

CNAV News Roundabout

March 2011

Directions for the year

Organising a possible regional meeting, in conjunction with a country member newspaper was one of the main ideas discussed recently when the CNAV committee met for the first time this year.

The committee was due to meet in February but extraordinary weather conditions made the meeting impossible for several executive members.

At its recent meeting, the committee heard that following the successful regional meeting in Kyneton last year, follow-on meetings could be held in various parts of the state, including possibly the western region, the north central, and the northern area.

Discussion centred on making the regional meeting available to a wide range of community newspapers in that particular region.

Several areas are up for consideration.



Welcome new member

CNAV now has 77 members, including six associate members, and it's a great pleasure to welcome Raymond Island Matters, a feisty four page monthly publication put out by a team of six volunteers for the general community in this quite unique and picturesque area of coastal Gippsland.

About 500 copies are printed, of which 450 are delivered by volunteers to letter boxes on the island and the rest go on the island's ferry for people to pick up. An electronic version goes to some 70 people.

Editor Kate McKinnon said that the newspaper started off as a Raymond Island Community Association (RICA) publication. "But then we made the decision make it a true community newsletter," she said.

"In its current format, it has been going for about two years. The first few editions were funded by RICA through a grant they had received after the 2007 floods.

Since then it has been financed by donations from individuals and groups on the island – quite amazing really, we have never asked for money, but a few people asked how much it cost to produce (about \$50 a month) and offered to sponsor an edition.

"From there it snow-balled, and the offers have kept rolling in. It's very gratifying, and one of the ways we know we're hitting the mark with our newsletter."

"We believe it has really helped to bring the community together – we try to find a balance of information and entertainment, and keep it pretty local (some might say parochial!) Readers seem to particularly like the human interest stories (eg 'Island Identities'), and the amusing anecdotes and quizzes.

"At the same time, we've been able to raise awareness about important issues such as bushfire and flood preparation, ferry outages and local events," editor McKinnon said.

Raymond Island Matters is printed on A4 and stapled. It features colour on all four pages. Its appeal is its wide range of local topics, simply layout and short, to-the-point sentences.

CNAV history project concludes

About 30 cheques for \$500 have now gone out to members participating in the Regional Development Victoria History Project, and a number of newspapers have expressed their appreciation for the grants, considering their often dire financial situation.

The following comments demonstrate that many committees are operating on shoestring budgets and the money has been greatly appreciated.

Narracan News:

Wow - that is great news. Maybe we can buy a laser printer to replace our, fit only for the tip, ancient photocopier!

Otway Light

Great news thanks! We are soon shifting into a new room at the school, and would like some storage cupboards, so it's come at a good time. This [project] has opened up a whole new world of interesting historical articles, if we have the time!

The Pinnacle, French Island:

The involvement with the CNAV has been inspirational for us: we have just managed to purchase a new A3 printer (thanks in part to the Historical Grant) and will be transforming the layout by the end of this year. Even the content is changing!

We are all looking forward to this year's CNAV conference, and it will be good to catch up and see how your year has gone.

Raymond Island continued from page 1

Situated in the Gippsland Lakes directly opposite and linked to Paynesville by ferry, the island is only six km long by 2 km wide. About 300 km from Melbourne, the island is famous for its large koala population.

There are about 450 permanent residents on the Island, and about the same number of houses (so probably about half are holiday houses). In summer the population quadruples.

Photograph: the Raymond Island Ferry, which features on the Raymond Island Matters masthead (photo edge.com.au)

New communications

At least one of our members makes use of Facebook. Do you know of any others? We would be most grateful for correspondence!

The social network has become quite valuable as a communications tool during a time of disaster, such as the recent Victorian floods. Victoria Police has links on its official homepage to Twitter, Facebook and YouTube (Victorian Police Blue Tube). You can get updates from there about alerts, road closures etc. This could be useful to people who have the latest phone/Internet gadgets. They can read them while they are stuck in traffic on the freeway! Note who follows Vic Police twitter. It includes all the main media ABC and commercial outlets, radio and TV, CFA, MFB, TAC, Metro trains etc.

<https://twitter.com/VictoriaPolice>

<http://www.facebook.com/VictoriaPoliceForcebook>

Linton News would like some advice about using Facebook. Members who have used Facebook effectively could contact Frank at Linton News directly, with advice. Linton is making some other changes too, among them a crack at tabloid. It is all part of the paper's attempt to set up a new profile. To see the monthly paper in colour, log on to: lintoncommunity.com

The finer points

One of our members wrote, asking advice about putting personal items such as death and birth notices on their website. They recently had a case in which there was some doubt about putting an engagement notice on the website, even though it was used in the hard copy of the publication.

The rule of thumb is that if the items satisfy appropriate law affecting journalism (that the actual advertisement has been verified in the classifieds) – eg by the signatures of the engaged couple – there is no problem with using it on the website.

As our President Mary Jo Fortuna said: "Indeed it's an extra selling-point for advertising – they get a double-whammy exposure!"

Next committee meeting

The CNAV committee is due to meet again early in April and one of the main topics will be the planning, first of all, for a regional meeting sometime mid-year, and then the major conference later.

Studfield Wantirna CN networks with local radio

Following the Warragul Conference, Col Fletcher from the Studfield Wantirna Community News, wrote to the keynote speaker Gerard Callinan (ABC Regional Gippsland) and said: "Our community newspaper had three of our four volunteer production team members at the conference and we found your session very enlightening, especially the discussion on how to gain connection with the community through engaging the services of local radio.



Gerard Callinan

"While we felt this would work really well in regional areas where there was probably one community newspaper and one local radio station, we weren't sure how your suggestions could be implemented in a metropolitan area.

"We operate within the Knox Council precinct where there are six community newspapers covering different suburbs within the Knox Council jurisdiction and at the time were not aware of any community radios within our immediate area.

"After some research by one of our volunteers we discovered the existence of Eastern FM Radio 98.1, a radio station covering the outer eastern suburbs.

"Since making this discovery we have been interviewed on the radio during a program hosted by Tricia Ziemer that focuses on community happenings within the eastern suburbs. Tricia is also involved with TV's Channel 31 and we have also enjoyed television exposure through Tricia's Ch 31 program that has a similar eastern suburbs focus and appears on Channel 31 twice per week.

"In our next edition we will be including a feature article on 98.1FM and also an article about one of Tricia's other Ch31 programs, 'Kids in the Kitchen' and we believe we have established an ongoing relationship with 98.1FM that will be mutually beneficial in the coming months and years.

"I doubt that this relationship would have been established without the exposure we received at the CNAV Conference to your thoughts about using the community radio network to help promote our community newspaper and I wanted to let you know the impact your presentation had, at least on our little part of the community newspaper world," Col wrote.

CNAV News Roundabout is compiled by Jo Vondra, CNAV vice president and editor of the Lorne Independent.

If you have any news or questions, please email Jo at jvondra@bigpond.net.au