

**April 2021 MEMBERS NEWSLETTER**

***The last month has been an exciting month for Lakes Entrance and for LEADA.***

**Easter**

The town was buzzing over Easter with residents and visitors enjoying ideal spring weather. The widened footpath and the new foreshore boardwalk saw thousands enjoying alfresco dining, walking and biking along the foreshore walk and picnicking on the new foreshore tables. The surf beach and boat ramps were packed. The Waterfront Festival added an extra dimension as it celebrated the contribution of families that professionally fished the lakes for many years as well as art workshops and displays.

**LEADA’s Business, Tourism and Events group (LEADA’s BTE)**

LEADA’s Business, Tourism and Events group was established this month. A committee was formed with Matt O’Donnell as Chair and Bianca Bassett as secretary. The group has swung into action and is working at developing their priorities for action in 2021 -22 including marketing campaigns, a calendar of events and business networking evenings.

The group has worked with East Gippsland Marketing and East Gippsland Shire Council on nominating Lakes Entrance for Tourist Town of the year. A promotional video of Lakes Entrance has been produced by Metung Films for the nomination. The editorial summary of the nomination and a link to the video will be placed on LEADA’s website and facebook page this month when they are finalised. As many would know earlier this month Lakes Entrance was ranked 5th in Wot If’s top ten Australian tourist destinations.

**2.2 million dollars funding announcement**

On Friday our local Federal Member Darren Chester announced that 2.2 million dollars had been allocated for Stage 1 of the Krauatungalung walk and to assist in the upgrade of the foreshore park area.. Funding applications are being made for Stages 2, 3 and 4 of this walk. This builds on allocations made by the State Government towards a foreshore playground and East Gippsland Shire allocation to the foreshore park upgrade. The support given by Darren Chester, his staff member Katie Zagami and EGSC in assisting in attracting this funding is greatly appreciated.

**Lakes Entrance Central Area being transformed**

The transformation that commenced in 2020 of the Central area of the town from the North Arm to the Rotunda will continue through 2021 and 2022 without major disruptions. Close to 20 million dollars has now been allocated with allocations made to upgrade the slipway, Bullock Island, improvements to the Esplanade, the CBD footpath, upgrade of the foreshore park, the foreshore boardwalk, the Entrance and Krauatungalung walks.

Lakes Entrance has had to wait a long time for these upgrades - several have been on the agenda for twenty to 30years. It is exciting to now see the transformation taking place. They are aimed at creating a vibrant town that rejoices in its idyllic natural setting, its seafood, outdoor activities and its rich cultural history.

The Slipway upgrade has had over $500,000 allocated to it. It will become an exciting venue for local food and drink outlets, entertainment and arts venue. It will add a lively vibe to the CBD

The masterplan for Bullock Island, “seafood central”, will be implemented and the fishing coop’s seafood café and boardwalk that will tell the professional fishing story will be built as will a walk and bike track around the island to create opportunities to fish and observe the marine life and boat activity on the lakes.

The upgrade of the foreshore park on the town side of the footbridge will build on it’s reputation as a place for families and people gatherings and picnics. A playground with water features will be built. The upgraded foreshore boardwalk and CBD footpath will allow visitors and residents to enjoy a stroll along the lakeside, alfresco dining, relaxed shopping.

The Krauatungalung walk will create a new all abilities local Aboriginal themed walking circuit in Lakes Entrance along the shores of Cunninghame Arm, celebrating the region’s rich Indigenous heritage. The now funded Stage 1 passes through the foreshore park, over the footbridge and through the area near the surf club. It will provide landscaping, art installations and story boards through this high profile area.

Completion of the Esplanade upgrade at the Eastern end of the town and Carstairs St to Bullock Island is also scheduled to be completed.

When news comes to hand on these projects it will be placed on LEADA’s website & facebook page.

**Looking ahead**

Significant progress on the above projects will take place in 2021. Some will be completed in 2021 and the remainder should be completed in time for the 2022 Christmas holiday period.

There is still a lot of improvements that LEADA’s needs to advocate for. Amongst these

include funding for the upper Jemmy’s Point lookout, the discovery link that connect’s Lakes Entrance to the rail trail and the remainder of the Krauatungalung walk. These projects have plans developed and await funding.

LEADA will continue to advocate for a Local Incident Management Plan including improved facilities to cater for an emergency. At the same time plans are needed for improved conference and meeting facilities as well as a centre for the arts. Properties that come into discussions when these requirements are being considered are the upgrading of the Mechanics Hall and the repurposing of Palmers Road. Palmers Road site is a magnificent site that has been under utilised for years.

Improvements to the town’s educational facilities and indoor sports and recreation are also urgently needed as is the extension of the Industrial site.

Infrastructure developments are not an end in themselves. They facilitate a more relaxing, enjoyable and enriching environment for Lakes Entrance residents and visitors.

Support for and energising the recently established LEADA’s BTE is also vital for the town.

**Partnership Approach**

In advocating for changes and infrastructure developments LEADA has adopted a collaborative approach that focuses on future developments. During the last 3 years strong relationships have been developed with all 3 tiers of government and with funding authorities. The most important partnership is that with the local community. LEADA’s advocacy strength comes from the support it receives from the community and its growing membership base.

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