



**2021 Annual General Meeting
13 October**

PRESIDENTS REPORT

The current Executive Committee was elected at the 2020 Annual General Meeting:

- **President – Geoff Fary**
- **Vice President – Diane Kolomeitz**
- **Secretary – Chris Kelly**
- **Treasurer – Hazel Ingram**
- **Committee – Chris Chetcuti & Irene Everett**

The Association's activities this year continued to be dramatically impacted by COVID. We were only able to have a couple of face-to-face general members' meetings – and one via Zoom in August. The Executive Committee continued to meet regularly – including via Zoom on several occasions.

A principal activity this year focussed on the State Government's Bellarine Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Declaration (DAL). In summary, the DAL has been formally gazetted, and the Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning (DELWP) has now issued the draft enabling Statement of Planning Policy (SPP). While there is much to like in the draft SPP, we have submitted that it needs more specificity – and implementation detail. We have also continued to work closely with all other community associations on the Bellarine via the CBCA to influence Government and Council policies.

Another key activity this year was to act on community concerns regarding a proposed multi-level residential and retail complex on the former botanic gardens/Post Office site on the bay facing side of Newcombe Street. We hosted a public meeting on the matter, represented our members at the subsequent public CoGG Planning Committee Hearing, collected more than 2,000 signatures on a petition – and were successful in persuading the Planning Minister to call the matter in following the developers' appeal to VCAT. In both the initial VCAT hearing and the leadup to and conduct of the week-long Ministerial Advisory Committee hearing, we were very capably assisted by the generous *pro-bono* assistance provided by the law firm Harwood Andrews and their principal Planning Partner, Kate Morris. The Victorian Government's decision on the permit application is currently awaited.

The indefatigable efforts of Vice-President Di Kolomeitz have resulted in the colourful laneway murals that appeared at the western end of the shopping strip during the year. Hopefully these are the first of many public art initiatives that will enliven the town and make it an even more attractive place to live in and visit.

The PCA continued to work closely with our sporting clubs in seeking a comprehensive redevelopment of our historic Recreation Reserve. We have recently agreed to their request to host a public meeting to discuss the CoGG draft masterplan for the precinct.

This year I again thank the Executive Committee, our Sub-committees and the many hardworking PCA members for their dedication and contributions. Irene is moving out of town and isn't seeking re-election. I thank her, and former President Deb Sheard who is also on the move, for their contributions to the PCA.

Portarlington will continue to experience very significant growth and change. We need an active and vibrant PCA if residents' views on how we can protect and enhance the special characteristics of our community are to be heard. To that end it is vital that the Association and its Executive Committee is refreshed and renewed – including by the addition of younger residents and those new to our community.

The PCA looks forward to a better 2022 and beyond.

GEOFF FARY
President