

# THE COMMITTEE FOR LORNE

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## Chris's Restaurant... The Story Continues

*This week, we continue the Story of Chris's Restaurant as recalled by George Biron. George recounts the story of the famous Roast Potato for which Chris's was legendary...*

It took me a while to fully understand the lore of the potato. It was always Christos who put it on very carefully around 4pm in a big galvanised crate filled with about 80 big unpeeled but washed dry spuds; not sure of the variety but they were not Kennebecs. There was a second tray for the 9pm sitting. By 6pm they were baked potatoes, by 7.30 they had a crisp crust and by 9.30 they were nearly hollow with a crunchy skin and a smoky layer of silken spud. One weekday night, just after I started, the delightful Bob Cowcher was due late. Chris kept us there to wait for his friend with a special bottle. I was worried that I only had about 3 potatoes left and they were rapidly shrinking. As I was leaving I said hi to Bob and apologised for the spud and I can still visualise his smiling response "George I was dreaming about that potato all the way from New York." That's what I call a signature dish.

Service began around 5.30 with families coming straight off the beach slowly building up to the first official service around 7pm these diners were well trained to be out by 9pm. There was a doorman with a job of responsibility who herded the walk-ins armed with a roll of \$5 notes from Chris that he would convince parents to give to their teenage children to go and get fish and chips or play the pinnies while the oldies could relax over a bottle, a cray or a big fillet steak. There were 3 normal sidewalk tables but often the footpath would be full of tables of diners

right up past the old post office, full of happy campers. The heat in the kitchen would come to a screaming crescendo around 8pm to make sure the 9pm setting was ready to roll.

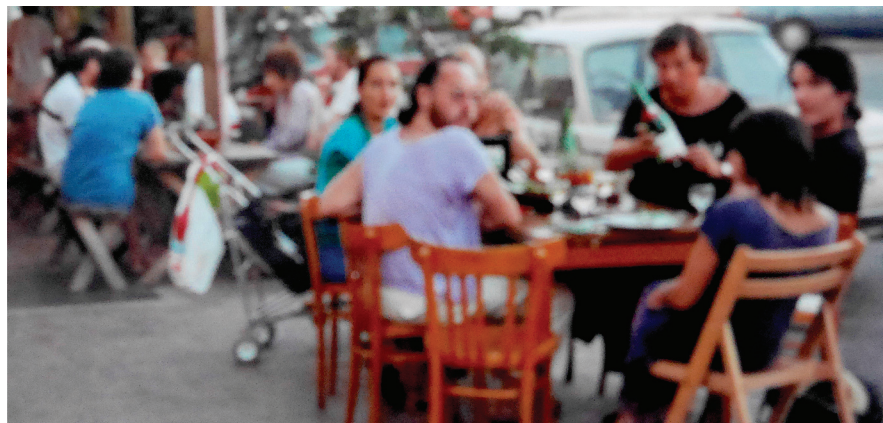
Chris had a very clever pressure valve installed in the shape of a punching bag hung in the corridor out the back that he, and all of us, including the diners, would occasionally consult when the "merde frapped le ventilateur." If we were lucky we could catch our breath before the nine o'clock rush. This was the main course. After 9pm, the real regulars would descend on the dining room. Christos knew just where to seat this A list. Joe and Patrice Saba had a table every night for at least 8, often a lot more that would spill into the rest of the room creating a soiree that continued well into the night. Pinder was buying the Burley Griffin Knitlok mansion. Rennie Ellis captured these scenes forever. Chris worked the floor all night sampling the premier cru BYO's and generously flirting with his adoring public. It was the toughest

brigade I have worked with. Penny made sure everyone behaved themselves. A summer of love tinged with sadness because of course the bulldozers would soon erase this sacred site. For what? You can still find Christos Penny and Taki [this is really a reminder to self to go soon] at Beacon point at Skenes Creek near Apollo Bay where the story continues.

In conclusion, it was a really tough but uplifting moment in time. Christos was under a great deal of pressure from many fronts. From the kitchen we were all rooting for him along with the whole town for the best result. The camaraderie inside the shop was extraordinary that was what I was trying to say along with a big thanks to Chris on whose shoulders we all rose.

*PS I know he is not a saint but he was our Zorba.*

George Biron



## A word from the *Chairman*

Happy Easter!!!! And with so much going on in and around Lorne, I'm sure it's to be an action packed week for all. The Sculpture Biennale continues to attract large numbers on a daily basis, the Bells Pro is bringing in many internationals, Livewire Park will have hundreds flying through the tree canopy behind town, the long running Lorne Lions Easter Art Show continues the tradition and make sure you visit the Lorne Kindergarten market on the Foreshore.

The Colac and District Football League (CDFNL) kick off this weekend with the Lorne Football and Netball Club hosting Birregurra for the annual Mark Trickey Memorial Cup. This country football blockbuster will also be a repeat of last years Grand Final with the Lorne boys looking to go one better than they did in 2017.

It is a super day for Country Sport that brings together two great clubs that combine their resources to service a big Easter Saturday crowd who love to watch local grass roots netballers and footballers going their hardest. Mike Brady with his "Superannuation Song" – Up Their Cazaly, will entertain the crowd pre-game from 1.30pm as the festivities unfold and full

catering facilities are on hand to ensure a great day is had by all.

In a continuing show of great communication, Bodin Campbell and his team from DELWP have us on notice that ignition of their planned burns is imminent and not to be alarmed if residual smoke is present over the coming weeks. On the back of the recent fires in our region and other parts of the state, these proactive actions have a limited window for effective execution and we wish them well with the project.

For the Lorne Community, Selena Walding and her team return to the recently refurbished Stribling Reserve commercial kitchen with Club Meals on offer each Thursday evening from 6.30pm. You're invited to come and join the growing number as they not only throw their support behind the Dolphins, but become of a growing close knit community; it's open to all.

Don't forget to pencil in your diaries our two upcoming community lunches at the View@LorneHotel on Friday the 20th of April and Friday the 8th of June. Both of these functions are not to be missed events as on April 20 we have the Co-chair of the

Great Ocean Road Taskforce, Mr Terry Mulder, and on June 8 our dynamic Lorne Community Hospital Chairman, Damien Smith and CEO, Kate Gillan, revealing the latest on Health Care in our region.

The Great Ocean Road Taskforce has recently released an issues paper outlining the key issues and proposing a new management model to strengthen protection of the landscape setting, improve the visitor experience, provide greater certainty in land-use planning and attract investment proposals that will benefit visitors and local communities. I urge everyone of you to go online a view the document with an opportunity to have your say by the 30th April 2018.

The Committee for Lorne are pleased to be able to provide the opportunity for you to listen the Co-chairman of the Taskforce in a low key local non political environment. I am sure this will be one of our most popular luncheons and attendance is only available by RSVP to [nicole@greatoceanroadrealestate.com.au](mailto:nicole@greatoceanroadrealestate.com.au) by April 5 – do it now!

Ian Stewart  
Chairman - Committee for Lorne



## COMMUNITY PROFILE

JOHN BARBER

There's a glint in John's eye when I asked about his first memories of Lorne. It seems he spent holidays down here with his mates in the late 50s at the Pacific Hotel. I'm sure there were plenty of memories made there. John married Barb in 1976 and has two children. Lorne holidays changed to include family, first in various rented accommodation then in their own house built 20 years ago.

John was born and educated in Melbourne. He had planned to study law but instead worked with the Victorian Crown Solicitor for two years before becoming a cadet with ACI and studying accountancy part time. Deciding he didn't want to be an accountant he completed his cadetship and worked for four years as State Manager of ACI Fibreglass. In 1972 the company sent him to the UK for 18 months, followed by six months in USA. On his return to Australia he met and married Barb.

He continued working with ACI Fibreglass until he was moved to their Packaging Division. In 1992 he changed to Smorgon Steel and was there when the firm was taken over by One Steel. He stayed for two years and retired in 2009. John has been a permanent in town since 2016.

He wasted no time becoming part of the community. John is a member of the Golf Club, Bowls Club, Aquatic Club and inaugural Treasurer of the Men's Shed. He has been a volunteer for the Lorne Sculpture Biennale. He joined the bridge group.

Travel is a passion. He and Barb have been on several cruises and tours around the world. Since retirement they have driven long road trips to Perth, Uluru and North West Queensland. He loves the garden. He has been a serious tennis player and spent five years on the Council of Kooyong Tennis Club. He's a family man and loves to spend time with their two grandchildren.

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## LORNE WARD EVENTS CALENDAR

### March

29-2/4 **Lions Easter Art Show**, at the Senior Citizens Centre.

31 **Lorne Kinder Easter Market**, Located on the Lorne Foreshore 9am – 4pm.

### April

1 **Lorne Country Club Easter Tennis Tournament**

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