

No. 294 May 2026

Produced as an independent newsletter by Lorne Independent Inc.

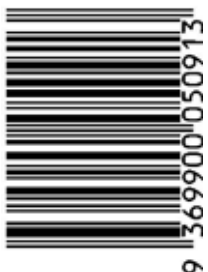
LORNE *Independent*

\$4

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**Our caring Governor-General
came to Lorne to check on our
flood recovery and praised
our community spirit**



Lorne Independent Inc.

Published by Lorne Independent Inc.

No. A0041756Y

ABN: 54 724 981 550

**MEMBER 2026****Published monthly****The LORNE Independent acknowledges our team:****Editor:** Janet Goud**Email:** editorlorneindependent@gmail.com**Special Writers:** Douglas Williams, John Agar, John Ford (Sports Editor).**Contributors:** Ray Sutton, Eva J Youl, Clementine, Allan Walls, Wendy Jarratt, Sandra McComb, Gary Allan, Keith Miller, Peter Spring and Harri Muller (Distribution Manager)**Distributors:** Post Office, Shell Service Station, Op Shop and Foodworks.**Design & print:** Jarrod Witcombe – Witsell Media**Treasurer:** David Stribling – PO Box 213 Lorne, 3232

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Contribution deadline: 20th of the month**Subscription charges.**

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LORNE

Independent

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These are how our little newspaper keeps going. Without this support and our wonderful voluntary staff of writers, and our accountant, we will go the sad way of so many small local papers.

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Easter Egg Hunt!

By Easter Bunny – Sally Young



Easter Sunday morning, Trade Winds Avenue was once again buzzing for the annual easter egg hunt – our 16th year in a row! Fortunately, we were blessed with sunshine and warm weather – but not too warm that the eggs melted. The Easter Bunny had been out early morning hopping up the street and sipping on a latte whilst hiding chocolate eggs in many of the Trade Winds Avenue driveways and gardens.

At 10am the hunt was on! Up to 30 residents and friends, along with 16 very excited children and grandchildren from the age of 6 months to 14 years, plus their very well behaved 4-legged fur babies, met at the bottom of the street to commence the hunt.

Over the next hour we walked, whilst the kids ran to each driveway where Julie Jordan read out cryptic clues. Designed for the adults, the clues provided “dirt” on the homeowners. One of the clues was: *“The home of Shark Bait Morgan who, despite having swum from the pier to the pub or pub to the pier over 100 times, has still managed to evade the resident white pointer”.*

Eggs were hidden in trees, in gardens, in flowers, on taps, on rocks and walls, in wood heaps and in blown up balloons that were hanging from my clothesline. POP POP POP! So much fun and imagination trying to burst them to get the eggs out.

After popping all the egg-filled balloons, the fun didn't

stop. We kicked off a playful “street initiation” for the new neighbours - tossing water-filled balloons from my balcony down to them! One stubborn balloon refused to burst, so it was thrown back up to the kids, who impressively caught it. After a few back-and-forth throws, it finally burst - right at the adults' feet! The kids definitely claimed victory. It was a highlight of the day—at least for them... perhaps less so for the soaked adults (who, in fairness, had been warned!).

All the big kids were great. They shared their eggs with the little ones, but to make sure the little ones did not miss out on the hunt, we conducted an under four-year-old hunt in one of the driveways. We are thinking that next year we may have seniors hunt in one of the driveways!

The hunt ended at the end of Trade Winds where a bag of eggs was rolled down the hill much to the delight of the children who ran everywhere chasing them!

After the traditional group photo, the kids were once again invited to donate some of their eggs to the residents at Lorne Hospital. It was heartwarming to see so many of them step forward and generously share their treats. A large bag of eggs was delivered to the hospital later that morning for the residents and staff to enjoy.

Thanks to all those who donated eggs and came out on the day to make our Trade Winds Avenue 16th Easter egg hunt a wonderful success.

Baskets full and tummies soon to be full – what a lovely group of neighbours! 🍷

“Eggs were hidden in trees, in gardens, in flowers, on taps, on rocks and walls, in wood heaps and in blown up balloons that were hanging from my clothesline.”

Editorial

By Janet Goud, Lorne Independent Editor

It's been glorious weather in our bit of paradise. Easter was also fabulous. The campers had a great time. So much was happening! In this issue you will find all these excitements reviewed. The very famous International Bells Surfing Comp, the Mens Shed Lorne Independent Regatta, and later the Grounded Festival at Yan Yan Gurt West all brought joy to visitors and participants to our town and surrounds.

GORCAPA have begun to rebuild the Anglers, and the rock wall. Negotiations continue for historic recognition in the external areas of the precinct. We wait to see how our history is treated after a long fight for recognition.

Due to the huge surprise floods we experienced up and down the surf coast, our traders have suffered from lack of tourist funds. Easter visitors put a spring in their steps, and the school holidays have helped. Please buy local when you can.

Unexpectedly, we have been visited by the Victorian Governor, and the Governor General of Australia so see how we are recovering from this climate emergency. All groups who came together at this time, as a matter of course, were thanked.

This shows us how precious our little town and its beauty is held by in the wider world. Also, how resilient our small local community is when called upon. Well done Lorne! I think we could even take on plagues of locusts if necessary. 🐛



Mayor Cr Libby Stapleton (right)

Thank you, Lorne



Dear Lorne community,

During the January flood, you showed up in extraordinary ways.

On behalf of our shire community - and the many visitors you protected, the neighbours and colleagues you supported, and the care you showed for Country - thank you.

The speed and scale of the event created extremely challenging circumstances. Community members came together quickly, many stepping into first responder roles and, in some cases, helping to save lives.

Hundreds of people arrived at the Emergency Relief Centre, many in shock and distress, some with nowhere to go and without essential belongings or even a bed for the night.

Their relief, gratitude and emotion on learning that the Lorne community offered shelter, comfort and short-term security is a lasting reflection of your compassion and generosity.

We also witnessed the profound impact of the flood on the land - on Country - and the care shown in response with respect, effort and responsibility.

The Lorne community has long been known for its warm, generous hospitality and in this emergency that same spirit was clear and essential.

Thank you.

Cr Libby Stapleton

Mayor, Surf Coast Shire Council

surfcoast.vic.gov.au



National 18-24 MAY 2026
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 YOUR YEAR TO VOLUNTEER **Week**

ANNOUNCING OUR 2026 SURF COAST SHIRE LOCAL LEGENDS

Community Commitment Award

- Greg Parker
- Steve Findlay
- Dean Walton
- Larissa Sichivitsa
- Jodi Morgan
- Cheryl Reif
- Doug Elsum
- Doug Stirling
- Steve Christou

Community Impact Award

- Sarah Gross and Cass Mackenzie
- Matty Lawrence
- Robert Lytzki
- Robert Sneddon
- George Carman
- Barry Davidson
- Daniel Blunt

Group Volunteer Excellence Award

- Lorne Community Flood Responders
- Anglesea Art House Volunteers
- Anglesea Community House Committee Of Management

Community Inclusion

- Tori's Place Café Volunteers

**THANK YOU
TO OUR SURF
COAST SHIRE
VOLUNTEERS**

LOCAL LEGENDS AWARD CELEBRATION

Thursday 21 May, 10am-12pm
Council Chambers, 1 Merrijig Drive, Torquay.

Join us at the 2026 Surf Coast Shire Local Legends Award Ceremony! Listen to the inspiring stories of award recipients, celebrate their contributions and connect over lunch.

**EVERYONE
WELCOME.**

Winchelsea Sustainability Conversation and Coffee

Wednesday 20 May, 10.30-11.30am
Winchelsea Shire Hall, Winchelsea.

Join us to celebrate Winchelsea volunteers and hear about inspiring ways to increase sustainability in your community programs at the Winchelsea Shire Hall.

Lorne Volunteer Afternoon Tea

Thursday 21 May, 2.30-3.30pm
Lorne Historical Society, 16 Mountjoy Parade, Lorne

Lorne Community Volunteers are invited to afternoon tea at the newly refurbished Lorne Historical Society. Join us to celebrate the Lorne Community, volunteering, and to reflect on a huge year of resilience and connection.

Anglesea Community Celebration

Friday 22 May, 10am-12pm
Anglesea Bowling Club, 15 Cameron Road, Anglesea

Volunteers from Anglesea and Surrounds are invited to attend a FREE community event at Anglesea Bowls Club. A fun bowling tournament between volunteer groups, morning tea, and a chance to connect as a community is planned.

Volunteer Thank you Drinks & Nibbles & Recognition Wall

Friday 5 June, 5pm-6pm
Deans Marsh Hall, 10 Pennyroyal Valley Road, Deans Marsh.

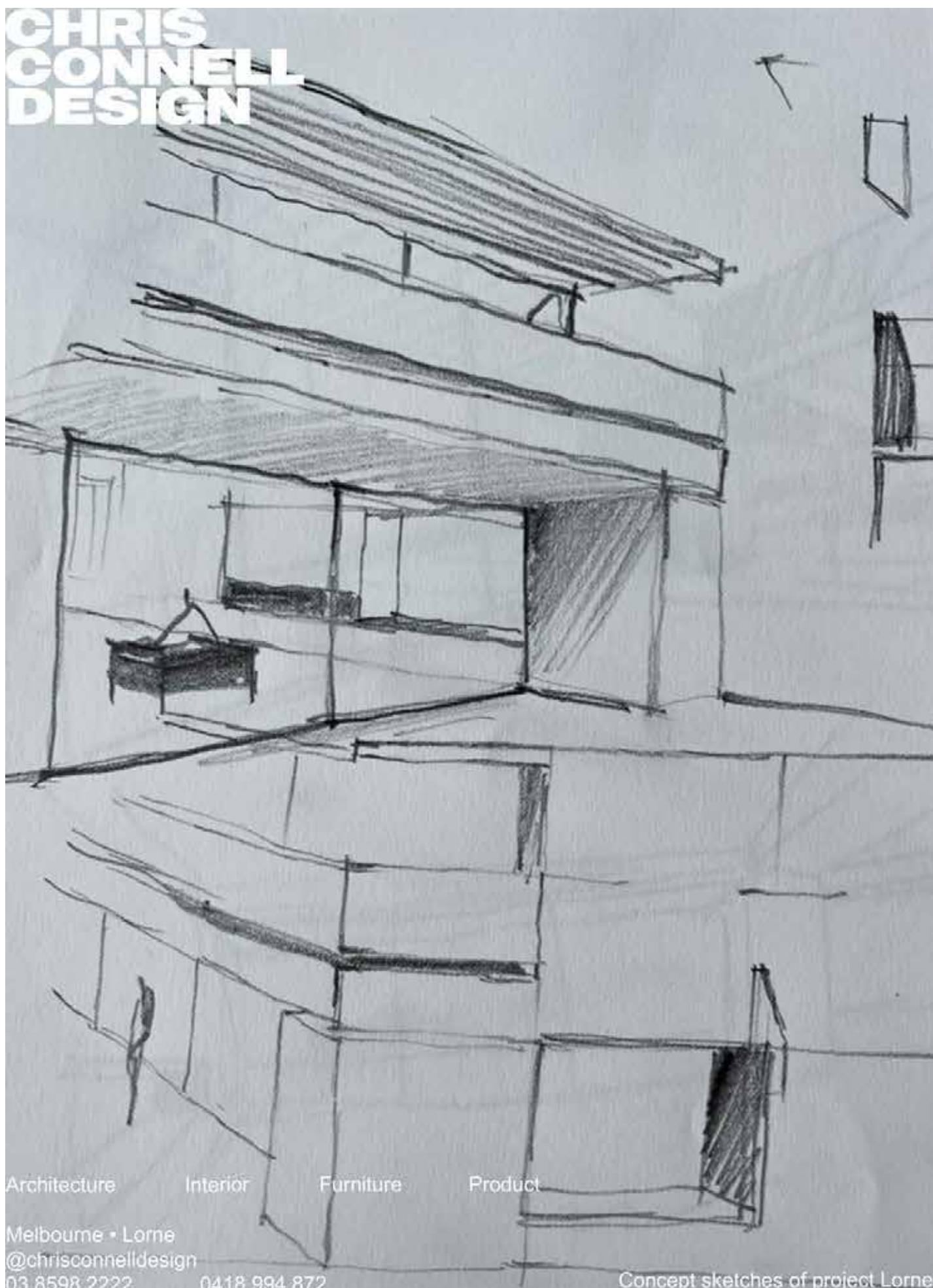
Before Community Dinner (no bookings required)

For further information on all events, scan the **QR code** or visit **surfcoast.vic.gov.au/volunteerweek**, email **bdixon@surfcoast.vic.gov.au** or call 5261 0600.

We are committed to making this event accessible and inclusive.
 If you require any support or adjustments to participate, please let us know when you RSVP.



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Concept sketches of project Lorne

Supporting Small Business in Lorne: A Community Responsibility

By Caroline Hirzel Bryant

Lorne has always been more than a destination — it is a community built on connection, creativity, and the unique small businesses that give our town its character. From cafés and retail stores to services and tourism operators, local businesses are the heartbeat of Lorne. Right now, that heartbeat needs support.

Over the past summer, Lorne businesses have faced significant challenges. The impacts of floods and bushfires have affected visitation, disrupted trade, and placed emotional and financial strain on business owners and staff alike. Now, with looming petroleum costs expected to further impact travel and tourism, many businesses are facing another difficult season ahead.

These pressures do not exist in isolation. Rising fuel prices increase freight and supply costs, meaning the price of goods inevitably rises. At the same time, small businesses are experiencing increasing operational expenses — higher rates, increasing debt repayments, and rising wages and superannuation obligations for staff. While these increases are necessary and important, profits are not rising at the same pace.

The result is often unseen by the broader community: business owners working longer hours, absorbing costs personally, and carrying growing stress that affects their mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing. Behind every shopfront is a person or family doing everything they can to keep their doors open.

Many business owners across Lorne are experiencing the same pressures. Yet too often, this struggle happens quietly, with individuals feeling isolated in overwhelm rather than supported through shared understanding. Now is the time for conversation, collaboration, and community connection.

Lorne's strength has always been its people. Instead of viewing one another as competitors, local businesses have an opportunity to work together — to collaborate, cross-promote, and support the uniqueness each business brings to the town.

When businesses support each other, the entire community benefits.

Equally important is the role of locals. Choosing to spend money locally is one of the most powerful ways residents can invest back into their own community. Every coffee bought locally, every gift purchased from a local store, and every service booked within town helps sustain jobs, families, and the character of Lorne itself.



THE MESSAGE IS SIMPLE BUT URGENT:

Use the things while they are here — don't regret them when they are gone.

The small businesses that make Lorne special are not guaranteed to always be here. Without community support, rising costs and ongoing challenges may force some to close their doors. Once lost, the uniqueness and identity they bring cannot easily be replaced.

Supporting local business is not just an economic decision; it is a community decision. It is about preserving the spirit of Lorne, maintaining connection, and ensuring future generations experience the vibrant town we know and love.

Now is the time to come together — to talk openly, support one another, and choose local wherever possible. Because when local businesses thrive, Lorne thrives. 📍

Lorne Independent Easter T37 Yacht Regatta

By David Lawler

Lorne Independent T37 RC Yacht Regatta was held on Easter Sunday with perfect conditions, great winds and a large crowd.

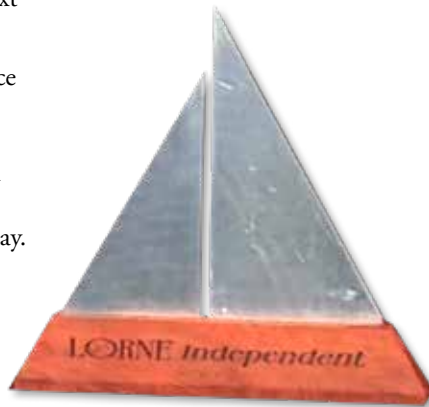
Racing was very competitive. After the four races, the winner, Smuggler (David Lawler) held a one-point lead over second place, Aeolus (Neil Verral). There were three different winners in the four races with Aeolus winning two. Love Lorne (Rod van Ingen) and Red Rocket (Tom Nelson) winning one each. Smuggler came second in each race.

As John Agar could not make race day, due to illness, Doug Robertson took over the commentary reins and did a wonderful job. Wayne Bishop was once again our race scorer and monitored the race finishes with an eagle eye.

We had a number of withdrawals due to gear breakages. Unfortunately, both Magpie (Bob Sinclair) and Lorne Independent (John Kelly) failed to start. The yacht, Men's Shed (John Barber), missed the first two races. During the third race, Reynard (David Worth) broke a main sheet and racing was over for the day. These will be repaired and readied for their next challenges later this year.

Thanks to *Lorne Independent* for sponsoring the race with the inaugural Lorne Independent perpetual Trophy built by the Men's Shed. The Editor, Janet Goud was on hand to congratulate the winner and present the trophy to Men's Shed President, David Lawler who was a sailor of big yachts back in the day. Of course, it is the Men's Shed who ran the event. Any new yacht builders and racers are welcome. ①

• A video of the four races is up on YouTube. Simply search for "Lorne Independent".



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Bells Beach Comp 2026

By Chris Cairns



Imagine if you gave a party and the guest of honour was a no-show?

Every Easter the Surf Coast is host to the longest running major surf contest in the world – the Bells Beach Pro. Bells is renowned as one of the premier surf breaks, one at which only the best excel. Lorne has its own connection to this storied event. A local has won it more than any other. Never say never, so they say. But never will anyone win more than Gail Couper's tally of ten wins.

This year brought the best of the best world's surfing talent to our coast; South Africans, Brazilians, Hawaiians, Italians, Americans and more, all looking to add their name to the list of wave borne luminaries on the trophy.

There was one problem though, the guest of honour failed to show. The waves just were not there.

In the new format, the event organisers can suspend surfing if the waves are not of suitable quality, lay days in sailing terms. This year had more hold overs than I can remember. In the past, if the waves failed to materialise the organisers resorted to a car convoy of contestants to Johanna Beach in search of suitable waves. After all, you can't have the world's best big wave riders scrabbling around in knee high dribblers. This year days surfed were nearly outnumbered by days missed.

So what does it mean? Has Bells lost its mojo? Is the Surfcoast a misnomer? No way! That's just the way it goes with ocean swell. To get classic waves, our coast needs a low deep in the Southern Ocean, which produces strong south westerly winds. The swell they generate can travel over a thousand kilometres till it reaches our coast. The nemesis of good waves is the easterly. And this autumn we have had more than our share of them. Easter came early this year.

There is a saying heard by surfers who turn up at a fabled break and see no classic waves, "You should have been here yesterday." This year that could have

been re-written as "You should have waited just one day more". The classic waves arrived the day after the surfing caravan folded its tents and headed off to the next venue at Margaret River.

There are three waves at Bells – Bells itself, Winkipop, its near northerly neighbour and Southside, unsurprisingly, the southerly cousin. If Bells is too small, Winki may work. This year Winki was much in demand. It is a top quality fast righthander. In the men's event two Brazilians made it through to the final, Miguel Pupa and a past wearer of the world champion's crown, Gabriel Medina, both noted for their ability to generate board speed and perform gravity defying air spins above the breaking face of the wave. Pupa was victorious. Aussies were well to the fore. Molly Picklum was runner up in the women's division and local Torquay surfer Xavier Huxtable won his way into the main event via a win in the ultra-competitive trials elimination.

As a long-term watcher of the Bells event, two things struck me. Firstly, the surf is fickle. In any heat the best wave may just not arrive at the right time for any contestant and the big waves may just not be there in the ten-day Easter window the World Surf League allocates to Bells. Secondly, these surfers are so incredibly fit and agile. Speed and aerobatics now rule the waves. ①

"There was one problem though, the guest of honour failed to show. The waves just were not there."



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A Short History of Surfing in Lorne

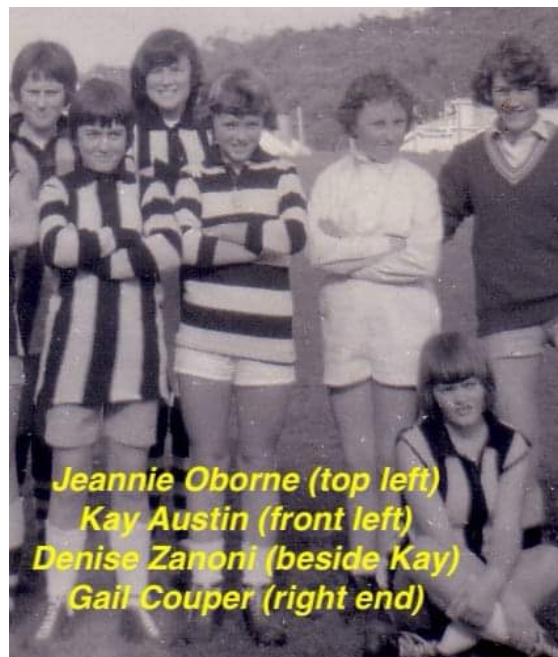
By Linton Ferguson, Lorne Historical Society

From the earliest days of surfing, Lorne has been at the forefront of surfing history. We know that in 1920, Louis Whyte from Geelong surfed using a solid redwood timber surfboard at Lorne beach. Whyte had travelled to Hawaii in 1919, spending six months at Waikiki learning how to surf. He purchased four solid redwood timber surfboards from Duke Kahanamoku and brought them back to Australia. Whyte is believed to be the first person to do a stand-up ride of a surfboard in Lorne, thought to be the second person to have surfed on a stand-up board in Australia.

Frank Beaurepaire was a world class swimmer and friend of Duke, (Frank was the featured swimmer at events in Melbourne that Duke attended in 1915). At the Lorne Historical Society (lornehistoricalsociety.org.au/exhibitions/surfing), we have some of the oldest film of anyone surfing in Victoria. In the grainy image, we can see Louis Whyte and friends surfing at Lorne as filmed by Frank Beaurepaire in 1920.

Surfing took off as modern surfboards evolved and people had access to modern transport. Gail Couper and Wayne Lynch are just two famous surfers from Lorne. Gail started surfing around 1961 and it wasn't long before she was competing at surfing's highest level as a finalist at surfing's first official world championship at Manly (NSW) in 1964. She started with a 9ft 4in board made by Max Gill. After that she used a 9ft 2in board which was made for her by Midget Farrelly. Her family embraced surfing. Her father, Stan, was an administrator for the Australian Surfing Association and a contest director at Bells Beach for many years. Her mother, Vi, also assisted with contest administration as well as travelling the coast with Lorne grommets, including a talented young local kid called Wayne Lynch, looking for waves. When Gail finally retired from competitive surfing in 1979, after five Australian titles, 10 Bells Beach wins, and 14 Victorian championships, she was inducted into the Australian Surfing Hall of Fame in 2000.

Wayne Lynch, another famous surfer from Lorne took surfing to another level. Born in 1951, an innovative surfer and surfboard shaper. A competitor from the age of ten, he won six consecutive Victorian junior titles and the Australian junior title four years running between 1967 and 1970. Wayne developed surfing techniques that became legendary, ushering in the shortboard revolution. By the age of 17, he stole the show and changed forever how people ride waves. ❶



"Whyte is believed to be the first person to do a stand-up ride of a surfboard in Lorne, thought to be the second person to have surfed on a stand-up board in Australia."

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Happy 80th Birthday!

By Peter Spring

On April 23, over 50 members of the Lorne Community gathered for lunch at In the Skies Restaurant at the Lorne Bowls Club to celebrate the “Festival of Gary”. This lunch was one of several events held in Lorne and Melbourne, for Gary Allen’s friends and family to celebrate his 80th Birthday. Gary is widely known and respected in the Lorne Community. His family were amongst the early settlers in Lorne and Gary has had a prominent career in Lorne in many roles including as Principal at Lorne P-12 College and as our Councillor on Surf Coast Shire.

Gary’s grandparents’ families (Allen and Anderson) came to Lorne in the 1870’s – the Allens as orchardists and the Andersons as brick makers.

Born in 1946 and raised by loving parents Norm and Kath, Gary and his sisters Judith and Barbara had a wonderful childhood in Lorne.

Educated at the Lorne School and then Belmont High School (as the Lorne School in the 1950’s finished at year 8), Gary completed Economics and Education degrees at Melbourne University. He taught economics at Melbourne High School and became principal of the Lorne School in 1990 and then in 1997 principal of Ararat Secondary College.

When principal at the Lorne School, the school community amalgamated with the Aireys Inlet Primary School, expanded the bus routes to welcome students from a broader area, expanded the footprint of the school by incorporating the Lorne RSL building and pioneered imaginative curriculum initiatives, including; vocational courses in hospitality, the expansion of music teaching, the introduction of French and Indonesian, the beginning of student written musical productions and multi-aged classes across upper primary and lower secondary levels.

After retiring from teaching, Gary took a leadership role in state and national rural education advocacy, worked at Ballarat University and ventured into private enterprise in the cabaret scene in Melbourne.

Gary returned to Lorne in 2012 and since then, he has become involved in the Lorne Historical Society, the Lorne Bowls Club, the Lorne Community Hospital Board, the Festival for the Performing Arts, Lorne Community Connect and the committee of the Lorne Lions Village. Under Gary’s leadership the Historical Society has upgraded its rooms and digitised most of its collection. The Bowls Club has more members playing pennant, with two teams winning



premierships last year. The greens are now lit providing improved access to bowling for community members in the winter months.

Gary has had a major impact on so many aspects of the Lorne community. The luncheon at the Bowls Club was an opportunity for so many of Gary’s friends in Lorne to recognise his contributions and to celebrate this milestone. Geoff Couper, retired Vic-Principal of Lorne P-12 College spoke in glowing terms of Gary’s leadership whilst Principal and the significant achievements that were made under his watch. Allan Walls who had been a fellow member of the Bowls Club Committee with Gary during the time so many changes and improvements were made at the Club, spoke of Gary’s contribution and the initiatives he led. At the time Allan and Gary joined the Bowls Club Committee, the Club was very insular within the community. It is now a vibrant, integral part of Lorne and is a wonderful gathering place for the community and visitors. Allan did remark on how much Gary had achieved for the Club but went on to say that in competition, his fellow bowlers referred to him as the “Postman” – who doesn’t deliver on Saturdays!

Gary, you are, and have been, a committed and respected person within the Lorne Community. You have achieved so much and provided incredible leadership to help so many in Lorne believe and achieve.

Happy 80th Birthday, Gary and may there be many more! 🎉

“Gary, you are, and have been, a committed and respected person within the Lorne Community. You have achieved so much and provided incredible leadership to help so many in Lorne believe and achieve.”



Keith Miller LACC
Commodore



REDEVELOPMENT REPORT

Our new clubhouse is progressing nicely with the underground plumbing done and the concrete slab not far away from being poured. The sea wall has started with truck loads of huge rocks being stockpiled and the foundations well underway. I love the name of the company doing it with their name on the excavators being 'ROCK-A-FELLAS'.

There's not a lot happening at the CoOp because of an issue with asbestos, but that's about to start.

Check out the photos below. Our local gun drone photographer and the manager of FoodWorks Lorne, Jonn Stewart, is going to take progress photos for us during the build. So all the drone photos are taken by him.




LOCAL LEGENDS AWARD CELEBRATION

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Council Chambers, 1 Merrijig Drive, Torquay.

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National Volunteer Week
18-24 MAY 2026
YOUR YEAR TO VOLUNTEER

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Volunteer Thank you Drinks & Nibbles & Recognition Wall

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Deans Marsh Hall, 10 Pennyroyal Valley Road, Deans Marsh.

Before Community Dinner (no bookings required)

EVERYONE IS WELCOME.

For further information, scan the QR code or visit surfcoast.vic.gov.au/volunteerweek or email bdixon@surfcoast.vic.gov.au or call 5261 0600.

We are committed to making this event accessible and inclusive. If you require any support or adjustments to participate, please let us know when you RSVP.



NO PIER ACCESS OVER EASTER

Bowdens, who are the builders for the redevelopment decided to allow access to the pier until after Easter when the sea wall build was starting, but GORCAPA decided to close it all down. I have no idea why they did this. There was no work being done there over Easter at all so I can't think of any reason why they did it. I notice there have been several people blaming Bowdens for closing it down but that was not the case.

FISHING COMP NUMBER FOUR

Sponsored by Lorne Concreting – Tom Dawson

Sunday 7th June, the comp runs from 6am until the deadline of 12:30pm. Weigh-in starts at midday. It's free to enter for members and all competitors get a free roast lunch. Prizes are awarded for first, second and third in both the junior and senior categories. Juniors must be under the age of 18. You can only weigh in one fish each, so anyone can win on the day, and it's environmentally friendly. Come and have a crack. It's great fun.

Weigh-in, lunch, refreshments and presentations will all be held at Stribling Reserve, downstairs near the canteen and booth.

There's no Fishing Report this month due to no access to Point Grey.

DIVING HOLIDAY

I've just returned from a diving trip to Komodo National Park in Indonesia. We stayed in a town called Labuan Bajo on the island of Flores and travelled by boat each day over to Komodo. It's a 90-minute trip each way. We left about 7am each day and got back about 5pm.

It sounds like a long time, but the diving was so spectacular and the scenery during the trips was so beautiful the time flew by very quickly. There are hundreds of islands in that area, all surrounded by coral reefs. It's in the centre of the 'Coral Triangle', which has the largest concentration of marine life on the planet. It covers only 1.6% of the world's oceans but has over 600 different species of corals which amounts to 76% of all corals. It also has over 2,200 species of fish which is 37% of all coral reef fish. The water temperature was 28 degrees with visibility ranging from 20 to 40 metres.

It's an area of extremely strong currents so it's not for the faint hearted. Our highlight was the abundance of Manta Rays and sharks. They were everywhere. The Mantas were gigantic and very friendly, allowing us to get close enough to touch. The sharks were the opposite, always checking us out from a distance. We had several huge all black Mantas which are quite rare. Almost all mantas have white bellies. A couple of them were about 6 metres across and were part of a squadron of 10 who were so busy feeding they were bumping into each other. They turn in surprisingly tight circles when feeding which is great to observe. They live on plankton and eat over 30 kgs of it daily.



PARADISE LOST

I've been diving all over SE Asia, the Pacific and Indian Ocean Islands for over 50 years now and up until about 20 years ago all the dive spots were pristine, but very sadly that's no longer the case. There are now large areas of ocean that are floating rubbish tips with single use plastic floating everywhere. It's really terrible and it's only going to get worse with no obvious solution in sight.

The worst I've come across is Malaysian Borneo, the Maldives, Bali and Vanuatu where even at 25 metres the coral is littered with plastic. Komodo is still not bad but it's getting there.

Another big issue is dynamite fishing which is done over coral reefs in reasonably shallow water. Each year we come across more and more areas of coral reefs that are blown to bits and most of these are inside marine parks.

Last year we were diving in Borneo off an island called Sipidan which has been a marine park for over 30 years and has housing and an office for rangers when we had an explosion that hit us with a shock wave and actually hurt our ears. It didn't just happen once it kept happening every 5 minutes or so for the entire dive. Result of Dynamite Fishing.



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LORNE P-12 COLLEGE

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by the Sea



Fundraising pays
off for the kids



New Playground Built For Fun

A long-awaited new playground at the front of the school has officially opened, much to the delight of students who are already making the most of the vibrant new space.

The project has been made possible thanks to the outstanding support of the local community. Funds raised through raffles, foreshore markets and community events in Lorne have played a vital role, reflecting the generosity and commitment of families and supporters.

Community members are warmly invited to visit and experience the playground, with access available after school hours and throughout the holidays.

The school extends its sincere thanks to the Master Plan Committee, Parents & Friends Committee, and Paul Spizzica Jnr for their dedication in bringing the project to life.



Easter Raffle Success

We would like to extend our thanks to the local & school community for the outstanding support of our Easter raffle, which raised valuable funds for future school projects, including the upcoming kitchen garden.

We acknowledge the generosity of families and local businesses who donated prizes and purchased tickets, helping make this fundraiser a great success.

The raffle was drawn at the Easter Market, with all 10 prizes now distributed.

Thanks To Our Raffle Sponsors

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Riverbank Cafe
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Scotchmans Hill
Shalimar Nursery
Terry White Chemist
Tommy Bahama

And the many other families who donated generously

Christos Poetry Prize 2026

LORNE P-12 COLLEGE

Lorne P-12 College is proud to present the Christos Poetry Prize, running from 18th May to 12th June.

The prize is inspired by the legacy of local poet Christos Raskatos, who ran Lorne Fisheries in his flamboyant, generous, and poetic style for so many years.

Students of Lorne P-12 College, families, and community members are invited to submit original poems. Selected entries will be displayed throughout the community during the prize period.

THEME – *My Special Place*

Entrants are encouraged to interpret the theme in their own creative way.

Age Categories

Prep – Grade 4

Grade 5 – Grade 9

Grade 10 – Year 12

PRIZES

Prizes will be awarded to the winner and runner-up in each Lorne P-12 student age category.

COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS

Families, staff, and community members are warmly encouraged to enter original poems.

Selected works may be displayed; however, community entries are not eligible for prizes.

Entry Requirements

- Poems must respond to the theme – *My Special Place*
- Maximum 35 lines
- Handwritten entries only
- Submit in person to the Lorne P-12 College front office

Entries close: Friday 12th June 2026 at 3:30pm



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A stunning Charlie Mina architect designed and locally built home situated in Lorne's most desired "town central" location. All of Lorne's essential amenities (beach, foreshore, supermarket, cafes, restaurants and both pubs) are within easy relatively flat walking distance. The less than 5 year old property presents in immaculate as new condition. Comprising 3 bedrooms, plus study/4th bedroom, ensuite to master plus a second full bathroom and two powder rooms. A living area on each level is ideal for large families. Substantial sized decks, double lock up garage and huge storage spaces complement the ideal layout. Outstanding natural light is enjoyed throughout the home and the floor to ceiling double glazed windows capture lovely treed views whilst absorbing natural warmth. Zoned ducted heating/cooling can be controlled remotely and the Storax wood heating fireplace is very effective. Durable high end fixtures and fittings include striking wormy chestnut hardwood flooring, beautifully appointed kitchen and charred Shou Sugi Ban external timber cladding. The enviable location and clever design have allowed the current owner to holiday let the property to suit their personal needs but scope to ramp up this investment opportunity exists.

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LORNE

OCEAN WINDS

Set across three spacious levels, this beautifully appointed home offers generous proportions and a relaxed coastal atmosphere, comfortably accommodating up to nine guests. With elevated beach and bush outlooks, the property feels both private and connected to its natural surroundings, creating an ideal setting for a memorable group getaway.

The thoughtfully designed layout balances shared living with private retreats. A king master suite enjoys its own upper-level position with ensuite and balcony, while additional bedrooms on the lower level provide flexible accommodation for families or mixed groups. Multiple bathrooms across the home ensure ease and comfort, particularly for larger bookings.

Inviting living spaces encourages time together, whether it's slow mornings, long lunches or relaxed evenings in. The home's multi-level design provides both separation and flow, making it well suited to extended family stays or holidays with friends. With quality finishes and generous proportions throughout, this is a home designed for comfort, space and easy coastal living.

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From the team at Great Ocean Road Real Estate

Surf Coast Shire Councillor Column

News and Updates from Otway Range Ward

By Leon Walker, Surf Coast Shire Otway Range Ward Councillor

What a wonderful Autumn we have had down the coast, with amazing weather and the biggest tides of the year, we really do live in paradise.

Surf Coast Shire Council is running the **Stay in Lorne & Win** campaign to encourage visitors to book accommodation, stay longer, and spend more at local businesses during the quieter months.

The campaign gives visitors the chance to win Lorne Spend Cards when they stay overnight in Lorne and spend locally — helping drive bookings for accommodation providers and more customers for shops, cafés and attractions.

This initiative is funded through prize money donated by professional teams from the 2026 Cadel Evans Surf Coast Classic.

Visitors love an incentive. This campaign gives you a clear reason to promote Lorne, encourage longer stays, and remind visitors to shop and dine locally.

I was also grateful to attend the Lorne BBQ hosted by In the Skies and supported by council with funding for the food and giveaways for the Lorne Spend Cards, a great atmosphere with community coming together, and showing gratitude to our emergency services.

Council also welcomed the Victorian Governor in early March and the Australian Governor General last week to Lorne to acknowledge the community spirit during the extreme weather events through summer.

Coming up in May, we have the *Always Live* gig on of May 2, through Visit Victoria and working with shire, Love Lorne and local community groups. Celebrating amazing music for locals, and driving visitation, so tell all your friends and family to come on down, enjoy the local football and netball on the day and check out some great music, then stay the night, shop and eat in town!

Council also supports the Great Ocean Road Run festival as a world class event in the off season in mid May. These events support tourism in the off season.

The Surf Coast Shires draft budget is on display, and I encourage our local communities to view and also submit any responses and submissions for consideration for the final budget.

We are all feeling the pinch of the cost of living, and the uncertainty in the current climate, however we are lucky to live in such an amazing region of the surf coast and getting out there and supporting and connecting with our communities is essential. 📌



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Clementine Calling

The American humourist Evan Esart (1889-1995) once said that Easter time is the only time when it is perfectly safe to put all your eggs in one basket!!! This year Easter was a cracking good one for Lornies with good weather and so many eggs. Foodworks was so full of Easter eggs that I nearly fell over them every time I entered. Even the Op Shop had a basket of wee eggs to give away. What temptation...

Easter Sunday was the most gorgeous sunny morning. Having walked down to Stoney Creek, I headed over the swing bridge and saw the Men's Shedders and their beautiful, cleverly crafted yachts in full swing. What a splendid sight. Then I proceeded down Cypress Lane, where I was accosted by a charming lady in a ute who gave me a chocolate caramel koala. I got quite a shock as the ute had GORCAPA written all over it!! It must be their latest tactic to get the locals onside!! I reckon that will take more than a chocolate koala!!

Early on Easter Sunday The Frozen Few were enjoying their swim to the pump station when Nadine heard someone calling for help. Together with Tali she swam to help the man. They started to tow him towards the shore assisted by Ribbler who supported the man's legs. Brad also came to help rescue the man. By waving her fabulous orange arms Nadine attracted a surfer who paddled towards them. It all ended safely and they got the man into shallow waters. In the gorgeous sunshine the swimmer walked back to the beach, and Josie, Nadine, Bec and Talii walked to the Club House. Kisses all round to those very athletic members of The Frozen Few who helped to save a man's life. Bravo!!

Before Easter the Catholic School principals held a well-attended conference at the Mantra. Some of them patronized the pie night at the Pacific and so enjoyed themselves that the noise became so loud that Clementine noticed the foursome of John Agar, Paddy Haig, Margaret Crawshaw and Tom Latham pick up their plates and glasses and remove themselves to the outside area. They ended up in the Fishermen's Bar – a much quieter place to enjoy a meal. Sara McMillan and friend fled leaving Nick and John Pym (visiting from Canada, staying in his house in Hazel Street) to talk about old days at St Peters school in Adelaide.

Helen Worth arrived with a large tray of beautifully made sausage rolls at a drinks party to farewell Sandy Day. Sandy Day has sold her house in Polwarth Road with its beautiful view down to the Erskine River mouth and will be living part time in Adelaide to be nearer son and grandson. David and Anne McCormack were at the drinks party and David was

bemoaning the fact that only two people turned up to his much publicised pulling up of that ghastly South African weed - agapanthus. Everyone missed out on Suzanne Diviny's luscious home-made scones which she had made for the helpers (or non-helpers as it turned out!!). Good luck Sandy, we will all miss her as she and her family have been a part of Lorne for so many years. Better luck next time David.

The artists in residence often stay at The Mantra or the Pacific – very generous of these two institutions to give them a room. Our own Community Connect provides a place for them to paint in. In this way they are well looked after

Dearest retired detective and Collingwood fanatic Alan Foster died on the 14th March after several years in the Nursing Home. He will be sadly missed by his dear partner Dot who he always called "his sweetness". Dot says she will still visit the wonderful nurses who so ably cared for her dear Alan in the Nursing Home.

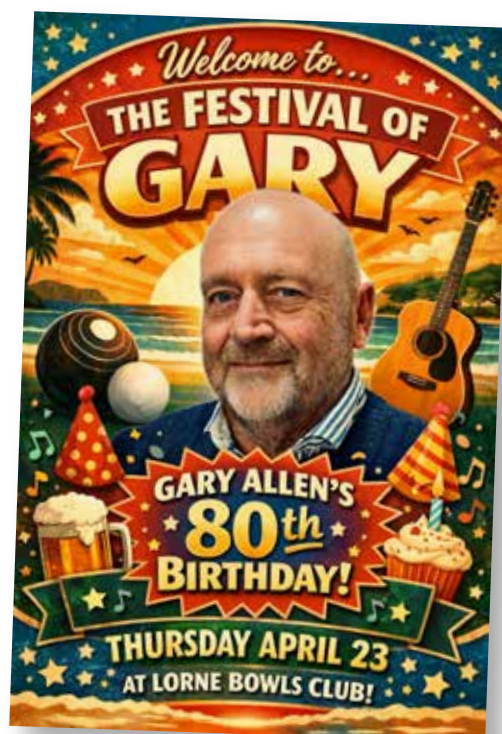
Terry White Chemmart has been sold to James Chan who runs the pharmacy in Anglesea. Sadly, our charming and helpful Rohan has found a new job in the Northern Territory and was given a farewell party by the Pharmacy girls at Salonika. We will all miss our chemist Rohan but the same charming and very helpful girls will still be there to look after us all.

Our dear little All Saints Anglican church got broken into by some vandals. Nothing was stolen! The very helpful Gary White was fixing up the damage to the back door and window and happened to notice that the big bottle for the communion wine was empty. He thought that the vandals must have drunk the lot, but the vicar assured him that it had been consumed by the Parishioners over Easter!!

A big gum tree came down in the area of the Community Garden, luckily it was when no one was there or there may have been damage to cars and possibly to people. Lucky old Craig ended up with the timber after he had cut it up.

Read all about it!! In the next edition, *Clementine* will report on *The Festival of Gary* – Gary Allen's 80th Birthday, which was celebrated on April 23 at the Lorne Bowls Club. ①

"Easter Sunday was the most gorgeous sunny morning. Having walked down to Stoney Creek, I headed over the swing bridge and saw the Men's Shedders and their beautiful, cleverly crafted yachts in full swing."



ANZAC Day 2026



It's 110 years since Australia marked its first Anzac Day, commemorating the 1915 landing of Australian and New Zealand soldiers in Gallipoli.



Lorne / Cumberland Recovery Feedback

Over summer, the Lorne and Cumberland communities stepped up in extraordinary ways.

We want to hear your thoughts about what worked, what was challenging, and what would make the response even stronger.

Your feedback will guide a community-led working group, and Council will also draw on these insights to strengthen our own planning and support.

You can share your thoughts by completing a short survey.



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GO WHERE THE TRADIES GO

Strawberries and chocolate – sweet and sour

By Doug Williams

We set up a cart under a red and white striped canopy selling vanilla ice cream cones topped with cut up strawberries straight across the road from Selfridges in Oxford Street, London.

It was summertime and tennis was on at Wimbledon. This occasion was historically very exclusive and held in a garden party atmosphere and the short growing season of strawberries, which were quite a luxury, fitted into this tradition very nicely. Strawberries and cream. Today nearly thirty thousand kilos are



consumed during the two weeks the competition runs for. It is a pretty perspective that has formed so that the physicality of the game conjoins with the gentle softness and sweetness of the fruit. Lush strawberries are associated with the Roman goddess of love Venus and thus with female sexuality.

The modern variety was hybridised with a Chilean species (brought to France by a French spy) to produce modern strawberries in the eighteenth century but other wild European varieties had been around for hundreds of years. These are much smaller but with a sweet, gentle fragrance and always held the reputation for enhancing sexual performance. So, is the common or garden strawberry an aphrodisiac? One could simply dip strawberries in melted chocolate for pleasure as part of your foreplay and find out how true this might be.

That's the sweet stuff of the article's title done but the sour part is not going to please people, so I'll make it brief. Cacao trees were harvested for chocolate five thousand years ago in western South America. Over the last 30 years attempts have been made to remove children from the workforce that harvests today's main orchards for cacao beans in West African countries. Children are traded as slaves to pick the beans and this is trafficking in child slave labour. Consumer pressure to eradicate this evil process is, understandably, very hard to find. There are two million kids involved in bringing that package of chocolate to you.

Refusing to eat chocolate that is harvested in these countries and then processed by all the major chocolate companies is the only way to go. There is a small selection of chocolate brands that are free from the allegations of child slavery, and you can seek them out online. It's also available locally too. 🍓



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Barwon Water Community Update

Barwon Water is Victoria's largest regional urban water corporation.

We have a proud history of contributing to regional prosperity by providing water and sewerage services that support community health, sport and recreation, gardens and agriculture, the economy, cultural values and the environment.

Learn, share, and get involved! We're working together with the community to enhance our region.

Learn more and have your say on our projects and activities. Scan the QR code to find out more.



Lorne: Water, Your Say

Get involved and learn how you can contribute to a sustainable, resilient water future for Lorne.



We're here to help

If you're concerned about your water bill, we offer support to suit your situation. Get in touch to find out how we can help.

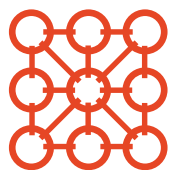


Be waterwise every day

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Arts in Lorne



**LORNE
COMMUNITY
CONNECT**

The Easter Photographic Exhibition, held over ten days, was a great success. The theme this year was 'Becoming and Belonging' inviting photographers to explore the intimate spaces between who we were and who we're becoming, seeking images that reveal the moments of transformation and the places where we finally feel at home.

This year there were a larger number of photographers exhibiting, but fewer photographs, as each artist had one item selected by our curator. The choice to frame the work, or not, was the artist's choice. This proved to be a good decision as we sold more images this year than last when all prints were images were presented unframed.

Opening night was well supported by the community with close to ninety people attending.

The prize winners were:

First prize, receiving \$2,000, Kayla Steinbruckner.

Second prize, receiving \$1,000 Louise Edebone.

Third prize, receiving a \$500 voucher from Bells Fine Art

The People's Choice Award this year went to Craig Crosthwaite for his work "Finding the Lost Waterfalls of the Otways".

We were indeed fortunate to have the services of Pia Johnson as guest curator, Pia is a visual artist, photographer, curator and lecturer living on Djaara country, Australia. Her works have been awarded and exhibited across Australia and internationally and are collected in private and public collections including the National Gallery of Victoria.



QDOS FINE ARTS Allenvale Road Lorne



www.qdosarts.com

The Committee wishes to thank all volunteers who helped to open the exhibition, the community for its support and particularly our sponsors including: Mantra Lorne, The Lorne Aquatic and Angling Club, Great Ocean Road Real Estate Lorne and Bells Fine Art.

Artist in Residence Program

Astrid Mendez began her residency in April. Astrid currently lives and works in Lorne and she is using the AIR opportunity to develop a solo puppet performance "The Pilgrim". Astrid, born in Chile, has twenty years of experience across Latin America, Europe and Australia working in the visual arts and object therapy/puppetry. We wish her well and we look forward to seeing the results of her work.

– Gary Allen



Lorne SES: Building Capability and Advocating for Our Community

Lorne SES Volunteers step up in road crash rescue capability assessment.



Lorne SES Unit members have successfully completed a live, scenario-based assessment to meet Road Crash Rescue Capability Standards. Although the team is limited to six members, many of our unit members contributed to the success over several weeks. A 'B' pillar removal and patient extraction in under 40 minutes from arrival on scene. The next assessment is in three years' time.

Phil Walsh: A Legacy of Service

Last month, we were advised by a friend, colleague, and long-time member of the Unit, Phil Walsh, that it was the right moment for him to close this chapter and finish up with SES.

Phil has served our unit with dedication since joining on the 25th of September 2012. Over 13 ½ years, he has held a range of roles — including multiple terms as Unit Controller, Section Leader, Unit Duty Officer, Unit Administrative Officer and Operational Member. His service record speaks to his professionalism, reliability, leadership, and willingness to step up whenever the unit needed him.

Phil's contribution to our community and to each of us has been significant. His calm approach, his experience, and his kindness have been part of the fabric of this unit for a long time. We will miss him greatly.

Great Ocean Road Flash Flood

15 January 2026 After Action Review (AAR)

Lorne Unit members and other units involved in the storm event attended an AAR facilitated by VICSES Head Office. The AAR followed Emergency Management Victoria's lessons management model. This is known as Observations, Insights, Lessons Identified and Lessons Learned, or OILL for short. This Unit-level AAR summary identifies the observations at the unit level, which activities we should sustain, and opportunities for improvement.

Victorian Legislative Council inquiry into the 2026 fires

The purpose and objectives of the Victorian Legislative Council's Inquiry into the 2026 Summer Fires are to examine how Victoria prepared for, responded to, and was impacted by the January 2026 bushfires — and to identify what must change to strengthen the state's future fire readiness, emergency response, and recovery systems.



On the 21st of April, our Unit Controller, Chris Jones and the VICSES Chief Operations Officer, Alistair Drayton, gave evidence to the Victorian Legislative Council inquiry into the 2026 fires. Alistair provided an overview of the activities undertaken, including:

- Evacuation Support & Community Movement Control
- Road Closures, Access Control & Impacted Infrastructure Support
- Rescue Operations & Fire-Adjacent Emergencies
- Warnings, Public Information & Local Intelligence
- Logistics, Relief Centre Support & Multi-Agency Coordination
- Post-Fire Impact Assessment (PFA) & Rapid Damage Assessment

Chris was there to answer any questions regarding the crossover with the January storm/flood event. Chris was able to put on the public record that mobile phone service between Lorne and Wye River is unreliable, particularly during emergencies or peak tourist seasons, often leaving users with no signal at all. The key mobile coverage issues included:

- Persistent Failures: Poor reception or total outages are common in the area, particularly between Lorne and Wye River.
- Emergency Risks: Flash flooding and bushfire incidents have highlighted that mobile networks fail to support emergency alerts and communication.
- Peak Demand: During summer holidays, networks become overloaded, resulting in slow or non-existent service in the townships along the coast.

Stay safe from the SES Lorne Unit.

For VICSES emergency response, call 13 25 00

If your situation is life-threatening, call 000

Follow us on our Facebook page – SES Lorne Unit.

Op Shop Buzz

By Wendy Jarratt

Back to the Future

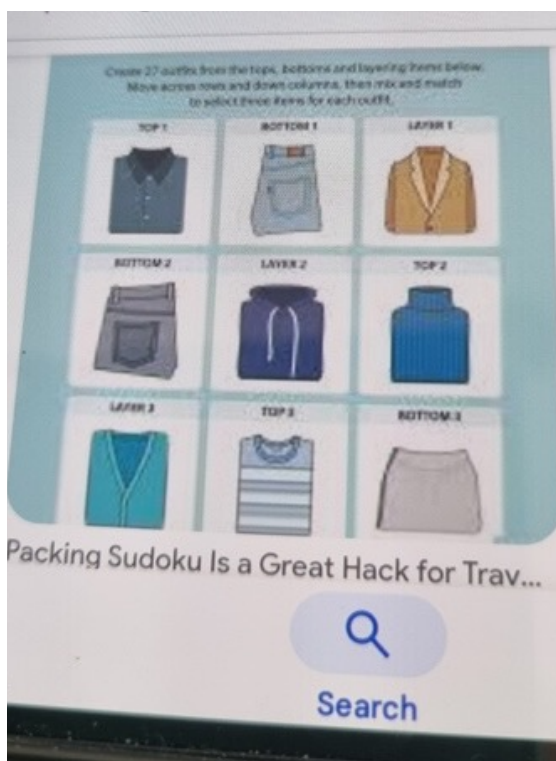
Every year about 1.5 tonnes of new textile items are imported into Australia and we are one of the biggest consumers of clothing in the world.

We buy on average 57 new items of new clothing a year, many being of cheaper and lower quality. We rely heavily on op shops to recycle our used clothing but only a fraction of the donated items are of good enough quality to sell. Many have imperfections such as stains, iron marks and tears. In many cases the problem is over consumption of “fast fashion”, clothing that has a short life.

In Australia apparently about 300 thousand tonnes of clothing is donated to charity shops each year, about a third is sent overseas (not our problem anymore), 36% is repurposed into things like rags, 14% goes to landfill and 16.5% is SOLD in charity shops. This is the general picture - all shops are different.

However, if some of the items bound for landfill could be washed and/or repaired it would help greatly. At the Lorne Op Shop good quality items are washed but volunteers don't have time to do repairs. When donating we are always being reminded that our donations should be good enough to give to a mate... there are other options for worn out and damaged clothing – textile recyclers can turn clothing into fibre or a different type of material altogether. Also, some fast fashion retailers accept clothing donations (their own brand) in store.

Returning to this concept of over consumption... do we really need 50 odd pieces of new clothing every year? I have been reading lately about smart holiday packing. These days we like to only take carry on luggage, it's lighter to carry around, there's no waiting at carousels nor worrying about lost luggage. However, you can't



pack much into a 7kg case. So how do we decide what to take? This is where the sudoku method comes in. Take only nine pieces of clothing plus a few pairs of shoes, scarves and some jewellery. You should be able to put together twenty-seven outfits. You may ask where is this heading? Well, my suggestion is that we try to apply this method to our seasonal wardrobes at home. We would have fewer, better quality pieces and less hassle thinking about what to wear and of course less going to landfill.

Why not go back to the future by only having a few good outfits a season and one pair of really special shoes. It has been done before when we older folk were children and teenagers.

Imagine... ①



“In Australia apparently about 300 thousand tonnes of clothing is donated to charity shops each year, about a third is sent overseas (not our problem anymore), 36% is repurposed into things like rags, 14% goes to landfill and 16.5% is SOLD in charity shops.”



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Maggie Beer Foundation Trainer Mentor Program

We are ten months into our Maggie Beer Foundation Trainer Mentor Program, and we can see and taste the differences made thanks to our great Mentor Michael who specialises in building menus in partnership with residents. This 12-month program pairs aged care home kitchen teams with a qualified chef trainer who mentors the team to serve flavourful, nutritious food and deliver an enhanced dining experience for residents in aged care homes. Building on our Montessori approach to aged care, the Maggie Beer Foundation Trainer Mentor Program is an exciting opportunity for GORH and our residents and families. Food is such an important part of the service provided in aged care, and we are always looking at how we can improve the dining experience. Michael continues to impress and motivate us with his passion for good nutritious and delicious food, his inspiring ideas for increasing choice options in our menu and how we present food, as well as his practical training approach. In turn, Michael has been impressed with the level of care that we provide to our residents, across both our catering and care teams.

Pictured: Kulsharan Singh, GORH Chef, with Michael Nam Maggie Beer Mentor Trainer.

Peri-menopause & Menopause Workshops

Our great Allied Health team are running a series of monthly Menopause workshops. Each workshop will be offered twice a month at Lorne Community House at 11am and 5:30pm, to allow for people to make it regardless of shift times. **Monday 25th May**—Sleep & Stress Management with Social Worker Charlie. **Monday 22nd June** - Women's Health Checks. For more information on this series please contact communityreception@gorh.vic.gov.au or phone (03) 5289 4360.

EOFY Tax Deductible Donation To GORH

As the end of the financial year approaches, we invite you to consider making a **tax deductible donation** to support **Great Ocean Road Health's Annual Appeal**. This year we are raising funds to improve access to great health care, close to home. To donate, visit our website: www.greatoceanroadhealth.vic.gov.au/support-us

Patient Feedback

In April our Acute Team in Lorne received the following feedback in a card.

"Thank you for your care and attention during this past year, particularly for me and [patient], in her final journey. I know it was your job, what you do, but your thoughtful compassion in providing it helped us both cope with the painful inevitability of it all."

GORH would like to thank our Acute team and all our great staff who go above and beyond for the care of our patients, clients and community. The empathy and compassion shown by our staff goes above and beyond the job. Thank you.

Flu Vaccinations at the Lorne Medical Centre

Appointments are available at our Lorne Medical Centre. Getting an annual flu vaccination boost each year helps prevent you from getting ill with influenza and limits the spread of the virus to others in the community, particularly those most vulnerable to infection. By getting the vaccine in April/May, you give your immune system the best chance to develop protection well ahead of peak flu season, which is usually in July/August. Please call our friendly reception team to book an appointment on 5289 4333.

Enhanced Measles Response Program at the Lorne Medical Centre

Lorne Medical Centre was successful in its application for the Enhanced Measles Response Program (EMRP), a Victorian Department of Health initiative responding to increased measles activity globally and the heightened risk of local incursions across Victoria. Adults born between 1966 and 1992 are likely to have received only one dose of measles-containing vaccine in childhood and therefore remain under-immunised. Lorne Medical Centre will undertake a Quality Improvement Activity during the period (1 April – 13 June 2026) with the aim of improving MMR vaccination coverage among eligible patients. The practice will recall identified patients and deliver MMR vaccinations where appropriate. Please call our friendly reception team if you have any enquiries on 5289 4333.

MEDIA RELEASE

Iran war could be the shock Australia needed to fix its broken food system

Global fertiliser routes in chaos, prices surging and Aussie farmers already cutting crops, but one expert says this crisis could finally force Australia to change.

APRIL 2026: One of Australia's most respected food voices has made a bold claim that is set to spark debate across the country, arguing the Iran war and disruption to the Strait of Hormuz could be a turning point for Australia's food system.

Chef turned farmer, author and broadcaster Matthew Evans says the current global crisis is exposing just how vulnerable Australia's food production has become, and why it could ultimately force long overdue change.

"What's happening right now is a wake up call," Evans said.

"Our entire food system relies on imported fertiliser and diesel. When that gets disrupted, everything gets more expensive, and that flows straight through to supermarket prices."

Evans' statement comes as Australia's farming community will come together for a pivotal national conference next week, called Grounded 2026, when they will discuss solutions to the Iran war crisis.

New data shows the impact is already being felt, with 28% of vegetable growers cutting or stopping planting and a further 16% reconsidering as costs rise and supply becomes uncertain (ausveg.com.au/article/more-urgency-and-clarity-needed-to-protect-fresh-vegetable-supply-for-australians/).

That means less food being planted now, and higher prices for everyday staples like bread and beer later this year.

But Evans says the real story is not the crisis itself, it's how Australia responds.

"This might be the moment that finally forces us to rethink how we grow food," he said.

"Because it doesn't have to be this way."

Evans points to China as an example of how quickly things can change when a country commits to a different system.

In 2024 alone, China sold more than 12 million electric vehicles, with around half of all new car sales now electric, up from just 6% in 2020 (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electric_vehicle_industry_in_China).

China now produces more than 70% of the world's electric vehicles and dominates electric trucks and logistics systems, significantly reducing its reliance on diesel (iea.org/reports/global-ev-outlook-2025/executive-summary).



"That matters because when your transport and farming systems run on electricity, you're far less exposed to global oil shocks," Evans said.

"In Australia, we're still running almost everything on diesel, from tractors to trucks. So when something like this happens, we feel it immediately."

The warning comes as Australian farmers enter the critical winter planting window, with many scaling back due to rising costs and uncertainty.

Evans says this is the third major fuel and fertiliser shock in six years, following Covid and the Ukraine war, where fertiliser prices surged by more than 200% (clime.com.au/fertilizer-a-critical-dependency/).

"At some point, you have to ask, how many times do we need to learn the same lesson?" he said.

Rather than framing the situation as purely negative, Evans believes the current crisis presents a rare opportunity.

"Farmers are already asking what they can do differently, and the answer isn't ripping everything up overnight," he said.

"It's small, practical changes that reduce costs, improve soil, and make farms less dependent on expensive inputs."

The conversation took centre stage at Grounded 2026, a national farming summit held in Victoria's Otway Ranges on April 22 and 23. ①



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From the Deck

The sorry state of Lorne's walking tracks

By John Agar

It is hard to avoid the doom and gloom surrounding the current state of the economy, with little or no thanks—seemingly—to a certain DJT. One has to wonder whether, in the long run, the Middle East fracas will be worth the global oil and economic crisis it has generated. Furthermore, it has come at a time when government inertia and economic laziness have left us ill-prepared for another 'shock', despite having been here before.

In his 1964 book *'The Lucky Country'*, Donald Horne launched a scathing critique of Australia's 1960s complacency, mediocrity, and lack of innovation, arguing that Australia's prosperity was merely due to luck. To our national shame, his conclusions then might aptly apply to Australia and its free-wheeling inaction now, as both sides of government have navel-gazed their way back into debt and deficit, setting the nation up for a bad economic mark.

The war in the Middle East will affect us all. Every small regional town and rural community will be hit, and Lorne, a town heavily dependent on tourism's discretionary spending, may feel it more than most as 'average Australia' battens down its hatches to protect local integrity. Indeed, it is not so long ago that a pandemic forced us to hunker down, but this promises to be a very different version of 'hunkering'.

In the COVID months, when an 'isolation principle' was enforced—the rights and wrongs of which will be debated for years—our 'hunkering' was dominated by loneliness, separation, and self-care. This time around, it will be 'hunkering' of a different kind ... one that reflects togetherness, support, and care for others.

Our much-loved town of Lorne has weathered—



(Above) Artist's sketch: GORCAPA website.

indeed, continues to weather—the impact of a difficult summer season. Triggered by a spate of nasty fires on the far side of the Otway ranges and flash flooding from heavy rain on the near side, and burdened by a series of lazy and erroneous media reports that implied Lorne and other towns along the Great Ocean Road were somehow 'closed and off limits', our usual busy season turned rapidly sour.

Although the Erskine bridge was closed for only two hours and, apart from the narrow camper's strip at the river's edge, the town remained essentially untouched and undamaged, bookings were cancelled, restaurants struggled, and many shop takings plummeted to near half their expected income. Questions such as '... is the GOR open?' and '... is Lorne safe to visit?' flooded social media and were still being posted more than two months after the event.

Even now, as Anzac Day weekend approaches, the echoes continue, though reports from local hospitality outlets over the Easter break do suggest that the tide has finally turned, with most businesses reporting

"The war in the Middle East will affect us all. Every small regional town and rural community will be hit, and Lorne, a town heavily dependent on tourism's discretionary spending, may feel it more than most as 'average Australia' battens down its hatches to protect local integrity."

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Where everybody counts

a bumper 5-day trading period. Nevertheless, the financial pain of the first quarter of 2026 has not helped our traders, who now face a long, hard winter ahead. Wham: enter DJT and his 'necessary' war, and the looming fuel crisis.

As our rural and regional hinterland braces for a petrol and diesel deficit, oddly, Lorne may yet take heart. Scuttlebutt has it that many Australians may be reconsidering their winter getaway plans, lowering their sights, and opting for holidays closer to home. If so, winter bookings may yet pick up, especially if or as travel costs skyrocket.

In this context, Lorne's winter-wonderland of bush tracks, waterfalls, and fern gullies should prove an attractive choice ... if only the walking tracks were open! Comfort food by a winter's fireside after a day of bushwalking should trump expensive family airfares and accommodation in places far distant, as families seek holiday options closer by. So, is the town prepared?

Sadly, no! GORCAPA is insisting that most bush walks are and should remain closed... just when they should be Lorne's major winter-time enticement. It is not only counterintuitive but crazy!

True: Several pieces of track infrastructure were washed away or damaged by the flash floods of January 15th.

True: In some places, access for repair work is difficult.

True: The cost of repair and/or replacement is not insignificant.

True: GORCAPA—our new forest overlord—already has a spate of high-cost projects underway: the

Apostles site, the Fish Co-Op and Point Bunbury at Apollo Bay, and the poisoned chalice of Lorne's Point Grey, among others.

But while getaway promoter websites continue to extoll Lorne's 'incomparable waterfalls and pristine nature walks', GORCAPA has offered no timelines or restoration plans... and continues to deny access. This smacks of ineptitude. It certainly isn't helping the town and its businesses to get back on their feet after summer's serial setbacks. As our money is thrown at grandiose projects like the Apostles Information Centre [see artist's sketch], Lorne's bush tracks, unloved and less vote-catching, moulder and deteriorate.

Bush tracks need to be walked. If left unused, trees and branches fall and remain uncleared; weeds and acacias quickly sprout in surface cracks and take hold; and paths are rapidly overgrown even as the cost and complexity of their restoration mount exponentially. Lorne's main winter attraction, its prime winter drawcard, is being wilfully ignored just when it is needed most.

Please, GORCAPA: help our town recover. Don't grind us down further. The tracks need urgent repair and, without them, Lorne will take yet another hit—this time in winter ... and it will be another own-goal to the Authority. Our businesses and the hospitality sector do not deserve to absorb further punishment, particularly when it could be so easily avoided.

Step up, GORCAPA: you accepted the role of Otway Park management ... so now is your chance to do some managing! ①

"Sadly, no! GORCAPA is insisting that most bush walks are and should remain closed... just when they should be Lorne's major winter-time enticement. It is not only counterintuitive but crazy!"

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SHAVINGS from the SHED

By Allan Walls



It seemed like a quiet month this month, but it wasn't. Separately in this issue you will read about the *Lorne Independent* sponsored Model Yacht Regatta held at the Swing Bridge on Easter Sunday. There is a whisper that there is a little controversy regarding the results, but all is well with David Lawler winning the overall event with Neil Verrall coming a very close second.

Clive Goldsworthy won the unsponsored lithium powered model boat section. Allan Walls restored Clive's boat enabling it to take out the win in a remarkable turn of events. No ambulances were needed this year.

Shedder, Former Councillor, retired headmaster, former President of the Bowls Club, former head of the Hospital Board and just about every other organisation in Lorne, Gary Allen, hosted the Festival of Gary at the Lorne Bowls Club last Thursday. In other words, Gary's 80th Birthday.

Shedder Don Baldwin, flew down from the Gold Coast to join many others in the celebrations. Don also presented Gary with an OBE Certificate and Medallion (Over Bloody Eighty) Geoff Couper presented a very informative speech on Gary's achievements in Lorne and other places, particularly in relation to his magnificent career in the teaching profession.

Allan Walls then proceeded to roast Gary with a

humorous presentation some of which resembled the truth. Fun was had by all; food was provided by In the Skies and enjoyed by all.

Then Anzac Day arrived, and as usual Rod Van Ingen summoned the troops (Shedders) to gather three BBQ'S from various places on Friday, fill the gas bottles and check everything was working by Friday night. Then horror of horror we were told to be at the bowls club by 6am on Anzac Day to cook the Gunfire Breakfast. One member was wearing a miner's light. Boy! Were we ready! 200 Eggs, 20kg of bacon six bottles of Gas, and 200 bread rolls. We were ready to serve as soon as the service was over. Crowds at the dawn service were big but we did not sell as many bacon and egg rolls as we hoped. I must say the customers were very generous and many left tips, so our takings were pretty good. The total sale proceeds are given to the RSL.

The month was not without drama as Shedder John Agar, became quite unwell needing hospitalisation to treat a burst appendix. Codger as he is affectionately known, is on the road to recovery and was working away at the Gunfire Breakfast along with 17 other Shedders. New Member Farmer Phil from Cressy (now residing in Lorne) was also toiling away this morning.

At the shed we need to boost our 120 strong membership as this month (near enough) we have Gary Allen, John Agar, Sam Johnson all turning 80. Our combined knowledge and experience now approaching 9,600 years.

Till next time, keep well. ①

"At the shed we need to boost our 120 strong membership as this month (near enough) we have Gary Allen, John Agar, Sam Johnson all turning 80. Our combined knowledge and experience now approaching 9,600 years."

Sportsbriefs

By John Ford, sports editor

Football and Netball Under Way

The 2026 football and netball season is well under way. Lorne's football teams have started the season in great form with the Seniors, Reserves and Under 18's all winning their first two matches. In fact, all five grades of football are currently in the top four on their respective ladders. The netball teams are playing exciting competitive matches with mixed results.

Dolphins Football

On April 18, Lorne had a very good day against the Colac Imperials. The day was quite cold and overcast but good for football in that there was no rain and little wind. The visitors started very well and surprised Lorne with their speed and clean ball movement. At quarter time Imperials led 5.2 to Lorne's 3.2. However, Lorne produced a dominant second quarter in which the midfield and half-back line set up quality scoring opportunities. The Dolphins capitalized with five unanswered goals to lead 8.3 to 5.4 at half time. In the second half both teams played quality football where the defences restricted easy scoring. Lorne held the ascendancy for the remainder of the match running out clear winners, 12.10 (82) to Imperials 9.5 (59). Best players included James Hughes with four goals, Cooper Mitchell, Oscar Coutts, Paddy Hughes (James' brother) and Fraser Balderas. The Dolphins form followed on from their impressive 86-point win over Apollo Bay on Good Friday.

The Dolphins Reserves team was too good for their Imperials opponents and led at every change, going on to win 12.13 (85) to 2.9 (21). The form of some of the Lorne players suggested that they would be pressing hard for senior selection over the next few weeks. In similar fashion, the Dolphins Under-18 team dominated against Colac Imperials. The team was rarely put under pressure as they cruised to win 14.16 (100) to 3.5 (23). Lorne really has a large squad of players who are in great form this early in the season and hopefully all grades can maintain form. Lorne's Under 15 team deserves a special mention for their 104 point win in which Xavier Hollmer kicked ten of his side's fifteen goals. Yes, it is the same Zav who has just had a very good senior cricket season!

Lorne's next matches are as follows:

Sat 25th April – **South Colac v Lorne** (Away)
 Sat 2nd May – **Lorne v Otway Districts** (Home)
 Sat 9th May – **Irrewarra-Beeac v Lorne** (Away)
 Sat 23rd May – **Lorne v Alvie** (Home)
 Sat 30th May – **Simpson v Lorne** (Away)

If you really support the Dolphins then memberships are available and are still really good value. It shows that you are a supporter rather than simply a barracker! Have lunch at the football where you will meet up

with such a diverse group of people all supporting OUR DOLPHINS!

The burgers and coffee rival the best in town.

Dolphins Netball

On April 18, the Dolphins A Grade team played an epic match against Colac Imperials. Both teams were hungry for the ball resulting in many turnovers. However, there was fast ball movement from both teams setting up repeated scoring opportunities. With five minutes left on the clock both teams were tied on 48 goals. Lorne and Imperials then both played desperate close-checking netball making it hard to score. Imperials was the team to break through, scoring the last five goals of the match – winning 53 to 48. Lorne was very well served by Sadie Stafford with 41 goals in an exciting tussle with her direct opponent. Lorne's junior netball teams are playing quite well but at this stage are falling just short in their matches. I expect that these teams will break through for wins shortly.

Womens Golf

Club News

- In the last week of March, we played the 3rd and final round of stroke golf for the annual Women's Club Champion competition, and after a strong first and second week, Sue England maintained her nerve - and her golf - to finish strongly to take out the A grade Club Champion award. Congratulations! Her name will be added to the Honour board for 2026! Bronwyn Halpin won B Grade, and Paula Hayden C grade... well done all.
- April Monthly Medal winner was Jan Borwick.
- Congratulations to Bronwyn Halpin and Danni De Bon who won the June Hunt Memorial 4BBB competition with a whopping 48 points.
- On Tuesday April 14th we held a Women's Golf clinic where we had a Coach - Linda Mew, from the Golf Institute in Geelong run a 2-hour golf clinic. We had 10 women - both new and returning golfers participate in the clinic held on the ninth hole and on the practice green, with clubs and balls provided by the club. The weather was kind, and everyone had a great time with some very impressive chipping, pitching and putting on display, followed by a lunch in the clubhouse with many of the Women members that had played

"If you really support the Dolphins then memberships are available and are still really good value. It shows that you are a supporter rather than simply a barracker!"



Continued on page 38

Continued from page 37

their Tuesday morning comp. It was a great success and we look forward to welcoming them back to join us on our beautiful course.

Women's Div 5 Pennant team - we have played 3 rounds to date, at Clifton Springs, Lara and Ocean Grove, have hosted a 4th round at Lorne, and are currently sitting in second position on the ladder behind Point Lonsdale. We have played Lonsdale and unfortunately lost to them....

we have 3 more rounds to play and hope to finish strongly!

We are a friendly group of women, at all different levels of golf skill and experience, and we love to welcome new members/golfers to our group, and also welcome back those that may be "lapsed" golfers!... If you are interested in joining our group, whether new to golf or with some Golfing experience, or if you have any questions, please call Chris Angus on 0439 008 167, or Rose Wyles on 0407 860 980.

Happy Golfing, *Danni De Bon.*

AROUND THE GREEN at the Lorne Bowls Club

By Brendan Tunstall

Our successful 2025/2026 season is now completed. Coach Leigh's aim at its start was to have our three sides play in finals. Nearly there Leigh! We succeeded with Weekend Division 2 winning a Grand Final, Midweek Division 2 losing in a Preliminary Final and Weekend Division 3 avoiding relegation in the last round (which was celebrated as if we had won a Final).

In the meantime, Members are urged to keep up their practicing during this "off Season" until more formal arrangements are made for coaching and team practice. It's pleasing to hear that this is occurring with members making up teams to enter competitions run by other Clubs, not only in our playing area, but also in the Geelong/Bellarine areas. And competing successfully! If travelling to warmer areas (up North) there are plenty of Bowls Clubs keen to have you enjoy/practice/compete at their facilities.

Our Club and Invitation Day competitions are now also completed for 2025/26. Awards were presented at the Club's Presentation Night on April 8th. Our In The Skies Restaurant catered to make this a terrific evening.

Congratulations to: -

Women's Champion – Donna Issell

Women's Pairs – Karen Heathcote and Caitlin McCombe

Women's 21 Up – Pearl McIver

Women's 100 Up – Sheryl Donne

Men's Champion – Leigh McIlvenny

Men's Pairs – Peter Jacobs and Allan Walls



Men's 21 Up – Brendan Tunstall

Men's 100 Up – Duncan Leckie
(defeating Allan Walls in a lengthy quality match)

Mixed Pairs – Colleen and Brad Weetman

Open Triples – Brad Weetman, Paul Staley and Leigh McIlvenny

Open Fours – Brad Weetman, Shane Thorncroft, Steve Donne and Graeme Dickson

Stribling Day Invitation – Trevor Carr, Dan Donovan and Cliff Cardinal from Colac Lake

Merna and Ken Smith Trophy – Marilyn McKenzie
(Worthy recipient for the third time) for her dedicated assistance to the Club-left her speechless.

President's Trophy – Steve Donne
(unheard of-left him speechless)

Coach's Award – Shane Thorncroft
(so encouraging of all players)

Social Bowls continues to be played at 10am on Wednesday mornings. Ever popular Barefoot Bowls can be booked with the Restaurant staff.

During these darker evenings it's pleasing to see Members convivially ensconced in the Marquee particularly on a Friday night following a Roll Up (or not). Why not join in telling the tallest tale.

Jason continues to build up his loyal coffee clientele each Friday to Monday afternoon at the Club. After seeing his photo in the latest LAAC Commodore's Notes it isn't surprising that he attracts the passing parade of walkers, campers, bike riders, day trippers and 8am Surf Club swimmers. Oh, not to forget that his coffee making is "world's best".

Members are advised that the Club's Annual General Meeting is to be held on June 14th after the end of the Club's April financial year. The Club's renewed Constitution/Rules will be a Special item of business.

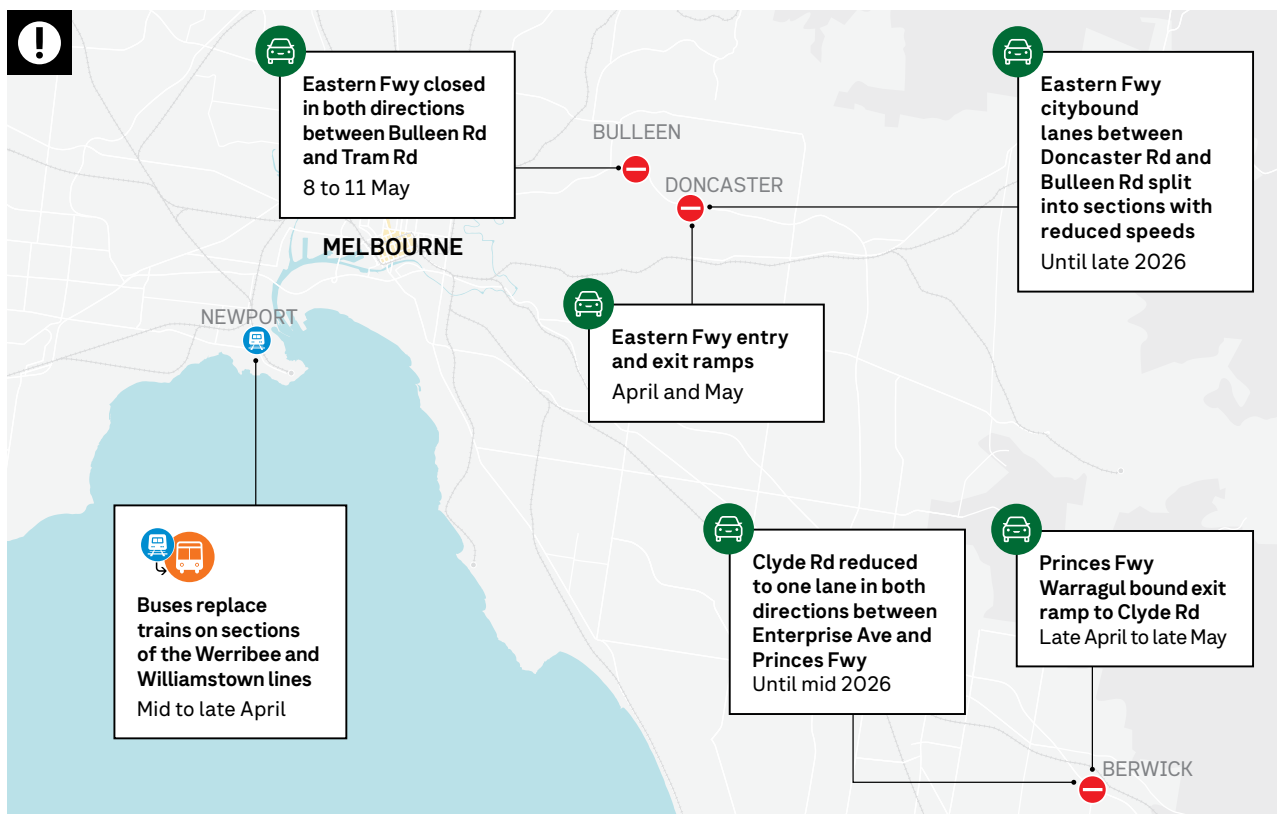
Please give serious thought to either joining or encouraging other members to put their nominations forward to join the Committee for this coming season 2026/27.

- Remember to tell us who you would like to see in *Sportsbriefs!* Articles to John Ford at 35 George St, or email to byswerdi2@bigpond.com



Heading to the Footy?

Victoria's Big Build continues works across the state with buses replacing trains on the Werribee and Williamstown lines and road disruptions on Clyde Road and the Eastern Freeway. These works could impact your travel around Melbourne to attend AFL games.



Avoid delays and check before you travel
at bigbuild.vic.gov.au



lorne books

Picks of the Month



FICTION: *Yesteryear* by Caro Claire Burke



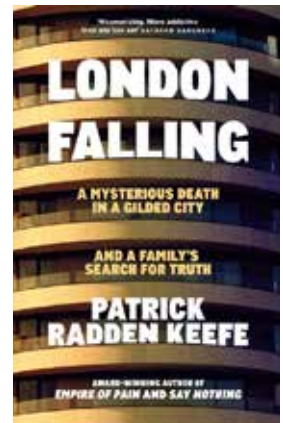
Natalie is a 'tradwife' influencer with 8 million followers on Instagram, living the picture perfect rural life. So what if there are nannies, producers and industrial-grade ovens behind the scenes? One day Natalie awakens cold, filthy, and terrified in the brutal reality of 1805, where she must unravel whether this living nightmare is an elaborate hoax, a twisted reality show, or something far more sinister.

A gripping, electrifying novel that is as darkly funny as it is frightening, *Yesteryear* is a gimlet-eyed look at tradition, social media fame, and the grand performance of womanhood.

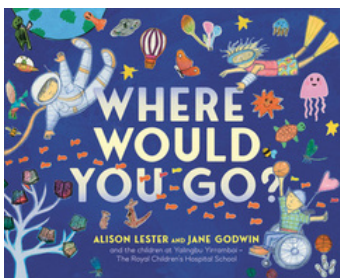
NON-FICTION: *London Falling* by Patrick Radden Keefe

A spellbinding account of a family devastated by the sudden death of their nineteen-year-old son, only to discover that he had created a secret life which drew him into the dangerous criminal underworld that lies beneath London's glittering surface. Keefe effortlessly weaves together social, cultural, political and economic history into a tapestry to display deeply human dramas.

London Falling is both a meticulously-researched descent into London's billionaire-fueled criminal underworld, and a deeply intimate family portrait of love and loss across generations.



CHILDREN'S FICTION: *Where Would You Go?* by Alison Lester & Jane Godwin



*"If you could travel wherever you choose,
to worlds imagined and new,
where are the places that you'd like to go
and what in the world would you do?"*

With lyrical text and additional artwork from much-loved creators Jane Godwin and Alison Lester (*The Silver Sea*, *Sing Me the Summer*), this unforgettable collaboration explores the magic of imagination and celebrates the joy of coming home. All royalties from the sale of this book go to Yalingbu Yirramboi - The Royal Children's Hospital School.

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