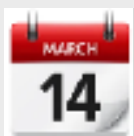


RHYLL REPORTER



RCA Meeting

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

Dog Bags

The Rhyll Community (that's YOU) pay for the supply of dog bags around Rhyll.

So could you please take only what is needed for Rhyll and also let us know when they need replacing.



Around Rhyll

The crowds have dissipated and Rhyll is almost returning to it's normal quiet self.

The next event will be the opening of the New Rhyll Tavern on Friday March 27th and then we have a cruise ship, The Carnival Adventure, arriving on Saturday April 4th, Easter Saturday.

Just a reminder that every 2nd year on Easter Saturday we hold the Rhyll Garage Trail Sale, and this year is our 'leap year', so start accumulating all of your unwanted treasures ready for our Super Sale in 2027.

We have the Rhyll Community Meeting this Saturday at 10am at Rhyll Hall where all Rhyll residents are invited.

It's a usually quick meeting that keeps everybody up to date with the activities of the RCA.

Included in our discussions will be a rundown on how we are planning to make Rhyll a 'Resilient Community.'

We will have an outline of what this entails and the plan to establish a Recovery Hub where people need to feel safe and have access to electricity to charge their phone and meet other basic needs in cases of emergency.

Phillip Island TOWN Club

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME.

Meetings take place every Thursday from 8.45am to 11am at the Rhyll Mechanics Hall, 54 Lock Road Rhyll. Weigh in time is 8.45 - 9.45am followed by a General Meeting and Group Discussion. Contact Details: Vincent Vale 0414 709 066 or Lillian Heflingers 0438 595 688.



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



Rhyll Tavern to Open

According to Facebook the Rhyll Tavern will be hosting a Grand Opening on **Friday 27th March from 12pm** until Late. They will be having live music from 8pm with the Laing Brothers.



Easter Cooking Class

Come along and join the fun and learn how to make delicious Hot Cross Buns, Surprise Chocolate Easter Eggs and Meringue nests.



Cost \$10 to cover ingredients - enjoy coffee, tea or Prosecco

Saturday 21st March, 2pm at 30 Lock Road, Rhyll



Rhyll Coast Action thanks friends and neighbours who have participated in the 2026 Aggi Blitz. More than 14 volunteers and neighbours have supported

householders in deadheading their Aggi Hedges and clusters around Rhyll.

This action prevents Agapanthus which is a South African Lily from spreading to neighbouring areas. If you have not cut those growing in your garden now is the time to do so.



RHYLL COAST ACTION

INC A0050588L

rhyllcoastaction@gmail.com

follow us on 



WE ARE A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS OF ALL AGES SHARING A PASSION FOR RESTORING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT WHERE INDIGENOUS PLANTS AND WILDLIFE THRIVE PRESERVED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

ABOUT RCA

PLEASE DEADHEAD YOUR AGAPANTHUS WHEN THEY STOP FLOWERING

Agapanthus are robust coastal garden plants but their seeds spread easily threatening neighbouring areas and reducing biodiversity






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.

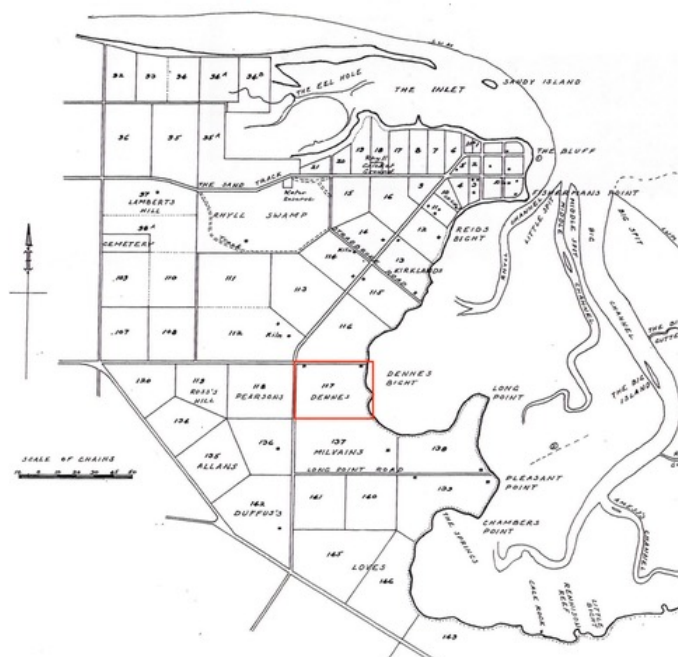


The Story Behind Denne's Bight

By Pamela Rothfield

Many fishermen know that the stretch of water just south of Rhyll is called Denne's Bight - but not everyone knows where the name comes from.

It takes us back to one of the early farming families of the district, the Dennes, who lived in Rhyll for more than fifty years. Their 107-acre farm sat at the intersection of what we know today as Harbison Road and the Rhyll–Newhaven Road, right on the foreshore, where the family grew chicory.



Henry and Eliza Denne arrived in Australia in 1855 with four of their five children. Their passage had been sponsored by Thomas Small, a farmer from Barrabool Hill near Geelong, and the passenger records describe Henry simply as an agricultural labourer. Their eldest son, William - known as Bill - followed some years later, arriving in 1861.

It is quite possible that Henry first worked for John McHaffie, who held the pastoral lease over Phillip Island from the 1840s. If that was the case, the family may well have lived on the Island for some years before purchasing land of their own.

In 1869, just a year after Phillip Island was opened for subdivision, Henry purchased waterfront land at Rhyll. Here Henry and Eliza, together with their sons Bill and Francis - known as Frank - established their farm. The small waterway beside their property later became known as Denne's Bight, a name that has remained on local maps ever since.

Life on the Island in those days was not easy. Medical help was distant and travel could be difficult. Yet Eliza lived to the age of 82, which was considered quite remarkable at the time.

In her later years she suffered a broken hip. A neighbour, Annie McFee, did what she could to help, binding the injured leg with linen and using Eliza's other leg as a splint. She then accompanied her on board the steamer *Genista* to Stony Point and from there by train to Melbourne for treatment. Doctors at Melbourne Hospital later praised the care she had received before arriving.

Henry and Eliza remained in Rhyll until their deaths in 1895 and 1899.

After Henry's death the farm passed to his sons Bill and Frank. Unfortunately, the two brothers



Frank Denne

did not get along particularly well, and the property was eventually divided. Frank kept the eastern section along the foreshore while Bill took the western portion fronting the Rhyll-Newhaven Road. Access to Frank's land was likely along the eastern continuation of Harbison Road, which today exists only as a road reserve.

Bill had married Jessie Fowler from Newhaven in 1878. Jessie's father, Joseph Fowler, had run a successful coach-building business in Melbourne before moving to Phillip Island around 1870.

Jessie was forty-one when she married Bill. As the couple were unable to have children, they adopted a baby girl named Cecilia around 1889.

Cecilia had been born Cecelia Woodward Higgins in Surry Hills, New South Wales, in 1888. When she was only a year old her mother died, and it appears her father arranged for the child to be adopted.

Sadly, tragedy struck again in November 1899 when Jessie died at Rhyll aged 64 — just twelve days before the death of her father-in-law Henry. Influenza had swept through the small island community and within three weeks had also claimed the lives of two other locals, Emily Jane West and Samuel Henderson.



Cecilia, only eleven at the time, remained on the farm with Bill until 1909. That year Bill sold his portion of the property to James Dobie and the pair left Phillip Island. Cecilia, then twenty-one, found work as a housekeeper in Malvern and the following year married Thomas Kelley, a drover.

Bill died in 1912 at Cecilia's home in Footscray.

Frank remained on the Island. For a time he also acted as caretaker at Churchill Island and continued farming chicory at Rhyll until about 1937. He later moved to an aged care home in Melbourne, where he died in 1943 at the age of 94.

Today almost nothing remains to remind us of the Denne family's long connection with Rhyll. Just one quiet survivor remains - **a mulberry tree** planted by the family still grows where their farmhouse once stood, while out on the water the name Denne's Bight continues to preserve the memory of a family who helped shape the early story of Rhyll.



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

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Brian Morris	dbrianmorris@gmail.com
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