AvocaBeachnews



It's worse than they thought.

Many locals have been asking about the barriers put in place along Avoca Drive just south of the village shopping centre. Why has crossing the road at this end of town suddenly become more dangerous with the pedestrian crossing and the pathway taken away from walkers?

Looking at the steep gradient of the cliff that looms over the road it's not hard to guess that there is probably some slippage occurring and there is a chance that walkers might encounter some debris tumbling down the hill. So, confusing though the logic may be, the safety of walkers is the reason for the removal of the pedestrian crossing.

Also, a consideration is the number of car parking spaces along Avoca Drive lost by those who work and do business in the village.

How did this come about? We chased it up and our inquiries have revealed that Council, knowing there had been some slippage, did a rigorous inspection of this cliff face, both by foot and using drone technology, and discovered that the problem was worse than expected. Barriers were immediately put in place and this meant the crossing had to be put out of action as it led to the danger area.

So how do you cross the road safely on the south side of the village centre, especially if you are young, old, or disabled? You don't, not now. You need to walk a few hundred metres and use the main crossing in the middle of the village, as

well as the smaller crossing leading to the beach and the toilet block.

The good news is that Council has plans to put in a temporary pedestrian crossing nearby, but out of the danger zone. With the obligatory paperwork and consultation completed, this should happen any day now!

How long before the cliff face is made safe, and things will be back to normal? Council at the moment can give us no definitive answer. We all know funds are scarce and this project will be more expensive than first thought. This is Council's reply:

"In relation to permanent solution, investigation and design works are in progress. The remedial solution may include the installation of a rock catch fence in coordination with the removal/stabilisation of fallen/loose rocks. Depending on the estimated cost of the works, Council will submit an application for top up funding.

Depending on the availability of funding and specialist contractors, the timeframe for completion would be 6 to 12 months".

Meanwhile, the houseowners with the beautiful views at the top of this cliff face hopefully remain safe and have the benefit of good engineering.

We'll keep you posted. Steve Fortey and Michael Scobie







Avoca Beach Rugby Club – Season 2022

After a COV-19 disrupted season in 2021 the Sharks can't wait to for season 2022 to begin.

The senior season will kick off on Saturday 2nd April 2022 with the junior season set to commence after the Easter Holidays. The senior club will be playing a series of trials with a major trial scheduled for 19th March against Orange City Rugby Club in Orange

New club and 1st grade coach Mick Burgess comes to us with a commendable coaching record, and he will be ably assisted by the experienced duo of Brendan Slape and Jonno Hirst. 2nd grade will be well looked after by club stalwarts Dan Reihana and Paul Kendall. Cameron Stewart will once again coach the very successful Women's 10's and shortly the club will announce appointed coaches for 3rd grade and the Under 19's

You may have noticed that there has been much work done on the Heazlett Park light towers. The club was able to secure a grant from NSW Government and with the agreement of Council the club has been able to upgrade the standard of lighting. Not only will this greatly assist team preparation during training, but the upgraded lights will allow for night games to be played at Heazlett Park. The club believes that playing some junior and senior games on a Friday or Saturday night will greatly enhance the impact of the sport as well as increase spectator attendance with a subsequent flow on benefit to local restaurants and associated businesses.

With the club now fielding junior age teams from under 6 to senior level and the rising number of girls/women playing rugby at the club there is ample opportunity for all to participate in the game they play in Heaven and wear the famous colours of blue, green & gold.

Contact details for both senior & junior rugby are detailed in the ad below.

It's time to start training. Cheers boys & girls!



Avoca Kayak Club

The weekend of the 5th and 6th of February saw Avoca Kavak Club hold a Whitewater training weekend on the Barrington River and hold some open racing on Sunday morning. It was good to see some other non-club paddlers turn up to do the races. We had Ben Jones and Glen Skarden former wildwater paddlers along with Lachlan Bassett. Australian Wildwater team member come and race against Alex McIntyre, Australian Team member and the new generation of Avoca Juniors taking on the discipline. The water levels were good which made for some great paddling on the technical classic course above the Steps rapid. The sprint course was just below the Steps Rapid which saw all competitors enjoying the wavy rapid for the first 150 metres of the 300-metre course.

A big thank you to all of the parents who helped with the car turnarounds and also the timing for both the classic and sprint races. Also, a big shout out to Brian Soundy and Dave McLosky, Central Coast Creek Boaters who gave up their time on the weekend to come and run boat safety. A good time was had by all at the beautiful Steps Campground and the superb water level saw many of our Junior athletes new to the sport of Wildwater undertake more exciting challenges.





Avoca Beach Rugby Club playing the game they play in Heaven since 1975

Come along and join in the fun. Every Saturday we field teams from Under 6's to Senior grade throughout the season at the Sharkpool (Heazlett Park). Both male & female players are welcome

New players can contact Club Coach Mick Burgess on mob 0438 323 024 or Junior VP Julia Niness Mob 0400 548 646

The Club appreciates the continued support of all our local businesses, sponsors & supporters

See our web page https://www.avocabeachrugby.club or check out our Facebook page Avoca Beach Rugby Club -The Sharks

More info by email at avocasharks@gmail.com

President's Report

I've decided not to mention the weather, but it's impossible not to give a thought to the horrendous flooding occurring to our north. The ABCA is donating \$2000 from our limited funds to the Salvos and St Vinnies specifically for flood relief. The Kincumber Neighbourhood Centre (0243 631 044) is accepting donations, but please check with them and send the right stuff.

This year we are funding the installation and maintenance of a Defibrillator machine in a prominent spot down at the village centre. We hope this will be the first of a few strategically placed Defibs (AEDs) around Avoca. At present we are negotiating the exact location with Council.

We have joined the Community Defib Project, a well organised not-for-profit organisation with the aim of making our community safer. An AED (automated external defibrillator) is a device that can be used by anyone to save the life of someone who suffers a sudden cardiac arrest and unconscious and not breathing.

We feel this potentially lifesaving machine is a worthwhile community venture and are happy to fund the first one (\$3,000). We encourage community members to contribute towards others. Down by the lake, in the park near the theatre and up near the scout hall are likely future locations. Contributions are tax deductible, so if you'd like to contribute to the Avoca Beach Community Defib project, here are the details: **ANZAC DAY** is coming up soon and we invite you all to the Dawn Service, 6 am by the surf club. The BBQ boys and girls will put on bacon and egg sandwiches for a gold coin donation. All proceeds to Legacy. A big thank you to Adam from Avoca Beach Butchery for once again donating the bacon and eggs.

Thanks in advance to all those who volunteer their time to make this a memorable morning.

Vale Graeme Love

Our community lost a very popular and respected gentleman recently. A life member of Avoca Beach Surf Club and the Central Coast Branch, Graeme was an outstanding administrator who served Surf Lifesaving as secretary or president over several decades. 'Lovey' was a man who loved life and people and he will be sorely missed. Our condolences to his family and many mates.

and Greg Jarmaine

A legend in surf lifesaving, Greg lost a long battle with illness some months ago. It was only very recently that a fitting memorial service was held for him at the surf club. A national and world champion on the surf ski, Greg was also a prolific and highly successful artist who brought many Central Coast scenes to life in his paintings. Although an incredibly high achiever, Greg was noted time and again for his humble nature, friendship and great sense of humour. Steve Fortey



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Support your community through membership of the Association. Send the completed form to our email address (above) or mail PO Box 105, Avoca Beach 2251. Annual fee is \$10 per member. Payment to the ABCA bank account BSB 032545 Account No. 128465; or by mail. (Donations also welcome.) Providing your email enables us to send you local information.	

Avoca Lagoon – First Steps on Road to Recovery

Our July 2021 issue rang the alarm bell – for the third year running our precious Lagoon scored a very poor rating for ecological health in the Council/State waterways monitoring program – landing us in the bottom 5%. Testing has begun in Avoca.

That article prompted a public meeting held with Council staff outlining proposed action to address the declining lagoon health. Now, Council in collaboration with the community and the State Government are progressing actions.

What is the Problem?

The lagoon has high, fluctuating nutrient concentrations which drive seasonal blooms of macroalgae and phytoplankton. These blooms eventually die consuming oxygen dissolved in the water – and aquatic life cannot survive under low oxygen conditions.

The lagoon is also at risk of contamination with fecal organisms negatively impacting recreational activities. This is monitored by Council. Where is this contamination coming from? There are multiple potential avenues – including sewer and septic systems, stormwater runoff, groundwater, animal and bird waste.

It is a complex task to figure out what are the principal drivers of the Avoca Lagoon problem. Council has formed a Focus Group to meet with community representatives, scientists and estuary managers.

At the first Group session before Xmas, State Government scientists admitted they don't understand why Avoca Lagoon is in such trouble. Wamberal and Avoca Lagoons have similar physical features but Wamberal scores relatively well.

Council and the State Government have commenced investigations, in partnership, to unravel this puzzle.

Beatrice – the buoy

You may have noticed a new instrument installed in the central basin (opposite Scout Hall/Lions Park) – named Beatrice. It will operate for a year.

It measures dissolved oxygen, turbidity, salinity, pH (acidity), temperature, indicators of photosynthesis and harmful algae, and dissolved organic matter.



Figure 1: Beatrice an innovative water quality logger

It will be an important part of figuring out the complexities of water movements and chemical interactions. Beatrice is located in the dredged zone and monitors the water column from surface and bottom

Data is beamed back in real-time allowing technical staff to take other lagoon measurements when key events happen (e.g., stratification into water layers).

Auto-samplers on tributaries

The project team have also installed automatic water samplers and flow sensors on the three main tributaries flowing to the lagoon – at Saltwater Creek and two locations on The Round Drive. They trigger when creek levels rise and take samples for staff to collect and process for measuring nutrient (nitrogen and phosphorus) and suspended solid loads entering the lagoon



Figure 2: Auto-sampler unit above and below water on Round Drive

Manual water samples will be gathered from minor tributaries to complete the picture catchment-wide.

This monitoring data will feed into construction of a nutrient balance model to analyse what is driving poor water quality in the lagoon. This will inform a plan of actions to address the problems.

Role of Sewer System

The sewer system can contribute to lagoon degradation due to breakdown of pipes, overflows during heavy rainfall, and illegal connections of properties. Just how much we don't know.

Inspection in Terrigal on a sewer system of similar age examined 57.2km of pipes, identifying almost half with some defects; with most of that now upgraded.

Our Role

We Avocans live within the catchment flowing into the lagoon. Being mindful about minimising pollution reaching the lagoon – cautious use of fertilisers on gardens; picking up after dogs; limiting what gets into stormwater; or preserving native shoreline vegetation – are practical ways each of us can help today. (If it's on the ground, it's in our waterways!).

The Community Association is engaging on a continuing basis with Council, State MP and departments, and Federal MP and Minister to ensure resources will be marshalled to pay for future remedial actions.

You can find more about Council's monitoring of lagoon quality in the environment section of its website; and on the sewer inspection program on the yourvoiceourcoast site.

Ian Carruthers - with input from Council staff

Amelia



My name is Amelia Lowe and I am a proud member of our beautiful Avoca Beach community. Having grown up on Darkinjung land, I have been blessed with innumerable opportunities which have shaped me into the person I am today. It is an honour and privilege to share some of my experiences in Avoca Beach and its surroundings with you.

As a newly graduated 18-year-old from Kincumber High School, I have been reflecting on my childhood in Avoca and have come to realise just how lucky I am. From kindergarten to year six, I attended our local primary school (ABPS) and was taught and nurtured by several incredible teachers. I created many friendships and memories which I am certain will last a lifetime and am beyond grateful to have grown up in such an organic and caring environment. From the sports carnivals to 'mega money days' and the unforgettable end of year talent quests, Avoca Beach Primary School allowed me to flourish.

With two older sisters who paved the way for me at KHS, I entered a whole new and exciting world where the adventure of high school began. KHS was pivotal for me and allowed me to discover a passion for leadership, public education, and my local community. One of my favourite aspects of KHS is its inclusive approach toward learning, something that distinguishes it from many other schools across the Central Coast. I soon realised that as an extrovert I belonged in the leadership team, a place that allowed me to create change within both my school and local community. I successfully ran for the position of school captain for 2021 and was

able to represent the school on various occasions and led several fundraisers. One specific honour of this captaincy was speaking at the 2021 ANZAC Day Dawn Service at Avoca. It was an incredible experience and demonstrated the close-knit community that Avoca Beach is.

For many, the heart of Avoca Beach is the ocean. I'm no surfer, but I know that Avoca Beach is home to some of the best surf and surfers in Australia and around the world. As youngsters, my sisters and I got involved in 'nippers' and loved every second of it. The Avoca Beach Surf Life Saving Club is an important mechanism for our community where families come together and share their love of sport by the beach. Nothing beats the smiling faces of little nippers.

I may be a little biased, but Avoca really has all you could ever want and more. We've got fantastic cafes and restaurants, beautiful landscapes, and wonderful people which together, makes my life and yours, pretty amazing. One of my favourite things to treat myself to is fish and chips by the beach or a cinematic experience at the Avoca Beach Picture Theatre. The Avoca Beach Markets are also a highlight within our community and for tourists, generating both economic and social development. The atmosphere within Avoca is fascinating to me because unlike the 'big smoke', Avoca Beach is a haven boasting incredible coastal walks and beautiful scenery.

If Covid has taught me anything, it is to appreciate the simple things. Travel may have been restricted, but I haven't been bothered by that because I don't want to live or be anywhere else. Walking along the beach or grabbing a coffee at a local cafe will always be a highlight of my week. As I grow up and go to University, I will always look forward to coming home, going for a swim, and catching up with friends. Avoca Beach is truly like nowhere else on the Central Coast, and I am so lucky to call this place my home.



Coffee at the beach with sisters Hannah and Isabel and mum Bronwyn.



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What's with the rabbits?

We've had several inquiries about the recent proliferation of wild rabbits. It seems they all want to live at Avoca. Who can blame them?



Yes, they are cute, but unfortunately feral and destructive.

In response to our inquiries, Council tells us they are aware of the rabbit problem and are working on a solution. Our committee member and rabbit man, Colin Tipney, has received some good news recently and it seems action is finally being taken. During late March, Council will be releasing the rabbit calicivirus (RHDV-K5) in several locations in Avoca. Releasing a virus, surely not? It sounds a little scary, but we're told this virus is not harmful to anyone but the rabbits.

Council says the virus will not eradicate the rabbits but will help to reduce the population and in turn the damage done to Council land. A public notice will be in local newspapers and on Council's website. The last 'treatment' in Avoca was as recent as 2019.

Just a minute, we hear you say, this means treatment will only happen on Council land. Will the smart rabbits hop next door onto your private land and avoid the virus? Treatment of rabbits on privately owned land requires liaison with Council. If you own a large slice of land (over 1000 sqm) you can do a training course in the use of the calicivirus, get the certificate and do it yourself.

If you are on a smaller block, you can try Bunny Bait purchased from such places as Coastal Rural Traders, Ourimbah.

More information? Council tells us to visit the Greater Sydney Local Land Services.

Website; greatersydney.lls.nsw.gov.au Or the local Biosecurity Officer on (02) 4355 8203.

For obvious reasons, in Avoca it is illegal to shoot or trap feral rabbits.

A rescue with a difference



Look what these boys found in the rock pool. It's a Mulloway (also known as a jewfish) and we think it was washed over the rocks in big seas and a high tide.

The boys did the responsible thing and with a little help and much effort transported it back to the deeper, safer waters outside the rock pool. Well done!



Talking about the rock pool, we'd like to take the credit for the sand returning to the pool so young kids can enjoy the safe swimming experience. So would Council.

Did someone say mother nature?







Happenings at Council

Recently there have been several developments and actions in Central Coast Council that affect the interests of Avocans. This article provides a summary.

Delivery (Operational) Plan

Council (the Administrator) at its February meeting adopted a 3-year Delivery Program (2022 to 2025) which includes an Operational Plan for 2022-23. The list of works (and associated costings) are predicated on IPART approving soon an extension of the recent general rates rise to 10 years.

A seemingly low share of the capital works budget was allocated for Avoca Beach.

The largest allocation is for drainage works on Avoca Drive (\$3.7 million over 3 years). The exact location and purpose of these works has not been provided. ABCA will seek further information and community consultation by Council

An allocation (\$200,000) is made for a study into car parking at South End Park to happen in the 3rd year. ABCA lodged a submission arguing this study should happen sooner to allow actual parking improvements funding to be listed in the subsequent triennium plan. But Council did not adopt that change –so don't hold your breath until parking improvements happen there.



South end car park rutted and boggy - not a great experience for locals or tourists

Minor allocations are made for upgrading next year the beachfront viewing platform near the shark tower (\$20,000), and for refurbishment also next year of public rubbish bins (approximately, \$75,000).

Council plans to undertake further consultations on the Plan in April.

Capital Works This Year

According to the Council website, the following projects are scheduled to happen soon:

- South end carpark drainage works, March 2022 – over 10 weeks (\$1.4 million)
- Resurfacing Cape Three Points Rd (near junction with Austral Ave), April 2022, \$90,000
- Renewal of the trunk water main from North Avoca to Avoca Beach has commenced.
- A major refurbishment of the Ross Park playground is scheduled to commence in March for a June completion, using developer Local Infrastructure Contributions. (This follows community consultation last August).



Ross Park play space today Rates and Administration

In early February, Council lodged with IPART its application for extension of the current 3-year, 15% special variation on general rates to a 10 year period. Council indicates that if that is not approved by IPART, major further reductions in staff and community services would need to happen.

ABAC has made a submission to IPART ahead of its decision in May.

These measures are a product of the enormous deficit incurred by the newly amalgamated Central Coast Council in its early years.

The State Government supplied \$20 million to cover those costs. Expert evidence provided in the latter part of 2021 to the Public Inquiry into Central

Coast Council indicated the actual costs of amalgamation were much higher.

There is no delivery date announced for this Inquiry report, but it will be interesting to see what it says on the point.

Down the track, and ahead of the March 2023 State election, there may be reason for the community to press the State to come to the party on real amalgamation costs?

Climate Change

In 2019 Council (then in the hands of elected Councillors) adopted a comprehensive Central Coast Climate Change Policy. It was broad in character and was to be followed up with a more specific implementing action plan, developed in consultation with the community.

The 2021 Council financial calamity resulted in loss of the staff in the climate change team and no allocated funding to implement the policy.

The 25 January Council meeting (the Administrator) endorsed a Central Coast Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (2022-25).

It comprises 27 actions across 5 thematic areas – natural systems, water and energy efficiency, community empowerment, waste reduction and strategic planning.

Given Council's financial situation, it is mostly a listing of activities that Council was going to do anyway over the next 3 years. And the others are open-ended on delivery depending on future financial allocation decisions.

In a generally underwhelming package, perhaps of most interest are measures directed towards: lower emission intensive Council fleet vehicles (including electric and hydrogen powered) and energy efficient street lighting.

The current version does not cover strengthening resilience to the impacts of extreme climate events – like major ocean storms, bushfires and drought. Council plans to revise the plan in 2022-23 to address that.

Stan Priestley



If you are an early morning beach goer, you will probably recognise Stan Priestley. He's a lot taller than most of us and a regular workout, swim, and coffee man. He also rows surfboats in the "old man's" crew.

Stan has another claim to fame. Operating out of the top floor of the Avoca Beach Surf Club, his physiotherapist practice has one of the world's best views. This might be a slightly biased opinion, but few locals would disagree. Whatever ails you, the view helps you feel better! It's a win- win situation, Stan provides a steady revenue stream for the surf club and gets to practice in a great location.

A 1994 Sydney University graduate, Stan furthered his qualifications in 2008 by undertaking a course in Canberra to earn the specialist title 'Sports Physiotherapist." He now likes to specialise in sports injury, prevention, and management. He has a keen interest in orthopaedic rehabilitation following surgery.





Stan's workplace

Stan's play place

An active member of the surf club, Stan, along with many other dedicated locals, is a volunteer lifesaver regularly patrolling our beautiful beach. (This year the surf has been particularly challenging, and many rescues have been made). As a competitor with the Avoca Beach Surf Lifesaving Club, Stan says he loves the physical and mental challenge of surfboat rowing. Many would believe this gives legitimate cause to question his sanity. He and his fellow crew members are no slouches either, having earnt bronze medals at the NSW and the Aussie surf titles. Stan hopes they can go even better this year.

Stan's volunteer work does not stop with surf lifesaving, he has been the Avoca Beach Rugby Club's physiotherapist for many years now, putting back together the misshapen bodies involved in a very physical sport. He's down at the rugby club most Tuesday nights of the season and usually has a line-up of battered players to heal. Some of the players have been accused of using Stan to avoid the hard Tuesday night training sessions! Stan spends most of his winter Saturdays preparing players and attending to the injured ones. Rugby Club president Brendan Slape calls Stan a critical part of the fabric of Avoca Beach Rugby: "As our physio he is the ultimate professional, selflessly looking after every player from young to old during his 17 years with the club. His contributions to the club and the community go much further than medical, he has immersed himself in the culture of the club and played a major role in our successes over the years."

Editorial credits: Steve Fortey: Editor | Julie Pickett: Advertising

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Stan has been part of many Avoca Beach Rugby successes.

Ask Stan what he loves about Avoca Beach and the answers probably won't surprise you: "In my opinion this is one of the world's most beautiful beaches with a fantastic community. I love looking around the rugby oval on a winter Saturday and seeing the community come together and support their team. I love going to the beach and seeing so many familiar faces enjoying our little piece of paradise. When Tanya and I spent two years travelling around the world there was never any doubt in my mind where I wanted to live and raise my family. In fact, when buying my first house I told the real estate agents not to show me any house where the address didn't end in Avoca Beach."

There are many characters like Stan who make enormous contributions to our much-loved beachside suburb. In my view these people provide the essential ingredients that give a suburb its community spirit. We are fortunate to live where we do, not just because it's a beautiful place, but for those like Stan who give back.

You can contact Stan at the aptly named "Beach View" Physiotherapy practice on 0408 444 544, and if you time it right you can have a swim, or a few drinks and a meal on the balcony below his practice at Sunsets restaurant. Steve Fortey





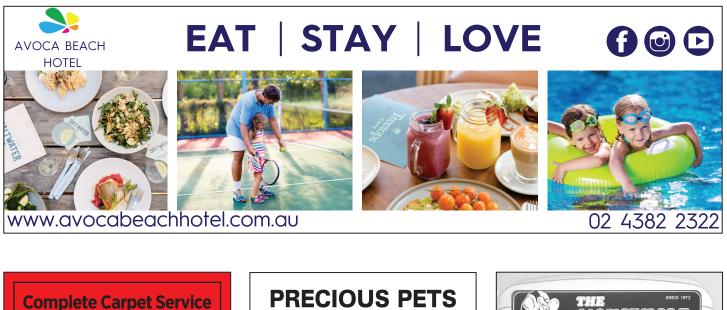
Lagoon Lovers



Above: The early days – before the rock pool

Below: Today - times have changed, rock pool (and sand)





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