

THE COMMITTEE FOR LORNE

Last weekend there were two deaths in the ocean in the Torquay region reinforcing the need to treat the open seas with utmost respect. As we approach the summer months and the number of people looking to enjoy our waters dramatically increases, caution and safety need to be the number one priority.

All beach goers are urged to head toward patrolled or known safety beaches and ensure adherence to the extensive signage messages that are displayed along our coastline. From the 1st of December, professional lifeguards will patrol the Lorne Beach through the week and then our local Surf Club introduces their volunteer patrols every weekend through summer.

As a follow-up to last week's comments, members of the Committee for Lorne (CfL) meet with VicRoads representatives to discuss the strategies with messaging on the fixed and temporary road sign displays. While VicRoads are working on their protocols moving forward, we expressed a very strong need to ensure signage remained positive and not always portraying the message "Great Ocean Road Closed".

While we recognise that messaging plays an important role in informing our many thousands of regular visitors, the future direction needs to take a "U turn" from what has been delivered in the past. For example, when the road was closed to our north recently we believe that the wording "Access Lorne via the Deans Marsh Road" (or something similar) would be a more positive message for the coast than "Great Ocean Road closed". It was a productive discussion about the need for positive messaging; messages that did not deter visitors from coming to the coast. Hopefully, these discussions will enhance the outcomes moving forward.

Through the past month, members of the CfL have also been active in supporting our Lorne Business & Tourism Association (LBTA) in attending the State Government initiated "Tourism Round Table" as a follow on to discussions in the Victorian Cabinet. The meeting brought together the heads of State Government departments servicing the Great Ocean Road including VicRoads, Emergency Management, DELWP, Tourism Victoria and Regional Development Victoria.

We were also active, along with our Lorne Community Hospital CEO, Kate Gillan, at the Barwon Regional Assembly in Torquay. The Assembly looked to bring together a diverse range of people from across the Barwon area to share views and talk directly to local Regional Partnership members and the Victorian Government.

A number of agenda priorities that were very aligned to Lorne included priorities such as simplifying the complex and duplicated management arrangements for the Great Ocean Road and supporting the implementation of the Master Plan for the GOR Region Visitor Economy 2015-2025, including Joint Federal/State commitment to long term funding for road works and tourism related asset maintenance.

Don't forget this weekend Lorne Film and for all information www.lornefilm.com.au or call in the festival hub at Lorne Central on the corner of Mountjoy Parade and Bay Street.

Ian Stewart

Ian Stewart
Chairman
Committee for Lorne

COMMITTEE
FOR LORNE



Amongst the extensive collection of photographs and artifacts curated by the Lorne Historical Society, is a group of four coloured postcards, which, on first glance, one would question, what is their relevance to Lorne? It's certainly not Lorne in the images and the writing describing the scene on each postcard is in French. The scenes shown on the cards are all set in the south of France, close to the Mediterranean. It's only when you turn the postcards over that it's apparent that the cards carry a letter, written over the four cards. Not all that uncommon. But what is unique is who wrote the letter on the postcards and the person to whom it was addressed.

The letter on the cards was written in 1924 by Howard Hitchcock, a prominent businessman in Geelong in the early 1900s and more particularly known as the Chairman of the Great Ocean Road Trust and the visionary and driving force behind the construction of the Great Ocean Road. The letter was addressed to his friend Mac Clarke who owned property at Eastern View and who, when the Great Ocean Road was completed, constructed the first Arch in the current location in celebration. Howard Hitchcock conceived a project that would provide a transportation route along the south west coast making for easy access to the coastal resort town of Lorne and a spectacular drive along the coast to Warrnambool. The project would also provide employment for servicemen returning from World War I.



In the letter Hitchcock writes, "The No. 2 card is a view of a lovely motor drive up the valley at the back of Menton (France). The mountains run right down to the water's edge and the roads are wonderfully made and, in parts, resemble parts of our Ocean Road. I thought you would be interested to know that it was here and along the north coast of Devonshire, that inspired me with Great Ocean Road ideas. Isn't No. 4 just like a bit on the Big Hill!"

The Great Ocean Road had been the subject of discussion since the 1880's but it was Hitchcock who drove the vision. He conceived the Road as an employment project, a Memorial to Victorian



soldiers and means of opening up the south west coast to tourism. To quote from the promotional material of the time, "What finer memorial could we build to commemorate the magnificent bravery of our Victorian soldiers in the Great War! A memorial which would benefit thousands of settlers, give great pleasure to tens of tourists and motorists and be the means of large sums of money being circulated in Victoria, which otherwise might be spent in other States." Source: The Great Ocean Road by K L Cecil.

Well, it's fair to say that this vision became a reality, one of Australia's iconic tourist attractions, drawing visitors from all over the world to experience the scenery of coast and bush. There are supposedly 3 R's on the tourist agenda; the Rock, the Reef and the Road. Over time, for many, the Great Ocean Road has become just a piece of windy road with great views that is part of a thoroughfare from Melbourne to the Twelve Apostles. This "laissez faire" attitude pays no respect to how the road was constructed, or to its significance as a Memorial. Countless buses traverse the road each day ferrying tourists to the Twelve (or whatever number it is) Apostles, with little time to stop and appreciate the magnitude of the feat to construct the road. The same "laissez faire" attitude is evident in the commitment (or lack of it) by Governments, State and Federal, to maintaining the Road in a manner commensurate with its significance as a Memorial and its pivotal role in fuelling the visitor economy of the south west Coast.

It's a disgrace to see the petty bickering between politicians at State and Federal level; pointing the finger at each other but doing nothing. When they do decide to do something, it's a pittance compared with what is needed. Decades of neglect and underfunded maintenance have now led to a situation where the road is in disgraceful condition and yet the finger pointing continues. Such behavior is an insult to the vision of Hitchcock, the servicemen who built this memorial and the people who rely on the Great Ocean Road for their business viability.

Where is the politician today with the vision and determination of Howard Hitchcock to ensure that the Great Ocean Road continues to be the Memorial and iconic journey that he created? Anyone?

Peter Spring
Committee for Lorne



HEATHER AND TONY ELDER

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Here's some history for you. Tony's great grandfather, Edward Lascelles built Waverley (now known as Waverley House). Edward's daughters included Hilda and Cicely Lascelles, the names most of us associate with the property. Their sister, Audrey Steuart, was Tony's grandmother. Audrey lived in Barwon Heads so Tony's first visits to Lorne were to visit his great aunts.

And Heather - has been coming to Lorne since she was four. Her family rented a house every summer. Melbourne born and educated and a licensed real estate agent, Heather works with Marshall White in Armadale.

Tony and Heather and their three children, Sam, Pip and Rob, were members of the Lorne Surf Life Saving Club, with all 3 children coming up through the junior ranks, making many long-lasting friends over the years.

The Elder family rented the same house here for 15 years until the children no longer wanted to holiday with their parents and decided to take a break from Lorne. After five years Heather was ready to return and they began renting again. The usual happened, the children then decided they wanted to join them, so the Elders bought their own holiday house, one that could comfortably accommodate them all.

Tony was born in Melbourne and educated in Geelong before studying Law and practising as a solicitor for 30 years. Admitted to the Bar ten years ago, Tony practises as a Commercial Mediator as well as an Advocate. Tony's passion is cycling and trips they make to Europe are usually planned with friends around a cycling adventure.

With both still working, it is hard to fit in all the things they enjoy doing which include working out at the gym and the garden; Heather walks to exercise their dog. Both are active members of Melbourne Clubs and if they can find time they also go to the theatre. If he can, Tony spends four nights a week in Lorne, Heather comes on weekends.

They belong to most of the local clubs. If you haven't seen Tony cycling, as a member of The Aquatic Club he may well have driven you home from a function as one of the volunteer drivers of the A Team's courtesy bus.

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LORNE WARD EVENTS CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

11-13 **Lorne Film**, it aims to create and nurture film culture in Lorne and the Otway region for the duration of the festival and beyond. Held over 3 days at the Lorne Theatre and Cumberland Resort Auditorium commencing Friday 11 at 7.30pm. All info: www.lornefilm.com.au

DECEMBER

3 **LAAC Annual General Meeting**, at the Lorne Aquatic & Angling Club. AGM at 5.30pm. Presentations at 6pm

17 **Carols on the Lorne**, sausage sizzle at 6.30pm and carols at 7.30pm. St Cuthbert's Church grounds Mountjoy Parade.

Please forward the dates of your Lorne Ward community event via the contact details at the bottom of this page.



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