

THE COMMITTEE FOR LORNE

One could be excused for wondering what all the activity has been about on the Lorne beach with teenagers in fluorescent tops this week. Well it's another tell tale sign of summer with the Lorne Surf Club hosting their annual Bronze Camp to train up and qualify the next wave of junior lifesavers. In what is a fabulous program, the majority of the participants have progressed through the Nipper movement having started in the under seven age group.

But it's not only the participants that have a strong history with the Surf Club as it takes a large number of volunteer instructors and club volunteers to run the program. Again, the majority of these instructors have progressed through Nippers, attained their Bronze Medallion, and participated in other specialist courses, then returned to the club to ensure the next generation are equally well educated at the 2016 Bronze Camp

The Lorne Surf Club accommodate, feed and instruct just under seventy of their valued junior members for the seven day program as they are taught all the advanced skills that form the backbone of the valued Bronze Medallion Award. Once they have qualified, these junior lifesavers will be out on the beach this summer adding to the numbers who do such a fantastic job in ensuring safety on our beach for the summer season. Great work to all at our strong local Surf Club!

Last week, the Lorne Business and Tourism Association (LBTA) hosted an informative breakfast to share the great work being done by Great Ocean Road Tourism for our area. The highlight for me was being able to hear about the key elements of the destination marketing plans that are being put into place. These plans are unique to each town and each plan requires input from local coastal communities to ensure the plan reflects the special qualities of the destination. It was great to see a number of our Lorne business operators commit to being involved in the project.

But it was clear to me that many more of us retailers, service/accommodation providers, tradespeople and interested parties need to be involved in a hands on way for the betterment of our town and region as a whole and your help is needed. Many had said they knew nothing of the breakfast, wanted to be involved but were out of the communication loop. If this is so please provide your details to the local President Chris Tutungi, by emailing info@lovelorne.com.

Further to my recent mention of the upcoming consultation sessions with key members of our local community groups, I can confirm that these four two hour sessions have been set down for Thursday and Friday 19 & 20 of January 2017. The objective of these sessions is to help build understanding and support for the Aspirations Plan developed by the Committee for Lorne and to document how, now and in the future, each group's work is contributing to the overall achievement of the aspirational strategies – we look forward to your participation with further information to follow.

Ian Stewart

Ian Stewart
Chairman
Committee for Lorne

COMMITTEE
FOR LORNE

SCHOOL LEAVERS - A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

Well the "Schoolies" came to Lorne, partied, and now they've departed. General commentary in the community has been very positive. There's always going to be issues with litter, noise and pranks but it seems that in the past couple of years, there has been a marked decline in the number of more serious incidents including violence, vandalism and groups out of control.

Commentary this year is a far cry from five or six years ago when the community felt was being besieged by "Schoolies". So what's changed? I had an invitation from our Lorne Police sergeant, Dave Cooper to come and observe for myself the organisation "behind the scenes" which has brought about this change. In summary, what's changed is an incredible effort by our local Police and the other associated groups to work together and to set boundaries and manage the impact of school leavers in Lorne.

As a result of their behavior and the portrayal by the media, Schoolies became a tarnished brand. The word Schoolies became synonymous with anti-social behavior, alcohol and drugs. Over the past five years the local agencies have worked tirelessly to communicate with school leavers about what behaviours were acceptable and not acceptable in our town. Even to the point of resetting the concept of the event by referring to School Leavers and getting away from the negative connotations of "Schoolies".

Dave Cooper has contributed an enormous amount of time over several years to get to this point where 2,500 School Leavers arrived in Lorne this year and there has hardly been a negative comment.

When I met with Dave I started to get an understanding as to why this change has occurred. Dave told me that he and his team try to visit every accommodation place where the School Leavers are staying and talk to them about expectations during their stay in Lorne. If he sees a house with a few cars with P Plates, he will "drop in" and ascertain if they are school leavers and if so, tells them how it's going to be.

During the course of the evening, I visited the station set up in the grounds of the Uniting Church and managed by the Red Frogs organisation. To quote from their website, "Red Frogs is a support program that provides direct relief from alcohol and drug related issues that are known to cause anxiety, pain, poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, disability, destitution, helplessness."

I met with Reagan, the co-ordinator of the Red Frogs volunteers in Lorne for this year. There were 51 volunteers in total on call 24/7 to provide counselling, support and even help with accommodation problems and supplying snacks and a place to chill out. There is a "mission control centre" where all requests are logged and the volunteers are deployed as required. They run two buses to transport the School Leavers to and from accommodation. It is a military style "command and control" structure designed to ensure that the right help is available when it is needed. The area in the Church grounds was a buzz of activity for Red Frogs and School Leavers alike; everyone enjoying themselves. And everyone recognised and greeted Dave Cooper. It was a very positive atmosphere and I commented at the time on the generosity of these people to volunteer their time to be Red Frogs. I learnt that not only do they volunteer their time; they actually pay about \$300 each to participate. For them it's an important job, but is also a wonderful experience that teaches them so much about relating to others in need of support and how to manage a wide range of difficult situations. It provides life lessons, which will be with them for the rest of their lives.

I also met Lauren and Rose from YSAS (Youth Substance Abuse Services). YSAS specialises in offering treatment, support and early intervention for vulnerable young Victorians struggling with substance dependence. Red Frogs team members will refer School Leavers who experience problems with drugs to someone from the YSAS team. It's an important intermediate step, which allows the Red Frogs team to escalate support and yet do so in a way that allows police resources to maintain their presence and patrols while the person is still receiving the best care. Once again, YSAS team members are volunteers. It's disturbing to hear that they don't know from one year to

the next whether they will receive Government funding which will allow them to deliver their valuable service in Lorne and Torquay and it's also concerning to hear that the funding they receive hasn't changed in ten years!

I met Paul from the security company engaged to provide resources for patrols and security services at Mantra where several hundred School Leavers stayed and at the hotels and bars which they visited. He and his team had as their number one priority the safety and security of the School Leavers.

It was a wonderful experience to meet all these people, see how they worked together, see their commitment to their job and to see how they related to the School Leavers. I would like to express my thanks to all the Red Frogs and YSAS volunteers who worked so hard and so positively to make the event a successful one.

They all talked about the wonderful job Dave Cooper had done in bringing the various groups together, setting expectations with School Leavers and getting everyone "on the same page". There is no doubt this approach has transformed the event. School Leavers has always provided an economic benefit to Lorne and in the past the question was, "at what cost?" That's changed now and seeing how all these teams worked together to manage the event was inspiring.

I came away thinking that the key element in this successful transformation is the "Cooper Effect" and we have Dave Cooper and his team to thank for that.

Peter Spring
Committee for Lorne



JANELLE CARLTON

COMMUNITY PROFILE

"One day I would love to live here", Janelle remembers telling her family as a youngster when they spent Easter holidays in Lorne. Her dream came true five years ago when she moved here permanently.

Janelle was born and educated in Melbourne. Despite her English teacher's urging to pursue an obvious writing talent, she chose to travel. After six months in New Zealand, she returned to Melbourne and found work in a pharmacy. Soon after, she met her partner, had three children and established their own business. When that didn't quite go as planned Janelle left and relocated to Lorne where her wider family was already living.

She has worked in hospitality since she arrived in Lorne. Most will know her lovely friendly face helping out at The Aquatic Club and the Lorne Hotel. During our once a year wager over Cup week she rescued us from the anxiety and frustration we were experiencing with the 'new to us' betting ATMs. She did it with charm and the patience of Job.

Janelle still loves to write. She has composed lots of poetry and knows that when she has the time the book bubbling inside her will one day be put on paper. She reads widely.

She and her two boys are very happy living here. "Lorne is one big happy family in a perfect location".

CW

LORNE WARD EVENTS CALENDAR

DECEMBER

- 16 **Premiere screening of Red Dog: True Blue**, Lorne Theatre at 7:30pm. This is a fundraiser for revegetation at Wye River and Sep Creek. Tickets available at Lorne Theatre and Lorne Op Shop
- 17 **Carols on the Lorne**, sausage sizzle at 6:30pm and carols at 7:30pm. St Cuthbert's Church grounds Mountjoy Parade.
- 18 **Carols in the Marsh**, from 6pm at Deans Marsh Oval. OMM Choir & Performers, Jumping castle, BBQ & Bar open. BYO picnic rug & chair.

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



FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @Committee4Lorne

P.O Box 168, Lorne 3232. info@committeeforlorne.org.au www.cfl.org.au Phone: 0438 843 258