

BRIDREPORT

Options examined for channel fix

Marine and Safety Tasmania is piggy-backing research for the new pier project with planning for a long-term fix for access to the port of Bridport. Seismic surveys were recently completed to determine depth and extent of bedrock at the pier site off Croquet Lawn beach and the survey craft also took readings of the Trent Water estuary channel.

MAST has funding to investigate a possible new entrance to the port by excavating through the dunes to the sea off Barnbougle Beach, but it's also looking at improving the depth and width of the channel to the existing entrance. The options may include:

- excavating sand already in the estuary;
- removing rock between the main recreational boat ramp and the entrance;
- employing a bed levelling device to periodically scour the bottom of the channel on outgoing tides and installing a sand bypass system at the southern end of Gofton's Beach, with an undersea pipe to Barnbougle Beach.

It's widely recognised that sand migrates from west to east and the extension of rock groynes at the existing entrance has only aided Gofton's becoming over full of sand, which then washes around the first rock wall and into the estuary. Pumping sand from at the end of the beach periodically it's predicted would only help the sand in its easterly journey without it spilling into the estuary.

Representatives from Bridport Innovations have met MAST out of concern siltation of the channel was affecting both commercial and recreation users of the port. Large craft, including the Bass Strait Freight ferries, have regularly been stuck on the sand banks and the area known as the ski beach on the eastern shore of the channel is high and dry for all but a high tide.

Remedial work was carried out in early January by Bass Strait Freight, removing sand from the channel with two excavators, but observers have said it was practically a waste of time and money, as the sand was not deposited high enough and within a few weeks much of it was washed back into the channel.



Freighter Matthew Flinders III aground in the channel

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March Long Weekend

Bridport Community Hall

Saturday, 7th March 2026

& Easter Saturday, 4th April 2026

9:30am - 1:00pm

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Vale Jay Wilson

Bridport Innovations members are sad to mark the passing recently of Jay Wilson, a highly respected Bridport Innovations member and well known in Dorset for his work in environmental areas and his many other personal interests.

After completing a degree in Environmental Zoology, Jay left his home in Colorado some forty years ago to go travelling and adventuring in Europe and beyond, eventually making his way to Sydney and later to Scottsdale where he settled, built a home, raised a family and then moved to Bridport as his final destination.

A keen musician, Jay was a member of the *Scottsdale Choir*, *The Men of Dorset Barbers Shop Quartet*, *The Bandicoots* and the well known local group *The Blackouts* who over time have played at many events and venues in the North East.

In his early days in Scottsdale Jay ran an Adult Education Wine Appreciation class which kick-started a keen group of wine tasters which grew to adding food to the appreciation.

Jay was a deep thinker and was a member of the Launceston Theosophical Society for many years. He continued to enjoy 'robust' and challenging conversations throughout his life.

He enjoyed beach and bush walking and photography and those things added to his passion and commitment to understanding and caring for the natural environment. His time over many years with Natural Resource Management (NRM) saw him working alongside farmers to understand and improve the health of the waterways on their properties. His time as a Dorset Councillor added to his extraordinary knowledge about legislation, procedure, who to contact and how best to approach and deal with issues. Most of all, he was genuine in his concerns, prepared to put in the time and legwork to see things through, to push when necessary but in a measured way, always backed up with knowledge and a quiet determination.

Jay will be missed for many reasons, but will be remembered as kind, gentle, caring man who left his mark on the world.



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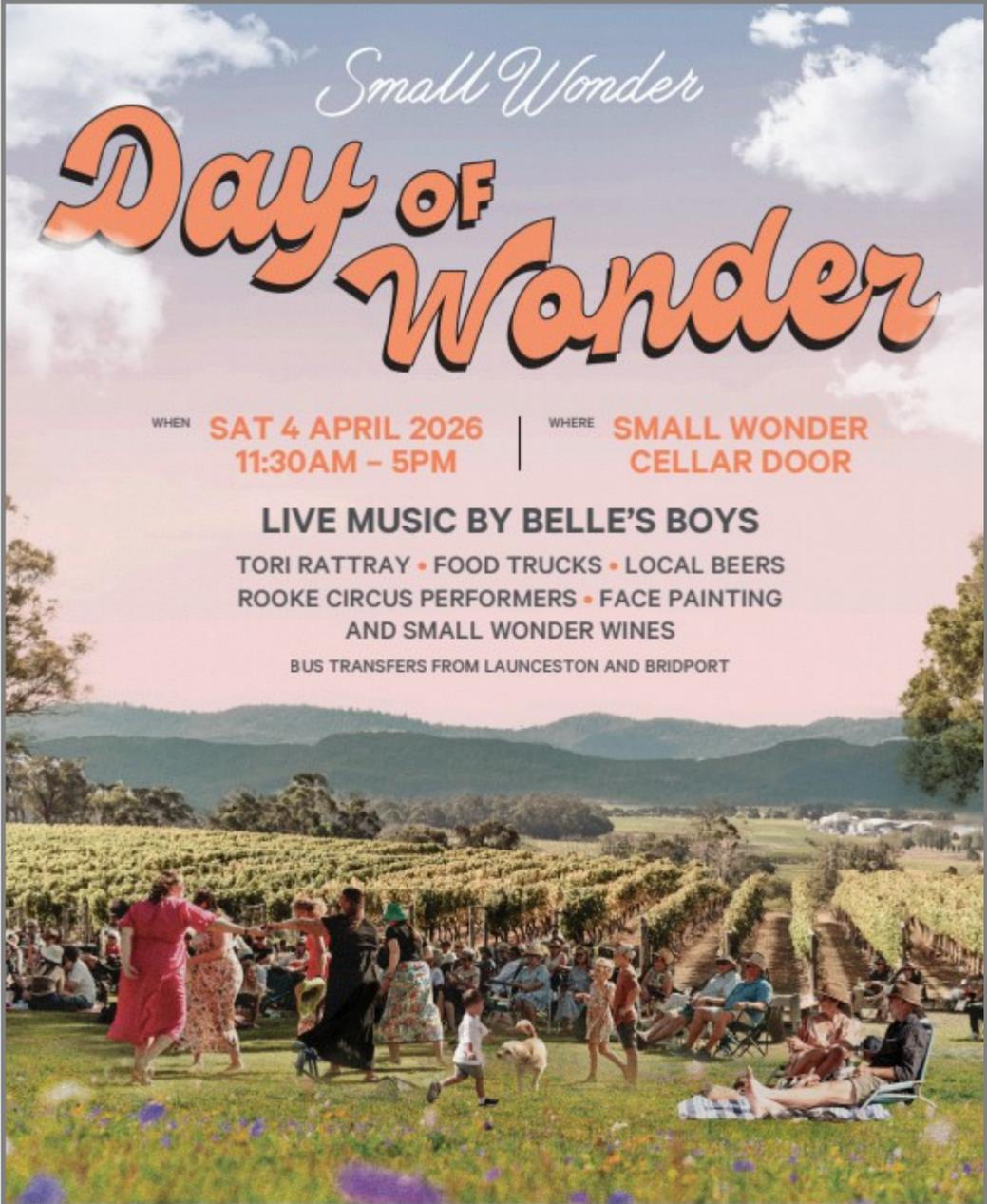
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Eucalyptus by Mike Douglas

March 23rd is National Eucalypt Day. Australia's 900 types, including 34 in Tasmania, are embedded in our folk culture—after all, that jolly swagman was camped in the shade of a coolabah tree, a eucalypt found in the outback.

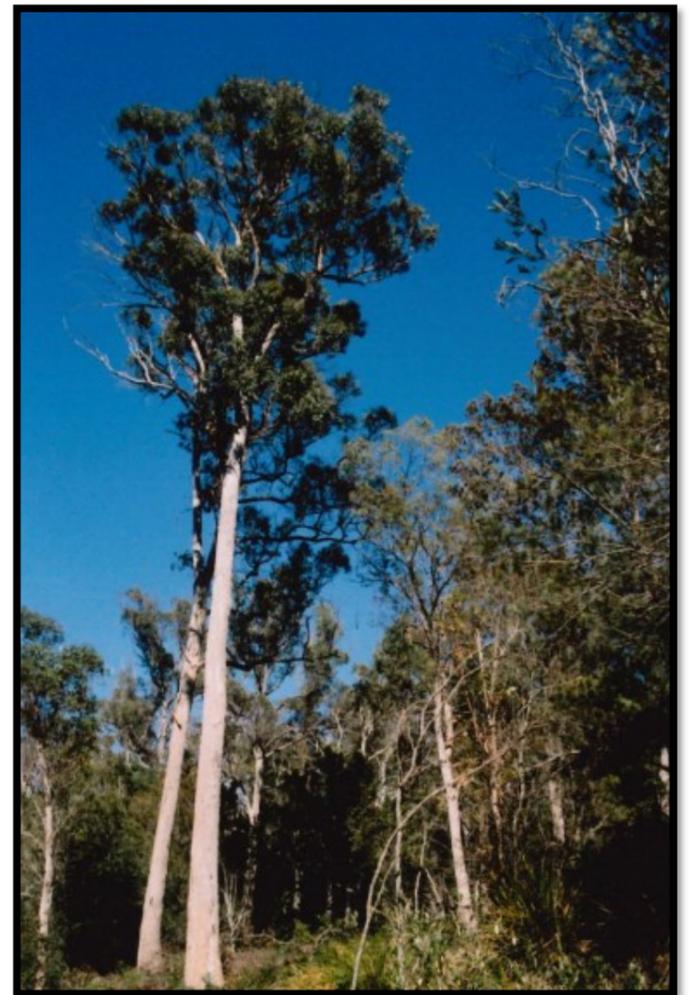
What do we have in Bridport? Naturally occurring types are white gum, black peppermint, swamp gum (aka black gum) and stringybark. In the bush behind town, big old peppermints and stringybarks with next hollows have been decimated by woodhookers.

Our floral emblem is the Tasmanian blue gum of which we have a few specimens planted on the golf course and the foreshore, but it is not native to our area.

Western Australian natives include the much admired red-flowering gum and the Bald Island marlock that has distinctive masses of fused gumnuts—look for it where the foreshore track passes the Bridport Surf Life Saving Club building and near the Old Pier. Others include several South Australian blue gums.

Questions to ponder: Are eucalypts an essential foreshore characteristic and if so, which types should replace the ageing white gums?

Photo: Stringybark near the Brid River pump station



U3A Bridport Seniors Social Group

All seniors welcome
Wednesday 10 am to 3 pm
Bridport Hall



Feb 4	10 am	Meet	Feb 18	10 am	Meet
	10.30	Chair exercises with Dee		10.30	Chair exercises with Dee
	11	Bingo		11.00	Guest speaker
	12.30 pm	Lunch at Bay Inn followed by cards etc.		12.30 pm	Lunch followed by cards etc.
Feb 11	10 am	Meet	Feb 25	10 am	Meet
	10.30	May not be any exercises		10.30	Chair exercises with Dee
	11-12.30	Something to share		11.00	More puzzles
	12.30 pm	Lunch at Barnbogle Dunes followed by cards etc.		12.30 pm	Lunch followed by cards etc,

Bridport Girl Guides

Bridport Girl Guides have got off to a good start for the year. We have lost three girls but have four new ones a total of 31 in two groups.

A leader along with three Guides spent four days at a state camp, Quambatook 26 at the Guide property Orana, near Hobart. They all tried new things and had a great experiences.

On the March long weekend we had a leader and a volunteer travelling to Snug with six Guides to attend the Scout Guide Regatta. This is always a great fun experience where guides get to challenge themselves to various on water and on shore activities.

Once again we will take part in Clean Up Australia and Anzac Day.

On March 28 Bridport Guides are hosting another Water Day to celebrate Thinking Day with Guides from the Launceston Region. This will be held in the river opposite the Bunker from 11 am -4 pm. This has given girls a chance to experience lots of water and land activities on previous years and has been lots of fun, so we are all looking forward to it.

Anyone who wants more information on Guiding please contact Lyn 0409 561 642.

Lyn Commane, Dorset District Manager Girl Guides Tasmania



Bridport Surf Life Saving Club (BSLSC)



Bridport Nippers Shine in Challenging Conditions at Clifton Beach Carnival

The Bridport Surf Life Saving Club delivered a spirited and courageous performance at the Clifton Beach Carnival over the weekend, showcasing the grit, determination and team pride that has become a hallmark of the small but mighty coastal club.

Facing a solid **big swell** and testing surf conditions, the **Bridport Nippers** threw themselves into competition with the same resilience and enthusiasm. Their “give it a go” attitude was on full display as young athletes embraced the challenge, supported each other, and demonstrated impressive surf skills across the program.

Bridport finished the carnival **7th out of 10 clubs**, a strong overall result for a developing squad. Across the day, the club accumulated an impressive medal haul, securing:

- **Nine 1st places**
- **Seven 2nd places**
- **Ten 3rd places**

These results reflect both individual excellence and the depth of commitment shared across the team.

Outstanding Junior Performances

Several Bridport Nippers delivered standout results, leading the way with dominant performances in their age groups:

- **Maggie Innes**, produced a clean sweep in the **U11 division**, taking out **1st place** in the **swim, board, and ironman** events.
- **Olive Howard**, body surfed a huge wave, showcasing great surf skills, to take **1st place** in the **U13 ironperson**.
- **Felix Harvey**, was unstoppable on the sand, winning both the **U14 2 km beach run** and **beach flags**, showcasing power, speed and tactical nous.
- **Harry Culhane**, stormed home for victory in the **U14 beach sprint**, adding another victory to Bridport’s tally.
- These achievements not only contributed significantly to the overall points but also highlighted the talent rising through the Bridport junior ranks.

Strong Performances in the Senior Carnival

Bridport’s older competitors also shone in the senior events, continuing the club’s success across the full age spectrum.

- **Tim Innes**, delivered an exceptional trifecta in the **U15 division**, claiming **1st place** in the **swim, board, and ironperson** events.
- **Annie Howard**, competing for Burnie but proudly connected to Bridport, claimed victories in both the **U17 female single ski** and **Open female single ski**, demonstrating her skill and consistency across senior competition.

Their results further strengthened the club’s presence across the weekend and provided inspiring role models for younger athletes.

A Club Proud of Its People

Bridport SLSC was extremely proud of the courage, teamwork and sportsmanship shown by its athletes throughout the carnival. From the moment they stepped onto the beach, competitors embraced the challenging conditions with confidence and resilience, supporting teammates and representing their club with distinction.

The club now turns its attention to the Junior State Championships being held in Burnie on the 28 February and 1 March.



Bridport Art Prize – January Long Weekend 2027

A new signature cultural event for Tasmania's North East.

The Vision

To establish a major annual art event in Bridport during the January long weekend of 2027. The centrepiece will be a significant art prize celebrating works inspired by Bridport and its close surrounds — from beaches and boats to streetscapes, landscapes, local life, and community moments. The only requirement: the work must capture the spirit of Bridport.

Why Bridport

Bridport has a unique, relaxed atmosphere that locals and visitors love. This event is designed to complement that vibe — a passive, high quality cultural experience that draws people in without overwhelming the town. Visitors often want to take home something meaningful that reminds them of the place they've enjoyed.

Art travels, and you never know where a painting of Bridport might end up — becoming a quiet ambassador for the town. Bridport is already a major summer destination. By anchoring a cultural event outside the peak period, the Art Prize can help extend tourism benefits and support local traders throughout the year.

Event Concept

Opening Night

- A ticketed launch for approximately 100 guests.
- Wine, nibbles, and live announcements.
- Presentation of the major prize winner.
- Auction of five selected works to generate excitement and early sales.

Exhibition

- All finalist works displayed in a central venue (to be confirmed) for one week.
- After the main exhibition, artworks will be distributed among participating local venues, encouraging visitors to explore the town.

Community and Economic Benefits

- Increased visitation during a traditionally quieter period .
- Stronger collaboration between local businesses.
- A new cultural identity for Bridport.
- Opportunities for local artists and emerging talent.
- A long term event that can grow into a regional highlight.

Next Steps

This concept is ready to evolve. The next stage is to form a proactive committee of passionate locals, business owners, artists, and supporters. With the right team, the event can expand to include workshops, youth activities, public art, or satellite events. We already have an offer of commercial media and marketing support — a strong foundation to build on.

Get Involved

If you're interested in helping shape this exciting new event for Bridport, please reach out.

Contact: Ian Goninon Phone/text: 0400 224 552 Email: ian@jidconstructions.com.au (Ian has previously organised Motorama, Woolmers Festival of Roses, and other successful events).



Redcross Transport Vehicle available to Bridport and Northeast residences.

- We currently have six Volunteer Transport Drivers who are available to provide door-to-door transport.
- Red Cross Volunteer Transport Drivers help older people to and from non-urgent medical appointments and social outings.
- A Red Cross volunteer driver will collect you from your home and drive you to your appointment.
- Register for Red Cross Transport Assistance contact Leonie Johnston (mobile 0438 281 352 or email: leonie.bridport@gmail.com) and she will come to your home and assist you.





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Ages 13 to Adulthood 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

For further information or to register your interest
call Corine on 0488 566 560

Kingcorine1@gmail.com

Dance at Bridport!



Children and adult dance classes have recently commenced, thanks to the support of parents within the community and the Bridport Primary School who have provided the fantastic school hall.

Children from 2-11 years have been attending classes and the uptake has been very encouraging. Karen Ashford, who has started the initiative, said that dancing is beneficial for people of all ages. "I am so excited to see children coming along to classes, and I am very grateful to the parents who are giving them the opportunity to foster a love of movement to music. The space is relaxed, inclusive and non-competitive, and we will try several forms of dance".

Adult classes are also on offer, with jazz classes on Wednesday evenings. "I always feel better in my mind and body if I am moving to music, and I hope that people of all ages and ability come along and have a go. Fun and laughter is guaranteed, and hopefully we will learn some steps along the way!".

Details are on the Bridport Dance and Chit Chat pages.

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Unheard of Peak by Lou Brooker

Most of the members of the North East Field Nats group had never heard of Doctor's Peak before they climbed it a couple of weekends ago. It's a 300 metre 'peak' about 10 km inland from the Gardens on the east coast, north of Binalong Bay. For reference, that is 100 metres higher than Mt. William in the National Park near Musselroe Bay.

We had read of an expedition that had happened in 2007 where members of the MTWAC, the local aboriginal organisation, had walked in the footsteps of George Augustus Robinson when he set out in 1830 to find the local chief Manalargenna and in his words "persuade them to come under his protection". In other words, round up the population and remove them to Wybalenna on Flinders Island.

One of our Field Nat members had been on that 2007 expedition in which Doctors Peak had been climbed, and he led the Field Nats outing. There was a large turnout for the outing because the North East Field Nats were joined by the St Helens Walking Group.

It was a fairly constant uphill walk through open ironbark forest, but well worth the effort when the summit was reached where there were beautiful lunch spots amongst the huge granite boulders. The 360 degree views below included St. Patrick's Head, Mt. William and Mt. Cameron. Perhaps the most interesting sighting of the day was the flying duck orchid, but other specialties, though not in flower, were the rock orchids which drape themselves all over the granite boulders. This was the first opportunity members had to farewell their dearest friend, Jay Wilson, and they did so by toasting him in very appropriate surroundings at the end of the walk.

Photo credits: Claudia Bohme and Penny Reeves



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Bridport Ladies' Fashion

Bridport was a hive of fashion across many routine and social activities in its early days. These included holidaying visitors from town (Launceston and beyond), campers along the foreshore, and bathers in the water. A great variety of ladies' fashion was on display, whether from high society, farmers, domestic servants, or simply a local going about their daily business. Amusements and activities, such as annual picnics, tennis and cricket matches, fishing parties, balls and dances, often attracted very specialised fashions for the period, when compared to today. During the early 20th Century, dances were held nearly every night at Bridport during the Summer months, with the hall often becoming very crowded. With so many functions, a well-dressed woman would need to have an extensive wardrobe if she was to be seen often at such events.

Beachwear for the ladies was strictly controlled, with Bridport having strict By-Laws to govern the desirability of beach clothes. Indeed, in 1935, at a meeting of the Scottsdale Council, Cr Robert Coplestone brought forward a motion that a By-Law be introduced to control bathing at Bridport, in the event of the "necessity arising where adequate clothing conventions were not met." Councillor Coplestone articulated that incidents were reported to him of occasions where "offensive clothing" was worn at the Bridport Beach. In one case, a lady complained that some people were not setting an example of modesty on the beach, which she allegedly called "disgusting". Whilst support was given to establishing a By-Law that regulated beach clothing, debate ensued over personal liberty versus community expectations and standards. Notwithstanding, Bridport had many bathing boxes on the beach for rent, to ensure people did not wear their beach clothes from their hotel to the beach. Bathing box rentals at Bridport Beach in 1935 were advertised at 7s/6d per annum.

Holiday wear for the ladies was eloquently described in a local newspaper as, "Clothing without style is like a violin without strings – minus its soul." The article further noted that you cannot get style from a ready-made suit. Indeed, Launceston tailors would advertise their work in order to attract customers from the bush, where a lady would send her measurements and hope that the garment met her requirements. However, fashion magazines would push hand made clothes for cost effectiveness and the personal touch, which cannot be obtained from a city tailor. Despite the fierce competition between home made and city tailor, local suppliers, such as Brewer's early store at Bowood, and one of the district's early pioneers, Thomas Massey of Jetsonville, followed by Thomas D. Heazelwood, who also opened a General Store at Tucker's Corners, now Scottsdale, where the needs of ladies' needlework could be met. Also, A.W. Loone later had a General Store at Scottsdale, which supplied ready made clothing, fabrics, millinery, boots and shoes, etc.

The many dances, balls and weddings that are published in local newspapers often articulate what the ladies wore to the event, including what a bride wore on departure for their honeymoon. In one wedding at the Methodist Church, Bridport, between Shirley Imms and Alan Ross in 1954, the bride wore a Junior Navy Suit as they departed for their honeymoon in Queensland. These descriptions were often published in the early 20th Century, whereas they are no longer used.

Whilst women's fashions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were consistent across Tasmania, Bridport held its own with its large range of activities around holiday time, and across the social spectrum.

The Dorset Tasmania History Society aims to record and preserve the history of our region. You can contact them via their popular Facebook page or via their President, Nigel Mercer, on 0412 063 024.



The publishers acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Bridport and North-East Tasmania, the leenerreter clan of the Coastal Plains Nation, with respect for Elders past and present.

Brought to you by



If you have an up coming event or something you would like to share please contact Alison for more information:

bridreport@gmail.com

A BIG thank you to the individuals, clubs and organisations and businesses who contributed to this month's issue of the Bridreport

