

PBDA PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR YEAR 2020/21

Well, what a year 2020/2021 has been!

We have had to deal with the pandemic for the whole year and cope with lock downs and state border closures. The Portarlington community responded magnificently, looking after each other and those who required special assistance. When lockdown restrictions meant no in-house dining, businesses responded by producing "take away" meals. It was vital that we supported all the businesses in Portarlington and not just for meals. We have a number of terrific tradies in our Directory and they too were supported throughout the whole year.

The impact of COVID-19 on local businesses has been severe, with tourism significantly impacted - and it is tourism that we rely on to carry us through. The PBDA received a State Government grant to support local businesses and we put together three retail promotions. The initial one offered \$2,500 to local traders in vouchers. The second promotion was in conjunction with Port Phillip Ferries, where we offered \$2,500 promoting Travel & Meal deals with some of our local Wineries and Restaurants. The third promotion, called "Rockin' at the Rotunda", was created with a band called Pleasure Drive who were fabulous and played on Saturdays and Sundays for 7 weekends. This attracted people from all around the Bellarine and tourists stayed in Portarlington for the two-hour performance on each Saturday and Sunday. They had lunch from our traders and then visited our shops and purchased goods. Thanks to Ashley Andrew who arranged the promotion. It was so effective that we will be repeating it for 13 weeks beginning the last weekend in October through to the end of January. This will be sponsored by our local Portarlington branch of the Bendigo Bank. They are a terrific supporter of the P.B.D.A. and many community groups. Thanks to Chris and the Bendigo Bank team for their on-going support.

PBDA: 2020-21 in Summary

- Record Number of PBDA Members: 163
- 29 New Business Operators joined in 2020-21
- The Association in the past year has been involved in supporting the following on-going projects:
 - Tower Road Wellness Centre
 - Safe Harbour - including roof cover for the walkway on the Pier - Government funds of \$9.6 million
 - Development of vacant land where the Chinese restaurant is
 - Development of the old Post Office site – 82 Newcombe St

- Continued to support developers with encouragement and offer assistance
 - Rotunda as an Information Centre, and
 - Many meetings with COGG over various items
- Directory
 - Produced a full colour Business and Community Directory which is highly valued by the community and sets a high standard in this field
 - Sponsored by our Community Bank (major sponsor) & Port Phillip Ferries – thanks
 - Your business was delivered directly to 2,611 homes and also in bulk quantities to 28 retail / tourism venues
- Networking Meetings
 - Two booked - our Christmas meeting held in the new room at the Portarlington Golf Club over two nights and our second meeting was two nights at Jack Rabbit restaurant
 - Both very successful and completely booked out
- Members have supported community projects throughout the year donating goods and funds to various groups
- Christmas Gift Program
 - Assisted 20 families have a very happy 2020 Christmas
 - Due to the support of the following donors: Portarlington Golf Club, Lions Club, Mussel Festival, Portarlington Community Bank (2 packages), Oxygen College, PBDA (3 packages), Indented Head Group, Bellarine Bayside, Portside Pilates, Perfect Again, and various anonymous donors (7 packages)
 - Total amount from donors: \$14,000. Thank you all!
- Sponsor of the Portarlington Demons Football & Netball Club
- Excellent media coverage in local press
- PBDA Annual Awards:
 - Community Award – Geoff Henderson
 - Business Member Award – Ron Stockdale, Portarlington Golf Club
 Both have given outstanding commitment and service to the Portarlington community
- The PBDA is a member of Tourism Greater Geelong & The Bellarine
- We have spoken at various functions on the success of the PBDA

As I look back over the 2020/2021 year this is what I noticed and experienced from our members - persistence, caring, solving issues, vision, trust, involvement, listening and offered friendship.

Thank you all for your membership and support over the year and we look forward to a successful 2021-22.

John Rae – President, Portarlington Business Development Association.