

# Save Bastion Point

*protect this coastal environment from inappropriate development*

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Photos plus People Power- a Winning Combination!**

The response to the evocative photo exhibition of Bastion Point staged by Norm Neilson in Mallacoota last week demonstrated that the battle over Bastion Point is far from over. Hundreds of locals and visitors alike turned out to view the stunning photographs that highlighted the intrinsic beauty of this iconic and much loved coastal place. Neilson's photographs capture Bastion Point's many moods, its exquisite rock formations, textures and colours, and the very essence of place.

The outstanding quality of the works inspired great interest and ensured that the Mud brick Pavilion was filled to capacity at the auction held on Saturday evening 23rd January. Councillor Bill Gamble opened proceedings and the community showed its appreciation for his and Cr. Dick Ellis's attendance and support. Auctioneer Mick Bartholomew's rhetoric entertained the crowd and kept the show moving. Bidding was vigorous and spirited, and every one of the 45 framed photos was sold, raising \$10000.

Norm Neilson, from Metung, held the exhibition to draw attention to the natural beauty of the Point, and to help raise funds for the campaign to preserve the area. Bastion Point is under threat from the East Gippsland Shire Council's controversial harbour development: a boat ramp /breakwater constructed through the reef with ongoing dredging requirements and a substantial roadway with rock revetments along the beach. Mid last year Minister Justin Madden gave his support to the project despite an independent Panel of Inquiry recommending against the development. Local group Friends of Mallacoota have since challenged Madden's action and are taking the case before the Supreme Court in March. Funds raised from the event will go towards these legal costs.

Norm Neilson's photographs refocused the public's attention on the beauty and integrity of this special place, allowing the public to see it afresh through an artist's eye. Dave Huxtable, MC for the night, voiced the thoughts of many. "I cannot believe that in contemporary society people would even consider desecrating this place as the EGSC is planning to do", he said. Strong community feelings and passions for Bastion Point were electric on the night, and people were invested with renewed vigour to continue the fight to Save Bastion Point.

Local musicians Merv Graham and friends supported the event by treating the crowd to some fantastic music. Other local musicians unable to attend donated a number of CDs for the auction, especially made for the occasion. Bastion Point continues to inspire people who feel passionately

about its future and who are determined to do all their power to ensure that it is preserved in all its glory, and that any upgrade to boating infrastructure is appropriate to the location.

Ends/ends...

**NOTE:** Caption for attached photo:

*Photographer Norm Neilson with one of his spectacular images of Bastion Point.*

**MEDIA NOTE:**

Photographic Exhibition and Auction: *A Walk around Bastion Point with Norm Neilson* was held in Mallacoota 21<sup>st</sup> –23<sup>rd</sup> January. The aim of the exhibition was to raise both awareness of the possible destruction of the area, and funds to help protect it.

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