

Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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An icon of Lorne reinstated

The iconic Lorne Swing Bridge was officially reopened by the Hon Terry Mulder MP, Member for Polwarth, Minister for Roads today, marking the completion of a \$527,000 restoration project to reinstate this historically significant structure.

Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) CEO Richard Davies said the iconic landmark signifies the entry to Lorne along the Great Ocean Road.

“This long-standing icon, which was first built in 1937, marks where the Erskine River meets the sea and is an integral part of the Lorne community,” he said.

“This structure is an important asset to our region, forming a vital part of the tourist trail network and linking to some of Lorne’s highlights including the Lorne Foreshore, the Swing Bridge Cafe and the Visitor Information Centre.

The Swing Bridge was constructed in 1937 following the struggles of the Great Depression and the opening of the Great Ocean Road in 1932.

“The bridge was built when the local tourism industry was growing rapidly and pastimes such as swimming, diving, camping and surfing were increasing in popularity.”

“The river bank, which previously housed boat sheds and a couple of jetties in the early twentieth century, now boasted a prolific structure that gave tourists and locals alike increased opportunity to access and explore Lorne,” said Mr. Davies.

Following a detailed structural survey of the bridge in early 2013 which identified that if the structure was to be preserved it required restoration from the foundations up, the bridge was closed and a major re-build commenced.

Mr. Davies said the works had ensured that a special part of Lorne was protected for the enjoyment of future generations.

“The historical significance of the bridge was an important consideration during the reconstruction works.

“The aim of the project was to retain the original appearance of the bridge and use like for like materials wherever possible whilst adhering to modern engineering and safety requirements which was a complex task, but one which we have achieved,” said Mr. Davies.

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The intensive reconstruction process included the use of a 220 tonne capacity crane to install the components, which were built off-site.

“Witnessing the crane ease the bridge into place was a once in a lifetime experience that attracted quite a crowd of onlookers.

Mr. Davies said that old, unusable components of the bridge would live on and had been recycled.

“Citywide Service Solutions and J and R industries have worked with us to ensure a smooth process and a fantastic outcome considering the complexity and great importance of the task,” he said.

The reconstruction project a collaborative effort that was made possible thanks to \$220,000 from the Victorian Government Regional Growth Fund, \$182,000 from the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee, \$75,000 from the Surf Coast Shire and \$50,000 from the Department of Environment and Primary Industries.

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