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TORQUAY MUSEUM WITHOUT WALLS QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

HISTORY MATTERS

DISTRICT VOLUNTEERS - MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

DRILLING FOR OIL IN TORQUAY

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ABOUT US....

Torquay Museum Without Walls is a proud volunteer-run organization. In publishing *History Matters* our volunteers do everything from research, writing, editing, photography and page layouts. Each edition also includes contributions of stories and photography from supporters of our work.

We are very grateful for the support of our sponsors identified opposite and those who contribute in any way to the magazine.

Volunteers play an important role in the operation of our history group. They work in a variety of areas including research, filing, data entry, collections management, photography and working with community groups.

VOLUNTEER WITH US: We welcome new people and you don't have to be an expert in history. A friendly attitude and willingness to join in is all you need.

DRILLING FOR OIL

State Library Victoria

Deakin University students - Ainsley Karleusa, Charles Edmund Worrell-Smith, Darren Wong, Dimitri Skangos, Elisha Sacchetta, Jackson Mison, James Mathes, Tom King

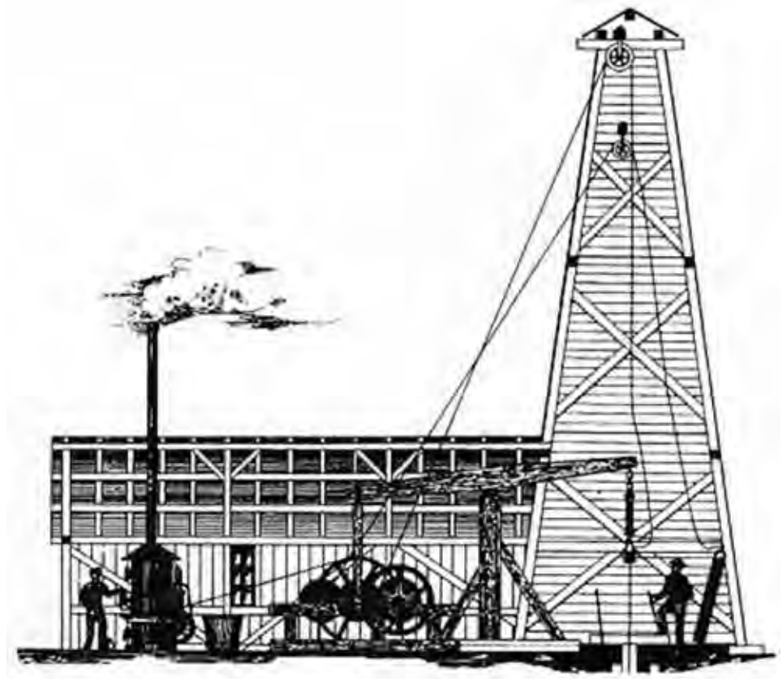
We have all been to Point Addis, a beach renowned and adored for its natural serenity and unaltered beauty. Most of the locals may not even realise that it came very close to being a small part of the site of an oil field run by various oil companies. If you head down there today you may still stumble upon an oil well just off Point Addis Road. Four of the oil well sites were in the area we today call Jan Juc, and were managed by a company called Torquay Oil Wells.

It all began in the 1920s, with the search for oil beginning to advance within Torquay. It had already started in the Gippsland region, east of Melbourne and experts started to speculate about the existence of the precious resource along the coast between Torquay and Anglesea. This particular expert was Dr George Baxter Pritchard, a geologist who would later become the founder for the Torquay Oil Wells company.

State Library Victoria - Palaeontologist George Pritchard

Originally from Gravesend, England, Dr Pritchard moved over to Melbourne, Australia with his mother when he was only three years old. He studied natural science at the University of Melbourne between 1888- 1891, and passed his degree of Doctor of Science by thesis in 1910. He went on to teach at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), then known as the Working Men's College, for 42 years. Throughout his time as a teacher, he was well received by many of his students, some of whom even went on to become forerunners in the Australian mining industry. Dr Pritchard was also teaching at the Gordon Institute in Geelong. Outside of teaching, he was also heavily involved in geological works. He had a profound interest in palaeontology, with a focus on molluscs, and published several papers about fossil species. He was also a member of the Geological Society of London as well as the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, and provided geological consultations of oil searches across the whole of Australia.

The presence of oil, and whether it could be extracted for use, would have the potential to change Torquay landscape from farming to mining, changing the future for



some local residents. So, why did this impending future not actually happen?

We will start at the beginning, before the formation of the Torquay Oil Wells company and others that were interested in finding oil within the region. What had led them to believe that oil was in the area? The answer was in the rocks.

The Torquay region provided some geological evidence of the existence of oil, based on the types of rocks found within the area. Richard Daintree, a British geologist who relocated to Australia somewhere in the mid 1800s, decided to map the Torquay area between the years 1860 to 1863. He claimed that he did so because he recognised the significance of the Bird Rock outcrops, making particular mention of them in his reports with sketches made from some of the first photographs ever taken in Australia. However, he was working under the pretence that his work had geological significance, and that it was 'routine mapping for geological survey'. His real agenda laid in sourcing out coal, which back then had a handsome sum of prize money attached to whoever could find it. Unfortunately for him, he missed the Anglesea mine by just a whisker.

Later on, in 1922, Dr Pritchard held a lecture at the Gordon Institute, where he identified Torquay specifically as a region with favourable conditions for the discovery of oil. He had high hopes that oil would eventually be found there, even going to the extent of labelling it as a matter of national importance for Australia.

The evidence for the oil was strong, and the success of extracting it from the ground was anticipated. Several companies were interested including Lakes Oil, a Jan Juc Syndicate and Victoria Petroleum Company. However, it was Torquay Oil Wells and Point Addis Oil Company that would attempt to drill for the oil. The drilling would be conducted with a series of numbered wells and bores located within the Otway Basin. In total, there were seven wells in Torquay; Torquay-1 to 5 was operated and owned by Torquay Oil Wells company and Torquay-6 and 7 by the Point Addis Company. Each well was created and drilled from late 1923 to mid 1924. The Torquay Oil Wells company raised £60,000 (nearly $5m today)with the cost of each onshore well being $2-3 million in today's currency, a large amount considering the success rate of drilling is 1 in 6 or 1 in 7.

In addition to these costs, there were costs associated with acquiring the land to drill on. Torquay Oil Wells had purchased more than twelve kilometres of coastline and more than twelve thousand acres of land. The promise of oil on this land was so great that more than a thousand acres were purchased at double the land value.

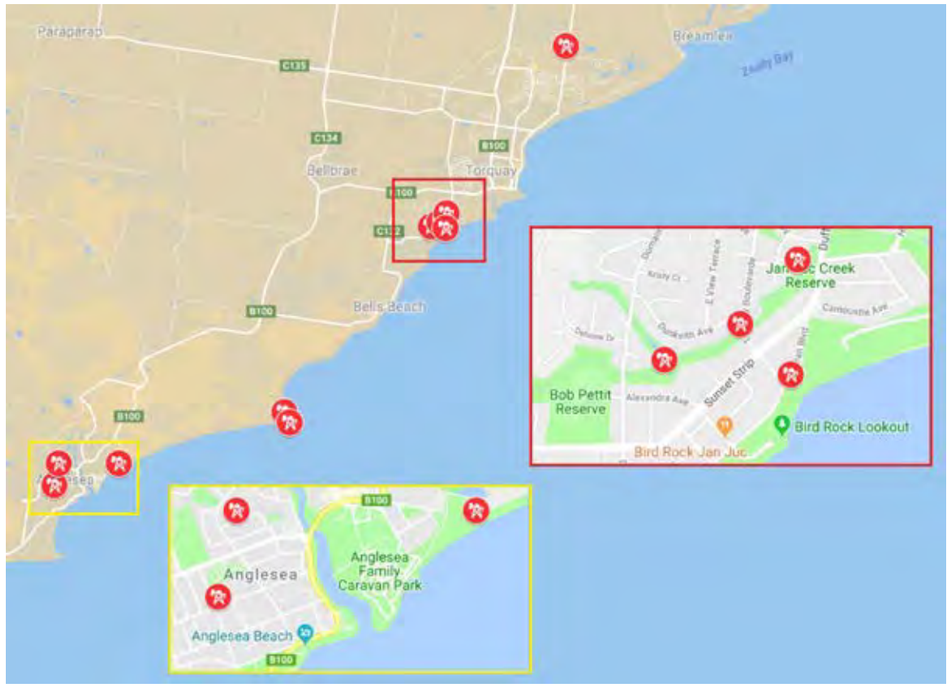
At the time, it was a wonder of how long the company would be in the area and how long they would be drilling. Depending on the outcome of the drilling, the company would be granted a license that enabled them to drill for five years. The technology and equipment used at the time was slow, as it took some time for each well to be drilled to a certain level. Torquay-7, for example, took five months to drill 250 metres in 1924. To translate that into modern times, the Lakes Oil Company named Bellarine-1, took only a month to drill 2,139 metres in 2003.

Torquay prides itself on having a rich history in farming and agriculture. However, this oil project had the potential to change this heritage. Had the project been successful, it is likely that much of the land would have been taken over by the oil companies, as it is often difficult for farmers to deny them access to their privately owned land. This was due to existing Australian legislation, which specifically stated that all the minerals under the ground belonged to the state and not the landowner. Those whose properties were identified as potential resource locations, and hence sought after, were not in a favourable position to negotiate and would eventually have no other option but to come to agreements with the companies to authorise workers' access onto their land. With these workers came noise, lights and a general intrusion of privacy. It is completely understood that the landowners were not going to be very receptive to this idea- after all, who would be comfortable with the idea of having 10 to 15 strangers working on your property for 24 hours a day, seven days a week? However, all may not be bad, as these actions may have also been beneficial when the workers repaired fences, installed cattle grids, gates and gravel roads. Should the digging for oil wells prove to be an unsuccessful venture, the farmer could still gain a water well out of all that.

Over the period from 1922-1924, nine wells were drilled across areas we now know as Torquay, Jan Juc, Point Addis and Anglesea. Much to the surprise of Dr Pritchard and all those whom he had encouraged to invest in Torquay Oil Wells, the wells did not deliver any amounts of oil. Torquay Oil Wells ceased their drilling, and the landscape returned to the mellow and tranquil place we all know and love.

However, this was not the end of drilling across the Surf Coast. Another attempt at drilling for oil was conducted 30 years later, in 1962. This was done by the company, Oil Development Ltd, who drilled within the Anglesea well '1A'. To assume it had little success would be correct, as drilling attempts continued to happen until 2005 when the Lakes Oil Company drilled the last well in the Torquay SubBasin. Before that, twelve wells had been drilled with no success, though previous drilling had been too shallow to find anything. With the addition of three failed 'offshore' drilling attempts within the Torquay SubBasin, the overall rate of finding oil within the area from drilling was pretty unsuccessful, showcasing the risks and the high failure rate of initiating such endeavours. That exercise concluded close to a century of drilling for oil within Torquay and the surrounding areas; so how did that all affect the quality of the area today?

Residual effects are common within failed oil drilling areas. This includes the regulatory requirement method of "plugging and abandoning" the wells, by filling them with cement after drilling was completed to ensure the water zones remain isolated and remain underground. Many water bores in the Torquay area have established



the presence of high salinity aquifers, but fortunately for the farmers, none of these have caused corrosion of infrastructure or reduction in crop yields.

As for now, evidence shows there is no current drilling for oil in Torquay, as the last exploration for oil and gas in the Torquay SubBasin was in 2006. In the last 13 years since the oil drilling has stopped, Torquay continues to flourish as the tourist hot-spot for iconic beaches and breathtaking landscapes that brings more and more people to the area each year. This brings more into the local community and more into the future for our children and their children. This also leads us into the potential existence of a future with cleaner, sustainable energy sources, as the environment as we know it cannot withstand the force of the continued use of oil, gas and coal.

We must ask ourselves what would the Surf Coast be like if Dr Pritchard and his team came across strong oil deposits. What would our beaches look like? Would our farmland be prosperous? Would our children have reserves to play on? Our region was once very vulnerable, and if these oil explorations proved more successful, the Surf Coast would not be known for its unrivaled coastline, but merely as the oil field just south of Melbourne. Despite the potential generation of new jobs that oil drilling could have brought to the area, the environment and overall reputation of Torquay is of far greater value.

Photo courtesy Wayne Richardson.
Derick inside No 1 Bore, Torquay Oil Wells

GRS 2009/1752/126
Torquay oil-drilling rig, 1921
Geelong Heritage Centre Archives

Heartfelt THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

↬STORIES BY CHERYL BAULCH AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS↠

Last month was National Volunteer Week to celebrate and acknowledge the generous contribution of our nation's volunteers. The theme for 2019 was "Making a World of Difference". This edition of History Matters celebrates the power of volunteering and says thanks to all the volunteers who have made a difference to our community and its members.

Volunteering is about optimism, perhaps idealism and a glimmer of hope about helping to make something better. Volunteers give unpaid help willingly, in the form of time, service or skills.

They believe that they are capable of creating change and making progress, whether large or small. At the same time, connections are made, to others, and the community. Volunteers are connected to the problem as well as the solution. Through their actions and involvement, they are benefitting others as well as themselves. Some volunteering takes place regularly; others serve on an as-needed basis, such as in response to a natural disaster, although they still put in a lot of voluntary hours behind the scenes in training.

Our volunteers have played a critical role in empowering individuals, in fostering active citizenship and in building our inclusive and resilient community so that we can all flourish.

Volunteering has a history. It has been influenced by our British origin as a penal colony, creating a unique relationship between the state and the volunteer corps of convicts and the police force. Volunteering has also been influenced over time by our first peoples, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and their complex concepts of kinship, reciprocity and family obligations.

While we know that those in the 30/40s age bracket with dependent children undertake the most volunteer hours, with the ageing population, older volunteers are becoming increasingly important and valuable – not a burden, rather an asset.

Locally, our first volunteers could be considered as the Torquay Improvement Association (TIA) who formed in 1889 to look after and further the interests of Spring Creek (the name by which the town was referred to initially). Members of the TIA have volunteered many hours of hard work by way of physical labour, writing letters and sending delegates to converse with government officials. The vision and determination of these members certainly laid the foundation of what we have today in our seaside town.

They fought for postal services, sanitation, electricity, telephone services, policing and they paid for the community hall. Life-saving was brought to the attention of the Royal Humane Society who supplied a life buoy for the summer season in 1899. After World War 2 they ensured street lighting be restored, the barbed wire removed from the beach and steps at Rocky Point returned.

The TIA provided land for lease to the Torquay Scout Group. They petitioned the CFA unsuccessfully for a fire truck. Undaunted by the rejection, they set out as they had done so many times before to raise the money for an important community asset for the growing town. Their success enabled them to purchase a fire truck for the fire brigade. Other volunteer groups developed and benefited from the activities of the TIA.

A tiny magazine like ours, in one edition, is unable to provide the history of so many of the Torquay district volunteer organisations and service clubs that have contributed or contribute now to our community, but this edition is a start. We thank them for Making a World of Difference.

'APEX' CLUB TORQUAY

An Apex club is a community service club, neither sectarian nor party political, that provides young civic-minded people with the opportunity to volunteer within the community and develop personally through club run schemes such as public speaking competitions. Club members, initially male, are volunteers aged between 18 and 45. Females were allowed to join in the early 1990s, and by 2006 the gender-specific clubs (and boards) accepted members of both genders to their clubs.

The Apex's familiar triangular emblem has been around Australian suburbs and country towns for decades. Locally is the visible Geelong sculpture in Johnstone Park at the end of Malop Street.

The story of Apex began in March 1931 when three young architects, looking to contribute to their local community of Geelong, decided to create Apex. They had attempted to join the Rotary Club of Geelong, but there was a rule restricting just one representative of a profession to each club, so the three architects - Ewan Laird, Langham Proud and John Buchan went on to form The Young Businessmen's Club of Geelong. The three founders were motivated by a simple creed: citizenship, fellowship and service.

After the club expanded into Camperdown and Ballarat, the Association of Apex Clubs was formed, and the three clubs branded as "Apex". By the end of the year, four clubs had been established. Over the decades, more than 1,000 local groups and over 200,000 young people have learnt key skills while contributing to their community.

Locally Apex was first mooted at a meeting held in Torquay during 1974 by the sponsor club Belmont. The President of the Belmont club, Greg Allen spoke as well as Gerald Edwards and Jeff Taylor, Chairman of the Extension Committee. At the close of the meeting, prospective Torquay members indicated an interest in forming a club. At a follow up meeting three weeks later, on 11 November 1974, the Torquay group confirmed their interest. This meeting was recorded as the first meeting of the Apex Club of Torquay (unchartered).

The Foundation Meeting to elect office bearers was held on 25 November with David Gordon (President), Bill Mitchell (Secretary), Bob McLeod (Treasurer) and Peter Stewart, Graeme McCartney, David McLeod, and Ron Worland making up the rest of the committee. Other members present at the meeting included Ken Anderson, Paul Baensch, John Baker, David Evans, Max Feldman, Paul French, Garry Hill, Graham Lee, Dick Saleh, Peter Scott, Mick Thomas and Peter Wilson.

The new year started with the inaugural meeting of the club on 28 February 1975. Guests included co-founder of Apex, Ewan Laird and Zone President, Graham Brian who were on hand to congratulate David Gordon as he was installed as President of the newly formed club, along with the other committee members mentioned earlier. There were 27 chartered members after this meeting. The club quickly set about raising money for the Darwin Cyclone Appeal and the Torquay Fire Brigade through activities of car washing, loam spreading and Bounce Ball. Social events to support the fundraising, including Rock and Roll nights, theatre nights and bbqs, brought the funds rolling in. There was also the unique district sporting challenge against Belmont, where Torquay beat them in a raft race by 15 minutes! There were also guest speakers and hosting of the final district debating competition. All in all, this small group of volunteers raised $3,716 (about $18,000 today) in just eight months.

The club contributed many community hours before folding 14 years later in 1989. Guest speakers enlightened members. Projects included fundraising through house wrecking, roadside cleanups, Christmas trees, hay carting, tree planting, raffles, car washing, bush fire help, and financial beneficiaries included the local fire brigade, RSL, Red Cross, school and kindergarten. Two Apex parks were created in 1978 and another in 1983. By the late 1980s service centered around junior surfing, junior discos, lawnmowing, wood cutting and starting up Little Athletics in Torquay.

Consistently through the years, the club was successful in the debating competitions, with Ron Worland Torquay's most successful debater. Through the many member volunteer hours the club supported the community through physical and financial help.

Photos courtesy Graeme McCartney and Ron Worland

Photo courtesy Ron Worland - Original APEX Torquay members

Front L - R: Ron Worland, Graeme McCartney, John Baker, Andy Kakouros, Rob Cother, Dick Saleh
Middle L - R: Kevin Hunter, Ron Driscoll, Rick Stinton, Tony Iacano, Peter Hanna, Bob McLeod, Steve Barrand
Back L - R: Bill Mitchell, Bill Walters, David Gordon (President), Rob Young, Geoff Morgan, Peter Wilson, Graham Lee, Gary Bath, Terry Charlton

FRIENDS OF TAYLOR PARK

Photos by Margaret Van Rompaey taken in 1989.

When European settlement moved south of Geelong, pastoral leases were offered with the condition of clearing the land for grazing. In 1858 Gilbert mapped out a township called Puebla but also known as Spring Creek. Today that town is called Torquay and the original subdivision is bounded by Bell Street, Anderson Street, The Esplanade and the Surf Coast Highway.

Pastoral leases were taken up, and the first land sales occurred in 1866. By the end of the century, the tiny village had fisherman, farmers and holiday makers who formed the community. The Torquay Improvement Association was formed to develop further the town, and the person who spent a lot of time campaigning for new development, to consider conservation and beautification of the town was John William Taylor. When the government wanted to survey and further subdivide and sell the land we know today as Taylor Park, John William Taylor offered them other solutions. His vision was to ensure the town always had some open space. This was remarkable in a town that was then mostly open space.

Confusion still exists today on the origin of Taylor Park because of the name. For many years it was known as the Fisherman's Park because there were fishing huts on the land and the fishermen would dry their nets there. Just after the death of John William Taylor, the Torquay Improvement Association believed that naming

The Friends of Taylor Park continue to care, maintain and provide direction for the park in collaboration with the Great Ocean Road Coastal Committee who manage the park. More details of the group can be found on their Facebook Page at https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Taylor-Park-Torquay-558434214643162/

or email friends.of.taylor.park.vic@gmail.com

They meet every second Saturday of the month 10 am to 12 pm. at the table directly behind The Bowls Club. Please call in to show your support and help revitalize the group.

the park after him would be a lasting memory to a man who did so much for the development of Torquay and to ensure that this parcel of land would always be in the hands of the community.

The original tree planting plan by John William Taylor was fashionable at the time – parallel straight lines of Sugar Gums around and down the sides of the park. The pine trees were planted soon after. There were times when the local school helped plant Ironbarks and flowering gums near the north-west corner.

The park has been used by fishermen, graziers, including Carl Voss and Andrew White, then for a short time a three-hole golf course. To encourage tourism by proving recreational activities for holiday makers, part of the park was set aside for Bowling Greens and Croquet lawns. In 1950 the park was proclaimed a 'Sanctuary of Native Game'. Twenty years later Jack O'Mara instigated the construction of a pond to entice bird life to the park.

Despite work by those who continued John William Taylors vision of open space in the town, others believed the area to be a suitable solution to finding a space for a new community facility such as a swimming pool, kindergarten, car parking. Consequently on 21 July 1989 the 'Friends of Taylor Park' was formed, led by Margaret Van Rompaey. Their core aim was to actively care for the park and provide advice to the Lands Department and Torquay Reserves committee as to the future direction of the park.

The group started activities three weeks later with a 'get to know the Park and each other' working bee, followed by lunch. From there they registered the group with the Victorian National Parks Association and became Park No '77'.

JAN JUC COAST ACTION GROUP

STORY & PHOTOS LUKE HYNES

The Jan Juc clifftops have seen many changes, from the indigenous Wathaurong people, managing the area using fire, to farming practices in the late 1800s and then urban development in the 1950s and increasing in density to today.

Farming impacts included clearing, grazing, increased nutrient levels and rabbit infestation. Urbanisation brought about more clearing, rubbish dumping and invasion by woody weeds and garden escapees. The resulting landscape was highly modified, demanding many management issues including erosion, weed invasion, informal access through native vegetation and inappropriate use.

In 1990 a couple of families began weed control and revegetation using locally indigenous species around the Jan Juc beach car park. Local residents joined in, and in May 1994 Jan Juc Coast Action became the first formal Coast Action Group supported by the state government. Once formalised, the group worked closely with land managers Torquay Foreshore and then the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee to rationalise tracks, remove weed infestations and replant with natives.

As environmental volunteering grew, Jan Juc Coast Action was able to work together with local schools and businesses, forming an ongoing partnership with local surf company Rip Curl who has donated staff time to work on the clifftops for over 17 years through the successful Planet Days program.

The group has also worked hard with community engagement, organising many educational events and creating a flora and fauna identification website: www.scnaturesearch.com.au

The resulting 23 years of hard work has produced significant change. From the modified weed infested vegetation to a functioning ecosystem which supports local fauna and has helped increase the distribution of the state significant Rufous Bristlebird, protected the rare Swamp Diuris, and increased the extent of the state significant Coastal Moonah Woodland Community. The clifftop tracks are used extensively by the local community and visitors who enjoy the natural surrounds, not realising that this now relatively intact ecosystem is the result of untold hours of volunteer and paid labour.

Jan Juc Coast Action meets on the first Sunday of the month, popping up in spots spanning the 5km from Rocky Point, to the concrete wave at the start of the Bells Reserve. It also accepts help from schools and corporate groups, enabling mass plantings.

To find out where the next working bee will be, phone Ian on 0428 614 861. Bring your own gloves. Tools and morning tea provided.

BEFORE & AFTER

IAN AND ROMA EDWARDS

FOUNDATION MEMBERS OF JAN JUC COAST ACTION GROUP

When the Torquay Golf Club subdivided some of their land, Roma Edwards family took up the opportunity in 1950 to purchase a house block in the estate that was to become Jan Juc. They built their house in 1990, sold the Lara farm and moved into the house almost thirty years ago.

They, along with other volunteers, initiated Victoria's first coast action group - Jan Juc Coast Action Group, which has transformed the cliff top bush, once covered with weeds, into indigenous vegetation.

Ian and Roma loved their stunning views, but these were spoilt by the presence of African boneseed. Many years of clearing and farming, as well as the introduction of the fox and rabbit, had changed the landscape. So they set about to do something about it, to return the landscape toward what it would have been like around 1800. They had spent time eliminating the African boneseed in the You Yangs, so they thought the weeds would have to go first.

Ian and Roma started by removing the woody weeds from around the Jan Juc car park, and some neighbours began to help. This area has now spread from Spring Creek to the Bells Beach Wave. As they began their work, they found other introduced weeds and quickly realized there were bare areas in need of re-vegetation, but there was no funding to purchase the appropriate plants. The manager of Quicksilver kindly wrote us a cheque for $1000. In 1994 their little group received a visit from two senior officials of the Department of Environment, who admired their work and suggested that they create a formal group and become incorporated. Ian pointed out that he liked his independence, but the Departments $30,000 startup offer was too good to turn down. There was a public meeting, and the group was established.

While many support the group in spirit these days, there still are around one to two dozen who regularly come to working bees to do the on ground work. The help is directly related to the type of work to be undertaken. There is always more help when it is evident what needs to be done, such as planting seedlings and cutting down woody weeds. In the early days, a major task was to remove the coast wattle, coast tea tree, buckthorn and other woody weeds. The job these days is to keep an eye on the regrowth to make sure that there are the best possible opportunities for the indigenous vegetation to survive. The group manages the indigenous grassland by spot spraying weeds and foreign grasses and by hand weeding. Although the couple did admit to working as one these days – Roma can't bend these days, so she just uses her walking stick to point to the weeds as Ian's eyes are not as good as they used to be. Rip Curl has been a wonderful support to the coastal volunteer groups. For the last fourteen or so years, providing their staff for one day each year to work with the Jan Juc Coast Action Group, and managers of the land, Great Ocean Road Coastal Committee and other coastal volunteer groups.

Director and Principal Botanist at Ecology Australia, Geoff Carr, has prepared a detailed report on the area about every five years on our work. He identifies his concerns, what can be done better and provides recommendations and advice for the future.

Over the years Ian and Roma say there have been some unexpected discoveries along this section of the coast –

- Janjucetus hunderi, an early baleen whale fossil;
- Discovery of Diuris palustris, the Swamp Orchid listed under Victoria's Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, led to some hand pollination and seed collection for propagation at the Royal Botanic Gardens who produce seedlings.
- The Rufous Bristle-bird, a little bird that runs along the ground, a rare and endangered bird now inhabits this region. We believe the success is a consequence of this habitat creation.

Ian and Roma explain that when they look back and see the progress that has been made, that it keeps them going, knowing that you have made a difference and of course they are encouraged by seeing the return of indigenous grassland.

In Spring there are lots of orchids – 4 or 5 different species.

An intractable job is to eliminate the cats and foxes that kill the wildlife, in particular the Rufous bristle birds as well as the marsupials.

When asked if he was granted one wish for the coastline, Ian replied, "to eliminate global warming. While it has happened before in geological history, this time it is happening at 1000s of times the rate it did then."

Carnoustie triangle

DON'T DESTROY WHAT YOU CAME TO ENJOY!

STORY OF SANE

Story and photos by Graeme Stockton

Bells Beach is unlike anywhere else in the world. It is a unique part of the Australian coastline and has a special place in surfing culture. SANE (Surfers Appreciating Natural Environment) seeks to protect and restore the reserve's natural beauty and that of the surrounding bushland.

For thousands of years, waves generated from Australia's southern oceans have travelled hundreds of kilometres to break over the reefs of Bells Beach, to make it one of the best surfing beaches in the world. Indeed it is the presence of nature, omnipresent as it is in the reefs, or the abundant wildlife (marine and terrestrial), as well as the rugged cliffs, species-rich heathland and unique coastal woodlands that make the beautifully diverse Bells Beach Surfing Recreational Reserve internationally significant.

SANE was formed by Charles Bartlett (Charles of the Sea) in 1988 who was alarmed at the perceived mismanagement of the Bells Beach Surfing Recreational Reserve by the then Barrabool Shire. Their heavy-handed approach to provide access for people and car traffic caused a great deal of unnecessary damage to the natural environment. At about the same time, the 13th Beach Ocean Outfall (Sewerage Treatment Plant) was being constructed, and SANE's leadership through the local papers and in the community, ensured the Plant was upgraded from primary to secondary treatment of sewerage. Since then, SANE have focused primarily on restoring the Bells Beach Recreational Surfing Reserve to its more natural state. Readers might not appreciate that large sections of the Reserve had become significantly modified over time and that a large number of serious environmental weeds were invading and replacing the indigenous coastal heath and woodland. SANE has been working to restore the balance now for some 31 years. The bottom line is that restoration and careful stewardship is by necessity, a long and slow process (e.g. weeding, planting, planning, etc.) Degradation and damage on the other hand, can be fast and very destructive (eg. trampling and illegal driving of vehicles over vegetation- or worse still, heavy machinery).

Unfortunately, 50 years of visitors to the Bells area has taken its toll, damaging vegetation and degrading the land base significantly. Our focus has been to reverse that destructive trend. As a result, SANE has:

- Re-planted indigenous species
- Removed introduced plants/weeds
- Assisted with fencing and track management and design. Held regular monthly working bees on the second Sunday of each month starting at 10 am.
- Initiated interpretation projects to inform and encourage positive behaviour from people using the reserve. Actively advocated with the community, local, state and federal government. We are proud to say for example that SANE was officially recognised by State Government for our work in lobbying for the introduction of the Point Addis Marine National Park.

SANE believes that at no other time in history has understanding and respect for the rights of nature been more important. Sadly, whilst biodiversity is in alarming reverse at state, national and international levels, Bells Beach continues to showcase nature at its best, with the additions of the Point Addis Marine Park in 2002 and The Great Otway National Park on its southwest boundary established in 2005. Meanwhile, SANE's habitat restoration, begun in 1988 now re-supports officially threatened species like the Rufous Bristlebird and Swamp Antechinus. Importantly, it highlights what a community can do when it decides to look after its backyard.

Although SANE is primarily a surfer's organisation, we welcome and encourage all people who share similar aims to join us.

So rather than watching nature docos on TV, why not join SANE and do something positive for your environment. Your energy and ideas will be appreciated. Working bees are the 2nd Sunday of every month except January. To become involved just reply at www.sanesurfers.org and your name will be added to the group email list.

TAKE A BREATH PLAYGROUP

Story & photos Rosemary Faris

Towards the end of 2005 Rosemary Faris attended an evaluation of the Life Activities Club, Surf Coast branch. The Coordinator of the Spring Creek Community House, (now Torquay Community House) Laura Conner, floated the idea of the group setting up some sort of interaction with young mothers and their children who attended the

House, many of whom had needs of some kind. Rosemary Faris felt that support and a space could be organized at St Luke's Anglican church, close by. Laura was delighted, suggested the name 'Take a Breath' (TAB) and was closely involved with the six months of planning which followed.

It was agreed that this playgroup would be different from those already in place. The emphasis would be on the mothers (and the few fathers) who brought their children along. There would be homemade goodies for morning tea and the children would be amused by an older group of women all of whom belonged to the church. Anglican Early Childhood Services gave a $1,000 grant, which covered the initial costs. The Mayor, Libby Mears, commended the initiative in her column in the Surf Coast Times, (June 5, 2006). Over the next 2 years TAB received two grants from the Shire totaling $1,200. The Men's Shed made two wagons and a set of chimes.

Word of mouth soon made TAB popular, membership flourished and a second group started in 2009. This lasted a short time and was mainly organized by the young women who felt they had gained so much themselves they wanted to give back. Women from Torquay Christian Fellowship spent a morning at TAB before starting their own similar group and the Uniting Church also started a group.

TAB was a much-loved part of the local Community and was an excellent way that St Luke's observed the Parish Mission (engage and work with the broader community) and the Parish Vision (valued for its contribution to the well being of the Surf Coast community). Very quickly TAB became a place where families who didn't have an older person in their lives felt at home. Many were from overseas – England, Ireland, Wales, Russia, Canada, New Zealand, Indonesia, Denmark, Germany, and USA. There were also referrals from the Maternal Health Nurse and the Community House. Around 120 families have been part of TAB. The older women were affectionately christened 'The Grannies' and since most of their grandchildren lived overseas or interstate this was warmly received. Sixteen 'Grannies' and one Grandpa have been involved during the life of TAB: Mabel Cashin, Maie Zorica, Helen Black, Pat Adams, Pam Bayley, Libby Fuller, Heather Weiss, Carol Walters, Lucia Forte, Chris Farrow, Jean Young, Emma Tunley, Barbara Bell, June Marks, Trish Rostron, Rosemary Faris and Roger Brown.

The team hoped that the love and care they showed these families would be indicative of their own faith. They cared for each other with regular lunches together at local cafes for which the retired grannies were collected and to which the incumbent was invited.

TAB started off with the children in the narthex area of the church, with the mothers enjoying coffee in the area adjoining the kitchen. It wasn't long before a larger space was needed and the hall was used with the sunny outside area being used for outdoor play. A sandpit was built in the shady area behind the hall. The usual playgroup activities were carried out, craft, art, dressing up, puzzles, observation of birthdays, and Libby on the piano gave much enjoyment. A highlight was the birthday celebrations in 2015 for Maie when the children helped her blow out 90 candles on the very large cake. In 2007 there was a record attendance of 43 for the second birthday. TAB was kept to a maximum of 25 families and attendances fluctuated, especially during the cold winter months.

Notable volunteering by the mothers included celebrating The Welsh National Day and the Danish festival of Festaluen before Easter. A Community Cook Book with recipes from local identities ranging from parliamentarians to surfing heroes as well as the TAB members, raised $3,000. Fiona Hale organized this for church funds and another $300 was contributed to the church from a Mothers' stall at the 2009 fete.

Over the years the TAB team was involved with significant issues, including family breakups, sickness and the death of a baby.

The four priests who have been at the church during the time of TAB supported the program and led services in the church at the end of each term; the Christmas service was special as Barbara Bell's photos of children were given to them to hang on the Christmas tree. Reverend Sophie Watkins baptized several of the children, Reverend Phillip Bewley came each Monday and was very much part of the team. Reverend Lynton Wade conducted a wonderful wedding for Sam Pritchard and John McGowan. Reverend John Webster initiated a Pram Service, and each month playgroup finished early and moved into the church. Reverend Irwin Faris conducted a prayer service and lighting of candles for Scarlett McGowan when at 9 months old she received a successful heart transplant. One mother was confirmed, blessings were given to children baptized overseas, and travel blessings were requested. The TAB team knew they were appreciated by the giving of lovely cards and letters, presents and parties including a memorable evening with French champagne at the RACV resort.

Take a Breath finished in 2017 with a very fine Service of Thanksgiving conducted in the Sunday service by Reverend John Webster, and a party with many past mothers the following day.

TORQUAY SES

The State Emergency Service (SES) is the name used by several volunteer organisations in Australia that assist during and after major incidents, such as floods, storms, cyclones, and bushfires. The SES also help in other emergencies, such as vertical and road crash rescues, missing person searches, and medical evacuations. In other scenarios, the SES may provide a support role to other agencies, particularly police and fire. The SES is operational 24 hours a day.

IN 2018 GRAEME JACKMAN SHARED HIS MEMORIES AND PHOTOS WITH OTHER SES MEMBERS AND TORQUAY MUSEUM WITHOUT WALLS.

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At the beginning of World War II, the National Emergency Service was created to provide air raid wardens with the organisation disbanding six months after the end of the war.

Ten years later the Civil Defence Service was formed as a precaution to any potential attacks on Australian soil. The name was changed to the "State Emergency Service" ("SES") during the 1970s, to reflect a change of emphasis into providing emergency help related to floods, storms and other natural emergencies. Every state and territory in Australia has its own State (or Territory) Emergency Service.

In addition to funds provided to the SES through legislation by state and local governments,

IN THE **BEGINNING**

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1940 NATIONAL SERVICE | **1974** CYCLONE TRACEY | **1976** TORQUAY SES | **2014** NEW HOME

SES groups also supplement their financial resources with donations made by individuals and businesses, and through other government grants. These donations typically contribute to purchasing or maintaining group equipment, such as vehicles and tools, or to the improvement of SES property and facilities.

In Torquay, the need for an emergency service was highlighted with the events of Cyclone Tracey in December 1974. Discussions took place in the community, and the first public meeting held to ascertain community interest in establishing an SES unit locally was held in Sept 1976. A year later the Barrabool Shire agreed to support the idea.

The first Unit Controller was Rutland James. The team started with minimal equipment - a 6x4 trailer, 1.5 kW generator, set ground light bank 5x100 w globes, power unit, crowbars, shovels etc. There was no home to store the trailer and equipment, so John Spittle, a local sheep farmer, offered to store the trailer half a mile up his driveway in the front yard of his farm (today the Surf Coast Plaza stands on the site).

As the SES accumulated more equipment, more space was needed. A shed behind the Senior Citizens Centre in Price Street, belonging to the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, was used. They allowed members to use half the shed to store the extra equipment such as sandbags and tarps. Using two locations provided extra work.

Graeme Jackman who was a foundation member of the Torquay SES, recalls those early days, explaining that whenever you needed the equipment, you had to go

there in your own car, find the trailer somewhere else then head off to the emergency.

He said, "For initial callbacks, Lorraine was my 'right-hand woman'. We never had pagers, we would receive a phone call on the landline from the police, and they would tell me what the situation is, where it is and either I or a designated member would go get the trailer, and Lorraine would make six phone calls – all landlines, no mobile phones. All we had was an address to get to, and we had no idea what we would find when we got there....bit like Dad's Army... even more so when you consider we were outfitted with left over military gear – navy blue overalls and the red (soup bowl) crash hat, round with a large lip – the only thing it was good for was as a soup bowl or growing plants in, because every time you turned you whacked your head on something.

When the first pagers came along, we thought it was Christmas. They were only tiny, and there was no message, no voice over, just three different tone beeps. The beeps let you know if you had a search on, or an accident, etc. The Duty Office had to ring Geelong CFA to find out what was going on. With road accidents, we were only classed as RAA (Road accident assistance). We were not the rescuing body. The Geelong CFA was the rescuing body at the time. They did the job, and we did the slushing, clean up, and whatever else was needed. Later we used a message pager that supplied a small message.

The next upgrade in technology was when the unit received its first mobile phone, the 'brick'. About the size of a house brick and weighed the same!

The first set of jaws of life was electric, and cost $25,000 which Barrabool Shire gave us as an interest-free loan for four years, which we paid back through fundraising.

Our very first truck was a 1956 International cab chassis, put together by Johnny Major of Grovedale, a great supporter of the SES right throughout Geelong. He would allow us to use vehicles in his yard to train with. Fundraising, particularly the Blue Light Discos in the old Scout Hall in Beales Street during the summer period, made $5000 to buy that truck. Johnny Major made the offer of this cab chassis - we bought the tray from the back of an old SEC truck and Johnny put it on the cab chassis, painted it all yellow with the black SES emblazoned on it. With the one little amber light added, we felt like it was Christmas, even though you could hardly see the light operating. We would take care going through an intersection as nobody could see it.

Later we were granted a State supplied Mazda2-4000. After the Ash Wednesday fires, our crew and every crew in the Geelong area went through a six week clean-up program along the coast. This was to help people get back on their feet. Shortly after we received a phone call from Des Hay, Manager of the Alcoa Power Station. The Alcoa Foundation USA wanted to know what they could do for us and Anglesea. We said a new truck, a new communications caravan, anything like that. Des took the request to the Foundation and they presented us with a cheque for $19,000 USD. The condition was to purchase a new truck with a fully decked out body on it and all the equipment needed. At the time we also had a sub unit down at Anglesea, who were based in the Shire yards. They had a Toyota State Troop Carrier that we received from some other unit, and that kept us going for a while. There was also a tandem rescue trailer there too. It contained rescue equipment for approximately two years and was then converted to a welfare trailer – well equipped with a gas bbq which took up the full width, freezer, urn, great helping out at incidents and for fundraising events. Eventually, we sold it to Winchelsea.

With the Alcoa Foundation's donation we purchased a Ford truck and our request to the manufacturer was to not have the body wider than the cabin, but it ended up about twelve inches wider on each side. We put up with it for some time. The body had written on it that the truck was donated by the Alcoa Foundation USA. We spent a couple of years building a new body which was the width of the cabin and served us for many years before we upgraded to the Mitsubishi which came from donations from Torquay Lions and Rotary clubs totally approximately $25,000.

We had no headquarters in the early days until after we continually harassed the Barrabool Shire, they gave us a shed down Domain Road, Jan Juc near the creek. We had power but no running water, except from the creek. No toilet. The shire had surplus porta toilets at Moriac after Ash Wednesday, so they installed one near the shed, but it was a race between us and the redback spiders to the toilet. A neighbour across the road allowed us to use his toilet when we were training. From there we moved our headquarters to behind the Shire offices in Grossmans Road at a cost of $140,000 paid for by the Surf Coast Shire. Then when the Shire moved to the Surf Coast Highway, we too needed to relocate. Eventually the new modern facility at Messmate Road was opened during October 2013.

Unfortunately, this move was not a smooth transition. Our new building was not ready when the Shire moved out of Grossman's Road, so we were left without headquarters for some time. Council offered us two containers inside a secure area at the Shire depot. However, we only had five passes to get into the secure area which was given to those living closest to the unit. Consequently, someone had to get there quickly and get the truck out before everyone arrived, so that it was ready to leave as soon as possible. During this time, training was an issue; the room was not big enough for practical training; all theory was done on our training nights.

The Unit has been here a very long time and has an outstanding safety record. In the early days, we were able to improvise with equipment to make our work more efficient - it was always done in a safe and considered way. We always looked out for our members and each other. The Torquay unit has always been a group of great people, and everyone has been on the same page in considering the outcomes we want for our community. It couldn't happen without the quality of the leaders we have had across the years. This team has always been one of the leading units in the area. We have set the benchmarks for other units to aspire to. They come to us for ideas and training programs.

The Torquay Unit has grown to 31 volunteers who last year attended 135 requests for assistance. Their contribution to the community is also the countless hours of voluntary work that goes on behind the scenes, and the support that the volunteers' family members give to enable members to leave their family at the drop of a hat to go and help the community in need.

Interested in volunteering? email torquay@ses.vic.gov.au

L - R: Carol Brandamarti, Gail Rooney, Linda Newstead, Lois Gill

TORQUAY FOOD AID

Torquay Food Aid is a voluntary community organisation established in 1994 by the four existing Torquay Churches at the time. The purpose was to consolidate the work that they were each doing in helping to provide support to families and individuals in need in the area.

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Originally situated at the Community Health Centre in Bell Street, Torquay Food Aid was taken on by Barwon Health when they took over from the Community Centre and moved to the Surf Coast Highway. It continues to be supported by local churches, businesses, community groups and interested individuals.

The group is run by a Committee of locals some of whom represent the local churches and St. Vincent de Paul Society, as well as the Torquay Community House, and Barwon Health. Each Wednesday the Centre is served by 3-4 volunteers who offer help and support to those who come in.

Lois Gill, secretary of Food Aid and coordinator of the volunteers, arrived in Torquay during 2000. She retired shortly after and sought community work to do. Lois worked at the Visitors Centre until hearing about Torquay Food Aid and volunteered to carry out different tasks over the years. Lois has been on the committee for sixteen years and has shared her memories of the Torquay Food Aid program.

When the Torquay Food Aid first opened its doors, clients received a bag of food once a week packed and delivered by groups of volunteers. At the time there were only about a dozen clients.

Times have changed. The Torquay Food Aid is now located at the back of Barwon Health Centre, and nowadays operates on a point system. Teams of volunteers stock the shelves with the canned fruits, canned vegetables, tinned meats and fish, vegemite, jam, cereals, donated by the community, and shortfalls are purchased by the group from the financial donations received.

Each client is interviewed and given an ID card then allocated points according to the number of people to be fed. They then choose what they want from the shelves, 'purchasing' items with their points. Clients can satisfy their dietary needs and pick up favourite foods – although there are limits on some items, to prevent anyone from scooping up all the dried biscuits, for example. The points system creates a dignified experience that encourages the selection of healthy foods. The fruit and vegetables from Secondbite and bread from Baker's Delight are free of points.

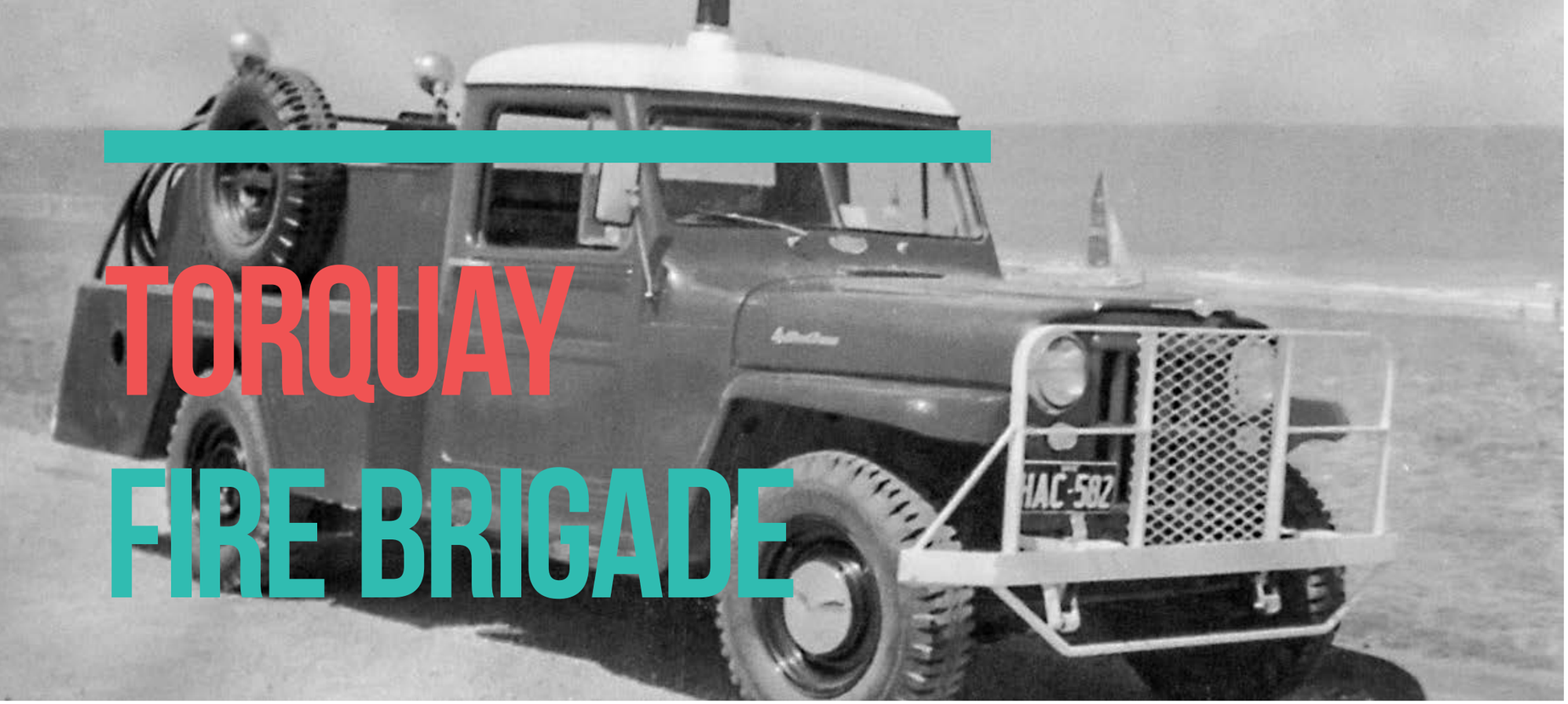
The idea is to provide a reliable source of food for those facing financial hardship in the district. "Our mandate is to help the residents of Torquay," Lois said, "but clients don't have to be destitute." They only have to prove that they are local and explain their situation.

Torquay Food Aid is available to residents of Torquay, Jan Juc and Bellbrae. The service also includes some nearby country areas which may not be covered by any other food distribution charity. If people from other areas in the Surf Coast come with a need for help and have been unable to access food at any centre near where they live, they are not turned away. A conversation is had with them about accessing food in their own area and if Torquay can, advise them of what should be available.

Once registered, the clients receive their points and can go "shopping" once a week. Torquay Food Aid is open from 1-3 p.m. on Wednesdays, and operates from Barwon Health, 100 Surf Coast Highway, Torquay. Access is through the carport at the rear of the Medical Centre carpark.

Torquay Food Aid relies on its volunteers, currently numbering twelve and sometimes there is a waiting list to become a volunteer. Volunteers sort, restock the shelves, listen to the clients and have a chat then act as "cashiers" when clients come to do their shopping. Lois describes them as "a team of very special ladies who chat with the clients, but not counsel them. Some clients come in just for the chat; for some, it is the only conversation they have had all week."

Donations from the community are also critical. Donations of non-perishable food items can be placed in a Torquay Food Aid box found at Ryan's Supa IGA, local churches, and Torquay Community House. Financial donations are always welcome too.



TORQUAY FIRE BRIGADE

Photo Louise Leighton - Regular for a Sunday Morning in 1983 was an informal training session. Equipment would be fired up to ensure all the gear was serviceable and the trucks would be taken out for a run.

1936 TOWN BRIGADE

1940 TOWN FIRE

1941 CFBB MEMBER

1944 CFA CREATED

The first fire in Melbourne, after European settlement, is believed to have occurred in Melbourne's first gaol in 1838. Up until 1890, fires were fought by employees of various insurance companies. A fire mark, like the one opposite was attached to a building in order to identify which insurance company it belonged to.

As Victoria expanded and towns were established, volunteer country brigades were formed, the first being at Geelong in 1854.

The Fire Brigades Act was passed through Victorian Parliament in 1890. As a result, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Board (MFBB) and the Country Fire Brigade Board (CFBB) were established. The CFBB was responsible for coordinating fire brigades more than 16 kilometres from Melbourne. Another fire management organisation called the Bush Fire Brigades was created in 1926 following several serious bushfires. It consisted of volunteer members and had little power to carry out fire prevention. Freshwater Creek Fire Brigade was registered with this branch in 1942.

During December 1935 nine bathing boxes were destroyed despite the efforts of residents and visitors who formed a bucket brigade and demolished some of the boxes to form a fire break. The Geelong fire brigade arrived within 17 minutes of being called and

The Presentation of a new truck to the Torquay Fire Brigade brings a smile to the face of Captain Sweeney (centre). Presenting the truck is the 1975-76 President of the Torquay Apex Club Mr. David Gordon (R) whilst Club Secretary Peter Hanna looks on. Torquay Apexians assisted in the acquisition of the truck as one of their projects.

were successful in diminishing the fire. Discussion then began about how to reduce fire dangers in the town. It was suggested that the Torquay residents raise funds for the purchase of several hundred feet of fire hose and a hydrant so that appliances would be available in the case of an emergency. When the water system was connected to Torquay, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission installed a number of fire plugs. It was felt that if a small hand truck was provided with the hose and appliances, a local fire brigade would respond quickly, reducing fire dangers in the town. A solution by some residents was for the Country Fire Brigades' Board to establish a brigade, and without enquiring, assumed their request would fall on deaf ears. Once the CFBB heard of the residents' resolve, they suggested that the community make an application.

A few weeks later in 1936, a grass fire from Freshwater Creek was heading for Torquay when the wind changed south helping the Geelong Fire Brigade, Country Roads Board workers and farmers get the fire in hand. Based on reports in the Geelong Advertiser, it seems as though the town had established their own country fire brigade early that year. In April 1936 a bucket brigade was formed by local residents to save the local doctor's home. Also in April, when the township of Anglesea was threatened by fire, it was reported that fire fighters from Torquay helped keep the fire back. They were mentioned again at the end of the year, when the scrub on the beach reserve caught fire; it was reported that the Torquay fire brigade arrived on the scene and quickly extinguished the fire. They also attended a fire in the camping ground a few days later.

Considered in terms of loss of property and loss of life, the Black Friday bushfires on 13 January 1939 were one of the worst disasters to have

occurred in Australia, and certainly the worst bushfire up to that time. In terms of the total area burnt, the 1939 Black Friday fires remain the State's second largest, burning 2 million hectares. Sixty-nine sawmills were destroyed, 71 people died, and several towns were entirely obliterated.

The subsequent Royal Commission led to sweeping changes including stringent regulation of burning and fire safety measures for sawmills, grazing licensees and the general public. The report also resulted in the compulsory construction of dugouts at forest sawmills, increasing the forest roads network and firebreaks, construction of forest dams, fire towers, and aerial patrols linked by the Forests Commission radio network to ground observers.

Boston road devastation, Geelong Advertiser

Wednesday 13 March 1940 was the fourth day of above century heat creating a typical bushfire scenario. The day was hot with a strong northerly wind. Farmers were on the alert for smoke. Mid-morning a fire gathered momentum, fanned by winds which at times almost reached gale force and headed from Moriac toward Torquay. It crossed through Moriac destroying thousands of acres of grassland and miles of fencing. It developed an extensive front sweeping all before it, destroying houses in Bellbrae. As it approached the Anglesea Road the fire branched in two directions, one north and one south of Bellbrae. Both fronts heading toward Torquay after destroying seven houses. While the fire raced through Bellbrae, tragedy occurred when Edward (John) Drewry drowned while sheltering from the fire in his dam. At Freshwater Creek Claude Grossman and 50 volunteers contained the blaze, saving the military camp and the northern half of the Torquay township. Claude ploughed an eight-mile fire break and as the flames leapt the break, volunteers smothered it, preventing it from working its way eastward. Claude's firebreak eventually came out near where Peach's fruit shop is today. When he arrived in Torquay the town was already alight.

There were 5,000 calvary men down the road from Torquay, but on the day of the fire 4,000 of the men were undertaking military exercises at the You Yangs. After ensuring that the camp was safe, the remaining men helped with the fires. It is said that they helped save the Palace Hotel. Others who came to help at Torquay included the Geelong City Fire Brigade, Barwon Heads Fire Brigade, and parties of men from Hawkes Brothers, the workers of Australian Cement Limited and the Ford Motor Company who arrived with fire-fighting equipment. Cr William Smith, owner of Sea View Villa on Anderson Street, sent over 100 workers and contractors from the 'Clyde Works' on trucks with buckets and sacks to fight the fire at Torquay. Chains of men stretched from the sea at the front beach, passing buckets of seawater to wet the sacks to protect the fire threatening the township and his house. Bob Pettitt, Fire Captain at the time, recalls in later years that, "Baensch and Gogoll were backburning along the road on the west side of Geelong Road. Half way along they were stopped by the police, who at the time were posted in Barwon Heads. The result was that half of Torquay was saved, the other half burnt out." He believed that had they been left alone, the whole of Torquay would have been saved. The aftermath was that the Fire Brigade Captain was given authority over the police. He said, "The new Fire Brigade tried to be more proactive after the fire and was burning a break around Torquay when the police threatened to arrest me for lighting the fire break. I rang the Chief in Melbourne who told me to put the hose in his car and blow the whistle twice, which meant water. No more was heard of the matter!"

Although a Torquay Fire Brigade had been in operation since about 1936, the community understood the need for the town fire brigade to be under the Administration of the CFBB because of the Royal Commission mandating operations, the increasing threat of a Japanese attack during WW2, and half the town wiped out as a result of the bush fire. At the insistence of Cr. A. R. Jennings and lieutenant of the Barwon Heads brigade, in May 1940 the South Barwon Shire asked the Country Fire Brigades' Board for the Torquay Fire Brigade to come under their control. The CFBB agreed under certain conditions, one being that the community provide an approved site without cost to the Board. Also that the present equipment and building of the volunteer fire brigade be transferred to the Board. During September 1940, the Torquay Improvement Association reported to South Barwon Council that they had chosen the site on the corner of Anderson & Pride streets and they are working on raising the money for the purchase. By November the TIA reported to council that the fire brigade was in a position to hand over all assets including the site. Consequently the South Barwon Council made an application to add the Torquay township to the fire district of the Country Fire Brigades Board.

The following year a public meeting was held to form a fire

THE COUNTRY FIRE BRIGADES' BOARD.

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION.

brigade to come under the control of the Country Fire Brigades' Board. On 29 January 1941, the Torquay Fire Brigade was formally registered by the CFBB.

Twenty men volunteered for service and fifteen were accepted. Mr A Rice was appointed captain, Bob Pettitt vice-captain, Fred Baensch foreman and Mr W Austin secretary. The site on the corner of Anderson and Pride streets was approved for the new brigade. The CFBB provided additional equipment for this new volunteer brigade.

The Fire Board in Melbourne provided a Tower and Bell to put up in the town. By this time the army had taken over the town, setting up camp near Point Danger where a gun had been placed. The Army Captain took the bell and erected it on the beach where the sand dulled the sound. Bob Pettitt rang the Fire Brigade Chief who said, "meet me tomorrow at 1pm in full uniform." Bob wrote, "The Chief arrived with a driver and told me to get the Army Captain, which I did after a lot of convincing. The result was they returned the bell and the Army helped us erect the tower."

After the devastating Yallourn fires in 1944, the Country Fire Association (CFA) was established to better coordinate country fire services. It commenced operation on 2 April 1945. It divided Victoria into regions and appointed Regional Officers who would represent the CFA in country areas. The CFA took responsibility for fire suppression on rural land, leaving the Forests Commission to focus on the public land estate. The CFA also was responsible for supporting existing fire brigades, many of which had been established in the 19th or early 20th century.

Today the CFA have 1120 brigades and are supported by 59,000 volunteers and 1800 staff, fighting not only fires but floods.

The CFA has evolved from their informal beginnings in community-based fire brigades to become one of the world's largest volunteer-based emergency service organisations.

SOURCES:
The Age, 23 May 1940, page 12
The Argus, 9 Jan 1941, page 5
Bufton, Dirleen Going to blazes : the story of the Freshwater Creek Fire Brigade. Dirleen Bufton, 2004.

1941/42 TORQUAY FIRE BRIGADE

Photos below courtesy Geoff Winkler.

Tanker Torquay 1 heads off, Westward up Anderson Street.

Geoff Lowe and Peter McKendrick about to take the Pumper for some exercise.

After a bit of practice pumping from the usual Hydrant in Pearl street, Peter McKendrick and Joe Sweeney roll the excess water out of a hose with the assistance of Fred Seiffert, as Geoff Lowe prepares to drain another.

TORQUAY SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

RICHARD GREENHOUGH

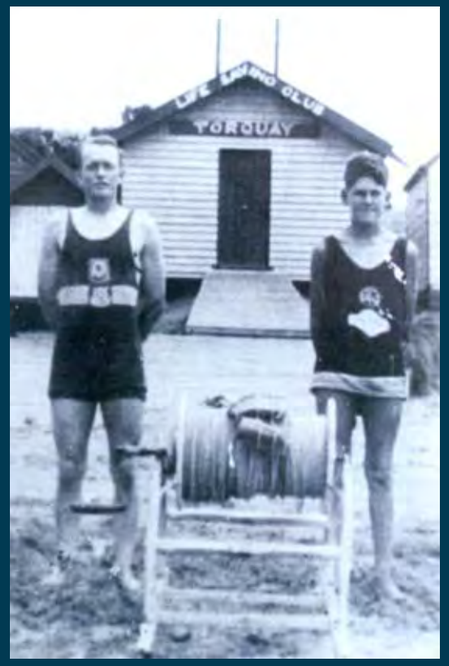
EARLY DAYS - TORQUAY LIFE SAVING CLUB

Volunteer lifesavers commenced patrolling Torquay front beach 23 years prior to the formation of the Torquay Surf Life Saving Club.

In 1922 the Torquay Life Saving Club was formed after a meeting was held in the Torquay Public Hall at which a representative of the Royal Life Saving Society spoke. This club was affiliated with the Royal Life Saving Society. The first 'club house' was a bathing box opposite the 'Two Bays Guest House', being one of the many bathing boxes which lined the foreshore of the front beach. A reel and line was obtained from the Elwood Life Saving Club. An Instructor and Examiner from this club put the first (Royal Life) bronze squad through in January 1922. The club was never large, at its peak in the 1930s membership numbers were 28 – 18 males and 10 females.

The 'front beach' was regarded as a relatively safe beach but quite a few rescues were carried out during the club's existence. Experienced swimmers did venture around to the surf beach, but this beach was regarded as unsafe and was sign posted accordingly.

The (Royal Life) Torquay Life Saving Club ran for several summer seasons until the end of the 1932/33 season. With membership dropping, the club ceased affiliation with the Royal Life Saving Society and went into recession.



*LATER - TORQUAY **SURF** LIFE SAVING CLUB*

During the 1930s many of the future foundation members of the Torquay Surf Life Saving Club continued to venture down to Torquay as the surfing 'bug' took hold. These men came from several Melbourne Bayside Life Saving Clubs, the Melbourne Swimming Club and the Victorian Railways Institute. Discussions during the late 1930s on forming a surf club continued, especially by Ainslie (Sprint) Walker who had been a champion swimmer with the Manly Surf Club in NSW. The distance barrier from Melbourne, travel expenses and accommodation added to the woes of a club being formed. With the declaration of War in 1939, formation plans were put on hold. Many of the surfers were called up for active service and areas of Torquay and beaches were taken over by the military.

At the conclusion of WW2 the 'surfers' returned to Torquay and discussions on the formation of a Life Saving Club took hold again. Several meetings took place in the camping area in late 1945 and it was resolved to call a meeting of interested parties to establish a club. The inaugural meeting of the club took place at the Palace Hotel, Torquay on 4 January 1946 with an attendance of 75 people. Those in attendance were representatives from the South Barwon Shire, Torquay Foreshore Committee, Torquay Improvement Association and interested residents and campers.

At the inaugural meeting a resolution was put forwarded for the formation of 'The Torquay Surf Club' the motion being unanimously passed with Clive Evans being elected the club's first President. At a Special General meeting of the club held on 10 February 1946, the name of the club was changed to the 'Torquay Surf Life Saving Club'.

Over the 74 years of existence, the club has staged many different events at the surf beach.. The first of these was a demonstration carnival held on Sunday 20 January 1946.

Planning for locating and building the first clubhouse commenced after the February Special General Meeting. Negotiations with the Torquay Foreshore Committee realised a grant of land (150ft x 100ft), a £20 donation and a donation of the old building on the front beach that was the Torquay Life Saving Club. The building was dismantled to salvage whatever materials possible and the materials were transported to the club's allocated site. After WW2, building materials were scarce, so materials for a club building were obtained by members by 'various means'.

During WW2 the army had set up anti-tank defences comprised of large telegraph type timber poles sunk deep into the sand haphazardly along the beach and protruding out 2 metres. Members excavated sand from the proposed club house site and 40 of the anti-tank poles were dug out and reset in position to become the foundations of the clubhouse. Construction of the building commenced in August 1946 and was completed mid November 1946 – all works carried out voluntarily by members. The official opening of the club took place on 1 December 1946. The club gained affiliation with the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia in June 1946 and the club's first Surf Life Saving Bronze squad (and the first in Victoria) qualified on 29 December 1946.

The club continued to grow over the years with several additions to the building, increased membership, and many events held at the surf beach. One of these events was the International and Australian Championship Surf Carnivals held between 25 November and 2December 1956 to coincide with the Melbourne Olympic Games. At the International Carnival an estimated 50,000 people viewed the event.

In 1969/70 plans had already been drawn up for a major extension to the clubhouse and tenders had been called. But it was not to be! In the early hours of 9 July 1970 fire completely gutted the Torquay Surf Life Saving club.

In a time span of 18 months an architect was appointed,

concept plans produced, government bodies consulted and approvals obtained, donors and donations obtained, detailed design produced and accepted by members, tenders called, a quotation accepted, building commenced, and the Torquay SLSC Co-operative Ltd formed. A Government guaranteed loan was obtained for the shortfall of funds required and on Christmas Eve 1971 the new building passed into the club's hands. All this was achieved through the dedications of many members, all VOLUNTEERS.

From an initial membership of 29, the club now has a membership of over 1100 members, 400 of these being 'Nippers'. Surf Life Saving Clubs find that only a small number of 'Nippers' transition through the ranks to become patrolling members, but it is hoped that the 'volunteer' spirit will be instilled into them all.

The demographics of membership of Torquay Surf Life Saving Club since its formation has certainly changed over the last 20 years. Where once Torquay was a Melbourne based club, you now find that most committee positions are filled by residents and a large percentage of members come from the Surf Coast Shire.

Photos courtesy Torquay Surf Life Saving Club

The number one priority for Torquay Surf Life Saving Club members is to ensure the safety of the general public whilst they enjoy the beach at Torquay. This season, 2019/20 will be the 75th Anniversary of the club. For the past 74 years of the club the club has always been able to report **NO LIVES LOST WHILST PATROLS ON DUTY.**

ROTARY CLUB OF TORQUAY

For 114 years, Rotary members have been addressing challenges around the world.

WHATEVER ROTARY MAY MEAN TO US, TO THE WORLD IT WILL BE KNOWN BY THE RESULTS IT ACHIEVES.

- Paul Harris, Rotary founder

For 114 years, Rotary members have been addressing challenges around the world.

It started with the vision of one man — Paul Harris. The Chicago attorney formed the Rotary Club of Chicago on 23 February 1905, so professionals with diverse backgrounds could exchange ideas, form meaningful, lifelong friendships, and give back to their communities.

Rotary's name came from the group's early practice of rotating meetings among the offices of its members.

Whatever Rotary may mean to us, to the world it will be known by the results it achieves. - Paul Harris, Rotary founder

Sixteen years later there were Rotary clubs on six continents. Today there are clubs in nearly every country working to solve some of our world's most challenging problems.

Rotary reached Australia in 1921 with the charter of the Rotary Club of Melbourne, closely followed by the charter of a Sydney Club and other Clubs around the nation.

Early in 1988, Torquay was surveyed by the Rotary Club of Grovedale to see if there was enough interest in the town to establish a Rotary Club. A few months later, on 7 March, the Rotary Club of Torquay was formed with twenty-five members. It was admitted to Rotary International on 19 April 1988, and the Charter was presented to Charter President Stan Boyle, by District Governor John King, on 6 May 1988 at the Charter Dinner held at the Torquay Community Hall.

To this day, the members of the Rotary Club of Grovedale have continued their close liaison with the Rotary Club of Torquay, and over the thirty years since charter have participated in many joint projects and fellowship activities.

There have been many achievements and highlights over the years.

- The first Probus club in town, Torquay Ladies Probus was formed with fifty four members, followed by other clubs.
- Fundraising for the Anti-Cancer Council to conduct a Relay for Life event; raising of $15,000 for the purchase of a portable kidney dialysis machine for Fiona Mathers; supporting other appeals such as Red Shield Appeal, Bowel scan.

Rotary reached Australia in 1921 with the charter of the Rotary Club of Melbourne, closely followed by the charter of a Sydney Club and other Clubs around the nation.

- Support to the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund, Alfred Heart Lung Clinic and the Polio Plus program.
- Youth activities have included the annual hosting and sponsoring of exchange students; youth programs/camps; school environmental, literacy and encouragement programs; Nelson Park Debutante Ball which brought untold pleasure to these young people; sending20 year 6 students from Torquay Primary School to Sydney to support the Paralympics
- Health programs - promoted organ donor awareness, hosted the first ever "Men's Health Night", initiated the "Flipper Card" project assisting in the problem of youth suicide;
- Renovations and facility improvements started with the Jan Juc Surf Lifesaving observation tower; rotunda and BBQ facility at Taylor Park; the bridge across Spring Creek; the installation and unveiling of four fitness stations along the Torquay foreshore. Fishing platforms were completed as part of our foreshore development program; Rob Emmett Children's playground; construction of a rotunda/BBQ facility on the foreshore adjacent to the Torquay Lifesaving Club, and carried out repairs to the steps leading down to the beach near Jan Juc Surf Lifesaving Club; Spring Creek Bike Park, where funds and man hours helped build a great community asset; renovations to the Torquay Scout Hall; planting over 1000 trees; and contribution to community activities such as the Torquay Surf Life Saving Club; a skateboard park; Torquay CFA; the Life Education Caravan; the Scout Hall renovation.
- Many community groups have benefited from in kind or monetary contribution to their programs – we donated to Guides, Torquay Football Club, Bellbrae Tennis Club, Food Bank and in kind to Dawana Community Gardens; to local schools, SES and the Community Health Centre and furniture for Restoration House, Bellbrae Primary School cricket pitch and oval reseeding; working bees at the Torquay Surf Club painting the toilets and passageways, and the refurbishment of the Community House, with many hours of hard work and fellowship resulting in a much improved facility.
- Hosting programs - A day at the beach for the Strathewan School Community about 6 weeks after Black Saturday - .program continuing every year; the "Dubbo West Drought Relief Project", when thirty members of the drought stricken community in central NSW were hosted for a week in Torquay; host 11 children from the drought affected area of Hopetoun.
- International programs were supported in Papua New Guinea, Tonga, India, Sathmar, Cambodia, Philippines and Haiti

Initially fundraising was the typical working bees, dinner auctions, casserole nights and garage sale. The fundraising was expanded to include the Cup Eve Calcutta Nights, Wine Appreciation Nights, and the Art/Craft Expo raising even more money. Later these activities were supported by the Annual Motor Show, the successful Book Fair, Ride the Bellarine, ANZAC Day, Hat Day with Belmont Rotary Club. The Bell's Beach Easter Surfing Competition parking provided funds and through our excellent relationship with the Lions Club of Torquay our combined fund raising catering for the Great Victorian Bike Ride has provided much needed funds for both clubs. The Graeme Price Memorial Golf Day was a great fundraiser.

TORQUAY R.S.L.

STILL SERVING

<<PETER THOMAS>>

When a small band of volunteers gathered to form the Torquay and District Ex-Servicemen's Club in Torquay in 1947, little did they dream their work looking after mates and their families would be continuing today (2019).

By the end of the 20th Century, membership of the 'Heroes' as it was known locally, had reduced to a small older group of volunteers unable to continue managing the Club and the services it offered to the local community.

Horrified at the thought of the Ex-Servicemen's Club collapsing, another younger group of Vietnam Veterans and WW2 veterans was conscripted to ensure the 'Heroes' survived as a volunteer body still looking after 'mates' and their families.

Unfortunately, the aging home of the Ex-Servicemen's Club, was unable to be revamped and modernised because of various Local Government By-Laws. This led to its sale and long-term planning for a modern, custom-designed building for the newly formed Torquay RSL Sub-Branch which received its charter in 2002.

The new RSL Sub-Branch became part of what was probably Australia's first national welfare agency in Australia, with welfare work remaining the RSL's prime function today.

But how did this Australia-wide organisation come into being and how long ago?

In June 1916, troops returning from WWI formed the RSL with the purpose of preserving the spirit of mateship formed amidst the carnage and horror of battle, to honour the memory of the fallen, and to help each other whenever required.

The underlying philosophy of the League is mateship, and this is as true now as it was in 1916.

In 1916, there was no formal government welfare service for veterans, and the RSL committed itself to

First, second and current RSL Torquay buildings.

Torquay RSL's purpose-built offices and club rooms in Walker Street. The venture failed leading the RSL to move to Taylor Park.

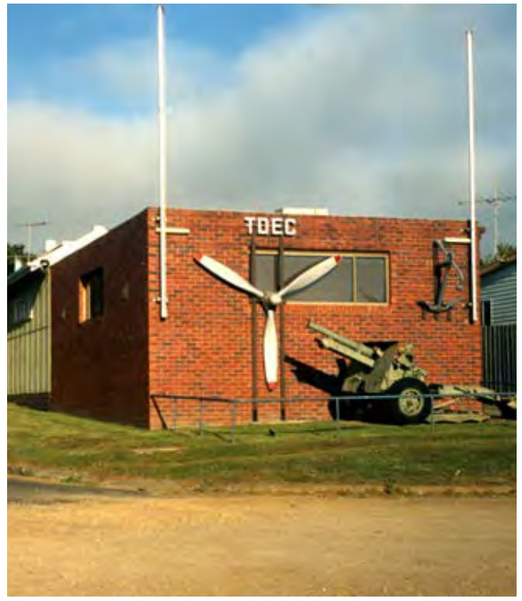


Photo Louise Leighton. Torquay RSL Sub-Branch original building in Beales street.

Torquay RSL Sub-Branch rooms at the Torquay Bowls Club site in Taylor Park.

provide for the sick, wounded and needy among those that had served, including their dependants.

The RSL was instrumental in creating a Commonwealth repatriation system; service, disability and war widows' pensions; various employment and retraining programs (and for many years operated its own employment bureau); child health programs; and vocational guidance services.

The RSL's mission today remains to ensure that programs are in place for the well-being, care, compensation and commemoration of serving and ex-service Defence Force members and their dependents; and to promote Government and community awareness of the need for a secure, stable and progressive Australia.

It is said that Torquay RSL went a bridge too far when it established its modern two-storey building in Walker Street in the mid-2000s. Upon advice from Victorian RSL Headquarters, when it was announced electronic gaming machines could no longer be considered as an income earner for welfare uses, the Sub-Branch closed the doors and sold most of its assets to clear an adverse financial situation.

Torquay RSL started afresh as a tenant of the Torquay Bowls Club with one of the most spectacular views on the coast. Membership is building and presently stands at 120 and still growing as Torquay's population grows.

To ensure continuity of Torquay's RSL and its welfare program, its voluntary committee and volunteer welfare officers now interact with younger veterans and current serving Defence personnel to guarantee that their social, health and well-being needs, and those of their dependants, are met into the future.

Everything the Torquay RSL does is dependent upon its willing volunteers who not only look after the wellbeing of its members but also manage the major commemorative anniversaries recognised in Torquay each year.

Once again, volunteers come to the fore, planning,

managing, and presenting excellent, crowd gathering commemorative activities especially at Point Danger, Torquay.

The Sub-Branch stages one of the biggest Anzac Day Dawn Services in Australia with close on 20,000 attendees turning out for the service in 2015.

This year (2019), 10,000 men, women and children, serving and ex-serving veterans, war widows and other community service organisations experienced another magnificent ANZAC Day Dawn Service, March and Gunfire Breakfast.

Success of the Dawn Service is a credit to the spirit and generosity of the community and businesses of Torquay and district.

Remembrance Day commemorations at Point Danger on 11 November continue to attract a growing number of attendees each year.

RSL volunteers present ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day commemoration services at Aged Care facilities in the region for those unable to attend the outdoor services on the day.

However, without these activities being driven by dedicated volunteers they would possibly wither and die.

But, no matter what changes occur to Torquay RSL's operations, the main focus of the Torquay RSL will continue to be the welfare of Australia's veterans and their dependants.

As has happened since 1916, when older volunteers fade away, younger ones step up to fill their roles, ensuring Torquay RSL's welfare services will be available until they are no longer needed.

Photos Peter Thomas & Torquay RSL

Top: Torquay RSL presented two carved memorial benches for the Torquay Foreshore to commemorate the centenary of the end of WW1. RSL President, Bob Tyler, talks about WW1 to local students.

Second: Torquay RSL volunteers celebrate the election of their committee for one more year.

Third: Torquay RSL volunteer John McCarthy explains the symbolism and history of the Flanders red poppy to local students.

Bottom (photo Chris Barr): Joe Walker protesting the removal of the memorial cairn.

Torquay's main war memorials are at Point Danger, venue for a Torquay RSL's well-attended public commemorations.

Torquay RSL volunteers lead a Remembrance Day service at an aged care facility in Torquay

Some of Torquay RSL's volunteers who help with poppy and ANZAC badges in the build up to the two main commemorations conducted by the RSL at Point danger.

MORE FRONT LINES

D DAY

On 3 September 1939, Prime Minister Robert Gordon Menzies announced the beginning of Australia's involvement in the Second World War on every national and commercial radio station in Australia.

Almost a million Australians, both men and women, served in the Second World War. They fought in campaigns against Germany and Italy in Europe, the Mediterranean and North Africa, as well as against Japan in south-east Asia and other parts of the Pacific. The Australian mainland came under direct attack for the first time, as Japanese aircraft bombed towns in north-west Australia and Japanese midget submarines attacked Sydney Harbour.

Seventy five years ago the Allied invasion of Normandy in Operation Neptune, and often referred to as D-Day, took place on 6 June 1944. It was the largest seaborne invasion in history. An armada of 7,000 vessels carried 190,000 sailors and 130,000 soldiers across the Channel to five designated beaches. Australia, with the bulk of its forces fighting Japan in the south-west Pacific, took a relatively small part in the operation, but the invasion force included up to about 3,000 Australians. Australia's main contribution was in the air. Between 2,000 and 2,500 Australian airmen served in dozens of RAF

and ten RAAF squadrons of all kinds. The operation began the liberation of German-occupied France (and later Western Europe) from Nazi control, and laid the foundations of the Allied victory on the Western Front.

On 7 May 1945, the German High Command authorised the signing of an unconditional surrender on all fronts: the war in Europe was over. The surrender was to take effect at midnight on 8–9 May 1945. On 14 August 1945 Japan accepted the Allied demand for unconditional surrender. For Australia, it meant that the Second World War was finally over.

Thirty three men and women from Torquay had entered the war. At a special meeting of the TIA seven months after Japan surrendered, they arranged for a special welcome home for the local men and women. These included those from Torquay who had enlisted and those recommended by the committee. A fund was established to pay for the dance and presentations. On Saturday 3 August 1946 the town greeted the guests with speeches and the presentation of special gifts. Dancing and sketches entertained the crowd.

The following were presented with a certificate, fountain pen and rug: P.Baensch; W.Marshall, I.Charles, P.Rice, L.Austin, E.Berryman, W.Getsom, R.S.Wettenhall, H.Voss, G.Jones, D.Rau, A.C.Thompson, D. Hartwick, L.Hartwick, I.Duffield, A.Humphrey, W.Hunter, T.Crow, J.C.Hosford, R.Appeleck, R.Charles, A. Rice.

Forty two men and women associated with Torquay volunteered to enlist. They include:

Appeleck, R		Hunter, Allan Cecil	Army
Austin, Leslie James	Army	Hunter, Stanley James	Army
Bensch, Frederick Paul	Army	Hunter, W	
Berryman, David Samuel	Army	Jones, G	
Berryman, Myrtle Elizabeth	RAAF	Kirby, John Joseph	Army
Charles, Ivan Murray		Marshall, Walter	Army
Charles, Robert Edward	Army	McHenry, Gloria Francis	Army
Cowperthwaite, Cyril John	Army	Nagel, Alma Kathleen	RAAF
Crow, Joel Thomas	Army	Rau, Otto Ernest	
Dendle, Fredrick George	Army	Rice, Alfred Charles	RAAF
Duffield, Ivan		Rice, Percy Alfred	Army
Evans, Clive Richard	Army	Rye, George William	RAAF
Getsom, William		Sayer, Frank	Army
Gorway, George Lockhart	Army	Scott, Norman Robertson	Army
Grenester, Lorna Patricia	Army	Sheedy, Ronald Arthur	Army
Hartwick, Donald	Army	Smith, Allan Campbell	Army
Hartwick, Laurence		Smith, Thomas Emmett	Army
Hosford, Jonathan Clydesdale	Army	Thompson, C	
Hughes, C L	Army	Voss, Herbert	
Humphrey, Alan Dunlop	Army	Wettenhall, Allan Robert	Army
Humphrey, Harold Charles	Army	Wettenhall, Roger Slaney	Army

SOURCES:

Australians And D-day | The Australian War Memorial, https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/blog/australians-and-dday-2004 (accessed June 11, 2019).

Torquay Improvement Association: One Hundred Years…. a short story 1889 - 1989 by Marg Bath, Margaret Van Rompaey and Lesley McQuinn

A HELPING HAND

RED CROSS

Beryl Follett (Torquay) raising funds for the Red Cross. She had 8 uncles and one cousin taking part in World War One.

Across Europe following the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) there were many Red Cross Societies formed, including the British Red Cross. At the outbreak of WW1 a branch of the British Red cross was established in Australia by Lady Helen Munro Ferguson. As wife of the Australian Governor General, Lady Helen made an immense contribution to Australia's war effort.

During the war the Australian Red Cross organized thousands, of mainly women, volunteers dedicated to providing comforts for the AIF overseas and for helping their families find out more about what happened to men reported missing through the Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau. By writing to the mayors of every shire and municipality in Australia and asking them to initiate a local branch, Lady Helen created a national organisation. The Geelong branch was quick to respond to her request. Other branches formed at Corio, Leopold, Beeac, and Deans Marsh in 1915. Mt. Moriac and Modewarre had established their branches by 1916.

In 1916 the Australian Red Cross Society sent a team of 21 civilian nurses to France; these nurses were dubbed the "Bluebirds" in reference to the colours of their specially designed uniforms. Much of the World War I home front activities such as raising funds, knitting socks and rolling bandages was done by local Red Cross branches.

The most visible contribution from the Geelong branch was the establishment of the Gala Day fundraising event. The first Gala Day was held in 1916 and the Red Cross continued to run it until 1927 when it was taken over by the Geelong Hospital.

Members of the Torquay community had created a Patriotic Committee

Image far left Australian Red Cross, other images News of The Week courtesy Bob Gartland Collection and Geelong Advertiser.

1916 Torquay concert party to raise funds for the Red Cross.

Below: The Red Cross box makers, Geelong.

and supported the Geelong Red Cross Branch during the war. The Buckland, Rudd, Crosier, Bowan, Williams women consistently provided cases of comforts which included socks, mittens, washers, handkerchiefs. The community raised funds from euchre tournaments, concerts and sports events. Mr. E. E. Dixon, Mrs Myers and Miss Valpeed collected the proceeds from a two-mile motorcycle race along White's Beach. E. Taylor won the event. E. E. Dixon, second, W. Surtees, third and L. Taylor fourth.

Nationally during World War II the Red Cross provided assistance to the sick, wounded, maimed and their dependents. By agreement with the federal government they provided hostel accommodation to those with no living relatives or friends to support them upon returning home from war. The Australian Red Cross proved to be an important link between the public and Japanese prisoners of war.

The British Red Cross Australian Branch changed its name to the Australian Red Cross Society and was incorporated by royal charter on 28 June 1941.

In the post-war period, Red Cross focussed on social welfare, national emergencies, natural disasters, the blood bank and first aid programs, which were sustained by the extensive branch network and thousands of volunteers.

For Gala Day, the employees of Solomon's secure the first prize for the BEST DECORATED CAR, which was judged by Mrs J. P. McCabe Doyle. The car was transformed into a veritable garden of pink roses.

The Mayoress visits Modewarre Red Cross Society.

Group of workers - President Mrs T. Batson, Secretary, Mrs Taylor

WAURN PONDS HOTEL

Contributed by Gwen Threlfall
Mt. Duneed History Group

A subgroup of the Mount Duneed Progress Association

History meetings are at 7:30 pm on the second Thursday of the months of February, March, May, August, October and November.

http://mdpa.weebly.com/blog

William Murray established the Waurn Ponds Inn in 1856 on the western corner of what is now Marendaz Road (formerly Colac Road) and Waurn Ponds Drive. This was the second hotel in Waurn Ponds and probably caused the demise of the Victoria Inn which was further up the road towards Moriac and positioned further back from the road. Its success was probably due to the number of half acre lots along Colac Road which were sold in the 1850s. Acreages of ten to twenty acres were predominant in the surrounding district.

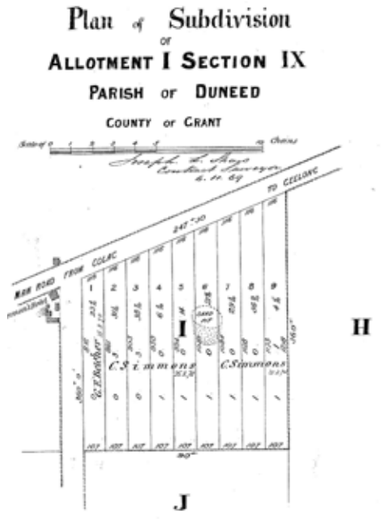
By April 1859 Charles, son of Charles and Mary (née Smith) Simmons, who migrated from Norfolk in England to join his parents, took over the hotel.

Charles married Sarah Carter on 12 January 1840 in Norfolk, England. They had the following children:
Charles Carter — born in 1832 in Norfolk, married Elizabeth Gaunt on 14 July 1856, died on 22 January 1894 at Waurn Ponds

Robert Carter — born in 1833 in Norfolk, died on 2 July 1900 in Lubeck, Victoria
Zipporah — born about 1834 in Norfolk, died in infancy
Amelia — born in 1836
Zipporah — born about 1842 in Norfolk, married Thomas Martin on 27 September 1859 — Thomas disappeared after being brought before the Bench to answer a charge of abduction in having married Zipporah before she was seventeen without her father's consent. Subsequently Zipporah had about ten children with James Francis Tribolet before marrying him on 12 November 1891 in Melbourne. She died on 4 January 1898 at Waurn Ponds
Thomas — born in 1845, married Eliza Field on 25 August 1870, married Margaret Dwyer in 1883, died on 13 February 1922
Eliza Catherine — born in 1848, married Samuel Harbour in 1870 at Geelong, died on 19 June 1923
Emily — born on 15 February 1850, married John Faulkner, married James John Loone in 1875, married John Dalrymple Ross in 1886, died on 8 January 1894 aged 45 years
John — born on 8 December 1852 at Waurn Ponds, married Jessie Ann Hunter, died in 1911 at Warragul aged 59 years
Ann — born on 8 December 1852 at Geelong, married John Fitzpatrick, died 22 June 1937 aged 84 years at Geelong
William — born 20 September 1855 at Mount Duneed, married Rebecca Hunter in 1877, died on 14 August 1932 at Geelong

The last mention of the hotel in the newspapers was on Monday 12 July 1880 when William Stutt, a candidate for the Legislative Assembly, addressed the Electors of Barwon at 10.00 am. After Charles retired from the hotel, he farmed land at Waurn Ponds until his death on 22 January 1894 at the age of eighty years. He was buried in the Church of England section of the Geelong Eastern Cemetery.

The hotel on Colac Road survived for many years before being demolished. The outbuildings in Marendaz Road remain to this day.



Torquay Museum Without Walls

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PREVIOUS ISSUES - Issues 1 - 10 are available on our website.

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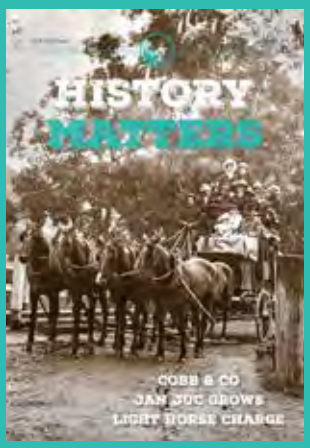

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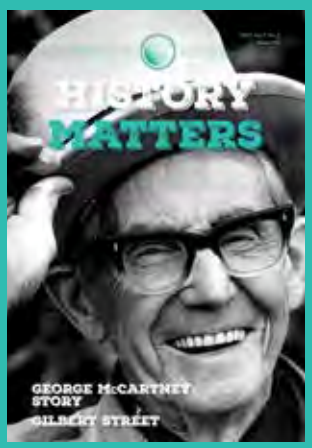

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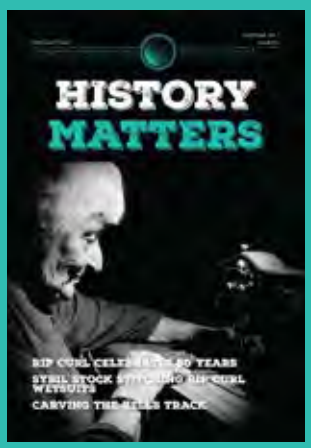

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