

OPINION

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COLUMN

Lorraine McLoughlin: The things we keep



NANCY stood at my front door holding large cushions. I'd bought the patchwork material years before but, knowing I'd be unlikely to make it up, she connived with my husband and surprised me with the job done. Forty years on, they're a symbol of kindness, memories of a friend. Recently, another friend kindly made me a cushion from textiles bought on my Bhutanese journey. Although busy with work, Pat is always doing kindnesses for family and community. And Jenny, my well-travelled sister, often returns with thoughtful gifts from around the world. Much prized are my Balinese cushions which make a décor statement and also intrinsically express the kindness she shows in many other ways. My mother didn't travel overseas but I still keep hand-stitched Indian cushions she bought from a catalogue when housebound with terminal illness. The purchase surprised me, not being in character for her to buy sight unseen. Yet in her isolation, she wouldn't worry us to shop for her, independently ordering from Oxfam, and supportive of workers in a land she'd never visited. I'm flooded with childhood memories of her kind acts: giving unasked-for kindnesses to others while expecting no reward. This continued until the end, cooking food for older and sicker friends, undemanding as ever, though she had reason to be.

Not a collector or overly absorbed with chattels, I do treasure belongings that hold a story. They'd have little value to others and I realise even cushions wear out. I can let go of such possessions, but I'm still attached to memories of many kindnesses. Aesop said: "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." After a lifetime admiring cleverness, I now believe that it is kindness that matters more, and makes a difference. That is wisdom I still remember.

Lorraine McLoughlin is an author, who has been involved in community events on the Fleurieu Coast. Visit www.fitzmcl.com

PRIMO PIC OF THE WEEK: CHRIS LAUGHT



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

City of Victor Harbor to fund selfie frame

IAM sure that ratepayers who have no footpath, a road adorned with potholes or one that gets flooded when it rains will be really excited to learn that Victor Harbor council has decided to spend up to \$8000 on a selfie frame instead of a planned entry statement on the Adelaide Road. (*The Times*, May 4). It would be the grandest in the land! And no doubt essential to our well-being! Did we need an 'entry statement' anyway? At least Councillors Charles, Marshall, Schofield and Dutton had the good sense and level of accountability to recognise this idea as a waste of money and voted against it. If you are concerned why Crs Glazbrook, Chigwidden, Hayles and Andrews supported this proposal I suggest you ask them. You might also ask Cr Jenkins (who moved the motion) what benefit will flow to ratepayers (who will pay for the thing) from providing visitors with a very expensive hole through which their photo can be taken. We already spend some \$500,000 a year to allow them to ride on a horse-tram and something like \$200,000 on the SA Whale Centre so what is another \$8000? This exercise reeks of the inability of some elected members not being able to come to grips with the real business and

priorities of council and their responsibility to the ratepayers.

Peter Reedman,
Victor Harbor

THANK YOU OFFICER

To the police officer who showed my partner and me extraordinary compassion on the afternoon of Friday, April 28, on Maude Street, Encounter Bay, we are both extremely grateful.

Chris Horwood,
Victor Harbor

STOP MEANS STOP

As a recent arrival to Victor Harbor I am amazed at the attitude of drivers to Stop signs. When I was a girl "stop" meant just that, not slow, look and give way but actually STOP. I have nearly been rear-ended a few times as the person behind me assumes (wrongly) that I will not stop. The police could fund their Christmas party if they sat at Coral Street/Ocean Street, where there are now stop signs. There will be an accident soon. Have other people noticed this or am I just getting old?

Sue Cook,
Victor Harbor

NEW ZEALAND STYLE

We all know how good the All Blacks are, NZ wine is now earning high dollars in the USA, and now Air New Zealand is the flavour of the year. I was impressed with a summary on radio why Air New Zealand has become so popular with Australian travellers: Air NZ management told middle managers to forget share-holders and promote working staff, making them to feel needed and important, with a marked rub-off on customers. End result - more happy travelers on Air New Zealand, making shareholders extremely happy. Psychology and the domino effect in reverse. Get with it Australia.

Glen Chenoweth,
Goolwa North

PRIMO PIC OF THE WEEK

South coast snapper Christopher Laught took a spectacular shot of the PS Marion during the recent Wooden Boat Festival at Goolwa Wharf. He has won a \$20 voucher for Primo Victor Harbor. Submit your local photo to victortimes@fairfaxmedia.com.au. Not all photos will be printed. Winners can visit *The Times* to collect their \$20 voucher for Primo Victor Harbor.

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