

Our club website was originally started by Gerald Batt. Following the sad passing of Gerald, his daughter Elise took over the management of the website. Along with the painstaking work involved in completing what Gerald had begun, Elise put together this wonderful and very comprehensive history of our club. The following is the club history in her words.....

I would like to dedicate the following pages to my dad Gerald Batt. He worked tirelessly for the Angling Club, and put in so many hours of work to make the club the fantastic group that it is today.

He also did so much behind the scenes, that many would not be aware of. The history of the club was a project he was working on behind the scenes, and I feel it is only right that I publish his work in honour of him.

This is for you Dad.

Foundation Members:

Norm Anderton , Dot Anderton, Albert Cumming, Ted Hansen,
Ray Mollison, Vi Mollison, Ernie Miall, Rose Miall,
Ken Taylor, Chris Taylor.

" Some of the founding members are now deceased.
It is their legacy that the club survives, and we enjoy the fruits of their work.

*Ken Taylor is a life member of the club, and Wally Diss declined life membership after being nominated.

Gerald Batt was awarded life membership in 2007.

A brief history of the club.
By Gerald Batt. [an original member in 1979 & a committee member in 2008]

In 1979 Venus Bay resident Ken Taylor made a survey of people
using the existing boat ramp at Fisherman's Jetty Road.

At this time there was a timber ramp, built alongside the jetty.
The ramp was old and slippery and dangerous.
Ken approached councilor Ted Hansen with a view to starting
a boat & angling club, and to instigate the building
of a new ramp at Venus Bay.

A public meeting was held at the Venus Bay Lifesaving club
in August 1979, and that was indeed the birth of the
"Venus Bay Boat & Angling Club".

The office bearers of the club when it was formed, came from the founding members.

1979

Ted Hansen.... President
Albert Cumming.... Vice president
Ken Taylor.... Secretary
Chris Taylor.... Treasurer

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July 1979[/caption]

The fight for better boating conditions:

The early committee worked tirelessly to upgrade the facilities.

In particular Ken Taylor, who became secretary of the club, lobbied all the relevant departments for grants to build a new ramp, and provide the parking area that exists today.

The new ramp was opened in 1982, less than three years after the club was formed.

The committee had lobbied with great success, and much of the manual work was done with the assistance of the early members.

Part of the plan to build the new ramp, also included the boat parking area, installing the electric bbq's, and building the playground. While not directly involved, these facilities would possibly not be there, but for the work of the fishing club committee at that time, in upgrading this area.

The angling club worked hand in hand with the foreshore committee, and while not agreeing all the time, the end result was a success for Venus Bay.

The members "raked" the concrete ramp as it was poured, so that the ramp would not be slippery, as many ramps are, and with the guidance of the Foreshore committee / Lands Department, Ports and Harbors, and the council, members assisted in building the catwalks over the next few years.

The club members, again with the help of the foreshore/lands Dept built a retaining wall behind the jetty, and boats could be moored there at all tides.

Much of the sand and grass areas in front of the ramp, were the work of the club, and in particular, Bill Van Dillen, who was at that time, not only our local "Ranger", but a hard working committee man of the Venus Bay Boat And Angling Club.

(In the late 90's the retaining wall was removed, and the mooring area has again filled with silt.)

The "Boat" part of the early club, was in regard to members who had boats, but did not always go fishing.

The club tried to assist these members with regards to radio license's, and also to provide some facilities for those who wanted to water ski.

The Tarwin river, from the ramp at Tarwin Lower to the rocks, was, [and still is], used by skiers. However most members were fishermen, and little was done for those wishing to ski.

The club, when it was reformed in 1998, decided to drop the "boating" from the name and it is now known as "The Venus Bay Angling Club".

The Caravan:

In the early 80's the club purchased a caravan, to have on site at the ramp, when fishing competitions were held. The caravan was the base station for entrance fees, and it was the weigh in point on competition days.

The caravan had to be "manned" at all times during competitions, and sometimes committee members had to sleep in it overnight, for security reasons. At this time there were no shops at Venus Bay,

and the club sold bait, tackle, some soft drinks and pies, from the caravan. This helped produce funds and made the club financial enough to have great prizes and trophies for their competitions.

The caravan was old & heavy, and to tow it to the jetty for fishing comps was another problem. The Caravan had to be kept at a committee members house, and you needed a 4 wheel drive to tow it.

While it did raise a lot of funds for the club, it also caused a lot of Headaches, and after the general store opened in Venus Bay, There was also a conflict of interest.

The caravan was disposed of when Doug Rosynski reformed the club in 1998.

Some funds were also used to purchase a small "safety boat". The boat was on hand when competitions were held, and also used by members when the channel markers needed replacing. The cost of maintaining the boat, and the little amount of use it was getting, forced the club to re-assess its importance, and after a number of years, this boat was sold and most of the proceeds were donated to the S.E.S, who were the responsible rescue service for Andersons Inlet.

Channel Marking:

Channel marking has always been a priority of the club. Early days saw members getting long, straight tea-tree trunks, and placing them each side of the gutter that leads to the main channel. Metal squares and triangles were fixed to the tea-tree, to give boats a guide. Seaweed and weather made it an everlasting task to keep the channel marked.

Wally Diss, Alan Tyley, Doug Rosynski, Bruce Evers and Greg Thomas, were among the many who kept the channel marked in the 80's & 90's. The old channel ran west of the boat ramp, along the muddy bank towards the drain. The silt build up along this bank has caused boats to now travel east from the ramp where the water is now a little deeper. The channel is still controlled by tide times & tide heights.

Due to the persistence of Alan Tyley, and Tony Burgess, Ports & Harbours provided the yellow buoys that marked the channel to 2001. These buoys were put in place by Alan, Tony, and other members of the "One Armed Bandits" fishing club [a club that was formed, at the time the Venus Bay Boating and Angling Club was in "recess". [About 1995].

Work was also done to remove the broken tea-tree markers that had become dangerous.

In 2002 the committee elected Gerald Batt & Ian McIntyre as safety officers. Gerald & Ian maintained the yellow buoys with the help of Gippsland Ports. These buoys moved with very high tides and broke away in storms.

Keeping the channel marked required constant work. These buoys are now replaced with red and green channel markers, and are maintained by Gippsland ports, the responsible authority for Anderson Inlet.

Looking after the environment:

The early committee was strongly opposed to netting in the inlet, both legal & illegal. Many letters were written to local papers & politicians on this issue. It all appeared to be fruitless, as people in authority mainly refused to believe that netting had any effect on fish population. However with constant attention being drawn to netting, it did become an issue and now there is no netting in the Inlet and recreational fishing has improved dramatically.

Another topic that caused much angst was in 1983, when the government first moved to make marine parks along the Gippsland coast. Recreational fishermen joined professional fishermen in opposing this plan. Professional fishermen feared of losing their livelihood, recreational fishermen feared that they would not be allowed to fish in these areas, and local people along the coast, believed their towns would die, without a fishing industry.

People rallied all over Gippsland, and protest crowds of 300 to 400 people were common. The Venus Bay Boat & Angling Club was very vocal in opposing the planned legislation, to the extent of supporting professional fishermen who had license's to fish Anderson Inlet.

Clubrooms:

The club has worked towards having it's own club rooms since it started.

Many approaches were made to council for loans to build these rooms, and many approaches to donate land for this purpose.

From 1979 to 1994 all committees worked towards this goal. The council decided not to grant loans or land for this purpose, but to direct the club to use the Venus Bay Community Centre, [plans for this centre were on the drawing board in the late 80,s] as this was the purpose of such a facility [Community Centre].

From "The Star 1982

The answer was NO

Taken from the club newsletter "Salt Spray" 1993

Again this application failed.

This was about the time the community centre was being built.

It was not a "sporting complex"

In 2006 the club again approached council to build clubrooms on the same site as all earlier committees had suggested.

Gerald Batt returned to the committee in 2007 as

Vice President, [after a two year absence], and was

appointed as Alick's assistant, to deal with council matters,

on getting the clubrooms up and running.

Gerald spent many hours through 2007, dealing with council regarding the lease of land adjacent to the jetty, the planning permit, the building permit, and the application for a council grant, to assist in the building of the facility.

The answer was yes.

Photo's shows the clubrooms to lock up 2007,
and the interior & exterior as it looks today.

The Fish-A- Thon.

From the beginning of the club, there has always been a "Fish-A-Thon".

This competition was always the biggest competition of the year with the best prizes. In the early days of the club, the Fish-A-Thon was held in January, and 200 entries were common. At that time you had to enter the comp each day.

Sponsorship and advertising made these events very successful. However it became more difficult to get sponsors in the early 90's, and the event suffered. In the 80's these competitions had major prizes such as a boat with motor & trailer valued at over \$1400, which was big money at that time. One such boat was won with a "secret weight fish".

The winning fish was a trevally of just 235 grams, and Peter Gheller of Wonthaggi took home a new boat.

The "Fish-a-thon" is still the main competition for the club each year. With the help of sponsors we are again building up the prize value, and it is the most successful competition of the year.

The "Fish-A-Thon" is now held over the Easter long weekend, when most members are down at Venus Bay, and good fish are still being caught, both from the Surf and the Inlet.

In the early years of the club, many inter club competitions were held with local clubs. Some of these clubs have also struggled with membership.

These events were keenly contested, and we hope to regain some Shields that were used in these competitions.

We hope that in the future, we will again be able to have these inter club contests. The club struggled in the early 90's.

The committee worked hard, but people lost interest,
and the competitions and meetings were poorly attended.
In fact the winding up of the club was an option in 1994.

The following excerpt is from the presidents report year ending 1994.

The club survived but there was little action until: 1998.
Doug Rozynski called for a meeting and formed a committee
to revive the club, and in doing so, steered us to where we are today.

There were some changes on the committee over the early years of the new committee.
Some members who had volunteered for office positions were unaware
of the commitment involved and did not have the time to do the work,
and were replaced by others who did.

Under Doug's leadership the club started to move forward and membership grew slowly.
Competitions started getting more entries, and social events were well attended.

Some funds were still in the bank from the old club, [around \$5000] and
some these funds were used to purchase trophies and assist with
running costs for the new committee.

However a total of under \$1000 was taken from this account,
and from that time on, the club has been able to stand alone
and raise funds, to the extent of being able to build "The Fisherman's Shed"
in 2007/2008, with club funds, council & government grants,
and fantastic donations of goods and services from members and supporters.

This facility in effect is valued at over \$20,000.

At the annual general meeting in 2001 Stuart Shelton
replaced Doug Rozynski as president.

Doug accepted that his work was done, and he had been
successful in reforming the club, and it was Stuarts turn to take the club further.
Stuart began the task of building the club membership,
taking the club to a more social club where members mixed together regularly.
The club also started to be more actively involved in improving facilities
for members and visitors.

In 2005 the club decided to approach council, with the proposition of
building a fish cleaning facility on the jetty , next to the boat ramp.
Gerald Batt & Bob McCracken designed and built the fishing table in late 2005.

Gerald applied for a grant through the community grants program and
the club received \$800 from council. Bob did the welding and fitting of this facility.
The cost of bringing water to the jetty was \$800, and all material and
labour for the table itself, was provided by Bob & Gerald.
This facility was built for the use of all anglers, not just members of the club.

At the committee meeting of the Venus Bay Angling Club held on the 6th of June
2006, the committee passed a motion for the club president, Alick Purchase,
to explore the possibility of building a storage area / club rooms facility
on council land adjacent to the boat ramp.

While the club had been using the community centre for it's A.G.M, and other social events, it was not a place where we could display our trophies, and we still relied on David Walsh, [Rod Bendings shop], as a competition station and membership enrolment. The club needed a "Home".

Gerald Batt returned to the committee in 2007 as Vice President, [after a two year absence], and was appointed as Alick's assistant, to deal with council matters, on getting the clubrooms up and running.

Gerald spent many hours through 2007, dealing with council regarding the lease of land adjacent to the jetty, the planning permit, the building permit, and the application for a council grant, to assist in the building of the facility.

With success with all of these negotiations, the concrete slab was poured in November, and the shed was erected in December 2007, to lock up stage.

This had been the aim of the club since it's beginning in 1979. While the "fisherman's shed" is not as grand as some previous committee's plans, it is a great asset to the club, and to Venus Bay.

In December 2007, the club began stage 2 of this project. This was the Fitting of a kitchen area, plaster lining of the walls, tables & seating for our members & visitors, and shelving for our perpetual trophies.

The work completed on stage 2, would be valued at over \$10,000, and thanks to the generous donations of goods & services of our members, and supporters of the club, this is now a \$25,000 facility on the best site in Venus Bay, and the club has no outstanding debts.