



SERPELLS LANE CARPARK REZONING

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STAYING POWER: LONGEVITY IN BUSINESS

Saints and Spectres of Christmas

Despite cultural chasms and disconnected theologies, all through recorded history an almost miraculous thread of kinship exists in the celebration of what we know as Christmas. Its most common thread however, is the great many gift-baring phantoms that have come to represent the spirit of the season.

The fascinating journey of jolly old Santa to his present day image takes us around the globe through a dizzying medley of customs, both familiar and terrifying. His prosaic origins can be traced back to a canonised Greek Bishop in the small Turkish village of Myra in the 4th Century AD. Saint Nicholas - the Patron Saint of Children - was lauded for his philanthropy, helping many impoverished children by distributing gifts or money during the reign of the Roman Empire. Known today by his combined Latin and Germanic name, Santa (Saint in Spanish) and Claus (the contracted form of Nicholas), the character of Santa evolved through the merging of radically diverse customs and folklore.

During the Middle Ages, the tradition of gift giving in the name of Saint Nicholas grew, but the more pious clergy felt that this accolade distracted children from Christ. So began the age-old divisiveness between those who view Christmas as a purely religious celebration and those who favour the tradition of generosity in remembrance of St Nicholas. It was not until the mid-20th Century that the modern interpretation of Santa Claus as a red-suited, white-bearded, jolly old man was refined.

The adaptation of Santa from charitable Bishop to supernatural figure first occurred in Scandinavian folklore. In Germanic Europe, he was re-defined as the Norse god, Odin, who led a procession of ghostly grey horses across the sky during the mid-winter Yule season - a time when spectral activity was at its peak. As the story crossed the Atlantic into 18th Century North America, reindeer replaced horses and Christianity's prominence in the region meant that Old Saint Nicholas was re-established as the figurehead and Odin was out.

Although popularised throughout all of Christendom, Santa is not the only seasonal phantom to bestow gifts. In Rome, for instance, legend tells of Befana, a



THE KRAMPUS STALKED GERMANY'S ROOFTOPS



20TH CENTURY SANTA & HIS REINDEER

broom-wielding housekeeper, who hosted the Three Wise Men on their way to witness Christ's birth.

Her work prevented the woman from joining the pilgrims - a decision she ultimately regretted - and so she devoted herself to gifting every child from then on, believing that Christ could be found in every innocent. Her appearance, however, was that of a withered witch and youngsters were warned that they would receive a swift knock on the head with Befana's broomstick if they attempted to catch sight of her delivering gifts. Here we find the origin of the cover story used by parents throughout the ages, secretly fulfilling the role of either Crone or Saint on Christmas Eve.

For fear-inducing Yuletide visitors, however, the German phantom, Krampus is difficult to beat. This horned, demonic figure was said to tear across wintery rooftops in Saint Nicholas's wake, delivering brutal punishment to naughty children, while Santa rewarded the good-hearted. Krampus is one of the oldest known seasonal spirits, originating in Pagan winter solstice celebrations. According to Germanic folklore, he was the son of Hel (the god of the underworld). He was later adopted into Christian ceremonies as a kind of 'anti-Saint', influencing artistic portrayals of the devil. Krampus - roughly translated as 'Claw' - survived an attempted banning by the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages and has remained a popular, if not terrifying, part of German Weihnachten (Christmas).

Slavic Christmas folklore tells of the giant, Djed Moroz, who pre-dates Christianity and serves as the Russian counterpart to Saint Nick. Djed Moroz has long been depicted as a wizard in a flowing blue gown, carrying a magic staff. Celebrating Christmas during Soviet Russia however, came to be seen as bourgeois, yet Djed Moroz survived the hard-fisted anti-capitalist ruling, as it was felt impoverished Soviet children needed 'a little magic to believe in'. Although modern day Santa Claus is generally seen as a Western concept, many Asian countries have adopted the more commercial aspects of Santa and Christ-



SAINT NICHOLAS: PATRON SAINT OF CHILDREN

mas. December 25th is not officially recognised as a holiday in China, for example, but many citizens will engage in gift giving as a nod to the seasonal custom, largely picked up through exposure to foreign media. In Taiwan, Shèngdànlǎorén (or 'Old Christmas Man') is a prominent sight in shopping centres and there is typically a parade in his honour, featuring girls dressed in elf costumes - billed as 'Santa's sisters'.

Whichever culture you identify with, there is a uniting factor in all of these Christmas gifting traditions. Kindness and philanthropy should be rewarded and the human need to believe in a little magic is as old as recorded time. ■



BEFANA FROM SEASONAL ROMAN LEGEND

About

The Glenferrie Times is an independent publication for the traders, residents, and visitors of the Glenferrie precinct in Hawthorn.

The Glenferrie Times is produced by a small team dedicated to fostering connection within the local community, aiming to provide the people of Glenferrie with relevant and informative local news and a forum for the betterment of the area.

If you are a Glenferrie trader or resident interested in being featured in The Glenferrie Times, please contact us.

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Printing: Ludwig Print

Find us online at:

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Distribution

The Glenferrie Times is distributed to the traders of Glenferrie Hawthorn and, when resources are available, also circulated to the letterboxes of some residences within the Glenferrie Hawthorn area.

Copies of the latest edition can be found at Hawthorn Arts Centre, Hawthorn Library, Hawthorn Aquatic and Leisure Centre, Coles Local, the noticeboard in the laneway of 817 Glenferrie Road, or in one of Glenferrie's many cafes and some retailers.

To receive a digital copy sign up to our mailing list through our website or by emailing us.

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The Glenferrie Times encourages feedback from readers and the community.

Staying Power

Endurance is an attribute often overlooked in favour of vainer qualities when it comes to business, yet it is the capacity for longevity that ensures a feeling of familiarity and 'standing' amongst the community.

Many shops come and go on Glenferrie Road, yet there are those, like that of Lawrenca Cycles, Continental Deli, Dobsons and Poloman, who have collectively displayed that durability is not only possible, but an asset to their business. Qualities like that of grit, positivity and passion are shared amongst these featured traders as reasons why they have enjoyed long-lasting businesses.

Lawrenca Cycles

Founded in 1938, [Lawrenca Cycles](#) (756-758 Glenferrie Road), greets customers upon entry with a piece of history. By the front entrance there is a faded image of a gentleman by a bicycle. The man in the image is Gordon Lawrence Snr, who competed in many and various cycling events in his lifetime. His son and now owner, Gordon Jnr, recalls a contentious moment that has become tender with time. "Dad thought he had crossed the line... but he had actually only crossed the junior's line. Then... this other bloke passes him and claims a win! But he always said the win was his, by a technicality."

Although the fundamental nature of Lawrenca has remained the same - the selling of quality bicycles - the business has changed immensely in many various aspects. Gordon Jnr recalls how the property was not only a store, but the home he grew up in. "We used to live upstairs" Gordon Jnr points upwards with his finger. He added, "The area just past the counter used to be our kitchen when mum and dad lived on site."

I remember from the age of about four or five, I was helping out in the shop every Saturday morning, and to this day I don't recall ever not working a Saturday morning." At the time, Lawrenca shared its premises with a butcher's shop, but by 1955, Gordon Snr took over the business and expanded, once the butcher retired. "The bike frames used to be made on site", Gordon recalls. "There was a big open fireplace (where the staff room is now) and they would heat up the steel in there and knock it into shape."

But like all things, cycling has waned and gained in popularity several times over his lifetime, Gordon Jnr remembers, "In the 1970s, the Heart Foundation really got behind cycling and there was this overnight boom in trade." During the early '90s recession, they struggled to scrape by until the fame of people such as Lance Armstrong influenced a renewed focus on cycling. During those leaner times, Lawrenca were in a position to rely on sales of alternative recreational supplies. Some of which Gordon had little fondness for. "This was, as they say, 'a real man's shop'. When I was in my early 20s, we sold guns and ammo, fishing gear and all that blokey outdoors stuff. It's hard to imagine nowadays, but anyone could just walk in and buy a gun."

Gordon's mixed feelings about the sale of firearms in his store ultimately led to him ceasing their sale as the 1970s drew to an end. "There would be little girls coming in to look at bikes, and over in the corner you'd have some bloke testing out a pump action rifle, and I just thought 'there's no way I can keep selling these things under the same roof'". Gordon reflects. "The times were how they were."

He adapted his business model, concluding the sale of firearms long before the gun crackdown in 1996, putting him far ahead of the cultural curve. As for the key facets in ensuring a long-lasting business, according to Gordon Junior, "you should treat people as you would want to be treated and always pay your bills."

Dobsons

"I'd often have people come in with their kids saying, 'you looked after me when I was a kid.' It was a nice feeling." Ian Dobson, the current proprietor of [Dobsons](#) (667 Glenferrie Road), was just 5 years old when he first went to hang out at his grandpa's shop. Dobsons was established in 1918, a mere 100 metres away from its current location on Glenferrie Rd. Now, Dobsons is one of the largest retailers on Glenferrie Road serving today as an expansive uniform and workwear emporium. The shop, however, has undergone enormous change since first opening as a small men's fashion boutique in December 1918.

By the early '70s, Ian became involved in running the business and has since added two sons, Warwick and Allister, to the family business. In Ian's lifetime, his



IAN DOBSON AT DOBSONS (2018)

The Glenferrie Times End of Year Celebration

Seasons Greetings to all. The Glenferrie Times invites Glenferrie Hawthorn locals and traders for a casual celebration of Christmas, the end of 2022, and to have a chat.

Thursday 15 December, 4:00 - 5:30pm

@ Osteria 20, 818 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn.

No RSVP, just pop in for a drink, snack and chat.



DJED MOROZ: THE RUSSIAN SAINT NICK



GORDON LAWRENCE JNR WITH THE FADED IMAGE OF HIS FATHER, GORDON SNR



CHRIS BARLAS WITH DAUGHTER CHRISTINE YIANNI AT CONTINENTAL DELI

business has changed in ways that have kept it relevant. He explains, "Fashions change so quickly, and it was actually Warwick that said we should be more uniform-centric. I was a bit resistant to it at first.. but I think it's what's kept us going. Warwick runs things more than I do these days." He exclaims, "Whereas Allister is more involved in sales." Ian, left the running of the Glenferrie store in 2014.

Never one to rest on his laurels, around ten years ago, Ian decided to go back to university and update his knowledge of the clothing retail trade and how it relates to sustainability. As a result, the business proudly lays claim to almost 100% recycled stock. "The rag trade is the second biggest polluter in the world." He explains, "A lot of the old artificial fabrics contained plastics and so we decided to get in on eco-uniforms and up-cycled and recycled fabrics for our stock. So I went back to school and it really invigorated me."

In conversation, Ian displays a conscientious attitude and thirst for knowledge. Rather than emphasise his many years experience, he enthusiastically embraces change and a desire to 'do better'. This characteristic is undoubtedly key to long-term survival, though Ian puts the 'secret of longevity' down to the simple point, "you just gotta love what you do!"

Continental Deli

Australia's European immigration history is marked in no small part by the presence of urban delicatessens. Locally, the [Continental Deli](#) (shop 8-10 / 674-680 Glenferrie Road) in the Glenferrie Centre Arcade fulfils that niche, and like many of Hawthorn's 'old guard' businesses, has thrived on customer loyalty, reputation for quality and a strong family bond.

"We've been trading for 42 years," current owner Christine Yianni enthuses. Along with husband Gary Yianni and father Chris Barlas, the family unit that make up Continental's crew are all strong, quirky characters with a palpable love for what they do. Christine is very much the spokesperson with a-hundred-and-one thrilling and heartwarming stories. Gary is knowledgeable, business focused and camera shy, while Chris is passionate and customer-focused.

The business was opened in 1980 by Chris and his late-wife, Vicky Barlas. Daughter Christine and husband Gary started running things on a permanent basis in the mid-'90s after Vicky's health declined. Christine remembers the very early days of the deli as a place where older local members of the Greek community would congregate. "Some of them didn't have much social contact I think, so they would come to hang out



VICKY BARLAS OPENED CONTINENTAL DELI IN 1980

and meet here. It helped them feel connected to their culture and got them out of the house."

Aside from providing a community hub, during the '80s and '90s, Continental Deli even garnered some celebrity clientele. Celebrated chef Gabriel Gaté, who used to run a cooking school in Burwood Road, would regularly buy his supplies from Continental. But it was comedian Mark Mitchell and his Comedy Company character, Con The Fruiterer who really put them on the map. "Chris was the inspiration for Con!" Christine divulges. "Mark used to come in here and ask all about the Greek lingo and culture while he was working on his act."

The famed TV fruit shop owner, Con belonged to a tradition of parody known as commedia dell'arte, in which a stock character from everyday life is played for laughs. Far from being offended by Mitchell's portrayal of a migrant shop owner, Christine saw it as a fond acknowledgement of the Greek community's growing visibility in Australia. "Mark was a friend to us. We thought Con was hilarious." Nowadays, there are fewer camera crews and comedy stars at Continental, but what has remained is the focus this deli's team has on customer satisfaction.

Christine says, "The key is to build upon your reputation." It is a trait immediately felt when conversing with Christine, Gary and Chris. "We know many of

our long-term customers by name and we are serving their grown-up kids now." Despite being somewhat hidden away in the arcades off Glenferrie Road, Continental rarely enjoys a quiet moment. They thrive on reputation and warmth of character, which is the best advertisement for longevity you could ask for.

Poloman

The retailer, [Poloman Menswear](#) (705 Glenferrie Road), owned and operated by Charles Miscamble, is one of those boutique men's clothing shops that seemingly 'forgot to' make way for the bigger, dominant chain stores. The shop retains a quaint, slightly out-of-time atmosphere and inside, we find proprietor Charles, who is the very picture of the classic 'well-dressed man'. He describes his arrival at Poloman with confident certainty that demonstrates a strong affection for his trade.

"I started August 20, 1986" He proclaims. "Before me, the business was run by David Bosbeck for around 25 years as the Sportsman, first opening on Glenferrie Road in 1964." Charles renamed the shop Poloman in reference to a love of the titular sport. "I was actually at a polo match when I got thinking about the name", he explains, "I knew I wanted the word 'polo' in it, and by adding 'man' it just seemed to fit with what we do."

Charles comes from a lineage of clothing retailers. He notes, "Well my godfather ran Bradman's - a bag shop - in Brisbane and he gave me my first ever job in the retail trade. My father also ran Holeproof - a ladies undergarments store - so the family have been involved in the clothing trade for many years." Charles' own children gained some retail experience through Poloman. He recalls, "When they were in school, my youngest two sons Connor and Fraser used to help out casually whenever I needed them. But they ended up carving out their own paths. One of them is going into medicine and the other is a solicitor now."

Charles notes that he believes that survival in trade is all about the personal touch. "We have a terrific clientele base. That's the point of difference between us and say, a big chain store. We offer actual personalised, bespoke service. In fact I prioritise it." In his time trading in Glenferrie, Charles has seen a lot of change in retail, on the other hand, what hasn't changed is interest rates and economic downturn. I remember very well the market crash in 1987 just after I took over, and it's happening all over again."

Although gruelling times come around like clockwork, these businesses have managed to overcome what has been thrown at them before. It might appear simple: Love what you do, earn respect amongst the community, understand the cultural climate, change when needed, a personal touch. Although it is simple to comprehend, it is very difficult to do. Businesses like Lawrence's, Continental Deli, Poloman, and Dobsons have defied the odds in cultivating longevity, when many have failed. ■



CHARLES MISCAMBLE AT POLOMAN



SERPPELLS LANE AT 399 BURWOOD RD

Sale of Serpells Lane Carpark

At a City of Boroondara council meeting on 25 July 2022, Council resolved to begin the process to amend the 'planning controls affecting land at 399 Burwood Road, Hawthorn' - also known as Serpells Lane carpark - and commence the process to sell the land.

The 'Amendment C385boro - Rezoning Serpells Lane carpark', proposes to change the land's status from Public Use Zone 6 (PUZ6) to Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z). The council explains that the carpark has been identified as 'surplus to the council's needs'. The carpark was acquired by the [City of Boroondara](#) in 1966 and has since provided 89 parking spaces, including two disabled spaces, three loading zone spaces and one Flexi-car space. The 2,950sqm zone, which offers three-hour parking for shoppers, traders and attendees of near-by Swinburne University, also acts as a thoroughfare for commuters between Glenferrie Station and Burwood Road.

According to the council report presented at the July Council meeting, the carpark was 'found to be underutilised', an assessment from a 12 year-old 'Glen-

ferrie Structure Plan'. The report also explained that the sale of the carpark would 'not impact social or economic' factors in the local area and is a 'viable as a commercial, office or residential' zone.

The legal risk of the rezoning was also outlined in the council report, stating that Council sought legal advice from Maddocks (lawyers) in 2019 regarding the carpark's rezoning. The lawyers note that the land may have originally been purchased through a special rate levied on traders in Glenferrie Road, in which case traders may have a proprietary interest in the carpark. Therefore, there might be a legal risk if Council were to sell the land without providing a replacement carpark in the general vicinity of the site in question.

In terms of providing alternative carparking, the Council pointed to the Draft Glenferrie Place Plan that 'proposes to provide alternative car parking facilities at sites that better align with the needs of local traders, rendering Serpells Lane surplus to parking requirements'. However, the additional carparking proposed in the Draft Glenferrie Place Plan and to be funded by the Australian Government as part of its Urban Congestion Fund was infamously rejected by local residence and funding withdrawn prior to the Federal Election earlier this year. This left the Draft Glenferrie Place Plan in limbo and in the year since the draft was released, the plan has still not been revised and ratified by the Council.

In September 2022 the City of Boroondara commenced the public exhibition of Amendment C385boro. The public had the opportunity to provide feedback to Council on the proposed changes, with submissions due on 24 October. A summary of submissions received together with a response and recommendations from Council officers will be considered the Council's Urban Planning Delegated Committee (UPDC) on 5 December.

Interviewing traders in the immediate area of Serpells Lane, The Glenferrie Times found that traders had not been consulted or notified by Council of the intended carpark rezoning. A straw poll conducted by The Glenferrie Times found that 87% of businesses within the vicinity of the Serpells Lane carpark on

Burwood Road, the Don Arcade and Glenferrie Road, disapproved of the sale and felt that their business would be impacted by the carpark's loss. It was also found that the loss of 89 parking spaces in the Glenferrie Hawthorn precinct is roughly equivalent to the loss of all parking spaces along one side of Glenferrie Road, stretching from Barkers Road to Burwood Road. The President of the [Grace Park Residents Association](#) Inc., Rob Perkins is frustrated with Council's flippant disposal of council land, commenting, "Hens' teeth is a reasonable definition of car park spaces in Hawthorn and particularly around Glenferrie Road... So what is the impetus to sell a car park that is full every day? It does not pass the pub test".

He also points out that 'after years of Boroondara advocating the need for MORE parking they now backflip and decide that... strategic car spaces on the very doorstep of Glenferrie Station are surplus to needs.'

The UPDC will decide whether to:

- Make changes to the amendment in response to submissions.
- Refer submissions to an independent Planning Panel for consideration.
- Recommend adoption of the amendment.
- Abandon the amendment.

If you would like to have your say about the rezoning of Serpells Lane carpark, please contact Nick Brennan, Senior Strategic Planner - by email Nick.Brennan@boroondara.vic.gov.au or call 9278 453. Also contact Cr Wes Gault, Glenferrie Ward Councillor - by email wes.gault@boroondara.vic.gov.au or call 9835 7849.



THE 'UNDERUTILISED' SERPELLS LANE CARPARK

Glenferrie Festive Calendar

The festive season is upon us and Glenferrie is getting into the spirit of all things Christmas with a full calendar of attractions and events this December.

[A Very Lido Christmas](#)

@ Lido Cinemas 675 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn

Thursday 1 Dec & Friday 2 Dec, 9pm

Catch comedians Zach Ruane (Aunty Donna) and Mish Wittrup presenting two festive films on the rooftop, beginning with John Leguizamo's thriller, Violent Night and cheesy Schwarzenegger romp, Jingle All The Way. More Christmas favourites will play throughout December. For ticket information go to lidocinemas.com.au

[EXAUDI Christmas Concert](#)

@ Scotch College 1 Morrison St, Hawthorn

Sunday 4 Dec, 8pm

The Christmas Concert will consist of EXAUDI and the New Zealand Youth Choir. It will be the first time in three years this concert has taken place. For ticket information go to exaudi.com.au

[Christmas Wonderland](#)

@ Burnley Oval, Richmond

Friday 25 Nov - Saturday 24 Dec

Experience a Christmas Wonderland with plenty of events and sights. For ticket information check melbourneschristmaswonderland.com.au



FESTIVE DECORATIONS ON GLENFERRIE ROAD

[A Red Hot Swingin' Christmas](#)

@ Hawthorn Arts Centre, 360 Burwood Rd, Hawthorn

Sunday 11 Dec, 6:30 - 8:20pm

Rhonda Burchmore & The Jack Earle Big Band will play all your Christmas favourites in a jazz style reminiscent of the '30s and '40s Big Band era. For more information visit hawthornartscentre.com.au

For those wishing to attend Christmas mass in the local area, make sure to add the following times and dates in your festive calendar.

[St Columb's Anglican Church](#)

@ 5 St Columbs Street, Hawthorn

Sunday 18 Dec

10:00am - Kids' Carols and free animal petting farm

Christmas Eve, Saturday 24 Dec

8:00pm - Carols Service

Christmas Day, Sunday 25 Dec

10:00am - Communion Service

[Immaculate Conception Church](#)

@ 345 Burwood Road, Hawthorn

Christmas Eve, Saturday 24 Dec

4:30pm - Mass with Carols

6:30pm - Family Mass with the children re-enacting nativity story.

8:45pm - Carols followed by Mass at 9pm

Christmas Day, Sunday 25 Dec

9:30am - Mass with Carols

11:00am - Mass with Carols

[Hawthorn Presbyterian Church](#)

@ 580 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn

Christmas Day, Sunday 25 Dec

10:00am - Mass

[St Josephs Church](#)

@ 10 Denham Street, Hawthorn

Christmas Day, Sunday 25 Dec

8:30am - Mass with Carols

Monthly Councillor Meet-Ups

The Glenferrie Times hosts monthly meet-ups with our local councillors from Glenferrie Ward (Cr Wes Gault) and Riversdale Ward (Cr Susan Biggar). These casual meet-ups provide an opportunity to discuss your thoughts and ideas on local issues.

The next scheduled Meet-Up is:

Thursday 9 February

4:00-5:00pm @ Guzman Y Gomez, shop 1/674-680 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn.

Discussed at recent meet ups were:

- Serpells Lane Carpark
- Condition of Railbridge Area
- Toilet Under the Railbridge
- Garbage Dumped Behind Glenferrie Centre
- Tram Access for Mobility Aid Users



AT A MONTHLY MEET-UP WITH FR DES DWYER, CR WES GAULT AND CR SUSAN BIGGAR