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Rapid Bay jetty open

By **LISA BACHMAYER**

RAPID BAY – Four years after the old and dilapidated Rapid Bay jetty was closed to the public, causing uproar, a brand new one now stands completed alongside it.

Already christened with squid ink, fishermen, scuba divers, locals and visitors have been making good use of the new jetty since the barricades came down two weeks ago.

Rated as one of the country's top fishing and diving spots, access to most of the existing jetty was closed on Christmas Eve 2004 after it was deemed unsafe.

The local community, anglers and divers have rallied for the jetty's

future ever since, forming the Friends of the Rapid Bay Jetty less than two weeks later.

Their prayers were answered when the state government announced in September 2006 plans to build a new \$3.9 million structure.

Rough weather prevented construction firm Bardavcol from finishing the jetty by the end of last year as planned.

However, Friends of the Rapid Bay Jetty members are extremely pleased to see the jetty finally completed after a long and arduous campaign.

"I am just so happy for the whole district; it is really going to benefit

everyone," spokesperson Glenice Galbraith said.

As former co-owner of the Delamere General Store, Glenice said business halved when the old jetty was closed.

"People were so upset, but it wasn't just the businesses that were affected," she said.

"The overall affect on people made me realise what it is for people and how much they love the place too; not just locals but international tourists too."

Only weeks after the jetty's completion, the store's current owner, Kaye Maslin, is already enjoying an increase in business.

"Locals are telling me that more

people than usual are camping here on weekends; everyone is so excited," she said.

The new 240m jetty features solar lighting, stairs and platforms for divers and is expected to boost the town's tourism.

"It is a popular attraction for the region ... (and) I certainly think it will get more people coming back into Rapid Bay," Fleurieu Peninsula Tourism's Roz Becker said.

"It is a really good camping spot for families wanting cost-effective holidays, right on the beautiful beach front."

The new jetty has also been given the tick of approval from divers, attracted to the spot for the rich diversity of marine life supported by the old jetty, which is expected to remain alongside the new structure.

Antony King of the Friends of Rapid Bay Jetty and the Scuba Divers Federation of S.A. said the jetty provides easier and safer access for divers.

"Previously, divers had to walk over slippery rocks, swim 300-400m and were a long way out if they got into trouble," he said.

"Now anyone who comes from interstate or overseas to dive will be very impressed by the facility.

"It is one of the best places to see the leafy sea dragon and is therefore a real drawcard for the region.

"Sometimes the sea dragons will gently settle on the ocean floor a metre away, moving back and forward in time with the gentle weed; they are a very special thing to watch."

The Friends of the Rapid Bay Jetty thanked the media, Dean Brown and Sandra Kanck for their help with the campaign and the Government for building the jetty.

Premier Mike Rann will officially open the new jetty on March 11.

• MORE DETAILS PAGE 10 •



Vonne McGlynn

Divers seek clues in reservoir

MYPONGA - Underwater Recovery divers searched the Myponga Reservoir early this week for clues in relation to the disappearance of Reynella woman Vonne McGlynn.

The dam wall was closed to traffic while Major Crime Scene investigators searched the area.

The 83-year-old pensioner was reported missing from her home early in December, after she failed to answer her daily welfare call from the Red Cross.

The reservoir dive found no results; however a search in the area of the Christie Creek and Southern Expressway in Christies Downs located tissue and bone.

The Forensic Science Centre is still testing to determine whether the remains are human and results will be known within a few days.



JUMPING FOR JOY ... Glenice Galbraith of the Friends of Rapid Bay Jetty celebrates the completion of the new jetty, already being put to good use by anglers and scuba divers.

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