Point Lonsdale Civic Association Inc.

PO Box 28 Point Lonsdale VIC 3225 **Reg. No. A0017883S**

Email: plcasecretary@gmail.com **Website:** www.plca.org.au

Representing Point Lonsdale Residents since 1910

March 2025 Newsletter

Vale Merv Jaensch

It is with great sadness that we learned, this month, of the death of past PLCA Vice -President and PLCA committee member Merv Jaensch.

Merv was a long time and passionate advocate for the residents of Point Lonsdale, and Queenscliff, joining the PLCA in 2011 and serving various committee roles until 2019.

The Borough of Queenscliffe, City of Greater Geelong, and 3225 residents, benefited from the high-level engineering and project management skills Merv brought to the table, often challenging decisions and pushing councillors and council officers to do better by thinking more broadly and creatively to meet architecture and design briefs.

Neighbourhood amenity was front and centre in most discussions and Merv certainly relished the opportunity work on projects along side like-minded community members. He was a trusted representative of both PLCA, and the community, on project reference groups, consultations and focus groups.

Merv will be best remembered, by many of us, through his work as a key member of the Front Beach Foreshore Committee consultative group, as a person instrumental in the campaigning and ensuing work that saved the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve from over development, including time spent on the project group(s) ,and as a familiar face in the gallery at numerous Council meetings across the years.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Vauna, Roger, Sue and Lea and their families, and in doing so, can attest to the impact Merv had on our work as an organisation that represents a community wanting to be the best it can be.

(Editor's note – A reflection from the Secretary.)

Merv will be remembered for his tenacity in getting things right. Often, whilst discussing a particular 3225 project, Merv would casually sketch a drawing, exactly capturing the thought process just discussed. Sometimes, that sketch would be on the back of piece of paper, with another sketch on it!

Merv always had the time to talk about how things could be accomplished – in a better way. He was a talented, and very clever Engineer. For us non-Engineer types, he was always happy to explain the why/why not about various complex Engineering planning documents. I remember sending Merv pages and pages of complex Engineering proposals, tenders, and plans, and he always had the time to explain them to me, and the others, in the committee. (Like Destination Queenscliff construction height levels).

Some of the projects Merv was involved with, still frustratingly, have not come to fruition, due to a variety of reasons. But Merv still gave to the community he loved so much, more than he took – I received emails from him just on 6 weeks ago, suggesting a better way forward on a particular project.

But when I walk down the Point Lonsdale Foreshore, via the all abilities access, like many of us do to admire the vista, I always think of Merv.

Vale Merv Jaensch.

President's Welcome.

Welcome to the first PLCA Newsletter for 2025.

Let me first introduce myself to members.

I have been coming to Point Lonsdale since I was 2yo staying in Guest Houses or homes of friends. My parents bought their own house in 1960 and when they retired changed it from a shack to a home. They were very involved in the community helping to establish the Maritime Museum and regenerate the sand dunes from the Lighthouse to Fellows Road and of course both were members of the PLCA. Their influence has given me this passion I have for this lovely town and I am keen to ensure that the atmosphere stays as we embrace change.

The PLCA will continue to hold regular meetings with the Mayor, Councillors and CEO to highlight issues and also to provide ideas for resolution. So, I am asking you all to keep in contact with us so that we are aware of community needs and issues.

PLMDP Toilet Block/Golightly Park/Royal Park *(Thank-you to BoQ CEO for providing these updates)*

The Association recently asked Borough CEO for updates on above. Here are the answers to the questions we asked:

1. PLMDP Toilet rebuild update? Is this fully funded, or not?

Fully funded, allocation is in a cash reserve.

2. Golightly Park & Royal Park new change rooms and fence repairs?

Golightly Park – Renewal Project to refurbish toilets in draft 2025/26 budget, but planning underway.

Royal Park change rooms – budget allocation in 24/25 budget for design phase.

Council officers will be engaging an architect to commence design work and community engagement.
Replacement of fence – fully funded, awaiting permit to harm (there are midden sites on the Northern boundary) and liaising with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation to confirm availability for construction oversight.

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Borough Vegetation Management Policy

Following Queenscliffe Council's recent endorsement of a draft Vegetation Management Policy and a 4 week public engagement process PLCA and others have provided feedback to help set the course of vegetation management in the Borough and achieve best practice management for our open spaces.

Our suggested policy changes included greater protection of Point Lonsdale's natural streetscapes and road verges, a significant increase in the canopy cover across the Borough's parklands, foreshore reserves and streetscapes, the re-establishment of a Council advisory group and the extension of the Borough's asset register to include trees in parks, reserves and road verges.

We have also included lessons learnt from other shires and cities as they deal with changing climate conditions such as the introduction of an urban forest strategy, biodiversity strategy, strengthened park and tree policies, annual tree planting quotas and watering program, tree replacement and succession planting and a much needed review of the Borough's open space management plan to provide a new vision for our public open spaces. Other suggestions included aligning vegetation management plans with relevant legislation and standards, the Queenscliffe planning scheme and recently enacted Bellarine Peninsula Statement of Planning Policy.

Community Based Alternative To Council's Draft Coastal and Marine Management Plan (CMMP)
(Thank-you to QCA member Mr. Chris Smyth for writing this update for the Association)

In December 2024, the Borough's new council deferred the draft Coastal and Marine Management Plan (CMMP) for three months to allow further consideration and community consultation. This provides a great opportunity to get the plan back on track before it goes to the Victorian environment minister for approval.

The current draft CMMP is a very weak document that will do little to resolve the issues facing the Borough's coastal and marine environments and could make things worse. It needs fewer and better targeted actions to tackle the big issues such as weed invasions, habitat loss, and pressures from development, population growth and climate change.

The CMMP also needs to embrace comprehensive monitoring and data collection to ensure that planning and management decisions are made using a strong evidence base. But it's not just up to the Borough to improve coastal and marine management here. The environment minister should replace the current management arrangements across multiple agencies with a more integrated framework. This would ensure that all marine and coastal land in the Borough is covered by the CMMP.

'Ballara' News.

At the last Ordinary Meeting of the Borough of Queenscliffe Council on the 26/2/25, PLCA Committee member asked the following question, in relation to 'Ballara':

Following the recent good news that Queenscliff residents have the cleanest beach in Port Philip Bay and Borough residents live 8 years longer than those in many other local government areas, there are also recent reports there has been some positive progress in respect of saving the large Ballara property in old Point Lonsdale.

1. Given the Borough has previously resolved to allocate $300,000 to conditionally support the establishment of a Trust, can the Council update residents on any progress including confirmation that:

a. *Matter is now out of VCAT and there is a window of opportunity to resolve the sale and keep this important property intact.*
b. *Government and private benefactor funding is progressing with the Federal Government requesting a valuation.*
c. *Government and private benefactor funding is progressing with the Federal Government requesting a valuation.*

The Borough CEO answered with the following:

" Thank you for your question David.

My understanding following discussions with the representatives from the Ballara Estate is as follows:

To the point:

That Matter is now out of VCAT and there is a window of opportunity to resolve the sale and keep this important property intact.

All issues of substance have been resolved. There are some minor procedural issues that are in the course of being concluded

To the point:

That the Government and private benefactor funding is progressing with the Federal Government requesting a valuation.

The Ballara representatives have advised the Government of progress and asked the Government to commence a valuation. The family will shortly commission a valuation

And to the final point:

Should a Trust be established Deakin University will manage the property with possible public access to the grounds and gardens.

That is the intent and a draft constitution for a company limited by guarantee Ballara Estate has been circulated and the intention is that this (public access etc…) is the case under the auspice of Deakin University.

The University has been active in the drafting of the constitution."

Ripview Stairs:

The CEO was also asked at that meeting about the Rip-view Stairs. His answer is below:

"Following the decision of Council last night, to allocate funding to the repair and refurbishment of the stairs, I have today formally engaged a contractor to undertake the works."

The Association is monitoring this matter closely.

Helicopter Take Off and Landing Site for McDonald Road.

Following a series of preliminary VCAT meetings (and VCAT Orders) and reviews by Queenscliffe Council during 2024, a 2 day Tribunal Hearing for a helicopter take-off and landing site at 6 McDonald Road has finally taken place with the presiding Senior Member now having to decide whether to approve or refuse the application.

Three civic groups (QCA, BHA and PLCA) and 2 residents opposed the application mainly on amenity, noise and safety grounds. Some respondents including PLCA also raised environmental and other provisions contained in the recently approved Bellarine Peninsula Statement of Planning Policy (BPSPP) in their submissions. There was some debate as to whether VCAT was bound to consider any BPSPP provisions despite it being a State Government planning policy. Legal Representatives acting for the Applicant and Queenscliffe Council supported the helicopter landing application essentially arguing that only Clause 52.15 - noise and amenity - were relevant.

PLCA and other respondents also argued that Swan Bay and its environs were regionally, nationally and internationally important and should not be disturbed by a helicopter take-off and landing site. Both sides provided expert witnesses to support their arguments and at the conclusion of the 2 day Hearing draft conditions were circulated to all parties to consider should approval be given by VCAT. What was particularly disappointing in the whole process was the recent reversal of Council's 2023 position in a behind closed doors decision that now supports the application with conditions.

Also disappointing was a November VCAT Order which forbade any consideration of the Rural Conservation Zone and accompanying environmental and landscape overlays, environmental provisions or indeed any other parts of the Queenscliffe Planning Scheme save Clause 52.15.

The Association wishes to thank the Barwon Heads Association for all their assistance, in particular Mr. Colin Bridges.

The Lawyers for the Borough of Queenscliffe have drafted the following conditions, please note, below conditions were circulated in the first instance by Maddock's Lawyers for Borough of Queenscliffe – without prejudice. It may not be the final version, if the Planning Application is successful.

DRAFT CONDITIONS

1 The helicopter landing and take off shall only be associated with the helicopter model Enstrom 280 FX to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
2 Helicopter flights (a flight being a take off and landing) shall only occur a maximum of six (6) times per month to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
3 Helicopter flights (a flight being a take off and landing) shall only occur between the hours of 7am to 7pm at any given time to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

4 Helicopter take offs and landings shall occur to and from a westerly direction at all times to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
5 The permit holder/owner will maintain a logbook of the use of the helicopter landing site and the logbook will be made available for inspection by the Responsible Authority on request.
6 ~~The use as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the written consent of the responsible authority.~~
7 The permit for use will expire if one the following circumstances applies:
(a) The use does not start within two years after the issue of a permit.
(b) The use is discontinued for a period of two years.
In accordance with Section 69 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, an application may be submitted to the Responsible Authority for an extension of the periods referred to in this condition.
8 Testing to be conducted, confined to 3-4 minutes, from time to time and to be added to logbook kept under condition 5 (Ms Abbot).
9 Surface of the helicopter landing site to be maintained.
10 Preparation of a Fly Neighbourly Agreement.

Point Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club Back Beach Base.

(Editor's Note: The Secretary unreservedly apologises to the PLSLSC for an erroneous statement made in the February edition of the Association Quick News, where we indicated that the Building works permit(s) application(s) were successful on behalf of the PLSLSC, and that works were set to commence. That was incorrect)

Regarding the Back Beach Base rebuild project, the PLSLSC advise the following:

"The project has not yet been approved. The Club is in discussions with DEECA regarding our application for MACA consent which is yet to receive approval. The Club appreciates the interest and support of the PLCA."

The Association feels that has taken far too long, for a rebuild of a facility that ensures the safety of the Public on the back beach. The Association urges the relevant Government departments to expedite any approvals needed to issue the relevant permits, so that building can commence as soon as possible.

Developments on the Bellarine. *(Thank-you to BHA Committee member Mr. Colin Bridges for these update)*

1. *Barwon Heads*

Following the recent demolition of 4 river front houses at the corner of Talbot St. and Paringa Lane, residents are watching with interest the construction of a multi-level house on the bank of the Barwon River. It is understood that the new development will incorporate 10 bedrooms, multiple kitchens and bathrooms, a basement and a swimming pool behind a new 2 metre high wall along the river frontage.

A further application to amend the plans to permit a third level which is understood will exceed a total height of 7.5m and should require the public advertising of the application, is currently being assessed by the City of Greater Geelong.

2. *Connewarre*

An application for a planning permit for the construction of a wake board cable park, accommodation and restaurant at 1392-1450 Barwon Heads Rd. Connewarre (opposite the Barwon Heads airport) was withdrawn late last year shortly prior to the hearing by the Planning Committee of the City of Greater Geelong. The Applicant expressed an intention to relocate the development on the same site but further from the end of the airport runway and resubmit the application. It is understood that to date no amended application has been submitted.

The proposed development required the construction of 2 large freshwater lakes adjacent to the Ramsar listed Lake Connewarre and within the Regionally Significant Connewarre and Barwon River Landscape declared under the Bellarine Peninsula Statement of Planning Policy to have a binding objective to protect the landscape character, physical features and view corridors of the area.

The Barwon Heads Association has expressed its concern and objection to the proposed development on a number of environmental grounds, safety (being directly under the flightpath of the airport) and traffic.

2025 Annual Subscription Payment and Donations

The annual subscription payment for 2025 is due by the date of the AGM, being 3 January 2024. The **subscription amount for 2025 is $10 per person**. Donations are welcome and appreciated, in addition to the payment of the subscription amount. The preferred method of payment is by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to the PLCA bank account. Alternatively, payment can be made by cheque – however as we have lost Bendigo Bank facilities in Queenscliff, EFT payment, rather than cheque (which we have to bank in Ocean Grove) are preferred.

Please click the **Online Membership Renewal Form** from link below. You will be directed to a Google Form, complete it, then hit 'Submit' – and you'll receive further instructions on EFT bank details, to complete your EFT payment. Alternatively, use PDF form below; print and scan and email to us, or deliver at a meeting, or post. Print out Membership Renewal Form

The PLCA bank account details are:

Account Name: Point Lonsdale Civic Association
Bank: Bendigo and Adelaide Bank
BSB: 633108
Account Number: 131346017
Description: Surname and Initials of the member must be shown

If payment is made by cheque, please write your name on the reverse of the cheque if it is from an account different to your name. Please, DO NOT send cash via the post.

***Please ensure you complete the Membership Renewal and Subscription Payment form*.**

New Members: Click link below, **Online Application for Membership**, and fill in online and hit 'submit' - and you'll receive further instructions on EFT bank details, to complete your EFT payment.

Or, use PDF form below; print and scan and email in to us, or deliver at meeting, or post.

Print out Application for Membership Form

Online Membership Renewal Form (Renewal)

Online Application for Membership (New Members)

New Committee Members Required!

The Association still desperately needs new committee of management members to help out. All the current committee members are passionate about 3225, but we do need some extra help to lighten the load for all of us. There are many issues, in particular in CoGG 3225 that we need to start to address – we just don't have the personpower. If you are interested, please contact the Secretary for further details: **plcasecretary@gmail.com**

Please remember to support our local Traders in both Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale, particularly as we head into cooler, quieter months.

Lynne Furness – PLCA President.