

THE COMMITTEE FOR LORNE

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Lorne - the Halcyon Days



As winter fades and Spring starts to bring some colour and warmth back to Lorne, we start to witness the return of the homeowners to Lorne. So many of the permanent population migrate to warmer climes over winter and are now returning. The part time residents are now arriving and preparing the homes for the influx of family and friends so closely related to the summer and in particular, the holiday season. The feel of the town changes, the mood of winter is forgotten as Lorne starts to prepare for yet another holiday season. And it has ever been thus.

Today it is primarily residents, family and friends coming to stay in holiday homes. But there are also the caravan parks which fill to bursting and the accommodation in places such as Mantra, Cumberland etc. and the multitude of B&Bs in town. Lorne has always been a popular holiday destination. As the Geelong Advertiser of 18 December, 1884 reports, "The ever-charming scenery of Lorne is again attracting the attention of Christmas holiday visitors from Ballarat, Melbourne and other distant parts. The Township is beginning to wear a more animated appearance than has been the case for some month's past, and the coaches from Birregurra are well filled with passengers almost every trip."

In the halcyon days of the 1920s and 30s there were 21 guest houses and 3 hotels in

Lorne, all thriving.

The biggest of all was Erskine House. The late Keith Dunstan, author and journalist, recalls his holidays at Erskine House. "Every year, dad booked the entire family into Erskine House, a large, gracious guesthouse at Lorne, which had been there since the 1880's. We stayed there from immediately after Christmas until the first week of February, although dad sometimes returned to the city and came down at weekends. Erskine House had its own gate right on the surf beach, its own grass tennis courts, bowling greens, croquet lawns, ballroom, billiard room and even its own 9 hole golf course. There were both ancient areas and modern.

The expedition to Lorne was always a grand affair. In the early days we went in an Essex sedan. Several suitcases would be strapped to both running boards, others lashed on the luggage carrier at the rear. By 1939 our travelling had been refined. Dad sent a Herald and Weekly Times van on ahead. This was loaded not only with luggage, but also with enough whisky, gin, vermouth and beer to last a month. There was also ice. It was tricky trying to find ice for a whisky out in the bungalows so dad also carted ice to Lorne in large insulated boxes. This way he was able to entertain in style.

At Erskine House we were always a large

community of several hundred. All meals were provided, breakfast, lunch and dinner, plus morning and afternoon tea, in the dining room. Bells called us to meals. The week's program included tournaments for bowls, tennis, golf, croquet and table tennis, complete with a treasure hunt and a sand castle competition for the children."

The guest houses of Lorne became an integral part of the history and culture of the town. To this day, people recall their holidays at the guest houses. In many cases, the holidays came as a result of parents having their honeymoon in Lorne and family holidays subsequently became part of the family ritual, spanning generations.

This weekend the Lorne Historical Society will be opening a new exhibition which recalls those halcyon days. Photographs of the guest houses, stories recalling those days, old movie footage showing the fun and games of the day and recollections of the wonderful experiences and lasting memories of the people who knew that era.

The exhibition will be open every Sunday at the Lorne Historical Society rooms, Lorne Community House (opposite Visitor Information Centre), from 10am till noon. The exhibition will run till end January. Please come along and experience an insight into this wonderful part of Lorne's history.

Lorne Historical Society



A word from the *Chairman*

AFL Grand Final Week what a great time of the year!!!! All the hype that surrounds the Tigers, Dusty Martin and that last game in September is alive and well. In what is shaping as one of the most anticipated year-end finishes for decades, the Richmond and Adelaide Football Clubs are primed to produce a one cracker of a game. While on the coast, the last game is like a changing of seasons as part time residents and visitors return to the coast in numbers not seen since the same seasonal pilgrimage last year.

There has been a lot going on in town, as the countdown to Christmas and summer is well and truly underway. The Point Grey Precinct is entering an interesting phase under the refreshing leadership of new Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) Chairman, Ken Northwood, following the second meeting of the Project Steering Group held in Lorne last week. Representing the Lorne Community in the process is Graeme Norton (Lorne Angling and Aquatic Club), John Wilson (Friends of Queens Park), Chris Tutungi (Lorne Business and Tourism Association),

Councilor Clive Goldsworthy and myself on behalf of the Committee for Lorne.

The focus of last week's meeting was to consolidate agreement on the endorsed Masterplan and the Business Plan directions to enable work to begin on project design, commercial considerations, and grant advocacy. Drawing on visitor research undertaken for both the Great Ocean Road, and Lorne, the Group identified that a diverse range of experiences was necessary to attract a volume of visitors to Point Grey - Lorne, to stop, spend and stay.

These experiences relate to activity (active pursuits with a connection to the water, the hinterland, and the town); food and beverage (a range of offering from café, to takeaway, to regional/seasonal dining); cultural (acknowledging and celebrating local cultural heritage, and Lorne's rich history); and scenic (exceptional design showcasing Point Grey's iconic location).

Building on the discussion, the Project Steering Group agreed that the key themes to inform design and development

should be -

- creating an enticing public realm that acts as a hub for Point Grey activities, the hinterland and town,
- developing a strong connection with the township through an access-for-all scenic and interpretive walk
- offering an attractive range of food and beverage options, available throughout the year
- providing a creative celebration of cultural heritage and Lorne's distinctive and historic past; developing a night-time lighting/interpretative experience to encourage overnight stays while focusing on car and min bus visitors rather than large tourist buses.

We are looking forward to welcoming GORCC Chairman Ken Northwood addressing our Committee for Lorne lunch on Friday and sharing his passion and commitment to the project with our wider community.

Ian Stewart
Chairman - Committee for Lorne

COMMUNITY PROFILE

PEGGY and RAY SELLARS



Every winter, Peggy and Ray escape to France to visit their son and his family. He is a Global Director of an Advertising Company based in Paris. They love travel anyway and take these opportunities to tour Europe or go on various cruises, usually with friends or family.

The Sellars were born and educated in Whyalla, SA. After finishing school, Peggy began a career as a hairdresser and Ray as an apprentice with BHP. They married in 1969. In 1974, they moved to Tom Price, WA, to join the mining industry. They stayed for eight years.

In 1982 they moved to Geelong where Ray started work as a Maintenance Supervisor with Alcoa. Peggy set up a hairdressing business with a partner, in which she was involved until she retired recently.

How did they end up in Lorne? Lorne became a favourite place to visit on weekends. Later on, the family stayed with friends in Wye River. When those friends bought a house in Lorne, they often stayed with them and their love of Lorne grew stronger. Nine years ago, the Sellars had an opportunity to buy here and have been coming at every opportunity since.

Every Christmas and New Year they are joined by their son and his family from Paris and their daughter and her family from Torquay

In his retirement Ray plays tennis, is a volunteer driver for Vision Australia, enjoys helping out with his three grandchildren, does a little gardening and loves to fish from the Lorne pier - although he admits he doesn't have much luck with that. He plays the odd game of golf at The Country Club.

Peggy says she loves being retired, cooking, travel, gardening and time with the all grandchildren.

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LORNE WARD EVENTS CALENDAR

September

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

October

- 6 **Laurence Mooney live stand-up Comedy**, with Dave O'Neil & special guest! Lorne Hotel (View) at 8 - 11pm. Call 03 5289 1409 to book tickets. \$25 Locals/Early birds \$30 on the door.
- 8 **LAAC Major Fishing Competition number 5**, Lines down at 6.00am. Weigh in at 12.15pm. BBQ lunch at the Lorne Aquatic and Angling Club.
- 10 **Community Forum, Suicide: Awareness and Prevention**, Lorne Senior Citizens Hall, 5.45pm to 8.15pm. Please contact Het Ramp: 5289 4385
- 28 **Mantra Lorne Garden Party**, tennis tournament, music, games, outdoor cinema, raffle & silent auction. From 2pm. All money donated to Luke Batty Foundation.

November

- 3 **The 2017 Doug & Mary Stirling Cup**, Presentation Dinner honouring Jan & Peter Spring. Cumberland Lorne from 6:30pm \$85 per person. To reserve seats, or tables of 10, contact Margaret Cartledge on 0408 599 336 / margcartledge@hotmail.com. Book before October 1 and go in the draw for a \$100 Foodworks voucher
- 5 **LAAC Major Fishing Competition number 6**, Lines down at 6.00am. Weigh in at 12.15pm. BBQ lunch at the Lorne Aquatic and Angling Club.

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