

THE COMMITTEE FOR LORNE

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Great Ocean Road Memorial Arch – A Memorial to What?



Right at the moment, the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) is requesting feedback on options to address several significant issues associated with the current use of the Memorial Arch precinct at Eastern View. In November 2015, GORCC released an Issues and Opportunities paper as part of the Great Ocean Road Memorial Arch Master Plan. That paper contains the following statement; "There needs to be an understanding of how the arch is generally recognised. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many visitors perceive the arch to be a marker that signifies the 'entrance' or gateway to the Great Ocean Road. While the arch is not the official entry point to the Great Ocean Road, it is located on the first stretch of ocean front road vantage, and therefore gains this perception."

In fact, the Memorial Arch does not signify the start of the Great Ocean Road, nor is it a memorial to the returned servicemen who built the road. The current Memorial Arch is the fourth one on this site, previous ones being vandalised, damaged by fire or made unstable by weather and time. The original arch was erected in 1939 as a memorial to Major W.T.B. McCormack, honorary engineer to the Great Ocean Road Trust and chairman of the Country Roads Board (CRB).

Peter Alsop, an engineer with the Country Roads Board, wrote a book titled "A History of the Great Ocean Road" in 1985. He also wrote a paper in 1965 titled "An Account of the Genesis and History of the Memorial

Archway at Eastern View on the Great Ocean Road" of which the Lorne Historical Society has 1 of the 11 copies published. Alsop's paper cites the Geelong Advertiser of November 4, 1939; "With the unveiling of the memorial tablet on the archway erected over the Ocean Road at Eastern View the last public function of the Great Ocean Road Trust was held yesterday. The archway has been erected as a memorial to the late Major W.T.B. McCormack, who was chairman of the Country Roads Board and honorary engineer for the construction of the Ocean Road. The unveiling was performed by Sir Harry Chauvel in the presence of a number of associates of the late Major McCormack and residents of Eastern View. The ceremony was also attended by Mrs. McCormack and her son, Mr. W McCormack.

The memorial to the returned servicemen who worked on the construction of the Great Ocean Road is in fact, the Road itself. In particular, the most iconic, most difficult to construct section between Eastern View and Apollo Bay. This section of the road was built by returned servicemen. Other sections of what is called the Great Ocean Road such as Torquay to Eastern View and Apollo Bay to Allansford where constructed by the Country Roads Board. The intent was that the section built by returned servicemen would be named "The ANZACS' Highway".

In their book, The Roads to Lorne including the ANZACS' Highway, Keith Cecil and Roger Carr wrote: "The fact that the construction of the section between Eastern View and Apollo Bay was mainly done by returned servicemen from the First World War, and the alternative name given to that section by the promoters, THE ANZACS' HIGHWAY, has tended to be forgotten with the passage of time. We hope that these details will be more prominently featured in the years ahead."

Their book also quotes from a letter written in 1918, by John Hennessy of

Timboon, one of the many, many people who contributed money to the Great Ocean Road Trust to fund construction of the Great Ocean Road. Hennessy wrote; "I think too much stress is laid on the benefits the road is going to confer on the people en route, and not sufficient on what the road really is – a lasting memorial to the brave men who have fallen in this great struggle for freedom. What I give I am giving for the perpetuation of their memories, and not for any benefit that I may derive from it, and I think this fact should not be lost sight of."

Recognition of the magnitude of the task to construct the Road from Eastern View to Apollo Bay has diminished over time. Were it not for the interpretive display at the Lorne Visitor Information Centre, very few people would be aware of the fact that this world-famous drive between Eastern View and Apollo Bay is in fact the world's largest war memorial. The stories of its construction and the men who had the vision and the men who dug the road are in danger of being lost in time.

By all means, retain the Memorial Arch and preserve the environment which surrounds it, but let's not lose sight of the true memorial, the Road itself.

Peter Spring
Lorne Historical Society



A word from the *Chairman*

Last Friday, a number of community members, together with representatives of Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) and representatives of other government agencies, met for the first time as the Point Grey – Lorne Point Grey redevelopment Project Steering Group (PSG) and it is evident that a "wind of change" is emerging over our unique coastal precinct. Over past years, much of the controversy that has existed has been as a result of a massive disconnect between the Land Managers and the various stakeholders, not the least being the Community of Lorne.

In our first PSG forum, the newly appointed Chair GORCC, Mr Ken Northwood, took the helm and led one of the most productive meetings since the inception of the original Community Reference Group back in 2014 and his planning and preparation for the discussion was first class.

In Ken's opening remarks he reminded us all, some for the first time, how the precinct was originally named and shared some of the region's past history. Point

Grey, Lorne was named by Surveyor George Smythe after Right Honorable Sir George Grey, the former 3rd Governor of South Australia between 1841 and 1845.

Following robust discussion that unfolded from frustrations in dealing with the previous Chairman, Ken used his skills, passion and love for the precinct, to listen and share with the participants in a workshop environment that began to "flesh out" a united way forward. The result was a clear statement that the PSG agreed that the MasterPlan has broad community support as a framework for further detailed work on Commercial aspects and specifics of design. The Group members agreed unanimously that for this development to be successful there will need to be attractions and visitor experiences beyond what is currently available, and to a world class standard.

There has been much discussion around the naming of the Precinct including The Port of Lorne, Point Grey Maritime Precinct and many more. The PSG unanimously agreed that the

precinct continue to be known simply as Point Grey – Lorne until further discussion and consultation is undertaken that may suggest an alternative is appropriate.

It was also good news for the Lorne Angling and Aquatic Club (LAAC) to hear that GORCC will consider in-principle commitment to the LAAC for a long-term lease for the redeveloped clubhouse, with the new lease issued once construction is complete.

Further to recent reminders for our September 29 (AFL Public Holiday) Committee for Lorne Community Luncheon, we are working to have GORCC Chairman Ken Northwood as our guest to share the updates and communications that will further unfold from our second PSG meeting on the Friday of the previous week. So if you have not RSVP'd yet, please confirm your attendance to nicole@greatoceanroadrealestate.com.au.

Ian Stewart
Chairman / Committee for Lorne



COMMUNITY PROFILE CHRIS NISBET

By Christmas, the adventurous amongst us could well be swinging in the trees at Chris's and his son, Luke's, Live Wire Park at the back of Lorne. Having obtained all the government permits and community approvals required, they are on standby to begin construction.

How does one arrive at an idea to do this? Chris was sitting on a Committee for Lorne sub-committee looking at affordable housing in Lorne when it occurred to him, out of season activities would be essential to help such a scheme be sustainable. A friend on the Peninsula had created a tree rope course which was enjoying enormous success so when Chris approached him about his idea for Lorne he received enthusiastic encouragement. After further support came from conversations with locals and friends, Chris and Luke formed a company, Live Wire Park, Tree Adventures and for the last five years have been planning the project. They are excited about their opportunities to employ local people and the contribution they hope their business will make to the economy of our town.

Chris has wide experience in business, not least in the family's 69 year long commercial refrigeration company which he joined when he left school. He has also been involved in property development mainly in inner Melbourne.

As a nephew of Lornites Gloria and Rusty Norton, Chris has known and loved the region for a long time and his wife Ruth's family has a long connection as well. They had three children and now have six grandchildren who are regular visitors to their home, built to accommodate them all. Lorne is their permanent address as it will soon be for Luke too, once the project gets under way.

Although Chris has enjoyed overseas travel in the past, further trips could be on hold until their tree adventures are up and running.

See you in the trees !

CW

LORNE WARD EVENTS CALENDAR

August

27 & 28 **Anglesea's 27th One Act Play Festival**, 14 short plays over the weekend from regional Victorian theatre companies & Anglesea Performing Arts & Torquay Theatre Troupe. www.angleseaperformers.org.au Tickets \$10.00 per session (3-4 plays) or \$30.00 entire weekend of 14 plays.

September

16 & 17 **Amy's Gran Fondo**, starting in Lorne on Sat arvo with Amy's wall hill climb and in Apollo Bay the Cyclo Cross. Sunday - starting in Lorne, the course takes riders through the Otway Ranges, along a breathtaking stretch of the Great Ocean Road, before finishing on the main street in Lorne. More details here: amysgranfondo.org.au

29 **Committee for Lorne Luncheon**, at The View, Lorne Hotel at 12pm for a 12:30pm start RSVP to nicole@greatoceanroadrealestate.com.au

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FOR LORNE**