

Storm Boy release shines light on Coorong's wild side

It's an exciting new chapter for the Coorong, as the remake of Colin Thiele's famous 1964 classic, Storm Boy hit cinemas last month, and our Mayor has encouraged the world to visit the district - what he refers to as the "fair dinkum" section of the Coorong.

There are so many South Australians who have already fallen in love with the story of Storm Boy and Mr Percival since the original book and film were made famous five decades ago. Now, the Council is looking forward to a new audience, from a new generation, wanting to experience their own 'Storm Boy' adventure right here in our district.

Since the trailer launched in August, there's been ongoing excitement across the State, as vision of the unique Coorong environment and wildlife, has been used to propel a major tourism marketing campaign across the globe. Images from the film have featured on the front page of The Advertiser newspaper, and 'Storm Boy inspired itineraries' are being promoted to places like South America.

The potential for our local businesses, especially those in Meningie, Raukkan, Narrung and Salt Creek, are exceptional - as the Coorong is beamed to millions of people worldwide.

"While we don't have the giant hotel chains or fancy restaurants, we do have the wild side of the Coorong right on our doorstep. We'll give people the fair dinkum Storm Boy experience over here," Mayor Simmons says.

"With this in mind, I'm expecting those people who love getting back to nature, bird watchers and environmentalists, are the types who will be coming to visit. Even if our new visitors are camping out in the national park, they still need to buy things like fuel, food and other supplies to see them through - I believe this is where the initial impact could be seen on the local economy."

Council's Senior Community and Tourism Officer, Kellie Jaensch is encouraging local businesses, which want to tap in to the Storm Boy excitement, to get in touch with her.

"Already there are some tourism operators in the Meningie area stepping up to deliver new experiences or improved products and service for the expected influx of visitors," Ms Jaensch says.

"These include new hands-on fishing and boating experiences, increasing accommodation, upgrades to local cabin/caravan parks, growth in holiday realty and more."

The Council has also been preparing for it, with some great existing and new facilities visitors can enjoy. In Meningie alone, we've helped deliver the Pelican Path, a new fenced dog park, free bike hire, a lakeside nature playground, public art and sculptures (including some from local Ngarrindjeri artists), improved RV and caravan facilities and more. There's even the giant wooden pelican sculpture in the main street of Meningie - a tribute to Mr Percival.

On top of this, Council will soon be launching the second complete section of the Murray Coorong Trail, which provides a recreational walking and cycling trail from the Meningie township directly to the edge of the Coorong at Noonameena. The third section of the trail, which will hopefully begin construction later this year, will be within the Raukkan township - as we support the community to capitalise on cultural and eco-tourism opportunities.

If you haven't seen the film yet, make sure you book a date!

Local tourism businesses who wish to get in touch with Kellie Jaensch, can email or phone the Council office on K.Jaensch@coorong.sa.gov.au or 1300 785 277.

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Mayor's report

Firstly, I want to congratulate the exceptional work of our local volunteers who have been named Australia Day Award winners for 2019 (see all the winners on page five). I was very fortunate that in my first few days after being elected Mayor, I had the privilege of calling the winners to congratulate them. It's passionate volunteer organisations and individuals like this who help to keep our local towns and facilities ticking.

It's been a busy few months in the role, and I would like to thank everyone who has supported me in taking it on. We have a diverse range of new Council Members representing the Coorong, and I believe this mix of backgrounds and interests will help us lead our district and make positive decisions on behalf of our communities over the next four years. We have Councillors from the fishing, farming, horticulture, emergency services and health industries - all bringing a great deal of local knowledge to the decision-making table. We also have a good mix of fresh energy with five new Council Members, and four who were re-elected offering us experience and insights into Council activities.

I'd like to thank the previous Councillors who have now moved on, for their commitment, time and effort. I acknowledge that while I may not have agreed with all of their decisions, each one put their heart into the role of leading this Council - and I expect our new team will do the same.

Many will know it was a hotly-contested election campaign, there was a lot of media coverage and community interest. I believe this was positive for our district, and ensured we had one of our biggest voter turnouts to date - giving our community a strong say in who now sits at the decision-making desk for Council.

Looking forward, my priority during my first six months as Mayor is to start to better understand where the Council is at. Many will know that I have an interest

to review the transparency and efficiency of Council where possible, and while there will likely be changes in this space in the future, for now it is important that I get to know more about the operational side of the organisation.

Another part of the role I see as vitally important is ensuring our district and wider region stays in the forefront of the State and Federal governments' agendas. There are some pressing environmental issues I'll be advocating for, including the health of the Lower Murray, Lakes and Coorong area - with the impacts of drought already being seen on farms, environments, small business, families and more.

The other State and Federal issue I want to pursue is more funding for road safety. Our high-volume principal highways in particular need to be more of a priority for the Government, and put simply, the funding allocations we receive from them at the moment is not enough. I'll be making it my mission to engage our State and Federal Ministers on this issue over the coming 12 months, and report back to the community on outcomes.

One thing I've always loved about living and working in rural communities is our 'can-do' attitude. We're resilient in the face of adversity, and always working to make our towns stronger. With this in mind, I'd like to work with local people and organisations over the coming years to further harness local strengths and resources to deliver more community-based initiatives - and I'd be happy to talk to anyone, anytime about how I can help to make this happen.

Regards, Paul Simmons

Keep In Touch

Keep up to date on the latest happenings across the Coorong by signing up to Council's regular InTouch with the Community e-newsletter. It's distributed on a fortnightly basis and highlights latest Council news, community events and activities, funding opportunities, and more.

To subscribe, just send us your name and preferred email address to: council@coorong.sa.gov.au

Your Councillors

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Unsealed roads

It's been another busy period for our rural roads gang, with grading, re-sheeting, patching and maintenance works completed on many of our unsealed roads over December and January.

Throughout November and December 2018, we graded almost 600 kilometres of local roads, including some of our biggest stretches being: 28km on Yumali Road (Yumali), 33kms on Boothby Road (Colebatch), 31kms on Yarindale Road (Meningie) and 25km on Homestead Road (Tintinara).

Our team has worked solidly through the Christmas and New Year break, managing to deliver significant resheeting along Bennier's Road in Peake, and patching along Johncock Road (Seymour), Mount Sandy Road (Meningie) and Settlers Road (Field) - to name a few.

Some seal patching has also been completed along Poltalloch Road and in the township of Taillem Bend.

If you would like to report any hazards on our local roads, please get in touch by calling 1300 785 277 or email: council@coorong.sa.gov.au.

Meningie's giant pelican gets facelift

It's impossible to miss the giant wooden pelican carving which sits atop its perch as you drive through the Meningie main street. This beautiful piece of artwork is now a landmark for local people and visitors, and Council wants to preserve its condition for many years to come. For this reason, maintenance works were undertaken, which has brought it back to its original glory and will help prolong its life. It's also good timing as the launch of the Storm Boy film hits, and avid bird watchers and nature lovers, start to visit Meningie more often.




Road sign upgrades

As many of our road signs across the district begin to age, they can become difficult to read. This can pose a range of issues - especially during emergency scenarios when people need to navigate to specific addresses. For this reason we are rolling out replacements across the district - with the initial 134 reflective signs installed over recent months.

This is part of Council's ongoing commitment to bring the signs up to Australian Standards and improve overall quality across the district. The new signs now also include Council branding.

If you come across any illegible signs, please let us know, by phoning 1300 785 277 or email council@coorong.sa.gov.au.

Infrastructure projects ahead

As we move into the New Year, our Council sees the start of many new and exciting projects across the district and the finalisation of two significant tenders. The projects the community can look forward to seeing come to life include:

- Tintinara Health Care Centre carpark upgrade
- Construction of Murray Coorong Trail shelter at Woolshed Reserve
- Roll out of Council's Reseal Program
- Various footpath and kerbing repairs/upgrades
- Finalisation of road re-sheeting tender
- Tendering for construction equipment (grader and vibrating roller)
- Taillem Bend Public Toilets redevelopment

In other good news for our outside team, we have now filled all of our community facilities and patrol grader positions after an extensive recruitment process, allowing us to have full staff servicing the roads and reserves across the district.

Patrol graders are based in Taillem Bend, Meningie and Coonalpyn and will service unsealed roads, and now that the Christmas annual leave period is over, we will have six full-time grader operators in action across the district - supporting Council's ongoing commitment to improve service levels.

Cycle with **the whole family** at The Bend

For the first time ever, the major Revolve24 cycling event at The Bend this March, will include the Coorong Community Ride. The event will allow people of all ages and abilities to have a go at cycling the world-class track, and adds to the other three cycling endurance and feature events over the long weekend.

The community ride will be held on Saturday, 16 March, and anyone with a bike (and helmet) will be able to ride the 3.41 kilometre west circuit. The cost is \$24 for a group of up to five people.

As part of the Council's partnership with this community-focussed event, we'll be handing out 'welcome packs' to participants, which include details on places to stay and things to do in the district - and hopefully encourage people to return for a holiday.

For more info on the event, or to register yourself, visit the website: revolve24.com/events/the-bend-motorsport-park.



Major trail moves ahead

One of the most exciting stretches of the Murray Coorong Trail, which connects the Meningie township to the edge of the Coorong, is almost complete.

Work is currently underway along Narrung Road (from the football oval to Warrengie Drive), which will include resealing and marking the trail. There will also be a shelter and picnic table installed at the end of Woolshed Road (part way along the trail), encouraging users to stop and view the regional hidden treasure that is the historic woolshed.



Directional markers will also be installed in the coming months, plus interpretative signage. We hope to have this section of the trail completed and open to the public during May.

Following this, Council will begin work on the next 32 kilometre stage of the trail which connects Raukkan to the Terengi Wetlands on the Coorong - this includes a rubble path to the Raukkan lookout - one of the most magical views of Lake Alexandrina and the Coorong. Following a funding win from the State Government of \$110,000, it's hoped this work will be complete by October 2020. Council will soon begin working with the Raukkan Community Council, NRM, National Parks SA and private landholders to develop this stage, taking in to consideration a range of environmental, cultural and heritage items.

The Murray Coorong Trail is a collaborative initiative with the Coorong, Murray Bridge and Mid Murray Councils, and will span 450km from Salt Creek in the South, to Cadell in the north - and is set to become one of Australia's iconic nature-based tourism assets.

MENINGIE 14 JAN - 12 MARCH	TINTINARA 1 JULY - 26 AUG
TAILEM BEND 12 MARCH - 6 MAY	RAUKKAN 26 AUG - 21 OCT
COONALPYN 6 MAY - 1 JULY	

Please contact Council immediately to report damages or maintenance requests
1300 785 277 or council@coorong.sa.gov.au



Worthy Oz Day winners announced for Coorong

Congratulations to the members of the Coorong community who have been recognised with the 2019 Australia Day Awards. A selection of six exceptional volunteers, three community projects and one event have been awarded for their commitment, dedication and leadership.

Australia Day Award ceremonies were held across the district on 26 January, when all winners were celebrated. The awards are a great opportunity to thank people and organisations for their passionate contribution to making our community a better place to live, work and play.

If you know a person, project or event you think might be worthy – then why not nominate them later this year? Find out the details at: australiadaysa.com.au.

Our local Coorong District Council Australia Day Award winners for 2019 were:

- Citizen of the Year – Meningie: Ian Qualmann
- Citizen of the Year – Peake: Trevor Johnson
- Citizen of the Year – Tailem Bend: Lynton Piggott and Joyce Medlow
- Citizen of the Year – Tintinara: Jim and Jacki Cunningham
- Community Event of the Year – Meningie: Murraylands Ambrose, Scrambrose and LALA Classic
- Community Project of the Year – Meningie: Coorong Cottage Industries (CCI)
- Community Project of the Year – Tailem Bend: Tailem Bend Community Centre Bucket List
- Community Project of the Year – Tintinara: Tintinara Nature Playground



Protect your family from mosquitoes this summer



We all know mosquitoes can be a nuisance, but some can spread serious diseases when they bite and there is currently NO CURE and NO VACCINE for mosquito-borne disease.

The only way to protect yourself and your family is to avoid being bitten.

Our Environmental Health team undertakes regular checks of mosquito numbers and potential breeding sites and we need your help. So please remember to clean up around your property and remove any stagnant water. Mosquitoes only need a small amount of water to breed in.

When outside, remember to cover up in light-coloured, loose clothing and use a picaridin or DEET based insect repellent.

According to recent figures from the University of South Australia, the Lower Murray River area has an above average rate for the transmission of arboviruses. This means there is a higher chance of acquiring such diseases as Ross River Virus or Barmah Forest Virus.

For more information on mosquitos, or Council's management of them, please contact our Environmental Health Officer Caroline Thomas on 1300 785 277 or cthomas@coorong.sa.gov.au.

Coonalpyn market and car boot sale

Council will be coordinating a car boot sale and market day to coincide with the 2019 Coonalpyn RV Fest. Locals and visitors are encouraged to join in the celebration. We are aiming to feature live music, food, drink and market stalls as well as activities for children.

Location: Coonalpyn Football Oval

Date: Sunday, 3 March 2019

Time: 11am - 3pm

Stall Holder Information: Interested stallholders need to complete an application form, available to download from: coorong.sa.gov.au/rvfest.

New **musical playground** underway for **Sherlock**

A \$25,000 Country Arts SA Regional Arts Fund Step Out Grant will help upgrade plans for Sherlock's new interactive playground. Funding will go towards a range of artist-led workshops to introduce musical play elements on the playground, which will be made from repurposed farm equipment.

This project has a strong community focus, led by the Sherlock Community Centre and renowned SA artist Mark Thomson (also leading the Long Story Short project); with support from the Coorong District Council and a range of volunteers from the arts, engineering, health and farming sectors.

Project leaders are working towards creating a sustainable and engaging environment for children, but also providing an opportunity for rural men to come together, connect and learn new skills. Those living in remote parts of the Coorong district, in particular local farmers, are encouraged to take part, as an outlet to distract from their often stressful working environment. The project allows them to use their farming skills creatively, and for a positive outcome in their local community.

Once complete, the play space will showcase a significant story on local farming hopefully becoming a unique landmark destination for visitors along the Mallee Highway.

Huge **2019 arts program** announced

It's another huge year ahead for the Coorong arts and culture program, and already it's kicked off with a new exhibition at the Coorong Gallery – Bridge Arts; and one of the major features coming up in August will be the Coorong's biggest ever SALA festival. Our award-winning arts program contributes to exceptional outcomes in terms of community mental health, wellbeing, social connectedness, learning and professional development.

Inside garden: 8 February – 5 April 2019

This creative indoor garden contrasts the cool of the garden with the heat of the Coorong summer. Visually interpreting our environment, artists have created the coolest venue to immerse yourself in this Summer.

Why Tintinara? South Australia's History Festival:

12 April – 7 June 2019

A collection of memorabilia and photographs which document the 1840 settlement of Tintinara, the impact of the 1852 gold route and the 1886 railway development that contributed to today's vibrant community.

Ray of Light: 14 June – 26 July

Robyn Stacey creatively distorts South Australia through camera obscura, an optical device of wonder, whereby the external world is trapped and inverted within the room.

SALA 2019: 2 August – 27 September

The South Australian Living Artists (SALA) Festival is a state-wide festival that promotes the many talented visual artists across SA. As part of Council's commitment, three different venues will promote our region's talent. A highlight will be the inclusion of works produced at the recent *Drawing on Country* workshop. To be involved, please contact our Arts and Community Development Officer Susie Ifould on 1300 785 277 or email council@coorong.sa.gov.au.





Council awards \$20k in community grants

Our 2018/19 Community Grants have been announced, with a collective \$20,000 in funding awarded to local projects in Meningie, Tailem Bend and Tintinara.

The grants program helps local not-for-profit organisations to deliver positive community projects and events which ultimately encourage members to keep active and healthy, build relationships, strengthen community culture, grow tourism and improve economic interests.

The five recipients for the latest round were:

- Meningie Netball Club: \$5,000 for a ceiling upgrade.
- Tailem Bend Bowling Club: \$2,280 to upgrade blinds.
- Coorong Cottage Industries: \$4,787 towards print workshops.
- Tintinara Football Club: \$5,000 for air-conditioning.
- Meningie Cheese Factory Museum: \$3,505 for a public toilet.

The Council offers two rounds of these grants per year, with up to \$5,000 available for each organisation.

Community groups and sporting organisations which have

project-ready activities and can be completed in 12 months are encouraged to apply. Applications for funding will be considered by Council on merit and in accordance with its Community Events, Grants and Donations Policy.

Round Two of Council's 2018/19 Community Grants will open on 1 March and close 5pm, 29 March 2019.

Applications can be downloaded from: coorong.sa.gov.au/grants.

Tailem Bend Public Toilets Re-development

The Local Government Association's (LGA) procurement division has facilitated a tender process for a contractor to design and complete construction of the Tailem Bend public toilet block upgrade (Railway Terrace). After a rigorous process, it has been awarded to Unique Urban Built Pty Ltd.

Council is now working alongside Unique Urban Build to finalise the planning process, with the engineering, design and construction program finalised at the end of January 2019. The next step is procurement of materials for the project, and construction will begin after all relevant approvals have been achieved - no changes to the existing facility will be made until this time.

Meningie Dog Park

The fully-fenced Meningie Dog Park was officially opened in November. The new facility includes doggy obstacles, a shelter and drinking fountain.

The project has been a collective community effort, with exceptional support from a number of local groups and volunteers, plus leadership from Meningie Area School.



Key dates:

February

- 08** **Inside garden - Cool in the Coorong**
Coorong Gallery, Taillem Bend
- 10** **Exhibition opening - Inside garden**
2-5pm Coorong Gallery, Taillem Bend
- 20** **Rural Business Support Workshops**
9-11am Meningie Information Hub
1-3pm Taillem Bend Civic Centre
- 22** **Dupang Festival**
Long Point, Coorong National Park

March

- 01** **Coonalpyn RV Festival**
Coonalpyn
Round two of Council's Community Grants open
(closes 29th March)
- 03** **Coonalpyn Markets & Car Boot Sale**
11am-3pm Coonalpyn Football Oval
- 06** **TAFE SA Food Safety Training**
3pm Meningie
Bookings essential, contact Gemma McGowan (foodsafety@tafesa.edu.au)
- 08** **Meningie Food Fair**
Meningie
- 16** **Revolve24**
The Bend Motorsport Park

April

- 06** **Tasting Australia Escargot Festival**
run by Careship Coorong
- 10** **TAFE SA Food Safety Training**
3pm Taillem Bend
Bookings essential, contact Gemma McGowan (foodsafety@tafesa.edu.au)
- 12** **Why Tintinara?**
South Australia's History Festival
Coorong Gallery, Taillem Bend
- 14** **Exhibition opening - Why Tintinara?**
2-5pm Coorong Gallery, Taillem Bend



Program release for Coonalpyn RV Fest

The countdown is on to the Coonalpyn RV Fest to be held from 1-4 March, and it's set to deliver another jam-packed program of local activities over the four-day festival.

Community groups and local businesses have come on board to provide their visitors with some good old fashioned Coonalpyn hospitality. Activities planned include walking arts tours featuring the spectacular silo art, car boot sale and market, barefoot bowls, snail farm excursions, fossil washing workshops, regional doggy day bus tours and more.

You can view and download the festival program from the link below and check out what's on offer. Please come along and support your local community groups with their events and activities and join in on the fun. Why not take the family out for dinner? You will see there's lots of meals and entertainment on offer during the evenings and we encourage you to come and have a chat with the campers.

To book a site or to download the program visit: coorong.sa.gov.au/rvfest.

Promote your event!



Planning a community event?

We want to hear from you! Register your community event with Council to be featured on the Council website calendar of events and other publications.

Visit: coorong.sa.gov.au/registeryourevent.



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