



LORNE

FIRE BRIGADE

HISTORY.

FIRE NEWS.

1851 to 1998.

COLLATED TO COMPUTER

BY

MALCOLM & JEAN GRAHAM.

1851 START OF NAMING FIRES BY THE DAY THEY OCCURRED.

This year saw the beginning of the practice of naming disastrous bushfires by the day on which they occurred.

14-2-1851 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**"BLACK THURSDAY" IN THE CAPE OTWAY FOREST.**

Terrific was the visitation of the bushfires in the neighborhood of Geelong, the phenomena displayed in the enormous forests of the Cape Otway coast, extending from Barwon Heads to Apollo Bay, were more fully grand, although the amount of loss to settlers has been, although serious, not so great as in the open country.

The most striking features of the Cape Otway country are, the immense size and crowdedness of the timber trees, and the density and luxuriant growth of the fern scrub. This scrub, in ordinary circumstances, burns slowly, while a fire may continue for weeks in some parts of the timber without extending far from where it originated. Such a fire was, in fact, known to have existed for a month past in the ranges, but no alarm was felt in consequence. The hot blast of Thursday, however, praying upon the kindled nucleus, caused the fire to spread with such fury that the dense scrub was swept away like stubble, and the flames were carried along the tops of the trees, leaving the massive trunks ignited wherever any decayed, hollow or dead branch gave it a nesting place.

At Louttit Bay, the timber belonging to Mr Riddle, of South Geelong, was destroyed. Mr Garrat Bryan had a paddock with fences, and a crop of oats consumed; and it is feared that a herd of one hundred cattle, which cannot now be found, had been overtaken by the fire in the scrub and roasted.

JULY 1879.

by Mr F M Straw.

There was a bush fire burning on the other side of the Jamieson Gully. We went down into the Cumberland some distance above the mouth and had a spell. While we were there the big fern flat at the mouth got burnt out and the fire travelled all over the hills on either side. We got through one fire only to find another one waiting for us nearer Lorne, so we climbed one of the two round topped hills known as the Twins (now known as The Brothers), and watched the fire for about an hour. Then we got down to the beach and home by the rocks.

27-12-1880 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**STABLES DESTROYED BY FIRE.**

The stables belonging to Mr John Bell, Deans Marsh, used by Mountjoy Bros of Lorne, were destroyed by fire.

24-3-1881 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**BUSH FIRES.**

Bush fires are still raging throughout the country between Geelong and Colac. Around the latter township there are fires in every direction, and many of them are believed to be the work of incendiaries. The whole country between Gerangamete and Bambra is burning, and fires are raging near Birregurra and among the Otway Ranges.

Mr Strachan, of Mount Gellibrand, has lost 800 acres of grass, and amongst the other sufferers, in grass, fences, etc., are Messrs Armytage, Easton, Johnstone, Moylan, Rand, Lawler, Kettle, Keating, and Barr.

The Louttit Bay Track is still burning, and all communication is stopped

7-1-1886 THURSDAY. THE AGE.**EXTENSIVE BUSH FIRES****FROM "THE AGE CORRESPONDENT"**

Lorne, Tuesday.-A tremendous conflagration is raging along the whole of the sea coast from Cape Otway to the east side of Louttit Bay, a distance of 45 miles. The fire, which commenced on Monday, is attributed to the excessive heat of the past few days. A steady breeze from the north fanned the flames, which travelled with fearful rapidity to the coastline on Monday night. This morning the breeze increased to a perfect gale, and drove the fire with tremendous velocity over the Cape Otway Ranges to the seacoast. The latter soon became enveloped in dense volumes of smoke, which presented a majestic and awe inspiring sight. The captain of the steamer "*CASINO*", which arrived from Warrnambool at mid-day, stated that he passed through immense volumes of smoke, which extended for 8 or 9 miles out to sea, over which it hung like an immense pall. At Lorne at times the sun was completely obscured as the fire leaped across the dry ravines characteristic of the Cape Otway Ranges, the velocity of the gale carrying the burning embers to the tops of the high trees, which soon became a mass of flames.

In this way they rushed over Mt St George, and approached so close to the Township of Lorne that at one time it looked as if the place was doomed to destruction.

The Residents made every preparation to battle with the flames, when fortunately the wind changed to the south at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and all immediate danger was removed. Then a most curious phenomom took place.

The immense volumes of smoke which had for fifteen hours been driven out to sea came rolling back on the Township, which became so dark that the fowls went to roost at 4 o'clock, and the Residents were compelled to light their lamps. The southerly breeze eventually cleared the air, and at six o'clock it was light again.

During the night the fire continued to burn briskly, but no further danger to the Township is anticipated. So far as can be learned, the fire has extended fully five miles inland, and for nearly thirty miles along the coast, and it is feared that several struggling selectors have been rendered homeless. The flames raged so furiously on the ranges along the main road from Birregurra to Lorne that the coaches running to the latter place could not pass through the burning timber, without danger of the passengers being burnt alive, consequently they were taken back to Dean's Marsh. Men are now engaged clearing the road, which is covered for some distance with burning trees.

7-1-1886 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

THE OTWAY FOREST ON FIRE.

Extensive bush fires prevailed in the Otway Forest on Monday and Tuesday. Miles of grass country was consumed, and great destruction of timber took place. Visitors to Lorne, who returned yesterday evening, described the fires as being something to be remembered, the flames being driven by a fierce northerly wind to the coastline, burning everything before them. At one time fears were entertained for the safety of many of the houses at Lorne, around which Township the fire raged with terrifying effect. Last night's "*Herald*" says :- A passenger by the afternoon train yesterday from Camperdown states that since the fearful Black Thursday no bushfires have equalled those raging throughout the Western District for nearly a week past. The Heytsbury Forest is on fire in many places, the large Hamlet of Cobden, situated in the heart of the forest, being almost surrounded by flames, which at one time threatened to destroy all the houses. It is three years since there were any fires of magnitude in the district, and severe frosts during the winter time withered up large areas of undergrowth and young timber, and there is so much dry deadwood about that the almost total destruction of the forest is inevitable. As the train approached Stoneyford the smoke was suffocating and it was observed that the magnificently grassed Corangamite Run was ablaze, though scores of men, women, and children, were trying to beat the fire out. At Pirron Yallock the smoke was so thick that one could not see fifty yards beyond the train, and at Colac the smoke hung over the Town in a dense fog, which necessitated lights to be used to read by.

Passengers arriving from Lorne by coach presented a pitiable aspect; their clothes burned with falling sparks, their eyes inflamed, and faces streaming with blackened perspiration. The Boot of the Coach had also caught fire, and the flames were with difficulty beaten out.

The smoke was brought over the railway line with redoubled density from the blazing forest by the sudden change of wind about 3 o'clock, and it was not until Mt Moriac Station was reached that the atmosphere cleared up". Telegrams received in Town last evening from Camperdown, Colac, and Lorne state that rain has been falling continuously since yesterday morning, and the fires have been extinguished.

16-1-1886 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**THE BUSH FIRES - FURTHER REPORT.**

We may expect to get the unwelcome news of some more bushfires in the course of a day or two.

Constable Martin reports from the Southern Police District, Lorne, under the date of the 13th inst, that on the afternoon of that day, at 5.30pm, information was given him by Mr Doble, a settler, residing about three miles on the way to Birregurra, that a large fire was burning on the side of the main road, about two and a half miles from Lorne.

The Constable rode out to the spot, and found that a fresh fire had started and burned about 100 yards square, between the Main Road and Mr George Atkins' paddock fence. It was not burning very fast, but a large dead tree was on fire, and there was every appearance of it falling across the road. If so, the fire would, no doubt, be a very large one, owing to the quantity of rubbish there. Mr Atkins was away from home at the time.

15-9-1888 SATURDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.**LORNE WATER SCHEME.**

The Residents of Lorne, after about 18 months agitation, are now in a fair way towards obtaining a full supply of fresh water for domestic purposes. At Fridays meeting of the Winchelsea Waterworks Trust, Mr Hodgson, the Engineer appointed to formulate a scheme, submitted his plans and specifications, which were unanimously adopted by the Commissioners, and it was resolved by them to call for tenders for the work, the same to be returnable at the next meeting. The Officers of the Water Supply Department had previously inspected the drawings and conditions, and, with one or two exceptions of minor importance, they were agreed to. The work is estimated to cost about £3250; but, to provide for any contingency that might occur, the Commission decided to apply for a grant from the Government of an additional £500, on the suggestion of Mr Hodgson. The members present were - Commissioners Murrell (Chairman), Cahill, Gullan, Wiltshire, Farquarson, Mountjoy, and T F Anderson.

5-10-1888 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**TENDERS CALLED FOR WATERWORKS INSTALLATION.**

Tenders were called but the price submitted for the Fluming, which has since been removed, was considered too high, and was re-advertised; but the balance of the work was let, in two sections, to Contractors J & J McCann and J Couston, for the sum of £1184, and the secretary was instructed to apply for an additional loan of £1000.

28-1-1889 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**OTWAYS ABLAZE.**

A Lorne telegram in the "*Herald*" of Saturday evening says :- "Bushfires have been raging in the Otway Mountains around Lorne during the past few days. For the last few nights Lorne has been quite illuminated from the Mountains, the summits of which seemed to be lit up with beacons all along the coast. The fires extended far into the ranges, and rapidly covered the slopes. Fires were encountered all the way to Erskine Falls, Cora Lynn, Phantom Falls, and other spots much resorted to by picnickers. In many cases the fires were exceedingly dangerous, and the visitors were greatly terrified. The conflagrations originated either from the intense heat or the burning of scrub. The coach from Birregurra to Lorne yesterday passed through fires nearly all the way from Deans Marsh to Erskine House. The flames came to the edge of the road, and in many parts blew over. The passengers and driver suffered terribly from the heat and smoke. Some of the fires are now dying out, but there are many big ones still raging in the Mountains immediately behind Lorne".

15-6-1889 SATURDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.**WATERWORKS TRUST.**

A meeting of the Winchelsea Shire Water Trust was held on Friday afternoon in the Shire Hall at Winchelsea. There were present Commissioners Hopkins (Chairman), Thos F Anderson, Mountjoy, Caldow, Murrell, Kiddle, Gullan, Farquarson and Cahill. A letter was read from Messrs Hodgson & Smith, Engineers for the construction of the Water Works at Lorne, which stated that the water supply extensions at Lorne had been completed, and not a shilling expended in extras. The contractors for the Fluming were making very slow progress which was caused by the heaviness of the work in getting the timber out of the forest. The Reservoir had been left in a very incomplete state by Messrs J & J M'Cann, the brickwork not having been done. There was still sufficient money to complete the work. Mr Hodgson, who attended the meeting, said that one of the brothers M'Cann had told him on Thursday that the firm did not intend to abandon the contract, but the trouble was in regard to the brickmakers, who could not be got to work as they wanted three pound per thousand.

The men, however, had a different story, they said that they had agreed to make the bricks for 25/- per thousand if supplied with clay, water and wood. When they got to Lorne they found very little clay, and no water or wood.

If the contractors paid £3 per thousand for the bricks the outlay would not be more than £78. On the motion of Councillor Murrell it was agreed to notify to the Messrs M'Cann that unless they proceeded with the work at once the penalties would be enforced and the contract completed at their risk. In regard to the Fluming contract it was decided on the motion of Councillor Murrell, seconded by Councillor Gullen, to give notice to the contractor to proceed with the work at once. Accounts amounting to £187-11-5d were passed for payment. The Trust then adjourned.

12-10-1889 SATURDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.**THE LORNE WATERWORKS.**

A meeting of the Winchelsea Waterworks Trust was held Thursday afternoon in the Shire Hall at Winchelsea. There were present:- Commissioners Hopkins (Chairman), Geo Anderson, Stewart, Bell, M'Lennan, Armytage, Caldow and Murrell. An application was read from Mr W H Denmead, of Geelong, for permission to tap the water main at Lorne to supply service pipes to the establishment of Mr Thos Mountjoy. This matter was referred to the engineers in charge with power. A letter was read from Mr Donald Ross asking the Commissioners to pay £10, being amount agreed upon for water easement through his land at Lorne. It was stated that a slight delay occurred through the necessary documents not being forthcoming until recently. It was resolved to pay the money without any further delay. An application was made by Mr J M'Bean, of Melbourne, for the extension of the water main from Torquay Road to his premises, 300 feet away. Referred to the Engineers for a report. Messrs Hodgson and Smith, Engineer for Trust, reported that the contractors for the construction of the Timber Flume had nearly completed their work and everything had been carried out in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. The tender of Mr James Couston to carry out the reticulation contract (partly finished by Messrs J and J McCann) for £295-8s was accepted. It was anticipated that the whole of the works would be finished in about five weeks. The Engineers urged that they should receive pecuniary recompense for extra supervision entailed by the delays in the three contracts. The report was adopted, and it was resolved to consider the Engineers' request when the works are completed. It was resolved to inform the contractors who had already received two months extension of time in completing their contract, that they would be held responsible for any further delay. Accounts amounting to £563-16s were passed for payment, and the meeting terminated.

11-12-1889 WEDNESDAY. BIRREGURRA & WINCHELSEA STAR AND LORNE MERCURY.**WINCHELSEA SHIRE WATERWORKS TRUST.**

Meeting held Friday December 6th 1889.

Present - Commissioners Murrell (Chairman), Gullan, Hopkins, Caldow, Kininmonth, Cahill, Farquarson, Armytage, McLennan and Stewart.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Messrs J Stirling, J G Rooke, J Mc Bean, J Elkington, A Allen and T Mountjoy wrote to the following effect: We beg respectfully to invite the attention of the Commissioners to some important matters in connection with the water supply of Lorne, and as these have not been referred to in any of the existing contracts for the construction of several works, now nearly completed, we feel justified, on behalf of the ratepayers, in bringing under notice some suggestions and reminders of a practical nature.

1. That all the growing timber be felled two chains length of the reservoir, on either side, and that the young saplings and scrub be cut down below the surface, to prevent the leaves and twigs from falling into the water. The cost of the work would not be great.
2. That a deep narrow trench be dug four or five feet deep and filled with rubble or 4" of cement to prevent the surface water and the water from the trees from finding its way to the foundation of the reservoir on the north and west sides, these suggestions, of course to be referred to the trust's engineers for their opinions and advice.
3. That the reservoir and catchpit, and proposed trench be protected on every side by a substantial fence, constructed of 6' galvanised, corrugated iron, with strong posts and rails, well secured above and below the surface to stand wind pressure. These are simply reminders of what the chairman and late chairman strongly recommended on the occasion of their visit to the works a few months ago. The foregoing matters should be considered at once; particularly that relating to the fence should not be neglected, for fear of accidents, the reservoir being but a few feet from the boundary of the Government Road. Councillor Hopkins - where is the money to come from? We are hard up for money. He moved that a reply be sent to the effect that the Trust regretted that they could not carry out the works recommended, at present, owing to want of funds. Councillor McLennan - Would it not be advisable to take some steps to fence the reservoir in order to keep out stock? Councillor Cahill said the writers of the letter were aware that the Trust had no funds. He seconded the motion, which was carried.

Another official letter advised that as the Lorne Works were now practically completed the district should be gazetted "supplied" and a rate struck. On the motion of councillors Hopkins and Caldwell the secretary was instructed to take the necessary steps.

A letter from the department was received inquiring if there were any water supply objections to the erection of certain allotments of land in the neighborhood of Lorne. It appeared from the letter that 600 acres had been applied for by H Love, 1000 by A J Foster, and 99 acres by somebody else whose name we did not catch. Councillor Hopkins thought the catchment area should be preserved from pollution that the application be objected to if they were within the catchment area. Agreed to.

Alexander Robinson, Lorne, who stated, by way of recommendation, that he was fairly educated, applied for the position of caretaker of the Waterworks. To be considered along with the invited applications on the motion of Councillors Cahill and Hopkins.

14-12-1889 SATURDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.

WINCHELSEA WATERWORKS TRUST.

It was intimated at the meeting of the Winchelsea Shire Waterworks Trust on Friday afternoon that the works for supplying the Township of Lorne with water have now been completed. The water from the storage reservoir is already flowing through the pipes, and the works are ready for any formal opening which the Trust or the residents of Lorne may be inclined to make.

So far, however, nothing has been done in the way indicated, but it was casually suggested by the members of the Trust yesterday, that a little demonstration should be observed on the occasion of the formal turning on of the water to the Township.

18-12-1889 WEDNESDAY. BIRREGURRA & WINCHELSEA STAR AND LORNE MERCURY.

From our own correspondent.

The weather of late cannot be regarded as the sort usually looked for at this period of the year; yet cool breezes and alternating sunshine and some exceedingly warm days lead one to fancy that summer has arrived at last.

Judging from the number of new buildings that have sprung into existence during the present year, (some of them handsome, neat, and spacious structures), and the substantial additions and improvements made to various dwellings externally, the Township really wears an inviting appearance, and indicates plainly that there is a larger amount of accomodation for visitors than heretofore.

After a struggle of 5 or 6 years to obtain a water supply to the inhabitants, it is gratifying to announce that the long desired luxury is now procurable at every dwelling within reach of the main water pipe; and notwithstanding the efforts to get the water supply scheme carried out on the best approved economic arrangements, it is feared that the cost will be found to exceed the original estimate largely; *CRGO*, a heavier water rate to be levied to meet the interest of an increased loan!

If the works of construction have proved costly, it is generally admitted that the whole scheme is an excellent piece of engineering, and does credit to the firm of Messrs Hodgson & Smith, the Engineers to the Water Trust.

In connection with the water supply, there approaches another potent factor to meet the convenience and comfort of the public at large hereabouts - as in a few weeks hence will be seen the installation of the Electric Light at Lorne. This useful gift of modern science will be appropriated for public use in the first instance, at the hands of our friend and neighbor, Mr J S Norman, who has recently built premises in which are placed a Dynamo and other portions of machinery to produce Electric Light; this gentleman will commence practically an undertaking which will be the means of distributing the light not only in the public streets, but in private buildings.

There is no room to doubt the advantages of the Light which will be supplied, certainly on a small scale at first, but from the interest taken generally, it is not difficult to forsee that the day is not far distant when a "*Lorne Electric Supply Company*" will become an accomplished fact.

Thanks to the Water Supply. Lorne is not going to be outstripped in the adoption of this new and important enterprise. Advance Lorne!

1-1-1890 WEDNESDAY. BIRREGURRA & WINCHELSEA STAR AND LORNE MERCURY.

FOREST ABLAZE.

The Birregurra Correspondent of the "*Argus*" wired on Tuesday night as follows:- "The forest between Dean's Marsh and Lorne has been ablaze for two or three days, and the fire is increasing. There was great fear of damage to the selectors in the ranges, and a number of men went to Dean's Marsh to save Hopgood's Farm, which was threatened with destruction.

The fire extends in places along the coast ranges as far as the Apollo Bay District. At Barramunga a sawmill proprietor was completely burnt out, and a farm belonging to Challis, between Dean's Marsh and Lorne, stood a great chance of being destroyed, but the exertions of a great number of men saved it. Some sparks from the fire set the dress of a child, who was travelling in a wagonette, on fire, but the flames were promptly extinguished. The fire is not likely to be as extensive as that in the Otway Forest four years ago, as a vast quantity of dead wood and undergrowth was cleared away by that conflagration. The fire between Dean's Marsh and Lorne is about half a mile in width.

19-2-1890 WEDNESDAY. BIRREGURRA & WINCHELSEA STAR AND LORNE MERCURY.

LORNE.

OPENING OF THE LORNE WATERWORKS.

from our own correspondent.

Friday last will long be remembered gratefully in connection with the opening of the water supply to the township. In the Lorne almanac of the future, the 14th February will be marked as a red letter day. Let me just glance at the proceedings of that same afternoon, when ten or a dozen gentleman arrived, some by coach, others on horseback, and were duly announced as the Chairman and commissioners of the Water Works Trust, the object of their visit being to inspect the works which had been reported as completed by the engineers to the Trust, Messrs Hodgson and Smith, and to take over the charge and control from the hands of the contractors. Accordingly, the Commissioners and Officers, with a large party of friends soon made their way to the rendezvous about a quarter of a mile from the township, and made a minute inspection of the large reservoir with the fluming catchpit and other surroundings, which were thoroughly explained to them by the Engineer, and much to their satisfaction it was soon made apparent that the works had been properly executed and were fit to be taken charge of by the Commissioners. Some little time was then spent in discussing the matter of erecting a strong, neat and substantial fence along the sides of the reservoir to prevent accident, as it was then full of water, and might prove dangerous, if any person stepped in, or any stray cattle.

On the return of the party to the township, a further test was given that the works were well up to the mark, when the engineer fixed a long hose to one of the fire plugs and with the hydrant quickly exhibited the pressure by throwing the water eighty or ninety feet above the road, over the roof of the Lorne Hotel. A few trials of that kind having been made, the Chairman of the Trust then said that they were well satisfied to take charge and control of the works, henceforward. At this announcement the bystanders loudly cheered, and some of them spoke in kindly and suitable terms of the Commissioners and all concerned, in the accomplishment of so grander scheme for the sole benefit and comfort of the inhabitants. It was now getting dusk, and thoughts naturally turned to the social entertainment being prepared for the guests in the shape of a banquet at half past seven o'clock.

Sharp to the minute the large room at the Lorne Hotel was quickly filled with the company, composed of the Commissioners of the Water Trust and Officers, ex Shire Councillors and a host of residents and visitors who were well and quickly served with the good things provided.

The tables were tastefully decorated, and the menu first class in every respect. Dinner being concluded, Mr John Stirling, who occupied the chair, in a few well chosen words, expressive of the pleasure felt at meeting the Chairman and Commissioners of the Trust and their Officers, called upon them present to drink the usual loyal toasts. The health of his Excellency the Governor was then drunk with musical honours.

The Chairman proposed "The Parliament of Victoria". Apologies were read from the Honourable D Ham, and Mr C L Forrest, MLA, who much regretted their inability to attend the banquet. The next toast proposed was "The Commissioners of the Winchelsea Water Works Trust", coupled with the name of Mr Murrell, The Chairman.

Mr Murrell heartily thanked the company for the manner in which they had drunk the health of the Trust. He was much pleased to find the works completed, and looking back six years, when the Chairman of that evening, Mr Stirling, as Councillor for the Lorne People, presented a partition asking for the formation of a Water Trust. The matter was warmly taken up by the late Mr W Stirling and by Mr J Stirling, who worked hard to get effect given to the request of the Memorialists. Mr Murrell then gave a lengthy detail of the surveys and estimates made up to a certain period, and although the cost had somewhat exceeded the original estimate, he thought the people of Lorne might congratulate themselves on having a complete system of water supply. Personally, he felt proud to be at the opening ceremony, and as the Trust had taken the Works over, it would do all in its power to keep them in a satisfactory state.

The Vice Chairman, Mr John Elkington, then proposed the health of Mr J R Hopkins, ex Chairman of the Trust, and in the course of his remarks, bore testimony to the earnestness and ability which Mr Hopkins had displayed in his endeavors to obtain the assistance and sanction of the Minister to the scheme submitted for approval.

But although baulked, frustrated, and subjected to all kinds of delay, he eventually succeeded in getting the Trust appointed, and should now feel some satisfaction in seeing such a happy termination to his labors. (Applause).

Mr Hopkins replied that he was proud to find that his labors had had a satisfactory result, and that the works were a success. It was true that he had worked hard to get the scheme carried out, and had experienced great opposition from the Department, who put various hindrances in the way. However, they had now got the water and no thanks to the department. (Here Here.)

Mr Gullan then gave a song.

The Chairman proposed the health of the Engineer and Officers of the Trust.

The Collector, Mr Gosney, briefly responded.

Mr Hodgson, the engineer, thanked the company on behalf of his partner, Mr Smith, and himself, and gave an interesting narrative of the works from start to finish.

He referred in a very sincere and honourable manner to the various schemes suggested from time to time. But he considered that which was the most practicable was that suggested by Mr Wilson Civil Engineer, whose report had been considered most carefully and proved of great value to his firm. In the exercise of his right to give an opinion upon any engineering work, he might say that Mr Wilson had very hard times in having his report subjected to the criticism of men not so well qualified as himself in the matter. The only departure taken from Mr Wilsons scheme was the adoption of box fluming instead of earthenware pipes. The Lorne people wisely objected to another scheme which would have allowed the water to come down to near the sea level, and then send it up again by a Turbine. Such a system would have been a continual source of expense for maintenance. The gravitation system, if once done properly and perfectly done for all time to come. Their were three miles and a half of box fluming, with an incline sufficient to give a force to carry to an elevation of more than 400 feet above the sea. The present reservoir was a considerable drop below that, and was thus decided upon to prevent too great a pressure. The capacity of it was sufficient to supply 1000 people for one week, or 7500 at the rate of 50 gallons of water for one day. Their had been many vexatious delays in carrying out the works, some of which were unavoidable. The engineers could not make the contractors work speedily, they only having to see that the works were all carried out properly. He was pleased to find that all had turned out so satisfactorily and for himself and partner must acknowledge the great courtesy shown, and confidence reposed in the firm by the Commissioners. He thanked the company also for their kindness on the present occasion. (Applause) In open brief sentences the vice Chairman referred to the working of the Local Government Act for 27 years, saying that under it he had taken an active part in the old Barrabool Hills Road Board and the Winchelsea and Bannockburn Districts, now termed Shires. He gave credit to the Winchelsea Shire Councillors for a decided improvement in the conduct of municipal business.

The adoption of an order to collect rates 3 months earlier than usual would result favourably by placing at the Councils disposal funds to carry out important public works earlier in the year than heretofore. Then in conclusion proposed the toast of "Councillors past and present of the Shire of Winchelsea", coupled with the name of the President.

Mr Murrell (The President) responded on behalf of himself and colleagues he was glad to find that the improvements in Shire business had been noted. Lorne certainly had gone ahead fast, and seemed to desire pushing on faster still. Not content with common kerosine they wanted to jump gas altogether, and go straight for the electric light. (Here Here). However, when proposals came before the council in a definite form it would not be behind hand in dealing with the subject of electric light for Lorne. (Applause).

Councillor McLennan spoke briefly in returning thanks for the honour done. His experience in Shire Council matters was not great as he had not long enjoyed the privilege of being a member of the Council. (Here Here).

Councillor Cecil Armytage next addressed the company by observing that though he was a new member he found that the Councillors all worked harmoniously together, and strove to do their best in the interests of the ratepayers at large. (Here Here).

Councillors Stewart and Bell spoke in a similar strain, and commented fairly on the progress made and business transacted at the Council meetings.

Councillor Gullan spoke of Lorne as it was in years gone by. He had witnessed its wonderful progress, and hoped to see it still further advance. The Waterworks now completed did credit to all concerned. He had been thought an obstructionist. All his objections were on the question of costs set down in the earlier estimates, that the work could not be done for the money, he now found that he was correct, as the total cost much exceeded the original estimates.

Councillors Caldow and Hopkins each responded in suitable terms.

Ex Councillor Prime spoke generally of his career as a member of the Council and the Trust and after detailing much in connection with the water question he said the people of Lorne were to be complimented on their foresight; if it had not been for the pressure which they brought to bear the matter would not have been gone on with. It was now quite patent that there was a splendid supply of water, and he would advise their procuring a hose and hydrant to use in case of fire. The next good thing Lorne should go in for was the direct Line of Railway by the coast; and he firmly believed that it would be found included in the next Railway Construction Bill. (Applause).

The Chairman then gave the toast of "Our Visitors" which was responded to by Mr R V Dennis. Mr Gwynne gave a recitation.

Mr C A C Wilson, Civil Engineer, in replying to the toast said that he went into the work of supplying Lorne with water with a peculiar interest, having known the locality for years, and had a keen appreciation of its beauties and salubrity. It afforded him pleasure to have the work entrusted to him, and he was very glad to see his scheme carried through successfully. He thanked his Lorne friends who had asked him to be a witness of the opening ceremony; and also for their kindness at all times. Although he had not the honour of carrying out his own scheme it afforded him pleasure to find it had fallen into such competent hands. (Here Here). He must thank Mr Hodgson for his kindly references to his (Mr Wilsons) services in the early part of the work, and felt glad if he had been of use to the present Engineers. (Applause).

The health of Mr Rooke was next drank and that gentleman thanked the company for the enthusiastic manner in which the toast had been received. He would do his duty in the new position which had been conferred by the Government. All knew the great interest he had taken in the water supply in the past, and he would take greater interest in the future they might rest assured. The toast of (The Ladies) was responded to by Mr Gwynne. "The Press" met with a ready response from Messrs Danaher and Elkington. Mr Prime, by permission of the Chairman, asked the company to drink "Success to Australian Federation" and in course of his remarks dwelt forcibly on the principles of the Federation cause as applicable to the Australian Colonies, more particularly for defense purposes, and considered it a grand scheme towards the establishment of the Australian Dominion, in the near future. He thought the Colonists all over the continent were to a large extent in favour of the Federation proposals, and watching with intense interest the result of the conference, on the subject. At any rate, he wished it every success. The toast was enthusiastically drunk.

The health of the host and hostess, were then proposed and suitably responded to by Mr Rooke.

The National Anthem brought the proceedings of a very enjoyable evening to a close, in celebration of a most interesting affair such as is not likely to occur at Lorne during the time of the present generation.

The water supply scheme is admirable and cannot fail to enlist the approval of all persons who may have the chance of seeing the headwaters at Splitters Creek on the Erskine River down to the grand reservoir at the top of William Street.

17-3-1890 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

During the past few days bushfires have occurred in several parts of the Coast District and done a considerable amount of damage. A large portion of the forest between Aireys Inlet and Lorne has been consumed, and the fire is still in progress there.

18-2-1891 WEDNESDAY. BIRREGURRA & WINCHELSEA STAR AND LORNE MERCURY.

DESTRUCTIVE BUSH FIRES.

LORNE - SUNDAY.

For some days past small bush fires have been burning in the neighbourhood, and yesterday's heat and strong north wind were all that were needed to fan them into a fierce blaze, which tore down the ranges, clearing the ground of all the lower vegetation, and leaving it strewn with charred logs and studded with blackened trunks. At about 3pm. A heavy smoke rolled down from the ranges, and enveloped the town. So dense was it that it was impossible to discern objects more than a few hundred yards distant, and a rush of flames on the Township was momentarily looked for. The greatest anxiety was felt for the safety of property, and everyone was on the quivive, even visitors turning out to do battle against the expected enemy. Scouts gathered round the outside of the Town, and reported Mt St George to be on fire, also Cherrytree Hill and the Erskine Track Range, where the fire came within a quarter of a mile of the Township. In the direction of "*Eagle Rook*" it was observed that a fire was sweeping down on the cottages standing near the seashore. The timely arrival of a few gentlemen at the dwelling of Mr Elkington, at the mouth of Stony Creek, saved it, for the fire had already reached the garden, the fence of which was partly burned, as well as an outbuilding. Mr Dalway's residence, which stands alone about two miles from here, was in the centre of a ring of fire last night, but it was safe, as the precaution had been taken of burning a space round it. A few days ago a pig paddock belonging to the Mountjoy Estate Company, situated about a mile away, caught fire, and but for the prompt action of Mr Mountjoy the forty or fifty pigs enclosed therein would have fared badly, as in the excitement they were forgotten for a time. The creatures were hurried away at a rate they had never travelled before. For miles along the coast right down to Cape Patton, twenty miles from here, the ranges are all on fire, but as there is very little settlement in that country little harm can result save to the wallabies, rabbits, etc, which are to be seen rushing scared and panting down to the seashore. A couple of sedate native bears were observed seeking the same refuge today. The air was comparatively clear and cool, but if there are a few hot days before rain falls very extensive fires may be looked for throughout the forest. Standing on Teddys Lookout this afternoon, one gets a very comprehensive view of the surrounding country. In front, on the coastline is Mt St George, today a huge black mass. Away inland, as far as the crest of the dividing range, the hills are enveloped in a thin blue smoke, which tells that the fire has been there, while occasional dense black columns make it evident that it is still raging in parts.

"The Argus".

21-2-1891 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**COACH DRIVING THROUGH A LANE OF FIRE.**

The disastrous fire which swept over the country between Mount Duneed and the coast was attended with numerous incidents of a sensational character, in one case three children narrowly escaping being burnt to death.

During the week fires had been burning in the fringe of the Otway Forest skirting the coast line between Jan Juc and Lorne, and on Saturday morning they burst out with intense fierceness, almost the whole strip of grass and timbered country between the two places named being devastated. A tremendous conflagration was fanned by the north wind from the direction of Wensleydale, and swept on to Jan Juc. Which was just saved, when all hope seemed lost, through the changing of the wind.

11-3-1891 WEDNESDAY. BIRREGURRA & WINCHELSEA STAR AND LORNE MERCURY.**WINCHELSEA WATERWORKS TRUST.**

The monthly meeting of the Winchelsea Waterworks Trust was herein included.

Wise folks tell us that March is to be the hottest month of the season. There is not much risk in the prediction as it happens that January and February have passed away with a very cool record of meteorological facts.

The heat has been excessive here since Friday morning. The bush fires uncomfortably close to the township, when yesterday they had to be met bravely and were subdued only after much trouble towards evening. The damage done was chiefly confined to fencing and not to any great extent. Mr Staughton lost a few chains of fencing. Mr Gwynne's paddock adjoining got scorched. Mr Gibson's cottage was saved with loss of garden fence on one side. The fire tore through the lower half of the cemetery, destroying about 12 chains of fencing, and but for timely aid in beating off the fire more destruction would have occurred. However all the cleared portion of one acre, wherein is situated all the graves was not touched, nor yet the boundary fence enclosing that portion. But the cemetery being open on that side to the intrusion of stray cattle it will be necessary to erect a new fence without delay.

A number of firemen did good service patrolling the suburbs of the township and extinguished all fire that appeared to make headway. A few acres of grass and herbage got burnt in the public park but no other damage to mention. On the northern side of the Erskine River all the spurs are burnt clean of everything right down to the sea beach, and present a very blackened appearance at present. The fires were fortunately arrested before sunset, and about 8 o'clock a slight fall of rain did much good in cooling the air and putting out the fires. About midnight the rain continued and proved very welcome.

In temperature the change was most congenial, when on Sunday morning at 10 o'clock the thermometer registered 86 in the shade and at the same hour on Monday it marked 66 only.

7-1-1896 TUESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

VISITORS TO LORNE.

A correspondent at Lorne states that the picturesque coastal watering place has been exceedingly well patronised by visitors from very many parts of the colony during the holidays.

On Sunday last the weather was particularly warm, chiefly caused on the coast by the numerous bush fires which were raging in various parts of the country adjacent to Lorne. Louttit Bay on Sunday night was brilliantly illuminated by the blazing bush overlooking the charming township of Lorne. Late on Sunday evening the fires reached St Georges River, and threatened before Monday morning to envelop the favourite track - known as Zammers - which is taken by picnicking excursion parties.

12-2-1898 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

THE BUSH FIRES.

SMART FIGHT AT LORNE.

The Residents of Lorne had some trouble with a fire which threatened several of the cottages on the hill on Tuesday afternoon. In the morning a fire came down the valley of St George's River, and although help was quickly available the cottage and orchard of the Messrs Allen, well known to tourists as a resting place on the track to the Phantom Falls, were surrounded by flames, and the position looked desperate. By great exertions the cottage was saved, but the fine orchard was entirely destroyed. Another orchard in which the fire wrought sad havoc was that owned by Mrs Ohle, further up the range, between the two branches of the Erskine River. Mr Dalway's house, beyond the mouth of the Stony Creek, was with difficulty saved from a fire that raged along the coast, but by cutting the fences and burning off round the house, the danger was avoided. The hardest struggle with the flames was fought, however, much nearer home. About 1 o'clock a fire, driven by a strong wind, came down the valley of the Erskine, from the direction of the Splitters' Falls, and visitors and residents mustered for what looked at times a rather forlorn hope. While they were trying to prevent the flames coming downhill by burning firebreaks, pieces of burning bark were carried down with the wind, and in an instant a fierce fire was raging close to the foot of the hill in a most critical position. So thick was the smoke and flame that the workers were frequently driven back, and it was only by some of the ladies - who behaved most pluckily - dashing water over them that they were able to continue. One cottage, in which a number of ladies were staying, was entirely surrounded by fire, and all chance of saving it seemed gone as the line of workers wavered preparatory to retreat. At the critical moment someone shouted, "*Now then, altogether*", and the response was a fine one.

About thirty men dashed at it in a body, and in less than two minutes hot work the house was saved. This was the finest thing done during the day, and just then the position looked so bad that at nearly all the houses further round towards the point the residents were hastily removing their effects and stacking them on the roadway. From that point the flames swept across towards Teddys Lookout, but all the houses on the slope of the hill were menaced, and had in turn to be defended - the fight being continued almost round to the Grand Pacific Hotel. An old roadway just above the cottages made an admirable fire-break, and by six o'clock the chief danger was over. At 2 o'clock on Wednesday morning many of the visitors at Erskine House were again called out to stop a fire near the Rapids, and this being accomplished there was no further risk. In fact, as the flames went they simply burned a protective ring round the town, and there can be no further risk from fire this summer. The Fluming which brings water to Lorne from the Splitters' Falls was burnt, and the town left with a two day supply, but repairs have since been made. Fortunately there have been no fires along the Coach Road, and though they have spoiled many of the beauty spots for this summer, others are still open and uninjured. On Wednesday (says the Argus) a picnic party from Erskine House visited the Upper Stony Creek, and found the magnificent fern gullies there, said to be the finest in or near Lorne, untouched by the flames. The weather for the last couple of days has been delightfully cool and pleasant, and all signs of fire have disappeared.

2-1-1908 THURSDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.

BOXING DAY.

On Boxing Day, drag excursions were made to the famous Erskine Falls, and the fern valleys provided cool retreats. To those who stayed at home, some excitement was caused by the sight of Teddy's Lookout on fire. The top poured forth volumes of dense smoke, and the flames were seen blazing merrily through the timber, and veritably reminded one of a volcano on fire. The rotunda and cottages were threatened by a change of wind, but, luckily, the rain, and such rain, came and put all alarm at an end.

30-1-1908 THURSDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.

JOTTINGS FROM LORNE.

by "Penelope".

Lorne as well as other seaside resorts has been passing through the fiery ordeal. On Monday week the thermometer reached the giddy height of 107 degrees - the highest climb it has ventured in "Lovely" Lorne. Bushfires enveloped the place in smoke, causing a good deal of anxiety, especially amongst the more nervous of the fair sex, who, however, fared very well, for there were always optimistic folk about (generally of the sterner sex) who would allay their fears and poo -poo their anxiety.

Lorne, 22-1-1908,

Dear Penelope:-

No doubt you have heard of the bushfires that visited this district last Monday, and also of the thrilling experience a party had at the Phantom Falls. Being one of the party, I thought you might be interested in an account of the scene from one who was there. As you know, it was a very hot day, and knowing the walks at Lorne, and the pleasure of sitting near running water, particularly falls, you will not be surprised at people venturing out to enjoy these pleasures on such a hot day. The first to arrive at the falls was a party of young ladies, then a few from Erskine House, and after that more from Erskine, till there was a party of twenty three collected at the spot. Some had had lunch, others were having it when it was discovered the fires were close beside us. The gentlemen of the party considered it safest to all to get into the cave. Unfortunately one young lady slipped, and cut her head. It was most exciting, all being collected in the cave with our "Billies" and "Mugs" filled with water, and each provided with a damp cloth. The fires came quite close to us on the one hand, and nearly to us on the other. Our eyes smarted with the smoke. To cheer us up, the gentlemen started us singing "Three Blind Mice", "Sweet and Low", student songs, and others, all forming part of the program. Some ladies were busy with fancy work. Burning trees were before us, as well as burning scrub, the loud report of rocks bursting with the heat, and trees falling, came to us at intervals. Things began to look serious, and provision was being made for camping there all night. Ferns were cut for our beds, and the ladies held a consultation about the food going round. Two young men sent out to climb the cliffs to the top of the falls to see if we could get a road home that way. Just after they left us, a large burning tree fell over the falls from the direction they had taken, and great anxiety was felt till we saw them safely back with the report "No Road That Way". Two more volunteers set out down stream, but had not gone far when a cry was raised, "Helpers". Oh, what rejoicings. As they came in sight breathless and heated, the imprisoned ones raised the song, "For They Are Jolly Good Fellows", and cheers for the brave ones. More volunteers came to us, till there were nearly a dozen. One poor boy had exerted himself too much. After the exertion, excessive heat and anxiety for the safety of his sister who was one of the party, were over, he collapsed. Fortunately a nurse, armed with a few remedies, was one of the party, and was able to give assistance. At the end of three quarters of an hour the boy was reported as better. Tea was made, and everyone felt more ready for the trying journey home. Willing bearers came for the patient, a stretcher was improvised, and a start made.

The majority of the party went first, and then came the ambulance party. The climb to the top of the falls was very trying, especially for the last part of the party. From here we cut across the hills to the "Raspberry Cottage" at Allenvale, an experienced bushman heading the way. The view of the surrounding country, burnt and still burning, was very grand, if we had not been in such a trying position. Great trees were burning fiercely; burning trees had fallen near our path. In one place a still burning tree lay right across our path, and we had all to pass under it.

Soon after the ambulance party had passed under it, this giant fell in two pieces across the track. We were thankful when we reached the "Raspberry Cottage". From there a walk was easier, though small fires were still burning near us. Some horsemen met us, and two ladies were taken to the township on horseback. A fresh batch of bearers met us on the hill behind the township, and no doubt the valiant bearers were glad to be relieved of their burden. We were all glad to reach the township, the victims of the accidents were soon under medical attention, and the other members of the party, after bathes, dinner and a good rest, were none the worse for their experience.

With kind regards,
Yours Sincerely,
"Becky".

FOR BRAVERY UNDER FIRE.

"For Bravery Under Fire". I believe the Victoria Cross is awarded. I heard of an instance of this kind which took place recently at Lorne. A party of picnickers were overtaken by a bushfire (principally girls), and one of these girls was a follower of Florence Nightingale (and certainly much of her spirit is in her follower, to judge by her actions). The picnickers took refuge in a cave, otherwise this story would have been a sad one to write. A rescue party set out to warn them and try and bring them safely back by devious tracks. One youth, whose sister was amongst the party, was amongst the first to reach them. He had run a great distance, and what with fighting his way through the smoke and his general weak state when he arrived, he just collapsed, and sore was his plight. However, the nurse was in attendance immediately with many necessities, and with the aid of some men who had arrived by this time, brought him back to life again, after about a couple of hours' work. Where they stood in the river was the only place of comparative safety (and it was only "comparitive") for trees were blazing and ever and anon a crashing sound told that another tree had fallen. Boulders might any moment roll down and crush them: Yet this girl (with her helpers) persevered, and at length they had the joy of seeing him return to consciousness. An ambulance was improvised and willing arms carried him to his destination (some miles). The nurse was offered a ride on horseback; but, no, she thought perhaps the patient might need her, so she walked behind the ambulance ready for any emergency. Two doctors had been "beaten up" from somewhere (they had just arrived from some other point of the compass, having returned from one of the many, excursions always "on hand" at Lorne), and were ready to attend the patient on his arrival. They made him comfortable, and not until the decree went forth from the professional lips, "he'll do now", did the nurse think of herself. Then she said, "perhaps you'll fix me up now" - and disclosed her injuries (she had slipped in the early part of the afternoon and cut her ear). A needle was procured (the only one available, an ordinary sewing one); the only cotton available, two pieces of horsehair (sterilised by being put in boiling water). With these rude implements the doctor (who was just through his course and an honour man in surgery) put in five stitches. He and all who saw our heroine are loud in their praises, and I am sure the patient she tended is deeply grateful too. God bless our nurses - as they go forth (even when on pleasure bent) ready to help and succor those who fall by the way.

A VISIT TO LORNE IN 1916.

by S F Kellock.

At some time subsequent to our 1916 visit (we reached Lorne on 23rd February) a very serious fire gutted the Hotel Lorne and it was altered substantially in design in the rebuilding. But, as can be seen by comparing my photograph with the Hotel as it stands today, the main entrance is still exactly as it was in 1916.

Apparently that portion of the building was not damaged so badly by the fire as to demand that the entrance be demolished.

It is of interest to quote the weekly tariff at the hotel in 1916, all inclusive: it was £2-10-0 per week each. It would cost as much to get a bed at many places today - and for one night only.

13-1-1916 THURSDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.**LORNE'S PROPOSED FIRE BRIGADE.**

In reply to a letter sent by the council, the Chief Officer of the Country Fire Brigades' Board (Mr T S Marshall) stated that he thought Lorne was too small to warrant the board taking over a brigade. There was no reason why Lorne should not form a volunteer brigade; if this was done, the board would assist the movement by purchasing the material and equipment at contract prices. Referred to the members of the riding.

21-1-1919 TUESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**THROUGH FIRE FROM LORNE.**

The party returning from Lorne by coach last Saturday had a very exciting drive through the forest. About 60 passengers were booked, including a few Geelong residents. Dr Baird and his son Gilbert being among them. Bushfires were raging on both sides of the roads, and the incoming and outward bound coaches, which met on a particularly narrow part of the track, had a very narrow escape from the flames. At times during the journey the heat and smoke were almost suffocating, and several of the passengers were burnt by falling cinders, and a little baby had its arm scorched rather badly.

6-3-1919 THURSDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.**THE OTWAY MUST HAVE ROADS.**

Mr P Harrington, of the Wye River; which is situated on the coast between Lorne and Apollo Bay, called on Mr E E Hendy, the organising secretary of the Great Ocean Road Trust, yesterday, and informed him that in order to get to Forrest railway station he had to employ 5 men and a team of horses ever since the fire, in order to clear sufficient fallen logs off the track to enable him to get through and take his wife to the Doctor in Melbourne.

Mr John Thomson, of Apollo Bay, has written to Mr Hendy to say that 37 houses were burnt out in the Apollo Bay District. Some of them were empty houses, as the settlers had cleared out some time ago, owing to the want of roads. He considers it useless for the Government to settle people on the land again unless they give them roads. He concludes by saying: "good roads in the hills to their farms and the Ocean Road along the coast is what we want to get our produce away to the markets".

28-11-1919 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

LORNE HOTEL BURNT DOWN.

Holiday makers, who had booked for the Christmas and holiday season at the Lorne Hotel, will regret to hear that the building was totally destroyed by fire on Wednesday night. It is thought that the flames started in the servants quarters, and burned slowly throughout the night. So slow was its progress that all the furniture and effects were removed. Nothing could be done to save the building, owing to the lack of water, and all efforts were therefore directed to saving the furniture. Eyewitnesses say that had there been anything like a pressure of water the building could have been easily saved. Several members of the staff lost their personal belongings. At the time of the fire there were between 20 and 30 people resident at the hotel and these have been taken temporarily to the Grand Pacific Hotel. The building was owned by the Bendigo Building Society, and the lessee was Miss Leydin. The fire is extremely unfortunate for her, as she will lose the business of the whole of the summer season. Last seasons business was largely lost owing to the influenza outbreak. Mr T W Freeman, of Geelong, had a contract for renovating the plumbing arrangements of the building, and this contract was only partly completed.

3-12-1919 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

LORNE.

Mr Balsilhe, of the Bendigo Land and Building Society, speaking in reference to the Lorne Hotel fire, said that it would take some time to fix matters up, and the directors were not yet in a position to discuss the question of rebuilding or otherwise.

8-1-1920 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

LORNE HOTEL FIRE.

The destruction of the Lorne Hotel by fire recently was not only a loss to the owner and the Lessee, not to mention the holidaymakers who had booked there, but also to 2 employees of Messrs B Freeman & sons, Plumbing Contractors, of this city. The firm was carrying out an extensive scheme for the improvement of the buildings when the fire occurred. The 2 employees were unfortunate enough to lose their tools, as well as their personal belongings. They were quartered at the Hotel while the work was in progress.

The Bendigo Permanent Land and Building Society in a recognition of the mens loss, and the splendid work they did to save the furniture and effects, has presented to each of the men a cheque for £10. No word has yet been received as to the intentions of the Society in relation to the rebuilding of the hotel.

1-3-1920 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

LOCAL MEN AND LORNE HOTEL.

It is understood that several local business men have completed arrangements for the purchase of the Lorne Hotel ruins and site. This hotel, it will be remembered, was late last year destroyed by fire,. Fortunately, the walls are still standing, and being of brick they will be of use in any rebuilding scheme which might be contemplated. Bricks in the locality will be worth double what they are in more accessible places. They are fetching much above their pre war value now owing to scarcity and transport difficulties. The building was formerly owned by the Bendigo Permanent Land and Building Society. It is not considered likely that the new purchasers will themselves rebuild, but will probably dispose of the property. The Hotel carries a licence - a thing difficult to obtain these days.

29-5-1920 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

BUILDING ACTIVITY AT LORNE.

At present there is much building going on at Lorne. It has been decided to immediately commence the rebuilding of the Hotel Lorne, which was in the latter part of last year destroyed by fire. Messrs Laird and Buchan have prepared plans for an up to date and modern structure, and materials have been sent forward for a commencement to be made this week. The work is to be completed, if possible, and ready for the reception of visitors by the opening of next summer season. The structure is to be a two storey one in brick, and will contain at least 40 bedrooms, sitting and smoking rooms, large dining hall, and kitchen, with all the necessary adjuncts. A bar on modern lines, with cellar and cafe, is to be provided, and there will be spacious verandahs and balconies, from which an uninterrupted view of a wide expanse of ocean and mountain scenery is to be obtained. Included in the plans is a winter garden and lounges; electric light and up to date hot water system, with all the latest appliances, another feature of the scheme is a series of grouped bungalows on the town planning system now coming into popular favour.

8-7-1920 THURSDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.

FIRE BRIGADE FOR LORNE.

At a meeting of ratepayers and residents in Lorne recently, it was decided to reorganise the old Fire Brigade on modern lines. This was considered imperative owing to the liability of big fires during the summer months. Necessary equipment for the brigade will cost somewhere in the vicinity of £125.

The procedure for establishing a Brigade has already been explained to the Lorne residents by a member of the Geelong City Brigade. Chief Officer Marshall has been asked to visit Lorne and give further information for the establishment of a brigade there. John H Anderson and H F Reid, on behalf of the Lorne Brigade, have written to the Winchelsea Shire Council asking them to supply the necessary plugs on the several mains in the town.

The Engineer and the 3 councillors of the Coast Riding were instructed to interview the Lorne Brigade Members, and inspect the mains in the town. Already there are 30 members attached to the brigade, and it is expected that many more will join the ranks of the fire-fighters.

12-8-1920 THURSDAY. NEWS OF THE WEEK AND WESTERN DISTRICT ADVERTISER.

WINCHELSEA SHIRE COUNCIL REPORT.

ENGINEERS REPORT.

As regards fire plugs at Lorne, there are several already in the township. It would be as well to have these located and clearly marked. Then the question of additional plugs could be considered.

7-2-1925 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

HOUSE BURN AT LORNE.

A report was received from Lorne last evening to the effect that at 3 o'clock in the afternoon a fire had occurred at the house of Mr William Coulton Smith. The residence, which was burned to the ground was a weatherboard structure comprising eight rooms. There was no one at home when the fire broke out.

15-2-1926 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

BUSH FIRES AT LORNE.

500 MEN TURN OUT TO FIGHT FLAMES.

The hot sultry conditions that prevailed in Geelong yesterday were accentuated to some degree by the fires raging in the closer portions of the State. Similar conditions were experienced at Lorne, near where a fire broke out yesterday morning and continued throughout the day.

The news that a fire had broken out in the mountainous country adjacent to the popular resort brought fire fighters out in force, and no less than 500 of them were at work before the day ended. Many houses were threatened, but all were saved, though a number of sheds were demolished.

All day long a strong north westerly wind blew, the day being described as the worst experienced at Lorne for seven years. The mountainous country to the north west of Lorne was that in which the fire was raging. The grounds of Allenvale Raspberry Cottage did not escape the fire, and 2 or 3 sheds were destroyed, the homestead being saved by the fire-fighters. This save was accomplished by a group of 100 men.

Late in the afternoon the fire was still in progress at Teddy's Lookout. A squad of 100 men was despatched to this point, and when the last message was received from Lorne yesterday fair success was reported to have attended the efforts of the fire-fighters, while little serious damage had been done outside the destruction of sheds, trees and grass.

LORNE OUTBREAK QUELLED.

The outbreak of fire at Lorne was practically subdued yesterday morning by the band of fire-fighters, who only ceased their vigilance on Sunday evening after it was apparent that the change of wind to the south would prevent the spread of fire to the township. At one stage Erskine House was in danger, as the long marram grass near this well known resort was in flames, and the boarders were prepared for emergencies, but they succeeded in beating out the flames. Teddy's Lookout fared badly, and it presents a scene of destruction where the fire swept over it and on towards the town. Men were busily engaged yesterday in pulling fallen timber off the road from Deans' Marsh to Lorne in the vicinity of Benwerrin. The fire spread along the Ocean Road for about one mile between Stony Creek and Lorne, but traffic was not impeded yesterday, the regular Lorne motor services and private cars going through without mishap or loss of time. Telephonic and telegraphic communication was not greatly interfered with between Lorne and Geelong yesterday.

18-2-1926 THURSDAY. MELBOURNE ARGUS.

MOTORISTS DELAYED.

FIRES REACH THE OCEAN ROAD.

SMOKY HILLS OF LORNE.

Smoke is still rising from fires at numerous points in the Otway Ranges, between Lorne and Airey's Inlet. At several places fires have reached the Great Ocean Road, and in the last few days motorists have deemed it advisable to return to Lorne. Cars from Melbourne reached Lorne without difficulty today and at present there is nothing to deter motorists from using the road. One of the outbreaks between Lorne and Airey's Inlet appears to be fairly extensive. There are no fires in the immediate vicinity of Lorne, but the hills at the rear of the town are enveloped in smoke.

22-2-1926 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**FIRES ON THE OCEAN ROAD.**

At about 2 o'clock on Saturday afternoon a fire broke out in the Grassy Creek valley in the vicinity of Eastern View on the Great Ocean Road. Within a comparatively short space of time the flames had spread towards the residence of Mr E Morley, M L A, Mrs Andersons Tea Rooms and the residence of the toll-gate keeper Mr McKay.

The alarm of fire was responded to by visitors and passing motorists who had a very difficult task in saving the three homesteads but with the exception of the outbuildings of Mr Morley's house, the properties practically escaped serious damage.

The fire swept across the Ocean Road and in its track trees were burnt down and left burning on the road. One of Fletcher's service motorcars narrowly escaped destruction and was delayed on the journey to Geelong on account of the driver and passengers having to remove burning logs from the roadway. The fire was subdued, but broke out in the evening, so that the road was declared unsafe for traffic. On Sunday morning, though the fire had not been completely subdued, one of Fletcher's service cars came through safely. The members of a party, which included Mr & Mrs Alan Belcher, and their son, Mr Monty Belcher, are not likely to forget their journey. Bushfires had been burning in the ranges all morning, and one, in particular, was noticed to be in the vicinity of the Ocean Road about four miles from Lorne. It was not, however, till the "Iluka" guest house was reached that any real danger was encountered. From the spot known as Cinema Point, right down to the toll gate, the whole country was alight on both sides of the road.

The party decided to make a dash through, but were stopped on two occasions by fallen trees across the track. With some difficulty these were removed, the car and occupants meanwhile being surrounded by burning scrub and trees. The heat was intense, and the smoke blinding, and fears were entertained that the petrol tank would explode. With the removal, however, of one more burning log, the party was enabled to proceed on its way.

24-2-1926 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**FIRES STILL RAGING AT LORNE.**

The bushfires are still raging in the Lorne district but in another direction according to a report received from Mr Morley, M L A. The fires appear to be returning in practically the same direction as they did on Saturday, keeping the members of the Forestry Department very busy in making fire breaks which, if made before, would have prevented much damage. Every effort is now being made to prevent the fires from reaching Airey's Inlet, and the men of the Forestry Department are having a trying time.

According to Mr Galbraith, member of the Forest Commission, officials of the Forest Department are indignant at the statement made by Mr Morley, M L A, that he had given repeated warnings of the approach of the forest fire at Lorne to Forest Officers and that these warnings had been disregarded. The Forest Officers informed him, he said, that they had received no warning whatever from Mr Morley, nor had any warnings been given by him to anyone at the Commission's Office. The Chief Officer of the Airey's district said that, on the other hand, he had himself given frequent warnings of the approach of the fire to the residents who had apparently taken no notice of him.

8-12-1926 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

FIRE AT EASTERN VIEW.

GUEST HOUSE DESTROYED.

VERANDAH SLEEPER HAS NARROW ESCAPE FROM FLAMES.

"*Iluka*" a guest house at Eastern View, well known to patrons from all over the state, was completely destroyed by a fire which broke out about 11.50pm on Monday night.

The guest house was conducted by Mrs Campbell, whose two daughters and son lived with her there. At the time of the outbreak her three children were sleeping in the premises detached from the main building. Mrs Campbell, sleeping on the verandah, barely had time to escape before the flames reached her.

The house provided accommodation for 34 guests, and such accommodation was completely booked right to the end of January.

Practically nothing was saved from the flames, and as there was no insurance on the building the loss is a severe one. No assistance was forthcoming until too late, and outbuildings only were saved.

"*Iluka*" was built by Mr Morley M.L.A. It occupied a commanding situation above Grassy Creek near the Ocean Road Toll House. From its wide verandah a magnificent view of the coastline was obtainable.

Originally it was used by Mr Morley as a seaside residence where he dispensed hospitality to his numerous Parliamentary and other friends.

30-6-1927 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

THE ROAD TO LORNE.

BENWERRIN REFRESHMENT ROOM.

After over half a century in existence the refreshment room and Post Office at Benwerrin has been closed, and visitors to Lorne this year via Dean's Marsh will miss the convenience that this historic place afforded. The passing has gone without even the cold official announcement that no longer is there a Post Office at Benwerrin.

It will be with feelings of regret that many that go to Lorne annually will learn of the closing of the house. Fifteen or twenty years ago the trip to Lorne had a far greater attractiveness about it than it does today. At that time there was the train journey to Dean's Marsh, and then the trip by coach over the hills to Lorne. The coach trip alone was a matter of four hours at least in favourable circumstances, and during the whole of that time the passengers were looking forward to viewing the sites and having the experiences about which they had heard from others.

Who was there that travelled to Lorne in those days who did not look forward to having a healthy repast of home made scones and jams at the Deans's Marsh Station? And then the commencement of the coach drive, and as they were nearing Benwerrin all were eagerly looking forward to seeing the "*Benwerrin Devil*" - a lifelike representation of that famous character which a bushfire years before had burnt in a tree.

27-2-1931 FRIDAY. MELBOURNE ARGUS.

LORNE - THURSDAY.

Smoke is still rising from fires at numerous points in the Otway Ranges, between Lorne and Airey's Inlet. At several places fires have reached the Great Ocean Road, and in the last few days motorists have on occasions been delayed. In some instances motorists have deemed it advisable to return to Lorne. One of the outbreaks between Lorne and Airey's Inlet appears to be fairly extensive, but there are no fires in the immediate vicinity of Lorne, but the hills at the rear of the town are enveloped in smoke.

30-10-1931 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

LORNE NOTES.

Several members of the Progress Association and a few others interested met last Saturday to burn a fire break around the town. At present the undergrowth in the bush and the surroundings of the town is very dense, and there is a prolific growth of wire grass. A good break burned now should act as a safeguard.

3-2-1932 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**FIRE BRIGADE FOR LORNE.**

There is agitation afoot for the establishment of a Fire Brigade at Lorne. The matter was mentioned to Mr Chellow, Chief Officer of the Country Fire Brigades' Board by Mr H F Richardson, MLC last week. The latter has been urging for some years the establishment of a small fire brigade at the seaside resort, pointing out that there have been several serious fires, with neither equipment nor trained men to cope with them. Mr Richardson stated on Saturday that the Country Fire Brigades' Board would not agree to register a small brigade to Lorne unless the Winchelsea Shire Council would put down additional fire plugs, Mr Chellow, he stated, had told him he could see no difficulties in the way of forming a small brigade which would afford protection against fire for the homes at Lorne and the surrounding country. Mr Chellow's views have been conveyed by letter from Mr Richardson to Mr J E Hall, Secretary of the Lorne Progress Association, which body, it is thought likely, will make further representations to the Country Fire Brigades Board.

29-2-1932 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**FIRE FIGHTING CHEMICAL TO EXTINGUISH BUSH FIRES.**

Arrangements have been made by the Forestry Commission to test under field conditions a bush fire-fighting chemical evolved by a lecturer at the Melbourne University and already tested with considerable success on grass fires. On a favourable day, with proper safeguards, it will be experimented with on a forest fire with only Scientists and Forest Officers present.

The young scientist who has evolved the formula insists on remaining anonymous until his formula is proved. He also has exacted promises from all concerned that nothing will be claimed in favour of the chemical until it has been scientifically proved.

In the recent hot weather he put out grass fires by throwing glass beakers containing the chemical into the flames. It can be made either in liquid or in powder form, and has no chemically dangerous elements. Cattle and sheep have eaten grass upon which this chemical has been spread, without apparent deleterious effect to the stock.

Professor W A Osborne, who is a member of the Forests Protection League, has encouraged the experimenter to persevere in efforts to prove his chemical and apply it on a large scale.

The Forestry Commission is very interested, and has placed to the experimenters disposal every facility to test it on a forest fire.

If the new firefighting formula can be produced economically in large quantities capable of blotting out big bush fires, every effort will be made to have it thrown on the fires from aircraft either in powder form or in liquid spray.

8-3-1934 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**ALARM AT LORNE.**

A bush fire, the origin of which is unknown, broke out today, about noon, behind Mountjoy's stables (site of the Chalet Guest House) an old historic landmark, at the western end of the township.

The alarm was raised by the vigorous ringing of the school bell during the lunch hour, and visitors and residents rushed to the scene. Buckets of water, fire beaters and other appliances soon quelled the outbreak.

A strong northerly gale was blowing at the time, but owing to the large number of tracks on the hill side, the fire did not spread very rapidly. No damage was done to any town property.

The prospect of a Brigade for Lorne was getting closer when the following announcement appeared.....

10-5-1934 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**LORNE COLUMN.....ITEMS BEFORE THE WINCHELSEA SHIRE COUNCIL.****FIRE BRIGADE FORMATION.**

As a result of the proposal made last year to form a Fire Brigade in Lorne a reduction in the premiums payable by policy holders has been secured. The suggestion was made at the time that policy holders should contribute portion of their savings to a fund to provide equipment for the Brigade.

Policy holders have now received the benefit of the reductions, and as a consequence a further circular has been forwarded to property owners asking that they forward at once half the savings on their policies to the funds to provide the equipment for the brigade. A prompt response to the appeal will expedite the formation of the brigade.

1-4-1936 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**NO DANGER AT LORNE.**

Speaking from Lorne late last night First Constable Mills said that no danger existed there from bush fires. The fire in the Benwerrin district was still going, but no volunteers had been called upon to fight it. Early in the day with the northerly wind the fire was travelling in a southerly direction, but about 5pm there was a temporary change in the direction of the wind and this tended to check the blaze.

3-4-1936 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**SPECIAL MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.**

Indicative of the seriousness with which the Forests Commission and other official bodies regard the bush fire danger throughout the State, a hurriedly summoned special meeting of the Executive Council was held at Government House today to extend the bush fire danger period and relevant regulations.

Ordinarily the proclaimed period expires on March 31st, but the prolonged dry conditions and outbreaks of fire on Tuesday, which caused extensive damage, prompted officials to seek an extension of the period until April 17th.

Cabinet approved and if conditions do not improve by April 17th, consideration will then be given to the desirability of further extending the proclaimed period.

The proclamation extends to practically the whole of Victoria, with the exception of the Mallee.

It prohibits the lighting of fires generally, but specifies conditions under which burning-off may be undertaken; these briefly being.....

*Breaks of a specified width must be provided.

*The temperature must be less than 90 degrees.

*No more than a light breeze may be blowing.

*At least 24 hours notice of intention to burn off must be given to neighbours.

*No fire may be left unattended.

*In country of a more dangerous nature, it is competent for the Forests Commission to specify that a certain number of men equipped with fire-fighting apparatus, shall be in attendance.

The penalty for non-observance of the regulations is imprisonment for two years or a fine of £200, or both.

1-7-1936 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**LORNE.**

Lorne finally got its Fire Brigade, the Lorne Urban Fire Brigade was registered on July 1st, 1936 - this was the first brigade on the southern coast. During 1937 it attended five calls.

No. 1. 2-4-1937 FRIDAY.

Three quarters of a mile from the station - Just a small outbreak and was quite easily got under control and effectively extinguished. Attended by Captain Ernie A Allen, Lieutenant George Huxley, Secretary Charlie R Browne and five firemen.

No. 2. 6-5-1937 THURSDAY.

Small outbreak just outside the town boundary in a Public Park and got within 50 yards of nearest buildings. Stopped without much difficulty nearest house being unoccupied at the time.

No. 3. 3-7-1937 SATURDAY.

A short circuit in the amplifiers at the Lorne Picture Theatre. Remarks - The firemen were present at the picture show and quickly got the outbreak under control. We have been informed by the Secretary of the company (Mr A E Jarratt, Lorne) that no claim will be made for insurance.

No. 4. 10-8-1937 TUESDAY.

Grass fire started in marram grass on the front beach. Several bathing boxes were in danger but the fire was soon under control and no damage done.

No. 5. 26-11-1937 FRIDAY.

Bush fire, 9 miles from the station (Eastern View)- Alarm received at 11-30am, arrived at fire 11-55am, returned to station 5pm. Remarks - The fire was under way when the alarm was received but managed to save all properties including Hotel and four houses. Several firemen received burns. The Secretary and eight men were detailed to remain at Station in case of further emergency within the boundary area.

27-11-1937 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

BUSH FIRES SWEEP RANGES AND OCEAN FRONT.

FLAMES FOUGHT FOR HOURS AT EASTERN VIEW.

HOTEL SAVED ALTHOUGH HOPE HAD BEEN ABANDONED.

The timely arrival of members of the Forests Commission, Country Roads Board men, and firemen from Lorne, prevented the complete destruction of the settlement at Eastern View yesterday.

The holiday resort on the Great Ocean Road was seriously threatened by a bush fire which swept down from the hills with sudden and fierce intensity. With only the licensee and two other men to face the flames, a corner of the hotel building caught alight, and all hope of saving the structure was abandoned. At this critical moment cars arrived hurriedly from Anglesea and Lorne bearing well equipped fire fighters, and an immediate attack on the flames saved the hotel.

Four other houses belonging to Messrs A A Farthing, J H McPhillimy, J H Ward and W Boyd were threatened. So fierce were the flames and heat that Messrs R E Evans of Anglesea and J Vining, a driver for the Country Roads Board both collapsed and had to be carried to safety.

This outbreak, which had been burning quietly in the hills away from the coast on the previous night took on a fierce aspect about 10-00am yesterday and swept down towards the settlement. Mr G W Clarke and his son Mr G H Clarke, were working in a paddock when they saw the fire top a rise immediately above the hotel. They rushed to the Post Office, which they conducted, and informed the licensee of the hotel (Mr H Gibson) by telephone. They then sent urgent warnings to Anglesea and Lorne, and set out to assist Mr Gibson.

The fire approached with such rapidity that it was considered impossible to save the building, and efforts were concentrated on removing valuable property. The furniture was taken out and placed in safety in an open space, and a huge safe, which took the combined efforts of the three men, was also removed. Attempts were made to prevent the fire from reaching the buildings, but coming from several points, it proved too much for the small band of fire-fighters. Leaping across from some nearby scrub, flames reached a corner of the building, and a cane chair, a wardrobe and an ice chest caught alight.

At this moment, the cars bearing the fire-fighters from Lorne arrived, and with the spray equipment fed by tanks attached to the backs of the men, the flames in the room were subdued. A stern fight then commenced to save the other buildings close by. Water was plentiful, and strenuous efforts were made to turn the fire away from Mr A A Farthing's holiday house.

FIRE DIVERTED INTO CREEK.

The fire-fighting strength had been considerably augmented by the arrival of the Forests Commission men and a number of Country Roads Board workers and with forty men facing the flames, the fire was gradually turned into Coalmine Creek.

In spite of the opposition, flames scorched the walls of all the buildings, and the windows of Mr J H Ward's new seaside home were continuously sprayed to prevent them from cracking. A tank on this property boiled merrily in the terrific heat. Mr J H McPhillimy's house also narrowly escaped destruction. Mr Ward, who received an urgent call, rushed from Geelong yesterday morning and assisted the fire-fighters.

At many points between Eastern View and Anglesea, flames jumped the road and burned right down to the beach. Traffic was not interfered with, but several telephone poles were destroyed and the service was disconnected for several hours. Linesman from Lorne proceeded to the spot and communication was restored by 4pm.

By this time another branch of the fire, about half a mile away towards Anglesea, had assumed fierce proportions.

For some time it seriously threatened the home of Mr W Boyd, but the immediate surrounding of the house had been well cleared. The position however, was closely watched, as it was feared that sparks from the burning hillside would ignite the buildings.

The fire then jumped a narrow road and burned fiercely down to the shore between Eastern View and Fairhaven Guest House. At a late hour last night both fires were considered to be well under control, but the areas were watched throughout the night.

Another fire, which appeared to have its origin in the vicinity of Addiscott, threatened Forest Reserve No. 3 in the Anglesea area, and the Forestry men were recalled from the Eastern View outbreak to fight the fresh menace. This fire was also under control last night.

1-12-1937 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

LORNE.

Reports were received last night that bushfires were raging yesterday afternoon between the She - Oak and Cumberland Rivers near Lorne, at Benwerrin, and at Pennyroyal.

23-2-1938 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

BUSH FIRES.

The Lorne Fire Brigade was called to assist in the fighting of the severe bush fires at Anglesea on Sunday last. Much valuable assistance was rendered by their burning firebreaks, which action later on saved much property. The members are to be congratulated on responding so readily to the needs of the neighboring township. It was after midnight when Captain Ernie Allen brought his men back to their home town.

During the hot spell last week two fires broke out near the township. One, which threatened to develop into a serious blaze through the lower Stony Creek area, was brought under control. This good work was considerably aided by the members of the Lorne Fire Brigade, by whose prompt action many acres of beautiful gullies and two or three homes at the extreme end of North Lorne were saved.

Fires also broke out at Big Hill, Benwerrin and at the She Oak River, but when rain fell on Monday night all fears of immediate danger passed.

25-2-1938 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**BUSH FIRES.**

The outbreak of fires near Anglesea and in various Victorian areas of bush land again showed the need for precautions to be taken by picnickers and others who make weekend sojourns to popular resorts. On one day alone twenty two separate outbreaks were reported, and on Sunday an appeal was made for fire-fighters to leave the city and join the volunteers striving to prevent the destruction of threatened towns.

At Anglesea, despite the Forestry Commission's propaganda that care must be exercised by campers and picnickers, about 25 acres of pine trees that were planted in 1926 were destroyed. Thousands of other trees that were planted to beautify the the slopes of the hills were devoured by the flames.

All bush fires cannot be prevented, but it has been established that so many are caused by carelessness that it is a matter of amazement that the sustained annual appeals for care pass unheeded by many campers.

The Forestry Commission and numerous Bush Fire Brigades scattered throughout the State have had breaks made in danger zones, and "spotting" by aeroplanes and a system of radio communications has been arranged so that volunteers can be rushed to the scenes of the outbreaks. But despite this organisation one careless individual can cause desolation and destruction upon an area of our beautiful bush.

It should give thought for serious thought that of 54 bush fires which the Forestry Commission was able last year to establish the origin, only two were caused by a natural agency - lightning. The Commission was unable to establish the origin of 29 fires, but it was able to prove that five at least were started deliberately, and 47 were caused by tourists, sportsmen, graziers, miners and others.

It is only reasonable to assert that all but two of these fires could have been averted by the exercise of reasonable care and by regard for the interest of others. These fires burned 18,861 acres of valuable forest - a comparatively light toll, but the danger last season was much less acute than the threat that now exists. A proclamation was issued prohibiting the lighting of any fires in the open, except under the most stringent conditions, and if the directions are honoured, the State should be saved, despite the high danger, from a repetition of the holocaust of 1931 when 307 fires destroyed 510,895 acres of forest land. It is to individuals rather than to the general public that appeals for care should be addressed.

27-12-1938 TUESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**EASTERN VIEW BUSH FIRE.****HOMES AND GOLF COURSE THREATENED.****TIMELY CHANGE OF WIND AIDS FIGHTERS.**

Fanned by a strong northerly and north-westerly wind yesterday a fire which had been burning in thick bush country at Eastern View for some days, threatened several cottages and the golf links yesterday. Local residents and holiday-makers combined with the Lorne Fire Brigade, under the direction of the Forests Commission officer from Anglesea, arrived to fight the blaze which had spread over a large front. A change of wind to the south about 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon enabled the fire-fighters to quell the blaze and save the properties.

Among those who assisted were Messrs C R Herschell, an official of the Great Ocean Road Trust, and Mr Bill, a Forests Commission surveyor, both of whom are spending the holidays at Eastern View.

The fire, while it had been burning in the back country, had occupied the attention of Forests Commission officers, but it was not until yesterday that it appeared dangerous. The strong wind carried the fire through dense dry scrub, and when it became apparent that several cottages at Eastern View would be threatened, a message was sent to the Lorne Fire Brigade for assistance. Captain Allen and six men from the Lorne Fire station, together with a party of volunteers from Lorne, responded to the call.

Early in the afternoon, when the blaze had spread over a wide front, the Eastern View Golf links, together with Mr Clarke's property were threatened. They were in the direct path of the flames. Other homes were also threatened.

With the northerly wind driving the fire, flames at one time within six feet of a haystack on Mr Clarke's property, but this was saved. Mr Clarke lost a quantity of fencing and grass, but the buildings escaped damage.

Had it not been for the fine work of the volunteers and the Firemen from Lorne, and the fact that the wind changed to the south at a critical period, it is possible that serious losses of property would have been suffered.

Smoke from the burning trees and undergrowth was carried by the wind over Torquay, and well out to sea, and at one stage many residents and visitors at Torquay expected to receive a call for assistance. At Torquay it was thought that the fire was burning in the forest areas between Bellbrae and Anglesea, but actually it was some miles further around the coast.

The officer in charge of the Forests Commission plantation at Anglesea said that with the change of wind at Eastern View the fire had been controlled. There was no danger from it as breaks had been prepared around the properties. He paid tribute to the good work performed by residents and visitors at Eastern View.

GRASSY CREEK BLAZE.

From Lorne it was ascertained last night that a fire was burning in bush country at Grassy Creek and that if the wind again swung around to the north the home of Mrs Anderson would be in danger. A close watch was being kept on the fire.

PRECAUTIONS AT LORNE.

Although there is thick bush surrounding Lorne, it is not expected that any fires will break out within the town boundary. For some weeks members of the Lorne Fire Brigade have been preparing fire breaks around the township, and every camping party, together with residents and visitors, is being advised to use precaution when lighting fires in the open.

2-1-1939 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

SERIOUS LOSSES BY FIRES IN OTWAY RANGES.

LARGE STOCKS OF TIMBER BURNT NEAR LORNE.

At Lorne two mills were menaced for a considerable time, but up to a late hour last night they were intact. However, large quantities of cut timber were destroyed, and it was also feared that a number of homes of mill workers had been consumed by the flames. Communication with localities through which fires had raged was interrupted last night.

TIMBER MILLS MENACED.

Owing to the density of the smoke electric lights had to be switched on at Lorne at 4-30pm yesterday. Throughout the day many fires were reported, and up till 5-30pm the alarm bell had been rung on several occasions.

At Armisteads No 2 mill half-a-million super feet of timber was destroyed but until a late hour last night the mill was not on fire. Owing to the heat from the burning stacks of timber the fire-fighters were unable to approach near to the mill to save the machinery.

At the No 1 mill it was estimated the loss would amount to £400, but the machinery was intact. As the mill was not out of danger it was being watched by a large body of men. It was also feared that about five houses and a number of huts belonging to the mill workers have been destroyed near the No 2 mill.

Late last night the wind had dropped considerably, and there was confidence the mill would be saved.

About 4 o'clock a call for volunteers was received at Lorne from Wye River. A number of men responded but on arrival found that there was little they could do. The fire was raging through virgin forest, and owing to the denseness of the undergrowth, which was a blazing mass, the heat was unbearable. No homes were destroyed.

Responding to a call from Kennett River, volunteers found the road blocked beyond Wye River. There was consternation when an outbreak was reported from Allenvale, but the fire burned itself out when it reached a break in the vicinity of Cherry Tree Creek.

Throughout yesterday the wind changed on several occasions. From early morning it was a hot northerly, but later in the afternoon it moved towards the west. Early in the evening it swung round to the south and brought a cool change. The cottage of the Country Roads Board patrolman (Mr Mercer), five miles from Wye River, was destroyed. A caravan was also destroyed, but the car to which it was attached was saved.

12-1-1939 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

PRECAUTIONS AT LORNE.

From the office of the Forestry commission of Victoria at Anglesea last night it was learned that there was no danger of bush or forest fires there or in the Lorne area unless a northerly wind occurred. Throughout yesterday Forestry Commission Officers from the plantations patrolled the forests as a precaution against any fresh outbreaks. Fires which were burning in the Lorne district on Tuesday, menacing the township, were reported to be completely in check yesterday evening, although they were still smouldering. However, there is little likelihood of the township being endangered now, as the growth is practically burned out. A cool southerly breeze blew at Lorne yesterday afternoon, but no rain fell.

Fire which occurred behind the Hotel Pacific at Lorne yesterday menaced several houses and was fought by the Fire Brigade and the Forestry Commission Officers. It was under control, however, late yesterday evening.

Fires are still burning in the Erskine district, but do not constitute a danger.

14-1-1939 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

RESIDENTS BURNT AT LORNE.

RUSH TO BEACH FOR SAFETY.

EXTINCTION OF TOWNSHIP THREATENED.

FLAMES SWEEP DOWN FROM SURROUNDING RANGES.

A realisation of the menace of the fires was brought to the residents of the Geelong district by disastrous outbreaks within 30 miles of the city. The most serious of these was at Lorne, where homes valued at thousands of pounds were destroyed.

FLAMES SWEEP DOWN FROM THE HILLS.

Lorne, one of the leading and most popular seaside resorts in Victoria, was threatened with destruction when bush fires, which had been smouldering in the back country, were fanned to life by a northerly wind which sprang up yesterday morning. The area known as "Little Colac" on the Geelong side of Lorne suffered extensively, and 16 houses were destroyed.

Dawn broke at Lorne yesterday with the wind set north and fires which were smouldering in the Erskine Valley belched smoke over the township. Anxious eyes watched developments until 10am when the fire alarm bell was rung. Immediately volunteers went up Mountjoy Hill at the back of the township.

The wind developed into a gale and constantly chopped around from north to west, making the efforts of the beaters most difficult.

Roaring along the Erskine River the fire soon caught the dairy farm of Mr K Inderberg, the pressure of water available being quite inadequate to save the buildings. Within a few minutes, the whole property was alight and the houses around were menaced for an hour after midday.

Just after "Kia-Ora" Guest House was evacuated, the fire had reached Mrs Gibsons home and reduced it to ruins. Very little of Inderbergs or Gibsons properties were saved.

By 2pm Lorne North was a blazing mass of fire. All the outbuildings at "Waverley" the beautiful two storey residence of Miss Cecily Lascelles, developed into an inferno and a £3,000 home met the fate of many beautiful little residences facing the sea in what is termed "Little Colac". Six other houses in the vicinity were quickly swallowed up in the raging inferno.

RUSH TO THE BEACH.

The scene on beach, river and foreshore resembled an earthquake, for residents and visitors to Lorne expected to see the entire township devoured by the terrifying blaze.

Motor cars were run into the river shallows and onto the beach for safety, while family groups, carrying a few hastily-gathered personal belongings, thronged the waters edge.

Camps were hastily deserted, in some cases only with a very few belongings being removed. Valuables, suitcases, bedding and clothing formed a litter along the foreshore. There were hundreds on the penninsular of land between Erskine River and the ocean, behind "Erskine House".

Doctor Oldham attended to more than 20 cases of heat prostration, while several fire-fighters from "Little Colac" collapsed. Lorne Fire Brigade, under the direction of Captain Allen, stuck valiantly to its task, while the Officer of the Forestry Commission of Victoria from Anglesea (Mr MacDougall) untiringly directed the many volunteers.

About 4pm Geelong volunteers arrived and were sent to the Erskine Falls Road, where a break was burned. Sore and swollen eyes were causing pain to many of the fighters, and relief was administered by volunteer aid nurses on holidays.

Lorne South had an anxious time for a little while. Miss Manton of "Kingcraig" was in the danger zone but there the fire was checked in time. The Library Hall nearly went the way of other buildings, the grass in the reserve being burned almost up to the structure.

CAMP BURNT OUT.

Three campers at Cumberland, five miles away, lost all their gear, and the Country Roads Board camp at the "She-Oak" was burned out. It contained tools, equipment and gear for between 30 and 40 men and the loss will be several hundred pounds. In the danger of the heat and fire, a quantity of gelignite was removed from the area.

A visitor to Lorne North lost his motor car. Mrs H Hayward's home at Little Colac was saved, although slight damage was caused to the walls at the rear when they caught alight. Other residents in the area, however, did not fare so well.

BABINGTON'S MILL.

The mills in the Lorne area were endangered all day, and the Deans Marsh Road was blocked by fallen trees about one mile from Benwerrin.

Armisteads Mill was not touched, although the fires blazed all around it. Families were evacuated from mills and from Benwerrin in the morning.

Although his homestead was saved, Mr C Howard of Stony Creek, several miles on the Geelong side of Lorne, lost severely by the destruction of an adjoining shed.

He estimated damage at about £400. The shed contained a motor truck, wagon, and dray, two engines, about 40 tons of wood, a saw bench, and an extensive selection of tools. The loss is not covered by insurance. The fire there occurred about 2 pm.

Considering the extent of undergrowth and forest area along the Great Ocean Road between Aireys Inlet and Lorne, it was amazing that more was not destroyed.

In many parts the countryside is blackened and trees stand gaunt and bare, robbing the district of much of the charm which makes it one of the most popular seaside resorts in Victoria.

"Waverley", the home of Miss Lascelles, situated between "Little Colac" and the bridge over the Erskine River at the entrance to Lorne township had recently been renovated. Miss Lascelles was not in residence, but had let the home for the first time. It was one of the features among leading Lorne homesteads. Yesterday evening, with portion of the ruins still smouldering, it presented a picture of desolation. Only the stone walls were left. Fires appeared to meet near this residence after travelling from the north and south behind Lorne. The bush was still burning at the back of the township at night, but, with so much undergrowth destroyed, the danger apparently had passed. Two girls who were staying at "Waverley" returned to the doomed house in an unsuccessful attempt to save a dog, and were only brought to safety in time to avoid the fire through the smart work of members of the Lorne Fire Brigade.

When the wind changed from the north to the south about 3 pm, the fire which had destroyed "Waverley" licked out towards a modern home situated nearby, but efforts saved this residence.

"Little Colac" is so named because many of the residences of that area are owned by Colac people. After the destruction of their homes many returned to Colac, while local residents accommodated those whose permanent residences had been destroyed.

HOMES DESTROYED.

Among homes destroyed were those of Messrs John McCabe Doyle and J Wilson of Geelong; Messrs T Reeves; Wilcox; W Gaylard; S Sanson; Mr Lebat; Les Swayne; G Wallace; McLeod; all of Colac and Messrs McKie, Gibson and J Whitehead of Lorne. The homes destroyed were almost all in the "Little Colac" area east of the Erskine, but Mr K Inderberg's dairy was west of the river. Most of the owners lost everything except a few belongings.

Because of the heavy pall of smoke over the township, the fires were not a brilliant spectacle. In fact, it was impossible to ascertain where a fire began or where it was until it emerged from the shroud of smoke. Outbuildings at the rear of the "Chalet" Guest House caught alight, and for a period there was danger of the main building being involved.

The home of Mr Lorne Smithers, several miles out of Lorne on the Erskine Falls Road was destroyed, and fears were entertained for the mills and residents in the thick country out that way.

Although no immediate concern was felt for their safety, five men working at one of the mills were known to be missing. Two other men who had been missing were located.

Receiving information that about 30 people were out in the back country near one of the mills, First Constable Mills of Lorne went out and arranged for their safe passage to Lorne.

The Forestry Officer (Mr MacDougall) brought several children to Lorne from Benwerrin from an old coach house about five miles out on the Deans Marsh Road.

Mr J Whitehead, whose home at "Little Colac" was destroyed, remained at the home until the fire was almost upon him. A bushman with considerable experience, he said later that he had never experienced a bush fire as fierce as that which, leaping to a height of more than 50 feet, devoured his home. He and his wife escaped with nothing but the clothes in which they stood, but were provided with accommodation for the night. Mr Whitehead is employed at Reid and Clarkes Tourist Bureau in the township.

Almost surrounded by flames in a narrow track in the bush country, N Smith and Eric Allen had a terrifying experience as they rode for their lives on horses for a distance of four miles to avoid destruction.

Among those treated for burns were Neil and Harry Fletcher, of Lorne Fire Brigade, and Norman Allen. Alan Schram was injured when a motor truck hit him at one of the scenes of the fire.

Ten passengers in a scenic tour car driven by Mr G Smith had an anxious time when they encountered the fires near Mount Sabine. It was estimated that the blaze was on a seven mile front, and Mr Smith had to drive fast to reach safety.

Mr T R Bath's home at "Little Colac" was saved through the quick action of Mr Les Smithers, who threw burning bedding from the window before it set fire to the residence. Mr Bath, who is employed by the Country Roads Board, was away at the time, and his family escaped to the beach. This house caught several times, but no extensive damage was caused. Although Mr Reids home at "Little Colac" was saved, a shack belonging to his son, Mr M Reid, at the rear, was destroyed.

Despite the dangers to Apollo Bay and the road to be traversed, fighters from that resort assisted at Lorne, while there were many from Geelong.

Employees from Geelong Post Office went to Lorne yesterday afternoon to locate a breakdown in the telephone communications, and discovered it a mile or two on the Geelong side of the township, where fire had caught a pole, bringing down the wires.

One telephone line was available for communication between Geelong and Lorne last night, and at 9-45 pm there was a six hour wait, meaning that a call booked at that hour could not be taken until 3-45 am today.

On the one line, all communications, including numerous anxious inquiries regarding relatives, were made.

From Geelong along the Princes Highway and the Great Ocean Road, the shroud of yellow smoke increased during the afternoon so that it was impossible to see 100 yards in any direction. The sun was a red ball that subsequently became a vivid scarlet. Smoke and dust strained the eyesight and the atmosphere was charged with the foreboding of tragedy and destruction.

At Anglesea, anxious residents and visitors inquired concerning the condition of the roadway through the forest to Geelong and Lorne. A motor cyclist, a mill worker at Lorne, brought his wife and child to Anglesea for safety, the latter suffering from the intense heat.

Geelong City Council despatched one of its motor trucks with a large tank of fresh water during the afternoon to Lorne for volunteer fire fighters, many of whom were far distant from supplies.

Serious telephonic interruption was caused by fire both to the Morse and telephone lines between Geelong and Lorne over a distance of about three and a half miles. At 4 pm there were approximately 100 urgent telegrams awaiting dispatch from Lorne to Geelong and other centres, while a greater number of urgent calls had been booked from Geelong. Contact with Lorne by telephone was made via Birregurra and the single line was worked throughout the day and night.

Owing to the impassability of the Geelong-Lorne road, the mail coach from Lorne, scheduled to depart from Lorne at 2-15 o'clock had to be deferred for several hours. Many of the telephone lines connecting Colac with townships in the Beech Forest area were rendered inoperative by the fires.

Following the broadcast of news flashes from 3GL (radio station) yesterday concerning fires in the district, and the message that a fire was threatening Lorne, considerable anxiety was felt by residents regarding friends who were spending holidays at resorts along the Great Ocean Road. When a message was broadcast that the fire was at the boundary of the township and that two houses had been destroyed there were many telephone inquiries to 3GL and the "Geelong Advertiser" office.

The Secretary of the Mountjoy (Lorne) Estate Company, (Mr H F Richardson) yesterday afternoon received an urgent telegram from Lorne which stated that all people at "Erskine House" were safe. This message was broadcast by 3GL, and subsequently by a metropolitan radio station.

16-1-1939 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

SURVEY OF DAMAGE AT LORNE.

FLAMES SWEEP ERSKINE VALLEY.

FIGHT TO SAVE HOUSE GUESTS.

With danger from the disastrous bush fire of Friday past, the track of the flames giving assurance of an adequate break against another outbreak, Lorne took stock of its losses in a calmer atmosphere on Saturday. Terror had gripped the township on Friday, when it seemed that nothing could prevent the flames from destroying the entire settlement, and hundreds of people had sought the safety of the beach with a few personal belongings, quite resigned to the fact that they would lose their homes and buildings. A survey of the affected areas showed that 17 buildings in all, some of them only shacks, had been destroyed, the most imposing being "Waverley", the two-storied stone residence of Miss C Lascelles.

Although many of the houses destroyed were seaside residences of Colac people, several were the homes of Lorne citizens who have been rendered practically destitute. Refuge was provided for a number on Friday night, and arrangements for relief were begun on Sunday. Five distinct fires started in the bush country off the Deans Marsh Road last Tuesday. They had been smouldering until Friday morning, when the hot north wind fanned them into roaring flames with disastrous results. There were no camps in the area, which is rough grass land not requiring to be burnt off.

In addition to the list of homes destroyed, as published on Saturday, those of Messrs Henderson and Flatman, Baker, Sydenham and Smithers were lost. A motor car belonging to Mrs L C Hilda Deller, of Maryborough was burned in addition to sheds belonging to Messrs Stephens and Dunse, a hut belonging to Mr Williams, and Mr Joyce's garage containing a motor car owned by Mr Miller.

Inquiries on Saturday revealed that people for whom anxiety was felt in the mill areas inland were all safe. The mills also escaped the fires, but portion of a bridge at Armistead's Mill was destroyed.

When it was realised that Lorne was in danger from the fires which had been fanned into new life by the hot northerly winds on Friday, fighters expected it to go round the Mountjoy Hill at the back of Lorne proper and fire breaks had been prepared there to meet the danger.

The choppy wind, however, upset calculations and the flames, which could be heard in the distance, suddenly roared over the hill and down the Erskine Valley with terrifying speed. Mr K Inderberg's dairy property was situated a few hundred yards south of the foot of the valley and was thought to be safe owing to the clearance on the intervening land. Fate was unkind, however, for a spark flew over and set fire to a stack of grass hay which Mr Inderberg had just labored hard to bring down to the homestead from the Cumberland, five miles distant.

The hay was ablaze at 12-30 and Mr Inderberg and assistants endeavoured to extinguish it with a hose by climbing to the roof of the house and playing water on the seat of the blaze. It was there that Neil and Harry Fletcher and Norman Allen of Lorne Fire Brigade received burns which necessitated treatment.

Flames from the hay caught the house and it was burned to the ground with all its contents, the inmates escaping with only the clothes they were wearing. Beyond Mr Inderberg's property was "Kia-Ora" Guest House and for a time it seemed that nothing could save it. Guests left hurriedly but fortunately the building was not destroyed.

While the fire-fighters were trying to protect property at Mr Inderberg's residence, the timber which was alight on Mountjoy Hill jumped the break which had been made and set fire to the grass. Very shortly it reached and destroyed the home of Mrs Gibson, situated near the top of the hill (48 Polwarth Road). Thence it burned down to the back of "The Chalet" but it did not reach that building.

Wind, then in the west, carried fire from Inderberg's to the river mouth and, jumping the Deans Marsh Road, it went down the Old Coach Road and entered the area known as "Little Colac" where most of the damage was done and many houses completely destroyed. However, by dint of individual effort, a number of homes were saved in that settlement. It was in fact remarkable that so many residences escaped destruction while others, almost next door, were lost.

From Mountjoy hill, where it had been burning all that time, the fire, whisked by the choppy wind travelled south and converged with another outbreak moving from Erskine Falls Road near the refuse depot. That was the scene of most of the night firefighting under the direction of the Forestry Officer (Mr MacDougall) who performed magnificent work throughout the day. A break was burned, but the flames menaced Wyatt's farm and "Yendalloch" guest House which is flanked by the Erskine Falls Road. There was grave danger that "Yendalloch" would go but it was saved at night and the fire then passed west to Cherry Tree Creek in Lorne South, where it met country already burned and was finally extinguished.

Taken from garages and other shelters, many motor cars were assembled near the water in front of the township although there was a danger of a spark setting fire to the grass and causing wholesale destruction. One woman, in endeavouring to reach safety, drove through marrum grass which was set alight from the exhaust. The car was destroyed.

FAMILIES DESTITUTE.

A number of families are destitute having practically nothing but the clothes they were wearing when they were forced to run from their homes for safety. Mr K Inderberg, who has a wife and two children, lost between £550 and £600. The home and furnishings, dairy and other equipment and personal effects were destroyed, but fortunately the cows were saved. Insurance will cover about half the loss.

Winter feed for the stock was also destroyed, in addition to about 25 tons of wood.

One of the most distressing cases was that of families from "Benwerrin", the old Coach House which was a home for some of the employees at Babingtons Mill, some miles inland. Mrs J Alford and her three small children were brought to Lorne for safety shortly before the building was destroyed. She was accompanied by Mrs P I Holland her sister, and four children who were staying there. Mr and Mrs Holland have been travelling while Mr Holland sought work, and he was employed temporary in the district. The children were accommodated at the Lorne Hotel for the night and an appeal for clothing was made. In all, seventeen children were given refuge while arrangements were made to clothe and care for them and their mothers. A horse and two cows belonging to Mr Alford were saved but chickens were destroyed. A faithful dog, after attempting to follow his friends to the safety of the seaside, disappeared apparently being trapped and burned.

Mr and Mrs Lorne Smithers, on the Erskine Falls Road, also suffered considerably. Mr Smithers is a returned soldier and lost his home and belongings.

Mr and Mrs J Whitehead, whose home at "Little Colac" was lost, and Mr Morris, caretaker of "Waverley" and his wife, were in need of assistance, as was Ted Payne a cleaner, who lost his tent and slender belongings while assisting to save some children.

The Country Womens Association and other organisations quickly began to arrange assistance and between £80 and £90 was raised at Erskine House for immediate distribution to relieve suffering. First Constable H Mills, of Lorne, was particularly busy, being called upon to carry out innumerable duties. He was assisted by First Constable O C Mason, from Newtown Police Station, who was on special duty at Lorne While Senior Constable H Rankin, Officer in Charge of South Geelong Police station, who had gone to Aireys Inlet to enquire into the drowning fatality there on Friday morning proceeded to Lorne and remained there until Saturday morning.

Anticipating trouble at the Mills, circular saws and other moveable gear had been buried in dug-outs prepared some days earlier. It was fortunate that the Library Hall was saved as flames burned across the grass to the building line. Lorne Cemetery was swept and fences were destroyed. Destruction of pegs may involve some trouble in identification there at a later date.

FIRE FIGHTERS PRAISED.

High praise was given to the organising work of several groups of fire fighters from Geelong, the Ford Motor Company not only sent men, water and equipment, but also provided for the catering of its employees while they were in the fire areas. A B C cafe supplied foodstuffs for about 60 men while Mr Stribling of the Pacific Hotel provided food for about 160. Lorne Fire Brigade carried out sterling work considering the difficulties it had to contend with. The announcement by the Country Fire Brigades Board that it intends to supply a fire motor will be welcomed at the resort.

Already building materials for the erection of the Brigade Headquarters are on the land.

Two visiting nurses at "Quamby" Guest House (126 Mountjoy Parade) gave their services freely throughout the day and attended to many men whose eyes had become effected by the smoke and flames. Women helped in the serving of meals to the fire-fighters while Mr Ernie Murnane assisted at the midnight supper.

On Friday evening the Reverend F Porter, Vicar of All Saints Church of England, Lorne, who had taken a prominent part in firefighting throughout the day, and who subsequently led many moves to secure relief, thanked the volunteers on behalf of the residents of Lorne for their splendid work.

FLAMES STILL BURN.

In the vicinity of the Great Ocean Road between Lorne and Eastern View, the fires continued to burn throughout Friday night and Saturday, in many instances reaching down to the water's edge. Throughout Saturday trees and logs smouldered while columns of smoke rising further inland told of blazes that had not been extinguished. With the cool wind off the ocean, however, the position was not dangerous. Telephone lines to Lorne, which were disorganised when fire broke the communications from Geelong on Friday, were still very busy on Saturday and there was a delay of five hours in the reception of calls between Geelong and Lorne. On Saturday evening there was a 40 minute delay between Geelong and Aireys Inlet.

APPRECIATION OF ASSISTANCE.

On his return from Lorne to Melbourne on Saturday morning Constable C Downes of the motor cycle patrol, who had been on duty for the Transport Regulation Board, expressed the gratitude and thanks of many Lorne people for the assistance rendered in fighting the fires there on Friday. Much of the organising, he said, had been carried out by Mr J Loughnan, a sub inspector of the Transport Regulation Board, while many firms and individuals rendered valuable assistance.

The Ford Motor Company had responded magnificently, providing a truck and much gear, many gallons of water, first-aid kits and a number of men, while Hawkes Bros (hardware merchants) provided a quantity of new stock on a truck and a number of helpers. Fletcher's Motors placed buses at the disposal of the fire-fighters, and ran a special bus from Geelong, while Volum Brewery provided gallons of beer, which was appreciated.

Unemployed men had worked hard to quell the outbreaks and everybody had stood manfully to the task in most unpleasant conditions.

FORTUNE AND MISFORTUNE.

A motorist on the Great Ocean Road between Aireys Inlet and Lorne had visions of his sedan car being completely burned after the rear right-hand wheel had collapsed on Saturday morning. With his wife, the man was driving towards Geelong, when the collapse of the wheel caused the vehicle to come down on the axle.

His dismay was much greater, however, when on looking above, he noticed that the car was directly under the limb of a tree in which a fire was burning, fanned by the cool breeze.

Several other motorists assembled quickly and were preparing to make a combined effort to lift the car, to enable a jack to be inserted under the axle, when, with a crack, the limb fell. It was burning freely and might well have set the vehicle on fire, but it bounced off the bonnet and mudguard on to the roadway, where it was hurriedly drawn away from the danger area. Some sparks began to smoulder in the rubber of the hood, but they were quickly removed and damage was confined to a dent in the left-hand front mudguard. Helpers then lifted the car, enabling the spare wheel to be attached, and a much relieved motorist hurriedly removed his vehicle from under the tree which was still smouldering dangerously.

Consignments for the Beech Forest line were not received at the Geelong railways goods sheds on Saturday owing to the damage done by fire to bridges.

1-2-1939 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

BUSHFIRE POSITION EASIER.

COOLER WEATHER WELCOMED ON ALL FRONTS.

FIVE HOUSES NEAR LORNE DESTROYED ON MONDAY.

ROYAL COMMISSION SITTINGS BEGIN.

From the latest information received last night, immediate danger from bush fires in the Beech Forest, Barwon Downs and Lorne district apparently has passed. All districts reported that the wind from the south west was generally assisting fire-fighters and was not likely to cause any serious damage, but if strong winds develop from almost any quarter considerable damage could be caused.

In the Forrest area, it was estimated by the forestry officer at that town that at least 15,000 acres of State Forest had been burnt, including most of the country between the headwaters of the east and west branches of the Upper Barwon River, and that the damage will amount to thousands of pounds. The position round Beech Forest is considered to be safe unless a strong northerly or westerly wind rises. Large portions of the forest are still smouldering, and all precautions are being taken.

To bring relief to some of those suffering as a result of 10 homes being destroyed at Laver's hill, and eight at Barwon Downs, on Monday, a Red Cross van left Melbourne last night with food, clothing and bedding.

Details of damage caused by the bush fires at Lorne on Monday indicated that although Armistead's St George River Mill escaped destruction the homes of Messrs Parker, Nicholls, Wilson, Scoble, and Dennings were destroyed.

The cottages were built close to the stacks of sawn timber which were seasoning, and although some families succeeded in saving a few articles others did not have time to take anything out before the whole row of dwellings was ablaze.

The mill, which is situated in a hollow, was menaced on two sides and the men had the flames under control when suddenly the fire broke out from another quarter. Fortunately, the mill plant is intact and a gang of men is watching the fires, which are still burning.

Mr and Mrs Neil Smither's dairy farm is not out of danger. The wind, blowing from the south east, is taking the flames up the Erskine Valley, but a fire from the opposite direction is keeping the men very watchful. The children and some of the women were evacuated on Monday and Mr and Mrs Smithers have provided hospitality for some of the homeless. All the men were suffering from eye trouble, but Mrs S Armistead, wife of the owner of the mill, left Lorne for the mill yesterday with lotions.

The Secretary of the Lorne Bush Fire Relief Committee (Miss Hammerton) left yesterday morning with the Reverend F Porter to investigate the needs of the sufferers. Men's clothing, bedding, clean linen, towels, and foodstuffs are the immediate necessities. Parcels sent to Miss Hammerton will be gratefully received. Mr Lorne Scoble, whose wife is in hospital, lost all her belongings, which were all new, while Mr and Mrs Parker and child saved only one or two articles.

The Shire President (Councillor A H Dorman) accompanied by the Shire Secretary (Mr W W Westhorpe), and the Engineer (Mr O T R Carr) visited Lorne after the inspection of the Barwon Downs fire areas. At Lorne steps will be taken to rehabilitate the victims and their families.

Many holiday people were unable to return to their homes on Monday owing to the fires in the vicinity of the Great Ocean Road.

Mr R Whitcombe, of Deloraine, was trapped by the fire as he was driving along the Great Ocean Road with his wife and two children. They all ran to the beach and looked on while their caravan was destroyed.

23-2-1939 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**BUSH FIRE MENACE.****PROTECTION OF LORNE BY FIVE CHAIN BREAKS.****SUPPLY OF SEA WATER.****SUGGESTIONS BY FORESTS OFFICERS TO ROYAL COMMISSION.**

As means of protectinng Lorne against bush fires in future, Mr William MacDougall, Forest officer, suggested to the Bush Fire Committee today that a break of five or six chains wide should be burnt behind the township, and pumps should be installed to raise sea water against fires. There was little water available during the height of the fires in January. Ample volunteers were available, but a force several times the size of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade could have done little on Black Friday.

It is possible that one fire had been started with the object of burning a protective break, but he did not know of any reason for the lighting of the other fires.

He said the Lorne Progress Association had requested the burning of breaks at the end of 1938, but, by reason of the intense heat, it was considered very dangerous. Witness agreed with Mr G Gowans (assisting the Commission) that a bush fire brigade at Lorne would be helpful.

The fire on January 13th, continued witness, would have caused 10 times more damage at Lorne if there had been no break. Someone should have authority to compel property owners to burn off at the correct time.

Judge Stretton: "If a fire break five chains wide from Teddys lookout to Allenvale were made, would it prevent a repetition"?

Mr MacDougall: "Yes".

NO DUG-OUTS AT MILLS.

Edward Lawrence Babington, sawmill owner of Lorne, described a fire which threatened his mill on January 13th. He had made no provision for a dug-out at that mill, but thought the danger was small because of cleared land adjacent to the mill.

Albert Armistead, mill owner of Lorne, described fires which threatened his mill, and alleged that the fires had been lit by vandals.

Mr Gowans: "Was there a dug-out at your mill"?

Witness: "No".

Walter Neil Smithers, grazier, said that more frequent burning off of scrub and waste should be carried out.

Light fires would not cause any serious damage to timber. Autumn, in his opinion, was the best time for burning off. Many mill owners were compelled to burn undergrowth because they could not get at or see timber unless burning off was effected.

Hector Stribling, Hotel keeper of Lorne, said apparently the Government authorities were not taking steps to make the Forestry Commission's fire prohibition Proclamation generally known. Burning off was detrimental to tourist tracks.

Leonard Alsop described the position of five fires which broke out on an area of his property three and a half miles on the Benwerrin side of Lorne on January 9th. He told of attempts which succeeded in protecting the town that day.

Ambrose Alfred Alsop, butcher, of Lorne, gave evidence regarding the combating of fires on January 9th and January 13th. He said patches of scrub still remained unburnt, constituting a further danger. No steps were taken on January 11th and January 12th, when a break could have been burned which would have made Lorne safe. No person with authority to grant permission was available.

Mr Gowans commented on the fact that the Lands Department did not appear to clear land under its jurisdiction.

Henry Gerald Irvine, Forests Officer at Forrest, who gave evidence at Forrest on Tuesday, was recalled. Reference was made to a letter written to him by Lorne Progress Association in 1936, when he exercised control over Lorne district (since then control has passed to the Anglesea Forest Officer), and a statement was made earlier that the association had requested four breaks to be burned.

Irvine said he had burned a break from Erskine River to Stony Creek. He was not responsible for burning fire breaks in the Lorne district, but felt that he had a moral responsibility.

The Judge, indicating that he considered that the Officer had overstepped his authority, said: "I dont see that it is your duty to do that". (The Forest officers territory apparently was overlapping at Lorne in 1936). The Commission then adjourned.

30-9-1944 SATURDAY. MELBOURNE ARGUS.

FOREST AREA SWEEP BY FIRE.

BREAK SAVES ANGLESEA.

GEELONG - FRIDAY.

Fanned into flame by a strong north wind, a fire swept over several miles of forest country to the north of Anglesea today and early in the afternoon the township was threatened. About 3,000 acres of scrub country was burnt.

The fire began about 10-30am and swept through down the Anglesea Creek, causing some damage to the Forest Commission's No 2 plantation. It reached to within a mile of the township, where a break burned back from the No 2 Road stopped further progress in that direction.

As the wind had changed, the danger to this area had passed, but the wind also caused the fire to break out and one section crossed the Anglesea Creek and spread in dense undergrowth to threaten the property of Mrs K Evans. Late in the evening the fire was burning slowly in the undergrowth, but as the wind had dropped it was considered to be under control.

During the fire the Lorne and Barwon Heads Fire Brigades and Anglesea Bush Fire Brigade, with volunteers from Geelong (including a party of Royal Australian Air Force men) Lorne and Barwon Heads fought the fire with motor pumps. The Forest commission sent a large motor pump from Melbourne.

30-12-1944 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

BRIGADES TO JOIN NEW AUTHORITY.

WILL DEREGISTER AT END OF SUMMER.

Despite their strong disapproval of the Country Fire Authority Act, members of the Victorian Bush Fire Brigades' Association decided yesterday to work under it this summer, because of the urgent need for protecting food production, rural dwellings and properties. but unless the Government undertakes to revise the Act in co-operation with the Association's Executive the resolutions to deregister carried by the district councils at recent meetings will be put into effect immediately after the summer.

Between now and the end of the summer the Association will campaign to bring about desired ammendments to the Act.

The association will endeavour to have the new authority constituted into two sections so that rural and reticulated areas can each have their separate control.

1-1-1945 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

50 ACRES OF PINES BURNT AT ANGLESEA.

GEELONG - SUNDAY.

Two thousand acres of the Anglesea district were swept by fire which broke out on Friday and 50 acres of pine plantation and 1,000 acres of wattles were destroyed.

The main pine plantation was not damaged. The home of Mr MacDougall, Forestry Officer, caught fire, but was saved as a result of the efforts of the volunteer fire-fighters from Torquay, Aireys Inlet and Lorne.

The fire smouldered throughout Saturday, but on Sunday morning it was considered safe. About 2,500 tons of firewood were destroyed.

When Anglesea was threatened late on Friday night many campers and some residents became alarmed and moved their belongings towards Aireys Inlet.

2-2-1951 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

STRONG WINDS AGAIN WHIP UP OTWAY FIRES.

LORNE OUTBREAK CONTROLLED.

Two thousand acres of bush and scrub were destroyed in the Lorne fires today, which penetrated up to the outskirts of the town this afternoon. The blaze has a front of about two and a half miles, and is centred between the George and She-Oak Rivers. About three hundred fire-fighters assisted surrounding rural brigades.

First Constable F R Bonsey, of Lorne, said tonight that the fire was now under control, and that breaks were now being burnt to prevent any spread into the Otway Forest and the Lorne township.

4-4-1953 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

FIRE AT LORNE.

About six acres of heavily-timbered scrub were destroyed by a bushfire which began in the Erskine Valley, two miles north of Lorne yesterday. The fire, which was assisted by a northerly wind, was eventually brought under control by about 50 firemen and volunteers.

6-8-1957 TUESDAY. THE HERALD.

CHILDREN MARCHED TO SAFETY.

Children at Lorne State School were marched to safety when a heater exploded and set fire to two classrooms today. None of the children were harmed. The fire destroyed the detached weatherboard classrooms which were installed only recently.

The heater exploded while the children, aged between 12 and 14, were in the classrooms. Teachers marched the children out quietly while other teachers fought the fire.

The local Fire Brigade was quickly on the scene but could not save the buildings.

7-8-1957 WEDNESDAY. THE AGE.**PUPILS ESCAPE SCHOOL BLAZE.**

19 children were rushed from the classroom seconds before it burst into flames at Lorne Central School yesterday.

The fire, which started from a heater, destroyed two classrooms, a staff room and a storeroom.

The rooms, which formed the central school wing, had been occupied for only two weeks.

Damage was estimated at more than £10,000.

The fire destroyed all desks, cupboards, school books, a tape recorder and a library.

About 150 panes of glass were shattered.

A twenty year old school master, Mr Brian Morgan, ushered the children from the classroom, were the fire began, just after they had returned from the morning play break.

"The children were about to sit down when I saw smoke billowing from the room", Mr Morgan said.

"I rushed them outside, and then with two other teachers grabbed fire extinguishers. As we tried to get near the fire we were forced back by flames and smoke".

The fire, fanned by a strong north wind, took only half an hour to destroy the building.

Several girls cried when their classrooms were destroyed.

The pupils at the school were given a half day holiday.

7-8-1957 WEDNESDAY. THE SUN.**THIS WAS LORNE'S NEW £10,000 SCHOOL.**

This is all that the fire yesterday left of the new £10,000 section at Lorne State School.

A heater flue is believed to have caused the fire.

The fire, which started while the children were at morning recess, destroyed the new 4 roomed section, which had been in use for only 2 weeks.

Smoke was seen curling from under a storeroom door soon after the class had reassembled.

The children, aged between 11 and 13, filed out quietly.

The main building, holding 155 children, was also evacuated.

Members of the Lorne Volunteer Fire Brigade, who answered the alarm, were hampered by poor water pressure.

Portion of the eaves of the main building caught alight, but this fire was soon put out.

In addition to the detached building, new desks and classroom equipment, a tape recorder, portion of the school library, pupils books and sporting equipment were also destroyed.

The head master, Mr J Stevens, said later that pupils from the two forms would be given other accommodation in the school.

Bright spot, from the childrens point of view - one unscheduled half holiday.

31-12-1961 SUNDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

NEW YEARS EVE FIRE.

On New Years Eve 1961, at 1-35pm, a fire was reported on Crown land at North Lorne, believed lit by persons unknown. The fire was quickly contained and it was left to the Forestry to completely black out the area.

20-2-1961 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

LORNE FIRES.

At Lorne on Saturday firemen were called to fight several outbreaks of fire in forest country. The fires were confined by Rural Firemen and Forests Commission employees to small patches of bush along the Erskine Falls road and near the Lorne-Deans Marsh Road. A further fire which began near Cherry Tree Creek, near Lorne, yesterday is being investigated by Police. This fire, although it did not spread over a large area was in rugged mountainous country, making it impossible to get water or fire units close enough to fight it. Late last night it was under control. It was patrolled throughout the night. The Regional Officer of the C F A (Mr S M Taylor) said it was essential that the fire was extinguished by today.

A NUMBER OF OTHER REPORTS CONTAINED THE INFORMATION THAT GAVE RISE TO THE ASSUMPTION THAT A FIRE-BUG WAS ACTIVE IN THE AREA - USUALLY AT WEEKENDS.

17-1-1962 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

HOMES REPORTED ON FIRE IN OCEAN ROAD OUTBREAK.

Several homes were reported to be burning last night at Wye River and Separation Creek following a bitter day-long fight against a bushfire which raged on a four mile front.

Just before midnight, Wye River had been completely cut off, fires burning across the road on each side of the township, which was being showered by debris and ash. For two hours, fire-fighters battled untiringly to save the settlement of Separation Creek, nine miles south of Lorne, yesterday afternoon, after the fire had spread six miles along the Great Ocean Road from Mt Defiance, with a front of about four miles.

EVACUATED.

Desperately, the fire-fighters fought the blaze as it almost circled four of the small cluster of holiday homes, while residents of Wye River, a quarter of a mile away, evacuated their homes and stood watching the great column of smoke billowing above them.

A slight drop in the north-easterly wind helped the fire-fighters to overcome temporarily the menace at Separation creek, but the wind changed and the blaze started to come in again from the mainland.

Inspector K McKenzie, Officer in Charge of No 2 (Country) Police Division, who was directing the operations with Station Officer N O'Halloran, called for more volunteers, and within three hours car and truckloads were arriving from Colac, Torquay, Geelong and other towns. By yesterday evening, hundreds of acres of Crown Land and woodlands had been claimed by the flames.

JUMPED GULLIES.

Fire-fighters were unable to get to the front of the blaze in the afternoon as the flames were jumping ridges and gullies hundreds of yards in front of them. Every available piece of fire-fighting equipment was rushed to Wye River and Separation Creek, but there was still a shortage, as the more serious fires on the other side of Melbourne had claimed much of the equipment.

The fire started about 6am but the alarm was not given until about an hour later. The fire started at the foot of Mt Defiance and crept gradually to the top, and by 11-30am it had spread inland about two miles.

ENGULFED.

A few hours later, the fire was rapidly spreading towards Separation Creek and Wye River, and the Great Ocean Road was engulfed in flames. The flames jumped the road and set alight to bushes on the beach front, and falling rocks made it a dangerous thoroughfare.

At this stage, Police who were under the Direction of First Constable B Matthews of Lorne, who was first on the fire scene, closed the road and allowed only fire-fighters along it.

INQUIRY.

Last night, four detectives led by Senior Detective John Pedley arrived at the scene of the fire and began investigating its origin.

The Geelong Branch of the Red Cross has appealed to the public for transport, to carry first aid equipment, provisions and Red Cross personell to the Wye River area. Offers of aid are expected to pour into D24 Geelong today.

18-1-1962 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**WYE RIVER FIRE.**

Wye River and Separation Creek are out of serious danger from the two-day bushfire that has travelled 13 miles along the Great Ocean Road from Mount Defiance, and is now burning seven miles inland. A change of wind could turn the blaze toward either Forrest or the two seaside settlements, but fire-fighters are confident that they have the blaze under control.

FORREST ALERTED.

The town of Forrest has been alerted. However, on Tuesday night Wye River and Separation Creek were desperately fighting the fierce blaze, and as fire-fighters said yesterday, "only a miracle saved us".

WYE RIVER LOSS.

The fire destroyed seven homes, two caravans and a garage at Wye River, but circled Separation Creek, a quarter of a mile away, although several houses there were within yards of the blaze. Late reports yesterday indicated that the inland fire was practically under control, and Forestry Commission and fire officers have a bulldozer and jeep assisting them in the thickly wooded area.

GOING BACK.

Tired, but cheerful, fire-fighters, who only a few hours earlier had evacuated Wye River and Separation Creek, were busy assisting people to get their furniture and belongings back to their homes yesterday morning, as large columns of smoke, from the fire seven miles away, loomed overhead.

Fire-fighters are still wondering how they managed to prevent the fire from engulfing Separation Creek, and later, Wye River. The fire, which started at the foot of Mount Defiance, travelled 13 miles along the coastal road before sweeping inland. It destroyed about 5,000 acres, but no stock were killed.

HOLIDAY HOMES.

Apart from one home which had been on the site for more than 50 years, the seven houses were holiday homes. They belonged to the Munroe, Yeoman, Williams, Wills-Cook, Yates, Tresize and Riddle families. The caravans were owned by the Pragnell and Fisher families.

Senior Constable Rayner said that apart from the fire itself, one of the biggest handicaps was sightseers. Yesterday hundreds of cars were turned back at Wye River by Highway Patrol Units. Only people with business in Wye River were allowed to cross the bridge.

INQUIRIES.

Geelong detectives, led by Senior-Detective J Pedley, arrived at Lorne yesterday and with First-Constable Bain Matthews, of Lorne, started investigations into the origin of the fire.

First-Constable Matthews said that several people had been interviewed.

In charge of operations yesterday was Station Officer N O'Halloran, who relieved Inspector McKenzie.

19-1-1962 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**WYE RIVER FIRE STILL BURNING, BUT HEADING INLAND.**

Last night no homes or property were in danger from the still serious bushfire burning along a seven-mile front nearly two miles inland of Wye River, about 10 miles south-west of Lorne.

The fire, being fought mainly at present by Forests Commission firemen and employees, is creeping through rugged forests. Little rain has fallen in the area, normally one of the wettest in the State. The fire, which is still serious, is the only one of consequence in the district.

Earlier yesterday, a fire danger was reported when a southerly wind fanned a section of the fire near Separation Creek, but this was controlled to some degree.

VOLUNTEERS HOME.

Most volunteers have been sent home and permanent firemen and Forestry Commission employees have been retained. Fire-fighters said yesterday that they did not consider the fire to be of any real danger unless a strong wind sprang up.

INACCESSIBLE.

Most of the fire-fighting is being done by hand, as the fire burns slowly in almost inaccessible land. Bulldozers have been sent to the area to try and clear paths, but trouble is being found in moving them through the heavily-timbered forests. A fire flared up about a mile inland behind the Wye River Post-Office shortly before lunch, but was controlled later in the afternoon.

Yesterday Police began closing all roads to the bushfire areas and will keep them closed until after the weekend. The Police Commissioner (Mr Porter) said this would enable fire victims and fire-fighters to mop up. Already there have been complaints that the work of cleaning up and of fighting fires has been hindered by hundreds of sight-seers driving through the devastated areas.

KOALAS IN DANGER.

The Director of Fisheries and Wildlife Department said today there was evidence that wildlife losses had been heavy. He said that animals such as koalas were particularly vulnerable to fire. He said that safety of koalas in the Wye River area was causing the Department some concern. He said that nothing could be done for them as they would be scattered over a very wide area of heavy bush and interference with fire-fighting and risk to human life was unwarranted.

20-1-1962 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**GOVERNMENT PARTY SEE BURNT OTWAYS.**

As a result of a cabinet meeting called to discuss the ravages of bushfires, a ministerial party toured the areas of Separation Creek and Wye River yesterday. They were met at Wye River by the President of the Otway Shire, the Shire Secretary and a Councillor from the Winchelsea Shire.

The residents of these fire-stricken townships appreciate the action from the building contractors who gave their services in repairing a large number of tanks which had been axed during the height of the fire as a measure to prevent their homes being burnt down. Yesterday the water tanks of the Otway Shire and the Country Roads Board were proceeding to refill these.

MAKING BREAKS.

The Forestry Commission's employees are now endeavouring to bulldoze, and if possible, burn a break between the Cumberland River and Kennett River to prevent the fire which is still burning steadily in the hills from spreading.

Kennett River itself, though not endangered at present, is still in the danger zone should winds again bring the smouldering fire to life and sweep it in this direction.

OCEAN ROAD CLOSED.

The Great Ocean Road between Lorne and Apollo Bay will be closed today and Sunday and only people with essential business along that section of the highway will be allowed through. Geelong's Police Chief said this yesterday when he warned sight-seers to keep away from the bushfire areas of Mount Defiance, Separation Creek and Wye River. Members of the highway patrol will be in charge of road blocks and every driver will be asked to state his business along the Great Ocean Road. He also said that hundreds of cars containing sight-seers could cause a road hazard along the cliff highway, and if the fires broke out again, essential transport would not be able to have a clear run through.

During the peak of the bushfires at Wye river and Separation Creek on Tuesday night, hundreds of sight-seers handicapped fire-fighters by parking their vehicles within yards of the blaze.

27-4-1962 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**FIRES ENDANGER LORNE TODAY, FANNED BY NORTH WINDS.**

About 80 fire-fighters and Forests Commission Officers are battling two bushfires which are about four miles from Lorne, heading for the township. The position is expected to become even more serious today, as a further two days of dry conditions and gusty winds are expected.

About 10pm the main fire jumped one of the tracks which had been prepared during the afternoon. The fire-fighters said that all of their days work had been undone.

LORNE BLACKED OUT.

Late yesterday northerly and westerly winds fanned the flames on fronts a mile wide towards the township. Lorne is almost blacked out with smoke.

The Forests Commission Officer (Mr E Caddy) said last night that the wind had died down in the late afternoon but had sprung up again at dusk and continued for several hours. He said that if the northerly or westerly winds resumed today, Lorne itself would be in danger. Firefighting equipment, including bulldozers has been directed to the danger areas by Mr Caddy. The main fire is blazing in the Erskine Basin while the more serious fire is moving towards the coast from Mount Cowley.

The Lorne population and a few campers do not appear unduly worried. About 72 hours prior to the outbreak there were more than 15,000 people in Lorne. It is believed to have been the largest crowd of holiday-makers in the history of the township. Three families near the Mount Cowley Road evacuated their homes yesterday afternoon. Blazing trees have since fallen across the road and closed it.

At night, as residents slept, fire-fighters and Police were prepared to spring into action. They expect daylight will create a serious situation as the blazes are fanned by strong winds which sprang up about 12-30am. Police units are standing by near the scene of the fire to relay messages to Lorne Police and Geelong D 24.

It has been estimated that about 2,000 acres of scrub and bushland have been burnt. Ryan's property near the Erskine Falls Road was in danger today as fires burnt fiercely towards it, only half a mile distant.

Gusty northerly winds have been estimated at a 45mph velocity, and are fanning the flames as they swept through the gullies. With the heat of coming day, the danger is expected to increase several fold, and anxious watchers are constantly on the alert.

28-4-1962 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

CHANGE IN THE WEATHER BRINGS RELIEF.

A sudden and unexpected change in the weather brought relief to Lorne's 1200 residents and more than 100 fire-fighters yesterday when it was officially announced at 11-15am that the township was no longer in danger of being engulfed by bushfires.

For more than 12 hours Lorne lay under a smoke pall and the smell of burning timber, but last night residents retired with the knowledge that the blaze, which at one time was only two miles from their doors, was burning further inland.

And instead of the smoke pall, they welcomed low rain clouds hovering above the town. Since 2pm on Thursday, when a blaze which started at Pennyroyal was classified as serious, fire-fighters, Police and residents were afraid that strong northerly winds would fan the main bushfire towards Lorne.

After fighting the fire on three fronts on Thursday night and early yesterday the fire-fighters were told at 6am yesterday that the forecast for the day was:- north to north-west winds of 25mph with gusts of 30-35mph, and a temperature of 85 degrees.

For more than three hours they waited...waiting to see whether the forecast would prove to be right and hamper their chances of saving Lorne.

READY TO EVACUATE.

While Forest Commission Ranger Eric Caddy and his men and fire-fighters from local and surrounding districts prepared to tackle the main blaze in Erskine Falls Basin, arrangements were being made to prepare for the evacuation of the town.

Commandant Mrs R Hammond, of Red Cross, organised teams of Red Cross workers to move the aged, sick and young from the town if the need arose.

They also set up a casualty base at St Cuthbert's Presbyterian Church. The police courtesy car, with its loud speaker was also standing by to broadcast instructions. However the weather forecast proved to be wrong.

Westerly winds took the place of northerly winds and a cool change arrived about 10-45am. At 11-15am Mr Caddy announced that Lorne was now out of danger and the fire was burning six miles inland.

At about the same time another fire broke out at the Big Hill Creek, on the Geelong side of Lorne, about half a mile from the Great Ocean Road, but this did not prove to be dangerous.

The main fire, which threatened Lorne at one stage travelled seven miles in four hours, but slowed down during Thursday night. Strong winds early yesterday did not help the fire to increase its advance on Lorne to a great extent, but it got within about two miles of the town.

6,000 ACRES SWEPT.

The three fires - the other two burning about seven to ten miles inland - destroyed more than 6,000 acres of valuable forest land. No livestock was killed and only a few old fences were destroyed.

16-8-1962 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE BRIGADE.

To the residents of Lorne and surrounding districts we commend the Lorne Fire Brigade's appeal for funds which opens this week.

The object is the acquisition of "Radio equipment".

It is a long time since the brigade has issued an appeal for money, but we are faced with the necessity if we are to maintain full efficiency. Over the past few years radio has become an integral part of the Fire Service, and to Lorne which is practically isolated as far as other brigades are concerned, it becomes a vital necessity.

The time lag while a man is despatched to get fresh or extra men can mean the difference between safety and disaster. If extra equipment is needed from outside the Lorne area it must be obtained with the shortest possible delay.

Powerful and efficient "Radio equipment" is the only answer.

Remember, YOUR donation may one day save YOUR HOME ! so support your Fire Brigade.

Noel Rogers, - Captain,
"Lorne Rural Fire Brigade".

4-10-1962 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE.**

The Lorne Fire Brigades Appeal for funds for the purpose of acquiring radio equipment has now passed the £300 mark, and although the brigade is very happy with the progress of the appeal, it states that at least 75% of the amount raised has been contributed by house and land owners who are not residents of Lorne.

We are informed that the brigade is concerned at the apparent lack of interest displayed by the resident population who should realise what a magnificent job of work the brigade has performed over the years.

Radio equipment is a modern "must" in fire fighting, especially in terrain such as that in which Lorne is situated. The appeal is not yet closed, and we take the liberty of reminding local residents and the business community generally that by their contribution to this most worthy cause they can still bring the appeal to a successful financial conclusion.

11-10-1962 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE APPEAL.**

We draw the attention of our readers to the appeal for funds for the acquisition of radio equipment for fire fighting.

The value of such equipment when our brigade is working in isolated areas should be beyond question.

An approximate amount of £150 is still needed to reach the target sum by the end of October.

This should be readily forthcoming, remember, the amount you subscribe may be instrumental in saving your home or business.

1-11-1962 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**NEW FIRE UNIT.**

On Monday October 8th, the Lorne Fire Brigade had its strength augmented by the addition of a new unit.

This a six cylinder four wheel drive Jeep, specially equipped as a "go anywhere" unit for firefighting. It has a 200 gallon tank, with a Briggs & Stratton motor pump to supply two high pressure hoses. An excellent suction unit also allows it to pump from still waters such as rivers or dams with equal efficiency.

Arrangements have been completed for an A W A Seafarer 20 Radio to be installed in this unit and also for the purchase of a new and powerful A W A Base set to be installed in the Fire Station.

The cost of these two sets will exceed £350, and as there is still another set to be obtained for the Austin Urban unit we hope the local residents will show as much pride in their Brigade as the Country Fire Authority has shown by the supply of the new unit. This pride will be best shown by the successful consummation of our appeal.

The official handing over ceremony will be held later, as at the present time Officers under Captain Noel Rogers are busy getting the required 1,000 on the speedo for the first servicing, and also familiarising themselves with the handling of the unit. Once all radios have been installed it is hoped to hold an evening when local residents can inspect the equipment and see the Brigade in action.

15-11-1962 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE BRIGADE.

The Lorne Fire Brigade has acquired two mobile wireless sets for its units.

A large set which it proposed to install at the Fire Station has been superceded by the A W A with a new model, which is not yet on the market.

For the time being it is proposed to install one of the mobile units at the Fire Station, and the other set on the Jeep. When the new A W A model is available it will be installed at the Station, and the temporary set will go into the Urban unit.

The Brigade has arranged to engage in burning off on the Seaford Estate right up to the Country Roads Board camp.

Much of this area is Council land, and the Brigade will be reimbursed by the Council for the burning of.

Where the land is privately owned, the owners have been circulated by the Council with a view to their co-operation. The burning off will be also regarded as fire exercises.

Both vehicles will be employed, and a full complement of firemen will be required.

FIRE BRIGADE APPEAL SHORT OF TARGET.

The Fire Brigade Appeal for the installation of radio equipment for its units officially closed at the end of October. The treasurer Mr D Crossley, has provided us with the following figures.

Receipts.....£434/ 8/ 6

Expenditure:

Circulars.....£ 11/18/ 6

Envelopes.....£ 2/18/ 6

Postage.....£ 15/ 2/ 6

2 Seafarer radios
at £144 each

£317/19/ 6

This leaves a balance of £116/9/0 and, as a new and more powerful Radio Unit is projected for the Base Station, it can be seen that that amount will be inadequate. The target of £500 was not reached by an amount of £65/11/6, and the brigade is hopeful that a further response from its well wishers will eventuate.

13-12-1962 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE.**

In view of the fact that much public money has been donated to the Lorne Fire Brigade for the purchase of Radio equipment, the Brigade has decided to hold an open day at the Station on Sunday December 16th from 2 till 5pm.

All vehicles will be operating around the town, and local people will have the opportunity of seeing the use to which the radio equipment is put and how the control room operates.

A welcome is extended to all residents and visitors to avail themselves of this opportunity.

10-1-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE.**

A suggestion has been put to the local brigade that it join the Winchelsea Group under one Group Officer.

Nothing concrete has eventuated, the offer being merely under consideration.

The main factor behind this move would be to co-ordinate fire services in the event of a major fire emergency, with a radio network setup throughout the area.

17-1-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**GEORGE RIVER FIRE.**

A fire broke out in the George River Valley on Sunday morning last.

Two units of the Lorne Fire Brigade and the Forestry unit went into action.

The outbreak occurred about one mile up the George River, and prompt action confined the blaze to the bottom of the gully.

In the opinion of the Brigade the fire was of human origin; possibly a lighted match carelessly thrown away started the conflagration.

It was fortunate that the Brigade acted quickly and in its usual competent manner, was able to restrict the fire to the valley. Had it reached the hills a dangerous situation could have eventuated. About 2 acres were burnt out.

The rain which followed later on in the day eased the position considerably in regard to fire hazard.

28-2-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE AT THE TIP.**

At approximately 4-45pm on Sunday last the temptation of so much inflammable material at the local tip proved too much for somebody with a spare match, and so all the firefighting forces in the town found a very pleasant Sunday afternoon develop into a very unpleasant one.

The fire was soon under control, but, as is usual in this type of fire, it was just frustrating, as it consisted of just pouring thousands of gallons of water onto great heaps of rubbish which are practically impossible to put out.

Provided the weather remains reasonable the best bet at the time of going to press seems to be to patrol the area and let the fire burn itself out.

In attendance were the Lorne Fire Brigade under Captain N Rogers, and the Forestry units under Forestry Officer Eric Caddy.

It appears that very soon something will have to be done about "tip fires" throughout the State. They are deemed to be the responsibility of the Council concerned, but in this case no Council employee took any part in the proceedings.

7-3-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE AT THE SHE-OAK.**

At about 11-20pm on Saturday last a fire was reported at the She-Oak River on the Lorne side of the stream. Arrangements were immediately put in hand and fire fighters were on the job at 6-00am on Sunday, organised by Mr Eric Caddy, of the Forestry Commission.

The terrain was very difficult, and prohibited the use of vehicular equipment, the work being done by hand.

The day was cool and damp, and the fire was confined to the ridge between the She-Oak and the George Rivers.

About 20 to 25 acres of light scrub were burned out.

Fire fighters were on the spot until 4-00pm on Sunday, safeguarding against further outbreaks, and a visit of inspection was made on Monday morning.

We are advised by Mr Caddy that no evidence was forthcoming of any camp fire having been lit, and the only conclusion to be drawn is that the fire was caused by the careless or deliberate use of a match.

FIRE, ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER AND WATER.

The Lorne Fire Brigade was inspected on Monday February 18th by Assistant Chief Officer Clarrie Howe and Regional Officer Max Taylor.

After the inspection of the Brigade, under Captain Noel Rogers, Assistant Chief Officer Howe gave a very informative on recent legislation concerning all aspects of fire prevention and suppression.

Regional Officer Taylor then passed on a message from the Chairman of the Country Fire Authority, Captain H Barnes stating that the Country Fire Authority was greatly impressed by the manner in which the two Lorne Brigades worked together. He said that the Brigade was unique in this respect, and could well serve as a model for the amalgamation of other Brigades throughout the State.

Commenting on the new Radio Control Room at Lorne both Officers were impressed, and stated that it was at least equal to the best in the State.

Grateful thanks are due to Fireman Alan Schram for the amount of time and work he so unselfishly donated to this setup.

To round off the night the Brigade took the Austin unit to the highest point of the water supply in George street to test the flow of water.

It was a frightening state of affairs to find that even at that late hour the supply of water was sufficient to send only a dribble through 150' of hose. This was improved by the use of the pump, but the supply was still meagre, and restricted operations to the use of one hose only. An actual gauge test showed a pressure of only 5lbs per square inch at the hydrant.

On returning to the Station the Brigade listened to a very informative address on Liquid Petroleum Gas which is becoming so popular in holiday homes.

Captain Rogers expressed the Brigade's pleasure at having the two inspecting Officers present on the one night, and thanked them for their valuable information. An excellent evening concluded with supper.

(Re the above statement on water pressure, The Chairman of the Water Trust, Councillor C R Tune, informs us that the position is known to the Trust, and plans for a water storage in this area have been submitted to the Authorities. When approval for the scheme is received, and the necessary finance arranged, the matter will be attended to promptly.

In the meantime the Trust asks for a continuance of care in the use of water by residents in the district.

With the building of homes in upper George street the present position was inevitable. The Editor.)

14-3-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE AT ALLENVALE.

At 11-35pm on Thursday 7th March, the Lorne Fire Brigade received a call to a fire at Sharp Bros timber mill at Allenvale. The Rural Tanker was despatched to the scene, and later the Urban Pumper was called out by radio to facilitate the suppression of the fire.

The outbreak was confined to the area of the sawdust hopper, the supports of which were almost burned through, causing some very anxious moments when the hopper itself commenced to slip.

However, quick work by Brigade members retrieved the situation, the fire eventually being beaten at 2-00am.

Damage was estimated at £500. It was heartening to the Brigade to receive the congratulations of the mill manager, Mr Jim Dale, for a job well done. The fire was attended by 20 members of the Brigade under Captain Noel Rogers.

2-5-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**BUSH FIRE.**

On Wednesday night the Lorne Fire Brigade, under Captain N Rogers was called to a fire 3 miles inland from Big Hill Creek, the fight being conducted all night in conjunction with the Forestry Workers.

It was established that the fire had been lit in 4 separate places adjacent to the jeep track which runs to Benwerrin. Fresh tyre marks were in evidence, and it was considered almost conclusively that the fires had been deliberately lit. The fires had been started on both sides of the track about a quarter of a mile apart.

Firemen battled for about ten hours to bring the fire under control and the Forestry Commission spent another 2 days following up in the area to guard against further outbreaks.

The new Jeep, was used for the first time, and fully justified itself as a great asset.

Tribute should be paid to the work of the Brigade in rugged terrain in confining the outbreak to some 60 acres.

13-6-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE AT LORNE.**

A house in Charles Street, Lorne, owned by Len Morrissey, was completely destroyed by fire on Tuesday night. The blaze was first noticed by Frank Ridgeway and John Osborne from Mr Ridgeway's home next door.

Osborne played a garden hose on the front of the house while Ridgeway ran for the Brigade.

It happened to be practice night, so many Brigade members were present at the Station.

The fire had such a hold that it was impossible to save the house, which we understand was insured.

Mrs Morrissey and the girls were away and Mr Morrissey had left for Colac about an hour before the outbreak.

No actual cause for the fire has been ascertained.

22-8-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE.**

The Annual Dinner of the Lorne Fire Brigade was held at the Lorne Hotel being well attended by Fireman and ex Fireman.

Visiting Firemen and officials included the Chairman of the Country Fire Authority, Mr R T Seaton, Chief Officer A W Larkins, Regional Officer Max Taylor, District Officer W Harrison, Station Officer Harold James, Secretary Jack Barrett of Geelong, Captain John Walker and Ex Captain S Begley (Colac), Ex R/O Lawrey, Geelong, and Mechanic Geoff Hicks (Warrnambool).

The Shire Council was represented by President G Crabbe, Secretary W K Mathison and Councillors J Hickey and C Tune. Forestry Officer, Eric Caddy was also present. Representatives of local organisations attended also Constable B Matthews, Don Daff (Lands Department), F Jackson (State Electricity Commission), Cliff Bennett (Post Master Generals department), and Len Allen (Water Trust). Noel Rogers was Chairman.

The Brigade wish to thank the management and staff of the Lorne Hotel for the excellence of the dinner and service.

Mr Seaton, as former Fire Protection Officer for the Forestry Commission gave special praise to the wonderful coordination that existed between the Brigade and the Commission. Chief Officer Larkins gave a comprehensive report on his trip to New Zealand to study advanced forms of Fire Training Colleges in Wellington, and stressed the need for similar methods in Australia.

Great strides had been made in replacing old vehicles with modern equipment in every town possible since the inception of the Country Fire Authority in 1944, but a training college to keep firemen up to date with new problems is essential.

The Chairman of the Authority presented Fireman Don Stewart with the "Long Service Badge" and Fireman Alan Schram with his 25 year clasp.

Both suitably responded, Stewart remarking "you always remember the good times and not the bad".

He hoped for another twelve years in the Brigade as happy as the last twelve.

Captain Wal Grant called for a round of applause for the Chairman, after which the company adjourned to the lounge.

On Saturday Mr Seaton and Mr Taylor inspected the Fire Station and equipment.

The Chief Officer expressed pleasure at the efficiency displayed, and said that he would like to be able to take the modern control room, which had been set up by Lorne members, around Victoria on a truck and show it to other brigades.

23-10-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE BRIGADE.

The business of firefighting offers excitement, and every fire brings a challenge.

In our district fires can also mean a great deal of hard work, sometimes dangerous work. Perhaps the greatest reward for any member of a volunteer fire brigade is satisfaction in the performance of a useful community service.

The personalities involved and the efficiency of our local brigade should be the concern of all members of the community.

The Bi-Annual election of officers in the Lorne Rural Fire Brigade was held last month with the following results:-

Captain W Grant; 1st Lieutenant E Armistead; 2nd Lieutenant N Rogers; 3rd Lieutenant N Clissold; 4th Lieutenant M Graham; Equipment Officer R Dickson; Communications Officer A Schram Senr; Secretary L Jarratt.

These Officers take over their duties as from November 1st.

Officers in the Urban section were elected last April, their Offices became effective on July 1st.

Results:- Captain W Grant; Lieutenant N Rogers; Foreman E Armistead; Equipment Officer R Dickson; Secretary L Jarratt.

Our Fire Brigade is unique in its combination of Urban and Rural equipment and firefighting organisation.

What appears to be a complicated arrangement on paper works smoothly in practice. In fact the Country Fire Authority is urging Brigades in other parts of Victoria to combine as Lorne has done.

In the period between July 1962 and June 1963, 38 fires were fought, 13 being in the town area and 25 in the bush.

The average turnout at bushfires was 9 men, and the fires in the town 13, the total number of hours spent in actual firefighting was 621.

We have by far the most active brigade in the No 7 Fire Control Region, followed by Ocean Grove then Anglesea. During the year Captain Grant has been carrying out regular Tuesday night practice with the younger members.

At the December meeting it was decided that the training program should be stepped up, incorporating the use of both Rural and Urban vehicles, Radio Practice and Map Reading, and that it be held on Monday nights for a trial period.

The interest shown by so many of our members has amply rewarded the Officers for their time and trouble, these sessions having been a spectacular success.

The two new radio sets which were installed in the vehicles prior to last fire season have proven themselves with a year of reliable and efficient service. Their cost, £250, was raised by gifts from residents and ratepayers. We have a third and more powerful, set ordered for use in the fire station.

The cost, £230, will be financed partly from the remainder of monies raised last year together with some Brigade funds. We much appreciate the great interest shown by so many of our citizens and organisations, and thank all for their practical and financial support.

29-10-1963 TUESDAY.

NEW GROUP MEETS.

A meeting called on 29th October by Regional Officer Max Taylor elected the following officers:-

Group Officer.....	Alan Schram, Lorne
First Deputy.....	Max Gerlach, Anglesea
Second Deputy.....	Des Wilson, Aireys Inlet
Communications Officer.....	Alan Schram, Lorne
Group Secretary.....	Lyn Jarratt, Lorne

The newly formed Group was able to have a couple of practice runs before Christmas when units attended fires occurring in the area.

30-10-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE BRIGADE.

Mr A W Larkins, Chief of the Country Fire Authority has emphasised the potential fire danger from the growth of grass and shrubs as a result of the recent unusual weather.

It has been difficult to carry out burning off operations because of the incessant rain.

He states that with warm weather the seasonal danger could be early this year because of the lush undergrowth.

Captains of Rural Fire Brigades report a tremendous improvement in fire precautions on the lived-on properties. But the properties of absentee owners provide the major hazards.

Mr Larkins said that firefighting plans had been streamlined by moulding Victoria's 1240 Urban and Rural brigades into 108 brigade groups.

Group Officers would co-ordinate activities and communications between brigades under their command so that fires could be attacked collectively instead of by individual Brigades.

He stated that the safest place during a bush fire should be in a person's own home, if proper precautions had been taken before the summer. This is sound logic, and should be acted upon by every property owner.

21-11-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE BRIGADE.

The Lorne Fire Brigade has been invited to take part in the State Wide Disaster exercises, to be held in the Dandenongs on Sunday November 24th. Captain will take a party up in the Jeep.

40 acres of scrub at Aireys Inlet were burned out on Tuesday November 12th, the brigade being on the spot in its usual efficient manner.

The brigade was also called to the home of Mrs Lambell, fat having caught fire in an electric stove. Prompt action by Mrs Lambell in smothering the flames is considered to have saved the home from the danger of catching alight.

28-11-1963 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE AT WYE RIVER.

Damage estimated at about £5,000 was caused when an engine room and two motors were destroyed in a fire at the Wye Valley Camping Area on Thursday night of last week.

The camping area is about mid way between Lorne and Apollo Bay.

The fire was noticed at 7-00pm in the evening and two units of 15 men from Lorne under Captain Grant, attended the fire, but were unable to save any of the equipment.

The property is owned by Mr & Mrs Illig, of Wye River and was only partly covered with insurance.

6-1-1964 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**ALL 50 BRIGADES FIGHT FIRES ACUTE DANGER.**

In one of their busiest days for many years each of the 50 odd Fire Brigades in the Seventh Rural Fire Region here were called upon to fight outbreaks of fire throughout the district yesterday. Fires occurred at Lorne, Werribee, St Leonards, Moriac, Leopold and Ocean Grove.

Lorne was the hardest hit area with two outbreaks being reported, one of them the largest being experienced in the region for the day. Almost 200 acres of Forests Commission territory near Lorne caught alight in inaccessible country and firemen spent until nightfall quelling the flames.

Although the fire was under control last night, firemen were still watching the area to prevent any resurgence. The other fire at Lorne, although smaller, still caused considerable damage, and Police are investigating the cause of the blaze.

7-1-1964 TUESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**STAND-BY TO MEET THREAT OF FIRE AT LORNE.**

Forest Commission and Country Fire Authority firemen made an all-night stand before two fires in the Lorne district last night in preparation for a renewed attack on the flames this morning. Neither fire was completely under control, although they were being held in some sections. One fire, near the She-Oak River, had been brought under control on Sunday night after sweeping through 50 acres of dense bush, but broke out again yesterday morning, and firemen battled the flames all day with varying success. The fire had been watched throughout Sunday night, and for many men last night was the second night of vigilance and preventative action.

JUMPED CREEK.

Strong winds yesterday sent the fire leaping across the She-Oak River, but by nightfall about 100 men had contained the fire in some sectors, although the flames were not entirely under control across the entire front.

HOUSES SAVED.

The other fire still raging last night broke out during the day at the northern end of the township at Stony Creek, and at one stage a group of 20 houses were saved only by firemen burning back from the houses towards the flames. A strong southerly wind which was still blowing last night sent the seat of the fire heading north. At Reedy Creek, firemen saved another house threatened by the flames. The Senior Forester in charge of the Forrest District (Mr K O'Kane) said last night that two bulldozers and 20 men would be brought in to attack the flames this morning.

Although the fire had been controlled along the Great Ocean Road, it was still burning out of control inland about midnight. The Secretary of the Lorne Fire Brigade (Mr L Jarratt) said last night that the Lorne township was well out of danger from any of the fires.

8-1-1964 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

CAMPERS EVACUATE BLACK STUMP AREA IN FACE OF LORNE FIRES.

After continuously fighting fires north and south of Lorne for 48 hours, Forests Commission and Country Fire Authority personnel rested last night, but were on a sharp lookout for further crises in their fight against the fires which have already destroyed about 1,400 acres of bush country. By 11 o'clock last night the bushfire south of Lorne, in the George River area, had been brought under control, but the other and larger fire north of Lorne was still burning out of control, and threatening to pass over Big Hill and endanger the Eastern View and Aireys Inlet areas.

Although no property has been damaged a Forest Commission Officer, Mr Phillip Garth, said last night that he expected the critical period to occur this morning, and the course taken by the fire would depend on weather conditions and wind direction.

A southerly wind has been forecast for today, and this would fan the flames in the direction of Eastern View. In anticipation of this the Black Stump camping area, on the north side of Big Hill, was evacuated by Police last night and most of the 250 campers, many of whom arrived only yesterday, had left the area by 7pm.

LAST TO LEAVE.

The owner of the camping park (Mr Murray Rainey) and his wife were the last to leave the area. Despite predictions by Forests Commission Officers that the fire would rage through the area, Mr Rainey seemed optimistic yesterday, and said he did not believe the fire would reach the camping park.

"This would be the first bushfire to pass through this area to my knowledge, and I do not think it will come this far", he said.

The Forests Commission Officer added that the fire could do a great deal of damage also if an easterly wind sprang up today.

"If we get an easterly wind the fire will be blown inland into valuable forest country", he said. "These fires could already be described as a national calamity and they could do untold damage if they travel inland".

AERIAL SURVEY.

Forests Commission personnel will rise at 4am today to reconnoitre the area and an aerial survey will be made at 6am to establish the extent of the fires.

"We haven't a clue what the fire will do in the morning", Mr Garth added "we can only keep watch throughout the night and act accordingly".

The fire north of Lorne which was reported to have been brought under control early yesterday, sprang up again later in the day and Police were forced to close the Great Ocean Road to all traffic travelling to Lorne at 3-30pm. A fire officer reported that the fire got out of control when a strong south-westerly started to fan the flames at about 1pm. The situation was further aggravated by three changes in wind direction during the afternoon.

Two carloads of Geelong Police were called to the area during the afternoon to man road blocks at points along the Great Ocean Road and to assist fire-fighters in other capacities. By nightfall the police strength had risen to about 20 men and six vehicles, from Lorne, Torquay and Geelong. Up to 1pm yesterday the fire burning along an 8 mile front from north of Lorne had destroyed about 400 acres, but by nightfall the fire had already swept through another 600 acres.

REINFORCEMENTS.

The Forests Commission Forest Officer at Lorne (Mr Val Cleary) said last night that 58 Commission personnel had battled the fires during the past 48 hours, and further reinforcements would be called to the area today. Mr Cleary said that the fire which had raged in the George River area since Sunday morning had now been brought under control, and was only burning along a thin front in the Cherry Tree Creek area, about half a mile south of Lorne. The fire south of Lorne destroyed about 50 acres of bush country before it was brought under control.

"We have a only a bit of tidying up to do there", Mr Cleary said, "and we think we can cope with this fire".

Fire-fighting in both areas has proved extremely difficult because of the lack of roads and means of access for vehicles and equipment. There is also a lack of water in the area, and food and water must be carried to firemen over rough and inaccessible terrain.

C F A personnel, whose main duty is to protect property and land outside the Forests Commission's jurisdiction, had about 40 men in the area yesterday, and due to their efforts no damage has resulted yet to any property or houses.

Station Officer N O'Halloran, who was in charge of Police activities in the area said that the road blocks had been lifted last night, but might be reimposed today if necessary. He added that the cause of the fires was not yet known.

8-3-1965 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**FIERCE FIRE BURNING NEAR AIREYS INLET.**

Firemen worked all last night and this morning to burn a huge break around a fierce fire burning in rugged country a few miles inland from Aireys Inlet. Forestry Commission and Country Fire Authority men, with bulldozers and other equipment prepared eight miles of breaks to check the blaze. The breaks gave protection to property in the surrounding area, but units stood by all night in case a change in the weather caused the fire to jump the breaks and get out of control.

The fire started about 1am on Saturday and was burning on a two mile front in the Cinema Point-Big Hill area parallel to the coast. Fears were held on Saturday afternoon for the safety of Aireys Inlet as strong winds swept the fire towards the town. However it was confined to the State Forest and turned before entering valuable red ironbark country.

Yesterday afternoon the Forests Commission and Country Fire Authority men completed trail lines around the fire area which enabled work to start on a string of fire breaks. The fire is about 4 miles from a large fire which started near Lorne about 3 weeks ago and which is still being watched for small outbreaks.

Fire-fighters in the area paid tribute to the work of local women who provided meals for them. The meals were prepared by Anglesea women and served to the men in the Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Fire Stations. The food was supplied by the Red Cross Society. The firemen are changing shifts every 10 hours with a team always stationed at Anglesea to meet any emergency.

9-3-1965 TUESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**RAIN CHECKS COAST FIRE.****FOUR HOMES BURNT AT EASTERN VIEW.**

About two hundred people were ready to evacuate Eastern View, eight miles east of Lorne, as a bushfire raged towards the town last night - and then the rain began. The fire, which officers believe was deliberately lit early on Saturday, has covered 500 acres and destroyed at least 4 houses.

Last night steady rain was still falling and the fire was reported to be under control. Fire-fighters, helpless in the face of the strong winds, retreated to Eastern View as the flames reached the top of the hill and then exploded several hundred yards in a few seconds along the hills near Cinema Point. Calls went out to Brigades in the Geelong district for more tankers and crews.

Fire-fighters caught on the roadway east of Eastern View fled for their lives when the fire leapt along the coast. One officer said it was like watching an explosion, and watching residents described it as terrifying.

By 1-30am, six bulldozers had moved into the area with about 100 fire-fighters manning tankers, and control headquarters had been set up at nearby Aireys Inlet.

HOMES ABANDONED.

Fire-fighters continued their steady retreat towards Eastern View, abandoning several houses on the coast side of the Great Ocean Road as the fire closed in, and at about 2-50pm word arrived that the first house had been burnt.

By 3pm a strong wind warning was issued by the C F A radio network, reporting a gust measured at 82 miles-an-hour further inland. As the fire burned itself out near the Black Stump Roadhouse, tankers moved back into the area to investigate. They found the Roadhouse ringed by blackened grass and trees, but intact, and the adjoining caravan park, recently purchased by St Augustines Orphanage from Geelong businessman, Mr Murray Rainey, had been swept but amazingly the buildings were untouched. Two houses perched on cliffs overlooking the sea were burning, while within yards stood other houses untouched. Trees, burning through at ground level, crashed with the sound of thunder as the wind rose. In gardens, scorched but still green, flowers drooped. Meanwhile, fire-fighters had regrouped near Clarkes Hill at Eastern View, waiting for the wind blowing directly towards the township to carry the flames over the hill.

ROAD CLOSED.

Police had closed the road and alerted residents to be ready to evacuate at a minute's notice, and cars, sitting low under heavy loads, stood in front of most houses. Behind the Post Office, which is the westernmost building in the town proper, firemen tried to burn a fire-break across a paddock but ironically the grass would not burn, and after several attempts they withdrew. A slight change in the wind heartened residents and soon after light rain began, but only for a few minutes.

At 5-40pm, Lorne Police reported that heavy rain was falling there, as light rain began at Eastern View. It gathered strength and by 6pm was falling heavily. Fire-fighters, waiting anxiously on the roadway, stood in the rain and grinned at the sky. Observers reported that the fire appeared to be passing north of Eastern View in the direction of Aireys Inlet, several miles away. It was running along a ridge parallel to the coast, but progressing little once the rain began.

The fire began near Benwerrin, six miles north of Lorne, and has burned a huge triangle of country to the south-east and east. Fire Officers believe the fire was deliberately lit as it started two miles from the roadway with no possible accidental cause in the area. A Forests Commission Officer (Mr K O'Kane) said tyre marks were found on a remote track where the fire started and he believed persons in the vehicle lit the fire.

Red Cross units from local branches fed fire-fighters throughout the week-end and treated a number of minor injuries. Hot meals were served near Eastern View yesterday morning and again at night.

The total area burnt exceeded 7,000 acres of timber and scrub as well as four houses completely destroyed.

11-3-1965 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

EDITORIAL.

It is a refreshing change, after being surfeited with newspaper reports of vandalism, sabotage, international intrigue and mayhem, to be able to pay tribute to a devoted and dedicated band of men who, disdaining personal risk and discomfort, give their time and energy on a purely voluntary basis in order to preserve the safety and well being of the community.

We refer to the members of our Country Fire Brigades. Chief Officer Larkins stated at Anglesea that the 1245 brigades in the country areas of Victoria totalled 109,000 volunteer firemen.

In January over 200 fire outbreaks were reported, but due to alert vigilance and brigade efforts only two reached major proportions.

A tired body of men has grappled with the outbreak which started in the early hours of last Saturday morning about 2 miles in on Big Hill Creek from Benwerrin, and came out on the Ocean Road at Big Hill Creek.

It burned back all the area between there and Grassy Creek. On Saturday night a track was bulldozed in from Clarke's Spur for seven miles to form a break, as a jump across Grassy Creek could get the fire into bad country with a threat to Eastern View, Fairhaven and Aireys Inlet.

During this battle with the flames some 28 units, four bulldozers and a grader were employed, and at its height between 150 and 200 men were estimated to have been engaged in their heroic task.

Hats off to these men!

18-3-1965 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

THE RECENT FIRES.

The recent fires, which started on Saturday, March 6th, swept through thousands of acres of land before being eventually halted with the loss of one house and two shacks.

It was halted briefly on the Monday night, when light rain fell over the area, but hot winds and low humidity on the Thursday caused more breakaways, keeping Firemen and Forestry Officers busy throughout the day.

The most danger to settled areas at Cinema Point and Grassy Creek was apparent on Monday.

However, pre-planning by Group Officer Alan Schram (Lorne), Deputy Group Officer's Des Wilson (Aireys Inlet) and Lieutenant Noel "Bo" Rogers (Lorne), who was in control of the fire front did much to reduce losses.

Unfortunately, everything came at the one time, as terrific heat caused the whole Grassy Creek Valley from Cinema Point to Devil's Elbow to explode. Density of smoke and the heat made fire suppression extremely hazardous, but strict discipline by all CFA men resulted in some miraculous saves.

Eventually all units were transferred because of the threat to Eastern View and Fairhaven. However, vigilance was still maintained on the Cinema Point area, resulting in the saving of a home when an outside staircase and balcony was found to be blazing. These were chopped away, and the dwelling saved.

On Thursday, units from Lorne, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet saved a house on the Great Ocean Road and a shack on top of Big Hill. Great praise is due to the magnificent work of the volunteers, many coming from other districts to assist their comrades of the Great Ocean Road Group, doing all and more than was asked of them.

The Brigade wishes to stress that a greater chance of success would have been possible had the householders of some properties taken at least some elementary precautions. The buildings destroyed were a house belonging to Mrs Smart, of Parkville, a shack belonging to the Bird Watchers Club, and a carport and shed at "Iluka" all being insured.

The Officers, through this paper, would like to express grateful thanks to the Police from Lorne and Geelong, whose efforts made the task much easier, the Red Cross for food and help with sore eyes and minor injuries and Mrs L Wilson wife of Deputy Group Officer Des Wilson, who, with a small band of helpers, kept up supplies of meals at any hour of the day or night.

At a special meeting of the Lorne Brigade also attended by members of Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Brigades a Post Mortem on the fires was held.

Regional Officer Max Taylor paid tribute to a magnificent job.

17-6-1965 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

BRIGADE'S TWELVE MONTHS EFFORT.

Since July 1st, 1964, The Lorne Fire Brigade has been involved in 34 separate fire fighting operations. The Austin Urban unit attended 11 fires, including four chimneys, one caravan, one fat heater, one grass fire and one small bush fire, all within the township area. Resultant damage to property is estimated to total £800. On three occasions the Austin left the reticulated area for short periods to assist at bush fires.

There was one false alarm. The Jeep tanker had a very active year, turning out on 22 occasions for bush fires and assisting the Austin at two fires in the town. Over 20,000 acres of forest was destroyed in the february and March fires. Damage to private property is estimated to exceed £10,000. Apart from a house at Wye River, it all occurred at "**BIG HILL**". Eleven Group Operations were necessary, some required the direction of over 20 fire units, thus providing a severe test for our organisation.

22-10-1965 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

BUILDING DESTROYED AT LORNE.

On Saturday night last, at approximately 10-30pm a five room bunk house belonging to the Lorne Surf Club, and used for the accommodation of visiting club members, caught fire. Mr Leo Schram who lives nearby, smelt burning paint at 10-50pm and gave the alarm. Sixteen members of the Lorne Fire Brigade attended the fire, which had gained hold of the entire building.

Two lengths of hose were used, the Jeep and the Austin truck being on the scene, but it was impossible to save the building which was virtually destroyed. Damage was estimated at £3,000 luckily the building was insured. Two members of the Club were in residence, but were at the local picture show at the time of the fire. So far the cause of the outbreak has not been determined. Slight damage was done to the paintwork of Mr R Dickson's house, who lives next door. The house was the former residence of Mrs Sanger, the Sangers originally living at "Bonnie Doon". It is a bad time, just before the season, for the Club to lose the bunk house. A number of bunks and mattresses were lost.

OUTBREAK NEAR AIREYS INLET.

A small outbreak of fire occurred last week (14-10-1965) while a fire break was in process of being effected. A sudden gust of wind whipped the fire across the road between Aireys inlet and Urquarts Bluff. However fire-fighters soon had this under control, being assisted by another change of wind. Only one house in the area was temporarily threatened.

30-12-1965 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRES NEAR LORNE.

At approximately 12-10pm on Wednesday December 22nd a fire started at the Lorne tip. It is thought that it commenced amongst a large heap of cypress boughs and spread to the surrounding area, reaching the top side of Dorman Street between Stony and Little Stony Creeks. About 25 acres were affected. Brigades from Lorne, Aireys Inlet, Anglesea and Freshwater Creek took part in the operations, as well as two Forests Commission Tankers and a bulldozer. No damage occurred to private property.

The brigades finished work about 6pm, but the Forests Commission patrolled the area during the night and bulldozed a strip which it is hoped will make the tip area safe during the present season. On Sunday last between 4pm and 6pm the Lorne Fire Brigade, with a Forests Commission Tanker and bulldozer attended a fire at the junction of the George River and Cherry tree Creek. About 5 acres were burned out. It is believed that the fire was deliberately lit on the Policeman's Track.

20-1-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

SMALL FIRE AT LORNE.

On Sunday, January 9th, at about 3pm a bush fire started at the northern end of Queens Park, roughly between the home of Mrs Howell 152 Smith Street and George Street. It was in unoccupied scrubby country, about 3 acres of scrub and ferns being burnt out. Captain Wally Grant and about a dozen men of the Lorne Fire Brigade brought it under control without difficulty, assisted by the calm conditions prevailing at the time. It was not easy to get at, the only access being the extension of Charles Street. There are no roads or tourist tracks in the vicinity of the fire, the cause of which remains unknown.

22-2-1966 TUESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

FIRES SWEEP 6,000 ACRES NEAR LORNE.

More than 6,000 acres of forest land have been destroyed by a fire raging out of control, about 5 miles from the township of Lorne. The fire broke out on private property behind Barwon Downs about noon yesterday and fanned by a strong northerly, raced through three farming properties, burning at least 200 acres, before reaching the forest. Several property owners rushed their stock from the path of the advancing flames to safer areas and no losses were reported.

Once in the trees the fire propelled at tremendous speed leaping from tree-top to tree-top, and the Chief Forester of the Forrest District (Mr K O'Kane) said that at times the flames were more than 100ft high. Strong winds carried burning debris high into the air and four spot fires broke out ahead of the main fire. Mr O'Kane said the furthest of these fires (three miles away) flared up near the Cumberland Camping Reserve, beside the Great Ocean Road. The other three were running between this outbreak and the main fire.

So far the fire has at least six miles and extends from the Barwon Downs-Benwerrin Road, which runs along the top of the ridge. Thirty Forest Commission and more than 50 C F A personnel have been thrown into the fight which Mr O'Kane described as a very severe and very hot fire. A grader, six bulldozers and six tanker units are being used. However, fire-fighters are hampered by the dense bush which makes the area practically inaccessible.

Earlier in the day, fears were held for the safety of Lorne, as the fire was bearing down on the township at tremendous speed.

At this stage, the fire was travelling in a south-easterly direction, but at 5-30pm a southerly change switched its direction along the northern face of the Otways. Despite this, the position is still extremely serious, and Mr O'Kane said he would not like to say when the main fire could be brought under control.

The Regional Officer of the C F A (Mr S M Taylor) said last night that units of the C F A were standing by in Lorne in case they were needed.

23-2-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE AT QUEENS PARK.

On Sunday morning at about 11-30am a fire broke out in Queens Park on the foot track leading from the caravan park to the rotunda. Lorne, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Fire Brigades, in company with Forests Commission personell, were on the scene, and the fire was under control at about 12-30pm. About 6 acres of scrub were burned out, but no other material damage resulted.

23-2-1966 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

LORNE FIRES ARE PARTIALLY CONTROLLED, BUT DANGEROUS.

"Fires which broke out at Lorne about mid-day on Sunday, have now been partially brought under control" the Chief Forester of the Forrest District of the Forests Commission (Mr K O'Kane) said yesterday. However he said the fires were potentially still dangerous and could flare up at any time. An additional 2,000 acres were burnt on Monday bringing the total area ravaged to more than 8,000.

More than 100 men from the Country Fire Authority and the Forests Commission of Victoria and volunteer fire-fighters were slowly containing the fire. Last night he said the fires were burning quietly and some faces had been contained to within reasonable boundaries.

Another major fire threat - "Spot Fires" - were menacing the fire-fighters last night. Mr O'Kane said the spot fires were caused by convection currents caused by the main blaze carrying burning materials into the upper atmosphere and then depositing them some distance away - in this case about four and a half miles from the major fire. The furthest of these was near Cumberland River Camping Reserve, beside the Great Ocean Road.

The main section of the fire was burning on the top of the main Otway ridge about six miles from Lorne and eight miles from Wye River. The District Forester, Mr Incoll, said if a strong north-west wind blew up the fire would race towards the Wye River Settlement, and if a strong westerly blew up, it would race towards Lorne.

C F A units last night were standing by in Lorne in case they were needed to help stem any further outbreaks.

Mr O'Kane said that more than 36 pieces of equipment were used at the fire scene, including eight bulldozers, one grader, 14 pumps and a dozen assorted personnel transports. He added that this was the seventh fire in the vicinity of Lorne this summer.

Increasing tourist traffic was probably the cause of a great number of the fires because carelessness with matches and cigarette butts on bush tracks. However, Mr O'Kane was unable to say what was the probable cause of this fire.

24-2-1966 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

MAIN LORNE FIRE IS NOW UNDER CONTROL.

A bushfire which had been raging slightly west of Lorne for the past three days had been brought under control last night, an officer of the Forests Commission said last night.

Burning through the Otway Ranges, about six miles from Lorne, the fires had destroyed more than 8,000 acres of farm land and State Forest before being brought under control. At the height of the fire, flames were reaching up to 100ft into the sky and the smoke could be seen for miles.

Burning on a 10 mile front, more than 150 men, eight bulldozers and nine tanker units were being used continuously to fight the fire. Although the fires were not out they had been contained into a definable area and were burning quietly within the boundaries. However, a spot fire some miles from the main fire was still out of control. This fire was near the Cumberland River, and still has the potential to become a menace to the camping reserve at the mouth of the Cumberland river, on the Great ocean Road.

17-3-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRES AT LORNE AND ANGLESEA.

At about 3-00pm on Saturday last a fire broke out in a vacant block in Charles Street Lorne. About 70 acres were burnt out, destroying fencing. Inside Queens Park camping area a small tent was destroyed, and slight damage was done to the roof of the Park Hall. The Lorne Fire Brigade Jeep and the Austin, together with a trailer pump from Wye River, which actually is an auxiliary of the Lorne Brigade, fought the blaze.

Captain Wally Grant was in charge, with about 20 members of the Brigade, assisted by numerous volunteers from surrounding houses. The rain which fell about 6-00pm was of great assistance, the area was patrolled throughout the night, and all day Sunday. At 6-00pm on Saturday the Lorne Jeep went to the tragic fire at Anglesea, remaining until midnight. Alan Schram was in attendance at Anglesea for the duration of the fire. The Anglesea fire, which the C F A Regional Officer Mr D Steinhauser said, had started on the edge of a road inland from Anglesea, is believed to have been caused by a carelessly thrown cigarette butt.

He said that if block owners had cleared their land in the Spring in this area the houses which were lost would have been saved. About 14 houses were destroyed, others damaged and fences and outbuildings destroyed. It was stated to be the worst fire on the southern coastline since the Black Friday of 1939. Firemen saved about 50 homes. Altogether about a 1,000 acres were burned out. Lorne Fire Brigade Officers say that this fire should be a warning to those people in Lorne who have not cleared up their blocks properly. The Lorne Fire Brigade has entered a team in the District Rural Fire Brigades Demonstration at Geelong on Friday night, March 18th.

24-3-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

AFTERMATH OF ANGLESEA BLAZE.

In the current issue of "*The Fireman*" residents of Anglesea are told that they can be grateful to their local Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade led by Captain Ken Ingram. A roadside fire was whipped into an inferno by a strong northerly wind, and threatened the whole town on Saturday March 12th. But a smart turnout by the Brigade, with a quick backup of reinforcements, called in through the C F A Organisation on a Group and Regional basis prevented what could have been a major disaster. Seven Urban and 18 Rural Brigades were engaged in the fight for the town. A tour through the devastated area last week provided ample evidence of the heroic work of these dedicated men. We saw many fine homes untouched by the flames although trees and scrub had been burned right up to their fencelines, and even into their front gardens. Somebody said it was a miracle that they were saved. It was no miracle - it was due to the untiring efforts of a body of men to whom the community owes such a deep debt of gratitude.

LORNE BRIGADE SUCCESSFUL.

The Lorne Fire Brigade Team won the "Eric Basset" Shield for discipline at the No 7 Region Rural Fire Brigades competition held at Geelong Showgrounds last Friday night. This is the 2nd year the Shield has been competed for, and Lorne has been successful on both occasions. Our congratulations to the team, Peter Ross, Alan Morton, Alwyn Trigg, Leon Armistead, Keith Richmond and their coach, Captain Wally Grant. Discipline is an essential part of any Fire Brigades organisation, and Lorne is fortunate to have such a capable Captain. Wally draws heavily on his experience in the Royal Australian Navy, and insists on maintaining strict discipline at all times. The Brigade's win makes Lorne eligible to represent our Region at the State Demonstration at Lilydale, to be held early next month.

5-5-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

AFTERMATH OF ANGLESEA FIRE.

Group Officer Alan Schram, of the Great Ocean Road Group, has released a detailed report on the disastrous fire at Anglesea last month. He said that weather conditions were bad at the time of the outbreak, with near century temperatures (F) and strong north east winds.

Their had been 4 days of century heat, resulting in dangerously dry vegetation. The fire could have been caused by a spark caused by a passing motorist on the Coal Mine Road investigations indicated. Officer Schram commended all crews for their discipline and total disregard for personal comfort. When the fire had been checked and held, units entered the fire area and effectively saved many homes which would otherwise have been lost, perhaps double the total of those destroyed. He complimented the men of the Forests Commission, the Police for evacuation and traffic control, the Council for men and equipment, and the Red Cross personell, who provided meals for 200 men, and treated eyes affected by smoke. He said: "Lack of township maps for reference in relation to Street names being reported as over-run by the fire made it very difficult to obtain an overall picture of the operation, or to direct tanker movements". State President of the Rural Brigades Association, Doctor P S Lang, said that although losses were suffered, they were minimised by the speed of attack and massive co-ordinated support by outside tankers.

30-6-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE TOWER FOR MOUNT COWLEY.

A steel fire spotting tower, 100 feet high, is to be built on Mount Cowley. The access road and the foundation for the tower have already been completed, and the whole project should be ready for the next fire season. Mount Cowley, the highest point in the Otway Ranges is 2009 feet above sea level, compared with Mount Sabine's 1911 feet, and the new tower will be 40 feet higher than the wooden structure at Sabine. Mount Cowley is approximately 1 mile from the Benwerrin - Mount Sabine Road, which is only partly gravelled, but full gravelling is expected by next summer. A splendid panoramic view will be seen on clear days from the top of the new tower, embracing Ballarat in the North and King Island in the South.

11-8-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE - ANGLESEA FIRE PROPOSALS.

A conference at Anglesea put forward proposals for fire prevention measures in the Lorne - Anglesea Areas. The conference was attended by 26 men representing the Shires of Barrabool and Winchelsea (in the municipal areas involved). Lorne, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Fire Brigades, No 7 Region Fire Brigades Association, top ranking Officers of the C F A, Forests Commission. State Electricity Commission, Country Roads Board and Alcoa of Australia. Proposals for fire protection put forward to the meeting by the C F A representative was the establishment of 2 green belts, each 3 chains wide, around the townships of Lorne and Anglesea.

The Lorne belt would start in the vicinity of Stony Creek, skirt the town and rejoin the coast in the Teddys Lookout area. At Anglesea the belt would commence on the coast near Eumeralla Scout Camp, circle the township and emerge to the coast about a mile on the Lorne side of Point Roadknight. The Alcoa Company was considerably involved in this area, and had assured its co-operation.

A severe clampdown was proposed on vacant allotments considered to be fire hazards. The green belt, both Crown Land and private property will be involved. The co-operation of private landowners was already forthcoming in most cases. The conference resulted from a visit to the areas by the Acting Premier, Mr Rylah, some three months ago. He later requested that a conference of interested parties be called. Property owners can obtain information from the Regional Officer of the Country Fire Authority.

18-8-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE PREVENTION PLANS.

Following our report on plans to establish a three chain fire free belt around Lorne and Anglesea, the comments of the Regional Officer of the C F A, Mr D Steinhauser are of interest. He stated that the idea was to stop fires that started within the town area spreading into the bush. Existing portions of open, grassed ground would be linked with "fire free areas" by burning off undergrowth among the trees. In some cases the undergrowth and perhaps a few trees would be knocked down, and the area planted with a green summer grass, such as Kikuya. The Lorne Golf Course would form part of the belt, and the help of property owners would be enlisted. Mr Steinhauser said: "What we want to do is to create a fire break without detracting from the tourist attractio of the town". Forests Commission and Country Roads Board men will be co-opted to form the belt prior to the summer fire season. Existing legislation requiring vacant blocks to be cleared will be enforced. Where this is not done the job will be done by the Council, the cost being charged to the owners.

20-10-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE FIRE PROTECTION PLANS.

The Winchelsea Shire Secretary, Mr W K Mathison, outlined plans for Lorne fire protection at the last meeting of the Council. He said that most of the area to be burnt off was in State Forest, and would be undertaken by the Forests Commission. Other areas in the protective belt were controlled by Lorne Foreshore Committee, the Lorne Golf Club and private landowners whose co-operation was being sought in the implementation of the plan. Formal notices were being sent to owners of vacant land. These notices were in addition to about 1,100 personal letters sent to owners of all properties in Lorne appealing for their co-operation in the campaign. A recommendation from the Secretary that the Chief Secretary, Mr Rylah, and the Country Fire Authority be advised of the action taken was adopted by the Council.

POWERS OF FIRE OFFICER.

The Municipal Association of Victoria is bringing to the notice of Councils a Bill to Amend the C F A (Fire Protection) Act, to extend the power of a Proper Officer to enable him to require the owner or occupier of any land to remove from the adjacent half width of any private street on which the land in question abutts, any grass and undergrowth which could constitute a fire danger to any neighboring property.

27-10-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

On Saturday, November 5th, the Lorne Fire Brigade will be the host for a Group Barbeque and Demonstration by the Great Ocean Road Fire Brigades Group. The barbeque will be held in the picnic area at Varna Gully at 12-30pm, and the Demonstration, including Fire Brigade events and childrens races, will be held on the Foreshore commencing at 1-30 sharp. Mr Ted Yates, of Yates Timber & Hardware, has kindly donated a shield as a prize for the team winning the highest aggregate number of points. We are appealing to local business houses to donate six small trophies for the main events, and sweets and drinks as prizes for the childrens events. This should provide local people with the opportunity to show their appreciation of the work done by the Local Brigade. This will be continued as an annual event, held alternatively at Lorne, Aireys Inlet and Anglesea. Programmes will be on sale at 5c each. To firemen - a working bee will be held on Saturday morning at 9-30 on November 5th, in order to get everything organised.

17-11-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE DEMONSTRATION.**

On Saturday, November 5th, the Ocean Road Fire Brigades Group held a picnic and demonstration on the Foreshore. Unhappily the Anglesea Brigade was absent owing to fighting a fire in its area. The Lorne Brigade, as hosts, were pleased with the way this first group demonstration went off, and wish to convey thanks to the Foreshore Committee for making the venue available and seeing that everything was in order. Ted Yates generously donated a fine shield as a perpetual trophy for the Demonstrations. This was eventually won by Wye River, who will hold it for twelve months. As Wye River has very few members, its 4 man team comprised George Moriarty, of Wye River, and Geoff Tune, Alan Gange and Neville Dickson, all of Lorne. Despite these ring-ins we congratulated George for his keenness, and the other Brigades will have a go for the shield next year. Results were:- 4 x 4 truck event for 3 men, Wye River. Trailer pump event for 4 men, Lorne (Peter Ross, Leon Armistead, Alan Morton, Peter Caddy). Knapsack race, Des Wilson, Aireys Inlet; Firemens Gift, Geoff Tune, Wye River; Firemens Prepare for Action, Geoff Tune, Wye River. The children turned up to the races between the Brigade events, and we hope the sweets were a reward.

The older ladies appeared bashful about a Ladies Championship, so an over 14 for girls was staged. This was won by Kay Austin, with Christine Coates a close second. Both were presented with trophies by Regional Officer Dennis Steinhauser.

Thanks to the Barwon Group who came as judges; and supplied equipment. It was good to see them without the necessity of a fire. Sincere thanks to all who donated cash, trophies and sweets - J & P Hickey, J Gaylard, L Wilson, C Whiteley, M Mill, C Green, N Grange, I & R Baldry, J Ridgeway, C Tune, J Carroll, C Manuell, W Lee, Vern Grose, G Brooker, Harry White, Marshall Smith, Mrs Fred Tully and L Pearce. Many appreciative comments were heard about the quality of the trophies.

1-12-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE FIRE BRIGADE DINNER.

Lorne Fire Brigade held its Annual Dinner at the Lorne Hotel on Friday November 25th. Unfortunately attendance was lessened by the absence of the Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Brigades which were engaged in suppressing a Fire in the Anglesea area. Lorne Captain Wally Grant was also there. The Lorne Brigade was formed 30 years ago by Hector Stribling, and the late Jack Alsop and Charles Howard. The first Captain was Ernie A Allen, who filled the position for 14 years, and is now retired. Another retired veteran is Jack Lucas, who prides himself on not missing a meeting for 19 years. The only Foundation Member still on active service is Don Alsop. The Toastmaster was Noel Rogers, who proposed the loyal toast to the Queen, after which the gathering stood for 1 minutes silence to the late Jack Alsop. The toast to the visitors was proposed by Alan Schram, who didn't miss a trick. Responses came from Assistant Secretary Lyn D'Arcy and Councillor Dick Purnell, of Barrabool Shire. In the absence of Captain Wally Grant, the toast of the Country Fire Authority was proposed by Noel Rogers, being responded to by Assistant Chief Officer Wally Crompton, who gave a resume of the work of the Authority and commended the Brigade for its growth and activity. Assistant Chief Officer Max Taylor presented the 30 year clasp to Ex Captain Don Alsop, who was vociferously applauded. Alan Schram moved a vote of thanks to Mr H Stribling, host for the evening, and who had been host over the years. Mr Stribling suitably responded, with his usual humorous touch. It was a thoroughly enjoyable night, marred only by the absence of those who were fighting fires with the dedication which makes Fire Brigades perhaps the most commendable of all organisations.

8-12-1966 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

THE RECENT FIRE OUTBREAKS.

At 8 am on Wednesday, November 23rd a fire broke out south of George Street and was fanned by north west winds towards Teddys Lookout. A patrol was organised with a Rural Tanker, and the Ocean Road below Teddys Lookout was also patrolled. The fire spread along the south east slopes of Teddys lookout but any danger to the township had passed.

2-2-1967 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE AVERTED.**

Alert motorists prevented a possible major fire outbreak the other weekend. They noticed a group of anglers near the George River mouth, with a fire burning. It was a day of Total Fire Ban, and the motorists notified Lorne Police. 4 Forest Commission fire-fighters and 6 of the Lorne Fire Brigade sped to the scene, where the fire had spread over about a quarter acre of grass. The anglers had left.

23-2-1967 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**THREAT TO LORNE.**

Lorne township was being threatened last night by a fire burning in inaccessible forest near the falls in the She-Oak Valley. This area is only two miles from the centre of the Lorne township. Fire brigade units from Lorne, Aireys Inlet, Anglesea and a large four wheel drive vehicle from Springvale were fighting the fire last night. The Group Officer of the Great Ocean Road Group (Mr A Schram) said last night that because the fire was unreachable by tenders, the blaze was being attacked on foot.

"We are battling to get the blaze under control by dawn, for if it continues during the heat of the day, the results could be far reaching", Mr Schram said.

24-2-1967 FRIDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**LORNE FIRE.**

A fire which burnt to within two miles of the Lorne township was brought under control at 4-25am yesterday. A Forests Commission bulldozer and a fleet of Country Fire Authority tankers cornered the blaze after a six-and-a-half-hour battle. The fire burnt out about 20 acres of thick scrub in the She-Oak Valley. It burnt in inaccessible areas for most of the night, and fire-fighters could do no more than fight the battle of the fringes. The fire started just before 10pm Wednesday and the cause is being investigated. No injuries to fire-fighters or property damage was reported.

2-3-1967 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE IN SHE-OAK VALLEY.**

Last weeks fire in the vicinity of the She-Oak falls was first reported at 8-45pm by phone from Wye River, where people noticed the glow in the sky. It was also reported to Lorne Police by several people in Lorne. The Brigade and Forests Commission turned out immediately, and after a report received from the fire by Captain Grant the Anglesea and Aireys units were called to assist. The Forests Commission notified that a bulldozer and Tanker were on the way, and a second would follow.

Country Fire Authority headquarters in Melbourne notified the Lorne base that the Morwell 4 x 4 Bedford was being sent from Springvale, where it had been located during the day. The C F A and the Commission conferred at Lorne, and agreed that conditions necessitated the fire being contained before dawn, as the forecast heat and wind next day could pose a serious control problem, with a possible threat to Lorne. The cool night conditions would make the fire easier to control where it could be reached, but in the steep gully on the north bank of the river it had to be attacked in the early stages with hand tools. The first bulldozer, Forests Commission men and C F A units attacked the fire on the south side, which was under control by 1-00am. The second, and larger bulldozer arrived and attacked the fire from inland on the north slope. Excellent work by the driver of this dozer resulted in this most difficult section being under control by 4-30am. Engaged at the fire were two dozers, two 4x4 Tankers and 20 Forests Commission men from Lorne and adjoining Otway districts, with two 4 x 4 Willys and one standard Tanker from the Ocean Road Group with 25 C F A men. The Forests Commission at dawn sent into the area one of its Mobile Support Crews from Stawell. These crews comprise 18 trained University students, fully self contained with transport and equipment to maintain themselves for long periods at fires. The Commission now has several of these Mobile Support Crews.

6-4-1967 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

8TH RURAL FIRE BRIGADES DEMONSTRATION - REGION 7.

Lorne Rural Fire Brigade, represented by Leon Armistead, Doug Tune, Geoff Tune, Keith Richmond, Alwyn Trigg, Alan Gange, Peter Caddy Leon Schram, George Moriarty and Peter Ross, under the training and supervision of Captain Wally Grant, competed in the Annual Demonstration held at Geelong Showgrounds on Friday, March 31st. A record 17 Brigades, with 31 teams, displayed modern firefighting techniques before a very good crowd. Lorne was represented by 3 teams - Lorne "A" and "B" and a Novice team for competitors who had not competed before in any demonstration. This Novice team won their event, described as "The glamor event of the evening", namely the unit demonstration. This involved extinguishing a fire of straw sprayed with 2 gallons of Kerosene. The win was more meritorious in so far as they completed the event in exactly the same time as Freshwater Creek team which won the "A" grade event, the time being 60.9 seconds. The Eric Bassett Discipline Shield, awarded to the Brigade judged to be observing the strictest discipline for the duration of the demonstration, was won by the Lorne Brigade for the 3rd time in 3 years. Captain Wally Grant accepted the shield, on behalf of the Brigade, at the presentation carried out by Brigadier Eason, the Chairman of the Country Fire Authority. This demonstration was certainly the best ever attended by the Lorne Brigade, as regards performances of the teams and individual competitors, and augers well for future years. Perhaps the best individual performance by a Lorne competitor was that of Geoff Tune, who was competing for the first time. His time in the Rope Climb a height of 16 feet up over a bar - and down again, was 16.2 seconds and was only one tenth of a second behind the 3rd placegetter. This is certainly the best ever performance by Lorne in this particular event.

31-8-1967 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**BRIGADE OUT.**

The Lorne Fire Brigade was called to the home of Norm Stewart at 151 Smith Street at about 1-30 pm on Saturday last. It appeared that the heat from the flue of a combustion stove had ignited insulation material under the roof. Matters were soon put right, practically only smoke damage having resulted.

28-9-1967 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**AN UNPLEASANT EXPERIENCE.**

One day last week Mrs Mary Alice Collins, 74, of Moggs Creek, took her 2 year old dog out for a walk at 11 am. Her husband Harold, became alarmed when she did not return, and went into the bush where he contacted Col Cooper, who was getting wood, at about 4-30 pm. Police were notified, and search operations were started, the Lorne and Aireys Inlet Fire Brigades taking part under the direction of Senior Constable Glen Croft, of Lorne, assisted by 1st Constable Kevin Oreo. Mrs Collins was ultimately located by Col Cooper and Ray Clarke at about midnight. It appeared that she had become bushed, and had got onto a track which was leading her towards Benwerrin, but she thought she was heading back to Moggs Creek. She was about 6 to 8 miles from home when she was discovered on the rough track. She apparently suffered no ill effects from her ordeal, which speaks well for her physical fitness. She has always enjoyed hiking, we are told.

2-11-1967 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRES AROUND LORNE.**

Firemen from 16 C F A units stopped a bushfire within feet of holiday homes at Fairhaven on Friday. The fire started on the Lorne side of the ridge, destroying about 200 acres of thick scrub, jumping the Ocean Road and petering out near the mouth of the Painkalac Creek within 1000 yards of the Aireys Inlet Lighthouse. Favourable wind saved the fire from racing through either Fairhaven or Aireys Inlet, as it could have gone inland through a section of inaccessible bushland. Squads of men under Group Officer A Schram, of Lorne, used thousands of yards of hose in relays, in almost impenetrable bush. This was followed by a bulldozer clearing a fire break. The Regional Officer of C F A, Mr D J Steinhauser, said the fire was fair warning to people in the Anglesea and surrounding areas who had poor access to houses isolated in thick scrub. He said: "We had to risk the lives of our volunteers and our equipment to save some of these places today". On Saturday a fire broke out on the Erskine Falls Road. However with our Fire Brigade boys so busy and tired, we refrained from worrying them for news. As we write the siren again sounded. We will give full details of the position in our next issue.

9-11-1967 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**THE ERSKINE VALLEY FIRE.**

A fire which burned out several hundred acres in one of Lorne's beauty spots, the Erskine valley, between 28th and 30th, should serve as a warning that this is a year in which the least carelessness cannot be tolerated. With the intensity of an average January blaze, the fire started on the Erskine Falls Road, swept across the big and little Erskine River's and back, to be stopped, strangely enough, within a few hundred yards of its starting point. Great support was given to our local brigade by backup groups from other parts of the region, and to these our grateful thanks. This fire gave us a good look at the capabilities of a new fire unit, an 800 gallon Bedford 4x4, which will be stationed at Lorne within a few weeks. The crew on this unit feel assured it will be a great acquisition. Equipment varies according to locality, so we have to spend money setting up this vehicle with necessary gear to make it a complete and flexible unit for this terrain. A chain saw is also imperative in this type of country, and we gratefully acknowledge recent donations of \$25, \$10 and \$5. However, money is urgently needed to keep your brigade at peak efficiency, to donate towards the protection of your properties from the ravages of fire. Fire suppression is our job, but fire prevention depends on you. Regional Fire Officer, Dennis Steinhauser, speaking at a Torquay meeting recently, said "There are three main causes of fire - Men, women and children".

THANKS FROM FIREMEN.

We recently saw one of the best backup groups imaginable. To the ladies who fed and looked after us go the grateful thanks of local Firemen and backup groups, who said they had never been better looked after anywhere. To the Red Cross, to the ladies who so willingly left things at home to help them, to Head teacher Paul Birch for making the school available, to his teaching staff who helped with meals, and those who took so well the disruption to classes during Monday - to all these a grateful "Thank You", for what you did, and the thorough way in which it was performed. The meals served in such pleasant surroundings by cheerful personalities sent us back to the fire doubly refreshed. All Brigades who attended joined in this "Thank You" for a magnificent job.

21-12-1967 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

On Sunday, 10th December, a new unit was delivered to the local Fire Station for use by the Lorne brigade. This unit, an 800 gallon Bedford 4x4 tanker, will be a great asset to the town in the future. Despite this fact, there were many sad faces at the loss of our first Rural tanker, "The Jeep", which had become so much a part of our bush fire fighting technique. However we have always tried to be progressive in our work and we feel the new vehicle is a step forward as far as the town and Brigade are concerned.

This unit is only the second of its kind issued to a solely volunteer Brigade, and Lorne is the first Brigade to be able to say they have one of their own. All other units of this kind are stationed where they can be sent away from their local area to fires in distant parts of the State. A monitor, or what could be called a water cannon, has been mounted on our unit. These have just been brought into service in Victoria. This monitor alone is capable of discharging 800 gallons of water in six minutes at a terrific pressure and will prove invaluable in house fires as well as bush fires. The unit can run 9 hoses at once if necessary from a side pump driven by a Briggs and Stratton motor and the main pump driven by a four cylinder Volkswagon motor. This pump can also be used to refill the 800 gallon tank from still water in just three minutes, which speaks volumes for its ability. Much training will be done with this vehicle during the next few weeks. We invite the public when they see the vehicle on a training run, to inspect it, and not be afraid to ask any questions from local Officers about its performance. Of course there is much work the Brigade has to do on this vehicle before we have everything satisfactory to our conditions. Being a much larger vehicle than the Jeep, it will not be as manoeuvrable in the bush and at times we are going to have to cut roads and turning points to get well into a fire area. In view of this we are still hoping to buy a chain saw for this purpose and although some donations have been received since the last fire, more is urgently needed. Get behind your Brigade and please give your donations now. This promises to be an extremely hazardous year for fires, and your donation could be regarded as very cheap fire insurance.

29-1-1968 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

KENNETT RIVER HOMES THREATENED BY FIRE.

A large fire was burning late today at Kennett River, near Lorne. By this afternoon the fire had burnt through more than 150 acres of thick bush country. A C F A official said tonight the fire threatened several homes at Kennett River before being diverted back into the Otway Ranges. The official said six C F A units and three Forests Commission Brigades, assisted by bulldozers were fighting the blaze. More than 120 fire-fighters battled throughout this afternoon to control the blaze.

PLANE USED.

A C F A plane was used to direct operations at the height of the blaze. It was hoped the fire would be under control by late tonight.

6-2-1968 THURSDAY. MELBOURNE AGE.

LORNE FIRE.

Families from 40 homes raced for the beach with hastily grabbed possessions as a ring of fire roared down on Lorne yesterday. The fire destroyed a house and five holiday shacks before a wind change swung it away.

This was one of the dramas of a day of desperate fire-fighting in many areas of Victoria yesterday. The worst outbreaks were at Lorne, Myrtleford, in the north-east, and Woodstock.

At Lorne last night, 180 firemen were holding the blaze in the hills at the west of the township. One of the Lorne evacuees, Mr Geoff Forrest, 35, described the fire's rush on the township as unbelievable. "We were listening to a Melbourne radio station which claimed the fire was under control, and then one of our neighbors raced across and said 'look out the window'".

Mr Forrest said he looked out to see a huge wall of flame speeding down the hill towards the township.

"People used everything from cars to prams to get essential items away from the path of the fire".

At the Lorne quarry, also in a direct line with the fire, workmen led by Mr Alan Roache, about 25, hurriedly moved cases of dynamite and powder away from the quarry.

Late last night the blaze, the worst in the Lorne area for five years, was swinging west towards Big Hill, away from the northern end of the township.

Forestry Commission, C F A and Police were combining to rush bulldozers round the perimeter of the fire in the hope of holding it at first light today. At the same time, three Police units patrolled the fire-fringed Lorne-Deans Marsh Road looking for stock and evacuees. The road was closed late yesterday afternoon as fires blazed along both sides alternately with wind changes.

At several points from Airey's Inlet into Lorne, the fire had spread down the hills, jumped the highway, and continued down a cliff to the beachfront.

One fireman, Bob Brown, 24, of Cook Avenue, North Sunshine, had to follow a young wallaby into the surf to rescue it.

The fire is believed to have started in 100 degree heat at Erskine Falls, about five and a half miles north-west of Lorne just before midday. Police have not discounted the possibility that the fire was started deliberately. Five youths were seen in the Erskine Falls area before the fire started.

6-2-1968 TUESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

WIND CHANGE TURNS FIRES FROM LORNE.

Tensions eased at Lorne township last night as the resort's most threatening bushfire since "Black Friday" 1939, retreated on two fronts to the west and north-east before a southerly wind.

Earlier, fire-fighters battled "with their backs to the wall" to save scores of houses as the fire swept through residential areas north-east of the township near the Great Ocean Road.

More than 28 units and 300 men have been sent to the fire from Geelong and even distant areas in Gippsland, including Lardner, Cranbourne, Pearcedale and Drouin. These units are on standby at Anglesea until this morning. Special communications vehicles, several bulldozers and a light plane will support them in the battle today.

TWO FRONTS.

Late reports last night indicated that the fire was burning on two fronts through inaccessible Forestry Commission timber country. One front had penetrated nine miles of heavily timbered country north-east to Grassy Creek, near Eastern View, on the Great Ocean Road. The second front was moving slowly unchecked into uninhabited forest, west of Lorne.

No property was reported destroyed in the fire, although an accurate assessment cannot be made until today. This remarkable achievement was due to the unflagging efforts of the fire-crews, who fought a running battle with the blaze as it raced from the Erskine River Valley after starting as a spot fire near Erskine Falls about 10-30am.

SEEN AT START.

Police said that five persons were reported shooting in the area shortly before the fire was sighted. They set up road blocks seeking to question the youths about the outbreak but were unsuccessful. Ironically, the first person on the scene of the fire, a woman with children, could possibly have extinguished the small outbreak with a sack or knap-sack spray, but none was handy. However, the blaze spread quickly, and fanned by gusty northerly winds, swept from the Erskine River Valley into the outskirts of the township. Its rapid progress took some fire-crews by surprise. But generally, the fire-crews equipped with two-way radios were kept well informed of the fire's progress.

A C F A spotter plane circled the main area pinpointing the main fronts and any new developments in the fire. In many instances fire units were directed to positions in the fire's path ready to tackle the blaze. Excellent communications and accurate information were responsible for many houses being saved.

About 15 houses were saved by firemen from certain destruction as the front moved through a settlement overlooking the Ocean Road about a mile north of the Erskine River Bridge. The fire front reached the Great Ocean Road at this point about 3-30pm; then a cool change arrived. It's cool breeze meant a new lease of life for fire-fighters and helped save the township. The southerly pushed the flames away from threatened houses, driving the fire-front north-easterly along the tall ridge adjacent to the Great Ocean Road.

ROAD CUT.

The flames crossed the road in several places halting all traffic for a time. With Lorne safe from immediate danger, fire-crews were directed by their headquarters at the Lorne Fire Station to concentrate on saving several holiday homes in the fire's new path. A large holiday house at Reedy Creek, about two miles north of Lorne on the Ocean Road, was ringed by flames, but firemen saved the property. Police set up road blocks at Aireys Inlet and Deans Marsh, halting all non-essential traffic.

PALL OVER TOWN.

A huge pall of thick, acrid smoke billowed over Lorne township during the afternoon, blotting out the sun and raining ashes on roof's. The smoke was visible from high points at Geelong and Ocean Grove. It cut visibility to zero on the Great Ocean Road, and fire units were forced to travel with headlights blazing. The Domestic Science Block at the Lorne Higher Elementary School was commandeered by the local Red Cross Auxiliary as a refreshment centre for the tired and blackened fire-fighters. Pies, sandwiches and cool drinks were supplied by the Red Cross and local traders.

Lorne residents remained calm during their hours of uncertainty. Many stood outside their homes and watched huge columns of smoke rise into the sky to a height of 8,000 feet. Others were determined to beat the intense heat generated by the bushfire. They watched the blaze neck-deep in water at the main surf beach as hot ash hissed around them.

It is not yet known how much country has been traversed by the fire, but it must be considerable, with some fronts burning ten miles from the township. A late report states that fire-fighters were mopping up small pockets around Lorne.

Cool south-westerly winds are forecast for today, which will not help the task of fire-fighters trying to halt the north-easterly fire front. The long range forecast for tomorrow is for more hot weather which could create a major problem if the fire is not contained before then.

7-2-1968 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**LORNE FIRES HELD IN ALL-NIGHT BATTLE.**

The bushfires which threatened the coastal township of Lorne on Monday are gradually being brought under control after two days continuous efforts to contain the blaze by fire-fighters, assisted by Forestry Commission workers.

About 25 fire tenders remained on the scene all day yesterday and throughout the night, while firemen fought desperately to contain the bushfire which was burning on a 20 mile front in heavily timbered country north-west of Lorne. Bulldozers cut a firebreak around the perimeter yesterday and it is hoped to complete the circle this morning.

The Regional Officer of the Country Fire Authority (Mr D Steinhauser) said last night that all fronts were gradually being brought under control but it involved a lengthy process. The main worry was strong winds which could swing the outer flanks of one section of the bushfire back towards Lorne from the western end, but weather-men predicted south-westerly winds of moderate strength for today.

23 units from many areas, including parts of Gippsland, remained on the scene yesterday and overnight and mopping up operations will continue this morning. Already 4,000 acres of scrub and timber has been destroyed by the bushfire which started early on Monday at Erskine Falls and spread rapidly towards Lorne.

Four sheds and three bungalows owned by Mr Wilf Lowe were burned on the Deans Marsh Road and the damage is estimated at \$3,000. 2 pigs were also burned to death. Mr Steinhauser said the property was destroyed late on Monday and no property was damaged yesterday.

The main front is being held in thick country north-west of Lorne, but yesterday the fire spread to Big Hill and Cora Lynn Valley and firemen concentrated in battling this section. The fire at Cora Lynn Valley could spread back to Lorne if northerly winds sprang up, a spokesman for the C F A said yesterday.

A helicopter was used yesterday to carry senior officers of the C F A over the bushfire and firemen were directed to spot fires from the air. The C F A has also set up temporary headquarters at Lorne Fire Station while the present dangerous situation continues.

TWO MEN SOUGHT.

Inspector J A Ottery who is directing Police operations from Lorne said last night that the Police were looking for two men who were seen in the area shortly before the blaze was observed. He added that two detectives had arrived from Geelong to make enquiries into the matter.

The main front of the bushfire is proceeding in a north-westerly direction in timbered country but a break had already been made by bulldozers around this section. The bulldozers are being followed by fire tenders and firemen who are blacking out behind the fire.

The Great Ocean Road which was closed temporarily is now open to traffic but the Lorne-Colac (Deans Marsh Road) is only open to essential traffic. Police said they hoped to re-open the Deans Marsh Road today. It was closed yesterday while trees were cut down to alleviate the situation should the winds vere round to the north again.

8-2-1968 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**HOUSE FIRE IN LORNE.**

A fire which started in a heap of rubbish under the back of the house occupied by Mr and Mrs Len Wilson at 61 Mountjoy Parade rapidly spread to the house itself. It was first noticed by Jack Carroll, of the Ampol Service Station, which is immediately next to the Wilson's house. He rang the Fire Brigade and then attempted to put out the fire with a service hose, but the blaze gained ground too quickly. The Fire Brigade was quickly on the scene with 2 units, and did an excellent job in saving the front part of the premises, as the back was an inferno. Belongings which were saved were taken to the R S L Hall to be sorted out. The Brigade did an excellent job in preventing the fire from spreading to closely adjacent buildings on both sides. A vacant shop in front of the house was untouched by the fire. Damage is estimated at \$4,000. The property is owned by Mr R Baldry.

THANKS TO BRIGADE.

The Editor "Lorne News" - Dear sir,

We would like through your paper to pay tribute to the efficiency of the Lorne Fire Brigade who attended the fire in our residence recently. But for their prompt and effective methods our losses would have been much greater. We would like to give a special mention to the team of volunteers who removed valuables and furniture while the building was still in flames. It has been very heartwarming to receive many offers of accommodation, clothing and meals when our spirits were at their lowest.

I would like you to pass on to the Lorne Fire Brigade our donation of \$100 in appreciation of making it possible to save Denis's collection of books and records.

Thank you again everyone.
Len, Merle and Denis Wilson.

PARTY LOST.

A party of 12 senior scouts with their scoutmaster, left Wye River at noon on Friday, February 2nd to walk 8 miles to the Wye River Falls and back. They were supposed to be back at 6 pm but failed to show up. The Lorne Fire Brigade sent out a party with radios and loud hailers to search for them. This paper was speaking to a Brigade member at 10 pm and at that time no news was forthcoming. However it transpired that the scouts, knowing they could not get back before dark, consulted their map and made for Mt Sabine Road. Here, confused by the logging tracks, it being then pitch dark, they split into 2 groups, one ultimately arriving at Wongarra at 11-30 pm and the other at Forrest well after midnight. They phoned through to Wye River, but the searchers could not be contacted, and they arrived back at Wye River somewhere about 5 am, reaching Lorne at 6-30am.

BUSHFIRES.

Their have been a large number of bushfires throughout Victoria, resulting in loss of stock and pasture and forest areas. Lorne so far has been fortunately free from serious outbreaks, although a large fire was burning fiercely at Kennett River on January 28th, threatening several homes before being diverted back into the Otway Ranges. Six C F A units and three Forests Commission units, assisted by bulldozers, with more than 120 fire-fighters, fought the blaze, which was later contained. On the Ocean Road, near Lorne, people were seen deliberately lighting fires. The Police are following the matter up, and we understand they have a clue as to the car involved.

16-2-1968 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**ECHO OF CUMBERLAND RIVER RESCUE.**

As a matter of interest we are informed that during the cliff rescue operation, the Lorne Fire Brigade, at the request of the Lorne Police, set up a line of communication from a patient, 200 feet above Cumberland River on the cliff, to a mobile radio in the Cumberland Camp. This mobile was in contact with the base radio at the Lorne Fire Station, which had phone contact with the Police station and Hospital, also radio and phone contact with Geelong. The Police and Doctor sent and received messages over this network throughout the entire rescue, the radios being in operation from 7-45am till after 12 noon. The whole setup can be operative within minutes of receiving a call. Incidentally, through generous donations from a few of the Brigades staunch supporters a chain saw has now been purchased - this will be a useful addition to the Brigades equipment.

THE LORNE BUSHFIRE.

It must have appeared a good deal out of context when we reported in last Thursdays paper that Lorne had been free from serious outbreaks, when on the Monday previously the town had been faced with a major conflagration. This paper is sent to Geelong each Monday for processing, and reaches the newsagents counter on Thursday, which accounts for the lag in news in many instances. On Monday, February 5th, a spot fire on the road near Erskine Falls grew into a blaze which raced to the Erskine valley. The O'Sullivan property, formerly Ryan's Tea House, was destroyed. Fanned by gusty northerly winds it swept down to the outskirts of the township, particularly at North Lorne. At the height of the blaze Police evacuated families from 4 houses and were preparing to clear another 40 in North Lorne when the wind changed from North to West at 3 pm. The fire raced up on both sides of the Deans Marsh Road to about the 5 mile post, buildings and 2 pigs on the property of Mr W Lowe being destroyed. That night the fire was burning on 2 wide fronts through inaccessible Forest Commission timber country; one nine miles north-east through heavily timbered country to Grassy Creek, the other moving slowly unchecked into uninhabited forest west of Lorne. About 15 houses were saved by firemen from certain destruction as the fire moved through a settlement overlooking the Ocean Road about a mile north of the Erskine River Bridge.

Then a cool southerly arrived, pushing flames away from houses which were threatened, and sending the fire front north-easterly along the ridge adjacent to the Ocean Road. The fire was brought under control after 2 days of continuous effort by fire-fighters, assisted by Forest Commission workers. For the first time in many years Lorne Brigade was reinforced by Brigades outside of our own Region - from as far afield as Gippsland. A number of units from Task Force Region 8, Mornington Peninsula were organised at Dandenong Fire Station, and came through in a group with Police escort. Assistant Chief Officer Max Taylor and Regional Officer Steinhauser were in Lorne, also three of the engineering staff from Ballarat workshops, who kept equipment functioning. Twice daily, conferences were held with Lorne's senior officers, Forests Commission officers and Taylor and Steinhauser to review the position. Once the initial burst of fire was over, quick fill pumps were installed in order to conserve water in our reticulation system, although it meant extra travel. Co-operation of the phone exchange at Lorne was excellent, and radio traffic between Brigades could not have been excelled.

The grateful thanks of the Lorne Firemen and the people of Lorne as a community, are extended to those Brigades who came to our assistance, the large number of voluntary fire-fighters and, not least, the ladies who catered so willingly for the needs of hungry and exhausted men.

22-2-1968 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

AFTER THE FIRES.

It would be impossible to convey in words the actual scope of the recent Lorne fire without making a personal tour of the affected areas. This we were able to do some few days after the fire was out. The outskirts of North Lorne are surrounded by blackened earth and trees. The fire burned up Waverley Avenue round the new homes overlooking the river, and branched off down Staughton Avenue, threatening homes in Gwynne Avenue, Minapre Street, Belvedere Terrace, Howard Street and Dalway Street. It continued on to the new Golf Course, burning off new grass on the fairways and swept through the cemetery. It liked the fence at Jack Carroll's home. It burnt behind houses in Deans Marsh Road, and jumped the road near the Wheal's home, threatening houses in Neade Street. It raced up Deans Marsh Road on each side to about the 5 mile post and veered to the right onto the Great Ocean Road. It threatened Mr Lowes home in Deans Marsh Road and homes in the area at the northern end of Dorman Street, including some on the new estate. It was an amazing spectacle to see how close some homes were to being destroyed, and evidenced the heroic efforts of the fire-fighters. Those fighting the fires came from 6 Regions, there being 26 firefighting units involved, including four 4x4 heavy Bedfords, with a total of 150 men. To these must be added the large number of Forestry men with their equipment, and the army of voluntary workers. The unflagging work of the fire-fighters, combined with some fortunate changes of wind, averted what could have been a major tragedy.

FIRE NEAR LORNE.

On Sunday morning a fire started on the Ocean Road between the She-Oak and Cumberland Rivers . It spread onto land owned by Mr H Stribling, and almost under control until it jumped a track and got into difficult country, being out of control for most of the afternoon. It appears not to have crossed either the She-Oak or Cumberland Rivers. It was hoped to be brought under control by mid-day Monday, weather being favourable. The Forests Commission, assisted by the Lorne Brigade was back burning late on Sunday, in anticipation of an intensely hot Monday. Our Brigade expected to be on the scene till 2am. 18 C F A firetrucks, bulldozers and Forest Commission trucks from our own Region participated, but between 5 and 6pm all but 5 C F A units were sent home. A Forests Commission helicopter operated over the area till after dusk, and was to resume at first light Monday. Water for the operation was drawn from the Cumberland River. Red Cross first aid and St John's Ambulance Rescue Squad were in operation and the R S L Hall was available for sleeping. Local ladies were to the fore as usual. Fuller details next week.

29-2-1968 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**APPRECIATION OF BRIGADE.**

The Editor,
Lorne News,

Dear Sir,

I should like to express my appreciation of the work of the Lorne Fire Brigade in your columns, as I am sure no amount of praise would be too much for their efforts in the recent fire. Myself and others in Waverley Avenue still have houses standing as an example of their successful fight on our behalf, and reason for our gratitude.

Yours Sincerely,
Donald G Duffy.

7-3-1968 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**STORE ROOM DESTROYED.**

At about 7 am on Monday, February 26th, a fire broke out in the combined storeroom and workshop at the rear of the home of Jack Graham at 26 Hopetoun Terrace, Lorne. The fire was first noticed by the driver of a bakers van, who gave the alarm. "Scottie" Dillon, who lives next door, rang the Lorne Fire Brigade, which arrived 10 minutes later with the Austin and Bedford units and 20 men. However, the fire had become well established before being detected, and when the Brigade arrived flames were coming out from under the eaves. It took three quarters of an hour to get the fire under control, but the Brigade remained at the scene for some two hours. The shed, approximately 40 feet by 20 feet, and its contents were totally destroyed, cause of the fire being unknown.

Contents included stores of groceries, for the 4 Square Self Service in Mountjoy parade, power tools, furniture, floor coverings, a collection of Gem stones and polishing equipment. There was no insurance cover, and estimated damage has been given at \$10,000.

28-11-1968 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL.

Rumours were circulating that the Hospital was on fire on the night of Tuesday 19th, November. These proved to be false. It was only the Lorne Fire Brigade, in conjunction with the Hospital Committee and the Matron and staff, trying out the new fire installation at the Hospital. The Fire Brigade simulated an actual fire and have now "pre-planned" the Hospital in case of any emergency that might arise. Units were deployed at both sides of the Hospital, with hoses and equipment utilised as it would be in actual fire. Evacuation drill was tried, with one of the Fire Brigade "heavy brigade" acting as patient. All agreed that they learned quite a lot on this trial run, which would then stand them in good stead should the real thing ever occur.

5-12-1968 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE GUTS WING OF THE LORNE SCHOOL.

At 2am on Tuesday, November 26th a fire broke out in the Secondary wing of the Lorne Higher Elementary School. The fire was first noticed by Mrs P Birch, wife of the Principal, whose home is nearby. As Mr Birch ran down to the scene, the whole of the centre section was well ablaze, but gusty and changing winds soon carried the flames to both end sections. The whole building, erected some four years ago, was completely gutted, despite the extremely quick appearance of the local volunteer Fire Brigade, and the competent action of its members. Two teachers, Ian Gribble and John Osborne, were among the first at the scene, and used the school's own hydrants to prevent the blaze from spreading to the Primary and Art block, which appeared at the time certain to go. They worked under severe conditions, as the wind was approximately south-west, and blowing directly towards them. The efforts of these two are to be highly commended, together with the splendid work of the Fire Brigade, which was faced with an impossible task. The building contained the domestic science section, and was furnished with modern and valuable equipment, including one gas stove and two electric stoves, a number of electric sewing machines, drying cabinet, refrigerator, hot water unit, lathes and other equipment in the carpentry section, cutlery, crockery and a new television set. Equipment belonging to teachers and pupils was lost. Only two typewriters were saved. The State Electricity Commission was on the scene shortly after the outbreak to disconnect power lines from the State School which had fallen. The destroyed building consisted of four class rooms, staff room, prefect's and sports room. Damage has been initially estimated at between \$80,000 and \$100,000, the building and contents being insured. However, the property lost is unfortunately not claimable.

Lorne Police have not been able to ascertain the cause of the fire, which is believed to have started near the wall of the carpentry section in the centre of the building. Mr Birch informed this paper that it is most unlikely the question will be solved. After a day's holiday the 50 secondary students were back in temporary quarters provided free by the R S L Committee in the main hall of their building. This arrangement is functioning as smoothly as could be expected, and will last until the Christmas Vacation. Mr Humphries of the Oberon High School, has set mechanical drawing material on loan, and Mr Flynn, of the Colac high School, 2 electric sewing machines and 2 crates of books. Other schools, Apollo Bay and Winchelsea, have offered any help needed. Some private citizens have also offered financial assistance, which has been gratefully accepted, as there are many unclassified items, not coming under the heading of school equipment, which have been destroyed. In these days, high pressure competition and equally high taxation have produced a tendency in the community to self-centred materialism, but when co-operation is required in times of crisis, it is heartening to find that better nature prevails. The Principal, in this period of stress, naturally has more on his plate than he could reasonably be expected to cope with, and so desires, through the medium of the "Lorne News" to take the opportunity of expressing his grateful thanks for this assistance. Furniture is to be supplied by the Education Department, and Mr Birch was hopeful that rebuilding could commence during the summer holiday session. However, an Education Department official stated that plans and specifications would have to be drawn up, and it was unlikely that rebuilding would be completed for the commencement of the 1969 school year especially in view of the Department's heavy building program. Fire damage was given high priority, and he was sure Lorne would get the best priority. Moves would be made to restore the school to its former standard at the earliest possible time.

6-2-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

KENNETT RIVER FIRE.

Forest Commission tankers and dozers, C F A units from Lorne, Anglesea, Wye River, Apollo Bay and 2 from Geelong attended a fire which broke out in heavily timbered country 1½ miles north of Kennett River on Friday Last. It started at the edge of a road on Forests Commission land, and burnt through a track leading to private property, this acting as a break. It started at about 4pm and was contained at 6-30pm only 2 acres of forest being burnt. Regional Officer of the C F A, Mr D Steinhauser, said it was lucky the winds were light, as the fire was in terribly inaccessible country.

13-2-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

NEW FIRE TOWER.

A new Forests Commission fire spotting tower, 100 feet high is being erected at Mt Cowley, the highest point in the Otway Ranges, and is expected to be manned at any time now.

There are three other towers in the Forrest Forestry District, at Peters Hill, which is behind Aireys Inlet, Fairholme, near Birregurra, and Mt Sabine, between Forrest and Apollo Bay. Mt Cowley is 2225 feet high, whereas Mt Sabine is 1914 feet. The new tower is about 1 mile south of the Benwerrin-Mt Sabine Road on the top of the range, and about midway between the two. As the crow flies it is about 5 miles from Lorne, and when further clearing is done should be visible from the Lorne Foreshore. It is well anchored in four massive concrete blocks and is built to resist a 90 mile per hour gale. It replaces the one at Anglesea, it has a full cover of the coastline where 80% of the fires in the district start. Mr R Handmer, Forestry Officer at Forrest, said that February was regarded as the real fire danger month in the Otways, as the forest could then have completely dried out. In addition to the new tower, the Forrest Forestry District acquired a fire control vehicle at the New Year, which is used for many purposes, including the education of visitors to the danger of fires, having a public address system. It is also used for fire spotting and radio communication.

20-3-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.

Our local "Boys" will be representing Lorne tomorrow night, Friday 21st March, at the No 7 Region Rural Fire Brigades Demonstration to be held at the Geelong Showgrounds, with the first event commencing at 6-30pm. Two teams have been entered in each event, in addition to individual members competing in the "Rope Climb events". The Lorne Teams will be striving to achieve "the almost impossible" at this demonstration, by again winning the Eric Bassett Discipline Shield. This shield has only been competed for at 4 demonstrations and at the moment Lorne's name is the only one appearing on it, the locals being adjudged winners on each occasion. A good night is guaranteed for all who attend these demonstrations.

3-4-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.

The Lorne "boys" participated in the No 7 Region Brigades demonstration at Geelong but were unable to again return the "Discipline Shield" to our Fire Station, being beaten in this years competition. However 4 wins out of 5 years is quite a satisfactory record, and there is always next year. The local "boys" turned on more than a creditable performance, with one team finishing 4th among 31 teams taking part in one particular event.

10-4-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**NO CHANCE FOR FIREMEN.****DEDICATED TO MEMBERS OF THE LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

When a truck is delayed 40 seconds in traffic, people say it took them 40 minutes to get there. Or, if the truck races at 40 miles per hour it's, "Look at the reckless fools". When four men struggle with an eight man ladder, "They don't even know how to raise a ladder". Windows are opened and it's, "Look at the wrecking crew". If the Captain stands back far enough to be able to be able to direct his men, "He's afraid to go where he sends his men". When a building is lost the Brigade is a "lousy" one, but if it is saved the fire was "not much of a threat". A great deal of water is required to quell the blaze, so folks say the water does more damage than the flames. If a fireman gets hurt he is careless, but if it's a citizen the Brigade must be crazy. A fireman inspects a citizen's property, so he is a meddler and when he wants a fire hazard removed, "I'll see my councillor". If he is killed and leaves a family destitute, "Oh, that's the chance he took when he joined the fire brigade".

Note!!!! All new members prepared to join the local brigade are welcome.

24-4-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

The local Brigade, after much consideration, has decided to buy a set of "Normal Breathing Equipment" for use in the Lorne area. The policy of the Country Fire Authority is to supply an additional set, free of cost, when a Brigade purchases it's own equipment. This provided for safety margins, with Firemen being able to work in pairs. The Brigade has given much thought to the types of buildings in its area, including Guest Houses, Hotels and Motels, and believes that the cost of the equipment, \$252.62, is justified, and will give greater protection for the area generally. The equipment consists of air cylinders, face masks, gauges, lifeline and carrying case for storage of the gear. Each cylinder provides approximately 20 minutes of compressed air, and allows the wearer to work in dense smoke or toxic gases. This type of equipment has been adopted as standard by the C F A and will be serviced and maintained at Geelong by Sub Station Officer Ed Cassidy, who has been appointed by the C F A to control this section of the service. All maintenance costs are covered by the C F A. Members of our local Brigade have already had some instruction from S S O Cassidy on the use of this equipment, and all members will undergo periodical instruction and tests with it. As will be appreciated, the service given by the local Brigade members is on a voluntary basis, and the Brigade relies on you, the public, for support and assistance from time to time by way of donations. Remember - this new equipment may be used to save YOUR life or property. Will you assist by donating towards the cost involved? If so, please forward your donations to the Brigade Secretary, Mr L S Jarratt.

15-5-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

The Country Fire Authority is presently conducting a series of lecture courses for the training of personnel within the organisation who will then give lectures and training in all aspects of firefighting throughout the Region. Group Officer Alan Schram has been selected to attend the Rural section of these courses, and Captain Wally Grant and Fireman Malcolm Graham attended a meeting at Colac last Sunday, May 11th to arrange for selection of Firemen to attend the Urban Brigade series. These courses will further help in the training of all members of the service and should greatly assist in widening the knowledge of members in the wide and varied aspects of fire-fighting. It may be of interest to note that, as at 30th June 1968, the Country Fire Authority has shown real growth within the State of Victoria, with 208 Urban Brigades, 1048 Rural Brigades and 141 groups of Fire Brigades being registered. The number of firemen who do so much toward the protection of life and property has risen to:- Urban Brigades 6131, Rural Brigades 111228 and Junior Reserve members 641. In all, these men operate a total of 1060 self propelled vehicles in addition to the many trailer pumps and similar equipment.

29-5-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

The Fire Brigade Station is now in the process of being painted by the Country Fire Authority. The Authority is also considering the building of an additional radio room connected with the present building. This should be carried out shortly, and when effected will provide better facilities for prompt action in periods of bushfire danger. A winch has been erected on the fire tower for the purpose of lifting hoses. This will eliminate the necessity for Brigade members to climb the tower in order to drag up hoses, which have to be hung up for drying after use.

19-6-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

Work has been carried out on extensions and renovations to the Fire Station, by Country Fire Authority personnel. The whole station has been repainted and freshened up generally and the new communications centre constructed on the northern end of the building will certainly improve facilities for the coming fire season. Thought has been given to all aspects of firefighting, much consideration being given to the need for complete communications between different sections during any major outbreaks. The new centre has been wired to allow for direct telephone links with the Country Fire Authority headquarters in Melbourne, the Forestry Commission and the Regional Officer, in addition to outside lines for quicker contact in any emergency.

Power outlets have been provided to allow immediate installation of VHF radio transmitters and associated equipment to augment the equipment already held and operated by the local Brigade. The Chief Secretary, Sir Arthur Rylah, stated in a comprehensive report to the Government, that the establishment of more adequate field headquarters was needed, with Regions and Groups being made self sufficient in equipment and facilities, and it would appear that the Lorne Fire Station is being made just that. Whilst it is the hope of every fireman, and the public generally, that we will not have need for all these facilities, it is certainly good to know that the Country Fire Authority is planning ahead to cover any contingencies.

26-6-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.

Extensions to the station came into use on Wednesday, June 11th and the Brigade took delivery of its new "Normalair" breathing apparatus. Sub-Station Officer Ed Cassidy, in charge of Protective Breathing Equipment for the C F A presented the equipment to Captain Wally Grant, and gave an informative lecture on its use. Members were given tests so that they are conversant with its potential value in protective and rescue work. Officer Cassidy said there were about 100 sets of breathing apparatus in Victoria, about 80 being of the type the Brigade has purchased. The C F A is standardising in this type of apparatus. Some 60 Brigades are now equipped with it, but many are towns or cities like Geelong, Colac, Warrnambool and Shepparton. He complimented the Brigade on its foresight, as the equipment could prove beneficial in many different circumstances. All further costs will be covered by the C F A, testing the equipment at least every 12 months at the Protective Equipment Section, Geelong. Air cylinders and parts will be maintained and replaced when necessary. The three Coast Riding Councillors were present, Councillor Crabbe thanked the Brigade for the welcome extended, and advised that Council, although it had many calls, had made a donation of \$50, towards the equipment's cost. He said that whilst he hoped there would not be many calls for the equipment it was good to know that it would be immediately available when necessary. Captain Grant thanked the Councillors for their attendance, and for the favourable consideration Council has shown towards the cost.

20-11-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

SHOP DAMAGED BY FIRE.

A fish shop and milk bar owned by Mr Marshall Smith at 48 Mountjoy Parade, Lorne, was partially destroyed by fire early Sunday morning, November 9th. The fire was first noticed by Mr Ron Dwyer, another shop owner, at about 2am. He notified the local Brigade. Two units with 16 firemen controlled the fire in 20 minutes and finally extinguished it about 4am. A fireman remained on salvage duty until 10-15am. The premises, valued at about \$26,000, sustained damage estimated at \$800 to \$1,000. An electric stove switch is believed to have caused the blaze.

18-12-1969 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

The Lorne Fire Brigade is appealing to local land and property owners for assistance in raising funds for its great work - the first appeal since 1960. All members are volunteers and receive nothing for their long hours, hard work and incessant danger to themselves. The Brigade is responsible for 20% of running costs, and members must supply their own overalls, boots and helmets. Donations may be posted to the Secretary, Mr L S Jarratt, phone 213, or may be handed in at ARMISTEADS CALTEX SERVICE STATION, VERN GROSE MOTORS (bottom garage near the bridge), or JARRATTS GIFT SHOP. Thanks are accorded to those who have made donations in previous years, and confidence is expressed in the community for further support.

5-2-1970 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRES NEAR LORNE.**

Two fires occurred on Sunday night, January 25th. One was at the She-Oak River, which was attended to by the Lorne Fire Brigade with the Bedford tanker. The other fire was at Mount Defiance, and was attended to by Forests Commission personnel with its Bedford tanker. Both fires were extinguished before mid-night, and under an acre was destroyed in each case. In case the fires became more extended the Aireys Inlet Brigade was called, but was turned back at Lorne. The Wye River Mobile Radio was also called, but turned back before reaching Mount Defiance. Both fires were established as deliberately lit. The fact that the grass was greener than usual at this time of the year helped and a cool evening also. The fact that other Brigades were alerted but not required shows that no chances are taken when fires are located.

26-2-1970 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRES AT LORNE.**

On Wednesday, February 18th an alarm was received at 12-30pm that a fire was burning in the Queens Park area behind Councillor L Hinton, on the top side of Charles Street. It was in dry native grass, and is thought to have been deliberately lit. Group Officer Schram and Captain Wally Grant, with 8 officers and 15 men of the Lorne Fire Brigade and 5 officers and 15 men of other C F A units attended the blaze, together with Eric Caddy and 12 men from the Forests Commission. Units on the spot were the Lorne Bedford tanker and Austin, a new Bedford tanker from the Lorne Forests Commission, a Bedford tanker and tip truck and 2 bulldozers from the Forests Commission, C F A tankers from Grovedale, North Geelong, West Geelong, Norlane, Geelong City, a private tanker from "Seascape Farm", and a Mobile Radio belonging to Cyril Ham, of Waurm Ponds. It was a bad day for fire risk, and no chances were taken. About 10 acres were burned out, together with a tent, mattress and the roof of a shelter in the Queens Park camping area. Visiting units left at about 5-30pm but Lorne continued patrolling and blacking out until 9pm. At 8-15pm on the following day a fire was reported in the Lorne tip.

The Lorne Fire Brigade Bedford tanker and the Forests Commission Bedford tanker kept the fire within the confines of the tip area, despite strong westerly winds. Captain Grant and Eric Caddy were in charge of operations. The Lorne tanker ceased operations at 10-40pm but the Forests Commission patrolled until midnight, guarding against flying sparks. The tip was still smouldering on Friday morning, but was being watched.

2-4-1970 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.

The Lorne Fire Brigade team won the Discipline shield at the No 7 Region Rural Fire Brigade Demonstration held at Geelong on Friday March 20th. This is the fourth year out of five that Lorne has won the Shield. It won it on three consecutive occasions, lost it the fourth year, and regained it this year - an excellent performance. The Brigade has a new 5 ton Austin, which was delivered to Lorne by Regional Officer D Steinhauser. The Brigade's former Austin, a smaller model - 3 ton was taken away to the C F A workshops at Ballarat. After reconditioning it will be delivered to the Trentham Fire Brigade.

17-5-1970 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.

On Monday evening, May 4th, several members of the Lorne Fire Brigade attended a lecture, most informative and interesting, given by Detective Sergeant McCrae and Detective Sergeant Cole, of the arson squad. In view of the recent spate of fires these talks were most topical. (Captain Wally Grant and Fireman Malcolm Graham attended).

28-5-1970 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

HOUSE GUTTED.

On Saturday night, May 16th, a holiday home in Pearce Street, Aireys Inlet, owned by Mr Jim Strack, of Moonee Pond's, was completely destroyed by fire. Mr Strack's son Gregory, 23, of Blackburn, and his wife Andrea, were hosts for the weekend to a party of the Christian Youth Fellowship at Blackburn, of which Gregory is a leader, about 15 people being present. They returned to the house about 11-15pm to find the house blazing. Units from Aireys Inlet, Anglesea and Lorne were called, but the building was completely gutted, having been built only six months ago. The party lost everything they had brought - transistors, record players, a tape recorder, clothing and bedding. The estimate of damage and the cause of the fire are not known. One report is that when the front door was opened the house exploded into flames. There was apparently an open fire burning and upon making enquiries we were informed by Anglesea Police that it was possible that a spark had caused the fire, which burst into flames owing to the draft from the opening door. But this is surmise only. Mr and Mrs Strack, senior, were in Melbourne at the time.

28-1-1971 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE IN CHERRY-TREE CREEK.**

A fire which occurred in Cherry-Tree Creek on Friday evening was brought under control by the joint efforts of the Lorne Fire Brigade and the Forest Commission about 11 o'clock Friday night. The fire which burnt out about 3 acres was in a very steep area on the western bank of the creek. Lorne firemen carried a pump and several hundred feet of hose down into the creek from George Street and attacked the fire with water while the Forest Commission men proceeded to cut a hand trail around the area which could not be reached by water from the hose. The fire was contained only a few hundred yards from houses in George Street-Allenvale Road area. Forest Commission men maintained a night watch and at daylight on Saturday morning a bulldozer trucked from Forrest cut a track into and around the fire and Forest Commission men completely blacking out by 10am, thus completing just another small service to the community. A second fire which occurred at 1am Sunday morning on Teddy's Lookout side of Cherry-Tree Creek was extinguished by the same people.

LORNE FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.

The Lorne Fire Brigade has recently taken delivery of a second Normal Air Breathing Apparatus set. This set was supplied by the Country Fire Authority. It is the Authorities policy to supply a set to any Brigade which buys a set from its own funds, the Authority also maintains and services the sets through a Special Services Branch. With two sets, each with a spare Air Cylinder available, Lorne firemen can now enter areas of dense smoke, asphyxiating or toxic gas to effect rescues, working in pairs or individually. With so many synthetics now used in household furnishings these give off dense suffocating smoke when ignited - other points where Breathing Apparatus would be used in Lorne are, Lorne Fishermen's Co-Op - high pressure ammonia - (asphyxiating), Lorne Memorial Swimming Pool - chlorine - (toxic), and in areas where Liquid Petroleum Gas is stored usually referred to as L P or Natural Gas (asphyxiating in dense quantities) Brigade members are instructed how to deal with leaks of various gases, and train regularly with Breathing Apparatus. Let's hope they never need use them other than in training, but it is reassuring to know that this equipment is available immediately for any such emergencies in Lorne where seconds could save a life.

2-4-1971 FRIDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.**

Region 7 held its Annual Rural Demonstration on Friday night 19th March. As usual this event took place at the Geelong Show Ground. For the fifth time in the past six years Lorne won the Eric Basset Memorial Shield for Discipline - Team members were Leon Armistead, Wayne Nicholls, John Alsop, John Carmichael, Ken Allen and Craig Henderson.

The Brigade also was placed third in the Four Man Low Down Pump event - Team members were John Alsop, John Carmichael, Wayne Nicholls and Craig Henderson.

As discipline and team work are an essential part of Fire Brigade work, it must be very gratifying for Captain "Wally" Grant to know that the young members of the Lorne Fire Brigade have learned and retained these qualities - qualities which have been maintained by the Brigade since its formation thirty five years ago.

4-11-1971 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRES IN LORNE.

On Monday last at about 11-15am, Mrs L Grass noticed smoke coming from underneath a house at the corner of Mountjoy and Albert Street. The Lorne Fire Brigade with Captain Wally Grant in charge, was quickly on the scene, as were the Police and State Electricity Commission. The speedy action meant that the house, belonging to the Manifold Estate, was saved, the fire being confined to the area under the raised verandah. Extensive damage was done to this section, which contained dormitory bedrooms.

Fortunately water pressure was good; the Brigade also attributed the saving of the house to prompt reporting of the fire. The house was covered by insurance. The cause of the fire is unknown.

The previous day children playing with crackers set fire to marram grass on the foreshore opposite the intersection of Hall Street and the Ocean Road. A south-easterly breeze drove the fire into dense scrub. Although no property was threatened, thick smoke proved a hazard to the heavy traffic along the Ocean Road at that time of the weekend. The Lorne Brigade had no trouble in controlling the blaze.

20-1-1972 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE SIREN SOUNDS.

Last Sunday, the peace was shattered by the sound of the fire siren. A Holden station wagon belonging to Mr Graeme Parker of Colac had caught fire whilst parked near the corner of John Street and Lorne Avenue. The alarm was given by Doctor McDonald, and even though the Lorne Fire Brigade reached the vehicle within 3 or 4 minutes, the owner had already extinguished the blaze. The fire is believed to have been caused by an electrical fault; damage to the vehicle was not serious.

26-10-1972 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE.**

On Friday October 20th at 10-35pm, the fire siren sounded, and in very few minutes time the Fire Brigade, under the direction of Captain Wally Grant, was at the scene of the fire which was located in the Mitchell's Fish Shop at 44 Mountjoy Parade. The blaze damaged the cooking apparatus and surrounds, an extractor fan, and timber in the ceiling, whilst smoke and water damage to the interior of the shop and fittings also resulted. We understand that the property was covered by insurance.

At about 5pm Sunday 22nd, the Brigade was once more summoned into action. This time the fire was in bush country in the Policeman's Track area roughly in forested area down behind the top end of George Street. Captain Grant and 10 men attended the fire which burnt about 12 acres of scrub - part of which was Crown Land, and some private property. Members of the Brigade patrolled the area until Monday morning, when the Forestry Commission took control. The area burnt is reported to have been very dry, but the Brigade was helped by the fact that there was little or no wind on Sunday.

In the opinion of Mr E Caddy, Forest Officer of Lorne, this fire was deliberately lit in several places along the Policeman's Track.

He would like to remind everyone that it is an offence to light unauthorised fires in Crown Lands or State Forest all the year round. Fines and imprisonment could result.

2-11-1972 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**IN AND AROUND TOWN.**

Last week as a result of our dry spell it became more evident when 3 minor fires were extinguished by the Lorne Brigade. In each case a couple of firemen could handle the operation, and it was not necessary to sound the siren and call out the rest of the Brigade. One fire was in Charles Street, one in the continuation of Bay Street, and the other near the Police Station, all were in natural bush and grassed areas. During the week, the Brigade did some burning off on the bank of the Stribling Oval, and behind the Chalet.

While on the subject of the Fire Brigade, Mr Alan Schram became the first Lorne person to attend a training school for Group Officers at Fiskville. At this place the Country Fire Authority has a permanent training school for its instructors, with facilities for meals and accomodation for a number of men who take the various training courses.

30-11-1972 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

The Lorne Fire Brigade has been given final instructions on their Fire Reporting System by Mr Bruce Bence, C F A Officer in charge of telephone alarm systems. A large number of Postmaster Generals Department Technicians, and members of the Brigade who will be involved in operating the system were present at the Fire Station. Pink cards, self adhesive stickers and information sheets have been sent to all telephone subscribers - these explain the new system.

Additional cards are available at the Commercial Bank of Australia, and Jarratt's Gift Shop.

18-1-1973 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.**

On Wednesday 10th January at 4-40pm, a fire which appeared to have been deliberately lit was reported to be burning below the Great Ocean Road on Mount Defiance.

Captain Grant, in charge of 9 men from Lorne Brigade, attended the blaze. They were assisted by 4 men from Kangaroo Ground Rural Fire brigade. These volunteer firemen were holidaying in Lorne.

Mr E Caddy with 11 Forestry men and fire units, also the Wye River trailer pump under the control of Mr George Moriarty and three men, all helped extinguish the blaze.

Fortunately the blaze was confined to an area between the Ocean Road and the sea, so damage was limited to the burning of about 1½ to 2 acres.

The Lorne Brigade members returned to the station at approximately 6-00pm.

At 1-15am on January 10th, the Brigade was called to the Deans Marsh Road, above Mr W Lowe's property, where a Kombi Van was ablaze. Evidently a gas lamp had set fire to the interior of the van which was owned by some surfers.

Captain Grant and thirteen men attended the fire, and although the van was virtually destroyed, no one was injured, and the surrounding bush did not catch on fire.

19-4-1973 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.**

In line with their policy of keeping all Fire Brigade buildings in good repair, the C F A has authorised the painting of the Lorne Fire Station roof, and the replacement of downpipe and guttering. Recently Assistant Chief Officer, Max Taylor and assistant Regional Officer, Ken Freeman inspected the Fire Station and equipment, and viewed a demonstration by the Lorne Fire Brigade. The visitors were very happy with things at Lorne generally. Supper was less formal and a very pleasant conclusion to the evening's activities.

5-4-1973 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.**

The Lorne Fire Brigade received several phone calls recently concerning a fire out towards Wye River.

Details were confusing, still the Brigade, under the control of Lieutenant Eddie Armistead (back in town visiting), headed out towards the Wye. The true state of affairs was found to be that a man was burning off in the Wye River Valley - but there was no danger with this blaze. However, after continuing on, the Brigade found that a lady householder between Wye River and Separation Creek, did indeed need their help. She had been burning a large heap of rubbish, when the blaze got away from her, and was burning up a steep slope and thus putting her house in danger. The brigade quickly extinguished this fire.

3-5-1973 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.**

On Saturday morning last, Fire Brigade members were called to assist Lorne policemen in searching for a family reported missing in the bush near Lorne. The family, a father, mother and 4 children were walking along the Erskine Valley when darkness fell and they lost their bearings. Captain Wally Grant and Geoff Tune found the lost family, unharmed, sitting on a log where they had spent the night, with only a luminous-dialled watch to amuse them - not that keeping check of the long cold hours was really much amusement. It was probably one of the few times that anyone in the lost group wished that he had been a smoker - as no one had a match to light a camp fire.

DISASTROUS ACCIDENT.

It was a saddened town last Sunday, when the news spread that during the early morning (1-15am), young Lorne resident, Grant Babington and his girlfriend, Barbara Sproules had been killed in a car accident. The driver of the car, Glen Nicholls of Lorne, at the time of writing was in the Geelong Hospital suffering from head injuries.

The accident took place in Mountjoy Parade where the car was found to be wrapped around an electric light pole which was almost severed. Three members of the Lorne Fire Brigade were called to put out a minor fire which started in a meter box on a dwelling attached to the Lorne Hotel. They detected a similar fire at the Manifold home next door which had also been caused by the interference to electrical wires, and were able to extinguish it too.

State Electricity Commission workers worked through the night, and after additional equipment such as a digger-erector and travel-tower were obtained from Colac, a new pole was erected by 8-15am Sunday, power was restored to the section of the main street which had been blacked out. Post Master Generals Department workmen also worked to repair telephone lines damaged by the smash.

22-11-1973 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

THANK YOU.

Prompt action and quick thinking by many people and the Lorne Fire Brigade saved our house. Many thanks are extended to all those people concerned in the recent fire in our garage.

Signed - May, Bill and Wayne Lynch.

10-1-1974 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.

The Lorne Fire Brigade had only one call this week. On Friday 4th, at 10-30pm two fire engines and a good roll-up of volunteers answered an alarm in Hall Street.

On investigation it was found that the wind was carrying smoke from an incinerator past the eaves of a house, and to a neighbour it appeared that the house itself was on fire.

Although the call was a false alarm, the brigade appreciated the fact that people are on the alert for fire, and are willing to report any possible signs.

24-1-1974 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

DISASTER PLAN FOR LORNE.

Many, or even most residents of Lorne would no doubt be unaware that there is a so called "Disaster Plan" for Lorne, which would be followed in the case of any emergency. It is a small part of a State wide plan, and is administered by the Police force.

In larger centres there are detailed plans laid out for particular emergencies, but in Lorne there are no hard and fast rules, because the action to be taken would depend largely on the type of disaster occurring.

The most obvious, of course, would be bushfire, and in such a case the Police and Fire Brigade would go into action immediately, probably calling for volunteers to aid in the fire fighting. All organised bodies in the town, such as the Lion's club, the Red Cross, the C W A, the Hospital Auxiliary, should be in a position to play an important part; supplying drivers for vehicles, food for the fire fighters, and other necessary services.

Members of those bodies should gather at their usual places of meeting, and when organised into a force, should inform the Police that they are ready to do whatever is needed.

The Fire Brigade have plans for specific types of emergencies, and carry out practices at intervals, so they are ready to cope with such things as gas leaks at places where commercial gases are used, such as the Fishermen's Co-Op and the Swimming Pool. They also carry out simulated evacuations at the hospital and at guest houses, so if emergencies arise everyone involved knows the part he or she has to play.

31-1-1974 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

DISASTER PLAN.

As a follow up to the article on Lorne's Disaster Plan in last week's issue, Mr Alan Schram has supplied more detailed information on equipment and services the Fire Brigade has on hand to meet emergencies.

Mr Schram is Group Officer for the Country Fire Authority in the area between Lorne and Anglesea. His car is equipped with radio so he is always on call. Also to hand he carries a list of 32 chemicals, inflammable liquids and gases, and explosives with instructions on how to identify them, how to treat persons exposed to them, and what measures to take to render them harmless. He also has lists of names and phone numbers of experts in the Mines Department, the Department of Health, Department of Army and supply, and I C I A N Z, who can be called on if necessary to handle and disperse these chemicals.

Members of the Country Fire Authority attend schools at regular intervals for instruction in the handling of dangerous chemicals, even to the point of being themselves exposed to them, so that they can easily recognize each chemical by sight or smell. The Country Fire Authority has specialized equipment for use when working on these chemicals.

The Fire Station in Lorne is very well situated within easy reach of three halls and the school.

These can be used to provide shelter and cooking facilities for evacuees and fire fighters. The Oval is also in close proximity to be used as a gathering place for fire fighting equipment, and can even be used as a helicopter landing pad when necessary, as helicopters are used frequently in the fighting of forest fires.

The Fire station is pre-wired so that the Post Master Generals Department (now Telstra) can plug telephones in for instant direct contact with Police, Forestry Commission, and other services.

In the event of land line failures, the Brigade is equipped with H F and V H F radio links with essential services in Geelong and other centres.

7-2-1974 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE BRIGADE CALLED OUT.

The Lorne C F A was called out last Monday 28th January, at about 3-15pm when observers at Mt Cowley and Mt Duneed Towers reported a fire in the Forest Park near the picnic area at the She-Oak River.

The Bedford from Lorne and one from the Forestry Commission attended, and later Anglesea's tanker and three more from the Forestry were called in.

The fire burnt out about 10 acres of forest before it was brought under control at 6pm with the aid of a quick fill pump in the She-Oak River.

It is thought that the blaze was started by a match or cigarette butt thrown from a car.

The Forestry Commission gave the Anglesea crew tea in the picnic area nearby, catering for 50 men, before they returned to Anglesea, and then the Forestry men continued mopping up operations that night and part of the next day.

On the following day, Tuesday 29th, at 10-45am, one of the builders working on the alterations to the Fishermen's Co-Op accidentally broke the sight glass on the ammonia tank, causing a serious gas leak. Geoff Tune borrowed breathing apparatus from the Lorne Fire Brigade to enable him to get to the tank and turn off the valves. Within an hour the leak was completely stopped.

28-3-1974 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.

On Friday, 22nd March, the following members of the Lorne Fire Brigade, W Grant, L Armistead, T Hart, K Cooper, G Murnane, N Murnane, and N Ennis took part in Region 7 Demonstrations, which were held in Geelong at the Show Grounds.

Although they did not win an event, they acquitted themselves very well, coming second in "The Best Kept Truck in the Region".

9-5-1974 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**QUICK THINKING SAVES A HOME.**

A couple of State Electricity Commission workers were the real heroes in a fire during the week. Mrs Pam Fulton, after noticing smoke coming from under the eaves of a house belonging to Mr & Mrs Ken Cooper, called to the two men passing by, and then alerted the Fire Brigade.

When the Brigade arrived, the two men had broken into the rear entrance to the house, and were playing water on the fire with a garden hose.

The fire apparently started behind the fireplace, in the wall between the kitchen and the living room, caused perhaps by sparks. Damage was done to lining, studs, a glass door, and general smoke damage in other areas.

Fourteen fire-brigade volunteers attended, but the quick thinking actions of the two S E C men had a great deal to do with containing the fire.

16-5-1974 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE.**

The new V H F radios have now been installed in the Lorne, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Brigades, and at present personell are busy testing these new radio links.

19-9-1974 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.**

A meeting for election of officers of the Great Ocean Road Group was held at the Lorne Fire Station on Wednesday 11th September. After having served for ten years, since the formation of the Group, Group Officer Alan Schram has resigned, and he has been replaced by John Harrison, of the Anglesea Fire Brigade. Captain Bill Allerdyce, of Anglesea Brigade was re-elected 1st Deputy Group Officer. Lyn Jarratt of Lorne was elected 2nd Deputy. Group Communications Officer is Keith Cecil, replacing Alan Schram, and Mr Cecil is now also Group Secretary, replacing Lyn Jarratt, who has held that post for ten years, since the formation of the Group.

It was decided to hold a meeting of all Group Officers and Officers of member Brigades later in the year to decide on new operating procedures for the re-organized Group.

A reminder of the Annual Fire Brigade Dinner, to be held at the "Chalet" on Friday 20th September, at 7pm. Ex members of the Brigade wishing to attend are asked to give their names to Mr Lyn Jarratt.

30-1-1975 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE AT EASTERN VIEW.**

A grass fire was reported to the Lorne Fire Brigade on Sunday afternoon. It was burning through marram grass and tea-tree on the foreshore near the log arch, close to Eastern View. The fire is believed to have been started by children playing with matches, and would have been a very much more dangerous fire had it been on the other side of the road.

The Lorne Brigade contacted the Brigades at Aireys Inlet and Anglesea, and tankers from these two Brigades quickly had the fire under control.

6-2-1975 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE CALLED OUT.**

Considering the amount of hot weather and Total Fire Ban Days that we have experienced lately, the Brigade has had a very quiet time.

The only alarm this week was to attend an accident in which a bread van overturned in Fern Avenue. Captain Grant and Lieutenant Armistead took the Bedford to the scene to ensure that the small amount of petrol spilled on the road was not ignited. The accident took place on Friday 31st, which was a day of hot north winds and Total Fire Ban.

13-2-1975 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE REPORT.**

At midday last Saturday the Fire Brigade was called out to attend a grass fire, which was burning directly in front of Captain Grant's home in Polwarth Road. A small area between the road and Tank's fence was burning, but was extinguished without difficulty. Captain Grant was very pleased with the number of firemen who answered the alert.

The forest area surrounding Lorne is now in a very highly combustible state, and the public is warned to take every care.

6-3-1975 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.**FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.**

On Sunday 2nd March, a Total Fire Ban day with a northerly wind blowing, the Brigade were fortunate to receive only one call. This came at around 9-45am from Captain Moriarty of the Wye River Fire Brigade.

The strong winds had broken off a branch of a tree, and it fell across S E C wires, setting fire to the grass at Separation Creek. Members of the newly formed Wye River Brigade had the fire extinguished by the time the Lorne Brigade's Bedford arrived on the scene.

13-3-1975 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.

The Fire Brigade were called out on Saturday at around 1pm to attend a fire in a vehicle, which was parked at Scotchman's Hill.

Mr Bender, a resident in the area, gave the alarm, and Brigade members Leon and Eddie Armistead and Malcolm Graham attended in the Bedford Tanker. They were able to extinguish the blaze without any trouble, using the brigade's new dry powder extinguishers.

The vehicle, a V W Kombivan was not badly damaged, the only things being burnt were some clothing and blankets inside the van, and some scorching to paint-work. The fire was apparently caused by a short circuit in the fuel gauge.

11-4-1975 THURSDAY. THE LORNE NEWS.

FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.

The Brigade had two calls last week. The first was on Thursday at about 3-15pm from the Wye River Rural Fire Brigade, calling for assistance to control a blaze in long dry grass on a high ridge behind the Wye River Hotel. This had been started by someone burning off. Six volunteers under Lieutenants Armistead and Tune took the Lorne Bedford to the scene, just in time to save two houses. Four men from the Wye River Brigade were using knapsack sprays on the fire, but were unable to contain it. A tanker and four men from Anglesesa also attended the fire, which was extinguished about 5-30pm after burning out about 4 acres

The Brigade attended another grass fire on Friday afternoon, this time at Queen's Park near the corner of Charles and Francis Streets. Captain Grant and seven men attended with the Austin, and had the fire under control within the hour. About 2 acres were burnt.

12-11-1981 THURSDAY. LORNE MERCURY.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

On Cup Eve a very successful night was held at the Golf Club, when Members of the Lorne Fire brigade were happy to welcome distinguished guests:-

Mr S Duncan a member of the Board of the Country Fire Authority and Wife.

Mr J Bushby - Regional Officer and Wife.

Mr J Colthard - Regional Officer.

Mr E beaurepaire - Councillor and Members of the Aireys Inlet Fire Brigade and friends.

During the evening presentations were made to Fireman Ed Armistead who received a 20 year badge. Captain W Grant presented retiring Secretary, Lyndon Jarratt with a silver pen and congratulated him on his 25 years as secretary to the brigade and wished him a happy retirement in Canberra. Regional Officer J Bushby spoke in glowing terms of Lyndon's 40 years service to the brigade and presented him with a framed certificate of retirement.

Mr S Duncan honoured Captain Grant by presenting him with the Queen's medal for his years of service and good conduct, and Wally was congratulated by all senior officers for his dedication and leadership to the Lorne Fire Brigade over a period of many years.

10-12-1981 THURSDAY. LORNE MERCURY.**LORNE FIRE BRIGADE.**

The Lorne Fire Brigade would like to thank everyone who donated money for our new four wheel drive vehicle appeal. To anyone else who wishes to donate money, feel free to do so, as we still need funds to complete the project.

THE MAJOR FIRES ORIGINATING 16th FEBRUARY 1983.

The following extracts are taken from the above C F A booklet.

OUTBREAK AND CAUSE.

The Otways fire broke out at approximately 1456 hours on Wednesday 16th February, 1983. The fire originated in or near a cutting on the disused railway line on the Deans Marsh-Birregurra Road, adjacent to the Deans Marsh sawmill. The cause of the fire is unable to be determined. Investigations have been carried out by the Police.

The fire caused the death of 3 people, destroyed 729 houses and burnt out approximately 41,000 hectares, mainly in forested country. There were extensive losses of pine plantations in Forest Commission areas. Whilst the origin of the fire was in the country area of Victoria, the majority of the fire (70%) was within the Fire Protected Area.

THE PROGRESS OF THE FIRE.

After its start, at approximately 1456 hours, the fire moved rapidly in a south-easterly direction through grassland, crossing the Deans Marsh to Lorne Road and at 1530 hours entered the forest. Little is known of its progress for the next hour, as all northern access to the area was cut. However, at 1600 hours the fire reached the Pennyroyal Road - 7 km from the start of the fire. Heavy spotting was occurring in the bush and a spot fire started at Big Hill Creek at 1630 hours.

Rate of spread for the initial hour was 7km/h which was maintained on the run to the coast. However, early spotting in the Lorne and Big Hill Creek areas made rate of spread of the main fire insignificant. Fuel load in the forested areas was estimated in excess of 20 tonnes/ha by the Forests Commission of Victoria.

By 1710 hours the fire was burning on both sides of the Great Ocean Road at Big Hill Creek. At this stage the fire appeared to be burning in many tongues in the bush and spotting very heavily.

At 1722 hours a spot fire destroyed three houses at North Lorne and many spot fires were starting in the North Lorne and Cathedral Rock areas.

At 1740 hours a spot fire was reported at Moggs Creek and a fire reached Cinema Point at 1816 hours. By 1839 hours, 30 houses had been lost in the North Lorne area.

At 1840 hours the wind swung to the west and the fire began heavy spotting to the east along virtually all of that front. At approximately 1900 hours, a gale force south-westerly (approximately 100km/h gusting to 160km/h) hit the fire and further extremely heavy spotting began to occur.

At 1903 the Grassy Creek Bridge on the Great Ocean Road burnt, effectively isolating Lorne.

The fire caused extensive damage in the coastal settlements at Eastern View and Fairhaven. Gale force winds destroyed many houses before the fire arrived. Sheets of galvanised roofing iron were torn from roofs and blown through the air, along with mattresses and debris.

At 1920 hours the fire spotted into the creek at Aireys Inlet and developed very quickly. 217 houses were destroyed in the area.

At 2000 hours it reached Urquart's Bluff. Spotting began in the Anglesea area at about this time. The main fire reached Anglesea at 2100 hours and burnt mainly around the west and the north of the town. (137 houses were destroyed in the Anglesea township).

Spotting into the Eumeralla Scout Camp destroyed this area and, although the wind moderated, there was still heavy spotting up to 2200 hours. The fire was finally contained in the Forest Road Jarosite Road area about 2300 hours.

Maximum rate of spread which occurred between Aireys Inlet and Urquart's Bluff was approximately 10km/h due to the fierce wind and spotting activity. The overall rate of spread of the main fire after the wind change was 5.5km/h. Drought indices on 16-2-1983 were Lorne 320, Grovedale 580.

THE FIREFIGHT.

The forces of the Winchelsea Group were involved in a grass fire in the Conns Lane area prior to the start of the Otways Fire.

The first response to the Otways fire was the Deans Marsh tanker and a private tanker. Vehicles could get to the head of the fire but could not stay there because of the heat and fire behaviour. Once the Deans Marsh to Lorne Road was cut by fire, virtually all access to the main head was lost, as this is a forested area with rough terrain and poor access.

As the fire travelled towards Lorne two units from the Lorne Brigade endeavoured to save houses, whilst the main front was allowed to burn to the sea. After the wind change fire-fighting was not possible because of lack of access and the severe fire behaviour. Units were forced to retreat along the Great Ocean Road and endeavour to save lives by evacuating coastal settlements.

After the main fire passed through Aireys Inlet, 4 fire appliances were left in the township to try to save some property and all other units withdrew to the Anglesea area.

The final containment to the north and east of Anglesea showed great efficiency and organisation by Groups and Brigades.

This was an extremely difficult fire to fight because of the fire behaviour, access and terrain. However, actions taken by brigades, especially during the retreat along the Great Ocean Road, were significant in reducing panic among the residents of the coastal settlements and minimising injury and loss of life.

Those who were at Aireys Inlet spoke of the NOISE, that it was likened to a whole fleet of 747 jet aircraft right alongside. Others, including many of the wives at the Anglesea Fire Station, recall the feeding of not only our own members, but the Army personnel as well, for nearly a week.

Others remember pulling hoses and pipes around in the peat on the western bank of the river for weeks afterwards in an attempt to extinguish the smouldering mass there, which incidentally following an original suggestion from the brigade, has been transformed into Coogoorah Park.

Volumes have been, and will be written about the Ash Wednesday holocaust. Many volumes of official reports have been published following the disaster. One in particular is worthy of mention:-

23-2-1983 WEDNESDAY. COASTAL TELEGRAPH.

COAST HOLOCAUST.

IT SHOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED.

By Garry Cotton, Telegraph Editor.

The coast holocaust could have been minimised if Fire Brigades had their way with strategic fuel reduction burns. But planning controls prevented vegetation removal, and conservation pressure leaves large areas at risk.

Brigades also meet with stubborn resistance from landowners who refuse to clear fire hazards, but expect their properties to be saved by volunteers when a fire occurs. This situation is incomprehensible in an area with the highest fire risk in Australia.

It will only take five years for sufficient dry material to accumulate to danger level. Unless narrow minded thinking changes, the coast will burn again.

The basis of fuel reduction burning is simple:

Reduce the fuel, which reduces the heat, which reduces the risk.

If reduction burns had been permitted on heathland west of Anglesea towards Urquart's Bluff, the story in Anglesea would have been vastly different from 127 homes lost. The same applies to Eastern View (30 homes), Fairhaven (181) and Aireys Inlet (127).

Where brigades do not have fire-prevention jurisdiction the Forests Commission should use its unlimited discretionary power to make Crown Land behind the coast safe. This means making available sufficient men and equipment to ensure that reduction can be carried out with full safety, not leaving it to the dedication of local Forest Officers, a handful of men, and a truck or two.

It is also not good enough to expect local volunteer brigades to continue to carry the burden of major fire-prevention work on Crown Land.

The main task of the brigades is fire-suppression - a job in which they are highly skilled. The coast between Anglesea and Lorne and through to beyond Wye River, is unique because it is totally bounded by Crown Land. Responsibility for the area is a State Government concern, and now is the time to re-think fire policies.

FUEL BURNS A SUCCESS.

Following last Wednesday's disastrous coast fires there are many obvious examples of where fuel reduction burns and previous wild fires have saved property.

In October 1981 fire destroyed a number of homes in Fairhaven and burnt around many others. Some of these homes saved the first time are still standing because the surrounding fuel has been reduced. But despite the 1981 fire many property owners, whose houses were saved by risky action by fire brigades, did nothing. This time they have paid the penalty. Classic examples of the benefit of reduction burns were at Bellbrae West, Paraparap and the Ocean Road "Mad Mile" area.

When the fire swept around the back of Anglesea, miraculously leaving most of the town untouched, it was driven towards Forest Road. But despite its built-up velocity and heat, its progress was impeded by strategic areas of reduction burns. These areas had been burnt to protect Anglesea from the North.

Although this time the fire had come from nearly the opposite direction, the effect was the same. Gum Flat Road, which runs through the rolling timbered valleys behind Anglesea, is an important link in the fire plan, and a vital access for fire vehicles. Successive reduction burns made the road useable because there was less nearby heat generation.

There was still no chance of stopping the fire when it reached Forest Road, but the road took away some more of the sting. Although there was more State Forest on the other side it had also been fuel reduced, and the speed of the fire front was further checked. By the time it reached farmland on the other side it was ready to be stopped by the waiting brigades.

There were a number of places where the fire did break through on this front, but they were mostly through areas of privately owned bush where there had been no fire prevention measures taken. The International Harvester proving ground on Gum Flat Road did not need a fire truck to protect it. Although covered in trees and surrounded in bush, consistent reduction burning kept it safe.

There is no disputing that the fuel reduction areas worked. If they had not, the fire toll would have been far greater.

24-2-1983 THURSDAY. LORNE MERCURY.**LORNE RED CROSS - THE FIRE.**

Ash Wednesday, 16th February, will be certainly remembered as being aptly named in this year of 1983. Lorne people, along with many others in various parts of Victoria and South Australia, were overwhelmed with the devastation of part of their beautiful town.

Driven by strong, gusty, searing winds, flames engulfed many of Lorne's lovely homes and gardens. Desolate heaps of ashes remain.

Practical help to the unfortunate ones was quickly forthcoming. Red Cross set up an efficient culinary department at the school and was able to provide approximately 800 meals and snacks to the fire-fighters. Also Red Cross established a depot at the R S L Hall, where all sorts of goods and clothing were distributed to the sufferers of the catastrophe.

Many thanks to the hundreds of people who generously contributed, through Red Cross and other avenues, to the needs of victims.

LORNE FORESHORE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT - ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE.

The Minister of Lands has advised that caravan sites are available free of charge for any local resident who has lost their home during the recent bush fire.

PRESS RELEASE FROM MR HARLEY DICKINSON, M L A FOR SOUTH BARWON.

Mr Dickinson praised the Insurance Council of Australia for establishing an Insurance Emergency Service with a claims centre at 97 Yarra Street, Geelong. Even those who lost their insurance policies can visit this office or phone 052 223034. Many insurance companies are prepared to make interim payments almost immediately to those who have lost everything.

Currently hundreds of claims are being assessed by loss assessors working around the clock.

With over 700 homes destroyed or damaged in the North Lorne to Anglesea area and a South Barwon insurance bill which will exceed \$30 million, it will take several weeks for a full check to be made on claimants details.

We thank Mr Dickinson for this communication. Unfortunately lack of space meant that it had to be summarised.

LORNE BUSH FIRE APPEAL.

A local appeal for victims of last week's disastrous fires resulted from a meeting convened by Lorne Lions Club. Official title is Lorne and District Bush Fire Relief Appeal.

One of the aims is to assist local permanent residents who lost homes and/or possessions in the fires, by providing funds for urgent immediate needs - those not met by various relief groups already operating.

So far an initial \$100 has been donated to many families and individuals who have needed requisites such as footwear, underwear, implements to commence cleaning up around their burnt dwellings, medical supplies.

A sub committee of Lions Club Members has already visited as many deserving cases as possible, and handed over cash to them. If these people require further assistance, they should contact Neville Morgan (address below). The committee is also anxious to hear from anyone else who requires aid, and who has not yet been contacted.

Within a few minutes of the appeal becoming official \$3½ thousand had been raised.

This included \$1500 from Lorne Lions Club, as well as \$500 from Peter Barker, one of the trustees of the appeal. Another noteworthy contribution was from Senior Citizens staying at the Lorne Chalet; these pensioners from Footscray, Canterbury and Mt Evelyn donated \$410. Holiday home owner Mike Brady made a rush trip down to donate \$1000 cash to this local appeal so assistance could commence immediately. Just as welcome was a small donation from a lady in Perth who had spent a very happy day in Lorne 3 years ago. Of course, many more large and small donations are still being gratefully received. Prospective donors are advised that donations of \$2 or over are allowable tax donations.

Donations (and queries) can be made personally or posted to :-

Lorne Post Office.

Lorne Real Estate, 136 Mountjoy Parade, Lorne 3232.

C H Morgan & Son, 96 Mountjoy Parade, Lorne 3232.

PLEASE CONSIDER THE PLIGHT OF THE MANY PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THIS DISASTER, AND GIVE GENEROUSLY.

LORNE FIRE BRIGADE NEWS.

On behalf of the Lorne Brigade may we say a big "Thank You" to all the volunteers who turned up at the station to help us on our "Ash Wednesday". To the Red Cross Ladies "Thank You" really seems so inadequate. They worked non stop from Wednesday night till Saturday and were on standby for Sunday. The meals were really appreciated by all our members and other brigades.

Would anyone finding any of our equipment e.g. Rake hoes, knap sacks, helmets or overalls could you please return them to Caltex Service Station or any brigade member as soon as possible as we need them urgently to re-equip our trucks.

9-3-1983 WEDNESDAY. COASTAL TELEGRAPH.**ENVIRONMENT GROUP QUIET AFTER FIRES.**

The Geelong Environment Council is keeping a low profile in the wake of the coast holocaust. The Council has previously opposed fuel reduction burns by the Country Fire Authority and Forests Commission. This is in spite of pleas by firemen for fire-prevention and new evidence following the February blazes of the success of control burns.

Council President Mr Tony Woolford said his group had "deliberately hung back because it's a very emotive thing at the moment".

He retracted an earlier statement about the G E C's stand on fuel reduction burns after reading articles published in the TELEGRAPH. The articles showed a strong bias against conservationists, he said.

Mr Woolford said he had spoken to members of the G E C committee and decided to "retract what we had said earlier until we find out what the causes of the fire were".

Any stand by the G E C now could develop into a slanging match by those opposed to its policy. "It could develop into a situation of us and them", Mr Woolford said.

In the past the G E C has opposed control burns by the C F A, and in October 1974 called upon the then Minister for Conservation, Mr Borthwick to protect the environment from the "ill informed burning policies of the Country Fire Authority".

The group said that a fuel reduction burn of an area of heathland on Gum Flat Road behind Anglesea was "an act of vandalism".

This is part of the letter:-

...11 units of the Anglesea C F A carried out a "control" burn on an area of heathland on Gum Flat Road several miles from Anglesea.

We regard this as an act of vandalism.

It is most unlikely that the control burning of any heathland can be justified on the grounds of fire-prevention.

This particular area is unique and is the subject of a submission by us to the LCC (Melbourne Study Area Report) for preservation in its natural state.

It is remote from habitation and industry and also has some small use (or did have) for spring honey production.

We ask you to give consideration to how the environment might be protected from ill-informed actions such as these.

In this particular case there is a pool of expert local knowledge (members of Angair). Surely there is some way of using such advice to guide the C F A.

10-3-83 THURSDAY. LORNE MERCURY.

LORNE: GETTING BACK TO NORMAL.

Reprinted from The Herald 5-3-1983.

Victoria's bushfire ravaged sea resorts have begun a campaign to entice more beachgoers. Lorne, a popular seaside resort, has been one of the hardest hit. Chairman of the Lorne Tourism Development Association, Mr Ian Evenden, said today: "most people think the recent bushfires have wiped out Lorne, but 95% of Lorne is still there. Only 60 houses, all of them private on the North East corner of the town, were caught by the fires, and the Golf House was burnt down", he said.

Mr Evenden said the Lorne Tourism Development Association had begun a campaign, with the backing of local businesses to promote the town as a flourishing beach resort. "Tourism is Lorne's major industry and business has dropped right back at a time when it should be doing so well. The town has grown tremendously within the last three or four years. There has been a lot of building development and we need a constant cash flow all year round to pay for this", Mr Evenden said.

Mr Evenden said: "The beaches are still there. The town's services, restaurants, shops, hotels, caravan parks and scenic bush walks are all intact, but because of the fires everyone thinks Lorne has burnt to the ground".

"The locals are worried. It has only been two weeks since the fires, yet we think it may set us back a couple of years", Mr Evenden said.

16-3-1983 WEDNESDAY. COLAC AND COASTAL TELEGRAPH.

LORNE BACKBURN DAMAGE.

Private property near Lorne had been burned in an area untouched by the Ash Wednesday bushfires, Winchelsea Shire Council was told.

Mrs B Heaton said she had inspected land owned by her daughter and son-in-law on the Erskine Falls Road after the fires, and found an area of natural bush, fences and about 500 trees planted by the owners burned.

A bulldozer had also knocked down a fence, she said.

Mrs Heaton said she had been told by the driver that the property had escaped the bushfires but had been deliberately burned.

Councillor St John Sutton said the area had been used by the Forests Commission for back burning operations.

The property was adjacent to the forest areas, he said.

The council backed Councillor Suttons recommendation that Mrs Heatons letter be referred to the Commission and the Lorne C F A.

23-3-1983 WEDNESDAY. COASTAL TELEGRAPH.

FLOOD DAMAGE.

The bridge at Grassy Creek, between Lorne and Eastern View, has suffered the ravages of fire and flood.

And as rain deluged the Otways on Monday and Tuesday reports of damage poured in.

At Cumberland River eight caravans valued at a total of \$35,000 were washed away as the river swept through the camping ground.

Up to 10" of rain has fallen in some places causing landslides and cutting roads.

CHILDS VIEW.

See that pile of ashes there,
That used to be my teddy bear.
There in the tree where the birdies sing,
I used to have my favourite swing.
In that corner, there was a hutch,
Where I kept the bunny I loved so much.
My doggy is gone, my kitten too,
I can only find one shoe.
My room used to be just there,
Now there's only ashes, It's so bare.
Grandma's house is all gone too.
Dont cry grandma, I still love you.

Charlene Angus.
Shirley Dandy.

THE RED STEER'S WILD COAST RUN.

The bush was dry and tinder,
 Just waiting for the day
 That someone let the red steer off
 to roam, the madman's way.
 Brigades were on the ready
 but nothing could be done
 to stop that fire on it's wild run.
 He roared, and tore, his way along
 through bush we all thought gay.
 Determined to beat all, to Louttit Bay.
 It was here, that he was cornered
 so he turned the other way.
 To engulf all and sundry.
 As they fell for his prey.
 He would not stop for anything
 as food aplenty lay.
 Until he came to paddocks
 with no grass for hay
 and now that he was cornered
 the end was where he lay
 not before he learned us
 beware of nature's way.

Anglesea author.

23-5-1983 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.**COURT TO PROBE FIRE DEATHS.**

Inquests into three deaths in the Deans Marsh - Lorne area Ash Wednesday bushfire begin in Geelong today.

Melbourne City Coroner Mr Tony Ellis will look into the deaths which occurred at Deans Marsh, Aireys Inlet and Fairhaven. A total of 47 people died in the February 16th bushfires which swept through Victoria. The cost of the fires to the public and private sectors has been put at more than \$217 million.

The West Coast fire began in Deans Marsh and swept through to the coast to Lorne, where about 60 houses were burnt in the northern part of the holiday resort. A wind change then fanned the inferno along the coast almost to Jan Juc, wiping out the towns of Moggs Creek, Fairhaven and Aireys Inlet. More than 120 houses in Anglesea were also destroyed and the fire threatened the Alcoa Power Station.

Mr Ellis will look into the deaths of Mr Colin Barton, 65, retired School Teacher, of Ridge Road, Fairhaven, Mr Lloyd Venables, 62, retired, of Gilbert Street, Aireys Inlet, and Mr Ille Mierra, 51, a Telecom Technician, of Miller Street, Colac.

A Melbourne Coroners court official said the inquest into the fires in the Warrnambool area would be held in July, the Macedon area inquests would start in September followed in October by the inquests into the Beaconsfield-Cockatoo area deaths.

A total of 27 people died in the Beaconsfield-Cockatoo fires, 10 in the Warrnambool area fires and seven in the Macedon area fires.

24-5-1983 TUESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

INQUEST TOLD OF MILL SMOKE.

Smoke was seen coming from a Deans Marsh sawmill sawdust burner up to two hours before the tragic Ash Wednesday coastal bushfires began in a nearby paddock a witness told the Coroners Court yesterday.

Kenneth Graham Barry, of Barongarook, a mill hand employed at the Deans Marsh sawmill at the time of the fires told the court he and another employee had to douse the sawdust with water to extinguish the burner. Under cross examination from Mr Johnston, for the C F A, Barry said that on other occasions he had seen burning material coming from the top of the burner. In his statement to Police read to the court Barry said the burner was not working when he arrived for work on Wednesday morning, the day of the bushfires. He said the burning sawdust in the burner had been extinguished on Monday and remained extinguished throughout Tuesday. Both Tuesday and Wednesday were days of total fire ban.

In his statement Barry said that at about 10am on Wednesday he saw "a puff of smoke" from the burner so he doused the burner with water to put it out. Under cross examination Barry said it was not smoke, but steam. Barry said he did not see the steam until some time between 12-45pm and 1-30pm. He said he and another workmate, Francis James Dowie, of Carlisle River, climbed inside the burner and hosed the sawdust. Barry told the court he realised about a week before yesterday's hearing that his statement to Police contained discrepancies with his spoken evidence, but he had not notified Police before the hearing. He said he did not receive a copy of his statement until the time he received his summons to appear. He said he thought it "wasn't important".

In his statement Dowie said that when he arrived at the sawmill on the morning of Ash Wednesday the sawdust burner was not operating. He said that about 2-30pm, the mill's proprietor, Mr Bob Trotter, told the workers to stop sawmilling because of the heat. He said the workers then proceeded to clean up inside the mill until the fire was noticed in a paddock west of the mill about half an hour later. He said another worker had detected the fire, which was burning in grass in an old railway cutting outside the fences surrounding the mill.

Under cross examination from Mr Robert Webster, council assisting the coroner, Dowie said that about lunchtime on the Wednesday he saw steam coming from the sawdust burner. He said he and Barry doused the sawdust until it was wet and a person could stand up inside the burner. Cross examined by Mr Johnston, he said there was nothing burning inside the burner. Dowie said the steam must have been caused by the heat of the bricks and the steel at the bottom of the burner.

He said a spark from the burner could not have started the bushfire because the fire started about 100 metres away to the west and the wind was not blowing in that direction.

Dowie said that he told the Police Officer taking his statement of the steam, but "apparently I forgot about it" when he read the statement and the incident was not mentioned.

Other employees of the sawmill told the inquest that the sawdust burner was checked on days of total fire ban as a matter of habit. The inquest was told that no one person was responsible to make sure the sawdust was fully extinguished. On days of Total Fire Ban sawdust from the mill was pumped into a truck instead of the burner and then later dumped on the mill's grounds, they said.

25-5-1983 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

P C TELLS OF RACE WITH DEATH.

A Police motor-cyclist told yesterday's Geelong coroners court hearing of his race with the flames of the tragic Ash Wednesday coastal bushfires.

Senior-Constable Steve Williams told the inquest he and another man raced along the Deans Marsh-Lorne Road towards Lorne as the main front of the fire blazed behind them. Senior-Constable Williams, riding a Honda 900 cc police motor-cycle was trying to lead to safety Telecom worker Ille John Mierra.

Mierra's body was later found lying beside the burnt-out wreck of his Telecom Toyota utility about 11 kilometres south of Deans Marsh, where the fire began.

Senior-Constable Williams said he was returning to Colac along the Deans Marsh Road when he smelled smoke and saw what he thought was a large cloud of dust obscuring the sun.. He said he was about two three kilometres past the Mount Sabine Road intersection when he was waved down by a Forests Commission employee. He said the man told him he should head back towards Lorne, but Senior-Constable Williams said he would continue ahead and alert people in the path of the fire.

He said he told the Forests Commission employee, later identified as Philip John Evans, of Lorne, to inform anyone else travelling into the path of the fire to turn back to Lorne. Senior-Constable Williams said that as he continued up the road he was confronted by a wall of flame burning up to 10 metres above the trees. He said he noticed the Telecom Utility approaching, he waved it down and told the driver to turn around and head back towards Lorne.

Senior-Constable Williams said he was travelling at about 80kph when they rounded a corner to find another sheet of flame across the road caused by the fire spotting ahead of itself.

He said Mierra slowed, so he yelled "come on" and motioned him to follow. Senior-Constable Williams said that as he approached the wall of flame he lay down on the petrol tank as far behind the wind fairing as possible.

He said he changed down to third gear and accelerated his 900cc machine quickly through the flames. "I didn't have a jacket or anything. I just ducked down behind the screen to get as much protection as I could", he said. "The heat from the flames was so intense that I dared not sit up on my bike".

He said that as he rode through the flames he saw a burning tree blocking the left side of the road, but managed to ride around it. Senior-Constable Williams said the last he saw of the Telecom Utility was when he looked in his mirrors before accelerating through the flames. He said he was unable to go back because of the intensity of the flames bearing down on him. "I believe that had he followed me he may have survived as I did", Senior-Constable Williams said.

The inquest was told that Mierra's was found shortly after by a group of C F A fire-fighters driving along the road to see if it was clear to Lorne. The official cause of Mierra's death was asphyxiation/incineration.

FIRE DID NOT START AT MILL, INQUEST TOLD.

There was "no way" a spark from a sawdust burner could have started the Ash Wednesday coastal bushfires the Geelong Coroners Court was told yesterday.

Robert Charles Trotter, of Carlisle River, the proprietor of the mill at the time of the fires said yesterday "there was no way the fire could have started at the mill". He said he and his family had become "very distressed" at rumours and allegations that his mill's sawdust burner provided the spark which ignited the fire. He said fire did not burn onto the sawmill property until at least half an hour after it was first detected.

The inquest was told on Monday that burning grass was first detected in a paddock to the west of the mill and that the sawdust burner was located at the eastern end of the mill property. The court was also told the prevailing winds were coming from the north and north-west.

Trotter, in his statement to the inquest, said yesterday there was "no way" sparks from the burner could have travelled across the mill property and against the prevailing winds to light the fire.

In a second statement read to the inquest, Trotter said he had no knowledge of smoke rising from the sawdust burner on either the Monday before the fires or on Ash Wednesday February 16th. Trotter said he had made the second statement because "I didn't like some of the comments coming out in the papers".

Cross examined by Mr Robert Johnston (for the C F A) Trotter said there "was no way possible" smoke could have been rising from the burner on the day of the fires.

He said he "did not believe" it could have been steam and said he was "quite serious" when he suggested that swirling dust could have been mistaken for steam or smoke. Trotter said he "had no reason whatsoever" to believe the sawdust burner would have been implicated as a possible cause of the tragic fires.

FIRE CLUES WERE DESTROYED, EXPERT TELLS SM.

The actual seat or cause of the Ash Wednesday coastal bushfires "could not be ascertained", a forensic scientist told the coroners court yesterday. He said the area where the fire started was graded sometime between Ash Wednesday and his inspection on February 22nd. He told the inquest the grading had destroyed evidence. He said he did not know who had graded the area, but he was told it had not been done by the C F A to stop backburning.

Mr Neil Barnes, a Melbourne forensic scientist, said he would have "most probably" have been able to state the exact cause and seat of the fire if the area had not been graded.

He told the inquest the fire started on grass outside the Deans Marsh sawmill property. He said the seat of the fire was somewhere in an area measuring about 120 metres by 60 metres near what was known as the old railway reserve. Mr Barnes also exonerated the sawmill's sawdust burner as the cause of the fire.

"It is considered that neither (the mill nor the burner) could have been the cause of the fire", Mr Barnes said. He said the mill and the burner were located about 100 to 150 metres down-wind of where the fire started. He said any burning material that may have been emitted from the burner, if it was operating, would have travelled south-east with the prevailing northerly wind. He said his inspection of the burner showed there were several centimetres of water in the bottom of it. He said "it was probable" the fire was started by a cigarette butt or match thrown by someone passing along the Deans Marsh-Birregurra Road. He said he "could not say with any scientific certainty" how the fire started.

He also ruled out clashing overhead SEC high and low voltage wires as a possible cause. He said low voltage wires near the mills transformer showed signs of recent clashing, which probably occurred when the mill burnt and supporting poles collapsed. "It is considered the fire was not electrical in origin", Mr Barnes said. The fire was also not started by the sun's rays reflecting on a shiny surface or being magnified through glass because the day was overcast, he said. He also said he examined the exhaust system of the mill's forklift and a pile of sawdust near where the fire began. Both were ruled out as possible causes.

MAKING EVACUATION COMPULSORY: C F A.

Consideration should be given to providing police and emergency services with the power to "compulsorily evacuate" areas in danger, the Coroners Court was told yesterday. Counsel for the C F A. Mr Robert Johnston, told the inquest that in the circumstances of Ash Wednesday, emergency services had no legal authority to evacuate people against their wishes. He said the inquest had heard evidence that two of the deceased "were clearly warned of the necessity to be part of an evacuation". "This inquiry highlights the necessity for consideration to be given for the power to be invested in authorities for a compulsory evacuation to take place", he said.

Mr Johnston was presenting his submission to Melbourne City Coroner, Mr Tony Ellis, SM, at the conclusion of evidence from 45 witnesses. He also said the C F A had no authority to require people to clear their land of fire hazards. He said the inquest had heard evidence to the inquest suggested the old railway cutting, near where the fire started, was a death trap. The C F A had no power to require clearance of such land, he said.

The inquest had earlier been told that the old railway cutting had acted as a "wind tunnel" on the day of the fire. The inquest was also told the cutting had not been cleared for several years.

Mr Johnston said under the C F A Act, the power to compel a person to clear land resided with the proper office of a municipality, whether or not that person had any knowledge fire-preventative measures.

Counsel assisting the Coroner, Mr Robert Webster, submitted that based on the evidence presented, the fire began about one km west of Deans Marsh along the Deans Marsh-Birregurra Road. He said the location of the starting point was about five metres off the roadside and just outside the existing fence line between the old railway cutting and the roadside. He also said the probable starting time was sometime between 2-30pm and 2-45pm.

12-9-1983 MONDAY. THE COLAC HERALD.**SIR NINIAN MEETS LORNE FIREMEN.**

Governor General of Australia, Sir Ninian Stephen, last Friday fulfilled his promise to meet members of the Lorne Urban and Rural Fire Brigade who battled the "ASH WEDNESDAY" blaze.

When serious flooding prevented Sir Ninian from completing his tour of fire areas in March, he promised he would return to meet the volunteer firefighters of Lorne, Aireys Inlet and Anglesea.

The Governor General's entourage reached Deans Marsh but was unable to continue because of the dangerous conditions caused by massive flooding in the coastal area.

After almost an hours wait in the rain at the Lorne Golf Club on Friday morning it was feared members would miss out again.

But Sir Ninian, Lady Stephen and their official party finally arrived, eager to meet members and chat about their experiences in the fires.

It appears the delay had nothing to do with the weather this time, but was caused by a mechanical problem with the official aeroplane.

Lorne volunteer Fire Brigade members number about 40, including reserves, but not all were able to meet Sir Ninian and Lady Stephen because of work commitments.

Those who did were:- Captain Wal Grant, lieutenant Leon Armistead, Appliance Officer Neil Ennis, Secretary Denis Karn, Lieutenants Malcolm Graham, Graham Armistead and Tony Hart, Communications Officer Jean Graham. Firefighters Paulyne Armistead, Valda Tank, Rhonda Tank, John Graham, Darren Balderas, Ken Karn, Brendon Telford, Jack Ngatai, David Gaylard.

After he and Lady Stephen had chatted with each of the 17 Brigade members present, Sir Ninian said he was proud to meet some of the great volunteer body of men and women who made up the Country Fire Authority.

Although he was unable to visit the area in March, it was well worthwhile returning six months later not only to meet the people who fought the "ASH WEDNESDAY" blaze, but to gain an impression of what had happened since.

It was an opportunity to see the lessons which had been learnt from the fires and sadly, those which had not.

Sir Ninian explained he was no expert, but he hoped people rebuilding after the fires would absorb all the information available from the C F A, regarding fire-safe house designs, and not make the same mistakes.

He also hoped people would sacrifice to some extent their delight of living in the bush.

Because of the amount of fuel present in bush settings people should think of the dreadful fire risk to themselves and to those firefighters who had to try and get in to save them.

Of the evidence that many people were rebuilding in the coastal area, Sir Ninian said he could understand their determination to stay.

If he had a house along this beautiful stretch of coastline destroyed, he would be eager to rebuild, but would insure he obtained good advice on its construction before beginning.

In view of this, the Lorne Golf Club was an ideal sight for Sir Ninian and Lady Stephen to meet Brigade members, not only for the panoramic view, but the sight of a new Golf Club building under construction.

The former Club building was destroyed in the fire.

Sir Ninian said this was the advantage of visiting the area six months on. Everything looks so much better - a contrast to his tour of the other devastated areas in Victoria and South Australia soon after the fires.

Before moving on to meet Brigade members at Aireys Inlet and Anglesea, Sir Ninian and Lady Stephen enjoyed lunch at the new restaurant at Lorne's Torrens Motel.

Among the guests who joined the official party for the tour were the Chairman of the C F A, Mr Laurie Newell, Officer in Charge of Region 7, Mr John Bushby and Chief Officer of the C F A, Mr Ron Orchard.

Mr Newell later returned to Lorne to attend the Brigades annual Dinner at the Chalet, where two members were awarded Life Memberships and another a 25 year service badge.

The Life Membership Awards were presented to former Brigade Secretary and Group Communications Officer, Mr Lyndon Jarratt and Mr Alan Schram, MM, who served a total of 90 years on the Brigade, and the 25 year Service Award to Lieutenant Malcolm Graham.

21-12-1983 WEDNESDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

RESIDENTS EVACUATED AS FLAMES CLOSE IN.

LORNE FACES FIRE THREAT.

Bush fires threatened Lorne yesterday for the second time in less than a year.

Parts of the coastal township and surrounding localities were evacuated as the fire closed in.

The fire burnt more than a thousand hectares of native bushland, but there were no reports of loss of life, buildings, or stock.

No one was seriously injured, although fire-fighters suffered in the heavy smoke which burnt the lungs and stung the eyes.

The fire came within two hundred metres of houses in George Street, the road at the rear of the town which looks out on the Lorne Forest Park.

The first areas to be evacuated were Cumberland River and Allenvale. Police set up road blocks along the Great Ocean Road to allow only Lornes residents into the town.

Later parts of Lorne itself were evacuated.

The first Street was George Street and other houses nestling among the trees.

By 9pm, more than 400 people were on the Lorne Foreshore waiting for word of the fires progress.

Late last night they were still waiting as the flames edged closer to the houses in George street.

The fire was burning uncontrolled in thick native bush and fire-fighters could only wait until the flames came close enough to the towns perimeter to allow them access to it.

Fire units from both the Country Fire Authority and the Forests Commission lined George Street ready to make their stand.

They stood and waited most of the afternoon and then late into the night.

By 11pm, the flames had come within 200 metres of the houses, but still they had to wait.

Spot fires began to break out in some places, but they were quickly contained by fire-fighters, assisted by the National Safety Council helicopter which dropped water from the air.

The most serious spot outbreak started about 9-45pm near the Forests Commission Offices.

The flames had jumped the Erskine Falls Road and were about to be joined by a small front coming down over a nearby ridge.

Again fire-fighters made their stand, waiting for the flames to get close enough. When they did, the fire was soon controlled.

From 11am to well after mid-night, fire-fighters played a waiting game. The Fire would be headed quickly toward Lorne, and then it would stop.

They hoped for a wind change, and when it came about 6pm, the flames were fanned back toward Lorne.

From Teddy's Lookout, on the South-Eastern edge of the town, fire-fighters gathered to watch the fire.

At first they were blinded by thick smoke, but then spot fires began to break out on the cliffs across the Georges River Gully.

Within half an hour, one spot fire had developed into a major fire on its own, even before the main front had crested the hill.

Fire-fighters were worried spot fires might help the fire cross the gully and the natural break provided by the River.

As the sun began to set, the winds racing through the gully were gale force.

The main fire was still approaching Lorne, but despite the strong winds, the front was moving slowly and without much ferocity.

A second front began to threaten the town about 7pm.

It had come from the Allenvale Area, where the fire first broke control lines, but it too was moving slowly.

In Lorne, people prepared their houses. They sprayed water on roofs, cleared gutters of leaves and filled them with water.

Some people had trouble with water pressure. One man could not even manage to get the water to reach 2 metres away.

Others prepared to pack cases, ready for the evacuation order which was announced about 7pm.

"Women and children to the main beach" was the message from the loud speakers. Some chose to ignore it, others followed the advice.

Those who stayed behind watched and waited. The thick smoke billowed over the nearby ridges, but there was no sign of fire.

Later, about 10pm, flames could be seen through the smoke, but the fire was moving slowly.

The wind began to fade and gave hope to Lorne residents.

The fire was within 200 metres of some of the houses and the fire-fighters were able to pour water on the approaching flames.

The threat appeared to be over, and although the fire was still burning unrestrained in thick bush less than half a kilometre away, Lorne breathed a sigh of relief.

It took until after 11pm, but fire-fighters were prepared to confidently announce they now had the upper hand.

The main fire was still burning in steep terrain about half a kilometre West of the town, but Lorne was protected by the Georges River and a fire break cut earlier in the day by Forests Commission Bulldozers.

Fire-fighters, who had earlier stationed a cordon around the towns perimeter, were allowed to take a break, or go home.

A skeleton watch would be kept throughout the night in case there were any unexpected flareups.

Police reopened the road and allowed vehicles to go back through to Cumberland River.

It too, had survived. The flames came within metres of the caravan park which was virtually washed out to sea in March.

On the beach, a public address system was set up to inform people of what had happened.

The State Emergency Service organized sandwiches and drinks, and emergency accommodation plans were being swung into action.

Some people would be billeted out, others would sleep in public halls, and as the town closed ranks in the face of a potential disaster, residents would stay at the houses of friends. Some would probably stay on the beach, where it was beginning to cool.

It had been a long day. The first threat emerged about 11am when what remained of a controlled back burn jumped fire lines and raced away fanned by the hot northerly winds that gusted during most of yesterday.

It headed up into steep terrain covered with dense bush, giving fire-fighters no chance of battling the blaze.

The Forests Commission was in charge of operations, and backed up by the C F A, directed crews to counter one threat, and then another.

They were worried that if the fire developed into a major blaze in the dense bush, it could turn and race down on the township when the forecast wind change came.

They had the additional worry of how to stop the fire moving along the Great Ocean Road to Apollo Bay.

In all, 20 Forests Commission and 17 C F A units with the combined manpower of about 130 had been called in to fight the fire.

The State Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, Mr McKenzie, dashed back from a meeting at Avoca to check on the fires progress late last night.

He said the cause and origin of the fire would be investigated.

JUST A PALL OF SMOKE.

The large pall of smoke hovering over Lorne was obvious as soon as the Westpac Helicopter took off from Geelong yesterday afternoon.

Word had gone out early in the day that a Forestry Commission burnoff started some days ago had flared again with the hot, northerly wind.

At this stage there was no immediate threat to Lorne.

The pattern was all too familiar to the events of Ash Wednesday when a wind change swept the fire through the coastal region.

With memories of that disaster in their minds, a Geelong Advertiser team was sent to the scene in the Westpac Helicopter. A second team travelled to Lorne by car. The Helicopter made its way along the coast after refuelling at Ocean Grove.

From Anglesea to Lorne the scene was one of rebirth, with the bush slowly recovering from Ash Wednesday and many houses being rebuilt.

But in the background was the threatening smoke over Lorne.

Immediately the helicopter arrived at Lorne the Westpac crew was asked to land on the oval behind the Fire Station and report to the C F A Officer in Charge.

One quick sweep of the fire area revealed spot fires less than 1 kilometre from the township.

The helicopter quickly left from Lorne, this time with Police on board to monitor the situation.

At 4-30pm the news was that the fire had crossed the Cumberland River, about 4 kilometres south west of Lorne.

Apart from that, the overall situation was not clear.

Although there was a front about 1 kilometre wide burning near Lorne, there were several spot fires throughout the area.

The area which had burnt was also not clear, running into some hundreds of hectares, but the major concern was the expected wind change which could threaten Lorne.

There was a feeling of some relief among Police and fire-fighters when the Cape Otway Lighthouse reported a change to the south-west at 5pm, measuring 20 knots.

It was earlier feared the wind could reach 60 knots with the change, producing an Ash Wednesday effect.

With the change, which had been billowing out across Bass Strait, turned on the township.

At one stage visibility was down to 20 metres.

In Geelong, the smoke became evident about 7-30pm.

ASH WEDNESDAY REVISITED.

It was reminiscent of Ash Wednesday.

The blue sky and white-to-grey clouds which hovered above Geelong were semi-obsured by the film of smoke.

And the fears, allayed since Wednesday, February 16, 1983, were suddenly with us once again.

But so was the wishful thinking. "It cant happen twice in 12 months ... or can it"?

And so was the guilt. "I meant to cut the trees back from the spouting, but I've just never got round to it..."

The "bloody greenies said leave the bush alone. Dont build the breaks around the house ...it wont happen again. but it nearly bloody well did".

And it did. As the smoke, grit and acrid smell swept its way over Geelong, firemen and others were battling to save Lorne.

Houses, rebuilt after Ash Wednesday, were threatened; the caravans of those who had moved in early at Lorne and the Cumberland were in the firing line; small Otway towns such as Allenvale were evacuated.

The horror had returned. Different from Harrods in London this week, but equally as frightening as the bomb which devastated the worlds most famous store.

From the safe distance of Geelong, we listened to the radio broadcasts and watched the television channels to discover the full extent.

The fear was a repetition of February 16, 1983.
Thank God it didn't happen again... but it was so close.

All the signs were there. We had a warning; another Ash Wednesday is never far away.

For the sake of our families, our friends, the people who flock to the coast to enjoy their Christmas holidays, please be careful.

LUCKY THIS TIME - PARK MANAGER.

Mr Neville Hettick and his wife, Dianne, owners (caretakers) of the Cumberland River camping ground considered themselves lucky after the Lorne fire had surrounded their camping ground.

The fire was stopped at the perimeter of the camping ground and there was no damage to buildings or caravans.

The fire swept over a nearby ridge about 1pm, and police ordered people to evacuate two hours later.

About 35 campers at the site made their way to the beach at Lorne while fire-fighters fought the blaze.

By 9pm police gave the all clear for everyone to return.

As Mrs Hettick was replacing the goods in her house late last night, the surrounding ridges were dotted with bright glowing embers.

Small spot fires were still burning on the opposite side of the river, only metres from the camping ground.

Mr Hettick said the scene was better than guy fawkes night.

But while Mr Hettick was in good humour last night, he said he hasn't always been so lucky.

In March the camping ground was ravaged by floods and 8 caravans were lost.

Mr Hettick was wondering what natural disaster would hit Cumberland River next.

He said many of the campers in the ground had lost caravans in the March floods.

"We were lucky this time", he said.

"But there was a lot of damage to the scenery and I imagine a lot of wildlife would have been lost".

Mr Hettick said the camping ground would operate normally over Christmas.

APRIL 1984.

BUSHFIRE REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT.

The report of the Bushfire Review Committee was presented to Parliament in April 1984. The main body of the report comprised 174 pages with an additional 22 pages of annexures.

For those interested it makes compelling reading. Some of the recommendations have been carried out but, as is often the case, many more seemed to have been shelved.

The main body of the report was concerned with the effectiveness of the counter-disaster arrangements and considerations for the future. The final section - CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS were listed under the following headings:-

- Section 1 - Policy, Planning and Organisation
- Section 2 - Legislation
- Section 3 - Mitigation and Preparedness
- Section 4 - Public Awareness and Education
- Section 5 - Communications
- Section 6 - Warning and Information Systems
- Section 7 - Shelter
- Section 8 - Evacuation
- Section 9 - Fire-Fighting Operations
- Section 10 - Relief Measures
- Section 11 - Research
- Section 12 - Important Considerations for the Future

The Committee, amongst its conclusions, recommended the following.....

Whilst conservation aspects must be respected, they should not be allowed to override reasonable safety measures achievable by fuel reduction.

Some municipal fire prevention plans are below the required standard because of inappropriate Proper Officers. Proper officers should be replaced with full time Fire Prevention Officers, with independant powers. If this cannot be done, and the current system of Proper Officers is retained, the incumbents must be properly trained in fire-prevention measures.

Local Government Legislation should be ammended so that conservation interests cannot overbear sensible fire prevention and protection measures.

Specal attention should be paid to fire-prone areas by local government authorities, such as provision of fire-breaks, home protection measures and evacuation arrangements.

There should be legislation to prevent local government authorities from restricting removal of trees and similar measures which are aimed at reducing fuel levels.

20-12-1990 THURSDAY. LORNE LOCAL NEWS.

9th SCHEDULE.

COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY ACT 1958.

NOTIFICATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OR NOMINATION OF A FIRE PREVENTION OFFICER.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that GRAHAM DAVID BUTCHER of lot 5 Gherang Road, Modewarre was nominated on the 12th day of December, 1990 to be the Fire Prevention Officer of the Shire of Winchelsea within the Winchelsea and Lorne Fire Control Region (s) for the purposes of the abovementioned Act in the place of GEORGE VLADOV JANEV whose appointment was terminated on the 16th day of November, 1990.

Dated this 13th day of December, 1990.

John M Wilkin.
Manager Technical Services.

11-12-1991 WEDNESDAY. BELLARINE ECHO.

FIRE TRACKS UNSAFE - C F A.

A group of fire-fighters are refusing to leave the Great Ocean Road to fight a bushfire on the grounds of poor access and personal risk. The C F A members took the stance at a recent Winchelsea Shire Municipal Fire Prevention Committee meeting. Draft minutes state that "Members of the Great Ocean Road Group will not leave the Great Ocean Road between the Arch and North Lorne because of poor state of access and subsequent risk to fire-fighters.

The area contains hundreds of holiday homes and permanent residences, many nestled in dense bushland. The move means those residents cannot expect to receive the Group's fire-fighting support during a bushfire emergency. Fire restrictions in the region begin next Monday.

Winchelsea Shire Engineer John Wilkin said the area stretching from Moggs Creek to private property in the Big Hill Estate north of Lorne had been highlighted for access problems.

"All of us remember Ash Wednesday and what happened to fire-fighters in the Cockatoo areas - access here is like some of those areas", he said.

C F A Regional Chief Ken Stephens said he was aware of the problems, but said units would not be risked in another "Ash Wednesday". "I'm not interested in saving houses to lose lives", he said. Chief Superintendent Stephens, who will visit several access tracks in the Otway Region today, said many were so narrow trucks could not pass. He said inspections would determine whether Councils, the Department of Conservation & Environment or landholders were responsible for the tracks.

But he also said access was not the only problem. "On a bad day reproducing Ash Wednesday, we will not be putting trucks and men into the forest. If we do they will die. You cant fight a fire on a day like that in the forest; if you do get close enough to put water on the flames, the water just turns to steam. It would kill you just by breathing it in".

A fire protection officer with the Department of Conservation & Environment, Mr Euan Ferguson, said road maintenance was a problem. Access tracks were budgeted for upgrading every five to eight years. "I'd like to have more money to make our tracks better but money isn't there", he said.

Mr Ferguson said there had been extensive fuel reduction burning this year, particularly close to settlements. But he pleaded for responsibility by landowners and visitors because of the high fuel buildups.

"The fundamental point is that fire is a natural event and it happens quite regularly and when people build down there they've got to be aware of that", he said. He also added that the Department planned aerial patrols, followed up with ground patrols to ensure campers left camping grounds in safety.

18-12-1991 WEDNESDAY. BELLARINE ECHO.

BUSH FOLK CONFUSED.

The C F A's stated intention not to fight fires along certain poorly-maintained Otway tracks has increased the concern of a number of residents to whom JULIE HOBBS spoke last week.

C F A restrictions on fighting fires off the Great Ocean Road have confused the local residents.

Residents in the Otway bush last week asked whether the bans included housefires or warnings to evacuate in a bushfire. The Ocean Road Group of the C F A told a recent fire prevention meeting that access tracks between Moggs Creek to the Lorne Big Hill Estate were too dangerous. The hair-raising, wheel spinning trips on loose stones, around tight bends and up steep inclines have prompted some residents to call for improved access roads. Others accept that their personal piece of heaven could be a potential death-trap.

Many survivors of the 1983 Ash Wednesday fires have learnt their lesson, building homes on concrete blocks and clearing nearby land. Many more have re-erected an assortment of timber holiday homes on high stilts in thick bushland.

"Some people think it's worth the risk", said Jim, a permanent resident of the Big Hill Estate. His own brick home was one of only a handful to survive the blaze of February 16th, 1983. Six days before the fire he had built a ring road around his house, two weeks ago he bought a petrol-powered water pump. He said he would fight any fire himself.

"It's the sort of thing you learn to live with. I will do it myself, I'd hate like hell for some young bloke to come in and get killed trying to save this place. They wouldn't want to anyway, they leave the track and they've had it".

The C F A Regional Chief Superintendent, Ken Stephens, has said that if another bushfire in conditions such as those on Ash Wednesday came through the Otways then no one would risk their life in the bush. He said access tracks were only one issue and that the onus of fire-prevention and clearing fell largely on resident's shoulders and he has stated that residents should evacuate immediately.

Jay and June Krause had been told to leave their house in the Big Hill Estate on February 16th, 1983, as fire roared through the Otways towards them. Their house became one of hundreds destroyed, but they rebuilt, this time on a concrete block along fire safety guidelines.

3-6-1993 THURSDAY. LORNE LOCAL NEWS.

LORNE WATER BOARD NEWS.

LORNE WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM.

Water for Lorne is harvested from the St George River via the Allen Reservoir and is supplimented from the Erskine River by the "Rough N Tumble Storage" when needed.

This water is treated and disinfected at the Lorne Water Treatment Plant before being distributed to a series of basins supplying five different Pressure Zones within the town.

Treated water from the plant discharges into the William Street basin (No 1) and is supplied to the low level system generally South of the Erskine River and lower than Charles Street. Water is pumped from this basin to supply all other systems.

The Golf Club Basin (No 2) supplies the intermediate level generally North of the River and lower than Belvedere Terrace and the Deans Marsh Road.

Water is again pumped to the Upper Golf Club Basin (No 3) which supplies high level areas of North Lorne and the top section of Richardson Boulevard Estate.

An engine driven pump can feed this basin in an emergency, such as a bush fire.

All other pumping systems can be by-passed if necessary and water supplied direct from the reservoirs.

Water is pumped to the Teddy's Lookout Tank, which supplies the high level system South of the River and higher than Charles Street.

Also a small system at the highest elevation is supplied from a booster pressure pump at Teddy's Lookout tank.

A recent report by the Board's consultant engineers identified a need for additional clear water storage within the town to serve future needs.

As a result the Board has adopted a policy to closely monitor Peak Water Consumption and to commence planning for additional storage to supply the area South of the Erskine River in the long term.

Because of the number of Pressure Zones, some Board customers on the boundaries of these zones may experience vastly different water pressure than their close neighbors.

If you are planning to install a mains pressure hot water service, your plumber should always check the existing water pressure. In some cases a pressure reduction valve may be needed.

Leigh Strange,
Manager of Operations.

LORNE WATER BOARD HISTORY NEAR COMPLETION.

A history of water supply to Lorne commissioned by the Lorne Water Board embraces much of the development of the town over the past 100 years.

The project is now well under way and will contain 150 pages of text and photographs outlining a century of providing water and wastewater disposal in one of the most difficult terrains in Victoria.

A wooden flume first used to supply the reticulation from the upper reaches of the town was an unique engineering innovation in its era.

The history reflects the important role in a voluntary capacity of Trust Commissioners and Board Members in their continual battle down through the years to cope with Lorne's development by coping with water needs of the community.

Hopefully, the history of the Lorne Water Board will give some insight into the development of an important resource probably taken for granted so long as it flows when a tap is turned on.

The publication will complete the overall history of the Otways water supply.

Author, Bob McCormick, has already compiled "A TRUST IN WATER" (History of the Colac District Water Board) "FROM RIVER TO COAST" (History of the Apollo Bay Water Board).

10-6-1993 THURSDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

URGENT CALLS TO BLAZE DELAYED.

Several Lorne residents said yesterday they could not contact the Lorne Fire Brigade as fire swept through three unoccupied homes, causing an estimated \$160,000 damage.

One of the three unoccupied homes in Otway Street was burnt to its stumps in the fire about 2-25am.

An adjacent holiday home received substantial fire and water damage and may have to be demolished.

The third home unit suffered minor damage to decking valued about \$4,000.

Police arson chemists were called yesterday to sift through the mass of rubble in an attempt to determine the cause of the blaze.

Telecom and the Country Fire Authority Technicians were also investigating technical problems which delayed contact with the brigade for several minutes.

Lorne Fire Brigade Captain Leon Armistead said the house was a "total fireball" when he arrived at the scene after 2-30am. The heat of the fire had broken through a window on the adjacent holiday house, owned by Melbourne residents, which was 80 per cent damaged by fire and water.

Police said yesterday it appeared the fire had been burning for some time before being noticed and reported by neighbors, who were possibly alerted by the sound of breaking windows "caused by the heat".

None of the three homes was occupied and there were no injuries.

C F A Regional Chief Superintendent Ken Stephens said yesterday it was not known what caused the delays, but appeared there was a "fault with the equipment".

Mr Stephens said some residents had difficulties reaching local C F A members, which may have been due to telephone equipment at the exchange or the fire reporting system. The first call to Geelong City Brigade was a 000 call at 2-29am, whose officers also had difficulty reaching the Lorne Brigade.

He said the phone lines had been in good working order during a routine check last Friday.

"Whether the few minutes delay would have made a lot of difference, I can't say. It is an unknown quantity ", Mr Stephens said yesterday.

"It is just one of those things that happens on very rare occasions. It is a very unfortunate set of circumstances".

Police said the gutted, two story Hardiplank house had been leased out until two weeks ago and the owners had intended to move back into the house.

Restaurateur, Mr Sen Huynh, of the Seaside Palace Restaurant, had been living with his family above the premises while the house was leased. It had been on the market for 12 months.

Mr Huynh said he arrived at the house yesterday morning to find that it was "gone".

Senior Detective Finley Beames, from Torquay CIB, said the fire was not thought to have been deliberately lit, but the cause was still being investigated.

It was difficult to tell the cause of the fire because of the total destruction of the Lorne house.

Five C F A appliances and police had remained at the scene until 7am before the fire was brought under control.

27-11-1993 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

FOREST FIRE SPARKS C F A WARNING.

A fire which burnt five hectares of State Forest near Lorne yesterday has sparked a Country Fire authority warning.

The fire began about 11-30am in Deans Marsh Road, three kilometres north of Lorne.

Officer in charge of Geelong region, Mr Ken Stephens, said council workers were using an angle grinder to cut steel posts when sparks set fire to vegetation on the side of the road.

150A.

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING HELD LORNE FIRE STATION FRIDAY 7th OCTOBER

1994.

MEETING OPENED AT 7-40PM.

CHAIRMAN:- Mr A Roache (Surf Coast Shire Representative)

COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE:- Regional Officer K Stephens.

VICTORIAN RURAL FIRE BRIGADES ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE:- Mr L Schroeter.

PRESENT:- L Armistead, W Grant, K Richmond, M Graham, J Graham, D Karn.

Commissioner Mrs T McCormack asked Mr A Roache to attend Meeting and conduct it.

Regional Officer Stephens thanked Mr Roache for chairing the Public Meeting.

This Meeting was to discuss the amalgamation of the Lorne Urban and the Lorne Rural Fire Brigades.

R/O Stephens explained that by the joining of the two Brigades there would be no change in the issuing of trucks or equipment as it was on a needs basis.

It was moved Mr M Graham that the Lorne Urban Fire Brigade and the Lorne Rural Fire Brigades be amalgamated and that all assets of the Lorne Rural Fire Brigade be changed to the Lorne Urban Fire Brigade. The Brigade is to be known as the Lorne Fire Brigade, but under Country Fire Authority rules it will be officially known as the Lorne Urban Fire Brigade. This motion was Seconded by Mr K Richmond.

As there were no objections the motion was carried unanimously.

Mr L Armistead then thanked Mr Roache, R/O Stephens and Mr Schroeter for attending the Meeting.

Meeting closed at 7-45pm.

"It was very dry because it had recently been sprayed", Mr Stephens said. "Before they could successfully extinguish it, the fire had ripped up the side of the road.

"This fire is an indication that the bush is ready to go now for this summer. If the conditions had been hotter and windier it would have been much more difficult to contain.

"People who reside along the Great Ocean Road need to take this as a warning that the fire season is already upon us".

Four Department of Conservation and Natural Resources units and units from Lorne, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet fire brigades attended. A bulldozer was used to dig a line around the burning area to contain it. Mr Stephens said firemen extinguished the fire from behind the line, containing it about 4-15pm.

21-12-1994 WEDNESDAY. THE FIREMAN.

AN ERA ENDS AT LORNE.

The 59th Annual Dinner and Presentation Night of Lorne Fire Brigade marked the conclusion of an era, this being the last such function involving both Lorne Urban and Lorne Rural Brigades. A public meeting has decided that Lorne Rural Brigade be deregistered and all funds and equipment be transferred to the Urban Brigade. The two brigades have always operated as one.

Representing the Country Fire Authority at the dinner was District Officer Jim Millar who reflected on the activities of both Urban and Rural brigades and commended members on the level of service provided to the community in one of Victoria's most fire prone and fire active areas. He also acknowledged the years of tradition that had been observed by the Brigades, stating that this need not change under the new classification.

In conjunction with the Rural Brigade's deregistration Honorary Life Memberships were bestowed on two members. Honored in this way were Ex Captain Wally Grant and Firefighter Denis Karn. An old friend of the Brigade in former Deputy Chief Officer Max Taylor made the presentations.

Ex Captain Grant has served for 43 years, most have been as an Officer. He was Captain for 26 years and is now Communications Officer. Firefighter Karn joined the brigade in 1968 and was Secretary for two years.

Denis was also one of the members who received C F A Service awards in recognition of the time spent with the Rural Brigade. He received a 25 year Badge.

Senior among Rural Awards presented to several members were 30 year Badges to Captain Leon Armistead, Firefighter Malcolm Graham and Firefighter Eddie Armistead.

Firefighter Tony Hart accepted a 25 year Badge, Firefighter Keith Richmond a 20 year Badge with 12 year Badges going to Lieutenant Len Tank and Secretary Jean Graham. Tony and Jean also received Urban Service Badges denoting 25 and 12 years of service respectively.

12-4-1995 WEDNESDAY. THE ECHO.

CAR PLUNGE.

A 43 year old Bendigo man died when his Porsche went out of control and plunged off the Great Ocean Road near Lorne. The car landed on its roof 20 metres from the base of the cliff at 12-37am on Thursday. The passenger, a 21 year old man from Lorne, escaped from the vehicle but could not free the trapped driver.

Martin Van Haandel is believed to have drowned in the car.

Senior Constable Gary Middleton, of Lorne Police, said the stretch of road was not considered dangerous.

12-4-1995 WEDNESDAY. THE FIREMAN.

COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY.

50 YEARS 1945 - 1995.

GREAT FORESIGHT SHOWN BY LEGISLATORS AND OTHERS IN PLANNING C F A FIRE SERVICE.

50 Years ago the Country Fire Authority began functioning, the formation of the organisation being prompted by disastrous and tragic fires in Victoria in 1939, Black Friday January 13, and again in 1944. The Country Fire Authority Act passed through Parliament in 1944 but it was in early 1945 that the C F A actually came into being.

So started what has become one of this State's, and one of Australia's, most successful volunteer organisations, a body that has been acclaimed throughout the nation and by many overseas authorities and fire services.

Great credit must go to the foresight shown by the Government in 1944 in providing legislation that has certainly stood the test of time. Of course, there have been many amendments and additions to the original Act but the legislation was so well compiled that it encompassed all matters to give the infant Country Fire Authority the opportunity to succeed and develop into a vital community orientated organisation.

Whilst the legislation was of vital importance, it was equally necessary for the personnel of the newly constituted C F A to play their role in setting the basis for a successful future. This they certainly did, the first officers and administrators of the Authority working under very difficult conditions to unify brigades in the fire service from the two organisations that had previously existed.

Urban brigades had, for 54 years, come under the control of the Country Fire Brigades Board, with bush fire brigades being under the Bush Fire Brigades Committee. The latter segment of the new service, renamed rural fire brigades, were concerned that they might become the "poor relations" within the C F A and it took some time to convince numerous rural brigades that they would benefit from being under the umbrella of the Country Fire Authority.

Indeed the early years were not easy for rural brigades in particular. With the C F A inheriting several hundred such brigades, and with more being continuously formed, equipping them was a real problem. Most were poorly equipped as bush fire brigades and the Authority's budget could not handle the vast amount of equipment that was required to bring brigades up to what could be termed a reasonable level. A great many did not have a C F A vehicle and it was more than 30 years before this goal of the Authority was achieved.

In the meantime there were many developments, a vital one being two way radio. This was one of the many ideas basically pushed and introduced by brigade volunteers, many of whom had experience as to its value through their experiences with the services during World War 11. However, acceptance of this method of communication by the C F A was not immediately forthcoming and all early radio networks were financed by brigades and groups.

Group organisation was also a new system in the Authority's early years. In a few areas brigades had banded together in groups prior to 1944. Increased administration activity and awareness to develop fire suppression methods saw many more areas embrace the group system, and with obvious benefits.

Early C F A officers had a difficult assignment, the travel that Senior Officers and Regional Officers had to cope with being often done under most difficult circumstances - sometimes by train and often in vehicles that were far from comfortable considering the amount of hours that officers were required to spend in them in seeing to their duties and co-ordinating brigades.

Present members of the service, and indeed the community in general, owe a debt of gratitude to these men and also to the volunteer officers and firefighters of that era for laying the foundation of the great service that is in existence today.

It is not only past generations that should be praised - present day officers and members are carrying on the fine traditions of protecting the Victorian community, these days not only from fire but in providing ancillary services to cope with accidents involving hazardous materials and, in numerous areas, road and industrial accident rescue.

No organisation can be successful unless it develops and meets the needs of those whom it is serving. The Country Fire Authority has met these criteria over the past 50 years and continues to meet them. It is held in high standing within the community because of the efficiency it regularly displays in emergency situations and because of the commitment of its members throughout the State.

5-7-1995 WEDNESDAY. THE ECHO.

FIRE SWITCH FEAR.

Geelong region residents could suffer when C F A region seven joins the Victoria Police, Metropolitan Ambulance Services and State Emergency Service Communications at a central office in suburban Melbourne.

The merger, expected to come on July 1st next year, has raised fears among several Geelong firefighters.

Shop steward for the United Firefighters Union in Geelong Mr Pat Geary said one effect of the move could be the loss of up to 10 positions at the Geelong operations centre in Yarra Street.

There are only 43 staff members in Geelong.

The C F A, police and S E S in police districts A to K, which cover an area from Dandenong to Geelong, including the Bellarine Peninsula, will all eventually operate under the Bureau of Emergency Services Technology Computer Aided Dispatch (Best-Cad) system.

"We believe the whole system is basically not much better than a farce", Mr Geary said.

He said Intergraph, the private company contracted to run the service, was the same company operating the troubled Ambulance communication services in Melbourne.

"We believe there will probably be more problems ... their system is unproven", Mr Geary said.

He said BEST-CAD would be operated by civilians who more than likely lacked local knowledge and the sense of urgency held by operational fireman.

Fire calls would be directed to Tally Ho, near Nunawading, answered by civilian operators and then put back into the local system.

A volunteer with Geelong said his main concern was staff losses. "All the volunteers think that's an absolute disgrace. The permanent staff are going to be relying on us more and more", he said.

He said there was potential for disaster.

However, Regional Officer Mr Ken Stephens said he saw no reason for there to be any delay in providing fire services.

"One of the main purposes is to make sure that time delays are kept to a minimum", Mr Stephens said.

He said one of the major advantages would be the introduction at the same time of pagers to most volunteers.

But he added that BEST-CAD would only be used throughout Urban Geelong and the Bellaraine Peninsula in region seven.

Other Brigades, such as Winchelsea, Inverleigh and Bannockburn would not be affected.

Ambulance services in the Geelong area will not operate under BEST-CAD.

TOWN BY TOWN.

FIRE BRIGADE.

The Captain, Officers and members of the Lorne Fire Brigade would like to inform the community of Lorne of a change in their meeting night to the first Tuesday of each month. Also the siren test will be carried out at 7-45pm on the first Tuesday of each month.

17-1-1996 WEDNESDAY. THE ECHO.

FIRE FIGHTING.

One of the World's most sophisticated fire fighting aircraft is going through its paces around Colac and the Otways this week in an effort to convince Federal and State Governments to invest in a \$300 million fire bomber squadron.

The Otways area was selected for trials because of its variety of forest terrain and diverse water sources at Lake Colac, the coastline of the Great Ocean Road and ravine areas around the West Barwon Dam.

Fire service representatives from all parts of Australia converged on Colac yesterday to see the aircraft in action.

The four day evaluation of the fire bomber is part of a hard-sell campaign by manufacturer Canadair to persuade Australian authorities to buy up to ten of the aircraft at around \$27 million dollars each.

Canadair believes the CL-415 Super Scooper, capable of collecting more than 6,000 litres of water in 12 seconds and repeatedly attacking fire for 4 hours before refuelling, would be cheap at the price.

Australian agent for Canadair, Max Irvine-Brown, says annual repayments spread over the aircraft's estimated lifespan of more than 30 years would be around \$US2.5 million plus operating costs.

"That's a small price to pay when you compare it with the loss of life and property damage caused by bushfire in Australia or, just as importantly, the enormous value of property being protected in our Urban interface area".

He said the 1983 Ash Wednesday fires in Victoria and South Australia, which killed 73 people, also cost more than \$500 million in property damage while the 1994 fires had a damage bill of more than \$100 million.

COASTAL GROUP C F A

MINUTES OF FOUNDATION MEETING OF COASTAL GROUP

HELD AT ANGLESEA FIRE STATION 12th JULY 1995.

CHAIRMAN:- Group Officer Bill Bubb.

PRESENT:- Secretary Jean Graham, D.G.O's Peter Cecil, Craig Hunt Angus McKenzie, Morris Grove (Connewarre), Malcolm Imer (Freshwater Creek) Captains:- Peter Sprague (Connewarre), Ian Menzel (Freshwater Creek), Leon Armistead (Lorne), Bob O'Neil (Torquay). Delegates:- Paul Bizewski (Aireys Inlet), Lance Avent & Stuart Morgan (Anglesea), Gordon Elliott (Connewarre), Les Grossman, Donald Grimmer, David Begley & Keith Stones (Freshwater Creek), Malcolm Graham (Lorne), Michael Helps (Torquay).

C F A:- Regional Officer Bob Barry.

APOLOGIES:- Captain Ross Girvan (Aireys Inlet), Delegate Geoff Cairns (Torquay)

NEW GROUP:- Discussion was held and a Motion was put by Captain B O'Neil Sec Captain P Sprague that a new Group be formed with a new name and that the Group Officer and D G O's from the old Great Ocean Road Group stay the same until the next Elections and the D G O's from the Barwon Group be incorporated in the new Group. **CARRIED.**

NEW GROUP NAME:- A discussion was then held as to the new name of the Group. Moved Delegate L Grossman Sec Delegate M Graham that the new Group be called the "Coastal Group" **CARRIED.**

DEPUTY GROUP OFFICERS:- Moved D.G.O A McKenzie Sec. Delegate P Bizewski that D G O numbers be deleted and names only used. **CARRIED.**

BASES:- Moved D.G.O. P Cecil Sec. D.G.O. C Hunt that Jean Graham remain Group Comms Officer and L Grossman Group Sub-Base until the next Elections. **CARRIED.**

STANDING ORDERS:- Moved Delegate L Grossman Sec. Delegate P Bizewski that the Group Officer and 6 D.G.Os have a Meeting and bring the new Standing Orders back to the next Meeting. **CARRIED.**

Delegates for various Committees were then appointed:-

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE:- G/O B Bubb, D.G.O M Imer, D.G.O A McKenzie.

TRAINING COMMITTEE:- D.G.O P Cecil, D.G.O M Imer.

MAPPING COMMITTEE:- D.G.O A McKenzie, D.G.O P Cecil, D.G.O M Groves, L Grossman.

MUNICIPAL FIRE PREVENTION COMMITTEE:- Group Officer B Bubb.

155B.

GENERAL BUSINESS:-

1. Letter to be sent to Fire Prevention Officer G Butcher advising him of the new Group name and the inclusion of Connewarre, Freshwater Creek and Torquay.
2. Weekly readability Schedules still to be done at 2000hours Tuesday night and at 0900hours Sundays.
3. Letter to be forwarded to the Training Committee and the Regional Planning Committee notifying them of the change in Name of Group.

It was Moved Delegate M Graham Sec Delegate L Avent that the Coastal Group Meetings are to be held at the Anglesea Fire Station. **CARRIED.**

Next Meeting to be held after D.G.Os discussion on Standing Orders for the Group.

C.F.A. REPORT:-

Regional Officer Barry gave a report on happenings in Region 7.

1. He is happy to be back in Geelong for family reasons. He has been with the C.F.A. for 20 years and was a volunteer at Grovedale and has been at Region 13 for 4 years.

2. Sorry to be at last Meeting of Great Ocean Road Group, but looking forward to see the start of a new Group and wished it well.

3. The Area Manager for Region 7 has not yet been appointed, hopefully will be within the next few days.

4. Risk Manager has been appointed, Mr Micheal James from Wangaratta. Not sure when he will be commencing duty.

5. There are still some regions without Area Managers and 3 Regions who have not been appointed Regional Officers.

6. Regional Headquarters have been short staffed since J Millar and R Parsons left. D/O D Russell was to go to Ararat to relieve, but R/O Barry said no as D/O Russell was the only Officer with any local knowledge in Headquarters.

7. F/O G Lay is to go to Colac relieving.

8. R/O Barry and F/O G Lay were in Wye River today (12th July) testing the Trunking Radio System. Found some "dead spots" at the Cumberland River and Jamieson Creek.

9. B.E.S.T. System proceeding well, coming on line July 1996. 600 pagers have been allocated to the C.F.A. and Region 7 is to trial 50.

10. Dotac Programme 15th August 1995 to see the start of change over of radios in Mobiles. Base Sets to be start changing at beginning of September. Handhelds no date set yet.

11. R/O Barry is looking forward to getting out into the Region and meeting as many Brigade Members as possible, and to get to know the Region before the Fire Season.

Meeting closed at 2115 followed by supper.

NEXT MEETING TO BE HELD AT THE ANGLESEA FIRE STATION ON ?????????? AT 2000hours.

Mr Irvine-Brown said the Super Scooper's speed and efficiency made it an essential pre-emptive strike weapon.

"The CL-415 is a formidable piece of fire fighting equipment, providing extremely fast, accurate and repeated water bombing in the critical early moments of a fire.

The value of this fire fighting capability should not be underestimated, with Australian cities spreading into bush areas where there is often little water supply", he said.

The Russians have also entered in the race to sell fire fighting aircraft to Australia.

The Russian Government has offered to make one of its giant Ilyushin IL-76 fire bombers available for a test season in Australia in exchange for Australian wool or other goods.

Spokesman for Ilyushin John Parkin said yesterday the aircraft, which was on show at last year's AirShow DownUnder at Avalon, had seven times the capacity of its Canadian rival, making it the best option for Australian bush fire control.

"The Ilyushin IL-76 is the biggest, most effective and proven fire fighting appliance in the World", Mr Parkin said.

"It has exceptional long range capability and a high cruising speed.

"This aircraft cannot be compared with any other.

"If the Ilyushin was stationed in Melbourne, it could be fighting fires in Sydney, Perth, Auckland, Hobart, Adelaide or Brisbane within an hour or so", he said.

Mr Parkin said that meant only one aircraft would be needed for all of Australia and New Zealand and with lease rates comparable to the Canadian plan would be more cost effective.

15-4-1996 MONDAY. HERALD SUN.

PAIR WALK AWAY FROM CRASH.

A couple had a miraculous escape yesterday after their car plunged 40metres off a cliff on the Great Ocean Road and burst into flames.

The man, 40, and woman, 42, were driving to the movies in Lorne when the man lost control of the car on a bend near the Cumberland River about 11-30am.

Sergeant Terry Matthews said the car hit gravel, skidded across the road and flew over the edge on to rocks below. It landed on its roof and caught fire, Sergeant Matthews said.

"It was like something you see in the movies," he said.

"The woman managed to get out and rescue her husband, he was upside down and hooked in his seatbelt".

"Three fishermen who were fishing on rocks about 100metres away helped them scramble to the top, but the car was completely gutted".

The married couple, who live on the West Coast, did not wish to be interviewed.

But Sergeant Matthews said the pair had "used up all their credits in the luck department".

The man, who cannot remember the accident, was taken to Geelong Hospital with a cut head. His wife was treated for bruising at Lorne Hospital.

Lorne Fire Brigade attended and extinguished the fire.

4-12-1996 WEDNESDAY. THE ECHO.

STALWART SIGNS OFF.

The Lorne Fire Station just wont be the same without him.

Wally Grant has been a fixture there for 44 years, 22 as Brigade Captain.

When regulations forced him to retire from active service at 65, he became what the C F A terms an Operational Support Member and took over as Communications Officer - the linchpin of every Fire Brigade.

But time has beaten Wally again and only a few weeks ago, just before his 76th birthday, he was forced to retire a second time from his beloved Country Fire Authority, this time hanging up his helmet for good.

About 50 of his good friends, colleagues and top brass from the C F A saw him out with a luncheon in his honor when he was presented with the National Medal, one of the highest awards to members of emergency and armed services.

Former Chief Fire Officer and current member of the C F A Board Rod Incoll also presented him with a Letter of Recognition and Life membership of the Country Fire Authority.

These latest honors have joined a string of awards for the man who is, according to C F A Regional Officer Bob Barry, "held in the highest regard by the Authority".

Wally joined the volunteer Lorne Rural Fire Brigade in 1951.

He moved to Lorne in 1947, a couple of years after marrying Marjorie, a local girl, and began working as a boiler attendant at Erskine House.

He retired after 38 years on the job.

Wally, who hails from Healesville, joined the Navy at 18 at the outbreak of World War 2.

He had only one posting throughout the war, on the heavy cruiser H M A S Australia which saw action in Europe, off the coast of North Africa and later in the Pacific.

H M A S Australia, with its crew of 1000 officers and men, took part in many of the famous Pacific sea battles - the Coral Sea, Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands, New Guinea and the Philippines.

Eighty five of his shipmates lost their lives on the Australia, mainly in the Philippines where the Captain was killed on the bridge and the ship crippled in a battle at Lingayen Gulf.

"We didnt see an enemy ship at all in those Pacific battles," Wally said.

"It was mainly aerial attacks from planes off aircraft carriers miles and miles away or from Kamikaze (suicide) planes.

"We got hit by five Kamikazes near Leyte in the Philippines.

"Thats where most of our men were killed.

"But the Australia was a lucky ship.

"We had everything thrown at us during the war and she was only badly hit that once when the bridge was hit and the Captain killed".

Having seen enough action to see most people through a lifetime, Wally was to many years later figure in an almost as dramatic and life threatening situation, the Ash Wednesday fires.

He was Captain of the local brigade that fateful day when 65 houses were destroyed in the terrible bushfires.

"It was an unforgettable time.

"Just about the whole town was down on the beach as the fire came out of the north-east from Deans Marsh and everything in its path went up in flames.

"Then just before it got to the river, incredibly the wind changed right around to the south-west.

"I remember it very clearly. It was a very strong wind and incredibly, it was hot - a hot south-westerly, amazing.

"Anyway, it turned the fire on itself and saved the town.

"It was a very anxious time, but looking back on it, we were very lucky.

If the fire had come from the north-west, instead of the north-east, the whole town would have gone up in flames, we wouldnt have stood a chance.

"Also, the people at Lorne at least could go down to the beach to get away from the fire.

"Places like Macedon I really felt sorry for. Those people had nowhere to go".

In his time with the C F A Wally attended hundreds of bushfires and several building blazes in the town, although none anywhere near the magnitude of the Ash Wednesday fires.

He puts that down to the efficiency and effectiveness of not only the Lorne brigade, but all the brigades along the Great Ocean Road, one of the most dangerous fire areas in the world.

Wally's other love is the local Masonic Lodge which has competed almost as much for his spare time over the years as the C F A and his family.

His daughter, Kay, is a specialist teacher in Melbourne and son Roger is well known in the region as the boss of Geelong Otway Tourism. He has five grandchildren.

Wally is also a member of the local Senior citizens club, of which Marjorie is president, and takes great delight in driving the community bus for the club on shopping excursions to Geelong and tours around the coast and the Otways.

As for living in Lorne, he can think of no better place to be.

"Its a great place to live and the people are terrific people, a close community where everyone helps everyone else," he said.

1-1-1997 WEDNESDAY. THE ECHO.

EVERYONE CAN HELP THE C F A.

If the Captain of the Lorne Fire Brigade Leon Armistead had his way everyone in the town would be a member of the Country Fire Authority.

"Or if they cant be in the C F A, at least have some basic training in fire fighting. And I mean everyone," Leon said.

"It doesnt matter what age you are, theres always something you can do in a fire emergency. Ash Wednesday here proved that," he said.

After all these years, Ash Wednesday 1983 still burns in the memory of many Great Ocean Road residents, particularly long time C F A volunteers.

In Lorne itself, everyone in the town was evacuated to the foreshore as the fire swept in from the north east, destroying many homes in its path.

It was only a lucky change in the wind direction that saved the entire town going up in flames.

Each summer the C F A nervously awaits a repetition of those disastrous fires and the more the years pass without a serious outbreak, the closer it gets to the next disaster.

Yet incredibly, in an area considered to be one of the worst in the world for wildfires, membership in the C F A brigades along the Great Ocean Road has dropped in recent times.

"People have got other things to do now, more in the way of sport and recreation, or they are just too busy", Leon said.

"Added to that, there are a lot of people around here who are starting to fall back into bad habits - not clearing their blocks or ignoring the precautions we try to drum into them each year," he said.

In Lorne, the hardcore of the local C F A is down to a handful of dedicated volunteers, including the town's young brigade.

They include Leons own children Daniel, 21, Mary Ann, 19, and Andrew, 17, his mate Ryan Heathcote, also 17, and Katrina Morgan, 22.

All have attended the C F A's training wing at Fiskville, near Ballan and Katrina and Daniel in particular are veterans when it comes to bush fires.

Both were involved in fighting a large outbreak at Katrina's home town of Moggs Creek in November 1994.

They were separated from the rest of their crew during the fire when they came across a house in the path of the blaze.

Despite being the first time out in a serious bushfire situation, they handled themselves with considerable aplomb and saved the house from being engulfed.

"Its amazing how all the training all of a sudden comes back to you," Daniel recalled.

"You really dont have time to get scared," Katrina remembered of the incident.

"We just put our heads down and worked hard and we saved the house."

Leon says they were heroes the way they went about their task.

"Katrina came up to me later on and asked if she could go and see if her own home was alright. Imagine that, her house was just up the road during that fire and she was stuck where she was without saying a word about it until it was all over," he said.

Katrina has high hopes of becoming a permanent firefighter with the C F A.

Leon believes its only a matter of time before she lands a fulltime job in what is still a male bastion with only permanent female, Michelle Snow of the Corio C F A brigade.

The younger members of Lorne's young brigade like the feeling of knowing that they can acquit themselves well during a fire or other emergencies C F A members are often called out on.

The Fiskville Training Wing puts junior brigade members, those under the age of 18, through a 5 day course of theory and practice, including the daunting ordeal of facing a wall of fire and how to handle the situation.

According to Daniel Armistead, being a member of the C F A is a worthwhile contribution to his own community.

"You get respect from your community. You are doing something that can save their homes, even their lives. And, apart from making you feel good that you are doing something for your friends and neighbours, its great fun and can be very exciting," he said.

19-1-1997 SUNDAY. SUNDAY HERALD SUN.

000 CRISIS LOOMS.

Victoria's emergency 000 service faces a crisis following the shock resignation of three top Intergraph executives.

The resignations come amid growing concerns that the company is facing a financial and management crisis.

Chief Executive Officer Grant Griffiths, Head of Operations Garry Bertuch and Chief Financial Officer Steve Nichols all quit on Friday.

It is believed Jim Taylor, the President of the U S based parent company, has assumed temporary control of Intergraph's Victorian triple Zero Operation, which services Police, Ambulance and the Fire Brigade.

An investigation by the Sunday Herald Sun has also revealed that:

*Intergraph's Operations and the awarding of the emergency services contract have been under investigation by the Auditor-General's Department for the past four months.

*The Metropolitan Ambulance Service purchased a \$4 million emergency computer despatch system that was brought on line on December 4th after the Intergraph System failed to meet expectations.

The Advanced Medical Priority Despatch System (A M P D S) developed by another U S company will replace the existing Intergraph System and will be fully operational by June.

*The U S based parent company, Intergraph Corporation, has reported losses of more than \$250 million, resulting in a major restructure of its World wide operations.

*Delays in the processing and despatching of Ambulances and Fire Brigade units to emergencies continue to plague Intergraph's operations.

*The Country Fire Authority in October refused to switch over to the Intergraph system amid fears that the system could not cope.

Last night, Premier Jeff Kennett said any Corporation was entitled to make changes to management ranks.

"If a private company wants to make changes to its staff that's its business", he said.

"We will continue to monitor Intergraph's performance".

The Sunday Herald Sun tried to contact an executive from Intergraph but staff said they had no contact numbers.

Mr Griffiths yesterday said he had resigned of his own accord.

"All I am able to say is I and two other Senior Executives resigned on Friday," Mr Griffiths said.

"I can make no further comment."

However, Senior Intergraph sources said the three major resignations would have a devastating effect on the company and its ability to operate properly.

"There will be a further substantial state of resignations over the next three to six weeks," the source said.

"The entire Emergency Services communications system could be placed in jeopardy, particularly if the U S company decides to pull out of Australia."

Another Intergraph source claimed the resignations had been sparked by a dive in the parent company's profit.

He said this could severely compromise the service delivery of the Victorian operations.

The Opposition's Health spokesman, John Thwaites, yesterday accused Intergraph of going into damage control to pre-empt the Auditor General's report.

"It highlights a major crisis at Intergraph and that we are not being told the full truth by the Government," Mr Thwaites said.

He claimed millions of dollars had been spent by the Metropolitan Ambulance Service on faulty computer systems.

"It is outrageous to think they have spent another \$4 million on an emergency despatch system the costs which should have been met by Intergraph," he said.

The Opposition's Police spokesman, Andre Haermeyer, said the resignations were a clear admission that the company was facing a crisis.

"Nobody has confidence in the system, which is being plagued by problems, and we have no confidence in the Government, which has been less than truthful with the Victorian public over this issue", Mr Haermeyer said.

The Secretary of the Ambulance Employees' Union, Rodney Morris, said it was alarming that the State's entire Emergency Services System had been placed at risk.

"The Government has placed all of its eggs into one basket", Mr Morris said.

"Its continuation hinges on the success or failure of a commercial company. We have nothing to go back on. If Intergraph folds or the parent company decides to withdraw from Australia, it would leave our Emergency Services devastated.

A VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE

What is a Volunteer Fire Brigade?

It's a group of men who come to our aid.
They give the time for you and me,
And provide the service without a fee.

No matter what the time of year,
The peril of fire is always near.
Whether it's a bushfire a house or a car,
Your local brigade is never too far.

Bushfires are a part of the Aussie day,
Destroying everything that's in its way.
Fires in summer seem the worst of all,
Especially the threat of the fireball.

Smoke, flames and ashes are everywhere,
Sore eyes, dry throat, the smell of singed hair.
These are the conditions of which they endure,
Just so your safety they can ensure.

To control the Fires on them we depend,
Fighting fires for their fellow men.
So spare a thought for that volunteer,
Fighting in a "hell", filled with fear.

Lynne Luckman.

Extract from the "Fireman".

OCTOBER 1998. LORNE LOCAL NEWS.

LORNE C F A.

As I put pen to paper we find an exciting time happening in the Lorne Country Fire Authority. Callouts have thankfully been quiet, with one car fire at Scotchmans Hill and three false alarm turnouts.

We have been visited by the children of the Lorne School and also the Lorne Kindergarten children and parents. We explained to the children about the basics of home fire safety, then they had a thorough look over the trucks and other equipment at the Station. Members of the Brigade always enjoy these visits as the children are always keen. I thank all members for donating their time as we are all unpaid volunteers and it is appreciated.

Upon Government approval we should have a permanent fire person at Lorne to assist in training and risk assessments of the township. After lobbying by Brigade Members, Lorne will also have a Community Services Facilitator appointed. Their role will include liason with the community, recruiting, planning for the future and talking to various bodies in the town.

As you can see the changes are beneficial for Lorne and its residents. Basically we are bringing the Lorne C F A into the year 2000 and upgrading our services to the community.

Any persons considering joining the Lorne C F A will be more than welcome. We have had 14 new members join over the last two months. Age or gender is no barrier. Look forward to hearing from any interested persons.

Craig Hunt,
Captain Lorne C F A.

5-10-1998 MONDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

LORNE FIRE.

Lorne CFA extinguished a grass fire at St George River, Great Ocean Road, on Saturday about 1-30pm.

The fire was a private burnoff, a CFA spokesman said.

5-1-1999 TUESDAY. HERALD SUN.

LOST ROCK FAN'S LONELY BUSH ORDEAL.

A teenager who just wanted to spend 30 minutes alone on New Years Eve ended up with a solo four-day ordeal in wild bushland.

A costly hunt involving 30 searchers and a police helicopter yesterday found bedraggled music fan Brett Hardham in a riverbed near the State's west coast.

The injured and hungry Keysborough teenager was flown out of the dense forest after going missing from a New Years Eve rock concert near Lorne.

He said he had feared he may have been able to survive only two more days.

"I just want a bottle of coke and a cigarette," Brett said after being winched to safety by a helicopter.

Missing a shoe and with torn clothing, the 18-year-old criss-crossed steep hills and deep valleys for four days after leaving the New Year rock show at Erskine Falls.

"I just ended up taking a wrong turn and you dont know how bad that was. In the end, it was all about trying to find water, do what you can to stay cool and try to stay alive. I was just waiting for someone to pick me up. I was so relieved when I saw everyone in the chopper today, because I saw two choppers the day before but they just passed overhead. It was pretty much a downer".

Brett was eventually seen at 12-30pm by Parks Victoria searchers at the St George River, 4km from where his arduous trek began.

He denied a fight with his girl-friend had led to him leaving the concert and becoming lost.

"I just had a bit of s... in my mind I had to sort out. It (leaving the concert) was a way of doing it," he said.

Brett said he followed the riverbed because he knew it would lead to safety.

"I was going the right way. It was just going to take me longer than everyone expected, a bit longer than I expected," he said.

His mother, Carol Hardham said her son was resilient but she could not help fearing for his safety.

"I'm just so relieved. New Years Day started today," she said.

A team of 20 State Emergency Service volunteers, Police on horseback and trail-bikes, six Parks Victoria workers, seven CFA volunteers and a police helicopter scoured bush near Lorne after the alarm was raised on Saturday.

Sergeant Bill Matthews, of Lorne police, said the shirtless youth was struggling to stay mobile by the time rescuers spotted him.

"He'd just about had enough of walking," Sergeant Matthews said.

"He'd lost his boots and the pair of pants he had had just about been torn off him."

He said the Parks Victoria searchers heard someone shouting near the St George River on Sunday and were sent to the area again yesterday.

"Last night they heard me cooee, but I was down a waterfall so they could hear me but I couldnt hear them because of all the water," Brett said.

23-1-1999 SATURDAY. GEELONG ADVERTISER.

EMERGENCY COMPLEX FOR LORNE.

BIG FOUR: Fire Brigade, SES, Police and Ambulance to share facility.

A new \$1.7 million emergency services complex is to be built in Lorne.

Construction of the complex, which will house the Lorne Fire Brigade, Police, Ambulance Service and State Emergency Service, is expected to begin in April and be completed by the end of the year.

Member for Polwarth Ian Smith, announced the project yesterday.

The complex will be situated on the corner of Smith and William Streets - the existing site used by the Country Fire Authority and SES.

The CFA, SES and Ambulance Service Victoria will share one building in the new complex, with Police to be housed separately on the adjoining site.

All four services will have shared amenities.

Mr Smith said the State Government had committed \$1.637 million to the project and the Surf Coast Shire \$50,000.

Mr Smith said that the existing Police, Ambulance and Fire Brigade facilities in Lorne were inadequate and that the State Government had a policy to co-locate emergency services where it was practical to do so.

This project had "fallen into place magnificently", he said.

He said the complex was the first of its kind in the area.

"There are very few of them in the State", he said.

"Its the way of the future".

Mr Smith said the greatest benefit to come from the project would be having the four emergency services working "even more closely together".

And he said construction of the new complex would encourage volunteer participation and help the members perform their duties.

Country Fire Authority acting area manager Mark Gunning said the benefit of having emergency services closely located was that they could better work together in emergency situations.

He said there were also huge financial gains, while at the same time the services ended up with a better facility.

"We're very glad that this opportunity's come along," Mr Gunning said.

Having a new facility enabled the services to offer more to the public.

For example, Mr Gunning said there would be an office in the complex for the Brigade's new Community Support Facilitator.

Surf Coast Shire Mayor Julie Hansen said the project was extremely welcome.

She said modern facilities were essential to meet the future needs if industry and residents on the coast.

The CFA said that arrangements were being made to secure temporary accommodation for the Lorne Fire Brigade and State Emergency Service.

27-1-1999 WEDNESDAY. THE ECHO.

\$1.7m EMERGENCY BOOST FOR LORNE.

A new emergency services precinct will be built in Lorne at a cost of almost \$1.7 million.

Plans for the complex, which will house local Police, the Fire Brigade, the Amulance Service and the SES, were revealed last week.

It will be built on the corner of Smith and William Streets - the current site of the Fire Brigade and SES headquarters - and will be the first of its kind in the Surf Coast Shire.

The Ambulance Service is now housed in a building adjoining the site and the Police Station is about two blocks away in Charles Street.

Construction will begin in April and is scheduled for completion later this year.

The Fire Brigade, SES and Ambulance Service will be all based in one complex and the Police in a separate but nearby building.

Member for Polwarth Ian Smith said money for the development had been allocated from each agency's budget.

The CFA is contributing \$400,000, the SES \$243,000, the Ambulance Service \$245,000, Police \$750,000 and the Shire \$50,000.

Mr Smith said the precinct was among numerous projects under way in the town, all of which had the backing of the State Government.

Surf Coast Mayor Julie Hansen said the Council had no hesitation making its \$50,000 contribution available for the project.

The precinct would benefit Lorne because more and more people were coming to the town to either visit or live, which placed increased pressure on emergency services, Councillor Hansen said.