

THE COMMITTEE FOR LORNE

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Protecting and Growing the Great Ocean Road

The 243 kilometre, National Heritage listed, Great Ocean Road is one of the world's most scenic and iconic coastal touring routes.

Its sheer limestone cliffs, pockets of rainforest, shipwreck history, and world class-surfing breaks make the Great Ocean Road one of Australia's most popular destinations for visitors and Victoria's most significant tourism asset.

The Great Ocean Road connected isolated coastal communities when it was constructed between 1919 and 1932. It was built by returned servicemen to honour their fellow soldiers and sailors from World War I, the coastal and forested landscapes along the road are of high cultural, ecological and economic importance to the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar people who have known this country, and cared for it, since the beginning. The coastline also includes rare polar dinosaur fossil sites, the best-known one being Dinosaur Cove. Fossils collected from numerous sites along the coast continue to yield important scientific information.

Today the Great Ocean Road governance arrangements involve many different organisations that operate across a range of geographical scales, timeframes and jurisdictional boundaries. There are more than 17 responsible public entities with accountabilities from strategy development and implementation: land-use planning, management and administration, infrastructure delivery, asset maintenance, emergency management, investment facilitation, destination promotion and brand stewardship. Responsibility for managing contiguous coastal foreshore, public open spaces and

parklands along the Great Ocean Road is also fragmented.

An expert taskforce charged with the job of protecting and growing Victoria's iconic Great Ocean Road has released an issues paper for public feedback.

The Governance of the Great Ocean Road Region identifies proposals for better coordination between the key agencies responsible for the road and the tourist destination, so that they are working in tandem with the one common goal – protecting and growing the Great Ocean Road.

Last year, the Government invested \$1.3 million to establish the Great Ocean Road Taskforce, and appointed former Victorian Ministers for Public Transport Peter Batchelor and Terry Mulder as its co-chairs.

It also features G21 chief executive Elaine Carbines, former chair of Victorian Coastal Council Diane James AM, Great Ocean Road Tourism chair Wayne Kayler-Thomson and the chief executives from five local councils. The Taskforce has worked closely with nearly 40 relevant organisations and local groups.

The issues paper notes that although more than 14 public agencies have responsibilities in the region, they're often disconnected from one another – and don't have clearly defined partnerships with Traditional Owners.

Other proposals in the issues paper include the establishment of a lead agency, action to secure funding sources for the plan, and a 20 to 25-year strategy covering the entire length of the Great Ocean Road, to ensure the iconic tourist destination reaches its full potential.

The Great Ocean Road region attracts twice as many visitors as the Great Barrier Reef and Uluru combined – generating \$1.3 billion in

visitor expenditure and creating around 9,200 jobs.

The Government will consider the Taskforce's recommendations after the community has had its say. Submissions can be lodged before the end of April. The discussion paper can be viewed at engage.vic.gov.au/great-ocean-road

Have your say on the future of the Great Ocean Road

The Victorian Government is calling for public submissions on the future management of the Great Ocean Road following the release of an issues paper last week.

The Governance of the Great Ocean Road Region highlights key challenges and opportunities for the region and recommends the establishment of a lead agency and a 20 to 25-year strategy covering the entire length of the Great Ocean Road.

For those in Lorne, the session will take place at Lorne Community House, Saturday April 21st from 4:00pm to 6:00pm.



A word from the *Chairman*

As the smoke begins to settle, children prepare to return to school and we roll into the last half of autumn, it's fair to say that the Easter vacation has been an absolute belter on the coast and for so many different reasons and diverse events. Having spoken with numerous visitors and locals alike, the common theme has been how good the "Lorne vibe" has been over past months compared to recent years. What has also been very noticeable has been the constant communication surrounding the burns that are underway.

Such a difficult operation where risk management is such a high priority for all involved, it's interesting to note how the media grab hold of the images of smoke blanketing Lorne and the Otways and search far and wide for negative quotes to accompany the dramatic images. Speak with generational Lorne and Otway's people and the admiration for the teams undertaking this difficult task is immense. Past memories of the Black Friday fires in January 1939, Ash Wednesday of February

1983 and the Wye River Christmas fires of 2015, provide a sound reminder that any fuel reduction management has to be a good thing!

As a flow on from these discussions, I also wanted to share a great conversation between two long term local mates who chatted over a beer at the Lorne Aquatic and Angling Club. My father, who celebrates his 85th birthday later this year, sat with his lifelong friend Edward "Ned" Stribling and they exchanged memories of the past - brilliant. Equally as good was to see current Commodore Keith Miller extend his hand to Edward who was the founding Commodore back in 1960 – the year I was born!

To hear talk how they moved the "old kitchen" component from the Gracedale guest house that sat prominently on the current site the Lorne Senior Citizens Facility and Lorne Community House, to be the first Aquatic Club House that has been added to through time. For over fifty years that small original building built by Lorne

people for Lorne people and their visitors has been an institution and continues to be today.

An amazing story unfolded as Edward queried the whereabouts and health of Henry Love and both smiles widened as great old times were rekindled. To hear how the fathers of both Henry and Don sat together at the Lorne School and learn of the same fate a generation later as both were class mates was a snapshot of a relationship seldom seen today.

Not sure if you've had the chance to read the issues paper of the Great Ocean Road Task Force (there is a link in the feature article) as it will be the backbone of one our most informative Community Luncheons to date on Friday the 20th of April at 12 noon. If you haven't already responded to confirm your attendance this will be your last chance – Please RSVP now to nicole@greatoceanroadrealestate.com.au

Ian Stewart

Chairman - Committee for Lorne

COMMUNITY PROFILE

NOLA & JOHN FREEMAN



48 Years ago, Nola's girlfriend and flatmate organised a blind date to take her to a Ballarat Teachers College Ball. It was John, who lived on the family farm at nearby Mt Mercer. The date was a success and he asked her out the very next week. Although she turned him down that time, he persisted. "We fell in love - and still are - and six months later we married".

John was born and educated in Ballarat. He was under no pressure to return to the farm but it was and is still, his passion. His own son has carried on the tradition and after Agricultural College has also returned, albeit with a "different" approach. John and Nola have moved into Ballarat but John says, "I don't really want to be out of it yet".

After the Freeman's were married they set up their own business. They created Freeman's Transport, a grain trading and transport company which their son has taken over. Nola runs the office with her daughter-in-law (a nurse) and their accountant who Nola taught in grade six.

When the children were in school, Nola served on committees, did heaps of fund raising and worked for charities, in particular, SIDS. Not only was she part of setting up the organisation but with her own tragic personal experience became a vital member counselling other parents who had suffered the same sadness.

John's not really into sport. "I played a bit of tennis and golf and I support Geelong Footy Club. Nola follows Essendon but we never go together when they play each other." Nola played squash and had a go at golf. John has been part of his local CFA for as long as he can remember.

Nola's passion is her home, garden and their grandchildren. "I am a grandmother and I love it". To celebrate her 70th birthday she is taking her two eldest grandchildren to Disneyland. She believes the travel they did with their children proved inspirational. Their daughter gave up a legal career, went to London, married an Englishman and created a chain of coffee shops which become bars at night.

The Freemans have travelled widely, love cruises and are happy to have family in London, an excuse to visit Europe more.

They bought in Lorne ten years ago and come for weekends regularly, usually with family or friends. They are party people. Their entertainment includes Qdos and The Aquatic Club.

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LORNE WARD EVENTS CALENDAR

April

20 **Committee for Lorne Luncheon**, at the View Room, Lorne Hotel. Guest speaker Terry Mulder, Co-chair of the Great Ocean Road Task Force. RSVP to nicole@greatoceanroadrealestate.com.au

21 **Lorne vs South Colac football and netball**, at Stribling Reserve, juniors matches from 9am, seniors at 2pm

May

4-6 **Lorne May Music Festival weekend**, various events at Cumberland Lorne, The Riverbank Café, Grand Pacific Hotel & Lorne Hotel. Book 2 nights accom at Cumberland Lorne, Grand Pacific Hotel or Lorne Hotel & receive 2 free tickets for 2 people to all events. More info lovelorne.com.au and oztix.com.au

19-20 **Great Ocean Road Running Festival**, Running, music, wellness.

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