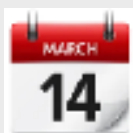


RHYLL REPORTER



RCA Meeting

The next Rhyll
Community
Association **Meeting**
will be held at **10am**
Saturday 14th March
2026
Rhyll Mechanics Hall
All residents welcome

Rhyll Tavern

We're all waiting for the Rhyll Tavern to open and will be lining up for front row seats.

Unfortunately, we need to wait a little longer as it is now not scheduled to open until February.

I'm sure it will be worth waiting for.....

Wrap up of 2025 and Happy New Year



As 2025 has drawn to a close, it is timely to reflect on the work and achievements of the Rhyll Community Association over the past twelve months.

One of the most significant achievements has been the return of responsibility for the management of the Rhyll Hall and surrounding parkland to the Association. Following an unsuccessful external management arrangement, Bass Coast Shire Council agreed that the Association and Hall & Parks are best placed to oversee bookings and the ongoing care of the historic Rhyll Hall precinct. This outcome ensures the Hall remains well maintained and managed with the community's interests at heart.

We were also pleased to secure an upgrade to the power supply at the park — a long-held goal that will allow for a greater number of food vans at our markets and community events, enhancing both visitor experience and local opportunities.

Looking ahead, work is about to commence on additional disabled car parking in Lock Road, including a new accessible pathway directly connecting to the Hall. This improvement will provide safer and more dignified access, bypassing the existing ramp that has long posed challenges.

Throughout the year, the Association has continued to support Reid Street residents in their advocacy for suitable road surfacing. Encouragingly, progress is being made and a practical solution now appears closer.

We are also currently developing a Master Plan for the Rhyll Hall and Park. This important document will guide future development by clearly defining what can — and cannot — be undertaken, ensuring any changes respect the heritage, functionality, and long-term sustainability of the precinct.

None of this work happens without commitment. Sincere thanks go to our dedicated committee members, whose time, care, and countless volunteer hours continue to

Businesses in Rhyll

Beauty Therapy

Bombshell Betty 0400 120777

Electricians

Electrical Insight 0418 100389

Cafes/Restaurants

My Seaside Cafe 5900 0666
Tides Fish & Chips 5956 9230
Rhyll Tavern TBA
Rhyll General Store 5907 6796

Garden Maintenance

Kerrin Sutherland-Parker 0484 145252

Hairdresser

Elements 5900 0811

Home Maintenance

John Kroon 0433 319716

Mechanics

Phillip Island Motorcycles 0400 567424

Marine Supplies

Phillip Island Marine 5956 9238

Rhyll Tennis Courts

Available for casual hire. \$15 per hour (plus \$5 refundable key deposit) from the General Store. Racquets can also be hired. For more information call Cheryl 0427 680483

Rhyll Hall Bookings

From Sept 1st 2025

Phone 0491 641 331

Thermomix Consultant

Contact Carolyn May 0409 252 099

Free in home demonstrations

make a meaningful difference for the Rhyll community.

Up Coming Events

- **Friday January 23rd** (rescheduled) is our last Twilight Market for the season.



- **Thursday 22nd January** Silver Nova Cruise ship arrival (late addition)
- **Monday 26th January 2026** is The



Gathering of Neighbours Rhyll Park with bands, food vans and entertainment for the whole family. This will include a 'Gathering of Volunteers' where community Groups can showcase their club and members in the Rhyll Hall

News around Rhyll

- We will be holding our next Community Afternoon Tea in February but no date as yet. Look out for the Tea Cup sign.



- Concrete has (finally) been poured in anticipation of the new seats on the foreshore.

- We have some lovely Historic Signs around Rhyll. If anyone notices that they are dirty, can you please contact Cheryl Overton and she will arrange for them to be cleaned.



- Our new trees that were planted along the foreshore are growing in leaps and bounds. Thanks to all who are protecting and watering them. This time next year we may have some extra shady spots to sit under and enjoy the view.

- Please keep the fire plugs outside your house clear of grass and garden. If fire breaks out it could make a massive difference for the CFA to find the fire plug. If you need any assistance please contact Cheryl Overton.

- In the February Rhyll Reporter we will include a plan showing the new car parks and pathway at the Rhyll Park.

Reid Street Update

Shane Dougherty, as a representative for Reid Street residents, has been in contact with BCSC and advised that council will shortly be commencing costings for the upgrade of Reid Street, despite the fact that two more signatures are required for the last petition. BCSC are also conducting a review of their road management strategy across the shire to determine how road construction and maintenance is funded going forward. Shane will be meeting with BCSC representatives some time soon to discuss and seek clarity on what this means for the residents of Reid Street, and what the next steps might be. We thank Shane for his ongoing work on this.

New Year's Eve Fireworks in Rhyll

- On New Year's Eve, fireworks were set off on Beach Road, resulting in traffic being temporarily blocked and creating a dangerous situation. During the incident, the fireworks caused a small fire, which required those involved to retrieve a fire extinguisher to bring it under control.

Following the event, debris from the fireworks was left on the beach, creating litter that risked being washed into the Bay. This incident has caused understandable concern among local residents, particularly as fireworks are illegal and the situation posed a clear fire and safety hazard.



Rhyll Tennis Club

Pickleball – 2025/26 Summer Program

Anyone can play!

Pickleball is easy to learn, great fun, and full of laughs.

Social Games

- Tue, Wed & Fri:** 9:30 am–12 noon
- Thu Evening:** 5:00–6:30 pm

✉ **Register:** rhylltennis@gmail.com

🔍 **Google “Rhyll Tennis”** or scan the QR code for details.



Gathering of Neighbours – Australia Day in Rhyll

On Australia Day, Phillip Island Historical Society together with the Rotary Club of Phillip Island and San Remo are delighted to host **The Gathering of Neighbours** at beautiful Rhyll Park — a relaxed, family-friendly celebration that brings our community together.

The day will feature live music, food vans, kids' activities, a **free sausage sizzle**, and **Bill's Bar** for adults. This popular event has been running for several years and continues to attract a fantastic crowd from across the Island and surrounding areas.

As part of the celebrations, we're also hosting **The Gathering of Volunteer Groups**, and we'd love for your club or community group to be involved.

 **17 Australia Day – Monday 26 January 2026**

 **Rhyll Hall, Lock Road**

 **From 11:30 am**

This is a great opportunity to promote what you do, connect with locals, and attract new members. Participation is **completely free**, and we can provide a table and chair. If you already have a display, feel free to bring it along. We encourage you to bring brochures, handouts, and membership information.

If you'd like to take part—or know of another local group that might be interested—please get in touch.

 **RSVP by 21 January 2026**

 **Sophie Maddigan – 0428 506 831**

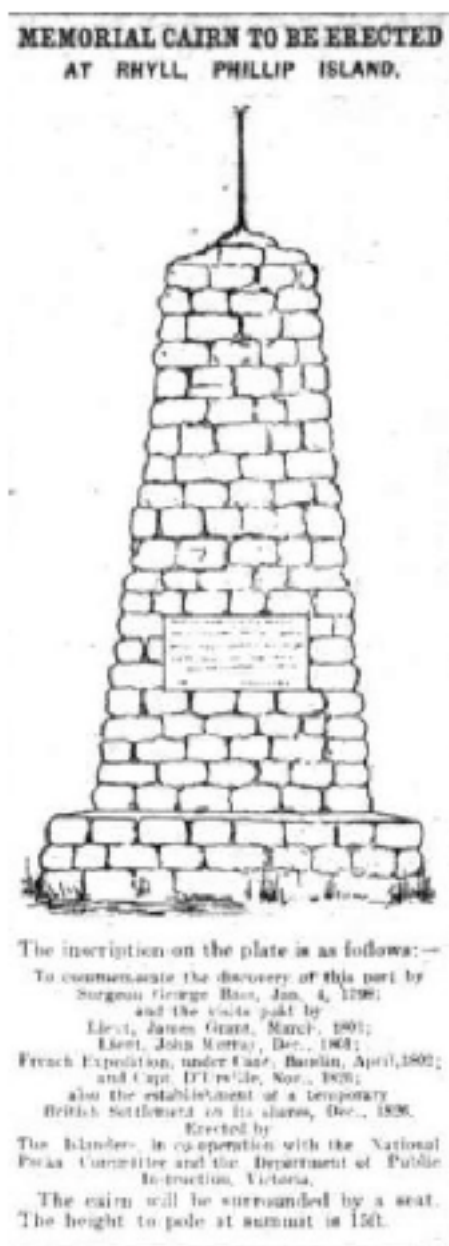


The Memorial Cairn at Rhyll

By Pamela Rothfield

More than a century ago, the people of Rhyll came together to create what would become one of the township's most enduring landmarks - the Memorial Cairn.

The idea of erecting a memorial cairn at Rhyll grew from a desire to formally acknowledge the European discovery of Western Port and the earliest European settlement in the district. Rhyll was recognised as the site of the first definite settlement, established by Captain Samuel Wright in December 1826, and local residents were keen to ensure this important moment in history was not forgotten.



Australasian (Melb, Vic, 1864-1946
Saturday 15 April 1922, Page 38

On 5 January 1922 - exactly 124 years to the day that Surgeon George Bass sailed into Western Port in 1798 - a meeting of local residents was held at the Rhyll Hall. Chaired by the Shire President, W. T. McFee, the purpose of the meeting was to form a committee and appoint officers to progress the erection of a memorial cairn at Rhyll, where the British flag had been raised and a settlement formed in 1826.

A committee was duly established, with Councillor A. McIlwraith appointed Treasurer and W. E. Thompson Secretary. From the outset, the project attracted strong local support and a shared sense of purpose.

Soon after, committee members met at the site of the old settlers' well on the Rhyll foreshore, accompanied by influential supporters including Sir James Barrett, Chairman of the National Parks Association, and Charles Long, M.A., Senior Inspector and Publications Editor with the Education Department. By a happy coincidence, the Chief Architect of the State Public Works Department, Mr Samuel Charles Brittingham, was also present and generously offered his assistance.

It was agreed that the cairn should be constructed from local stone, with a tablet of Woolamai granite set into one face, and that its decoration should echo that of the Flinders Cairn. Mr Long was asked to prepare a suitable inscription. The cairn was to be positioned just seaward of the old well, which would be cleaned out, bricked, and restored for practical use — a direct physical link to Rhyll's earliest settlement.

Early donations were received, and later, public subscriptions were encouraged to help meet the cost of the memorial.

The preparation of the Memorial Cairn soon became a powerful example of community cooperation and quiet determination.

In April 1922, the first working bee took place on a bright, clear day described at the time as “one out of the box.” From early morning, people made their way to Rhyll by every means imaginable — motor cars, spring carts, wagons, farm drays, tip drays and on horseback. After earlier delays, the project was finally underway.

One of the committee’s most thoughtful decisions was that the cairn should be built entirely from local materials - stones gathered from the nearby beach and sand from the very ground once walked upon by the early settlers. It was not to be a polished monument of imported stone, but something firmly rooted in place and history.

Cobblestones were sourced from nearby, close to the site of the long-abandoned settlers’ well. Overgrown with bracken and briar, the well marked a tangible connection to Rhyll’s beginnings. Credit was given to several local women whose foresight prompted the committee to preserve the well, rather than allow it to remain forgotten.

While carts ferried stone from the beach, others set about clearing the well. The remains of its original barrel lining were uncovered, and although the task was unpleasant, it was described as a “labour of love.” Bricks and cement were generously transported by Captain J. Jansson, master of the *Helen Moore*, and Mr McLardy undertook the brickwork. Plans and specifications supplied by the Public Works Department ensured the work was well organised.

By day’s end, 41 loads of stone and 14 loads of sand had been carted to the site, with 26 men involved. One observer noted that since the days of first settlement, there may never have been such a gathering of men in that place, united by a single purpose. As always in Rhyll, the day concluded with hospitality - the women of our township providing afternoon tea for the workers.

While volunteer labour carried the project forward, funds were still needed to complete the memorial. To build wider support, two illustrated public lectures were held over consecutive evenings at the Cowes Hall in November 1922.

The speakers were Sir James Barrett and Charles Long, both passionate advocates for commemorating Victoria’s early exploration. The evenings were chaired by Lord Stradbroke with Lady Stradbroke also in attendance. The Governor spoke of the importance of memorials in ensuring that the achievements of early pioneers were not lost to time.

Sir James reflected on the hardships faced by early settlers and reminded his audience of the responsibility owed to those who laid the foundations of the present. Using lantern slides, he illustrated memorials already erected to honour explorers such as Flinders and Mitchell, and argued that Bass, Grant and Murray deserved similar recognition at Rhyll.



Mr Long followed with a detailed lecture tracing the exploration of the southern coastline, supported by charts, maps and historic images. Among the slides shown were early maps of Western Port, the route of Bass in his whaleboat, the Lady Nelson entering Port Phillip, a sealer’s hut on Phillip Island, and the old well at Rhyll — the future site of the cairn.

Funding for the cairn came from public subscriptions by island residents and visitors, in cooperation with the National Parks Association and the Department of Public Instruction.

Responsibility for construction was placed in the hands of local man, James Findlay, a skilled stonemason trained in Scotland and experienced in rubble stonework. His reputation was already well established on Phillip Island, and his appointment ensured the cairn would be built to endure, both structurally and symbolically.

At the same time, specialist work was undertaken elsewhere. The monumental masonry firm Chambers and Clutten prepared a block of Woolamai granite bearing the carefully worded inscription commemorating the early exploration and settlement of Western Port.

The Memorial Cairn was officially unveiled at 3pm on Friday 20 February 1923 in a ceremony attended by the State Governor, Lord Stradbroke. To mark the importance of the occasion, school children across Phillip Island were given a holiday so they could attend the unveiling and share in what was recognised at the time as a historic day for the Island. In his address, the Governor paid tribute to the courage of the early explorers and spoke confidently about Phillip



Island's future. The day concluded with a dinner hosted by the Governor at the Isle of Wight Hotel, attended by returned soldiers and soldiers' fathers. As part of the occasion, Mr E. V. McHenry presented the Governor with a specially inscribed album containing fifty photographic views of Phillip Island and Western Port. Today,

that album is preserved in the collection of the Phillip Island and District Historical Society, providing a lasting connection to the day the cairn was unveiled.

Read today, the story of the Rhyll Memorial Cairn is about far more than stone and mortar. It is a story of foresight, cooperation and community pride - a reminder of what can be achieved when a community comes together to honour its past and create something lasting for future generations.

Have you considered joining the Phillip Island & District Historical Society?

Did you know that the Phillip Island & District Historical Society relies almost entirely on the support of its members to continue its important work? For just \$30 a year—that's only 57 cents per week — the Society preserves and protects the stories, artefacts, and sites that make our island unique. Email j.gittus43@gmail.com for details





Membership forms are available on our website
<http://rhyllcoa.com.au>

Rhyll Community Association Inc Committee Members:

President	Jim Kiley	jandkkiley@bigpond.com
Vice-President	Carolyn May	carolyn.may87@gmail.com
Secretary	Cheryl Overton	cheryl.overton@bigpond.com.au
Treasurer	Judy Lawrence	rhyllcoa@gmail.com

Committee members:

Sandra Inness	jimisan2@hotmail.com
Carmen Bush	ccbush@bigpond.net.au
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Shane Dougherty	sdougherty@bigpond.com