



## **President's Report to Victorian Chapter AGM November 9<sup>th</sup> 2014**

This year we have built on the previous efforts of the Victorian Chapter Working Group which had established a state presence prior to 2013. This Group instigated media activities for the state webpage, provided regular reports to ACS and created networks across the region. This provided an important baseline on which to formally create our Victorian Chapter in August last year.

Officially formed in 2014 our Committee provided experience from a combination of business, agency, community and tertiary education providers.

Our key outcomes have been to implement the key roles of the ACS; support and strengthen interest at both a national and state level and to promote and improve communication, networks, partnerships and ACS membership.

We have met monthly, mainly via skype but also via face to face meetings at the Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence, at the Melbourne Museum and in Melbourne at two public venues. We have also attended two VCC workshops on the Draft VCS. Subsequently we held a workshop in Geelong to develop agreed processes for involving members in relevant submissions and to consider a response to the Draft Victorian Coastal Strategy 2013, [VCS2013]. We have also offered to promote the upcoming VCS information sessions with the VCC.

Our submissions have included a response to the Victorian Coastal Council, [VCC] on the VCS 2013 and to the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council, [VEAC] on their Marine Investigation Draft Proposals Paper 2013. Where possible we have circulated our submissions or key points to organisations and groups who might also be responding to these documents in the interest of generating a stronger voice.

At our April meeting where we were developing future plans, we identified that we needed to know more about our membership, their interests and specific areas of expertise or activity. Hence a questionnaire was developed

building on the previous national survey questions and outcomes. The questions asked why people had joined ACS, what role and activities they foresaw or expected and how they would like to be involved.

A response summary has been completed which will assist us with our forward planning workshop at the Coastal Funday.

Communications with members has been ably handled by Nick Wynn, with updates provided on our activities, workshops, ACS newsletters and scientific reports. This included the “Coastal Climate Change and the Great Ocean Road Region” workshops run by Phillip Roos.

We also agreed at our April meeting to attend or hold two coastal events by our next AGM and to increase membership. We have developed stronger ties with Parks Victoria who invited us to attend and present at their “Sharing the Love of the Coast” Forum at Phillip Island. Assisted by the Committee an ACS VIC brochure and presentation was developed with Rebecca Koss and Amanda Cornish attending on the day. Our Coastal Funday is the second event and my thanks to you all for your input.

In June those on the coast and inland experienced a large storm event with videos and photos captured by some of our Committee, other organisations and the media. This event raised the issue of what scientific and pictorial data is being collated, its availability, longevity and usefulness in monitoring coastal changes and planning for future adaptation. We need to consider our potential role and opportunities with regard to scientific data, community knowledge and support.

Over the last few months I have met with Mark Rodrigue, Parks Victoria, to review the outcomes of their Forum which included some future thinking on what the coast might look like in 20 years time. They are also interested in supporting a future event at Queenscliffe. I have also met with Naomi Edwards, convener of the Younger ACS, [YACS] to identify where mutual opportunities might lie, especially with communication, social media and YACS members.

Geoff Wescott, Rebecca Koss attended and presented at the Coast to Coast conference in Western Australia recently on an estuaries project, with Phillip Roos presenting on Regenerative Adaptive Design for Coastal Settlements and climate change.

With the assistance of Geoff Wescott we have completed regular State Chapter Reports to the ACS Committee and participated in regular skype meetings. This has been beneficial in understanding what is happening nationally and where our focus might lie in Victoria. My congratulations to Geoff on his recent election as President of the ACS.

#### Looking to the Future

I feel that this year has been a time of building our Chapter Committee as a team and of understanding where we, as an organisation might play a key role for the coast. The ACS vision and aims are very broad and encompass a realm of possible actions and preferred outcomes. We need to consider the expectations of our current membership, learn from other States what is possible whilst also considering our capacity. We are fortunate to have a current Coastal Strategy, a Coastal Management Act together with a coastal structure which advises the Minister for Environment. We also have catchment management Authorities, Committees of Management, local government Coastcare/landcare and other voluntary organisations active within the coastal space.

Our Planning Session will assist us to formulate a plan and possible program for the next year.

My special thanks to our Committee Members, Phillip Roos, Rebecca Koss, Amanda Cornish [until September 2014], Werner Henneke, Nick Wynn, and Geoff Wescott for your support in our inaugural year and to those who have contributed through the surveys and supported the Chapter this year.

Sue Mudford