



**Friends of Lorne
Annual General Meeting Minutes
Saturday 14 November 2020
at 5.15pm by Zoom**

1. Welcome, apologies and proxies

Penny Hawe (President) welcomed *members and guests* to the meeting and declared that a quorum was present. There were no apologies or proxies.

2. Present: Rhyll Nance, Alan Nance, Steve Bayley, Kerri Bayley, Gary Allen, Graham Brawn, David Cummings, Mary Lush, Alan Shiell, Lindy Pearce, StJohn Sutton, Colin Leitch, Jane Orr, Peter Spring, Jan Spring, Ian Farran, Robyn Farran, Susan Sutton, Sue Godwin, Graeme Wilkie, Penny Hawe

3. Acceptance of minutes of AGM from 2019

The minutes of the meeting of 23 June 2019 were accepted. Moved: Mary Lush. Seconded: Lindy Pearce. Carried.

4. Treasurer's report (attached)

Lindy Pearce spoke to the Treasurer's report (attached). Our largest incoming donation for the year was \$500, from the Commonwealth Bank. The Treasurer's report was accepted. Moved: Steve Bayley. Seconded: StJohn Sutton. Vote carried.

5. President's report

Penny Hawe began by thanking Graeme Wilkie on his splendid talk prior to the meeting about the origins of Qdos and the history of the arts in Lorne. Penny then spoke to a slide presentation on the past year's work.

Introductory remarks " I'd like to acknowledge that due to join us at the meeting today we've got Carol Baker, a former President of FoL who has decided to step away from committee duties. Her legacy lies in how the character of Lorne is preserved in the Lorne structure plan and in the tree canopy we have retained. I'd also like to acknowledge Rhyll Nance the former secretary for many years. Rhyll retired before she could be formally thanked at an AGM. Rhyll was the backbone of FoL for many years. I'd also like to welcome Gary Allen our new Lorne Ward Councillor for the Surf Coast Shire.

This is my first time as President and I've got lots to tell you about our work this year. First of all I like to thank the members of the committee this year : Mary Lush, Lindy Pearce, Steve Bayley, St John Sutton, Carol Baker, Graham Brawn (up until August) and Ross Dimsey. Jane Orr also attended our meetings as a member at large -and she ended up with the quite a bit of work. Thanks to all of them but especially to Mary and to Lindy. Our job this year has been huge and we've been successful primarily because of them.

Just to remind you, FoL has the following mission

1. To encourage and contribute to planning and development of the environment within Lorne and its environment consistent with the need for preservation of the natural features, flora and fauna of the district
2. To encourage and contribute to the planning development and maintenance of community services and activities within Lorne and its environment consistent with the balanced needs of permanent residents, holidaying residents, campers and tourists

And right now we are drafting a set of short statements about our values, to make the criteria that we bring to any decision clearer.

There was a complete turnover of office bearers at the last AGM, so Mary, Lindy and I stepped into a new role, while Rhyll Nance and Ian Brown retired.

Activities for the last year We thought it was time to give the organisation a bit of a rev up. So the plan for 2019/2020 was to:

1. Understand and get our systems of operation in order
2. Increase the profile of FoL
3. Be active in planning and conservation issues

During the course of the 16 months:

- we moved from the practice of 4 meetings a year to 11 Committee meetings (7 general business, 4 special purpose)
- we had 1 general meeting of FoL members (to adopt model rules)
- we moved from 1 printed newsletter to 4 digital newsletters instead
- we wrote 4 or 5 Articles in *Lorne Independent*
- we moved the website from .com to www.friendsoflorne.org.au (special thanks Charles Coates for all his help with this)
- we put together planning 6 submissions/objections on: Pt Grey redevelopment; GORCC Foreshore plan; GOR Coast and Parks Authority x 2; and walking track Skenes Creek to Fairhaven
- we continued our participation in Committee for Lorne
- we began "meet and greet" (Zoom speed dates!) with other Lorne organisations (starting with the Lorne Aquatic Club and the next group will be the Lorne Business and Tourism Association)

Here is an example of one of our Newsletters and in a sense it shows off some of our strategy, *which is to take opportunity to remind people how beautiful Lorne is – and that it is precious*. After enticing you in with this photo of a seal at the start of this issue, we had a news items about the Pt Grey decision, Great Ocean Rd Coast Authority, an Erskine paddock update, a few other things and a link to an article written by Jane Orr for the Lorne Independent on the history of friends of Lorne and why we do what we do,

Part of our strategy has been to try to develop working groups to take the lead on particular issues on behalf of the committee. Mary Lush leads the environmental working group and as part of that she has mounted a continuous loop slide-show down the Visitors Centre to educate visitors about what they might see while they are here (plants and animals) and to suggest they don't try to pick them up.

Perhaps the thing that has raised our profile the most this year has been the webinar series on the future of living in Fire prone regions. Again this was an initiative of Mary's.

We had more than 200 people at each of the three webinars. Six top Australian scientists gave their time freely for it and we planned this in conjunction with the Surf Coast Shire and the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning. Quite apart from what we've learned, arguably one of the best payoffs is the relationships that have been formed with the Shire and DELWP and also with AIDA (Airey's Inlet and District Association- a smaller community than Lorne, but with a larger membership than ours). If you weren't able to attend please have a look at our website and watch the videos.

The speakers talked to the way fire events in Australia are increasing. There is one slide I remember off my heart. There was one mega fire in the 1800s that we know of; there was one mega fire in the 1900s; but since 2003 *there have been three mega fires*. So things are changing. What's nice about the videos as they include the discussion that we also had with a panel of people who work on the ground here, including those who were involved in the Wye River fire.

What the organisers of the fire series wanted to do was make people think more critically about our lives here. Personal fire preparedness is one thing. But the other take-home messages are that *we all have a role in mega fire prevention too - we can be more active as citizens* in showing popular support for government policy to reduce global warming and we can ask that they manage forests in evidence-based ways that are known to reduce the really big (mega) fires.

New members and member activities Over the course of the year we have attracted another 15 new members to Friends of Lorne. We are deeply excited about that and keen to get more of our membership engaged. So if there is anything that stands out for you tonight in terms of things we're doing or things you think we should do- let us know. We depend on your energy.

Graham Brawn and StJohn Sutton lead our working group on planning on behalf of the committee. They're active right now in preparing to get members of Friends of Lorne more informed about the Shire Council's structure planning and review process. You'll hear more about that over the next couple of months.

We've got a new project just starting with Committee for Lorne called Lorne by Numbers. This a whole-of-community citizen science project to be *precise* about the levels of visitation, length of stay and size/makeup of permanent population needed to retain key assets in Lorne. We see it as a way to identify what things we need to do to retain key cultural and social assets (eg, levels of volunteering, opportunities for youth). And this all speaks to the principle of evidence-based planning. So when someone says "this will be good for Lorne" We want to be in the position to say, how good? How do you know? Plus it is fun and it extends our connections with other groups in town.

Lorne is beautiful and that takes work The bottom line is that something that looks this good (photo) takes a lot of work. It also takes relationships. And a *duty of care* that I probably wouldn't feel if I was *not* living in a small community. What I'm talking about is how we try to solve problems here. So let me give you an example. If I was opposed to somebody turning a little bit of green space up in Fitzroy into a bicycle park covered with tarmac, I'd just organise opposition, hopefully win, and then forget about it. *But here*, if local parents want to put a

bicycle park on a bit of green space on the foreshore - we might still oppose it but we keep the dialogue going and offer to help them look for an alternative solution. And that's a real example and that's exactly what our Committee decided to do.

On the other hand – we are not naïve and some things you just have to oppose and hope the processes work appropriately. This house (photo of new development) is inconsistent with stated Shire policy in so many ways. There were 46 objections but it still got the OK. We now have a working group whose remit includes going through planning applications, alerting us to anything out of the ordinary. But please note that we did not have this process in place early enough to influence this particular decision.

Conclusion In terms of the future, you can see that just sustaining what we started this year would be an accomplishment. But in terms of stand-out agenda – we do have a fair way to go in *spreading the word about what Friends of Lorne is* - because we have a rival group with the same name. If you have ever typed “Friends of Lorne” into a search engine you might have got these good ladies (photo of retired Girl Guide group based in Northern Ireland). Indeed this group is so active that when AIDA and Friends of Lorne teamed up to do the fire series, the person from AIDA sourced this group's logo from the web and presumed that our logo was a celtic castle (and not the old Lorne pier)!

I have to say that in my experience running FoL in this last year is about as removed as being in the Girl Guides as you can get. If I've learned one thing this year- it's that planning is *not* for sissies. Thanks again the Committee and welcome especially to new members.”

6. Resolution regarding retention of current fees. It was proposed (Penny Hawe) and seconded (Mary Lush) a that we keep the membership fees at the same level (\$15 for individuals; \$25 for families). Vote carried.

7. Election/Appointment of Office bearers and Committee for coming year

There was no need for an election of the incoming office bearers as there were fewer nominees than there were positions available: the incoming Committee is thus Penny Hawe (President); Mary Lush (Secretary); Lindy Pearce (Treasurer). Committee: StJohn Sutton, Sue Godwin, Steve Bayley, Jane Orr

8. Welcome to Lorne Ward Member

Penny invited the new Lorne ward member, Gary Allen, to address the meeting. Gary spent a few moments introducing himself and outlining how he intends to work with the community. Gary has recently joined Friends of Lorne and he looks forward to working with us over the course of his 4 year term as local councillor. Please note that an item about Gary appeared in our October newsletter

https://friendsoflorne.org.au/newsletter_october_2020/

The meeting ended at 6pm.