerns. The most significant action was a five-month strike in 1934. This had been preceded by Depression-era setbacks, including the retrenchment of 430 miners in 1932 and escalating wage cuts. The strike began on 6 March 1934 and was led by a strike committee including President Arthur Asquith, Vice-President Idris Williams, and Secretary Tom Currie. The committee adopted a new strategy of 'militant' industrial

¹⁶⁶ Reeves 2011, pp. 8–9.

action and political mobilisation, establishing volunteer sub-committees responsible for relief funds, entertainment, and propaganda.¹⁶⁷

Part of the success of the strike may be attributed to the cohesive and tight-knit Wonthaggi community, which had a strong emotional attachment political, economic, social and emotional attachment to the mining union. The services that had been established by the union, including the co-operative store, the dispensary, and the dental clinic, as well as social spaces such as the Union Theatre and the Workman's Club, meant that union activity was strongly embedded in community life. In the early days of the strike on 12 March, a town meeting was convened at the Union Theatre that 3000 residents of Wonthaggi and surrounding districts attended. They voted almost unanimously in favour of the motion that presumed the mutual identity of all townspeople in opposition to the mine management.¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, the *Powlett Express* reported in June 1934 that 90 out of every 100 residents in Wonthaggi supported an all-out policy to resolve industrial disputes.¹⁶⁹ The strike successfully ended in July 1934, after the Federal Government succumbed to the demands of the Miners' Federation. The strike helped to gradually improve nationwide conditions and wages that were lost during the Depression years. It also bolstered Wonthaggi's identity and pride as the strongest branch in the Federation.¹⁷⁰

A national coal miners' strike commenced on 27 June 1949. This was sparked by the Miners' Federation's demands for long service leave; a 35-hour work week; a wage increase of 30 shillings a week; and the provision of pit and town amenities. By this time, there was growing suspicion that the Miners' Union was controlled by the Communist Party, and the strike was equated with a 'communist plot' to infiltrate Australian politics.¹⁷¹ Unlike the case in 1934, Wonthaggi did not play a central role in the strike, but townsfolk did serve as a much-needed source of funds for the union nationally. Cash donations were hidden by trusted union members and supporters in obscure corners of their homes, such as in the stuffing of sofas, wrapped in oiled paper and pushed down drainpipes, or hidden under floorboards.¹⁷² Great care was taken to hide this money from the police who were closely monitoring 'illegal' strike pay.¹⁷³ The Federal Government took a heavy-handed response to the strike, and on 28 August, Labor Prime Minister Ben Chifley sent in the army to a NSW coalmine to break the strike. The strike ended within seven weeks in a significant defeat for the Miners' Federation.¹⁷⁴

Important places associated with Wonthaggi's history of industrial action include 'Flea Hill' (now Easton Street), which was one of the first major industrial disputes, a mass meeting of 200 miners was held on 11 June 1910 to discuss the cessation of work in No.3 shaft due to inadequate ventilation.¹⁷⁵ Another site is Earnest Yardley's barbershop, which was a major place of early union recruitment. Yardley was treasurer of the Victorian Coal Miners Association when the Wonthaggi branch was established.

Wonthaggi Miners' Women's Auxiliary

As discussed, several sub-committees were established during the 1934 union strike to provide support for the striking miners and their families. In June 1934, 35 volunteers formed the Women's Committee

¹⁶⁷ Reeves 2011, p. 59 and Peter Cochrane 1974, 'The Wonthaggi Coal Strike 1934', *Labour History*, 27, January 1974, pp. 14–15.

¹⁶⁸ Cochrane 1974, p. 16.

¹⁶⁹ Reeves 2011, p. 28.

¹⁷⁰ Cochrane 1974, p. 30.

¹⁷¹ The Socialist 2009, <https://thesocialist.org.au/1949-coal-miners-strike-a-turning-point-in-australian-history/>, accessed online October 2021.

¹⁷² Reeves 2011, p. 144.

¹⁷³ Cash 2000, p. 34.

¹⁷⁴ Phillip Deery 1995, 'Chifley, the Army and the 1949 Coal Strike', *Labour History*, no. 68, May 1995, p. 80.

¹⁷⁵ Cash 2000, p. 64.

who helped to organise relief, particularly for mothers and children. This role quickly expanded beyond direct relief, and the committee became closely involved in propaganda campaigns. In the past, the government had often appealed directly to women to help end a strike.¹⁷⁶ The role of the Women's Committee was to help educate other women on mining and industrial issues. This involved speaking at meetings and events, including a national speaking tour organised by the Propaganda Committee in mid-1934. In July 1934, President Agnes Chambers spoke at Northcote Town Hall, where she addressed other working women:

*Do the women of Australia understand what the life of a coal-miner is, how dangerous is the occupation? We women, living at home, while our husbands are toiling in the bowels of the earth each day. When they leave for work, we are not sure whether they will return uninjured. These accidents, our husbands tell us, are largely due to the systems of "speeding up". Because our men are determined to call a halt to this sacrifice of life and limb, the Government threatens to take us from our homes.*¹⁷⁷

Following the 1934 strike, the Women's Committee formed the Wonthaggi Miners' Women's Auxiliary. It was the first auxiliary of its kind in Australia and was used as a model for similar groups in Australia and abroad.¹⁷⁸ The Auxiliary continued to support the Miners Union following the strike, campaigning for improved mine safety following the 1937 explosion, and resuming their propaganda role during the 1947 National Coal Strike. They also provided financial support for striking miners at Korumburra and Jumbunna. They were an active community organisation throughout the twentieth century, campaigning on other issues including for the addition of a maternity wing at the Wonthaggi Hospital and for a local kindergarten.¹⁷⁹

3.6.3 Quarrying

A stone quarry operated a Griffiths Point (San Remo) from 1856. The *Argus* reported in July 1859 that a considerable quantity of stone had been mined near Griffiths Point three years earlier but had ceased following significant signs of decay in the stone.¹⁸⁰

The shoreline of Cape Woolamai is studded with huge blocks of pink granite that were considered to be an excellent quality for building purposes. A quarry was operating here by 1870.¹⁸¹ In 1891, Messrs. P. Finn & Co. established a quarry at Cape Woolamai that would supply granite to Melbourne. A jetty was built, and ships came in at high tide. At low tide granite blocks would be brought on trolleys along a tram line and loaded into the ships with a jib crane. Fifty men were employed at Cape Woolamai with more employed in their Melbourne factory.¹⁸² The quarry supplied granite for the exterior of the Equitable Life Assurance Society of America building situated on the corner of Elizabeth and Collins Street in Melbourne. The convenient location of the Cape Woolamai granite meant the tender was won over options to import stone from Scotland or Sweden. At the time, the granite supplied from Cape Woolamai

¹⁷⁶ Australian Women's Register 2018, <https://www.womenaustralia.info/biogs/AWE0638b.htm>, accessed online September 2021.

¹⁷⁷ Cited in Reeves 2011, p. 73.

¹⁷⁸ Australian Women's Register 2018.

¹⁷⁹ Reeves 2011, p. 25.

¹⁸⁰ Phillip Island & District Historical Society 2021, Stone quarrying.

¹⁸¹ Whitworth 1870, p. 415.

¹⁸² Phillip Island and District Historical Society Inc. 2020, Photograph, Granite Quarry, Cape Woolamai, Phillip Island, 1913, <https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/5600cc7f400d0c22a881b4c1>, accessed online September 2021.

for the Equitable Life Building were the largest pieces of red granite used in Victorian-era construction in Melbourne.¹⁸³

In December 1892, the ship *Kermandie* was transporting around 50 tons of granite from Cape Woolamai to Melbourne. Extreme weather in Bass Strait blew the vessel of course and it was sunk. Searches were conducted at Wilsons Promontory, Yanakie Beach and Great Glennie Island, but failed to locate any sign of the ship or its three-person crew.¹⁸⁴ The quarry closed in 1896.¹⁸⁵

The Equitable Life Building was demolished in 1968. Some of the granite was salvaged for use in other buildings in Melbourne, and large pieces are also located in the ‘Colonial Garden’ in the Carlton Gardens in Melbourne.



Figure 3.21 Granite quarry at Cape Woolamai on water’s edge, a jib crane in action. (Source: Phillip Island & District Historical Society; cropped by GML)

In the 1930s, a gravel quarry was established at Rhyll for road-building by the Shire of Phillip Island. This was known as the ‘Diamond Dolly’ quarry and mined sandstone and mudstone. The quarry helped to supplement farm workers’ income during the Depression. Operations at the quarry paused during World War II, commencing again at the conclusion of the war. It permanently closed around 1950 due to the poor quality of the rock, which contained too much clay from the mudstones.¹⁸⁶

The former Diamond Dolly quarry is located within the Rhyll Inlet, behind the Rhyll Cricket Ground. The 10m high cliff formed by the quarry operations can be viewed from the Conservation Hill to Observation Point walking path.¹⁸⁷

From 1958, the volcanic crater at Quoin Hill was quarried for basalt (bluestone) by Evans Quarries. The bluestone was used for roadmaking and the production of concrete. The quarry was purchased in 1981

¹⁸³ *Argus*, 2 May 1893, p. 7.

¹⁸⁴ Heritage Council of Victoria, ‘Kermandie’, <http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/shipwrecks/heritage/394>, accessed online 27 September 2021.

¹⁸⁵ Phillip Island & District Historical Society 2021, Stone quarrying; M. Evans, N. Evans and R. Cargill 1967, ‘An architectural history of Phillip Island: research essay for history of Australian architecture and to commemorate the centenary of open settlement on Phillip Island and Churchill Island from 1868 to 1968’, Department of Architecture, University of Melbourne, p. 117.

¹⁸⁶ Phillip Island & San Remo Advertiser 2020, ‘The Diamond Dolly Quarry’, Facebook, 26 July 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/1661828150778178/posts/2362098200751166/>; Cuttriss and Bird 2021, p. 5.

¹⁸⁷ Agriculture Victoria, ‘177. Rhyll Quarry – Rhyll Arkose’, http://vro.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro/portreg.nsf/pages/port_if_sig_sites_rhyll

by the Donmix concrete business (See Section 3.6.4 Sand mining). A concrete plant subsequently opened at the site and operated from 1983. The extraction and crushing of basalt at the quarry paused in June 2018, but the site is still used for concrete production.¹⁸⁸ The quarry is located just south of Back Beach Road in Ventnor. The summit was originally 78 metres but is now likely less than 50 metres because of quarry production.¹⁸⁹

In early 1910, the Mines Department established a quarry to provide stone for street development in Wonthaggi. By April, work began on constructing a tramway from the quarry down Murray Street.¹⁹⁰ The quarry appeared only to operate for a few months. The *Powlett Express* reported in late May 1910 that 70 men were put off when it was decided that the stone was not durable enough for the heavy traffic of Wonthaggi's roads.¹⁹¹ The quarry is believed to have been near Watt Street, as it was reported in 1928 that residents of the street petitioned against the Wonthaggi Borough Council's decision to convert the old quarry into a rubbish tip.

The search for suitable stone for the development of roads and streets needed to go further afield. By September 1910, the Mines Department again established a quarry at Kilcunda. The rocks were believed to be useful for supplying metal and pitcher for road construction throughout the Wonthaggi district.¹⁹² In December 1910, the government purchased a rock quarry at Kilcunda from Mr J. Ridgeway.¹⁹³

From the late 1930s, the waste stone, or spoil, from the State Coal Mine was the main material for road building in Wonthaggi. The State Coal Mine gifted their Eastern Area stone dump to the Wonthaggi Borough Council. This cost the Borough Council only one-third of other road-making materials. These stones had a distinctive red colour and became ubiquitous around the area, and were used for building roads, footpaths, driveways, and the local tennis court in Wonthaggi. The 'red' or 'burnt' colour has been attributed to a build-up of waste coal in the stone, which reacts with oxygen in the atmosphere producing heat. This heat builds, and if remained unchecked, spontaneous combustion can occur. Following a dispute between the Borough Council and their crushing plant contractor, Mr F. Webb, in the late 1950s, the crushing operations at the dump stopped. The council continued to use uncrushed stone on the roads, leaving stones that were too large on the side of the road. These leftovers are thought to have been salvaged and used in local gardens and property border walls.¹⁹⁴

3.6.4 Sand mining

Sand-mining operations have occurred in the Bass Coast area since the mid-twentieth century. In the early 1950s William (Bill) Donohue won a contract to supply beach sand to a company cleaning corroding cast iron water pipes. This sand was sourced from the Cape Paterson foreshore. Donohue hand shovelled the sand to fill his 22-ton truck daily, then delivering it to the rail line bound for Melbourne.¹⁹⁵ In the mid-1950s Donohue obtained an extractive industry lease at The Gurdies establishing a crude sand washing plant (Donmix). In 1958, Bill Donohue and his brother Henry established the ready-mix concrete business, 'Donmix' at The Gurdies. In 1963, the first load of concrete

¹⁸⁸ Gavin Moreira 2014, *Evans Quarries – Over 60 years in the Business, Sand & Stone*, accessed December 2021, <https://sandandstone.cmpavic.asn.au/evans-quarries-over-60-years-in-the-business/>

¹⁸⁹ Cuttriss and Bird 2021, p. 7.

¹⁹⁰ Cash 2000, p. 39 and *Age*, 7 April 1910, p. 8.

¹⁹¹ Cash 2000, p. 39.

¹⁹² *Argus*, 7 September 1910, p. 11.

¹⁹³ *Herald*, 19 December 1910, p. 6.

¹⁹⁴ 'Red Wonthaggi', Bass Coast Post: <https://www.basscoastpost.com/local-history/red-wonthaggi>

¹⁹⁵ Moreira 2014.

was delivered from The Gurdies Concrete Plant. The company experienced high demand shortly after opening, requiring them to increase equipment and take on more employees. In 1969, the company was awarded the contract for the new San Remo to Newhaven bridge, supplying 7700 cubic yards of concrete.¹⁹⁶ The business also supplied the concrete to Candowie reservoir at Almurta, the new Wonthaggi High School and the expansion of the General Motors Holden proving grounds at Lang Lang. Donmix sold their interest in the sand quarry in 2012.¹⁹⁷

Today, there are three sand quarries in operation in Grantville. One is adjacent to the Gurdies Nature Conservation Reserve, and another which is adjacent to the Grantville Nature Conservation Reserve. In 2020, there was significant community opposition following a proposal to expand this quarry into nearby remnant bushland.

3.6.5 Salt production

A saltworks was established by Samuel Anderson on the Bass River in 1835, who sold the salt in Launceston.¹⁹⁸ Anderson was running a large salt-making operation by c1850 which obtained salt through the evaporation of sea water. The onset of the gold rush meant that he was unable to find workers and he appears to have abandoned the saltworks by 1854.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ White 1974, p. 56 and Moreira 2014.

¹⁹⁷ Moreira 2014.

¹⁹⁸ Hughes 2020

¹⁹⁹ *Age*, 5 November 1863, p. 5; Hughes 2020, p. 123.

3.7 Building towns and settlements

The development of settlements in Bass Coast Shire was initially in response to pastoral settlement in the area, but also to support the early fishing and timber industries. The Bass River, which provided access to important timber resources, supported a number of small settlements in the late nineteenth century. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the advent of the railway and the State Coal Mine influenced development patterns. The extension of the railway line to Wonthaggi in 1910 helped to establish townships at Woodleigh, Kernot, Almurta, Glen Forbes, Woolamai and Anderson.²⁰⁰ In the inland settlements, the population was mostly concentrated around farming and grazing areas.

Services were laid on in town centres as the towns grew. Street lamps were installed by the early 1900s. In the larger towns of Wonthaggi and Inverloch street trees were planted along the main streets. At Cowes an avenue of Golden Cypress was planted in 1910.²⁰¹ The avenue is included in the Heritage Overlay (HO57).

3.7.1 Small settlements

Grantville and Queensferry

Grantville and Queensferry developed in the 1870s as the centre of the Bass Valley's thriving timber industry, and as an important shipping port linking the Western Port district with Melbourne. A site was surveyed in 1870 for the township at Grantville on the Hurdy Gurdy Creek. This was situated on the route of the new Western Port Road, which was then under development. The first land sales took place in 1873, but the township of Grantville did not develop within the township reserve as originally surveyed. Instead, it developed around the 300-yard-long private jetty and tramway that had been built by timber merchants. By 1874, four sawmills had been established in the Grantville district, and the timber industry was the mainstay of the area. A state school was established in 1874 and, later, areas were set aside for showgrounds and a recreation reserve.²⁰² From 1875, a store was built, which operated the first post office, and soon other stores were opened including a draper, a butcher, a blacksmith and two bank agencies. Two hotels were built in the late 1870s, the Grantville Hotel, which was destroyed by fire in 1929, and the Prince Alfred Hotel, which operated until the late 1880s.²⁰³

Like Grantville, Queensferry was established to support the local timber industry. Sawyer, Alexander Stewart played a major role in the development of Queensferry, and much of the timber that was shipped from Queensferry came from Stewart's sawmills. There were two piers at Queensferry, one owned by Stewart and the other built by the Public Works Department in 1882.²⁰⁴ Stewart opened a store at the corner of his property near the pier, and this incorporated a post office from 1874. Other local businesses were established, including a butcher, a hotel, a licenced wine saloon and another store.²⁰⁵ Queensferry was also the headquarters of the Great Victoria Colliery Company, established in 1895. In 1897, the company built a railway line from Queensferry pier to a point near the Woolamai

²⁰⁰ White 1974, p. 28; Western Port Times Grantville and Districts 2020, <https://grantvillehistory.com.au/files/TWPT-Dec2020.pdf>, accessed December 2021.

²⁰¹ Gliddon 1968, p. 289.

²⁰² White 1974, pp. 31–35.

²⁰³ White 1974, pp. 33–34.

²⁰⁴ White 1974, p. 30; Bass Coast Post, <https://www.basscoastpost.com/local-history/the-town-that-vanished>

²⁰⁵ White 1974, pp. 30–31.

railway station using rails recovered from the Kilcunda to San Remo tramway, but the company collapsed before any coal could be extracted. Evidence of the railway infrastructure remains today.²⁰⁶

Grantville and Queensferry both experienced decline following the closure of the timber industry.²⁰⁷ In the 1920s, a high king tide inundated and destroyed most of the remaining buildings and homes in Queensferry. Since the 1950s, Grantville experienced a period of regrowth.

Bass (formerly Woolamai)

In 1851, Robert Mason was instructed to survey a village reserve on both the east and west banks of the Bass River. Sales of Crown land in the area were held in the mid-1850s.²⁰⁸ A new township survey was undertaken in 1863 and named Woolamai, and town allotments were offered for sale. The Royal Hotel was in operation by the late 1860s. A new hotel was erected in 1882 and later another hotel and store.²⁰⁹ The development of Woolamai township was initially hampered by poor access and a reliance on communication by sea (at nearby Bass Landing) and in 1882 the township was described as 'sleepy'.²¹⁰ The township was renamed Bass in 1896.²¹¹ The advent of the railway and improved roads in the early twentieth century led to further growth and development.

San Remo

Previously known as Griffiths Point, San Remo was first surveyed in 1850 by Robert Mason, Assistant Government Surveyor, who laid out an area of 650 acres for a township. At this time, the area was part of the Two Rivers pastoral run. The township wasn't surveyed again until 1870, and San Remo began to develop as a village.²¹² A jetty was built to transport coal from Kilcunda from 1873, a school opened in 1874, and the Pier Hotel and the San Remo Hotel were also built in the early 1870s. Following a public petition, the name of the town was changed to San Remo in 1888.²¹³ San Remo developed as a tourist town through the early to mid twentieth century, benefitting from its proximity to Phillip Island. The town also supported a large fishing industry.

Kilcunda

Kilcunda emerged as a village following the discovery of payable coal seams from 1865. A state school was opened in 1880 for children of the local mining families.²¹⁴ A town was proclaimed in 1898.²¹⁵ Kilcunda developed further from the early 1910s as more coal operations were established in the area. At this time, a miners' housing settlement, known as Happy Valley, was established. In 1926, Kilcunda was reported to have a public hall, and the Ocean View Hotel, which opened c.1915.²¹⁶ It has remained a relatively small coastal village, and a popular destination for surfing, fishing and diving.

²⁰⁶ Vines 2008, p. 64 and White 1974, p. 72.

²⁰⁷ 'Grantville', Victorian Places, <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/grantville>

²⁰⁸ *Age*, 1 September 1855, p. 5.

²⁰⁹ *Illustrated Australian News*, 19 October 1867; White 1974, p. 36.

²¹⁰ *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 26 April 1882.

²¹¹ White 1974, p. 36.

²¹² White 1974, p. 46.

²¹³ White 1974, p. 46; 'San Remo', Victorian Places, <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/sanremo>

²¹⁴ Blake 1973, vol. 3, p. 1220.

²¹⁵ Watson 2003, 242.

²¹⁶ 'Kilcunda', Victorian Places; *Age*, 10 December 1926, p. 11.

Bass Landing

Bass Landing, located at the mouth of the Bass River, was the site of a wharf and goods shed that were built in 1889.²¹⁷ From 1891, the wharf was used to ship timber from Captain Henderson's sawmill in the Bass Hills. A wooden tramline ran down from the mill to a point east of the Woolamai Racecourse and bullocks hauled the timber from there to Bass Landing where it was transported to Melbourne on schooners.²¹⁸ In 1896, Henderson purchased Lot numbers 2 and 3 in the Parish of Woolamai at Bass Landing and established himself here. After the timber industry wound down, shipping was largely replaced by road and rail and the settlement of Bass Landing declined as a result. Henderson's house, 'The Landing', was the last remaining house at Bass Landing. After his death in 1922, it was relocated to Narre Warren.²¹⁹ Little physical fabric of the settlement remains.

Rhyll

Rhyll is a small fishing village on Phillip Island situated on a bluff with coastal mudflats to its north and south and a swamp to its west. It was the site of the landing of George Bass during his exploratory visit to Western Port in 1798 and of a temporary British settlement (Fort Dumaresq) in 1826. Rhyll is believed to have been the site of sealers' camps in the 1820s. A small settlement (Flagstaff Point) was established at Rhyll to take advantage of the booming oyster dredging industry in the 1850s.

The village of Rhyll was surveyed in 1868 and 24 allotments were set aside for those who had held a license for a fishermen's residence or drying nets on the shores of Western Port Bay and been engaged in the activity for the previous three months.²²⁰ A jetty was constructed 1876–77.²²¹ In 1889, a post office opened at the home of Captain John Lock, a prominent maritime trader based at Rhyll, and in 1891 a mechanics institute and state school were opened. In 1940 Rhyll was described as an 'old world fishing village'.²²²

3.7.2 Larger towns

Cowes

Cowes is a small coastal town with the rare attribute in Victoria of a long north-facing beach. Formerly known as Mussel Rocks, it was surveyed in 1868 and renamed Cowes by Commander Henry Cox after the port on the Isle of Wight, which Phillip Island bore a close likeness to in terms of its overall shape. The town of Ventnor on Phillip Island was also named after its namesake on the Isle of Wight. The township of Cowes was surveyed in November 1868 and town allotments were sold in 1869.²²³

A jetty was built in 1870, and Cowes became the terminal for the popular ferry service that ran between Phillip Island and Stony Point. The town quickly developed. Two hotels, the Isle of Wight and the Wood's Family Hotel, were built around 1870, as well as an Anglican church in 1870, and a state school in 1874. Like the broader Phillip Island area, Cowes developed as a popular holiday destination from the late nineteenth century. It was the main centre for the former Shire of Phillip Island (1928–1994) and today remains the largest town on Phillip Island.²²⁴

²¹⁷ PIDHS, pers com, November 2021.

²¹⁸ White 1974, p. 65.

²¹⁹ *Frankston and Somerville Standard*, 28 April 1922, p. 4; PIDHS, pers com, November 2021.

²²⁰ *Australasian*, 7 November 1868, p. 20.

²²¹ 'Rhyll', Victorian Places; *Age*, 29 December 1876, p. 2.

²²² *Age*, 29 November 1940, p. 6.

²²³ Edgecombe 1989, p. 49; Gliddon 1968, p. 196.

²²⁴ 'Cowes', Victorian Places, <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/cowes>, accessed online September 2021.

Inverloch (formerly Anderson's Inlet)

The township of Anderson's Inlet was surveyed in 1883. A port was developed for the shipping of local coal. The township was renamed Inverloch in 1889.²²⁵ A post office was established in 1883, a state school opened in 1886, and a mechanics' institute and public library in 1897. The Esplanade Hotel was built in 1896.²²⁶ By the turn of the century, Inverloch was established as a fishing port and holiday destination.²²⁷ The township of Inverloch developed significantly in the 1920s and 1930s on account of its popularity as a seaside resort. It also developed in the postwar period and remains a popular holiday destination. It has seen development in recent decades.



Figure 3.22 A'Beckett Street, Inverloch, c.1930. (Source: Inverloch Historical Society, from the collection of Betty Pink)

Wonthaggi

The township of Wonthaggi began in 1909 as a tent town for coal miners, known as Bachelors Camp. The tent town developed rapidly, and conditions of the camp were rough. It accommodated the miners who arrived in November 1909 to begin work at the State Coal Mine. Later, when miners arrived with their wives, a separate section was established as the married men's quarters.²²⁸

In February 1910, the government reserved land east of the State Coal Mine for the township of Wonthaggi. This would provide housing for the mine workers and other requirements, such as public buildings and services. Wonthaggi was developed in line with the principles of a model township, with 'many miles of roads and footpaths' and necessary infrastructure and services such as water supply. By the end of the year, the population of Wonthaggi was 4000. A total of 100 workers' cottages had been built, which were leased to miners at a weekly rent.²²⁹

²²⁵ Inverloch Historical Society, 1980, p. 1, and 'Inverloch', Victorian Places.

²²⁶ *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 10 April 1896, p. 3; this was rebuilt in 1934, see Lewis 2013, record no. 18601.

²²⁷ Inverloch Historical Society, 1980, p. 2.

²²⁸ Vines 2008, p. 89.

²²⁹ Victoria 1910, *Annual Report of the General Manager of State Coal Mine*, Government Printer, Melbourne, p. 5, <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/papers/govpub/VPARL1910No59.pdf>.

Wonthaggi developed steadily in the years following establishment, reaching a population of 5000 in the mid-1930s.²³⁰ The town was dominated by the State Coal Mine and by mining interests. The miners' union had a strong influence on the character of the town. The closure of the mine in 1968 also spelt the decline of the town, but this was short-lived. The area has continued to grow in the post-mining decades and in recent years areas of Wonthaggi North have been earmarked for further residential development.

3.7.3 Commercial development

Early commercial businesses and services were established where there was sufficient population to sustain them. These often appear as new industries emerged. For example, the rapid development of the timber industry around Grantville and Queensferry led to the quick establishment of general shops, as well as a butcher, draper, blacksmith, and wine saloon (See Section 3.9.1). Likewise, the establishment of the dairy factory at Archies Creek warranted the development of a small shopping village.²³¹ These services fell away as industry or commercial activity declined.

General stores and essential services like blacksmiths and boat repairers were established in the port towns of San Remo, Grantville, Cowes and Inverloch in the 1870s and 1880s to support coastal trading and the surrounding farming and pastoral industries. Hotels were other early commercial enterprises established at new settlements. Early hotels were located at Cowes, where the Isle of Wight Hotel and the Woods Family Hotel were both built c1870, and at Grantville, where the Grantville Hotel and Prince Alfred Hotel were built in the late 1870s. The steady business of the timber industry in the Grantville area helped to establish reliable trade at the hotels.²³² Hotels were also established at San Remo, Queensferry, and Bass. The Esplanade Hotel at Inverloch was first licensed in 1896 and the Ocean View Hotel at Kilcunda in 1915.²³³

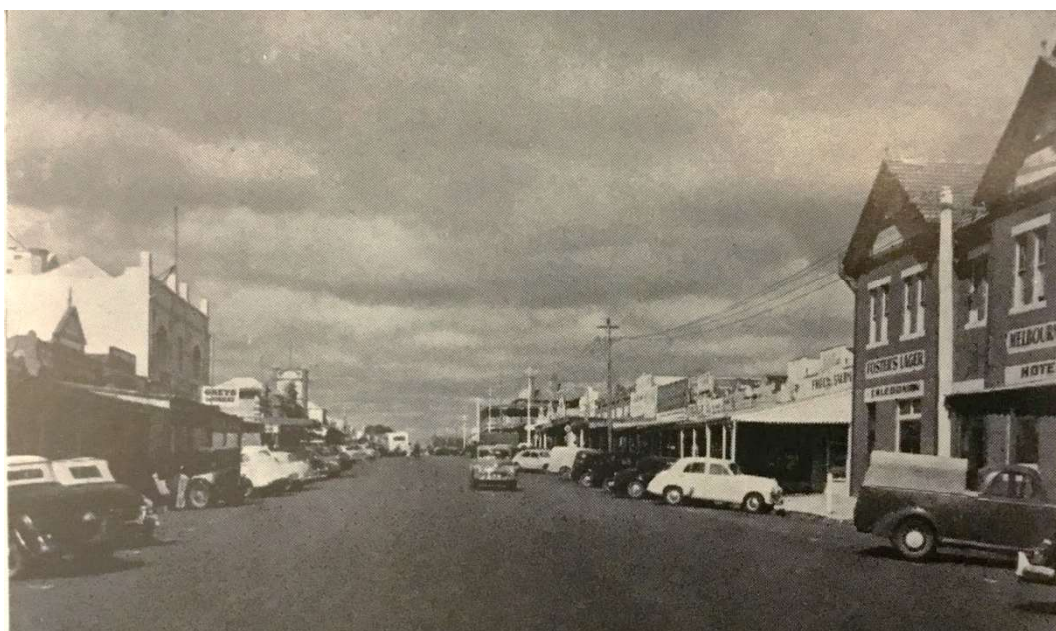


Figure 3.23 Shopping Centre at Wonthaggi. (Source: Lyle Turnbull and Percy Trompf, *Under Southern Skies: Victoria, Australia*, [1954], p. 68)

²³⁰ Back to Wonthaggi 1934.

²³¹ 'Archies Creek', Victorian Places 2015.

²³² White 1974, pp. 33–34.

²³³ Inverloch Historical Society 2021; *Lang Lang Guardian*, 22 December 1915, p. 3.

The Federated Miners Union was instrumental in developing many of the town's services and facilities in Wonthaggi. One of the first, and most successful, services established was the Wonthaggi Co-operative Society Store. Discussion regarding the establishment of a co-operative store in Wonthaggi had begun in 1910 following complaints about the local cost of goods and commodities. The early workforce at the State Coal Mine included workers from mining communities in England, Scotland and Wales, where the co-operative movement had first developed in the late nineteenth century. This was the impetus for a co-operative store in Wonthaggi.²³⁴ Following 18 months of meetings and town canvassing, £200 was raised to purchase a small building in Watt Street. The Wonthaggi Co-operative opened in July 1912 with 30 shareholder members, the bulk of whom made up of miners and other unionists. Co-op shares cost £1 each and shareholders were expected to hold at least ten shares, up to a maximum of 100 shares. The Federation's Victorian Branch acted as a virtual guarantor of the co-op.²³⁵ By 1918, the co-op had outgrown its building in Watt Street and moved to a larger premises in Graham Street.²³⁶ From 1922, John Short, an experienced Scottish co-operator, was appointed manager and restructured the business on the Rochdale principle,²³⁷ adding a bakery and a butcher. He also established contracts with other local business which gave co-op members access to purchase other services, such as hairdressing, motor repairs, photography and funerals.²³⁸ Under this revitalised model, the Wonthaggi Co-operative was an important feature of the town and kept prices low. Its operations were described in the early 1940s:

*All members hold £5 shares ... but larger consumers can buy a limited number of additional shares. Shareholders, of which there are 1400, mostly miners, can book up to an extent of two-thirds of their share holdings. There is a half-yearly turnover of 60,000, and the rebate is 3s. 4d in the £. The store has grocery, drapery, butchery, footwear and furniture sections.*²³⁹

3.7.4 Residential development

Some of the small towns and hamlets had limited development and decline rather than expansion was more common through much of the twentieth century. The main town centres such as San Remo, Cowes and Inverloch have seen periods of expansion, reliant on local industries and an established population. In 1926 at Inverloch, for example, a subdivision created 600 new homes.²⁴⁰ Housing was generally modest, with a scattering of better-quality homes on Phillip Island. The development of housing in the 'model town' of Wonthaggi followed a slightly different course, including planned and staged development from 1910. Here, housing was designed along class lines to some extent – with simple timber cottages for miners and larger more comfortable homes for the professional class.

The development of housing at Wonthaggi was atypical for Victoria. The Victorian Government leased house blocks to miners, which were subject to various conditions in line with the model township. Within three years of securing a lease, a building of some kind needed to be erected on the site. This was to be

²³⁴ Bass Coast Post 2014, 'The co-op and the bakehouse', <https://www.basscoastpost.com/carolyn-landon/the-co-op-and-the-bakehouse>, accessed October 2021.

²³⁵ Reeves 2011, p. 40

²³⁶ Bass Coast Post 2014.

²³⁷ The Rochdale Principles are a set of ideals for the operation of co-operatives. They were first set out in 1844 by the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers in Rochdale, England and have formed the basis for the principles on which co-operatives around the world continue to operate.

²³⁸ Reeves 2011, p. 40.

²³⁹ A.J. McIntyre and I.J. McIntyre 1944, *Country Towns in Victoria: A social survey*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, p. 94.

²⁴⁰ *Great Southern Advocate*, 6 May 1926.

of the value of £400–£500, and constructed of stone, brick or concrete. The *Wonthaggi Lands Act*, passed in 1913, removed these requirements.²⁴¹

The satellite suburbs of Hicksborough, Dudley, and North Wonthaggi were outside the boundary of the planned township and were opened up for land speculation. They were not subject to the conditions of the model township, and many old miners' cottages from Jumbunna and Outtrim were moved by bullock wagon to be relocated in these areas.²⁴²

Housing in the Bass Coast Shire has had a long history of recycling and re-use of old building material, beginning with the scavenging of bricks in the 1840s from the early convict settlement at Corinella. There is also a long tradition of making-do, and using what is available, and a long practice of house relocation: houses were moved to Wonthaggi from the surrounding area, and then later when mining was in decline they were moved from Wonthaggi to Inverloch. There have also been examples of novel use of natural materials. Shells, for example, were in abundance on Phillip Island where they were used to decorate fences and to pave make garden paths.²⁴³



Figure 3.24 Black and white image of a house being moved from Outtrim to the outskirts of Wonthaggi using bullocks. (Source: Inverloch Historical Society, ID 004247)



Figure 3.25 The beginnings of the Wonthaggi township, 1910. (Source: Annual Report of the Manager of State Coal Mines, 1910)

²⁴¹ Harper 1987, pp. 12–14.

²⁴² Harper 1987, p. 11 and Vines 2008, p. 89.

²⁴³ Gliddon 1968, p. 198



Figure 3.26 A row of miners' cottages in course of construction at Wonthaggi, 1910. (Source: Annual Report of the Manager of State Coal Mines, 1910)

3.8 Industry and manufacturing

3.8.1 Brickmaking

The earliest report of bricks being made in the Western Port area were for the establishment of buildings at the 1826 settlement near Corinella. These bricks were hand-made and sun-dried.²⁴⁴ The pits from which the clay was dug for these bricks were still visible in the 1940s.²⁴⁵ As settlement progressed around the Bass River district in the 1860s, an ample timber supply reduced the need for bricks. Nevertheless, some local operations were established on the Bass River in the 1860s and 1870s. The Woolamai Common School, for example, was constructed in 1874 using hand-made bricks.²⁴⁶

Two brickworks were established at Phillip Island. In 1868, Robert Anderson purchased block 71 on Settlement Road in Cowes, where he discovered a significant clay deposit while digging a waterhole. Anderson established a Hoffman kiln on the corner of McHaffie's Drive and Church Street, and went on to build several cottages, a section of his own home, and a chicory kiln. Later, when the chicory kiln was demolished, the bricks were reused to build the Cowes Post Office and another house. By this time, it was more economical to salvage the bricks as they were no longer being produced locally and new bricks would carry heavy import and travel costs.²⁴⁷ In 1869, George Watson had also discovered a significant clay deposit on his eight-acre block near Rhyll while sinking a well. He quickly built a kiln and erected several buildings around Rhyll with the bricks and mortar that he made using lime formed by burning shells.²⁴⁸

A newspaper report in Melbourne *Punch* in 1913 indicates that there may have been a large brickmaking business based in Grantville.²⁴⁹ The timeframe that this business operated is unclear.

A brickworks operated at the State Coal Mine from 1910 to 1914. It was reported in March 1910 that clay for brickmaking 'equal to anything at Northcote' could be obtained close to the developing township of Wonthaggi and was to be used in connection with the State Coal Mine and the erection of buildings.²⁵⁰ Due to the high cost of transporting materials, it was a priority to establish a local source for building materials.²⁵¹ The State Brickworks was erected about half a mile west of No. 3 shaft. A Hoffman kiln was constructed in 1911 as well as semi-dry presses.²⁵² The first bricks were produced in June 1910 and were used to build the post office, town hall and other major buildings in Wonthaggi.²⁵³ The State Brickworks began to wind down operations in late 1913 due to the unsuitability of the clay.²⁵⁴ The remains of the State Brickworks are located within the State Coal Mine Reserve.

3.8.2 Flour mills

The earliest flour mill in the Bass Coast Shire, and probably the earliest in Victoria, was built by Samuel Anderson in 1835 and was used to process the wheat grown at his Bass Farm. The mill was built on the

²⁴⁴ Evans et al 1967, p. 114.

²⁴⁵ Peck 1942, p. 155.

²⁴⁶ Blake 1973, vol. 3, p. 1183.

²⁴⁷ Evans et al, 1967, p. 115.

²⁴⁸ Evans et al, 1967, p. 115; Gliddon 1968, p. 254.

²⁴⁹ *Punch*, 18 September 1913, p. 11.

²⁵⁰ *Weekly Times*, 5 March 1910, p. 31; Harper 1987, p. 14.

²⁵¹ Harper 1987, p. 13.

²⁵² Lewis 2013, record no. 13411.

²⁵³ Cash 2000, p. 7.

²⁵⁴ Harper 1987, p. 14.

banks of the Bass River and operated on tidal power.²⁵⁵ The stone roller from the mill lay on the foreshore at San Remo for many years.²⁵⁶

Keen's flour mill, described as a 'tidal flour mill', was operating at Woolamai (Bass) by 1863.²⁵⁷



Figure 3.27 Flour mill powered by tidal energy at Bass River c.1850. (Source: National Library of Australia)

3.8.3 Boat-building

Boats were the mainstay of early communication in the local area in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and boat-building was a local enterprise at Rhyll and elsewhere. Boat repair yards were essentially the smithies of the coastal towns.

Rhyll is believed to have been the site where Captain James Clarke Smith's 26ft sloop, the *Caledonia*, was repaired and rebuilt in 1825. Captain Smith and his crew of six men had departed Hobart for the Bass Strait islands on a sealing expedition. During this trip, Captain Smith determined that the sloop was unfit for the purpose of sealing. It was decided to journey to Western Port to rebuild the vessel. Rhyll is believed to have been the location for the works as gum extracted from grass trees, which grew in abundance around Rhyll Swamp, was mixed with oil and used for caulking and waterproofing the hull. The channel at Rhyll would have also enabled them to haul the vessel up on the sandy beach to undertake the works. Following these works, the *Caledonia* was rebuilt as a 70ft schooner.²⁵⁸

While they were settled on the Bass River in the 1840s the Anderson brothers built a cutter.²⁵⁹

In 1854, it is believed that the 38ft cutter the *Island Queen* was built at Rhyll. The *Island Queen* was built for Walter Freeman and William Putwain of the St Kilda Oyster Company, whose main operation was based at Rhyll. In November 1855, The *Island Queen* and its crew of five were reported as lost after sailing to Port Albert for a cargo of oysters during a heavy gale.²⁶⁰ Further evidence of Rhyll's early shipbuilding history is reflected in an 1872 report of a shipwright living at Flagstaff Point (Rhyll) who had

²⁵⁵ Peck 1942, p. 158; *Argus*, 22 July 1922, p. 5; Hughes 2000; Pybus 2020, p. 207.

²⁵⁶ Gliddon 1968, p. 61.

²⁵⁷ *Age*, 5 November 1863, p. 5; Whitworth 1870, p. 429.

²⁵⁸ John Jansson 2021, 'Early shipbuilding in Victoria', Phillip Island & District Historical Society.

²⁵⁹ Hughes 2020, p. 91.

²⁶⁰ *Gippsland Guardian*, 14 December 1855, p. 1.

built a 'fine little cutter'. Tragically, 17 men had taken the vessel out for a test sail on Western Port and did not return.²⁶¹

There is no physical evidence of the location of Rhyll's early shipbuilding history, however a historic slipway adjacent to Rhyll jetty is still in use.

3.8.4 Butter and cheese factories

The rich volcanic soil in Bass Coast Shire is well suited to dairying, which led to the development of several butter factories in the 1890s. The co-operative model of these factories was a means of increasing local milk and butter production while enabling a stronger economic position and market advantage for local dairy farmers.

The development of Victoria's factory-based dairy production industry from 1889 was enabled by several key factors: the advancement of refrigeration from the 1860s, which addressed storage and transportation issues; government-appointed dairy experts in the late 1880s who advised on the establishment of a Victorian dairy industry; and the invention of the cream separator in 1891, which mechanised the time-consuming and tedious task of separating the cream from the milk to make butter.²⁶² The government dairy experts were tasked with setting up the Vegetable Products Commission, which involved sharing and demonstrating skills and technology for butter and cheese making.²⁶³

The establishment of co-operatives in the late 1880s, which allowed farmers to share the cost of building and managing factories, was pivotal in enabling the development of butter and dairy factories in Victoria. The co-operative model for dairy factories also improved the quality and consistency of production.²⁶⁴ This model was perhaps so successfully taken up in country Victoria because of the existing spirit of co-operation in small rural communities, which was buoyed by a collective interest in local development and a recognition of shared challenges.

The first co-operative dairy factory in Victoria was the Cobden District Cheese and Butter Factory, which was established in October 1888.²⁶⁵ Just weeks later, the Jumbunna Cheese and Butter Factory was established at Woodleigh, which was the first co-operative in Gippsland and the Bass Coast Shire region.²⁶⁶ Other co-operative butter factories were established at Bass and Almurta (initially known as the Glen Alvie Butter Factory), and private dairy factories were also established at Queensferry, Archies Creek and Bass. The later company, the Bass River Cheese & Butter Factory, was established in 1889.²⁶⁷

The Wonthaggi Dairy Produce Company was established in October 1903. The company purchased the factory owned by the Melbourne Chilled Butter Co. at Archies Creek with the intention of establishing a co-operative.²⁶⁸ The factory complex was expanded to accommodate the growth in production, and by

²⁶¹ *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 6 January 1872, p. 5.

²⁶² Norman Godbold 1989, *Victoria: Cream of the Country*, Dairy Industry Association of Australia, Victoria Division, Hawthorn, p. 56.

²⁶³ Godbold 1989, pp. 18, 21 and 31.

²⁶⁴ White 1974, p 60.

²⁶⁵ Godbold 1989, p. 18.

²⁶⁶ Godbold 1989, p. 22.

²⁶⁷ White 1974, p. 69.

²⁶⁸ White 1974, p. 58.

the 1950s it employed 200 people.²⁶⁹ The company was renamed the Archies Creek Dairy Produce Co. in 1937, following a business restructure, and operated under this name until 1969.²⁷⁰ In the postwar period, Archies Creek products were exported to over twenty countries and the factory pioneered new industry initiatives in Victoria, such as the bulk-handling of milk in tankers, aluminium-wrapped butter for tropical areas, and instant soluble milk. The factory was taken over by Murray Goulburn in 1972 and eventually closed in 1983.²⁷¹ Some buildings associated with the butter factory remain on Archies Creek Road.

The production of high-quality dairy products continues in Bass Coast Shire.

3.8.5 Automotive industry

In 1936, General Motors Holden (GMH) opened a plant at Fishermans Bend in Melbourne, becoming a major figure in the industrial development of Melbourne. Melbourne was the centre of engine production and product development, while car bodies were produced in Adelaide.²⁷² Holden had tested its vehicles on public roads since 1946, but by 1954 saw the need for a private testing ground. GMH engineers needed controlled conditions to gather reliable data when testing new vehicles for the market.²⁷³ The Holden Proving Ground at Lang Lang was opened in 1957 and was the first automotive proving ground in Australia.²⁷⁴

The site was used for testing 24 hours a day, six days a week. Vehicles were run within the circuits for 25,000 miles which was considered by GMH as equivalent to 100,000 miles of normal vehicular use.²⁷⁵ The proving ground facilities enabled GMH engineers to simulate controlled conditions from tropical heat to below freezing point.²⁷⁶ Other testing facilities included an emissions control laboratory, which was significantly upgraded in 2018, and a Safety Design Test Centre that opened in 1969. By 1984, the network contained over 40 kilometres of test road, including 22.2km of sealed road, 15km of unsealed road, 1.75km of rough track and 1.8km of dust road.²⁷⁷

Although initially a 'secret site', visitors were permitted to the site from the 1960s. They were also welcome to drive on test roads at the Proving Ground provided they obtained permits and followed the rules.

3.8.6 Clothing and textile factories

Clothing manufacturing was a substantial industry to emerge in Wonthaggi in the mid-twentieth century. This was in part due to the ongoing wind down of the State Coal Mine and the need to transition the local workforce, and the Federal Government initiative to decentralise clothing and textile production as a defence response during World War II.

In 1943, the White Manufacturing Company based in Melbourne converted the Crystal Palace Theatre on Graham Street into a clothing factory for the manufacture of Adelyn frocks. At the time, it was

²⁶⁹ 'Archies Creek', Victorian Places, <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/archies-creek>, accessed online September 2021.

²⁷⁰ White 1974, p. 58.

²⁷¹ 'Archies Creek', Victorian Places; National Trust of Australia (Victoria), file B6075.

²⁷² Samuel Owens 2008, 'General Motors-Holden', in eMelbourne, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/>, accessed July 2020.

²⁷³ Niel Gunson 1968, *The Good Country: Cranbourne Shire*, F.W. Cheshire, Melbourne, p. 228.

²⁷⁴ General Motors Holden 1964, GMH Proving Ground, brochure published on Holden Retiree's Club website, accessed online July 2020.

²⁷⁵ *Age*, 12 February 1958, p. 12.

²⁷⁶ *Bulletin*, 22 March 1975, p. 47.

²⁷⁷ General Motors Holden 1964.

estimated that the factory would provide employment for 100 women.²⁷⁸ By 1946, the Aywon glove and leather goods factory was also operating and employed a large number of local women.²⁷⁹ In the 1960s, the White Manufacturing Company premises was purchased by Bill Marshall who established the Marshall Shirt Factory. This operated until the 1980s, producing shirts for Pelaco and Arrow. The premises was later used by the Exacto Knitwear Company until the factory was sold and converted into shops in 1988.²⁸⁰

In May 1958, the Wonthaggi Cotton Mills were established. The State Government and Wonthaggi business owners contributed £15,000 to establish the mills. The spinning mill manufactured yarn for de Stoop (Aust) Pty Limited at Blackburn North. The push for cotton mills at Wonthaggi had occurred several decades earlier.²⁸¹ In 1928, it was reported that the Wonthaggi Borough Council had considered a letter from the Victorian Cotton Mills Ltd, stating that it understood the residents of Wonthaggi were 'anxious that industries should be established in the district to provide work for young women'. They noted that if capital was available it was prepared to move the factory to Wonthaggi, with the view that up to 200 women could be employed. The Council resolved that those who desired to establish the industry would need to provide the capital.²⁸²

From the early 1980s, Wonthaggi was the base of the textile division for Smith & Nephew Pty Ltd, where a weaving plant was established.²⁸³



Figure 3.28 The front office of the de Stoop and Best Aust Pty Ltd cotton mill in Wonthaggi. (Source: Whitehorse Historical Society Inc. ID: NP4047)

3.8.7 Light manufacturing

Discussions about the closure of the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi began as early as 1939. There was a concerted effort to gradually wind down its operations to avoid mass unemployment and people moving out of the area. As such, new industries emerged, mostly in manufacturing. Some notable

²⁷⁸ *Age*, 25 September 1943, p. 2.

²⁷⁹ *Age*, 15 May 1946, p. 5.

²⁸⁰ Statement of Significance HO157—Plaza Arcade; Sam Watson 2021, '100-year history celebrated at Plaza Arcade', *Sentinel-Times*, accessed December 2021 <https://sgst.com.au/2021/06/100-year-history-celebrated-at-plaza-arcade/>

²⁸¹ Victorian Collections 2021, <https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/60d923316e5f9954513501e5>

²⁸² *Argus*, 4 May 1928, p. 10.

²⁸³ *Age*, 14 June 1980, p. 84; *Age*, 23 May 1981, p. 114.

examples included the Cyclone Forging Factory, that opened in 1950 employing 80 men, and by 1954, a shuttle-cock factory that employed 18 women and was the only factory of its kind in Australia.²⁸⁴



Figure 3.29 Newspaper article featuring Valerie McKinnon, an employee of the Wonthaggi shuttle-cock factory in 1955. (Source: *Age*, 15 November 1955, p. 19)

²⁸⁴ *Argus*, 23 March 1949, p. 3; *Age*, 13 May 1950, p. 3; *World's News*, 13 March 1954, p. 32.

3.9 Transport and communications

3.9.1 Operating steamers, ferries and barges

Sea transport was the primary means of moving goods and people in the Western Port region until the developments of rail and reliable roads. Until the early twentieth century it was essential for trade, tourism and general communication. A regular shipping route from Melbourne to Western Port was through the Eastern Passage around Phillip Island.²⁸⁵ A shorter route to Melbourne was across Western Port Bay to Stony Point, near Hastings, where a connection by road or rail could be made to the city.

Ferries

Western Port was a major travel route connecting southwest Gippsland to Port Phillip Bay. To avoid the arduous journey on the unreliable and poorly made roads, settlers took small sailing boats from Grantville or Corinella to Hastings and then the Cobb & Co. coach to Melbourne.²⁸⁶ When the coach service was extended to Stony Point, boats also ran to Cowes on demand.²⁸⁷ The railway from Melbourne reached Frankston in 1882 and this was extended to Stony Point in 1889–90, which made the ferry link more efficient and more accessible to the public.

The first steam ferry to operate between Cowes and Hastings was the 54-foot small paddle steamer *Sarah*, which provided a daily service in 1872 and also called at Griffiths Point twice a week.²⁸⁸ *Sarah* was withdrawn after a year, however, due to lack of business.²⁸⁹ In 1876, a steam yacht named *Eclipse*, which was capable of carrying 60 passengers, took up this service.²⁹⁰ The *Eclipse* ran excursion trips to Flinders Jetty and around Phillip Island. It also ran excursions to Seal Rocks, the Nobbies, French Island, Settlement Point, Bass and Grantville.²⁹¹

In 1887 the *Eclipse* was replaced by the 58-foot wooden steamer, *Vixen*, but a larger vessel was soon needed as the population of Phillip Island increased and San Remo and Grantville districts were opened for selection. In December 1889, the 90-foot steamer *Genista* became the main ferry. This also coincided with the extension of the railway from Hastings to Stony Point, which then became the main terminal for Western Port ferries. The *Vixen* was retained and continued to run until 1915 as a replacement when the *Genista* required maintenance and during the busy summer period when both vessels were required.²⁹²

The 1920s saw a tourism boom at Phillip Island, and demand for a larger vessel. The 73-foot steamer *Ventnor* (originally named *Oscar*) serviced the link in 1923–24 but was laid up as it was too expensive to run. It was replaced by the steam yacht *Alvina* in 1925, which joined the *Genista* in the regular run, although it was only operated during busy periods. In 1928, the *Narrabeen* was purchased, replacing the *Genista* as the main ferry until 1932 when the demand for a vehicular ferry became apparent and it was replaced with the 146-foot *Killara*. The *Killara* had the capacity for 38 vehicles and ran until 1943. The *Killara* was essential for transporting cars, motorbikes and people to the popular car and motorcycle races at Phillip Island. The biggest day for the *Killara* was a race day in 1937, when 7000 return

²⁸⁵ Whitworth 1870, p. 293.

²⁸⁶ Edgecombe 1989, p. 39.

²⁸⁷ PIDHS, pers com, November 2021.

²⁸⁸ Phillip Island & San Remo Advertiser 2021, 'The Ferries of Westernport', updated 25 July 2021, <https://www.pisra.com.au/western-port-ferries/the-ferries-of-westernport>

²⁸⁹ Phillip Island & San Remo Advertiser 2021, 'The Ferries of Westernport'.

²⁹⁰ Phillip Island & San Remo Advertiser 2021, 'The Ferries of Westernport'.

²⁹¹ *Argus*, January 1880, uncited reference provided by PIDHS.

²⁹² Edgecombe 1980, p. 39; Phillip Island & San Remo Advertiser 2021, 'The Ferries of Westernport'.

passengers made the journey across to Phillip Island. The opening of the Phillip Island bridge in 1940 lessened the need for the vehicular ferry service, and these ferries ceased operation in 1948. From this time, several passenger ferries operated, including the *Sunrise Star* (1948–49), the *Estelle Star* (1948–59) and the *Eagle Star* (1949–78). The *Eagle Star* was used as a fishing boat between 1954 and 1959 before being converted back to a passenger ferry.²⁹³



Figure 3.30 Tourist postcard featuring a photo of the *Genista* leaving Cowes Pier, c.1900–10. (Source: Phillip Island & District Historical Society)

Coastal traders

Coastal trading vessels regularly serviced Western Port and Anderson's Inlet, transporting goods and services, and in some cases passengers, between West Gippsland and Melbourne. Timber and coal were shipped out of Grantville, Queensferry, Griffiths Point, Kilcunda and Inverloch.

Captain John Lock, a settler at Rhyll, owned and operated a total of 10 ketches and cutters from the 1850s. These vessels formed part of the 'Mosquito Fleet' that carried essential goods into and out of Melbourne in the mid-late nineteenth and early twentieth century. From the 1860s Captain Lock's *Lizzie* and *Foam* came to Anderson's Inlet as they were designed for the shallow entrance.²⁹⁴

In 1876 local sawyer Alexander Stewart built the schooner *Tyro* on the beach at Queensferry. On its first trip to Melbourne the *Tyro* transported 20,000 ft of timber.²⁹⁵ Its ports of call included Black-head (Flinders), Cowes, Griffiths Point, Queensferry, Grantville, Lang Lang, Yallock Creek and Tooradin.²⁹⁶ Captain Henderson acquired the *Tyro* in early 1888. At this time, he also bought the ketch *Kermandie* and the schooner *Little Angelina* in 1892. Following a major rebuild in 1912, the *Little Angelina* was

²⁹³ Information provided by PIDHS.

²⁹⁴ Linda Cuttriss, pers. com., November 2021.

²⁹⁵ *Argus*, 5 February 1877, p. 4.

²⁹⁶ *Argus*, 15 September 1877 and 5 September 1877, references provided by PIDHS.

renamed *Woolamai*. The *Tyro* was sold in 1906.²⁹⁷ Other coastal traders reported to have operated at Western Port in the 1880s included the *Clara*, the *Gertrude*, the *John and May* and the *J.C. Taylor*.

Regular coastal traders to service Anderson's Inlet (Inverloch) from the 1880s included the *Templar*, the schooner *Wunthalong*, the *Manawate* and the steamer *Moonah*. One of the most notable coastal traders to call at Inverloch was the ketch the *Ripple*. This provided a monthly service carrying supplies and passengers. As roads improved, the demand for the *Ripple* declined; it made its last trip in 1929.²⁹⁸

Jetties and piers

Western Port was heavily reliant on sea transport prior to the extension of the railway to Wonthaggi in 1910 and, as a result, most coastal towns and hamlets required piers and jetties as part of their essential infrastructure. Trade was closely regulated to protect buyers and sellers and to stymie smuggling, which did occur around Western Port. Government jetties that were used for shipping goods also required a customs building, as customs were payable on all Victorian imports and exports prior to Federation in 1901. From the 1870s and 1880s there were customs buildings at Grantville, Anderson's Inlet (Inverloch), Cowes and Griffiths Point. These jetties were also supervised by a government-appointed wharf manager.

In a coastal survey of Western Port by Henry Cox, dated 1867, jetties are marked at Cowes, Newhaven, Settlement Point, Queensferry and Grantville, as well as two jetties at Davis Point (near San Remo), with one marked as a coal jetty in ruins. A jetty was also marked at Lang Lang, a short distance south of the Lang Lang River outlet.²⁹⁹

Some of the earliest jetties in the area were privately built, but over time these were replaced by improved structures built by the Public Works Department. A new jetty was built at Cowes in 1870. This saw extensive use for ferries from Stony Point (near Hastings), and for those taking excursions to Seal Rocks at Phillip Island.³⁰⁰ It was given a major refurbishment in 1945-46.

The Western Port Coal Company built a jetty at San Remo (Griffiths Point) around 1873 to transport coal from the mines at Kilcunda and Cape Paterson. A government jetty was also erected here in 1871.³⁰¹ At Rhyll a government jetty was erected in 1877.

A group of timber merchants in 1874 had established four sawmills in different parts of the Grantville district and built a tramway from their sawmills to Grantville. Part of the tramway followed the Almurta Road, then crossed the Melbourne road and continued on to terminate at the beach. A private jetty was built here, measuring 300 yards, and this was laid with rails that connected with the timber tramway. Sawn timber was loaded here for shipment to Melbourne.³⁰²

²⁹⁷ *Argus* 18 March 1912 and *Herald*, 10 February 1906, references provided by PIDHS.

²⁹⁸ Inverloch Historical Society 2021, 'Historical Overview', <https://inverlochhistory.com/historical-overview/>, accessed October 2021.

²⁹⁹ Henry L. Cox 1867, *Port Western* (SLV).

³⁰⁰ Edgecombe 1989, p. 41.

³⁰¹ VGG, 24 February 1871, p. 355; *Ballarat Star*, 28 August 1872, p. 2; *Illustrated Australian News*, 17 May 1875, p. 74; VGG, 11 October 1878, no. 106, p. 2466.

³⁰² White 1974, p. 33.

There were two jetties at Queensferry; one was privately owned and had been in existence since at the 1860s, while the other was built in 1882 by Laurence Mouat for the Public Works Department.³⁰³ A government jetty was also built at Settlement Point, Corinella, in 1883.³⁰⁴

The Public Works Department built a jetty at Inverloch in 1885.³⁰⁵ In February 1910, the Public Works Department commissioned works to improve the Inverloch jetty to enable the shipment of coal from the State Coal Mine. These works included the enlargement of the storage accommodation, removal of the current goods shed, widening of the jetty from 3.5m to 6.5m, and the extension of the 'T' head by 11 metres.³⁰⁶ A new jetty was built in 2001.³⁰⁷



Figure 3.31 Photograph of Cowes Pier, showing the Isle of Wight Hotel and Cowes Jetty Shed in the background, c1940s-50s. (Source: Phillip Island & District Historical Society)

3.9.2 Establishing roads and bridges

Roads were slow to develop on the east side of Western Port Bay due to the extensive swamps, scrub country and dense timber. Early roads and tracks consisted of a network of rough pack-tracks used by bullock teams.³⁰⁸ Little was done to construct or improve the roads in the district until the formation of road boards and municipal governments. Even then, the local authorities lacked sufficient funds and

³⁰³ *Argus*, 31 March 1882, p. 5, cited in Lewis 2013, record no. 42284.

³⁰⁴ *Argus*, 2 June 1883, p 15, cited in Lewis 2013.

³⁰⁵ *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 22 April 1885, p. 3. *VGG*, 26 June 1885, p. 1814.

³⁰⁶ *Argus*, 2 February 1910, p. 7.

³⁰⁷ 'Inverloch', Victorian Places.

³⁰⁸ South Gippsland Pioneers Association 1966, p. 56.

resources to carry out significant major works. The use of sea routes for trade and transport in the late nineteenth century reduced the urgency to establish improved and reliable roads and bridges.

Agitation for a road began in the early 1850s and by 1857 the Western Port Road was formed.³⁰⁹ The Western Port Road facilitated access to the developing towns of Grantville and Queensferry, which were the gateways to the local timber and sawmilling industry.³¹⁰

In 1871 the residents of Phillip Island began agitation for the formation of a road board on the island. As a result of this petition under the *Local Government Act 1863*, Phillip Island, together with Churchill Island, was proclaimed a road district on 28 August 1871.³¹¹ The early road boards also improved access routes in their local areas.

In 1878, surveyors Murray and Hargreaves surveyed a road from Grantville, which was afterwards continued by government surveyor John Lardner as the Jeetho West Road. In 1883, Lardner also surveyed a road from Jumbunna to Anderson Inlet.³¹² The district was not surveyed adequately at the time of settlement, however, and it was often the task of landowners to establish a route to their property, navigating dense and difficult terrain in the process.

Before a railway connection was extended to Wonthaggi and the State Coal Mine, all machinery, plant, and materials had to be transported by road from either Outtrim or Inverloch using bullock teams. The conditions of these roads were poor, dogged by choking dust during the summer and reduced to impassable mud and slush during the winter. This led to calls for improvements to the roads in and around Wonthaggi.³¹³

The establishment of the Country Roads Board in 1913 resulted in vast improvements to the district's road network. In 1914 the Country Roads Board approved the construction on the Wonthaggi–Inverloch Road and from 1918 took responsibility for the development of roads at Glen Alvie, Kongwak, Dalyston–Glen Forbes, and Corinella–Glen Forbes, and the Evans and Ventnor Roads on Phillip Island. At this time, tenders were also called for works on the Bass–Woolamai Road, the Main Coast Road, and the Kongwak–Glen Alvie Road.³¹⁴

Phillip Island bridges

Phillip Island and the mainland are separated by the Eastern Passage or 'The Narrows'. From the early period of settlement, a boat was the only means of crossing the narrow passage, which was difficult and unpredictable.

By 1929, a series of punts began ferry services between San Remo and Newhaven, and between Cowes and Stony Point. In 1938, this was replaced by a larger punt with the capacity for six cars.³¹⁵ These services had limited capacity for transporting cars and livestock. By 1928, Phillip Island was developing as a popular tourism destination and there was a growing need to build a bridge. In 1937, a Bridge League was established that quickly amassed a membership of 388. This group directly petitioned the Victorian Government and was granted permission to build a bridge in 1938. Due to engineering challenges in designing a bridge over the Eastern Passage, it was decided to build a

³⁰⁹ VGG, 24 July 1857, p. 1377.

³¹⁰ White 1974, p. 11.

³¹¹ White 1974, p. 11.

³¹² South Gippsland Pioneers Association 1966, pp. 78, 80.

³¹³ Cash 2000, p. 43.

³¹⁴ *Age*, 5 August 1914, p. 13; *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*, 11 October 1918, p. 3.

³¹⁵ White 1974, p. 153.

suspension bridge to cater for loads of up to 6 tons. The bridge connecting San Remo and Newhaven was designed by the Country Roads Board and opened on 29 November 1940.³¹⁶ The new bridge had an immediate impact, opening up Phillip Island as a more popular tourist destination.

While the first suspension bridge was well used, the 6-ton load limit proved a significant constraint for large transport and the increased volume of traffic to the island in the postwar period. From 1959, the suspension bridge was also exhibiting signs of deterioration. A new reinforced concrete bridge was designed by the CRB, which opened on 21 November 1969. The earlier suspension bridge was demolished in early 1970.³¹⁷



Figure 3.32. Aerial photograph of the two bridges linking San Remo with Newhaven on Phillip Island (view towards Newhaven) 1969. (Source: Phillip Island & District Historical Society).



Figure 3.33. Former punt used between San Remo and Newhaven with the new suspension bridge in the background, c1940s. (Source: Phillip Island & District Historical Society)

Road bridges

The township of Bass was surveyed on both sides of the Bass River, and so a bridge was a high priority during the earliest days of the settlement. The current wooden trestle bridge was constructed in 1936,

³¹⁶ White 1974, pp. 153–56.

³¹⁷ White 1974, pp. 153–56.

but this most likely replaced an earlier structure.³¹⁸ There is also a wooden trestle bridge over the Bass River on Stewart Road at Kernot.³¹⁹

3.9.3 Building railways

Several local railway leagues led the agitation for a railway connection to the Bass Valley region in the 1880s, when the Great Southern Railway was being constructed. These leagues were formed by residents of Grantville, Kilcunda, Powlett River and the Bass Valley as early as 1887.³²⁰ They worked to influence the Railway Standing Committees that the route suggested by their league would be the cheapest to construct, the shortest in distance, and would benefit the greatest number of people. Some of the routes proposed included Korumburra to the Powlett River in 1890; Loch to Nyora in 1893; Nyora to Kilcunda in 1893 and 1896; and Nyora to Woolamai in 1899.³²¹ After the Jumbunna–Outtrim line was completed, a line extension to Inverloch and Powlett River was proposed in 1894.³²²

While these local demands were unsuccessful, the government soon realised the urgency for a railway due to proposed surveys of the coalfields at Powlett River. A Parliamentary Standing Committee was appointed to assess the feasibility of a railway line to the coalfields. The Committee's recommendations were accepted and in December 1907 authorisation was given to construct a railway line from Nyora to Woolamai. The exact route of the new line was debated by landholders and residents in the affected townships, and deviations to the route were debated even after construction had begun.³²³ The final schedule of construction stated that the line would start at Nyora and follow the existing line towards Loch, cross the Bass River, and go through the Parish of Jeetho West, Jumbunna, Corinella, terminating in the Parish of Woolamai. Construction began on 18 June 1909.³²⁴

Railway workers' (or navvies') camps were systematically assembled and dismantled in linear fashion along the proposed new lines. Conditions were rough and comforts were few. Living in isolated work camps for months at a time, Navvies cleared the forest, felled timber and laid tracks.

The establishment of the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi in 1909 prompted the State Government to expediate an extension of the railway line from Woolamai to Wonthaggi. In January 1910, at least 300 men were working on the line extension, initially known as the temporary or emergency line to the State Coal Mine. Camps were erected along the line. Working conditions had improved somewhat, and some men brought their families with them. The camps operated as small communities, complete with makeshift stores.³²⁵ Construction work was fast-paced, averaging two miles per week, and included with overnight shifts. The line to Wonthaggi was completed on 22 February 1910, ten weeks from its official commencement date, and was considered to be an extraordinary achievement.³²⁶ At Wonthaggi a substantial brick railway station building was erected with a large siding to facilitate the shipping of coal.

³¹⁸ *Great Southern Advocate*, 13 February 1936, p. 3.

³¹⁹ Film Victoria 2021, 'Stewart Road Bridge', <https://www.film.vic.gov.au/choose-victoria/locations/stewart-road-bridge>.

³²⁰ White 1974, p. 89; *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 4 January 1888, p. 2.

³²¹ White 1974, pp. 89–90; *Great Southern Advocate*, 19 October 1893, p. 3 and 8 October 1896, p. 3.

³²² White 1974, p. 89.

³²³ *Argus*, 2 June 1908, p. 7 and *Age*, 30 November 1909, p. 7.

³²⁴ White 1974, pp. 90–92.

³²⁵ White 1974, p. 92.

³²⁶ Cash 2000, p. 40.

The first train load of 120 tons of coal left Wonthaggi for Melbourne on 23 February 1910. Passenger traffic commenced on the line on 9 May 1910. Although the line had not been intended for passenger use, there was considerable public demand for this service.

It was many months later that the line from Nyora to Wonthaggi was finally completed with all sidings, stations, and station buildings constructed. There were stations at Woodleigh, Kernot, Almurta, Glen Forbes, Woolamai, (Woolamai Siding), Anderson, (Mitchell's Siding), Kilcunda, Dalyston, (Powlett North Siding), Wonthaggi, and State Coal Mine.³²⁷

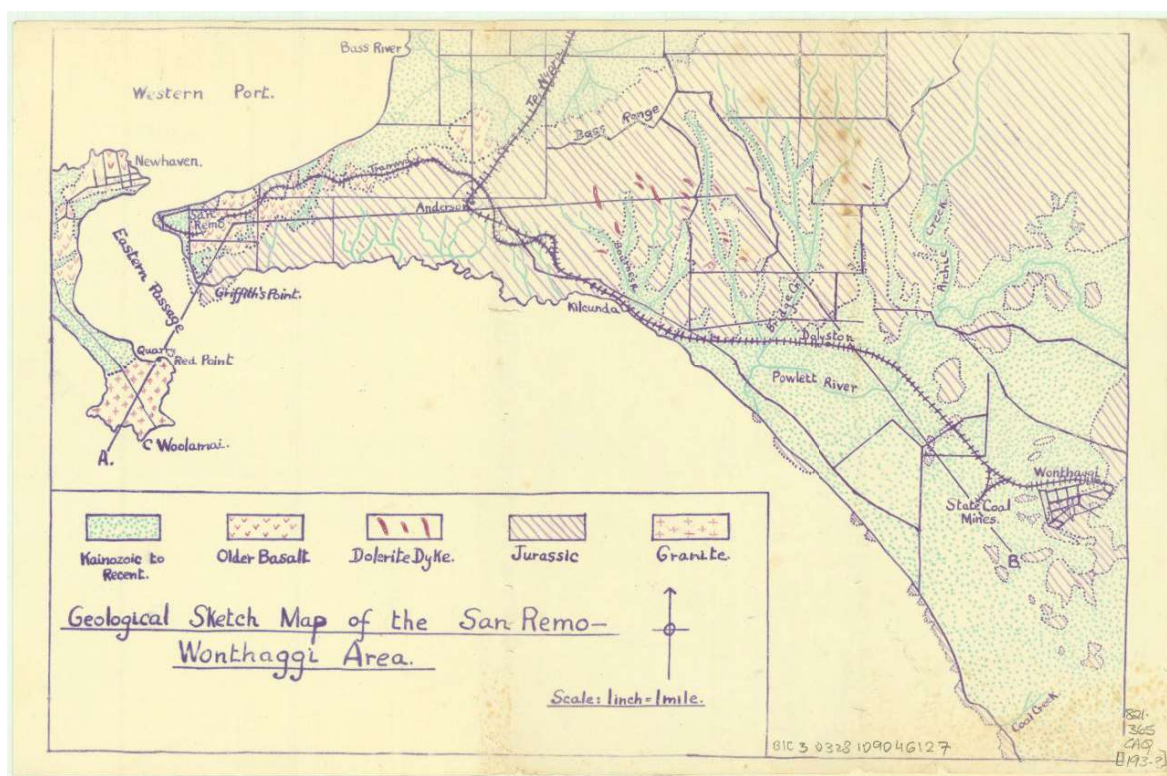


Figure 3.34 Geological sketch map of the San Remo–Wonthaggi area which depicts part of the Nyora to Wonthaggi rail line. (Source: State Library Victoria).

In the postwar period, the revenue from the railway line began to dwindle. This was due in part to the increase of car ownership, road improvements, and the decline and ultimate closure of the State Coal Mine. As a result, passenger services ceased in December 1977 and the line closed in November 1978. The track was dismantled in 1988. This has since been developed as the Bass Coast Rail Trail and is a popular tourist destination.

The former Wonthaggi Railway Station (VHR H1557) has been adapted for use as a museum and is the home of the Wonthaggi and District Historical Society.

³²⁷ White 1974, pp. 92–93.



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RAILWAY STATION, WONTHAGGI, VIC.

Figure 3.35 Postcard depicting Wonthaggi Railway Station, c1920-30s. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H32492/5180)

Rail bridges

The Kilcunda timber rail bridge, spanning 91 metres in length and 12 metres in height, was built in 1911, coming into use with the opening of the permanent Woolamai to Wonthaggi railway line. It was originally built with angled two-pile timber piers, however due to the unusually heavy haulage that the bridge was subject to, two more vertical timber piles were added to the centre section of each pier. Beam spans were also strengthened by adding an extra timber beam under each side to give a total of six beams per span. This innovative and unusual design distinguishes the Kilcunda bridge from other surviving timber railway bridges. The Kilcunda rail bridge forms part of the Bass Coast Rail Trail, which spans 21 kilometres from the old Wonthaggi Railway Station to the Woolamai Racecourse.

There are also some remnants of the rail trestle bridges on the former Woolamai to Wonthaggi railway line at Almurta and Kernot, however these are both in a ruinous condition.



Figure 3.36 The Kilcunda Rail Bridge is no longer in service and forms part of the Bass Coast Rail Trail. (Source: Rail Trails Australia)

3.9.4 Air travel

An airport on Phillip Island operated to and from Essendon Airport from 1925 to 1935. The site was later occupied by Merrilands.³²⁸

3.9.5 Providing postal and telegraph services

Communications in the area were generally poor in the nineteenth century, although post offices were established at a couple of places by the mid-1860s, including Bass and Newhaven.³²⁹ Early postal services were carried out by contractors. In 1864, for example, a contract was advertised for a mail run from Cranbourne to 'the Bass' twice a week.³³⁰ Mail to the area was also delivered by sea before the railway was built.

Post offices were often established by local residents. At Queensferry, local sawyer Alexander Stewart opened a post office in his store near his pier in 1874, and at Rhyll, the prominent maritime trader Captain John Lock established a post office at his home in 1889.³³¹

There was a post service established at San Remo in 1873, at Grantville in 1875, at Inverloch (previously Anderson's Inlet) in 1883, and at Cowes by 1903.³³² There was no post office at the Bass River in c.1880.

A telegraph connection was established in the area by 1867, connecting to the east coast of the Mornington Peninsula, with a telegraph office was established at Cowes.³³³ In 1884, an aerial telegraph cable was constructed, connecting Phillip Island and the mainland. The line spanned 620 yards across the Eastern Passage between Griffiths Point and Newhaven, and then onto Cowes. It required a mast on each side measuring 160 feet in height, which was built like a ship's mast, in two sections of 110 feet and 60 feet. These were made from blue gum timber sourced from the Bass Ranges. At the time, this was reported as the largest aerial suspension of wire for telegraph purposes in the colony.³³⁴ The aerial cable was replaced with an undersea cable in 1906.

The development of the railway and increased settlement brought improved communications. The establishment of the State Mine at Wonthaggi also demanded efficient post and telegraph services. William John Hamilton, a clerk temporarily employed by the Mines Department, was appointed the first Postmaster at Wonthaggi and initially operated from the Bachelors Camp. The government purchased a site for a permanent post office in 1910, and expenditure of £2000 was approved for its construction. The Public Works Department built the post office in 1911–12.³³⁵

³²⁸ Gliddon 1968, p. 92.

³²⁹ Cox 1867.

³³⁰ *Argus*, 22 September 1864, p. 7.

³³¹ White 1974, p. 31; 'Rhyll', Victorian Places.

³³² White 1974, pp. 33 and 46; Inverloch Historical Society, 2021; 'Cowes', Victorian Places.

³³³ Cox 1867.

³³⁴ *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 17 December 1884, p. 3.

³³⁵ Lewis 2013, record no. 35259.



Figure 3.37 Cowes Post Office, at the corner of Thompson Avenue and The Esplanade, 1920. (Source: Phillip Island & District Historical Society)

3.10 Government services

3.10.1 Local government

The *Local Government Act* of 1863 provided for the creation of road districts that would administer areas where there was sufficient settlement of rateable (freehold) property. The first local government in the area was the Phillip Island Road Board, established in 1871. The ratepayers of Woolamai petitioned the Governor for a road district in 1874, which covered a large area from the Bass River to the Tarwin River and extending from the coast to the mountains.³³⁶ Instead, however, the existing road district of Phillip Island was amalgamated with the new area to create the Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai in 1874. A site for a Shire hall was set aside at Griffiths Point in 1877 and tenders for its construction were called that year.³³⁷ In 1928 the ratepayers of Phillip Island established a separation movement, which was organised by a local women's organisation. The Shire of Phillip Island was created on 18 September 1928, with the remainder ultimately becoming the Shire of Bass.

The Shire of Woorayl in the southeast of the Bass Coast Shire was formed in 1888 and incorporated the town of Inverloch.

The Borough of Wonthaggi was formed in 1911, a year after the town was established by the State Government. The borough offices and hall were constructed in 1911. The announcement in June 1910 that the Borough of Wonthaggi was to be established had met with local opposition from the Powlett Progress Association (later Wonthaggi Progress Association) which asserted that the local community was not ready for self-government, and that the government would not establish the necessary infrastructure that had been promised to establish the model township.³³⁸

Each municipal area was responsible for road-making, rubbish disposal, water supply and sanitation, and the local pound, as well as a range of additional services, such as the provision of community buildings and the maintenance of public parks and recreation facilities.

In 1994, the Shire of Bass, the Shire of Phillip Island, the Borough of Wonthaggi, and parts of the Shire of Woorayl, the Shire of Korumburra and the City of Cranbourne were amalgamated to form the Bass Coast Shire. Prior to 1994 the area comprised several former local government areas and these areas have their own history, and former buildings, facilities and operations.

³³⁶ VGG, 8 May 1874, p. 862.

³³⁷ VGG, 1877, p. 1732; *Argus*, 6 December 1877, p. 3, cited in Lewis 2013, record no. 14436. (The location is given as Woolamai but this was Griffiths Point)

³³⁸ Sam Gatto and Wonthaggi and District Historical Society, Plod Essay: Matthew John McMahon (continued), [Matthew_John_McMahon_continued.pdf](#), accessed October 2021.

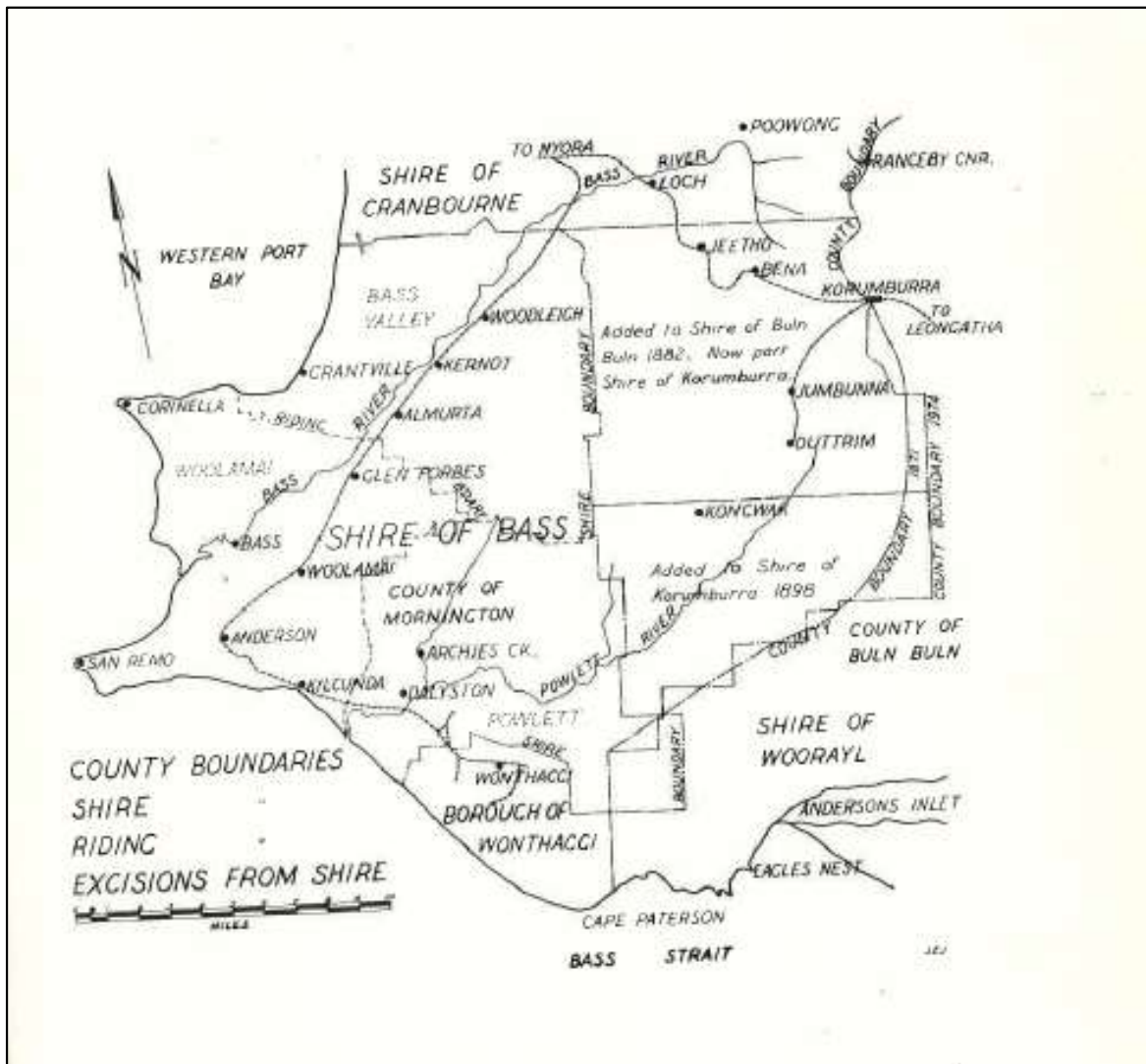


Figure 3.38 Former municipal boundaries as of 1975. Note that Phillip Island is missing from this map. (Source: White 1974)

3.10.2 Education

Primary schools

A few early schools were established along the Bass River, including Woolamai Common School No. 847 which opened in 1866.³³⁹ Common schools were managed by the Denominational Schools Board Schools and were generally associated with a particular denomination. The first Woolamai school was a poorly built and unhealthy building, constructed of porous hand-made bricks. It was replaced in 1890.³⁴⁰

Schools were scarce in the Bass Coast area until the 1870s and 1880s. A number of small local schools opened in the early 1870s, probably in response to the increased number of settlers taking up selections. A school opened at Cowes in 1871 as Cowes Rural School No. 75, but only lasted one year due to the passage of the *Education Act* in 1872, which saw all schools closed owing to the end of government funding. The *Education Act* ordained that education of children aged between 6 and 14 years was compulsory (as well as secular and free of charge), led to an increase in the number of local schools. The Cowes school was re-opened as a state school in 1874 and was relocated to a new building the same year.³⁴¹ State schools were opened at Grantville in 1874 and at Queensferry in 1876. The latter school lasted only until 1883 when it merged with Grantville.³⁴² A five-acre site for a state school was reserved at Lang Lang in 1873 and a new school erected the following year (although this site is outside Bass Coast Shire).³⁴³ State schools were established at Kilcunda in 1880, at Inverloch in 1886, and at Newhaven in 1890.³⁴⁴ A one-roomed state school operated at Corinella from 1874 until 1965, when it was replaced with a new two-roomed school building.³⁴⁵

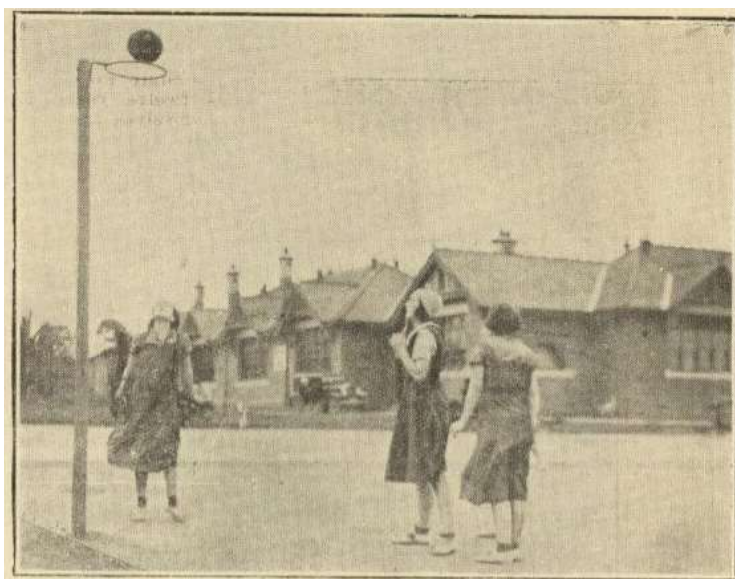


Figure 3.39 School girls playing netball in the playground at Wonthaggi State School, 1934. (Source: *Souvenir Back to Wonthaggi, Victoria, 1934: Official programme*)

³³⁹ Blake 1973, vol. 3, p. 1183.

³⁴⁰ Blake 1973, vol. 3, p. 1183.

³⁴¹ Blake 1973, vol. 3, p. 1189.

³⁴² Blake 1973, vol. 3, pp. 1193, 1197.

³⁴³ VGG, 1873, p. 1415; VGG, 1874, p. 1822.

³⁴⁴ Blake 1973, vol. 3, pp. 1220; 1243, 1262.

³⁴⁵ Blake 1973, vol. 3, p. 1193.

Many of the local state schools have been modernised or entirely replaced over the decades. The Cowes State School was significantly altered in 1918, while new buildings were erected for Inverloch State School in 1919 and for the Woolamai State School in 1921.³⁴⁶ A number of schools were modernised in the postwar period, including Woolamai State School which was rebuilt in 1963.³⁴⁷

Secondary and technical education

The Wonthaggi Technical School was opened in 1922 and was designed as a feeder of new staff for the State Coal Mine which would offer apprenticeships. A high school component was provided from 1947. A separate Wonthaggi High School was established around 1967 and this was moved to a new site in 1969.³⁴⁸ The high school was renamed Wonthaggi Secondary College in the 1990s. Wonthaggi Technical School was extended in the 1960s.

Land for a proposed agricultural college at Wonthaggi was set aside in c1910-16 but this never went ahead.

Newhaven College, a private, non-denominational school, was opened on Phillip Island in 1980, on the site of the former Newhaven Boys Home.



Figure 3.40 Wonthaggi Technical School. (Source: PROV)

Kindergartens

A kindergarten was established at Wonthaggi in the c1930s by the Women's Auxiliary.

3.10.3 Policing and local courts

In the 1840s policing of the Port Phillip District was limited to the Mounted Police, the Border Police and the Native Police Corps. British colonial law was imposed upon Aboriginal people to empower the settlers and enable the process of colonisation. An early police case was the capture and arrest in 1840

³⁴⁶ Blake 1973, vol. 3, pp. 1183, 1189, 1243.

³⁴⁷ Blake 1973, vol. 3, p. 1183.

³⁴⁸ Blake, vol. 3, p. 1354.

of the two Tasmanian Aboriginal men, Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheenner, near the coast at Powlett River, for the alleged murder of two whalers. Their capture was enabled by the Commissioner for Crown Lands for the Westernport District, Frederick Powlett, after whom the Powlett River was named.³⁴⁹ The British colonial authorities applied the law and regulations selectively in the way they treated Aboriginal people in Port Phillip (Victoria), claiming that Aboriginal people were incapable of giving evidence or defending themselves but at the same time could be convicted and sentenced to death. Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheenner became the first people to be publicly executed in Victoria.

The Victorian government established the Victoria police force in 1852 but a local police presence was not established until the 1870s. Prior to this, disputes were taken to the nearest district courts — for example, at Dandenong or Cranbourne. In the late 1860s the lack of a police presence was keenly felt at the Bass River where there were complaints about the ‘heavy offences that are committed here with impunity’ and concern that ‘there are no police nor magistrate within about fifty miles to go to for help’.³⁵⁰

Policing and judicial process in the Bass Coast area was limited until the 1870s when increased settlement warranted the provision of government services in this area. A site for police purposes was set aside at Woolamai (Bass) in 1875.³⁵¹ A timber police building was erected here with a rear attached lock-up.

Policing continued to be spread thinly in the Bass Coast area. Sites for police purposes were provided as settlement grew, and generally included a residence and office for the policeman and his family, a lock-up, and generally a paddock for the police horse. A police reserve was later established at Cowes in 1873 and at Inverloch.³⁵²

A police court was operating at Griffiths Point by 1879.³⁵³ Other local courts operated at Wonthaggi, where a substantial police station and courthouse was built in 1911,³⁵⁴ and at Cowes, where a court house was built in 1930.



Figure 3.41 Police station at Bass, c1920s-1950s. (Source: PROV)

³⁴⁹ Pybus 2020.

³⁵⁰ *Age*, 11 October 1867, p. 7.

³⁵¹ *VGG*, 19 November 1875, p. 2169.

³⁵² White 1979.

³⁵³ *South Bourke and Morning Journal*, 21 May 1879, p. 3

³⁵⁴ Lewis 2013, various references.

In 1939, in order to reduce the debt on St Philip's Anglican Parish in Cowes, it was decided that the vicarage be leased out for use as a police station and the rent revenue used to finance the necessary renovations to the church. In 1950 the police moved to a new building on the corner of Walpole and Chapel Street, close to the current Cowes Police Station.³⁵⁵

In 1915–16, the McLeod prison camp was established on French Island. Here, 127 prisoners were occupied with farm work and afforestation. The prison farm was closed in 1975.³⁵⁶



Figure 3.42 Wonthaggi Police Station, erected in 1911. (Source: PROV)

3.10.4 Water supply and sanitation

Early settlers were challenged by the lack of fresh water, which was a key factor for the abandonment of the Corinella settlement in 1828. Here a dam was built across the river but it proved inadequate for the purpose.³⁵⁷ Much of the Western Port area is an estuarine environment, which means the rivers are salty, and some of the lagoons. Those on the land relied on fresh water springs and lagoons, for example, on Phillip Island. Early settlers like the McHaffies dug waterholes to create a permanent water supply for stock. Farmers also built bores and dams. For personal use a well was sunk or an underground tank built. A plan of the Wonthaggi area drawn up in 1907 in anticipation of the new railway extension to Wonthaggi showed artesian wells inland from the coast.³⁵⁸

With the establishment of Wonthaggi township in 1910, a reticulated water supply was established for townfolk by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, which built a large reservoir near Kongwak in 1909.³⁵⁹ This reservoir also serviced the State Coal Mine and the railway. A water tower and a pumping plant were installed in 1926 to provide increased supply, and North Wonthaggi and Hicksborough were subsequently reticulated.³⁶⁰

In 1914 it was proposed to build a pipe connection to Inverloch from the Kongwak Reservoir to provide the town with fresh water during the summer months.³⁶¹

Candowie reservoir was established in 1963 at Almurta as the sole water supply in the region.

In the townships, sanitary services were the responsibility of local government, which provided night soil removal. A 5-acre sanitary depot was established near the mouth of the Screw Creek at Inverloch in

³⁵⁵ PIDHS, pers com, November 2021.

³⁵⁶ *Argus*, 29 March 1916, p. 10; Koo Wee Rup Swamp History 2020, <http://kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com/2020/01/french-island-short-history.html>

³⁵⁷ G.H. Haydon 1846, *Five Years' Experience in Australia Felix*, Hamilton, Adams, & Co., London, p. 123.

³⁵⁸ Railway map 1907 (SLV).

³⁵⁹ *Victorian Year-Book 1973*, p. 218; *Victorian Municipal Directory 1914*, cited in 'Wonthaggi', Victorian Places.

³⁶⁰ *The Powlett Express Souvenir of Wonthaggi*, 1934, no page numbers.

³⁶¹ Newspaper article, 1914.

1911, where night soil was deposited. A similar sanitary depot was established of the outskirts of the Wonthaggi township.³⁶²

3.10.5 Defence

British imperialism

British imperial possession of the southern coast of mainland Australia came into effect in 1788, when Arthur Phillip claimed possession of the entire eastern seaboard and eastern third of the Australian continent. This claim rested on the false premise that the country was unoccupied. The presence of the French on the Victorian coastline in the early 1800s prompted a defensive position by the British colonial authorities. Various efforts by the British to assert 'ownership' of the Victorian coast were made, including Churchill Island in 1801, at Sorrento in 1803, and at Fort Dumaresq and Corinella in 1826, where gun emplacements were built.³⁶³ These posts were all abandoned after a short period.

Wartime on the homefront

Local men and women served in the various overseas conflicts, including the South African War (1899-1902), World War I (1914–18) and World War II (1939–45), and the Korean and Vietnam wars. During both world wars there was considerable activity on the home front, where local communities contributed in many ways to the war effort. For five years during the Second World War the Pine Lodge Hotel at Inverloch was used as a naval hospital.³⁶⁴

³⁶² Township of Inverloch 1947 (SLV); Township of Wonthaggi, Parish of Wonthaggi, 1927 (SLV).

³⁶³ Peck 1942, p. 156.

³⁶⁴ Inverloch 3996 Facebook Page.

3.11 Health and welfare

3.11.1 Hospitals and health services

Medical treatment was hard to come by during the early settlement period. One of the Anderson brothers at Bass River, however, was partly trained in medicine and performed medical services for local people. As the region developed, many of the chief local industries, timber cutting, saw-milling and coal-mining, incurred a high risk of injury, which was problematic in isolated settlements where there was little medical help. Doctors were available on horseback from further afield, for example Dandenong or via steamer from across the Bay. Local women usually assisted at births and doctors were available on horseback with sufficient notice. People would also travel to Melbourne for specialist medical treatment. One of the earliest public health measures was the appointment of a public health vaccinator at Bass River in 1864.³⁶⁵

With the establishment of the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi in 1909 unionists took a strong stance on workers' safety and campaigned early for a public hospital. A large number of mining accidents helped the cause of those advocating for a local hospital, which was established in 1914 through the efforts of the Miners Union. As well as workplace accidents there were cases of typhoid fever in the early years of the State Coal Mine.³⁶⁶ The Wonthaggi Hospital also managed a significant local impact of the Spanish Flu in 1918–19, which was brought back to the area by soldiers returning from the war in Europe, and this appeared to affect the population of Wonthaggi more than most other country areas.³⁶⁷ Mining accidents continued at a high rate at Wonthaggi. Between 1909 and 1968, 85 men were killed in the State Coal Mine. There were two fatal mining accidents in the 1930s. The first, in 1931, killed four men, and the second, in 1937, killed 13 men.³⁶⁸ The loss of life through industrial accidents in the 1930s prompted the government to improve the existing Wonthaggi Hospital. In 1939 architects Bates Smart McHutcheon called tenders for extensive additions to the hospital.³⁶⁹ This included a new maternity section, which was advocated by the Wonthaggi Women's Auxiliary. A number of private hospitals, including maternity hospitals, were also operating in Wonthaggi by the early 1940s.³⁷⁰

In Wonthaggi the Friendly Society also established essential and important co-operatives which supported the mining workforce. This included the Wonthaggi Miners' Friendly Society Dispensary in 1922, which expanded to include a dental clinic in 1927, which functioned alongside a dental benefits scheme.³⁷¹ These services were central to the community of Wonthaggi, and provided a safety net for miners and their families. They have had an enduring influence on the development of a local community culture of collective support.

A 'cottage hospital', named Warley, was established in Cowes in 1923 by the local branch of the Australian Women's National League.³⁷² Warley was largely funded by local initiatives. A private home named Buena Vista was donated for the purpose by Mrs Thompson on the proviso that the community would adapt the building for use as a hospital.³⁷³ Warley officially opened with beds for six patients and

³⁶⁵ *Herald*, 30 November 1939, cited in Lewis 2013, record no. 15714.

³⁶⁶ *Argus*, 12 July 1912, p. 8.

³⁶⁷ Teychenne 1993, p. 18.

³⁶⁸ Damien M. Cash 2000, 'An exploration of the heritage of Wonthaggi', prepared for Heritage Victoria, p. 15.

³⁶⁹ *Herald*, 30 November 1939, cited in Lewis 2013, record no. 15714.

³⁷⁰ McIntyre and McIntyre 1944, p. 133; Wonthaggi and District Historical Society, pers. com., 20 October 2021.

³⁷¹ McIntyre and McIntyre 1944, p. 135.

³⁷² *Argus*, 8 December 1923, p. 33.

³⁷³ Mary Whelan 2018, 'In sickness and in health', Bass Coast Post, <https://www.basscoastpost.com/mary-whelan/in-sickness-and-in-health>

an operating theatre with modern appliances, including a 600-candle power lamp. Warley was later known as a bush nursing hospital. The hospital enjoyed strong local support and a high level of membership among Phillip Island residents, which helped Warley to remain financially viable for many decades. The Warley model of care became woven into the fabric of the lives of locals. Annual memberships entitled them to a lower fee for hospital stays; fund raising involved a willing whole community; costs were contained and volunteers did anything that was needed, including being volunteer ambulance drivers. Over time, the hospital committee guided the extension of Warley so more patients could be cared for. A new Warley hospital building opened in 1962,³⁷⁴ and a nursing home was built in 1980. The original cottage was relocated by Mr O'Donoghue to nearby Genista Street. The acute hospital at Warley was closed in 2008.



Figure 3.43 New Warley hospital building opened in 1962 at Cowes. (Source: Bass Coast Post)

3.11.2 Women and children's welfare

Steps to improve the welfare of women and children saw measures that included the establishment of infant welfare centres, which opened at Wonthaggi, Bass, Cowes and Inverloch in the mid-twentieth century.³⁷⁵

The women's 'comfort station' in Wonthaggi was a community-driven initiative that was built in 1947, funded by the State Government, the local council and the public.³⁷⁶ It was a modest brick building with toilets. The comfort station provided women who were in town for the day, often with children in tow, with a place they could rest, use the toilet, obtain refreshment, and feed and change babies.³⁷⁷ It was repurposed as a municipal library by the Borough of Wonthaggi in 1970. Members of the local community of Wonthaggi were also the impetus behind the Wonthaggi Neighbourhood House, which

³⁷⁴ Whelan 2018.

³⁷⁵ Gliddon 1968, p. 245.

³⁷⁶ *Morwell Advertiser*, 29 May 1947, p. 1.

³⁷⁷ Wonthaggi and District Historical Society, Plod Essay, 'State School Mothers Club', http://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/files/plod/Mothers_Club.pdf

was established in the 1982 to provide a range of co-operative help to local residents, including a playgroup, mother's club, child-minding, learning centre and general support network.³⁷⁸

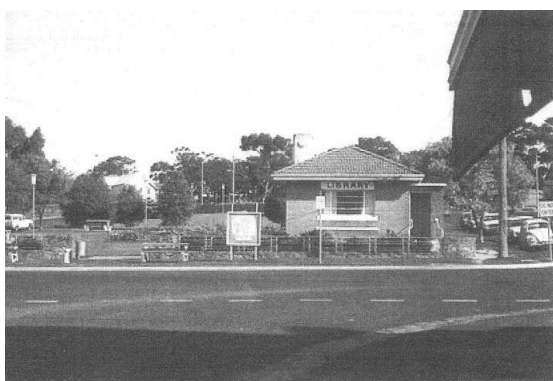


Figure 3.44 Comfort Station Library, Wonthaggi, erected in 1970. (Source: Bass Coast Post)



Figure 3.45 Mitchell Neighbourhood House, Wonthaggi. (Source: Wonthaggi and District Historical Society)

3.11.3 Newhaven Boys' Home

The Newhaven Boys' Home (formerly known as the Newhaven Reformatory) was established at Newhaven, Phillip Island, by 1914.³⁷⁹ The purpose of the home was to 'reform' boys who were difficult to discipline.³⁸⁰ The remote location of Newhaven was thought to deter any plans of boys escaping, which was a common problem at mainland reformatories.³⁸¹ In 1916, it was reported that the building used to house 18 boys was not suitable and fundraising efforts had begun to help finance a permanent building.³⁸² On an adjacent site, the Seaside Garden Home for Boys was established in 1921 and was operated by a non-denominational committee of management.³⁸³

In 1928, the Anglican Mission of St James and St John took over the management of the Newhaven Boys' Home and established the St Paul's Training Home for Boys. They erected a two-storey brick building on the site for additional accommodation. The home had capacity for up to 60 boys, aged between 8 and 16, who received technical training in engineering and carpentry and attended the adjacent state school. In 1933, the Mission of St James and St John was requested to assume control of the Seaside Garden Home for Boys following the death of a boy in care. Approximately 50 boys from the Seaside Garden Home were discharged, and the Anglican mission took in the remaining 70 boys at St Paul's.³⁸⁴ Under the management of the Anglican Mission of St James and St John, the Seaside Garden Home became known as St Bernard's Boys' Home in 1934 but closed in 1939 due to financial difficulties.³⁸⁵

In 1955, St Paul's Training School closed due to insufficient numbers. During this time, more government-run institutions were opening and attitudes towards the care of young offenders were changing. From this point, St Paul's became eligible as a boys' home. Following the closure of the St

³⁷⁸ Fay Quilford 2021, 'Mitchell Neighbourhood House', Plod Essay, <https://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/2021/07/08/the-plod-essay-july-2021/>

³⁷⁹ 'Newhaven', Victorian Places 2015.

³⁸⁰ *Age*, 31 March 1916, p. 11.

³⁸¹ *Age*, 31 March 1916, p. 11; 'Newhaven', Victorian Places.

³⁸² *Age*, 31 March 1916, p. 11.

³⁸³ Find and connect 2018, 'Seaside Garden Home for Boys (1921–1934)', <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/vic/E000416>

³⁸⁴ Find and connect, 2018, 'St Paul's Training School (1928–1955)'.

³⁸⁵ Find and connect, 2018, 'St Paul's Training School (1928–1955)'.

Nicholas' Boys Home in Glenroy in 1956, residents were transferred to the Newhaven home, which then cared for approximately 50 boys aged between 8 and 16 years, who had not had contact with the justice system. From 1956 to 1969, the place was known as St Paul's Home for Boys.³⁸⁶ By 1973, there were only 15 boys residing at the home and it subsequently ceased operation. In the late 1970s St Paul's became the St Paul's Discovery Centre for social disadvantaged children, which was funded by the Commonwealth Schools Commission. This closed in the early 2000s.³⁸⁷ The building survives, but it has been neglected and has fallen into disrepair.

3.11.4 Cemeteries

In the early colonial period, settlers were often laid to rest in lone graves. There were deaths recorded at Corinella in 1826 and the burials took place at the settlement, presumably at a designated location. On large private properties from the 1840s a burial ground was sometimes set aside, for example at the Anderson brothers' homestead, Netherwood.³⁸⁸ In the 1840s and 1850s, both on the pastoral stations and amongst the itinerant communities of sealers, fishermen and timber-workers, the deaths and burials of workers and their families may sometimes have often gone unrecorded. Makeshift burial places would have been lost to time, while sealers and whalers who died in the early decades of the nineteenth century might have been given a sea burial.

As small towns and villages developed in the early 1870s there was a need for properly managed public burial grounds. These were set aside as specified Crown land reserves and managed by a local committee of trustees, which generally represented the various local denominations. Public cemeteries satisfied the need for both the hygienic disposal of the dead and a permanent place for the bereaved to pay their respects.

At Corinella, also known as Settlement Point (or Bass), an early burial ground was set aside at Stony Point and surveyed in 1851, but this was subsequently resumed for other purposes. A second cemetery site was reserved in 1872, which was cleared and fenced by 1878.³⁸⁹

A public cemetery of 4 acres in the Township of Cowes, was gazetted in 1870. This site was deemed unsuitable by the local residents who took it upon themselves to allocate another area of Crown land in Rhyll for the purpose. This second site was officially reserved for the purpose in 1899.³⁹⁰

A 5-acre burial ground at Grantville was first used in March 1872 and reserved in 1874. The cemetery records indicate that it serviced a wide area, including Jeetho, Fernhill, Queensferry, Bass, Loch, Wonthaggi, Wonthaggi North, Woodleigh, Glen Forbes, Almurta and Archies Creek.³⁹¹

A site of 10 acres was set aside for a cemetery at Woolamai (later known as San Remo) in 1880. This cemetery was initially known as Woolamai, then Griffiths Point, and finally, from 1888, San Remo.³⁹² This burial ground includes many early graves, including those of members of the Anderson family, who were early Western Port settlers.³⁹³ There was also an early burial ground at Bore Beach, San Remo,

³⁸⁶ Find and connect, 2018, St Paul's Training School (1928–1955) and National Trust of Australia (Victoria), file B5465.

³⁸⁷ National Trust of Australia (Victoria), file B5465.

³⁸⁸ Hughes 2000.

³⁸⁹ White 1974, p. 98; Garrie Hutchison 2014, *In Memoriam*, p. 102; See VGG, 31 May 1872.

³⁹⁰ White 1974, p. 101; PIDHS, pers com, November 2021.

³⁹¹ White 1974, p. 99.

³⁹² VGG, 25 March 1880, p. 705; White 1974, p. 101.

³⁹³ White 1974, p. 101.

where it is believed the Hayes brothers were buried. They drowned in the 1860s when they were swept from the rocks while fishing.³⁹⁴

A public cemetery was established at Anderson's Inlet (Inverloch), with the first burial taking place in 1891. Trustees were appointed but little was done to develop the site and its use declined following the First World War. It was closed in 1962.³⁹⁵ The cemetery was reopened in 1981, incorporating a new section in front of the original cemetery that provided lawn burials and walls for ashes. Efforts have been made to locate the original graves and to recreate the historical cemetery register.³⁹⁶

An area was used as a cemetery at Kilcunda (Woolamai) in the early 1900s and this area of five acres was reserved for burial purposes in 1907. The Wonthaggi Railway Survey took a small rear section and some graves were re-sited in the remaining cemetery area.³⁹⁷

Following the establishment of the State Coal Mine and Wonthaggi township, a 20-acre site for a public cemetery was set aside in 1911.³⁹⁸ Initially known as the State Coal Mine Cemetery, this was the final resting place of many local miners who were killed in mining accidents. During the first decade of the State Coal Mine there was an average of two fatal accidents per year, and 85 miners had died in the mines by the time of its closure in 1968.³⁹⁹ At Wonthaggi, the funeral of a miner who died in a workplace accident was a significant local event that involved most of the mining community. Hundreds of miners would follow the coffin to the cemetery on foot, demonstrating solidarity in death as in life.

³⁹⁴ DELWP Heritage Inventory site.

³⁹⁵ VGG, 24 July 1891, p. 3170; VGG, 9 May 1962, p. 1567.

³⁹⁶ Inverloch History, <https://inverlochhistory.com/historical-overview/>; 'Inverloch Cemetery', Find a Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2316872/inverloch-cemetery>

³⁹⁷ White 1974, p. 101.

³⁹⁸ VGG, 29 March 1911, p. 1813; White 1974, p. 101; Hutchison 2014, p. 116.

³⁹⁹ Cash 2000, p. 8.

3.12 Community life

3.12.1 Churches

Sites for early churches for the small communities along the Bass River were set aside in the 1860s, but with settlement relatively sparse in the Bass Coast area, churches were mostly not erected until the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. A site for a Wesleyan church, for example, was reserved in the Rhyll township in 1869.⁴⁰⁰ Before that time services were generally held in private homes or in the open air. The first church building built in the Shire was St Paul's Anglican Church, which opened at Bass (later Woolamai) in 1878. The site had been reserved as early as 1865 following an application for a grant of land by the members of the local Anglican community.⁴⁰¹ Another early church was St Philip's Anglican Church at Cowes. The site was set aside in 1869 along with a site for a Presbyterian church and vicarage. The Anglican church was dedicated in 1870 and also served as a schoolroom in the early 1870s while a state school was being built in Cowes.⁴⁰²

With increased settlement and the advent of the railway in 1890 (and the extension of the railway in 1910), growing local communities sought to establish places of worship. Many church communities used existing public halls to hold services until a church was built. At Inverloch the mechanics institute, built in 1897, was used for early church services, and was also used to house the organs for the Anglican and Methodist congregations while their respective churches were being built.⁴⁰³ Many churches were built in the area in the 1890s and early 1900s, for example at Inverloch, Dalyston, Glen Alvie, Woodleigh and San Remo, and a Presbyterian church was built at Cowes.

The first churches in Bass Coast Shire were affiliated with the major Christian denominations: represented by Anglicans, Catholics, Presbyterians and Methodists. There was a strong representation of Methodists in the area, which was probably due to a higher-than-average representation of Welsh immigrants among the mining community. As was the case elsewhere in country Victoria, other (non-Christian) faiths were seldom represented until later in the twentieth century, if at all.

The Catholic Church was established in the Western Port area from the Diocese of Dandenong. The Catholic Church in Scarborough Street, Inverloch, erected in 1902, was the first church built in Inverloch.⁴⁰⁴ Catholic churches were also built at Dalyston (1902), Bass (1905), San Remo (1906), at Glen Alvie (1905) and at Cowes in 1933.⁴⁰⁵ The Glen Alvie Catholic Church was closed in 1968 and the building relocated to Bass where it was added to the existing church.⁴⁰⁶

In the new township of Wonthaggi most of the main denominations were established by mid-1910. Here, eight half-acre allotments had been set aside for a number of denominations. The Lands Department found it difficult to determine how to allot these sites among the various religious denominations, with many favouring the same site. Adopting an egalitarian approach, it was decided that if more than one application was made for an allotment, the selection would be decided by ballot.⁴⁰⁷ On 3 May 1910, the Secretary of the Lands Department, Mr T. Skene, drew the ballot from a hat. The results were: Church

⁴⁰⁰ VGG, 3 December 1869, p. 1922.

⁴⁰¹ VGG, 17 October 1865, p. 2402; White 1974, p. 177.

⁴⁰² White 1974, p 180, Blake 1973, vol. 3; VGG, 16 April 1869, p. 615 and 28 January 1870, p. 156.

⁴⁰³ Inverloch Historical Society, pp. 4–6.

⁴⁰⁴ Inverloch Historical Society, p. 16.

⁴⁰⁵ Photo, PIDHS, held Victorian Collections 2021, <https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/57243ada2162f11d84e0bc33>

⁴⁰⁶ White 1974, p. 178.

⁴⁰⁷ *Argus*, 1 April 1910, p. 6.

of England (Block 3); Congregational Church (Block 2); Baptist Church (Block 5); Catholic Church (Block 1); Presbyterian Church (Block 6); and Methodist Church (Block 4).⁴⁰⁸ The *Powlett Express* reported in June 1910 that the churches had been sited too close together, which was a mistake that was already very evident, explaining: ‘The singing of the other churches is plainly heard and they thus have a tendency to interfere with each other’s voices.’ As well as the mainstream denominations, the Salvation Army, the Reorganised Church of Jesus Christ, and Latter Day Adventists, and the Associated Church Christ were each offered sites, which they accepted and so they were not included in the ballot.⁴⁰⁹ These denominations were represented because of the range of backgrounds of the miners employed at the State Coal Mine and also probably because of the particular appeal to some of these the churches to the working class, notably the Salvation Army.⁴¹⁰

As the population declined around some smaller settlements, many churches closed or were relocated or demolished. For example, the Glen Alvie church closed in 1968 and was shifted to Bass.⁴¹¹ In 1933 when the Wonthaggi churches had become more established and roads improved, the West Creek Union church (built in 1900) was transported to Archies Creek to be used as an Anglican church. It was demolished in 1972.⁴¹² In 1956, the Presbyterian Church purchased the former Outtrim Church and relocated it to William Street, Inverloch.

In some areas, the major denominations established churches relatively late. The Inverloch Methodist Church acquired the former Wonthaggi Methodist Church building and transported it to the site in A’Beckett Street. It was opened as a place of worship in 1930, however the site was expanded in 1932 to accommodate a high volume of attendance at the evening services. The Methodist Church acquired the former Jumbunna church, and had it relocated to its current site on William Street. It now serves as the Inverloch Uniting Church.⁴¹³

A small timber church was erected in 1938 at Woolamai by the Methodists. In 1952, a church was built at Corinella through a community ‘brick appeal’. Prior to that, the town hall was used as a place of worship. In 1957, The Kernot Presbyterian Memorial Church was built as a Second World War memorial.⁴¹⁴

3.12.2 Mechanics institutes and public halls

Not long after towns were established, local residents lobbied for the provision of a public hall or mechanics institute and to some extent the establishment of these halls reflect more general patterns of development within the Shire. These public community buildings, which offered a venue for local meetings and social events, provided a democratic focal point of community life that was not controlled by one particular denomination or social group. As well as a meeting room, mechanics institutes often provided a lending library and other facilities.

One of the earliest mechanics institutes proposed was at Cowes where a site was set aside in 1871. This did not progress, however, and a later private piece of land was acquired in 1883.⁴¹⁵ Other early

⁴⁰⁸ *Argus*, 4 May 1910, p. 6.

⁴⁰⁹ *Argus*, 4 May 1910, p. 6.

⁴¹⁰ Cited in Cash 2000, p. 9.

⁴¹¹ White 1974, p. 178.

⁴¹² White 1974, p. 181.

⁴¹³ Inverloch Historical Society, p. 16.

⁴¹⁴ White 1974, pp.182–185.

⁴¹⁵ Pam Baragwanath and Ken James 2015, *These Walls Speak Volumes: A history of mechanics institutes in Victoria*, the authors, Burwood, p. 169.

public halls and mechanics institutes were established at Queensferry in 1884 (referred to as the Atheneum); Grantville in 1888; Dalyston in 1890; Rhyll in 1891; Kilcunda in 1893; Bass in 1896; Bass Valley in 1896; Glen Alvie in 1896; and Inverloch in 1897.⁴¹⁶ A brick public hall was erected by the Public Works Department for the new Wonthaggi township in 1911.⁴¹⁷ Later halls were built at Archie's Creek in 1904; Pound Creek in 1906; Glen Forbes in 1911; Blackwood Forest in 1914; Ventnor in 1915; Kernot in 1918; Woodleigh in 1921; San Remo in 1925; and Woolamai (Bass) in 1947.⁴¹⁸

3.12.3 Social clubs

Social clubs formed where the population was of a sufficient size. Often these developed out of shared religious or political views.

The social fabric of Wonthaggi was articulated in the town's principal social clubs, notably the Wonthaggi Workmens Club, established by the union for the miners, and the Wonthaggi Club, which was a 'gentlemen's club', established for white collar workers. The latter offered a bowling club and 'altogether, very elaborate facilities'. There was a distinct social divide along class lines between these two institutions, which was evident by the fact that there was virtually no overlap of membership between the two clubs.⁴¹⁹

The social clubs of Wonthaggi were shaped and influenced by migrants from mining communities in England, Scotland, and Wales who had come to Wonthaggi to work at the State Coal Mine. This is strongly reflected in clubs such as the Wonthaggi Leek Club established in 1927. These clubs were very common in Northern England mining towns.⁴²⁰ The Club hosted an annual Leek Show commencing in 1928. This began as an event dedicated to the competitive leek growing, but soon developed into a general flower and vegetable competition, which ended with a concert at the Union Theatre.⁴²¹ While the club had strong links to mine workers, women were also active members of the club.

Several brass bands were formed in Wonthaggi throughout the twentieth century and remain active in the community today. Brass bands have strong links to mining communities in Britain, where they were once a ubiquitous feature in the social fabric of nearly every mining community.⁴²² In April 1910, the Wonthaggi Public Brass Band was established in the dining room of the State Coal Mine. The band would rename several times, including to the Wonthaggi Miner's Union Band in 1912. This band split in 1916, becoming the Wonthaggi State Mine Band and the Wonthaggi Union Band. Both bands continued to change their names, until 1935 when there was eventually only one band called the Wonthaggi and District Citizens' Band.⁴²³ These brass bands were a central feature of Wonthaggi's community life, providing entertainment at community events and during strikes, and the leading funeral processions of miners killed in industrial accidents.⁴²⁴

The Wonthaggi Social Club was active from May 1931, providing entertainment and social activities for their members.⁴²⁵ The club hosted weekly dances and games, such as cards, draughts and chess

⁴¹⁶ Gannon 1934; Baragwanath and James 2015, p. 487.

⁴¹⁷ Lewis 2013, record no. 14939.

⁴¹⁸ White 1974, pp. 46 and 188–99; Baragwanath and James 2015, pp. 308, 471 and 589.

⁴¹⁹ McIntyre and McIntyre 1944, p. 192.

⁴²⁰ Cash 2000, p. 12.

⁴²¹ Gannon 1934.

⁴²² Christopher Werth 2013, 'Britain's brass bands a working class tradition on the wane', NPR Music, <https://www.npr.org/2013/03/06/173642709/britains-brass-bands-a-working-class-tradition-on-the-wane>

⁴²³ *Great Southern Star*, 10 November 2009, https://education.issuu.com/thestar/docs/nov_10/40 and Cash 2000.

⁴²⁴ Reeves 2011, p. 100.

⁴²⁵ Gannon 1934.

matches. These matches eventually expanded to competitions with other clubs from surrounding towns such as Kongwak, Korumburra and Leongatha.⁴²⁶ The club also held community singing sessions which became a hallmark of Wonthaggi life in the 1930s. This club was also thought to have an active migrant member base, with British residents represented strongly on the club's organising committee.⁴²⁷

The Wonthaggi Co-operative Workmen's Club was established in 1911. The club was granted a liquor license soon after opening and was a social meeting places for members. It included features such as bar and dining facilities, billiard tables, and a reading room, and organised events such as weekly dances and raffles. In 1922 the club building was destroyed by a fire, and in 1923 a new brick building was erected.⁴²⁸ By the early 1930s, the club had about 500 members.⁴²⁹ Women were allowed access to the members' areas in the 1980s and given voting rights in 1985.⁴³⁰

The Freemasons established lodges at Wonthaggi in 1911 and at Phillip Island in 1935.⁴³¹ Service clubs such as the Lions Club, Rotary and Probus have also had a presence throughout the Shire in the twentieth century and remain active in Inverloch, Wonthaggi, San Remo, and at Phillip Island.

Immigrant communities

In the early Wonthaggi township, a significant proportion of the population were migrants from coal towns in England, Scotland and Wales. This had a significant influence on the social and cultural life of Wonthaggi.

Nineteenth century settlers tended to be British, Scottish and Irish. As was the pattern elsewhere in Victoria, the early pastoralists were often Scotch or Scotch-Irish, including the Anderson, McHaffie and Cleeland families. The Scots were also active in the Wonthaggi community. From 1912 there was a Caledonian Club and Scottish dancing also featured at various local events.⁴³²

The only significant non-English speaking immigrant group were the Chinese, who lived on Phillip Island and at San Remo as fishermen.

While the majority of Italian migration to Victoria was in the postwar period, the State Coal Mine attracted a small but significant Italian community to Wonthaggi in the 1920s.⁴³³ Declining economic conditions in Italy at that time had encouraged migration to Victoria, and many single men were drawn to mining towns in the Latrobe Valley and at Wonthaggi and Kilcunda to find work. Wonthaggi was an attractive option for new migrants as the town was prospering at that time. By the early 1930s, an identifiable Italian community existed in Wonthaggi, which was concentrated at the western end of Hagelthorn Street. When Italy entered World War II, Italian nationals quickly became the subject of suspicion. They were soon considered a potential threat to national security and identified as 'enemy aliens' by the Australian government. This community tension peaked in Wonthaggi in 1940 when miners at two State Coal Mine pits refused to work with Italian miners.⁴³⁴ Following this, the Italian

⁴²⁶ Gannon 1934.

⁴²⁷ Reeves 2011, p. 50.

⁴²⁸ Gannon 1934.

⁴²⁹ Reeves 2011, p. 40.

⁴³⁰ Wonthaggi Workmens Club: <https://www.wonthaggiworkmens.com.au/about-us>

⁴³¹ PIDHS and 'Wonthaggi', Victorian Places.

⁴³² Cash 2000, p. 12.

⁴³³ Reeves 2011, p. 50.

⁴³⁴ Reeves 2011, p. 117.

residents of Wonthaggi were reported to have donated £19 to the local AIF Ambulance Fund. This had been collected from within the community and was an expression of their loyalty to Australia.⁴³⁵

In the postwar period, the Italian community in Wonthaggi continued to grow and Italian culture contributed to the character of the town. Many Italian settlers also took up farming in the area. Today there is a Wonthaggi Italian Senior Citizens' Club, and in 2020 the southern section of Loch Street in Wonthaggi was renamed Ciconte Close, to recognise the prominent Ciconte family that had resided in the street since 1952.⁴³⁶

3.12.4 Theatres and cinemas

A ready population and the need for entertainment saw a number of theatres developed at Wonthaggi. The Wonthaggi Picture Theatre was built in 1911 using locally made bricks.⁴³⁷ The Wonthaggi Miners' Union Theatre was built through the fundraising efforts of the Miners Union and operated from 1925 to 1978. It was originally established as 'Union Hall', and the first additions to the hall were the Union Office and Committee Room. This was the formal home of the Union. The Union Theatre began showing silent films in June 1925 and 'talkies' from December 1931.⁴³⁸ It served as a venue for fetes, dancers, bazaars, boxing, concerts and operettas were produced by the Wonthaggi Musical and Operatic Society in the 1930s. During the 1934 strike, relief meetings were held in the building, and for many years it was the meeting venue of the Wonthaggi Women's Auxiliary. The present Wonthaggi Union Community Arts Centre, which operates the cinema, is located on the former Union Theatre site. It is 'a 1940 reworking of the cinema owned by the Miners' Union'.⁴³⁹

Three other early theatres in Wonthaggi were all in Graham Street: the Lyceum, the Plaza and the Crystal Palace. The short-lived Lyceum Theatre was destroyed by fire in 1912.⁴⁴⁰ The Plaza Theatre was built by the Wonthaggi Theatre Company in 1917. It was originally known as the Wonthaggi Theatre before being sold to the Wonthaggi District Returned Soldiers, Sailors and Nurses Co-operative who continued to operate it as a cinema.⁴⁴¹ The Crystal Palace Theatre opened in 1920 and closed in the 1950s when it was converted into a clothing factory that manufactured Adelyn frocks.⁴⁴²

3.12.5 Recognising local history and erecting public monuments

From its early development as a holiday destination, tourist literature and journalists paid attention to the important maritime history associated with Phillip Island, Corinella and the Bass River area, and its significance in early colonial exploration of the southeast coast of Australia and the eventual settlement of Port Philip in 1836.

A movement to recognise the achievements of the early explorers of Victoria saw a number of stone cairns erected across the State in the early 1920s, including one at Rhyll In 1923. This monument was erected through community subscriptions to commemorate the arrival at Western Port Bay on 4 January 1798 of the British navigator George Bass. A monument at Fort Dumaresq commemorates, 'the

⁴³⁵ Wonthaggi and District Historical Society, 'Powlett Express and Italians', Plod Essay, http://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/files/plod/Powlett_Express_and_Italians.pdf

⁴³⁶ Bass Coast Post: <https://www.basscoastpost.com/local-history/ciconte-close>

⁴³⁷ *Herald*, 31 August 1911, p. 3.

⁴³⁸ A cinema film with speech and sound made during the period when most films were silent.

⁴³⁹ Heritage Matters 2002, 'Jaffas Down the Aisles', prepared for Heritage Victoria, p. 21.

⁴⁴⁰ Wonthaggi and District Historical Society, 'Fire! Fire!', Plod Essay, <http://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/files/plod/FireFire.pdf>

⁴⁴¹ Cash 2000, p. 24.

⁴⁴² Sam Watson 2021.

discovery of this port by Surgeon George Bass, 4 January 1798, and the visits paid by Lieutenant James Grant, March 1801, Lieut. John Murray, December 1801, French expedition under Captain Baudin, April 1802, and Captain d'Urville in 1826'. A plaque was added to the memorial in 2001 to commemorate the bicentenary of the landing of Lieutenant James Grant and the mapping of Western Port by Francis Barreillier.⁴⁴³ In 1973, the Phillip Island & District Historical Society erected a monument at Rhyll to recognise the proclamation of Phillip Island as a British possession in 1826.⁴⁴⁴

Two memorials are erected at Corinella, associated with the sites and individuals of early settlement in 1826. A stone cairn was unveiled on 10 December 1972 to commemorate the site of first settlement in Victoria led by Captain Samuel Wright in 1826.⁴⁴⁵ A tall red brick memorial was also erected to commemorate Count Paul Edmund Strzelecki, who led a party from the Murrumbidgee River in New South Wales through East Gippsland to Western Port Bay, arriving in the settlement of Corinella in May 1840. The expedition involved significant hardship and near loss of life on the part of Strzelecki owing to the difficult terrain.⁴⁴⁶

Local towns celebrated their history with exhibitions and special events and by erecting monuments. A 'Back to Phillip Island' event was held in 1928 and a 'Back to Wonthaggi' during Easter 1934. A second 'Back to Phillip Island' was held in 1968.

Historical societies and local history museums were established in several locations, including Cowes and Wonthaggi. The Phillip Island & Western Port Historical Society Inc was first established in 1941. That society closed down during the 1950s and the PIDHS was formed in 1967. The society's museum was opened in December 1982 by the Shire of Phillip Island and operated continuously until early 2020 when it was forced to close due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴⁴⁷

With the closure of the State Coal Mine, many recognised the importance of recording the history of this unique enterprise and example of a model town. A local historical society was established at Wonthaggi in 1959.⁴⁴⁸ The Wonthaggi Railway Station building was adapted for use as a local history museum in 1983. The heritage of coal-mining at Wonthaggi has also been developed as a tourist attraction, with the opening of the Wonthaggi Mine Museum which provides access to the underground mines.⁴⁴⁹

Memorials have also been erected at Wonthaggi to honour those who were killed in mining accidents. This includes two plaques to commemorate miners killed in the underground explosions at the Number 20 Coal Shaft on 20 February 1931 and 15 February 1937.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴³ Monument Australia, 'Explorers Monument': <https://monumentaaustralia.org.au/display/33263-explorers-monument>.

⁴⁴⁴ Monument Australia. 'British Proclamation': <https://monumentaaustralia.org.au/search/display/33262-british-proclamation>.

⁴⁴⁵ White 1974, p. 209.

⁴⁴⁶ White 1974, p. 210.

⁴⁴⁷ PIDHS, pers com, November 2021.

⁴⁴⁸ Wonthaggi and District Historical Society, <https://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/>

⁴⁴⁹ George Gunton 1996, *Travellers in Time: Living history in Australia*, the author, Clyde, pp. 70–71.

⁴⁵⁰ Monument Australia: <https://monumentaaustralia.org.au/themes/disaster/industrial/display/33444-number-20-coal-shaft-disaster>



Figure 3.46 Unveiling of the explorers' memorial cairn at Rhyll in 1923. (Source: Phillip Island and District Historical Society)

3.12.6 Honouring war veterans

As service men and women returned home from the First World War, local communities held 'welcome home' ceremonies, and erected war memorials to those who served. Memorials were erected at Inverloch, Cowes and Bass. Later, additional wording was added to these memorials to recognise service in World War II and other theatres of war, including at Wonthaggi. A small memorial was erected in San Remo in 1987 to recognise those who served and were killed in both World Wars, as well as Korea and Vietnam.⁴⁵¹ In the wake of the First World War, avenues of honour were also planted for local soldiers at Grantville and Bass.⁴⁵² Various buildings installed honour boards that listed the names of the local men and women who served, including several public halls, churches and the Wonthaggi Fire Station. Memorial gates were erected at the entrance of Glen Alvie Public Hall in 1949.

In c.1921 housing in Wonthaggi was also made available to eligible returned servicemen through an attractive Commonwealth Government lending scheme for 'war service homes' that was managed by the War Service Homes Commission. A 2-acre site for the war service homes commissioner was reserved in Wonthaggi around 1920 and a total of 31 war service homes were erected.⁴⁵³

Clubs for returned servicemen and women were established at Wonthaggi and Cowes. The Wonthaggi Theatre was sold to the Wonthaggi District Returned Soldiers, Sailors and Nurses Co-operative who continued to operate it as a cinema.⁴⁵⁴ An RSL branch established at Cowes was provided with premises at the Phillip Island Shire Hall.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵¹ Monument Australia, <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/multiple/display/33357-san-remo-war-memorial>.

⁴⁵² Avenues of Honour: <https://avenuesofhonour.org/>

⁴⁵³ Township of Wonthaggi 1927 (SLV); *Age*, 9 April 1932, p. 10

⁴⁵⁴ *Cash* 2000, p. 24.

⁴⁵⁵ Gliddon 1968, p. 288.



Figure 3.47 'Welcome home' archway erected in Wonthaggi, photographed by John Henry Harvey, 1927. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H2009.100/197)

3.13 Sport and recreation

3.13.1 Sporting clubs and activities

The development of local sports was generated by the particular interests and resources of the local communities.

Early recreation reserves were set aside — for example at Inverloch in 1888⁴⁵⁶ — but in many cases games such as cricket, football, or golf were played on a suitable public area or private property, long before a suitable public reserve was gazetted for the purpose. For example, at Phillip Island, golf was played on land at Rhyll that had previously been used for a racecourse in 1910. The racecourse was developed by the community, however very little infrastructure was established.⁴⁵⁷ Land for recreational uses was also donated by local landowners to help establish sporting facilities. In 1928, Mrs J.B. Cleeland donated land at Newhaven for the erection of public tennis courts and c1910 Charlotte McFee donated land for the establishment of a cricket pitch at Rhyll.⁴⁵⁸

Other local golf courses were established at San Remo in 1922, at Inverloch in 1926, and at Wonthaggi in 1927.⁴⁵⁹ Golf links were also often attached or associated with private hotels such as the Isle of Wight at Cowes or Pine Lodge at Inverloch.

Cricket clubs were established throughout the Shire, including at Cowes, Rhyll, Ventnor, Wonthaggi, and Inverloch. Local football clubs were also established in many localities. On Phillip Island from the 1890s there were teams for Cowes and Rhyll. Other teams included Ventnor, Grantville and Kilcunda. The Wonthaggi Football Club was formed in 1910. In 1946, Cowes, Rhyll and Ventnor combined to form a Phillip Island team. In 1946 the participating teams in the newly formed Wonthaggi Football Club included Dalyston, Bass, East Wonthaggi, Glen Alvie, Inverloch, Kilcunda, Phillip Island, San Remo, Shop Assistants and Workmen's Club.⁴⁶⁰

Social tennis was a significant offering to visitors at private hotels and guesthouses at Phillip Island and Inverloch, however local tennis clubs were also established throughout the area. The 'Exiles' Tennis Club at Cowes was established in 1897, and other clubs were established at Grantville by 1899, at Wonthaggi by 1911, Kilcunda by 1929, and Inverloch by the 1930s.⁴⁶¹ From the middle of the twentieth century, many local churches provided tennis courts.

A range of sporting activities developed at Wonthaggi from its establishment in 1909. In the early period of Wonthaggi, being almost exclusively a male settlement, sports were strongly encouraged as a means of keeping the men occupied. In March 1910, the State Mine Football Club was established, and by May 1910 the 'Coalfields Competition' had commenced. It involved the following teams: State Mine, Kilcunda, Ryanston, Dalyston, Wonthaggi and Bass. A junior football club was established at the State Coal Mine in March 1910.⁴⁶² An athletics club was established at Wonthaggi as early as 1912.⁴⁶³ The Wonthaggi Bowls Club, also established in 1911, proved highly successful and was reputed to have one of the best

⁴⁵⁶ Inverloch Township Plan, 1947 (SLV).

⁴⁵⁷ PIDHS, pers. com, November 2021.

⁴⁵⁸ *Age*, 16 July 1928, p. 12; PIDHS.

⁴⁵⁹ *Age*, 2 September 1927, p. 13.

⁴⁶⁰ 'History of Island Football and Netball', Phillip Island and San Remo Advertiser, <https://www.pisra.com.au/football--netball-history/history-of-island-football-and-netball>

⁴⁶¹ *Mornington Standard*, 8 April 1897, p. 2; *Mornington Standard*, 23 April 1897, p. 3; *Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 27 October 1899, p. 2; *Great Southern Advocate*, 30 May 1929, p. 5.

⁴⁶² Cash 2000, p. 44.

⁴⁶³ Cash 2000, p. 43.

greens outside the metropolitan area.⁴⁶⁴ In 1910, the Wonthaggi Rangers soccer club was established, and by 1927 Wonthaggi had its own soccer league. This was a reflection of the significant number of miners from the British Isles. Team names such as the 'Wonthaggi Thistles' and the 'Caledonians' suggest a strong Scottish component amongst them. Local historian Andrew Reeves reflected, 'only on Australian coalfields, it seems, could soccer rival rugby or Australian Rules Football at the time'.⁴⁶⁵

Other sporting ventures at Wonthaggi included the Wonthaggi Cycling Club, established in the c.1920s and the Wonthaggi Speed Coursing Club, which opened at a 13-acre site called The Sports Paradise in December 1938.⁴⁶⁶ Cycling became one of Wonthaggi's boom sports during the Depression, and the Wonthaggi to Melbourne amateur road race became a 1930s cycling classic.⁴⁶⁷

3.13.2 Horse-racing

Horse-racing in Bass Coast Shire played an important part of recreational life in the period of early settlement but was not extensively developed, probably on account of the difficult terrain and the relatively small population. The earliest racetracks were probably on private land and not properly laid out for the purpose. There were few if any grandstands erected. Some wealthier settlers bred horses, including Captain John Cleeland of Wollomai House, Phillip Island, who owned and trained the 1875 Melbourne Cup winner, *Wollomai*.

Early horse-racing grounds include a site at Grantville which was established in the 1870s where a local racing club managed race meetings,⁴⁶⁸ and a reserve at Lang Lang, which was set aside in 1887.⁴⁶⁹ The Western Port Racing Club was established at Queensferry between 1888 and 1889 and the Powlett Race Club was established in 1902.⁴⁷⁰ In 1888, a site was reserved for a racecourse at Woolamai (Bass). From this time, only sporadic and unregistered 'picnic races' took place here, and the reserve became neglected. In the postwar era, there was a coordinated local effort to establish the Woolamai Race Club. By this time, all other racecourse in the area had ceased operation, and the Woolamai Race Club became popular. These race events were highly profitable, and money raised was donated to make improvements within the reserve and the Wonthaggi Hospital and helped to establish a cricket pitch and club rooms.⁴⁷¹ The ownership of the reserve was eventually transferred to the Crown and the track is leased to race clubs.

Western Port held an annual gymkhana, which was first held at Yoorhooga, near Corinella, in 1914.⁴⁷²

3.13.3 Swimming and surfing

Swimming at the beach has been a popular summer activity at many locations in the Bass Coast Shire. Phillip Island and Inverloch were popular holiday destinations over summer. Sea baths were constructed at Cowes around 1893.⁴⁷³ At Inverloch, the timber swimming enclosure was constructed by the community in the early 1900s.⁴⁷⁴ From the mid-twentieth century, the Inverloch Foreshore Committee

⁴⁶⁴ Gannon 1934.

⁴⁶⁵ Cash 2000, p. 51 and Reeves 2011, pp. 50–51.

⁴⁶⁶ Cash 2000, p. 44.

⁴⁶⁷ Reeves 2011, p. 48.

⁴⁶⁸ Whitworth 1879, p. 222.

⁴⁶⁹ VGG, 11 November 1887, p. 3259.

⁴⁷⁰ White 1974, p. 170.

⁴⁷¹ White 1974, pp. 168–70.

⁴⁷² Peck 1942, pp. 156, 161.

⁴⁷³ Eulalie Brewster 2020, 'Taking the waters', Bass Coast Post, <https://www.basscoastpost.com/local-history/taking-the-waters>; Gliddon 1968.

⁴⁷⁴ Lis Williams 2002, p. 39.

was established by community members, who actively worked to improve and manage the foreshore area. The committee would replace the timber piles of the swimming enclosure each spring before the new swimming season.⁴⁷⁵

Members of the Wonthaggi mining community holidayed at Cape Paterson where the miners built a rockpool at the beach in the 1960s for safe swimming.⁴⁷⁶

The Phillip Island Life Saving Club was also located at Cowes and became affiliated with the Royal Life Saving Society in 1930. It ceased operation in 1964. There was increased interest in surfing at Phillip Island in the late 1950s due to the excellent surfing conditions at Cape Woolamai. A surf life-saving club was established here in 1959 on account of the danger of this section of water. A road was constructed to the Woolamai surf beach in the 1960s and a carpark was provided. The Phillip Island Boardriders Club was established in 1963 and continues to operate today. A surf life-saving club was also established at Wonthaggi in 1938, at Inverloch in 1956 and at Cape Paterson in 1960.⁴⁷⁷

In 2013, the Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve was opened. Planning for the reserve began two years earlier and was led by a dedicated community group. The Phillip Island Professional Surfing Competition (The Phillip Island Pro) is held here annually.



Figure 3.48 The public baths at Cowes, c1920s.
 (Source: Phillip Island and District Historical Society, ID: 179-08)



Figure 3.49 The Bathing Place, Inverloch, c1920s.
 (Source: Inverloch Historical Society, ID: 004286)

3.13.4 Boating and yachting

Boating and yachting were a popular and relatively early recreational activity to emerge at settlements along the coast in the Shire. Annual regattas were held at Cowes from 1873 and at Inverloch from 1893. These were typically held around the jetty and involved several types of boat and yacht races.⁴⁷⁸ These regattas were annual events and involved yacht clubs from across Victoria.

⁴⁷⁵ Eualie Brewster 2020, 'Taking the waters', Bass Coast Post, <https://www.basscoastpost.com/local-history/taking-the-waters>

⁴⁷⁶ Place and see 2022, 'Wonthaggi', <https://placeandsee.com/wiki/wonthaggi>

⁴⁷⁷ Wonthaggi Life Saving Club 2022, 'About us', <https://wlsc.org.au/about-us/>; 'Inverloch', Victorian Places, <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/inverloch>; Cape Paterson Surf Life Saving Club, 'Club History', <https://www.capepatersonslsc.org/club-history.html>

⁴⁷⁸ *Age*, 3 April 1873, p. 3; *Sportsman*, 10 January 1893, p. 6.

Yacht clubs were established at Inverloch from 1893, at Cowes in 1957, at Newhaven in 1962, and at Rhyll in 1971.⁴⁷⁹

3.13.5 Motor-car and motor-bike racing

From the late 1920s, Phillip Island has been a major destination for motor racing. Until the construction of the first bridge to Phillip Island in 1940, all vehicles were transported by punts and ferries. These events attracted significant audiences from across Victoria and were a huge surge of business for the hotels and boarding houses on Phillip Island.

From 1928 until 1938, Phillip Island hosted the Tourist Trophy races for motorcycles. In 1928, a group of volunteers selected and repaired 10.4km of public road around Cowes to create a race circuit for motor cars. This was initially staged as the 100 Miles Road Race, and the first race took place on 26 March 1928. By 1930, the Victorian Light Car Club pursued the idea of establishing an Australian Grand Prix at the circuit, and Phillip Island hosted the Australian Grand Prix until 1938. In 1931 the race moved to Bathurst, NSW as the unsealed, dusty track had become too impractical.⁴⁸⁰

In 1951, six local businessmen formulated a plan to re-establish motor racing at Phillip Island, and by 1952 the inaugural meeting of the Phillip Island Auto Racing Club (PIARC) took place. The current circuit site at Ventnor was purchased by P. Whitlock, owner of Brighton Beach Motors, and work began immediately on planning and building a racetrack. The PIARC called for 7000 subscriptions at 10 pounds each to assist in the development of the circuit. The first race meeting on the completed circuit was held on 15 December 1956.⁴⁸¹

In 1962, the circuit was extensively damaged during the running of the Armstrong 500 races (which later became the Bathurst 1000s). The PIARC were unable to finance the cost of the repair and the track was closed and put up for sale. In 1964, the site was bought back by Len Lukey, a Melbourne-based muffler manufacturer. Lukey purchased the site with the agreement that the PIARC could rebuild the circuit and continue running race meetings there. By 1967, the circuit was rebuilt and ready for racing again. When Lukey passed away in 1978 the agreement for PIARC to control and develop circuit racing ended. The last race hosted by the PIARC was the Golden Jubilee Australian Grand Prix Meeting.⁴⁸²

From 1989 to 1991, the circuit hosted the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix before it moved to NSW. The race returned to Phillip Island again in 1997. Since 1991, the Phillip Island circuit has hosted other major racing and been used for testing sessions by both local and international car and motorcycle teams. The Castrol Classics, an annual historic car race, has been hosted at the circuit since 1990.⁴⁸³

⁴⁷⁹ Cowes Yacht Club 2021, 'Cowes Yacht Club-History', <https://www.cowesyachtclub.com/about/history/>; Newhaven Yacht Squadron Inc 2021, 'About Newhaven Yacht Squadron', <https://www.nys.org.au/facilities/>; 'Rhyll', Victorian Places.

⁴⁸⁰ *Argus*, 25 March 1930, p. 5; Edgecombe 1989, pp. 56–59; Gliddon 1968, pp. 38–39.

⁴⁸¹ Phillip Island Auto Racing Club 2017, *Who We Are*, http://www.piarc.com.au/about_piarc.html, accessed October 2021.

⁴⁸² Phillip Island Auto Racing Club 2017.

⁴⁸³ Phillip Island Auto Racing Club 2017.



Figure 3.50 Photograph of the start of a race during the Motorcycle Grand Prix on the road circuit on Phillip Island, c1920s-30s. (Source: Phillip Island & District Historical Society, ID: 335-12)

3.14 Arts and culture

3.14.1 Artists' and writers' impressions

Artists

The rugged coastal scenery and natural beauty of Western Port Bay, Phillip Island and the timbered hill country of the Bass Valley area has been a favoured subject of artists' landscapes and seascapes since the mid-nineteenth century. A rare painting of the area that pre-dates the settlement of Victoria has Phillip Island as its subject. This was executed by French artist Louis A. de Sainson (1800–87) who was part of a French exploratory expedition in Bass Strait in 1826–27. He recorded some of the local scenes, including a work titled *The Sealer's Hut*, thought to have been painted at Rhyll c.1827, after his Pacific voyage with Dumont D'Urville, 1826–29, which included the exploration of Western Port.

Notable nineteenth-century artists who were inspired to paint in the area include the Swiss-Australian artist Eugène von Guérard (1811–1901) and local Gippsland artist Flora Gregson (1854–1933). A painting John White (1851–1933), titled *Cray Fishers, Phillip Island* (c.1872), was included in the preparatory exhibition of works to be sent to the 1873 London International Exhibition. The early photographer Richard Daintree also found inspiration in the spectacular geological formations at Phillip Island in the 1850s as did N.J. Caire in the early 1900s.



Figure 3.51 Eugène von Guérard, *Granite Rocks, Cape Woolamai*, 1872. (Source: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra)

The delicate watercolours of J.B. Henderson (1818–1887) include a large number of watercolour landscapes of Phillip Island and Western Port Bay. Born in London, he studied art in Edinburgh and architecture in London, and emigrated to Australia in 1851. Founding members of the VIC Academy of the Arts in 1870. His sisters Euphemia and Georgiana Henderson were also artists and produced some fine botanical works. Georgiana was married to John McHaffie, who held the leasehold of Phillip Island from 1842 until it was subdivided in 1868.

In the early twentieth century the notable architect and artist Robert J. Haddon painted the coastal scenery of the area and Gippsland artist Flora Gregson produced watercolours of Phillip Island. One of Australia's leading female artists, Clarice Beckett, painted at Inverloch in the 1920s. She also captured a view of Phillip Island from San Remo in the early 1930s, not long before her death in 1935.⁴⁸⁴

Other notable artists associated with the area included several of the Jorgensen family from the Monsalvat artists' colony in Eltham and the Modernist artist Noel Counihan. Unable to travel abroad due to World War II, Counihan spent six weeks in Wonthaggi in 1944, sketching local coal miners at work. Counihan's communist sympathies found expression in the worn and hardened faces of the miners. Works from this period include *Miners Preparing for a Shot, State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi* (Ballarat Art Gallery) and *In the 18-inch seam, State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi* (NGV; both painted in 1944), as well as a series of six linocuts titled *The Miners*.⁴⁸⁵

More recently, in 2019, the Bass Coast South Gippsland Reconciliation Group exhibited works by local Indigenous artists, as part of NAIDOC Week events held in Inverloch.⁴⁸⁶

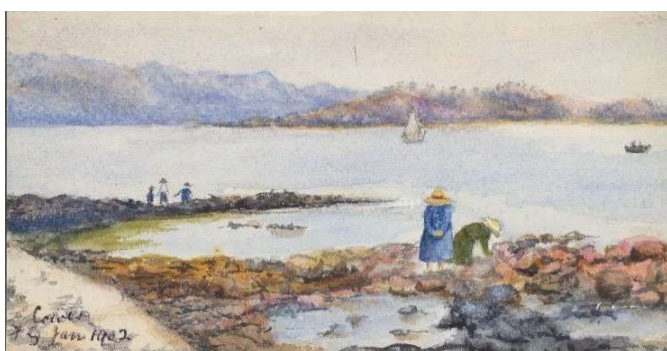


Figure 3.52 Flora Gregson, watercolour titled 'Coves, Jan 1902'. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H16560/7)



Figure 3.53 Detail from Robert J. Haddon watercolour, at San Remo, 1918. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H2008.54/43)

The Bass Coast Shire is home to numerous galleries and artist workshops. The first artists' studio was the Summerlands Art Group, which was established by Eric Juckert and Shirley Webster in May 1964.⁴⁸⁷ An early art gallery in Cowes was the Tudor Art Gallery, which occupied the town's former Catholic Church.

Writers

Being a popular tourist destination, a number of well known writers have holidayed on Phillip Island. The Broadwater guesthouse at Cowes was a favourite place for writers and many did some writing here, including Mary Grant Bruce, Charles Barrett, Crosbie Morrison and Ambrose Pratt.⁴⁸⁸ A significant play with local subject matter was *Thirteen Dead: Reportage drama on the Wonthaggi mine* by the Melbourne Writers' Group. This was an avant-garde play produced in 1937 by the Little Theatre in Melbourne. It was not performed in Wonthaggi, probably because the subject matter was considered too

⁴⁸⁴ National Gallery of Victoria: ngv.vic.gov.au

⁴⁸⁵ National Gallery of Victoria: ngv.vic.gov.au

⁴⁸⁶ South Gippsland Reconciliation Group: sgst.com.au

⁴⁸⁷ Newspaper article, May 1964, PIDHS collection.

⁴⁸⁸ Gliddon 1968, p. 238.

raw and confronting for the local population at that time. In 1934, popular songwriter Jack Hagan wrote *There is Part of my Heart in Wonthaggi* for the occasion of the 'Back to Wonthaggi' celebrations.⁴⁸⁹

Nineteenth-century writer and historian, Alexander Sutherland spent his summer holidays at Cowes in the 1880s.⁴⁹⁰ The notable historian Manning Clark (1915–1991) spent several years at Phillip Island where his father was the Anglican vicar at Cowes in the 1920s and where he developed a love of cricket and fishing. His autobiography, *The Puzzles of Childhood* (1989), referred to Phillip Island as his 'Swanny River' and his affection for the place continued in later life.⁴⁹¹ Another historian, the late Jan Bassett, wrote evocatively about her associations with Phillip Island.⁴⁹²

A play called *The Wonthaggi Celebration*, written by Ken Harper in association with the townspeople, was produced in 1982 by the New Theatre. It was commissioned in response to the loss of the Union Theatre and to mark the opening of the new community art centre.⁴⁹³ Other contemporary writers include Carmen Figuerola (1906–1993), who wrote *Family on Phillip Island* (1955), and Gill Heal.

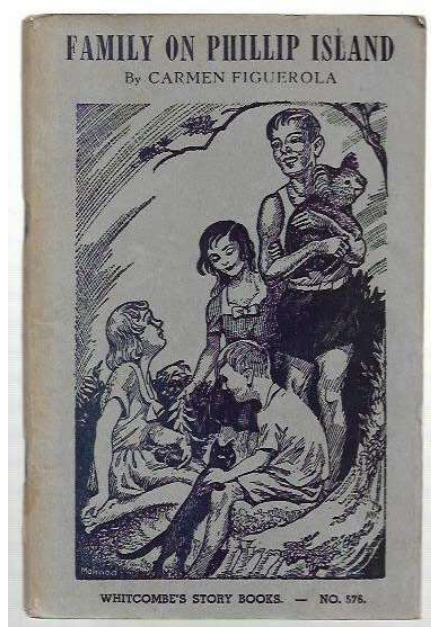


Figure 3.54 Book cover for Carmen Figuerola's children's book, *Family on Phillip Island* (1955)

3.14.2 Cultural organisations

Performing arts groups based in Wonthaggi include the non-professional Wonthaggi Theatrical Group, founded in 1967, and the Bass Coast Chorale.

⁴⁸⁹ *Souvenir Back to Wonthaggi, Victoria, 1934.*

⁴⁹⁰ P.H. Northcott, 2006 'Sutherland, Alexander (1852–1902)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/sutherland-alexander-4671>

⁴⁹¹ Mark McKenna 2015, 'Clark, Charles Manning Hope (1915–1991)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/clark-charles-manning-225>

⁴⁹² Jan Bassett 2002, *The Facing Island: A personal history*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton.

⁴⁹³ Peter Pierce (ed.) 1989, *The Oxford Literary Guide to Australia*, p. 403; Wonthaggi and District Historical Society, 'A Quite Unexpected Success', Plod Essay, http://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/files/plod/A_Quite_Unexpected_Success.pdf

3.15 Tourists and holidaymaking

3.15.1 Early tourism—opportunities for scenery and sport

From the mid-nineteenth century, Western Port Bay, Phillip Island and the Bass River area attracted those seeking recreational pursuits, primarily hunting and fishing. In 1864 one keen sportsman noted that the greatest spoils for shooters not far out of Melbourne could be had in the heavily timbered Bass Valley, claiming 'The fauna of the Bass River ... was perhaps richer than any within an equal distance of Melbourne ... the large flying squirrels, platypus and lyre birds, seem to be tolerably abundant in that district'. One shooter claimed a spoil of 'about three dozen' lyre birds that year.⁴⁹⁴ The seals at Seal Rocks, Phillip Island, the mutton bird colony at Cape Woolamai and the abundance of birds at Western Port also drew regular shooting parties. Being relatively isolated from major transport routes, however, meant that access was somewhat restricted, and visitors to the area were more likely to arrive by sea than by land. A sale of Crown land at Corinella in 1864 offered 'Suburban lots' that could provide summer retreats for people from Melbourne.⁴⁹⁵

As Melbourne grew rapidly in the goldrush years of the 1850s, and the city became more crowded and polluted, city folk sought the natural scenery of the coast and countryside. The coastal areas that were within a reasonable distance of Melbourne drew those in search of a seaside holiday as well as good sport with the rod and gun, and the picturesque. Western Port Bay and Venus Bay — and notably Phillip Island with its unusual and spectacular geological formations — also offered some dramatic coastal scenery, which did not fail to impress those in search of the picturesque.

Phillip Island was the major attraction for visitors from Melbourne and by the early twentieth century, San Remo and the island townships of Cowes, Newhaven and Rhyll were popular summer holiday destinations. San Remo also attracted tourists at this time. E.J. Brady considered that these Western Port villages offered 'a restful reflective holiday'. He described San Remo in 1918 as 'a quaint little seaside place with an old-world air about it' and that 'Hedges of sweet-briar and English trees help to heighten this effect'.⁴⁹⁶

Inverloch, originally known as Andersons Inlet, served as a working port in the early part of the twentieth century. As such, it drew limited sightseers and tourists, but the beach was enjoyed by the local mining community. The township became popular as a summer resort for the residents of Wonthaggi during the early decades of the twentieth century. As coal-mining operations declined at Wonthaggi in the late 1960s, Inverloch attracted a growing number of beachgoers, tourists and retirees.

Phillip Island continued to grow in popularity from the mid twentieth century, with Cowes being the centre of tourist activity. Cowes offered sea baths and a range of holiday activities. Boats and equipment for fishing could also be hired. At San Remo a band rotunda was built near the beach by c1950s which was a popular destination during the summer.

⁴⁹⁴ 'An Old Bushman' 1864. 'Stray Notes from the Forest', *The Field: The gentleman's magazine*, vol. 23, issue 594, 14 May 1864, p. 342.

⁴⁹⁵ *Argus*, 7 September 1864, p. 7; Coghlan 1979, p. 19.

⁴⁹⁶ Brady 1918, p. 308.



Figure 3.55 Ladies' tent, Ornithological Society camping trip to Phillip Island, 1902. (Source: Museum Victoria)

3.15.2 Holiday accommodation

Cowes and San Remo were popular holiday destinations from the late nineteenth century. By 1888, there were two hotels at Cowes and 'furnished cottages' were also available. A hotel was established at San Remo c.1918 and a lodging house was operating at Newhaven.⁴⁹⁷ Phillip Island became a sought-after holiday location in the 1920s and 1930s, which led to a property boom on the island.⁴⁹⁸ A number of guesthouses operated, including Broadwater, Cora Lynn and the Continental at Cowes and Summerlands near Summerland Beach. These catered largely to visitors from Melbourne. Motor transport increased the tourist traffic and the construction of a road bridge from San Remo to Newhaven in 1940 brought both an increase in visitors and a greater ease in shipping building materials, which in turn also hastened development on the island.

Inverloch, having long functioned as a port town for the local coal-mining operations, was slower to emerge as a holiday destination. A hotel, named the Esplanade, was erected at Inverloch in 1896. Once the railway had reached Wonthaggi, making it no longer necessary for Inverloch to operate as an industrial port, the small coastal town became fashionable as a summer resort. Inverloch's popularity as a tourist resort increased significantly through the 1910s and was booming in the 1920s and 1930s when several guesthouses were provided. The Pine Lodge Private Hotel at Inverloch, which opened in 1930, was designed as a luxury country club with 'entertainment and sporting activities including a nine-hole golf course, two tennis courts and horse riding'. Pine Lodge also boasted 'the first telephone in Inverloch and a 33-yard (Olympic-size) sea water swimming pool (when built, this was the largest private swimming pool in Australia)'. Pine Lodge operated until 1981 and was demolished in 1985.⁴⁹⁹

Camping was popular in the coastal areas from the early 1900s. Early campers made use of the foreshore reserves and many of these areas were subsequently adapted as serviced public camping grounds. There were also private operators, like Keam's Camping Park at San Remo which offered auto-cabins and sleep outs.⁵⁰⁰

During the postwar period there was a rejuvenation of tourism. Considerable progress was made by the Inverloch foreshore committee to improve the beach for visitors. An increase in ownership of motor cars

⁴⁹⁷ *Argus*, 3 March 1888, p. 5; Victorian Railways 1908, *Picturesque Victoria and How to Get There*, DW Patterson Co, Melbourne, p. 30.

⁴⁹⁸ PIDHS: <https://pidhs.org.au/>

⁴⁹⁹ Inverloch 3996 Facebook Page.

⁵⁰⁰ *Age*, 29 November 1940, p. 6.

also made caravanning and motor camping popular in the foreshore reserves. Camping and caravan parks included the Cowes Motor Park by c1940s-50s as well as camping grounds at Inverloch by c1960. There was also a camping ground at Cape Paterson. By 1960, Cowes was one of the busiest summer holiday destinations in Victoria, with a growing number of guesthouses and other accommodation options.⁵⁰¹ San Remo also benefitted from the increased tourist activity at Phillip Island. From the 1950s to the 1970s holiday homes built on Phillip Island, San Remo and Inverloch tended to be rudimentary in design and modest in scale. A number of houses were relocated from Wonthaggi to Inverloch in the 1980s to serve as holiday houses.



Figure 3.56 Tourist postcard, Two Views Guesthouse, Inverloch, c.1910s-20s. (Source: Victorian Places)



Figure 3.57 Caravan and camping ground at Inverloch, c1950s. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H32492/3422)

Less formalised provisions for holidaymakers emerged in several locations along the coast from the early twentieth century, where clusters of beach shacks were erected, including the Flats (Flat Rocks), Eagles Nest, Wreck Beach and Cape Paterson. Many of these were built by local fishermen and others by coal miners as holiday huts, and these were mostly make-do constructions using discarded materials.

⁵⁰¹ RACV tourist publication 1960.



Figure 3.58 Details of advertising, *Broadbent's Tourist Guide to Phillip Island and Gippsland*, c.1940s. (Source: State Library Victoria)



Figure 3.59 Details of advertising, *Broadbent's Tourist Guide to Phillip Island and Gippsland*, c.1940s. (Source: State Library Victoria)



Figure 3.60 Advertisement for Bay View Guesthouse at Phillip Island, from *Broadbent's Tourist Guide to Phillip Island and Gippsland*, c.1940s. (Source: State Library Victoria)



Figure 3.61 Tourist postcard depicting the San Remo Hotel, San Remo, c.1930s-40s. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H32492/924)

3.15.3 Tourist attractions

Tourism in the area developed largely on account of the attractive coastal scenery, interesting natural history, safe sandy beaches, and good fishing. Strong interest in natural history has also been a mainstay of tourism at Phillip Island and along the Inverloch coastline.

Phillip Island's popularity as a tourist resort increased in the second half on the twentieth century, following the construction of the road bridge from San Remo in 1940. Touted as 'Melbourne's playground', the island offered fishing, safe swimming beaches as well as an excellent surf beach, and a range of nature-based experiences, including bird-watching, the nightly Penguin Parade of Little Penguins (*Eudyptula minor*), taking a boat trip to view the seal colony at the Nobbies, and the opportunity to view koalas and lyrebirds. The Penguin Parade has been a key attraction for tourists since at least the 1920s and draws international attention.⁵⁰² It has attracted considerable funding and has led to the development of viewing premises and a 'Discovery Centre'.

More recently, Churchill Island has also emerged as a popular tourist attraction. Since it was acquired by the Victorian Government, it has operated as Churchill Farm, the island is open to the public and tours of the former Amess House are provided by the PINP. There are also extensive bird-watching opportunities on the island, including sightings of Cape Barren Geese.

Many of the beaches in the area, for example Cowry Beach, were once renowned for their extensive and unusual shells and shell-collecting was encouraged. The Shell Museum at Inverloch opened in the c1950s. It originated as the private collection of local man Jack Lewis and includes a c1880s dolls house made entirely of shells.⁵⁰³

The Dinosaur Dreaming program which has been developed by the Bunurong Conservation Society at Inverloch, is a recently developed addition to tourist attractions in the area.



Figure 3.62 Tea House, Shelly Beach, Phillip Island.
(Source: Phillip Island and District Historical Society)



Figure 3.63 The Shell House, Ventnor. (Source: Victorian Collections)

3.15.4 Country estates

The picturesque seclusion of Western Port Bay and its islands provided a ready retreat and a suitable location for a country estate or a summer seaside home for those of means. In 1865 John Barry called

⁵⁰² Age, 1939; Gliddon 1968.

⁵⁰³ South Gippsland Conservation Society: <http://www.sgcs.org.au>

tenders for the erection of a villa residence on the Bass River Station, Western Port, for pastoralist Michael Pender.⁵⁰⁴

The wealthy Melbourne merchant and City of Melbourne councillor Samuel Amess acquired the entirety of Churchill Island in 1872 as a country estate. He erected Amess House and used the property as a summer holiday destination. He introduced rabbits, quail, pheasants to the island to provide sport for shooting, and bred Highland cattle in a nostalgic gesture to his Scottish roots. Amess grew a large number of exotic trees that are listed on the National Trust Significant Tree Register.



Figure 3.64 Photograph of Amess House on Churchill Island dated c.1930–40.
 (Source: Phillip Island District Historical Society)

⁵⁰⁴ *Argus*, 1 May 1865, p 3, cited in Lewis 2013, record no. 21806.

3.16 Facing the challenges of the natural environment

3.16.1 Shipwrecks

During the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, shipwrecks were relatively frequent along Victoria's coastline. Bass Strait could be a treacherous stretch of water and a number of ships met their end on the Western Port coastline.⁵⁰⁵ Wrecks at Inverloch included the *Amazon*, which came aground at the Flat Rocks in 1863, the *Magnat* which was grounded offshore in 1900, and the *Artisan* which was wrecked at Wreck Beach in 1901, west of Cape Paterson.⁵⁰⁶

By the 1860s, a series of painted beacons were established to guide vessels through the narrow Eastern Passage that separated Phillip Island from San Remo. A plan of Western Port Bay dated 1867 is marked with the other danger spots where lights or beacons were installed.⁵⁰⁷ A small lighthouse was erected at The Nobbies by c.1900s. At Cape Woolamai two kerosene lanterns were installed to light the Eastern Passage in 1922, and these were upgraded the following year. A new light was erected at the high point of Cape Woolamai in 1928.⁵⁰⁸ Jetty lights were also provided at government jetties.

With the region's heavy dependence on shipping in its early period of development, volunteer rocket corps were established at coastal settlements to provide assistance to vessels in distress and lifesaving assistance. Rockets with a line and harness attached (called a Breeches Buoy) were fired to the ships, and then used to pull the crew to safety.⁵⁰⁹



Figure 3.65 Lighthouse at the Nobbies, Phillip Island, early 1900s. (Source: Phillip Island District Historical Society)



Figure 3.66 The Rocket Shed at Inverloch built c1900. (Source: Inverloch Historical Society: <https://inverlochhistory.com/rocket-shed-the-ripple/>)

⁵⁰⁵ Inverloch Historical Society 2021, 'Rocket Shed and the Ripple', <https://inverlochhistory.com/rocket-shed-the-ripple/>

⁵⁰⁶ Williams 2002, pp. 31–32.

⁵⁰⁷ Department of Crown Lands and Survey 1866, *Town and Country Lands Phillip Island*, Melbourne, 20 November 1866 (SLV); Cox 1867.

⁵⁰⁸ Image, PIDHS collection; *Frankston and Somerville Standard*, 14 December 1928, p. 8; Gliddon 1968, p. 259.

⁵⁰⁹ Advisory Committee on Recreation and Tourism to the Westernport Regional Planning Authority 1971, *Victoria's Playground*, p. 65.

In c1900 the San Remo and Newhaven Rocket Corps was established. Their first call out was in 1901 to assist the crew of the *Artisan*, which had been driven ashore at Wreck Beach near Cape Paterson. In 1914, the Rocket Corps was transferred to Cowes.⁵¹⁰ A rocket corps was also established at Inverloch in the early 1900s. A rocket shed was erected on The Esplanade, Inverloch, which was restored in 2009.⁵¹¹

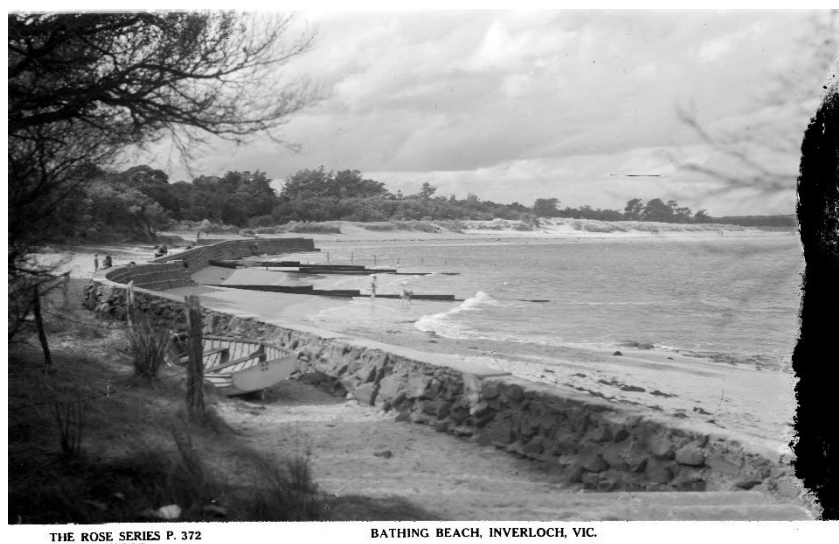
3.16.2 Facing danger and disaster

Fighting fire

As well as the threat of bushfires and grassfires, fire was an ever-present risk in early townships, threatening not only the loss of property but the loss of life. Many important buildings have been lost to fire in Bass Coast Shire. A volunteer fire brigade was established at Wonthaggi in 1910 and a fire station erected soon after.

Coastal erosion

The action of the ocean tides and the wind off Bass Strait caused significant changes to the foreshore areas. Sea walls were built at Inverloch in the early twentieth century to protect the foreshore from tidal activity.



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BATHING BEACH, INVERLOCH, VIC.
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Figure 3.67 Sea wall at Inverloch, c19302-50s. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H32492/482)

Exotic Marram Grass was planted in parts of Phillip Island and the Bass Coast in the 1890s and early 1900s. This species was recommended by Ferdinand Mueller for planting in many coastal parts of Victoria because it helped to bind the sand and prevent erosion of the sand dunes.

3.16.3 Adapting to climate change

The global impacts of climate change will have local impacts within the Shire of Bass Coast. The rise in global temperatures is contributing to more frequent and severe weather events such as bushfires, droughts and floods. Within the municipality, several settlements are concentrated on the coast. These places have the potential to be impacted by sea level rise, coastal erosion, and storm surges. Foreshore

⁵¹⁰ *Argus*, 25 April 1901, p. 5; PIDHS, pers com, November 2021.

⁵¹¹ Inverloch Historical Society 2021.

erosion has already been reported to threatening infrastructure and the natural environment in Inverloch Cowes East, Kilcunda and Grantville.⁵¹²

In 2019, Bass Coast Shire Council launched their inaugural Climate Action Plan, joining a movement of other local governments declaring a climate emergency and taking tangible action to address climate change, and the risks it poses to the safety and liability of the Bass Coast community. The plan outlines a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for the operations of the local council and the wider community.⁵¹³

⁵¹² Bass Coast Shire Council 2019, 'Climate Change Action Plan: 2020–2030', [Climate-Change-Action-Plan-2020-2030.pdf](#), accessed October 2021; Bass Coast Shire Council 2021, 'Erosion action outlined for Kilcunda foreshore', <https://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/about-council/news-listing/erosion-action-outlined-for-kilcunda-foreshore>, accessed January 2022; Bass Coast Post 2015, 'Turning the tide', <https://www.basscoastpost.com/point-of-view/turning-the-tide>, accessed January 2022.

⁵¹³ Bass Coast Shire Council 2019.

3.17 Understanding and appreciating the natural environment

3.17.1 Discovering natural history

The Western Port area contains a rich natural history and distinct vegetation and landscapes that were recognised early in Victoria's history. From the 1840s and 1850s, visitors to the area were interested in studying and recording its plants, animals and birds, as well as its curious geological formations. The German naturalist Wilhelm Blandowski visited the Bass River, and Phillip and French Islands in the 1850s and reported a rich variety of birds and animals. He noted the large number of wallabies, as well as seals and water rats, while birds included penguins, mutton birds, dotterels, cranes, pelicans, black swans and occasionally Cape Barren Geese.⁵¹⁴ Ferdinand Mueller collected plant specimens from all over Victoria with the help of various collectors, including Euphemia Henderson to whom he was engaged in the 1860s. Euphemia lived at Phillip Island, where her brother-in-law John David McHaffie was a squatter.

3.17.2 Keeping weather records

A local resident at Cowes maintained the weather record from the early 1900s. He made a Stephenson screen in accordance with the instructions provided.

O'Geary was a long-serving keeper of weather records at Wonthaggi.



He

Figure 3.68 Detail from N.J. Caire photograph, titled 'The Front Beach, San Remo, c.1908, showing a Stephenson Screen (for taking temperature records) on the far right-hand side. (Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No. H96.160/1121)

3.17.3 Acclimatisation

While appreciating the distinctive flora and fauna of the area as early as the 1850s, with various scientific expeditions and reports, there was also a strong, converse impulse to resettle the familiar and more exotic birds and animals of 'home'. Acclimatising the birds and animals of 'home' and those from other countries was in the 1860s an unquestioned means of 'improving' the natural environment of the colony. From the early beginnings of the Acclimatisation Society of Victoria in Melbourne in 1861, headed by Edward Wilson, Phillip Island was identified as an ideal place from which exotic birds and

⁵¹⁴ *Argus*, 1 May 1856, p. 6.

animals could be released and acclimatised for distribution in Victoria. In 1863 a strip of land, half a mile wide, was reserved for acclimatisation purposes.⁵¹⁵

By 1870, a number of exotic species had been 'liberated' at the acclimatisation depot at Phillip Island, including deer, hares, pheasants, partridges, quail, starlings, grouse and wild ducks, in an effort to encourage these species to flourish, partly to provide opportunities for sporting shooters.⁵¹⁶ A number of exotic species were also released on nearby Churchill Island, which was then owned by Samuel Amess, who was a member of the Acclimatisation Society of Victoria.⁵¹⁷ These birds and animals provided early settlers and tourists with game for shooting, but ultimately provide a menace. As greater understanding has developed about the need to protect indigenous birds and animals, exotic animals are now discouraged, especially animals of prey. Foxes have recently proved a challenge to eradicate from Phillip Island.

3.17.4 Establishing nature reserves and national parks

The fragile ecosystems of the area have been valued and protected by local people since the early twentieth century. For a much longer time these lands and waters have been cared for by Aboriginal people and the Bunurong people continue to care for their Country today.

Early advocates for the protection of the natural environment included Ferdinand Mueller, director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens from 1857, and members of the Royal Society of Victoria, established in 1859. The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria was established in the 1880s and launched a campaign for the creation of national parks in Victoria.⁵¹⁸ As result of local advocates, the government reserved a small area of land at Fern Tree Gully for 'public recreation' in 1882 and Tower Hill near Koroit was declared Victoria's first 'national park' in 1892. In 1898 significant reserves were declared at Wilsons Promontory and Mount Buffalo that were also referred to as national parks. However, these declarations lacked clear definitions and the appropriate statutory mechanisms to protect them. It was also rare for parks to be established in the face of competing commercial interests, particularly grazing and farming.⁵¹⁹ In 1937 the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria proposed that Cape Woolamai on Phillip Island was sufficiently significant to be made into a national park, however this did not eventuate.⁵²⁰

Public pressure to legislate a comprehensive national park system mounted in the 1940s. The first *National Park Act* was passed in 1956, but stronger more meaningful legislation came with the amended Act in 1975. The new legislation established the concept of having different types of reserves for different purposes and subject to different levels of protection.⁵²¹ Eventually there would be around 40 categories to classify reserved areas. In 1970, the introduction of the *Land Conservation Act*, resulted in the establishment of Land Conservation Council, which was responsible for assessing existing public use and making recommendations for the future use of public land.

Within Bass Coast Shire much of the coastal foreshore near settlements had been reserved for public purposes, primarily for recreation. There are three Nature Conservation Reserves, including Reef Island and Bass River Mouth, Wonthaggi Heathlands, and The Gurdies. These are protected under the *Crown*

⁵¹⁵ VGG, 7 July 1863, p. 1510.

⁵¹⁶ Whitworth 1870, p. 293; Gliddon 1968, p. 171.

⁵¹⁷ Friends of Church Island, 'About Churchill Island', <https://focis.org.au/about-churchill-island/>

⁵¹⁸ Danielle Clode 2006, *As if for a Thousand Years*, Victorian Environmental Assessment Council, pp. 12–13.

⁵¹⁹ Clode 2006, p. 14 and Don Garden 2012, *Conservation Journeys: A short history of the VNPA, chapters 1 to 4*, Victorian National Parks Association, p. 4.

⁵²⁰ *Frankston and Somerville Standard*, 19 February 1937, p. 6.

⁵²¹ Clode 2006, p. 24; Garden 2012, p. 35.

Land (Reserves) Act 1978 which broadly aims to conserve native plants and animals within the reserve and prohibits other uses.

In addition, other land in the area has been entrusted to other conservation bodies. When the Amess estate on Churchill Island was sold in 1976 it was acquired by the Victorian Conservation Trust.⁵²² The waters extending from Long Point south of Rhyll to the north point of Churchill Island were declared the Churchill Island Marine National Park in 2002.⁵²³ The park is part of the Western Port RAMSAR site and is an important habitat for many bird species.⁵²⁴

Bunurong Marine Park and National Marine Park

Marine parks and marine reserves were declared in Victoria from the 1970s prompted by a growing awareness that marine and coastal environments required similar protection to land-based parks and reserves. There was a need to protect these areas from degradation, pollution, resource exploitation and over-tourism. Marine reserves were typically zoned for multiple uses, whereas marine parks were afforded the highest-level protection and all exploitative activities were prohibited. The first reserve of this kind was the Harold Holt Marine Reserves. These reserves are located at the southern end of Port Phillip Bay and include Swan Bay, Mud Islands, Point Lonsdale, Point Nepean and the Annulus (Pope's Eye) Marine Reserves, which were established in 1979.⁵²⁵

The Land Conservation Council's final assessment of 'South Gippsland District 2' in 1982 recommended that that the coastal area from Cape Paterson to Point Smythe, on the west side of Andersons Inlet, be reserved for conservation, education and research, and fishing and boating purposes. It also noted that all coastal Crown land within the Borough of Wonthaggi had natural and recreational values.⁵²⁶

The Bunurong Marine Park, reserved in 1991, extends along approximately 17km of coast from Coal Point in the west to Wreck Creek, near Harmers Haven, and about 5km southwest of Inverloch. The Bunurong Marine Park incorporated a Sanctuary Zone and two Conservation Zones. Fishing was prohibited in the Sanctuary Zone under the *Fisheries Act 1968*. A small section of the Marine Park had previously been reserved for protection in March 1984. In November 2002, the Bunurong Marine National Park was proclaimed, revoking only the Sanctuary Zone of the Bunurong Marine Park.⁵²⁷ The area is highly significant for features such as the extensive intertidal rock platforms and subtidal rocky reefs which extend several kilometres from shore, and the abundant and diverse marine flora and fauna.⁵²⁸

Phillip Island Nature Parks

In 1994, the Land Conservation Council recommended that Crown land on Phillip Island be protected as a State Park. However, due to the government's desire to develop areas of Phillip Island, including a

⁵²² Friends of Churchill Island, <https://focis.org.au/>

⁵²³ Parks Victoria, 'Yaringa Marine National Park, French Island Marine National Park, Churchill Island Marine National Park: management Plan', [management-plan-yaringa-marine-national-park.pdf](#), accessed January 2022.

⁵²⁴ Parks Victoria, 'Churchill Island Marine National Park', <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/sites/churchill-island-marine-national-park>, accessed December 2021.

⁵²⁵ Department of Conservation and Environment Victoria 1992, 'Proposed Management Plan: Bunurong Marine and Coastal Park', Victorian State Government, [Bunurong-Marine-and-Coastal-Park-Management-Plan.pdf](#), accessed September 2021, p. 1.

⁵²⁶ Department of Conservation and Environment Victoria 1992, p. 2.

⁵²⁷ Parks Victoria 2006, 'Bunurong Marine National Park, Bunurong Marine Park, Bunurong Coastal Reserve and Kilcunda-Harmers Haven Coastal Reserve Management Plan', [Bunurong Marine NP Management Plan 2006.pdf](#), accessed September 2021, pp. 1–2.

⁵²⁸ Parks Victoria 2006, p. vii.

new seal-watching facility at The Nobbies, influenced the decision to instead designate the area as a 'Nature Park'. The new park was established in 1996 and brought together 1805 hectares of Crown land of high conservation value. The area included the Penguin Parade, Seal Rocks, the Summerland Peninsula, The Nobbies, Cape Woolamai, Rhyll Inlet and Rhyll Swamp, Oswin Roberts Reserve, and the Koala Conservation Reserve. The area was reserved as the Phillip Island Nature Park and part of the park management was delegated to the Penguin Reserve Committee of Management.⁵²⁹

3.17.5 Conservation movement

Western Port Bay

Increased industrial development in and around Western Port Bay raised concerns about the future long-term effects of pollution and its impacts on the use of the bay for fishing and recreation. The protection of Western Port Bay became an issue in the 1960s, particularly with the establishment of oil and gas company BP at Crib Point near Hastings

In 1982, nearly 60,000 hectares of Western Port was designated as a wetland of international importance under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (RAMSAR Convention 1971).⁵³⁰ Western Port is considered internationally important because of the high representation of marine species and birds that rely on the wetland, and the significant expanses of important wetland habitat, including intertidal sand and mud flats and areas of saltmarsh and mangroves.⁵³¹

In March 2021, several community groups won their campaign to stop AGL from establishing a gas import terminal at Western Port Bay. The campaign was led by a coalition of groups, including Save Westernport, Phillip Island Conservation Society, Westernport and Peninsula Protection Council, Victorian National Parks Association, Environmental Justice Australia, and Environment Victoria.⁵³²

Community advocacy

The protection and conservation of the Bass Coast Shire's natural environment, including wildlife and habitat protection and improved land and coastline management, is in part due to a strong community participation and support. In 1968, the Phillip Island Conservation Society (PICS) was formed by Ken Pound, who had a strong interest in the island's bird population and their habitats. The previous year, Ken Pound had launched a petition against firearms on Phillip Island, as unchecked shooting was having a significant impact on the island's bird life. The petition received 3000 signatures over the 1966–67 holiday season and provided a strong foundation for the formation of a community group that was eager to see the island's native birds and animals protected.

Early campaigns led by the PICS included habitat regeneration at Swan Lake from 1969 until the early 1980s.⁵³³ In 1974, PICS successfully campaigned to have 11 acres of the former Sandgate Farm

⁵²⁹ Clode 2006, p. 66; *Age*, 4 July 1994, p. 4; Cuttriss and Bird 2021, p. 51.

⁵³⁰ Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment 2021, Western Port Ramsar Wetland Ecological Character Description, <https://www.awe.gov.au/water/wetlands/publications/western-port-ramsar-wetland-ecological-character-description>, accessed December 2021.

⁵³¹ Western Port Biosphere 2019, Western Port Ramsar Awareness Project, <https://www.biosphere.org.au/biosphere-projects/current-projects/western-port-ramsar-awareness-project/>, accessed December 2021.

⁵³² Environment Victoria 2021, 'How we stopped AGL's dirty gas plan in Westernport Bay', <https://environmentvictoria.org.au/2021/04/28/how-we-stopped-agls-dirty-gas-plan-for-westernport-bay/>, accessed December 2021.

⁵³³ Christine Grayden 2008, *An Island Worth Conserving: A History of the Phillip Island Conservation Society 1968–2008*, Phillip Island Conservation Society, Cowes, pp. 11–12.

reserved as the Conservation Hill Reserve, which was the subject of various development proposals, including the Rhyll Inlet marina and a stock car racing track. The two-year campaign involved fundraising by PICS for the purchase of the land, and its transfer to Crown land.⁵³⁴ Since 1969, PICS has led revegetation programs, campaigning for stronger protection for places with high conservation values.

The South Gippsland Conservation Society (SGCS) was formed in 1976 and established the Bunurong Environmental Centre, which is home to the Shell Museum. The SGCS has worked to revegetate areas of public land, and to improve sustainable public access through the establishment of walking tracks and boardwalks. It has also taken on a significant educational role.

The Phillip Island Landcare Group, established in 1987, has worked to address vegetation decline and to advocate for sustainable land management. It was one of the earliest groups established within the Landcare network across Australia.⁵³⁵ Today, there is an active Landcare network across Bass Coast Shire and groups with groups also based in the Bass Valley, Three Creeks (Kilcunda), Wonthaggi, Powlett Catchment, and Andersons Inlet (Inverloch).⁵³⁶ Numerous Coast Care, Coast Action, 'friends of', residents' groups and other volunteer organisation have also played and continue to play a significant role in supporting Bass Coast Shire to manage 42 kilometres of foreshore within the municipality, as well as with revegetation, weed removal and remnant vegetation protection.

Koala Conservation Centre

Koalas are not native to Phillip Island but are thought to have been introduced from the Bass Valley where their habitat was being rapidly depleted by the timber industry from the 1870s. The koala population grew from the 1920s to the 1940s before it began to decline. In 1944, the Phillip Island Koala Reserves Committee of Management was established to care for the koalas and their reserves. There was a concerted effort by this group to support the species through habitat regeneration, particularly remnant Manna Gum, Blue Gum and Swamp Gum that had survived the extensive cutting for the chicory industry. The koala population was at a critical point by the late 1970s due to disease and low fertility, as well as an increase in road traffic and dogs on Phillip Island. Also, by this time nearly 3000 koalas had been removed from the island by the Department of Fisheries and Game. In 1985, a government-led Koala Working Group was established that proposed the idea of enclosure, for both tourism and research and conservation. In June 1992, the Koala Conservation Centre was opened.⁵³⁷

3.17.6 Palaeontology

In 1903 at Cape Paterson, William Ferguson found the first dinosaur bone in Australia, which is referred to as the 'Cape Paterson Claw'.⁵³⁸ After this significant discovery, few dinosaur remains were uncovered in Victoria for around 70 years. In the 1970s significant investigations were carried out in the area by Monash University science students, including Tim Flannery and John Lang, and some important Cretaceous discoveries were made.⁵³⁹ Since the c1980s, local amateur palaeontologist Mike Cleland has made several significant discoveries.

⁵³⁴ Grayden 2008, pp. 13–16.

⁵³⁵ Phillip Island Landcare, Our Purpose: <https://www.phillipislandlandcare.org.au/our-purpose>.

⁵³⁶ Bass Coast Landcare Network, Our Groups, <https://www.basscoastlandcare.org.au/groupmap.html>

⁵³⁷ Grayden 2008, pp. 17–22.

⁵³⁸ Museums Victoria Collections, <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/specimens/1045754>, accessed October 2021.

⁵³⁹ Williams 2002, p. 9.

Since 1995, Museum Victoria and Monash University have conducted ‘Dinosaur Dreaming’ digs at the Flat Rocks site near Inverloch. The area is awash with fossils from the early to mid-Cretaceous period. Fossils at the site were first discovered in 1991 and as of 2013, 15,000 bones have been collected from the site.⁵⁴⁰



Figure 3.69 Bunurong Environment Centre and Shop ran by the South Gippsland Conservation Society. (Source: South Gippsland Conservation Society)

⁵⁴⁰ South Gippsland Conservation Society 2021, Dinosaur Excursions, <http://www.sgcs.org.au/dinosaurs.php>, accessed October 2021.

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11/07/2019
C156basc

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 43.01 HERITAGE OVERLAY

1.0

11/07/2019
C156basc

Application requirements

None specified.

2.0

11/07/2019
C156basc

Heritage places

The requirements of this overlay apply to both the heritage place and its associated land.

PS map ref	Heritage place	External paint controls apply?	Internal alteration controls apply?	Tree controls apply?	Outbuildings or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-3	Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017?	Prohibited uses permitted?	Aboriginal heritage place?
ALMURTA								
HO1	Heidelberg Springs, 200 Almurta-Glen Forbes Road, Almurta	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO2	Almurta Hall, Grantville-Glen Alvie Road, Almurta	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
ANDERSON								
HO5	House, 8 Railway Road, Anderson	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
ARCHIES CREEK								
HO6	Archies Creek Dairy Produce Company Building	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO8	House, 55 Archies Creek Road, Archies Creek	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
BASS								
HO11	Pender House, 2485 Bass Highway, Bass	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO12	House, 30 Bass Road, Bass	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO13	Bass Community Centre, 2-4 Bass School Road, Bass	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO14	Bass River Bridge, Hade Avenue, Bass	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

BASS COAST PLANNING SCHEME

PS map ref	Heritage place	External paint controls apply?	Internal alteration controls apply?	Tree controls apply?	Outbuildings or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-3	Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017?	Prohibited uses permitted?	Aboriginal heritage place?
HO15	Bass War Memorial, Cnr Hade Avenue & Bass Road, Bass	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO16	Bass Park, 70 Nolan Road, Bass	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
	CAPE PATERSON							
HO23	House, 130 Cape Paterson-Inverloch Road, Cape Paterson	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO24	Holiday House, 2 Nardoo Street, Cape Paterson	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	CAPE WOOLAMAI							
HO180	Wollomai House, also known as Woolamai House, 7 Cleeland Road Cape Woolamai	-	-	-	-	yes Ref No H666	no	no
	CHURCHILL ISLAND							
HO27	Churchill Island	-	-	-	-	yes Ref No H1614	no	no
	CORINELLA							
HO28	1826 Settlement Site, Corinella	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
HO29	Corinella Cemetery, 50 Cemetery Road, Corinella	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO30	House, 58 Cuthbert Street, Corinella	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO31	Former General Store and Post Office, 145 Smythe Street, Corinella	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
	CORONET BAY							
HO32	Elgas Hot Shop/House, 69 Cutty Sark Road, Coronet Bay	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	COWES							
HO34	House, 3 Victoria Court, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

BASS COAST PLANNING SCHEME

PS map ref	Heritage place	External paint controls apply?	Internal alteration controls apply?	Tree controls apply?	Outbuildings or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-3	Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017?	Prohibited uses permitted?	Aboriginal heritage place?
HO35	House, 11-13 Carapooka Way, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO36	Tallawallah Homestead, 16 Chillingworth Road, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO38	Amaroo Park Cabin & Camping Ground, 97 Church Street, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO39	House, 111 Church Street, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO40	St Claire, 161-163 Church Street, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO41	Glen Isla, 4-6 Glen Isla Court, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO42	Jetty Shed, Cowes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO43	Cowes Foreshore, The Esplanade, Cowes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO45	Bennan Lodge, 3 Genesta Street, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO47	House, 8 Osbourne Avenue, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO48	House, 18 Osbourne Avenue, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO49	House, 106 Settlement Road, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO50	Sunny Lee, 170 Settlement Road, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO54	House, 16 Steele Street, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO56	House, 34-35 Stradbroke Avenue, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	no	No
HO57	Avenue of Golden Cypress, Thompson Avenue between Ventnor Road & Chapel Street, Cowes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	No
HO58	St Phillip's Church Complex – Parish Hall, Church, Manse, 102-112 Thompson Avenue, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	No
HO59	Rhylston Park, 190 Thompson Avenue, Cowes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO60	House, 11 Walpole Avenue, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

BASS COAST PLANNING SCHEME

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HO61	House, 13 Walpole Avenue, Cowes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
DALYSTON								
HO62	Goshen, 3995 Bass Highway, Dalyston	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO63	O'Halloran's Hotel, 4205-4211 Bass Highway, Dalyston	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO64	House, 4229 Bass Highway, Dalyston	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO65	Powlett River Primary School, 9-21 Bent Street, Dalyston	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO67	Former Holy Cross Church and Presbytery, 72 Dalyston-Glen Forbes Road, Dalyston	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO68	House, 20-24 Elizabeth Street, Dalyston	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
GLEN ALVIE								
HO109	House, 479 Glen Alvie Road, Glen Alvie	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO76	Glenlea, 1930 Grantville-Glen Alvie Road, Glen Alvie	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO77	Aberfeldie, 1465 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Glen Alvie	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO20	Farmhouse, Membrey Road, Glen Alvie	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
GLEN FORBES								
HO79	House, 85 Eden Road, Glen Forbes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO81	House, 1705 Bass Highway, Glen Forbes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
INVERLOCH								
HO82	Inverloch Esplanade Hotel, 1 A'Beckett Street, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO87	Morningside, 1 Freda Street, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO92	House, 17 High Street, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

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HO95	House, 25 Hopetoun Street, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO129	House, 453 Inverloch-Venus Bay Road, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO97	House, 37-39 Pier Road, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO85	Anderson's Inlet Angling Club, Foreshore, The Esplanade, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO86	House, 73 The Esplanade, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO98	Charnwood, 3 Charnwood Court, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO99	Do-Me, 17 Venus Street, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO100	House, 23 Venus Street, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO102	Shirwell, 8 Western Street, Inverloch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	KERNOT							
HO105	Kernot Store, 1075 Loch-Kernot Road, Kernot	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	KILCUNDA							
HO106	Killy Pub, 3531-3533 Bass Highway, Kilcunda	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO107	Former Kilcunda Rail Bridge, Bass Coast Highway, Kilcunda	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO108	Eratyra, 7-19 Kilcunda Ridge Road, Kilcunda	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	KROWERA							
HO111	Willowbank, 704 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Krowera	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO112	House, 780 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Krowera	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO113	The Cottage, 1135 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Krowera	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO114	Balquhidder, 1415 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Krowera	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no

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HO115	House, 55 Michie Road, Krowera	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO21	Clarus, 405 Sheepways Road, Krowera	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO116	Edrom, 730 Sheepways Road, Krowera	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO117	House, 605A Sheepways Road, Krowera	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO118	Llandu, 655 Sheepways Road, Krowera	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO119	House, 735 Sheepways Road, Krowera	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
	LANCE CREEK							
HO110	House, 2250 Korumburra-Wonthaggi Road, Lance Creek	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
	LANG LANG							
HO120	Lang Lang Foreshore, Jetty Road, Lang Lang	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
	LOCH							
HO176	House, 450 Andersons Hill Road, Loch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO121	Farmhouse, 240 Loch-Kernot Road, Loch	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO177	Farmhouse, 495 Loch-Kernot Road, Loch	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no
	NEWHAVEN							
HO122	St Paul's Discovery Centre, 54-61 Forrest Avenue, Newhaven	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO123	Newhaven entrance to Churchill Island, Samuel Amess Drive, Newhaven	-	-	-	-	no	no	
HO126	Redcliffe House, 37-38 Forrest Avenue, Newhaven	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO127	House, 24 School Avenue, Newhaven	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

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	PHILLIP ISLAND							
HO128	<p>Chicory Kilns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Churchill Island (d/s 280); ▪ Phillip Island Wildlife Park, 2115 Phillip Island Road, Cowes (d/s 131); ▪ Phillip Island Golf Driving Range, 2120 Phillip Island Road, Cowes; ▪ Graydon's Kiln, 79-83 Lyall St, Ventnor (d/s 572); ▪ 549 Back Beach Road, Ventnor (d/s 111); ▪ 14-26 Jeury Court, Cowes (d/s 512); ▪ DSE Reserve, Harbison Road, Rhyll (d/s 283); ▪ Richardson's Kiln, 546 Ventnor Beach Road, Ventnor (d/s 567); ▪ 511 Ventnor Road, Ventnor; ▪ 285 Ventnor Road, Cowes; ▪ 30A Settlement Road, Cowes; ▪ 217 Ventnor Beach Road, Ventnor; ▪ 230 Rhyll-Newhaven Road, Rhyll (d/s 115); ▪ 1635 Phillip Island Road, Sunderland Bay (d/s 113); ▪ 1700 Phillip Island Road, Rhyll (kiln located on Rhyll-Newhaven Road boundary); ▪ 48 McFees Road, Rhyll (d/s 282); ▪ Banksia Park Estate, 910 Phillip Island Road, Newhaven (d/s 134); ▪ 9-11 Ventnor Beach Road, Ventnor 	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

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	RHYLL							
HO130	House, 16/15-18 Beach Road, Rhyll	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO132	Wembley, 28 Coghlan Road, Rhyll	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO133*	House, 68 Rhyll-Newhaven Road, Rhyll	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO134	Stradbroke House, 148 Rhyll-Newhaven Road, Rhyll	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	RYANSTON							
HO7	House, 30 Abrahamson Road, Ryanston	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO80	Former Uniting Church, 53 Jones Road, Ryanston	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO78	House, 1665 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Ryanston	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no
HO17	Merricourt, 1715 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Ryanston	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO18	House, 1827 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Ryanston	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO19	House, 1850 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Ryanston	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	SAN REMO							
HO137	St Augustine's Anglican Church, 111 Marine Parade, San Remo	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO138	Westernport Hotel, 161 Marine Parade, San Remo	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO139	San Remo House, 11 Phillip Island Road, San Remo	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no
	SOUTH DUDLEY							
HO69	House, 17 Dudley Street, South Dudley	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO73	S.C.M No. 14 Airshaft, Lower Powlett Road, South Dudley	no	no	no	no	no	no	no

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HO74	Former State Mines Hotel, 46-48 Station Street, South Dudley	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO220	House, 1 Dudley Street, South Dudley	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO184	House, 38 Epsom Street, South Dudley	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO185	House, 40 Epsom Street, South Dudley	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	VENTNOR							
HO140	Grossards 'Lonely Grave' Site, Ventnor	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO141	House, 110 Kitty Miller Road, Ventnor	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	WONTHAGGI							
HO144	Wonthaggi State Coal Mine – Central Precinct	-	-	-	-	yes Ref No H1778	no	no
HO183	Wonthaggi State Coal Mine – Eastern Precinct	-	-	-	-	yes Ref No H198	no	no
HO145	Wonthaggi State Coal Mine – Northern Precinct	-	-	-	-	yes Ref No H1777	no	no
HO147	Wonthaggi Campbell Street Railway Cottage Residential Precinct	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO154	Wonthaggi RSL Club, 60 Graham Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO155	Wonthaggi Workmen's Club, 65-83 Graham Street, Wonthaggi	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO156	Graham Street Shop Elevation, 103 Graham Street, Wonthaggi	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO157	Plaza Arcade, 134-142 Graham Street, Wonthaggi	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO158	Caledonian Hotel, 159 Graham Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO159	Shop, 165 Graham Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

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HO160	W.M.F.S. Dispensary Building, 167 Graham Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO161	Former State Offices, McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO162	Baptist Church Complex, 2 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO163	Llewellyn's Buildings, 70-72 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO164	Former Bank, 1-3 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no
HO165	Wonthaggi Hotel, 2-10 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO166	Ludbrook's, 32 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO167	Whistlestop Bakery, 28-30 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO168	Wonthaggi Town Hall, 76 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO169	Railway Station, Murray Street, Wonthaggi	-	-	-	-	yes Ref No H1557	no	no
HO170	Fire Plug, Cnr Murray Street and McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO171	Co-op Bakery, 106 Watt Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO172	Court House, 75 Watt Street, Wonthaggi	-	-	-	-	yes Ref No H974	no	no
HO174	Library, (former Post Office), Cnr Watt Street and McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
HO186	Former Presbyterian Manse, 11 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no
HO187	House, 13 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO188	House, 15 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO189	House, 18 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

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HO190	Kaleno, House, 19 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO191	House, 21 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO192	House, 22 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO193	Former Government Cottage No 52, 40 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO194	Former Government Cottage No 51, 42 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO195	House, 57 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO196	Former Miners Cottage, 68 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO197	Former Miners Cottage, 70 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO198	Former Miners Cottage, 73 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO199	House, 117 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO200	Former Miners Cottage, 121 Broome Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO201	Former Miners Cottage, 2 Caledonian Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO202	Former Miners Cottage, 23 Caledonian Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO203	House, 13 Campbell Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO204	House, 1 Dunn Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO205	House, 3 Dunn Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO206	House, 5 Dunn Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

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HO207	House, 7 Dunn Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO208	Former Government Cottage No 76, 16 Dunn Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO209	Former Government Cottage No 64, 17 Dunn Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO210	Former Government Cottage No 69, 30 Dunn Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO211	House, 4 Hunter Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO212	Former Government Cottage No 34, 12 Hunter Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO213	Former Government Cottage No 80, 15 Hunter Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO214	Former Miners Cottage, 6 Merrin Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO215	Former Miners Cottage, 112 Reed Crescent, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO216	Former Miners Cottage, 11 Stewart Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO217	Former Miners Cottage, 12 Stewart Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO218	House, 26 Watt Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
HO219	House, 46 Watt Street, Wonthaggi	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	WOODLEIGH							
HO179	Former Woodleigh Hall, 86 Woodleigh-St Helier Road, Woodleigh	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
	WOOLAMAI							
HO181	Former Woolamai State School, 722 Turnbull-Woolamai Road, Woolamai, also	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

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	Former Teachers Residence, 720 Turnbull-Woolamai Road, Woolamai							
HO182	Marathon, 695 Turnbull-Woolamai Road, Woolamai	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no

Notes: * Denotes interim protection