

# **Margaret River Coastal Residents Association Inc (CRA) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020**

**The Common - Gnarabup  
4pm Sunday 29 November 2020**

**1. MEETING OPENED** by President Adrian Wilson  
4.02PM

## **2. APOLOGIES**

Peter St Clair-Baker  
Ian Burvill  
Dave and Margaret Leggott  
Sally and Tim Campbell  
Denise and Greg Clancy  
Susie Anderson  
Jeff Yeaton  
Joe Longo

## **3. ATTENDANCE**

Adrian Wilson  
Sally Pyvis  
Janet Dufall  
Barry Dufall  
Sharon Burvill  
Gen Broadhurst  
Natalie Bell  
Lyn Serventy  
Pauline Andrewe  
Clive Hodgson  
Michael Carr  
Mary-Eileen Scanlan  
Ann Delroy  
Emma Campbell  
Tim Moore  
Ron Roozen  
Linda McKellar  
Richard McKellar  
Matthew Joyce  
Frederique and Mathew Tutton

## **4. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS AGM MINUTES 2019**

### **MOTION**

**MOVED** Natalie Bell

**SECONDED** Janet Dufall

That the Minutes of the previous AGM be accepted

## 5. REPORTS

### 5.1 PRESIDENT – ADRIAN WILSON

CRA continues to be a “voice for the community” as an important stakeholder that represents the best interests of residents and ratepayers in coastal issues and decisions.

CRA works with “Nature Conservation Margaret River Region” (NCMRR) and the Augusta-Margaret River Shire (AMRS) and other groups to secure grants and undertake important coastal rehabilitation. (see Report by Janet Dufall and Genny Broadhurst)

#### **Effects of Covid 19 on our Community**

It seems a long time ago that backpacker illegal camping was an issue (ie. In January 2020)

Since then, we’ve had a regional lockdown, social distancing at the White Elephant Cafe and “takeaway only” at The Common. We are very fortunate in Western Australia.

Because of overseas travel restrictions during the pandemic, the MR region has experienced a large increase in domestic (WA) tourist visitors.

And east coast flights into Busselton announced in 2019 have not eventuated due to Covid.

#### **Development in Gnarabup**

Major development is proposed for 5 separate blocks (a total land area of approx 7 hectares) at Gnarabup. This development site has changed hands several times in the past 30 years and has been opposed by the Gnarabup community.

This land is the only privately owned freehold land on the west side of Wallcliffe Road in Gnarabup, and adjacent to the foreshore reserve. The land represents a precious strip of coastal heath that is currently of high visual landscape value.

A hotel resort (on the site above the cafe), a commercial village and housing are proposed and this continues to be challenge for the local community.

At the upcoming Ordinary Council Meeting on 9 December 2020, Council will consider a Scheme Amendment (proposed by a member of “Preserve Gnarabup”) to rezone the land so that it no longer has any development potential.

However the Officer Recommendation is “That Council resolves not to proceed to advertise the amendment.” as it may trigger a compensation claim against AMRS by the landowner.

No community consultation has been undertaken by AMRS relating to this proposal.

Amongst its many other concerns, CRA questions the capacity of the waste treatment plant to cope with any additional development, as current effluent monitoring works show elevated levels.

Questions from “Preserve Gnarabup” and CRA regarding the sustainability of the waste treatment plant remain unanswered. Thanks for Astrid Serventy from “Preserve Gnarabup” for her outstanding work.

The Coastal Path (Gnarabup to Riflebutts)

AMRS plans for a boardwalk from Gnarabup carpark to Spindrift is being progressed (refer email)

CRA suggests deferring construction of a boardwalk as coastal erosion has accelerated ahead of engineering projections.

It may make more sense to simply deviate the existing coastal path (as at Spindrift) on an “as needed” basis at erosion hotspots, subject to coastal erosion encroachment.

### **Gnarabup Boat Ramp**

Initial boat ramp works were undertaken mid 2020, however major works involving sand bagging behind and under the boat ramp are about to commence.

CRA has expressed concern regarding these works, which involve borrowing sand from Gnarabup Beach, as a long term solution to the problem.

Contractors who undertook the mid-2020 works, hopped the fence to take a short cut route to the boat ramp and caused significant erosion damage to the sand dune which remains un-repaired

### **Gnarabup Lagoon**

CRA has, in the past and without success, lobbied to have spearfishing prohibited in the Gnarabup Lagoon. The unwritten local rule is no spearfishing.  
(see Report by Peter St Clair-Baker)

CRA also believes the vessel boat speed limit should be reduced for safety.

### **Wallcliffe House Redevelopment**

Council initiated a Scheme Amendment in September 2019, however there are no changes on the ground to date

### **Environmental Management Fund (EMF) Grant**

CRA secured an EMF grant through AMRS to complete dune conservation works at Gnarabup. Thanks for Janet, Genny and contractors Drew and Nathan for successfully installing coir logs and stakes on several dunes.

Not only does this aid dune stability and provide shelter for new plants, it creates important visual awareness for people using the coastal path. It reminds people of the fragile and dynamic nature of the dune systems and highlights the good work that CRA does

### **“Bike to the Beach” Event**

This successful event held Sunday 25 October 2020 attracted 88 participating riders. Grant funding was from the Department of Transport (DoT) and WestCycle.  
(see Report by Sally Pyvis)

### **New Cyclist/Pedestrian Crossover on Wallcliffe Road**

This AMRS project was completed in November 2020, providing increased safety and good sight lines at this difficult and busy crossing point. Thanks to Barry Dufall for lobbying AMRS for this improved outcome.

### **Additional Bike Rack & Landscaping at the White Elephant Cafe**

Discussion of this project has yielded pledges of  
AMRS - \$2,000  
White Elephant Cafe - \$1,500  
CRA - \$500  
to complete this proposed project.

### **Gnarabup Beach Carpark**

Current contractor works (funded by AMRS) include landscaping and tree planting. Whilst the beautification works are very welcome, it remains to be seen if the semi-mature casuarinas, with undeveloped root systems, planted in November will survive the summer heat stress

### **The Margaret River Surf Pro Event**

The 2020 event was cancelled due to Covid 19. CRA will pick up the baton re

- eco toilets at Boodjidup
- \$2,000 promised by Surfing WA for coastal rehabilitation work
- parking issues

### **AMRS Management of Verges**

Bulk glyphosate still being applied to road verges with some slashing taking place – council does not notify CRA in advance despite being requested to do so.

## **Dogs**

The presence of dogs in areas other than designated dog exercise areas is an ongoing problem on the coast.

Shorebirds, especially those that live and nest on the beach, are greatly disturbed by dogs.  
(see Report by Natalie Bell)

## **MRSLSC Activities**

MRSLSC summer beach activities (Nippers) on Gnarabup Beach commenced early November 2020.

CRA will approach MRSLSC to suggest implementing a beach cleanup element to Nippers beach activities (could be as simple as a 2 minute beach cleanup by children) to raise awareness of rubbish and improve the cleanliness of the beach.

MRSLSC looking to erect some sort of facility along the coast, with locations at Rifle Butts and Gnarabup being mooted. A proposal to establish MRSLSC infrastructure at the River Mouth was rejected some years ago.

In April 2019, SLSWA purchased a property in Railway Terrace, Margaret River as an operational base for south west surf lifesaving activities.

## **Nature Conservation Margaret River - Forum**

On 25 November 2020 CRA representatives joined other coastal user groups and stakeholders and attended a Forum convened by NCMRR to explore a community drive Capes Coastal Code (or Pledge) to foster respect and care for our coast.

The Pelau Pledge (link to article below) was used as an example of similar codes being introduced around the world to educate tourist visitors about conservation in regions of high tourist impact.

Overtourism (too many visitors in one area) can negatively impact the environment, lead to intolerance in host communities and result in loss of character and authenticity.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/travel/2019/10/24/can-tourism-pledges-help-keep-visitors-their-best-behavior/>

## **CRA Website**

The website is vastly improved since Clive has been webmaster. (see Report by Clive Hodgson)

## **Thank You**

CRA relies on its dedicated members who volunteer on a weekly basis to undertake coastal rehabilitation work. These voluntary activities represent vast financial savings for AMRS and, ultimately, for all Augusta-Margaret River ratepayers.

Thanks to all CRA Committee Members to everyone for attending today's AGM.

## **5.2 TREASURER'S REPORT - ANN DELROY**

### **INCOME \$0**

### **EXPENDITURE**

Post Box (2019) - \$35

Post Box (2020) - \$39

Nature Conservation MR region - \$500.00

Printing Costs - \$50.00 (cheque not yet cashed)

Registration for Incorporated Associations' Model Rules - \$42.00 (cheque not yet cashed)

**BANK BALANCE 1 JULY 2019** - \$14,887.05 Cr

Minus expenditure - \$666.00

**BANK STATEMENT 30 June 2020** - \$14,313.04 Cr

### **5.3 COASTAL VOLUNTEERS REPORT 2020 – GENNY BROADHURST/JANET DUFALL**

This year has seen the volunteer team contribute 501 hours to working on the coast, which is a wonderful effort. The works have included fostering education through the adopt a spot Montessori School, whose wonderful students spent a morning planting and brushing, plus another afternoon of planting and listening to Tamara from the Undalup Association share the local dreamtime stories.

We have also been party to two grants: one which was an Environmental Management Fund project which saw coir logs, brushing and planting on some of the high blow outs along the coastal path, and the other a Coast West Grant which allowed for a group from the Chamber of Commerce to come to Grunters and brush and plant on the dunes there.

Our regular weekly group has grown with the welcome addition of a few new people and we have kept up with our weeding and planting projects, plus we have become fencers and have installed one at Gas and one at Longreef.

In addition to the regular Thursdays, Sally Pyvis and Janet Dufall, plus others, have planted an impressive amount of pigface along the path.

We have one more epic project to complete for the year – 100 St Thomas More students are coming to the Rivermouth on Dec. 8 to plant and brush.

All of our efforts have not gone unnoticed, with the group being nominated this year for a Shire Volunteer Award.

I'm proud; everyone involved should be proud, and we hope next year will see a continuation in our efforts to preserve and increase the biodiversity of the dune systems.

Genny Broadhurst.

### **5.4 LOCAL SHOREBIRDS REPORT – NATALIE BELL**

A positive initiative came out of a recent meeting between Nature Conservation Margaret River Region, AMR Shire, City of Busselton, DBCA and Birdlife. We are getting some temporary signs made for beach nesting birds that can be put out when a nest or chicks are present. They will, hopefully, be species specific and will guide people re what to do/not to do.

The focus of this report is on beach nesting birds, as these are most vulnerable and are currently breeding locally. It is also significant to note that groups of up to 50 Sanderlings have been sighted regularly around Grunter's point and just north of the Gnarabup boat ramp.

#### **Hooded Plovers**

- The Gas Bay / Grunters resident pair hatched all three eggs on 12th Oct from their first nesting attempt. Two chicks immediately perished; one chick survived for approx 20 days but has not been seen since. As of 25th Nov, this pair have not attempted another nest.
- The Rivermouth pair have a 3 egg nest just north of the River which was laid around 2nd Nov. Incubation takes around 28 days so they are due to hatch now (30th Nov). If you are in the area, walk at the waterline and give them lots of space to forage.

#### **Red-capped Plovers**

- A 2 egg nest near Reef Drive carpark resulted in one chick being sighted on 3rd November but soon after it disappeared. Unleashed dogs on these beaches are on ongoing issue. Owners are aware of signage but unwilling to comply.
- Up to 8 birds have been foraging near the seaweed wrack just north of the Gnarabup boat ramp. As far as we know there have been 3 nests and only one

chick has survived (now a juvenile and able to fly). DBCA have advised that they do not have resources to fence red-capped plover nests. The Shire has one temporary sign and can put it out as needed.

### **Pied and Sooty Oyster Catchers**

• A pair of Pied Oyster Catchers have successfully raised a chick at the point north of the Margaret River. It is almost a month old so will be able to fly any day now, which greatly increases its chances of survival.

Natalie Bell, November 26, 2020

## **5.5 SPEARFISHING IN GNARABUP BAY – PETER ST CLAIR-BAKER**

I was unable to get in to meet with Susan due to personal circumstances and only managed a quick phone call with her.

Apparently the shire is preparing/has prepared some signage about safety with spearguns at swimming beaches. I haven't seen the signage.

I suggested the signage should ask people to snorkel , but not take. Hopeful that some peer pressure might prevail.

I reiterated that the fishing and majority of spearfishing community were in support of this.

The main problem seems to be kids and adults on holiday with guns and gidgies. Unfortunately the area, as part of the Ngari Marine Park, is now zoned as a surf zone and spearfishing is an allowed activity in these zones, so no regulatory support there and unlikely to change.

I think just erecting signs asking to respect community philosophy of appreciation of our marine coast is about the best we are going to get.

I am attending the coastal forum on Wednesday.

## **5.6 BIKE TO THE BEACH EVENT – SALLY PYVIS**

The inaugural “BIKE TO THE BEACH” Event was held on Sunday, October 25, 2020 at the Gnarabup Beach carpark, Gnarabup from 8am-11am.

### **BUDGET ESTIMATE**

\$300. Advertising - AMR Times, graphic design, photocopying

\$450. Electric Bikes Margaret River - (min 3 x staff for 3 hours at bike station providing bike safety checks

\$500. White Elephant Cafe - first 100 get free coffee/hot chocolate

\$270.05. Local Community Insurance Service (LCIS) for public liability insurance

\$25. AMRS - event application fee

TOTAL \$1,545.05

### **ACTUAL EXPENDITURE**

\$ 125.00 newspaper advertisement (AMR Times)

\$ 100.00 Graphic design (Patrick Design)

\$ 18.00 Photocopying (MR Library)

\$ 450.00 Bike station/safety checks (Electric Bikes Margaret River)

\$ 373.50 coffees/hot chocolates (White Elephant Cafe)

\$ 270.05 Insurance (Local Community Insurance Service)

\$ 25.00 AMRS - event application fee

TOTAL \$1,361.55

### **CYCLIST NUMBERS - RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

Margaret River - 48

Brookfield - 5

Prevelly - 12

Gnarabup - 23

**TOTAL RIDERS – 88**

## **EVENT DESCRIPTION**

- cyclists ride independently to/from Gnarabup Beach (carpark) using existing off-road cycle tracks
- free bike safety check (Electric Bikes Margaret River) provided at carpark
- free coffee/hot chocolate for first 100 cyclists (White Elephant Cafe) at carpark

## **WA BIKE MONTH GRANTS PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

1. Encourage people of all ages and abilities to ride bikes for transport, fun and/or for a healthier lifestyle.

This event provides the incentive and opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to try cycling to and from Gnarabup Beach for transport (instead of driving) and for recreation and fitness benefits.

2. Introduce new riders to bike riding and improve the skills and confidence of novice riders.

This event provides the opportunity for individual, group and family cyclists to ride the safe off-road route to Gnarabup Beach to test their competence and boost their confidence in undertaking this ride on a regular basis.

3. Raise awareness of new and existing bike infrastructure and bike routes.

This event promotes the existing off-road bike routes that link the towns of Cowaramup, Witchcliffe with Margaret River and Margaret River town with Gnarabup Beach.

4. Support inclusion by engaging with and providing an accessible environment for people with disabilities.

The event location (Gnarabup Beach carpark and cafe) has universal access, 1 x ACROD bay 1 x universal toilet and H2O to Go portable water bottle refill station has universal access.

5. Support local WA businesses

This event supports the local businesses

- Electric Bikes Margaret River (provides bike checks/services)
- White Elephant Cafe (provides coffee/hot chocolate for cyclists)
- A-MR Times Newspaper (advertising)

## **PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Local Community Insurance Service (LCIS)

<https://www.localcommunityinsurance.com.au/insurance/public-products-liability/about.aspx>

## **PROCESS**

- MRCRA applied to CycleWest for Department of Transport for WA October Bike Month 2020 event grant
- MRCRA paid event costs upfront
- MRCRA submitted Acquittal Form (post-event) to WestCycle
- Department of Transport will reimburse MRCRA costs (December 2020)
- MRCRA retains copies tax invoices for audit

## **SUMMARY**

A sunny 27 degree October Sunday morning (25/11/2020) and 88 participating cyclists helped make the Gnarabup “Bike to the Beach” WA Bike Month event a success.

If a similar event was to be considered for 2021, cyclist numbers could be increased if local schools were actively lobbied.

Any future event could include

- public education of plastics in the marine environment
- promotion of coastal conservation values
- shore bird education
- partnership with Tangaroa Blue or Sea Shepherd

**Sally Pyvis, Event Coordinator, October 2020**

## **5.7 MRCRA WEBSITE – CLIVE HODGSON**

Since the last AGM, the website has been completely updated with fresh content – i.e. the latest news items and photos.

It has publicised the very successful Bike to Beach event in October, and now has many photos from the event.

A Facebook page was also set up as part of the Bike to Beach grant and this provides an overview of the aims of the MRCR, as well as displaying news about our latest events.

In order to drive more traffic to the website, MRCRA members are asked to add the link to the website to their email signatures, where appropriate.

The link is <https://mrcra.wordpress.com/> - this takes you to the home page.

## **6. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**PRESIDENT:** Adrian Wilson

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Genny Broadhurst

**SECRETARY:** Sharon Burvill

**TREASURER:** Ann Delroy

### **COMMITTEE**

Clive Hodgson (Web Master)

Janet Duffall

Natalie Bell

Ron Roozen (Social Secretary)

Adrian Wilson thanked all for their reports.

Meeting closed by President Adrian Wilson at 16.48.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** to be announced.