

CITY OF
BALLARAT



my

Ballarat

Spring
2018

Save Her Maj

Maria Ridsdale

A generous gift from a life-long patron launches *The Time is Now* campaign.



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Cover image: Ballarat resident Maria Ridsdale has kick-started the City of Ballarat's *Save Her Majesty's Ballarat - The Time is Now* campaign with a \$50,000 donation.

You can also read myBallarat magazine online at
ballarat.vic.gov.au

The City of Ballarat respectfully acknowledges the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung people - traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work.

All information correct at time of going to print.



myMayor's message

Her Majesty's Ballarat has entertained our community for 143 years.

Whether through performances on-stage or movies during its time as a cinema, Her Majesty's Ballarat has made us smile, laugh, cry and filled us with awe.

But now it's our turn to support Her Majesty's.

As you'll read on pages 3-5, this historic gem urgently requires major structural works.

The City of Ballarat is contributing \$5.3 million to Her Majesty's emergency restorative works this financial year, and as part of our *Save Her Majesty's Ballarat - The Time is Now* campaign, we are calling on the state and federal governments to provide an additional \$15 million lifeline to ensure the theatre continues to inspire and delight audiences for many decades more.

With State Government-imposed rate capping in place, at 2.25 per cent, it's never been more apparent that the City of Ballarat is trying to deliver more - with less.

As such, this Spring edition of myBallarat has a focus on the City of Ballarat's recently adopted 2018–19 Budget.

Throughout this edition, you'll find budget facts that show just how much the City of Ballarat is investing to maintain our roads and footpaths, through to how much is being invested into supporting businesses and attracting jobs and investment to Ballarat.

This financial year, the City of Ballarat will work with a \$214.5 million operating revenue to maintain \$1.9 billion in assets and deliver 80-plus services for residents and visitors.

The rate cap leaves a shortfall of \$298 million over 10 years. With a current capital and projects list of almost 220 projects, representing \$1.3 billion of required investment, the City of Ballarat is seeking significant state and federal government investment.

This multi-million-dollar shortfall is funding that should be spent on key projects, from saving Her Majesty's to building Ballarat Link Road Stage 2 and developing an Aviation and Emergency Services Innovation Hub at Ballarat Airport.

As an organisation, we continue to review each and every area of our business to ensure we're providing the best value to our ratepayers while ensuring we maintain the exceptional level of service that our community rightly deserves.

We hope the stories in this edition help to put the spring in your step. I encourage you to explore everything that makes our city colourful, bright and vibrant this Spring.



Mayor Cr Samantha McIntosh



Curtain call: Maria Ridsdale has donated \$50,000 to preserve Her Majesty's Ballarat. Maria joins dancers from The Academy of Classical Ballet. All occupational, health and safety requirements were met during this photography session.

saving Her Majesty's for the future

Built 143 years ago, Her Majesty's Ballarat has long been known as one of Australian theatre's greatest treasures. But this grand old dame urgently requires \$20 million in structural works to be preserved for many generations of encores to come.

Maria Ridsdale loves everything about Her Majesty's Ballarat – its grand elegance, its status as a world-class performance venue, the opportunity it provides to both amateur and professional performers, and the enjoyment it provides to countless audiences.

Maria, a long-term member of Her Majesty's Ballarat, is calling on everyone who also loves this majestic theatre – performers, audiences, supporters of the arts and the wider Ballarat community – to throw their support behind the City of Ballarat's *Save Her Majesty's Ballarat – The Time is Now* campaign, lobbying for state and federal funding in a bid to save the theatre.

Maria is now going one incredibly generous step further, digging deep

to donate \$50,000 to preserve this much-loved jewel in Ballarat's creative arts crown, affectionately known as 'Her Maj'.

"It's history - it's our city and beautiful things like this should not be discarded to rot," says Maria.

"It's got to be left for future generations. If everyone donated a dollar, that would help." - Maria Ridsdale

Emergency restoration works on the theatre began earlier this year thanks to a \$2 million Living Heritage Grant, provided by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) via Heritage Victoria.

The City of Ballarat is contributing \$5.3 million to kick-start the next stage of restorative works and upgrades to Her Maj.

The City of Ballarat is now calling on the state and federal governments to provide an additional \$15 million to undertake the extensive works needed to preserve the theatre.

Any funds raised by the community will also go directly into capital works to save Her Maj.

It's 31 years since the last major refurbishment works were carried out at the theatre.

A complete refurbishment of the auditorium, back-of-house and stage areas is now needed to bring the theatre up to current safety and performance standards.

The major overhaul is needed to ensure Her Maj remains open to generations, now and into the future.

"This building is Ballarat. It's very unique – it's beautiful," Maria says.

"If we just sit back, it won't be here in the future. We must make sure that it remains here and that it's in good shape for the future."

2018–19 Budget



The City of Ballarat is contributing \$5.3 million to Her Majesty's emergency restorative works this financial year.



In the spotlight: Performers from the Wavie Williams Pantomime Company regularly took to the stage of Her Majesty's Ballarat in the 1940s and 1950s.

behind the curtains of Her Majesty's Ballarat

As one of Australia's longest-running and most historic theatres, Her Majesty's has always stood at the cornerstone of Ballarat's performing arts scene. While the stage of this regal Lydiard Street theatre now stands silent, a new era of restorative works will ensure the building continues to echo the sounds of laughter, music and applause for centuries to come.

A rich history

Built by wealthy farmer Sir William Clarke and his family, the theatre opened in 1875 and was first named The Academy of Music.

When Sir William Clarke died 25 years later, the building was bought by a local consortium and transformed into the theatre space we know today.

Australia's leading architect, William Pitt, who designed Melbourne's Princess Theatre, remodelled the interior to feature the sloping floor and double balconies.

From World War 1 onwards, the theatre was increasingly used as a cinema. A projection room was built above the Dress Circle Lobby in 1916, and the theatre was wired for sound in 1930.

In 1928, the Hoyts cinema chain took control over the building through its local subsidiary, Ballarat Theatres. Then, in 1936, Her Majesty's was leased and operated by Ballarat Amusements, presenting MGM and Paramount movies.

Throughout this time, the theatre remained a home for live performances, with touring companies and local groups taking to the stage, including the annual pantomimes staged by the Wavie Williams Pantomime Company.

The theatre was bought by the Royal South Street Society and renamed The Memorial Theatre in 1965. When not used for competitions, the theatre showcased local amateur and touring professional theatrical performances.

In 1966, Royal South Street embarked on renovations, including adding a mezzanine level and a concrete tunnel to the dressing rooms.

Between 1987–1990, the City of Ballarat took ownership of the theatre through a deed by Royal South Street and began \$6.8 million in major renovations, upgrades and repairs to the building.

These works included changes to the entrance of the theatre, access to the auditorium, back of house, and the theatre was once again renamed Her Majesty's Ballarat.

These days

Up until restorative works began earlier this year, about 15,000 amateur and professional performers, from comedians to musicians and actors, regularly took to the stage of Her Majesty's in front of 75,000 spectators each year.

Her Majesty's remains the home of the Royal South Street Society Eisteddfod, which attracts people from across the country to perform in disciplines ranging from dance, choral, debating, music and much more.

In the spotlight

A few of the many performers who have trod the boards at Her Majesty's over the years include:

- International soprano Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Ballarat-born opera singer and composer David Hobson, entertainers Rhonda Burchmore, Nancye Hayes and Todd McKenney, country music singer Lee Kernaghan, singers Guy Sebastian, Kasey Chambers, Kate Ceberano, Denis Walter and Tina Arena



- Comedians Carl Barron, Arj Barker, Ross Noble, Akmal Saleh, Jimeoin, Kitty Flanagan, Judith Lucy, Dave Hughes, Lano and Woodley
- Opera Australia, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Australian Ballet, Bell Shakespeare, Ballarat Light Opera Company (BLOC), Ballarat Lyric Theatre, Ballarat Theatre Organ Society and TV show RockWiz.

Works needed

It wasn't until restorative works began earlier this year, thanks to a \$2 million Living Heritage Grant, via Heritage Victoria, that it was discovered additional large-scale works were needed to preserve Her Majesty's.

An engineer inspecting the theatre discovered a crack in one of the roof trusses – requiring immediate remediation.

The City of Ballarat is contributing \$5.3 million for the next stage of the works, to ensure Her Majesty's is safe and can once again open its doors to performers, patrons, staff and the wider community.

These works include the structural renewal of the stage and the implementation of a comprehensive fire strategy, including an upgrade of the existing passenger lift, works to improve balcony and balustrade safety, provision of accessible toilets as well as accessible seating in the dress circle. Works will also include a new box office and refreshment bar, foyer signage and display system.

As part of the City of Ballarat's *Save Her Majesty's Ballarat – The Time is Now* campaign, a further \$15 million is now being sought from the state and federal governments to guarantee the ongoing operation and safety of Her Majesty's for generations to come.

Outcome

This construction project will provide a \$16.7 million boost to the economy, creating 118 jobs. There will also be an ongoing annual \$16 million economic impact, creating five jobs, plus hundreds of associated jobs into the future.

Most importantly, the works will bring this iconic 19th century building into the 21st century – giving it a new lease on life for generations to come.



SAVE HER MAJESTY'S BALLARAT

The time is now

The City of Ballarat has launched the *Save Her Majesty's Ballarat – The Time is Now* campaign.

Go to savehermaj.com - share your message on the wall of support, donate to the community fundraising appeal or subscribe to the campaign newsletter.

All funds raised by the community will be held in trust and will go directly towards capital works to save Her Maj.



Cracked truss above stage.



Impact of water ingress, impacting all surfaces.



Launching Ballarat. Now and Into the Future: From left to right, Committee for Ballarat Chair Elect Nick Beale, Sovereign Hill CEO Terry Lloyd, BHS Chair Rowena Coutts, ACU Ballarat Campus Dean Bridget Aitchison, City of Ballarat Mayor Cr Samantha McIntosh, Federation University Deputy Vice Chancellor Andy Smith, Visit Ballarat Acting Chair Stacey Grose and Commerce Ballarat Chair Nick Thurlbeck. Credit: Lachlan Bence, The Courier.

With state and federal elections looming, the City of Ballarat is lobbying for funding for more than 30 projects.

The Ballarat. Now and Into the Future lobbying campaign prioritises six long-term projects vital to Ballarat's future.

The campaign is a collaboration between Australian Catholic University Ballarat, Ballarat Health Services, the City of Ballarat, Commerce Ballarat, Committee for Ballarat, Federation University, Sovereign Hill and Visit Ballarat.

The six *Ballarat. Now and Into the Future* projects are 'game changers'.

Her Majesty's Ballarat

The ask: The City of Ballarat is contributing \$5.3 million, however an additional \$15 million is needed for extensive restoration works and upgrades to rectify major structural problems in the 143-year-old building.

Ballarat Link Road Stage 2

The ask: \$80 million to connect Ballarat's newest suburbs in the Ballarat West growth area, improve travel times in the west, remove

about 14,000 vehicles a day from Sturt Street and provide a link to the Wendouree Railway Station.

Ballarat Aviation and Emergency Services Innovation Hub

The ask: \$50 million to develop an Aviation and Emergency Services Innovation Hub featuring a multi-agency innovation centre, hanger, parking services for rotary air cranes, fire fighting aircraft and road infrastructure.

This will create an aerial firefighting centre for excellence and innovation, catering for aviation training, research and development.

Warrenheip Station

The ask: \$21.8 million to develop the former Warrenheip Station into a commuter station with 2,000 car parks and passenger amenities.

Located on the Melbourne side of Ballarat, the station will service residents living in the eastern and southern suburbs of Ballarat and students and staff from Federation University's Mount Helen campus.

The station will reduce rail commuter times and alleviate car parking stress around the Ballarat Railway Station.

Sovereign Hill Beyond Fifty

The ask: \$43 million for a major upgrade to celebrate the tourist attraction's 50th birthday in 2020. Sovereign Hill will contribute \$7 million to the project.

This will deliver a new entry building, refurbish the Gold Museum's galleries and create new museum exhibits.

The project will boost tourism, increase annual ticket sales to more than a million by 2025 and create 193 jobs.

Ballarat Innovation and Research Collaboration for Health

The ask: \$19 million to build a collaborative research hub on BHS' Drummond Street site as a collaboration between BHS and St John of God Ballarat Hospital and six universities.

The hub will bring together research facilities to create an innovative health care research hub that will support medical students to complete mandatory research locally, create new career research pathways and service the broader Grampians region through tele-education.



Fed up with traffic congestion: Alfredton family Kayla James, Ellie Beer, Geoffrey and Myles James are calling for Ballarat Link Road Stage 2 to be constructed.

a new arterial link **for the west**

In the eight years since moving to Alfredton, Geoffrey James has seen a dramatic increase in the volume of traffic on the roads around Ballarat's western suburbs.

The Alfredton father, a shift worker, and his partner Ellie Beer regularly battle traffic congestion on the school run with Kayla, 15, and Myles, 12.

Geoffrey says the traffic has markedly increased in line with the growth in the west of Ballarat, with new housing estates being developed at Lucas, Delacombe and Bonshaw.

"The traffic in Alfredton is incredible. We do lots of running around and the traffic is definitely getting a lot heavier." - Geoffrey James

"All the development in Winter Valley and with Lucas expanding, and all the new people that are living in those zones, they're all feeding on to Dyson Drive, Sturt Street and Cuthberts Road.

"The roads aren't designed for all of that heavy traffic, the type of vehicles – especially the big B-double trucks which come in all the time, alongside the school run.

With the population in Ballarat's western suburbs expected to increase by 12,000 residents in the next five years, the City of Ballarat is calling on the state and federal governments to provide \$80 million in funding to build Stage 2 of Ballarat Link Road, from Remembrance Drive to the Glenelg Highway.

Ballarat Link Road Stage 2 will connect these fast-growing residential areas with the Western Freeway and the Glenelg Highway.

This new arterial road will improve travel times for residents, removing about 14,000 vehicles a day from Sturt Street, while providing a direct link between the Glenelg Highway, the Ballarat West Employment Zone (BWEZ) and the Western Freeway.

The funding will also duplicate Stage 1 of Ballarat Link Road, including a link to the Wendouree Railway Station.

The April opening of Stage 1 of Ballarat Link Road, between Remembrance Drive in Alfredton and Learmonth Road in Mitchell Park, has already resulted in a quicker peak time work commute for Ellie.

"That saves her five to 10 minutes. I think that Stage 2 will save a lot of traffic problems, it's going to cut travel time down beautifully," Geoffrey says.

"I think it's a great idea and I want it to happen."

2018–19 Budget



The State Government's rate cap leaves a City of Ballarat Budget shortfall of \$298 million over 10 years. With a current capital and projects list of almost 220 projects, the City of Ballarat is seeking significant government investment. Ballarat needs a better share of the tax dollar.



A new chapter: The Bridge Mall Business Association's Shane Donnithorne and Wendy McLachlan

a new era **for Bakery Hill**

At the heart of the initial gold rush and Ballarat's development, Bakery Hill was also where the Eureka Flag was first raised. Community consultation will soon begin on a major City of Ballarat project to revitalise this significant area that encompasses a historic site of national significance, the main entry to the Ballarat CBD, the Bridge Mall and Main Road.

The Bridge Mall

CBD retailers Shane Donnithorne and Wendy McLachlan are excited about what the future has in store for the Bridge Mall.

The Bridge Mall Business Association President and Vice President say it's time for the community to join with traders to discuss and shape the future direction for the outdoor shopping precinct.

"It's exciting because retail is always changing, and we've always been at the forefront of looking forward to what needs to be done," Wendy says.

"If you're not moving forward, you're going backwards."

The Bridge Mall was renewed almost 40 years ago, when it was transformed into a pedestrian mall in 1981.

The Bakery Hill area is a vital Ballarat shopping precinct – featuring about 200 retail and hospitality industries where 1,900 people work. On its own, the Bridge Mall is home to 90 businesses, not including those fronting Curtis and Little Bridge Streets.

This year marks 30 years since Wendy operated her first business, the Capri Café, in the Bridge Mall, before opening Wen & Ware in the former National Bank 16 years ago.

Shane ventured into business with the Jeanswest franchise, opening Jeanswest stores in Shepparton, Bendigo, Geelong and in Ballarat, where he opened two stores – one at Stockland Wendouree. His other Jeanswest store opened in the Bridge Mall in 1996.

"Through the last 20 years, I've seen a lot of retailers move into the mall and it has become quite progressive," Shane says.

"Then the likes of Wen & Ware opened and we saw a lot of national stores come into the mall - there was that real growth period between post-2000 up until 2014. For a good decade or so it was a very strong, vibrant place."

While the Bridge Mall is home to the popular monthly farmers market, the move towards online shopping and a lack of investment has taken a toll on this much-loved part of the CBD.



Did you know?

- The Bridge Street Mall is the oldest commercial retail area in Ballarat, located on the river flats of Yarrowee River
- The precinct was a major meeting point in the 1850s, between Main Road and the chaotic alluvial mining and commercial centre spread over the Ballarat Flats, Yarrowee Creek and Golden Point
- Previously known as Main Street, a bridge was constructed across the Yarrowee River in 1862 and the road became known as Bridge Street
- Throughout the 1850s and 1860s, regular flooding of the Yarrowee, impacted Bridge Street and Main Road businesses, prompted engineering works to raise the level of the street by up to six feet in some places
- The precinct is architecturally important, containing many original and early examples of Victorian, Federation and Inter-war era commercial, community and residential buildings.

"I love the mall, I bought a building in the mall years ago and I love the community feel and the atmosphere here, and I enjoy retailing but it's got its challenges," Shane says.

The Bakery Hill Precinct Urban Renewal Project, which is set to begin within the next few months, will define a vision and implementation plan to renew Bakery Hill, particularly the Bridge Mall.

The project aims to redevelop major City of Ballarat and privately-owned land, stimulate retail and business services sectors, unlock under-utilised sites, improve community safety, and ensure the CBD remains Ballarat's high-end retail and entertainment precinct.

The project will feature extensive community consultation, with opportunities for the community and traders to have their input at each stage of the process.

Previous community discussion has brought up ideas such as re-opening the mall to traffic or creating a vibrant community space.

Shane says all options are on the table and open to discussion.

"Our position is that all of this will be decided through the consultation process with traders and the community," he says.

"I'm positive it will have a really good outcome whichever way it goes. Once decided, and if done well, it will be a real showpiece for Ballarat."

2018–19 Budget



The City of Ballarat is investing \$1.5 million into its economic development program this financial year – supporting existing businesses, attracting jobs and investment to Ballarat, including the Bridge Mall.



Embracing outdoor dining: Mr Jones' Damien and Danielle Jones.

a new era for Bakery Hill

Revitalising Main Road

What are the ingredients for turning a quiet shopping strip into a thriving community village? Tree cover would help, as would bike lanes, ample car parking and space for outdoor dining. But what are the surprising elements that make an area charming, interesting and individual?

For the past two years, the City of Ballarat has been working with local business and property owners of a precinct in Main Road, located between Little Bridge Street and Humffray Street South, to revitalise the area.

Main Road has a rich and chequered history. It has a long association with Wadawurrung peoples, forming part of their 'food bowl' in what is today known as Ballarat East.

With its unique character and renewed interest in the area,

Main Road offered an exciting opportunity to trial a pilot renewal project between traders and the City of Ballarat.

In 2017, the City of Ballarat developed the Main Road Master Plan. Working with traders and property owners, the plan outlines ways to activate the street - from greening the area through trees and landscaping to providing seating, implementing artwork, increasing parking spots and the width of footpaths.

Acknowledging Main Road's heritage was a crucial part of the plan, so a framework of interpretive themes was developed by the City of Ballarat's Heritage and Cultural Landscapes team. These themes were used to inspire a new public artwork.

In February, the City of Ballarat asked interested artists to create an artwork responding to one of the nine stories outlined in the brief.

After an in-depth selection process, artist Travis Price, who is perhaps best known for his Hop Queen artwork at Hop Temple, won the commission.

"I actually got the idea while I was mowing the lawn," Travis says.

"Instead of just picking one story I decided to touch on them all.

"I liked the idea of using old signage. I thought that was an interesting way to tell all the different stories."

Travis' mural is on the south-east side of the new Mr Jones restaurant, formerly Catfish Thai. Measuring 12 metres in height and 15 metres in length, the artwork is a highly visible mosaic of symbols and words that reflect the precinct's identity.

While some references are obvious – a hand holding a burning piece of paper symbolises the miners burning their licences in the Eureka



Wall art: Artist Travis Price in front of the Main Road mural.

Stockade – others are more ambiguous. A barometer alludes to the Yarrowee River, where the banks would often burst causing the street to flood.

“Every single piece of this mural has meaning and it’s fun to see how different people interpret the work.”

- Travis Price

The artwork is just one of the many ways in which the plan will activate the street. Damien Jones, from Mr Jones, is excited about the transformation.

“Main Road is really one of the great streets of Ballarat,” says Damien. “It’s not too cluttered and it has these old signs and beautiful old buildings.

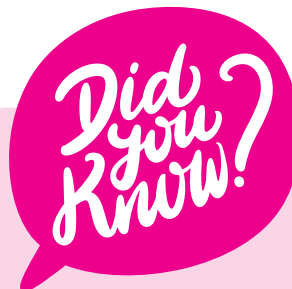
“The City of Ballarat has done a great job with introducing one lane, which slows people right

down, and creating all this new landscaping. It’s really changed the look and feel of the place.”

One of the most exciting instalments for Mr Jones and Main Bar are the new ‘parklets’ – raised timber platforms that cater for outdoor seating and tables. Ideal for warmer months, the parklets will provide a space to sit and watch life bustle by.

With plans to introduce interactive artworks, sound installations and other projects with traders, Main Road is well on its way to becoming a shopping street that has the perfect balance of charm, activity and individuality.

The City of Ballarat will continue working with traders to evaluate the success of the pilot project, to assist in rolling out tailored programs in other areas.



During the late 1800s, the area was the centre of mining life, and was a mass of tightly packed houses wedged between hotels and specialty stores. It became known for its entertainment and revelry with theatres, boxing saloons and grog houses.

*Part of Main Road, 1859.
Image: Francois Cogne*



Ballarat changemakers

Peter Caligari OAM needs little introduction. The renowned Ballarat radio identity and campaigner for those less fortunate was this year recognised as the Australia Day Awards' Citizen of the Year. While Peter has recently taken a step back from his volunteer role, he continues to shine the light on the vital work of the 3BA Christmas Appeal and Christmas in July Appeal.

Peter remembers a Ballarat mum and her three small children coming to visit him late in the afternoon on Christmas Eve at work, when he was the Managing Director of 3BA and PowerFM.

"She said – 'I am just so totally desperate. It is Christmas tomorrow and I've always been too embarrassed to go to an agency or a charity and ask for help'," Peter recalls.

"Today, I can go no longer. I have absolutely nothing for the children for Christmas tomorrow - we have no food, no toys. Can you please help through the Appeal?"

"Fortunately, we were able to help at that point of time," Peter says.

"With the many contacts that we had with organisations and business people around the town, we were able to ensure that this young woman and those three little children had one of the best Christmases they ever had."

On the day the radio station reopened after Christmas, the woman returned.

"She brought her three children and said – 'Thank you on behalf of our family. You have given us

the best Christmas that we could possibly imagine'."

About 10 years later, Peter received a letter from that same woman.

"She wrote – 'You may not remember me. Many years ago, through the Appeal, you gave me and my family the best Christmas ever. Fortunately, my circumstances have changed over the years and I'd like to do something for the less fortunate families in return'."

Every year since then, the woman has sent a donation to the Christmas Appeal.

"That is proof that the Christmas Appeal, and also the Christmas in July Appeal, that they can change and make a difference in the lives of people," Peter says.

That is just one of the many heart-warming stories. But for every heart-warming story, Peter says there are another 100 heart-breaking stories of Ballarat families struggling to make ends meet.

The Appeal first began in 1980 with the Christmas in July Appeal beginning in 2001. Thirty-eight years after the Appeal began helping many families, the Appeal has grown. So too has the community's need for assistance.

Each year, about 4,500 families receive a helping hand at Christmas and in Ballarat's cold Winter months - thanks to both appeals and the generosity of Ballarat people, businesses and organisations.

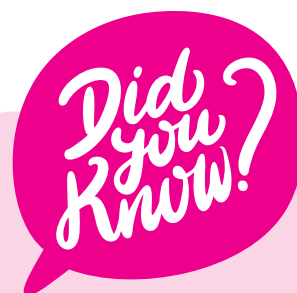
Peter says some people have questioned why, even during his

retirement, he has dedicated so much time to both appeals.

"The simple answer to that is we do it for the youngsters quite honestly. Every child, as far as we're concerned, is entitled to a visit from Santa at Christmas.

"Christmas is a time that should be enjoyed by every family - not only families who can afford it."
- Peter Caligari

"There would have been many, many thousands of children without a toy at Christmas time without the Christmas Appeal."



You can nominate an outstanding Ballarat achiever, like Peter, who deserves recognition.

Nominations for the 2019 City of Ballarat Australia Day Awards are now open and will close on Friday 16 November. The Awards will be presented at an official presentation and citizenship ceremony in three categories – Ballarat Citizen of the Year, Ballarat Young Citizen of the Year and Community Activity of the Year.

For more information visit ballarat.vic.gov.au





Healthy attitude: Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre Group Fitness Instructor Melanie Steenhuis.

mind over **matter**

Melanie Steenhuis is the picture of perfect health. But almost seven years ago, the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre (BALC) Group Fitness Instructor faced the battle of her life. What saved her was her healthy and active lifestyle, plus her unwavering determination.

Melanie loves working as a Group Fitness Instructor.

So much so, that when she woke from a coma at the Monash Medical Centre, her first thoughts were about her class at BALC.

"I said - 'Oh no, I'm meant to be at work, teaching,'" she recalls, laughing.

At the age of 39, Melanie had suffered a ruptured brain aneurysm.

"I just had a massive headache and started to vomit. Then I had two strokes after that while I was in hospital."

It was Melanie's dedication to living an active and healthy lifestyle that saved her life.

"The doctor said she would have died if she wasn't healthy – that's

what got her through, that's why she survived," her partner, Clint Huff says.

"It does pay to be fit and look after yourself."

Tackling this life-threatening condition was just the beginning of a long road to recovery.

Melanie endured more than a year of follow-up surgery and extensive rehabilitation, before was she well enough to get back into the gym, and eventually return to the front of her BALC class.

Along with the love and support of her family and friends, Melanie credits her extended BALC family – colleagues and members – for assisting her on her path to recovery.

Despite her own challenges, as well as leading a busy family life and managing Pippins Takeaway at Stockland Wendouree with Clint, Melanie has continued to reach out to BALC members who are facing their own personal health battles.

"When she knows someone's not well she'll go out of her way to help them. Probably because she knows

how hard it is – she's been there," Clint says.

To this day, Melanie experiences headaches, pain and has limited left-side arm and hand function but family, friends and colleagues say she doesn't dwell on her own personal hurdles.

Instead, she's been inspiring others – especially those in her Fit 45 aerobic and resistance training class – to get moving and live their own healthy lives.

"It slowed her down a fair bit but she was determined to just get up and go on." - Clint Huff

"Her class at BALC motivated her. That was probably her number one priority was to get up, get going, get back to the gym and get back to the work.

"Many of the members have become friends as well - she loves it."

Check out the new Spring Group Fitness Timetable at ballarataquaticcentre.com or find us on Facebook.



Japanese connection: Early Childhood Educator Yukie Speirs with kindergarten children at the Wendouree Children's Centre.

speaking the same language

Yukie Speirs was a kindergarten teacher in Chiba, Japan, before moving to Ballarat. Now, in her role as an Early Childhood Educator at the City of Ballarat's Wendouree Children's Centre, Yukie shares the language and culture of her homeland with the centre's little learners.

Yukie reads a book, *The Gigantic Turnip*, in Japanese to a group of four-year-old kindergarten children at the Wendouree Children's Centre.

The children sit spellbound as Yukie animatedly reads a page before her colleague, Elizabeth Foyster, reads the same page in English. They proceed throughout the book – alternating each page in both the Japanese and English languages.

These are sessions that Yukie, and her captivated young audience, both love.

"Kids are like a sponge – (they) copy me very easily, so that's why I start teaching Japanese. Every day is different, every day is challenging and when I get kids (to) smile, that's the most happiest time."

Yukie began sharing her culture with some of the children after she began working at the centre seven years ago.

The children enjoyed it so much, Yukie now spends time each weekday introducing a small piece of Japan to the 75-place centre, from teaching the children Japanese words and about Japanese events to showing children and their parents how to make sushi.

Yukie says the children have really embraced learning Japanese, even using the language when they're at home.

"I was reading *Very Hungry Caterpillar* and then in English and Japanese, and I taught kids (the word) lollipop in Japanese – it's pelo pelo candy. The following week, the parents asked me – 'my kid said something (about) pelo pelo in the shop and I have no idea (what they're saying)'.

"(I said to the parent) - I'm so sorry, that's my fault. I taught kids in Japanese it means lollipop so (they are) trying to say – can I have some lollipops in Japanese? That was a... funny moment."

Centre Coordinator Melissa Lloyd says Yukie is a much-loved staff member at the centre, who is also giving toddlers and pre-schoolers a head start in learning about a language and culture often taught at primary school.

"The parents think it's a great little stepping stone for when they go off to school that their children have got the basics of another language."

- Melissa Lloyd

"It's great, it gets all of the children involved – they love it."

2018–19 Budget



The City of Ballarat is investing \$1.5 million into Family and Children's Services this financial year – providing a range of services including child care, Maternal and Child Health, immunisations and Parent Place.



Gone to the dogs: Tracy Benda, Peter Marmo, Deb Hamilton and Kate Scott.

getting to know **Victoria Park**

Established in 1890, Victoria Park has a long and rich history. With 130 hectares of tree-lined avenues and large open spaces, Victoria Park was once extensively mined for gold, and was the site of Victoria's first Arbor Day planting.

After several years of community consultation, the City of Ballarat developed a Master Plan to protect and enhance Victoria Park. Adopted by Council in December 2015, the plan provides long-term strategic guidance for this iconic Ballarat park.

Today, Victoria Park features 13 ovals for cricket, facilities for soccer, horse riding, cycling, jogging, walking, picnics and barbeques, and an off-leash dog park. It's also home to the Ballarat Dog Obedience Club and the award-winning Inclusive Play Space.

Teaching all dogs new tricks

Weaving through upright poles, jumping through hoops and over hurdles is just a walk in the park for these talented pooches.

These agility dogs and their owners, members of the Ballarat Dog Obedience Club, train in this fun four-legged sport each Sunday morning, opposite the Military Drive clubrooms in Victoria Park.

Agility coordinator Tracy Benda joined the club 22 years ago before becoming "hooked" on agility.

"Most people come to join obedience and then they may leave or do dog sports later," she says.

"Then others, like myself, get hooked and the next thing you know you're doing dog sports and you've got more than one dog in the backyard."

Tracy enjoys the challenge of agility with her dogs, Curtis, a Schnoodle, and Ruben, a Finnish Lapphund.

"Every dog is different, every course is different that you go out to run, every competition, every judge lays down a different challenge, so there's never a day that's exactly the same," she says.

"Sometimes you can come out of it and you haven't won anything but you walk away going – I had a good run today. It's just really, really enjoyable."

Victoria Park has been home to the club since 1977.

Since then, the not-for-profit organisation has promoted responsible dog ownership, educating thousands of people on how to achieve an obedient dog that will sit, stay, come when called, and walk beside them. The club



The right moves: Australian shepherd Flynn flies over jumps at Victoria Park.

also provides puppy pre-school, tracking, flyball and tricks.

Victoria Park is the perfect playground for agility. Its wide, open spaces attract competitors from across the state each year for major agility competitions.

“The very first thing they say when they’ve never been here before is – ‘what an asset you’ve got here, this is amazing’.”

- Tracy Benda

“A lot of country clubs don’t even have grounds this big and so beautifully maintained that they can run their dogs on, and people from Melbourne are always in awe when they come here.”

Tracy says there’s much more pet owners can do than just take their dog for a walk.

“You don’t have to have a dog that you just take for a walk once a week.

“There’s so much you can do. Try obedience, go and see what else is out there, and agility will hook you - if you get into it.”

Every child’s playground

Sarah loves the nest swing, the carousel and the sand pit at the Victoria Park Inclusive Play Space.

“It’s been designed so you can actually push her up to the sand pit and she can reach in. She enjoys the sand and, in Summer, the water here - where she can splash,” her mum, Rebecca Paton, says.

Sarah has profound physical and intellectual disabilities from a rare syndrome that affects just 400 people across the world.

Before this playground for children

of all abilities was developed, Sarah was unable to play alongside her younger sister Hannah.

“When I had a five-year-old in a wheelchair and an active three-year-old, I couldn’t just leave one and run after the other, so that was difficult,” Rebecca says.

It was challenges like these that prevented Rebecca and her children enjoying the simple pleasures of playgrounds and which prompted Rebecca, a member of the City of Ballarat’s Disability Advisory Committee, to find a solution.

After being inspired by an inclusive playground at Sydney and realising the potential to build a playground at Victoria Park, with the support of the City of Ballarat and the Touched by Olivia Foundation, Rebecca and the City of Ballarat began a four-year process of planning and fundraising.



Fun for all: Esther Cutts with Sarah and Hannah Paton.

The \$1.4 million Victoria Park Inclusive Play Space opened in 2016.

It spans about 10,000 fenced, square metres, features multiple play zones and accessible equipment designed for people with all abilities, with a double flying fox, multiple swings, slides, a carousel and a year-round passive/imaginative water play precinct. It also includes shade shelters, barbecues, picnic tables and a Changing Places toilet and change facility.

City of Ballarat Youth and Diversity Coordinator Craig Donaldson who, as the then Rural Access Coordinator, was instrumental in helping to drive the initiative, says the level of community support that helped to transform Rebecca's vision for an Inclusive Play Space into a reality "exceeded all expectations".

"We knew this was a once in a generation type of project.

"We wanted to make it a space the entire community could be proud of."

The Inclusive Play Space features design elements that replicate traditional playgrounds while enabling children of all abilities to participate - from the ramp that provides views from the main structure to the flying fox with harness support and the carousel that enables wheelchair and pram access.

This popular play space attracted more than 150,000 people last year. It was also formally recognised with an LGPro Award for Excellence in 2017 while Rebecca received a High Commendation for Excellence in the Victorian Disability Awards.

Rural Access Officer Phil Cutts, who took on the role after Craig, says there are now plans to make the playground even better, from improved irrigation and drainage in Winter to a bounce zone and a quiet zone.

"The plan is to put in a quiet zone, whether that be a group of teepees or cubby houses," he says.

"It gets really busy here and there isn't a spot in the play space for kids who might be feeling a little anxious and need to get away from all the noise and activity."

For Rebecca, the play space is much more than an asset for Ballarat - it means Sarah and Hannah, now aged 12 and 10, can happily play together. What's more, they can also play with other children.

"On the opening day, we had Sarah in the nest swing and a dad came over and said 'would it be okay if my girls came on that with her?'," Rebecca says.

"It just dawned on me that Sarah won't just play with her sister, she'll play with other kids as well."

planning for the community

Thinking about a subdivision, a long-overdue renovation, building a deck or installing a swimming pool? You may need a planning permit. The City of Ballarat's Statutory Planning team is here to help ensure your build or home improvement is legal, safe and complements the neighbourhood.

"Talk to us first." That's the message from Statutory Planners Jade Erwin and Rachel Blackwell.

Rachel, who has overseen applications for the burgeoning Ballarat West residential and shopping precincts through to the Ballarat West Employment Zone (BWEZ), says often residents seek advice after they've purchased land or had plans completed.

"It would be good to be involved from the start so that we can shape the process and guide residents through the planning process," she says.

For many residents, applying for a planning permit can be a daunting process.

That's where the City of Ballarat's team of Statutory Planners come in – they're on hand to help navigate applicants through the process.

The Statutory Planning team makes decisions that help shape our city.

Each year, Statutory Planning issues more than 1,000 planning permits for residential, commercial, industrial and rural-related development, including subdivision, housing and new business.

For Jade, who has worked in statutory planning for more than a decade, it's rewarding work.

"I was born and raised in Ballarat, so I really love watching the way our city has grown and flourished over the years."

- Jade Erwin

"I love statutory planning because it's relevant and has a purpose – it's planning for a community.

"When the process is complete there is a tangible outcome, such as a restored heritage building, an

improved green space or a new, vibrant activity centre.

"This gives purpose to what we do, and when planning is done well it can generate great improvements in the quality of people's lives."

Statutory planners assess planning permit applications against the policies and controls set out in the Ballarat Planning Scheme.

The team also assists any residents with questions or concerns about planning proposals in their neighbourhood.

Community consultation is an integral part of the permit process. Anyone who comments on an application can attend a mediation meeting, where they can discuss their concerns with the applicant and the Statutory Planning team.

While the City of Ballarat's decision on planning permits is final, applicants or objectors can have the decision independently reviewed by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Contact Statutory Planning on 5320 5107.

Shaping our city: City of Ballarat Statutory Planners Jade Erwin and Rachel Blackwell.





A centenary since Armistice: Arch of Victory/Avenue of Honour Committee President Bruce Price OAM.

remembering our **fallen**

This November marks 100 years since the guns on the Western Front fell silent – signalling the end of World War 1. Arch of Victory/Avenue of Honour Committee President Bruce Price OAM anticipates thousands will pay their respects at Ballarat's special Remembrance Day service.

Ballarat's iconic Arch of Victory stands at the entrance to the longest Avenue of Honour in the world.

Along the Avenue, which stretches for 22kms, 3,801 trees stand tall in honour of all those who enlisted in World War 1 from Ballarat.

The Arch and Avenue, with the addition of the Garden of the Grieving Mother early last year, is a special precinct that holds incredible significance for many people, particularly Bruce.

The Arch of Victory/Avenue of Honour Committee President is the great grandson of Eleanor Lucas, the founder of textile company E Lucas and Co.

Eleanor's son Edward (Ted) Price went on to assume management of the company and, in 1917, Edward offered for the company and its 450 employees, known as the 'Lucas Girls', to raise funds to establish and create the Avenue and Arch from 1917-20.

In honour of Eleanor Lucas, the suburb of Lucas was named after Eleanor and the Lucas Girls while Eleanor Drive was also chosen as the name for the main through-road of Lucas.

The Arch of Victory/Avenue of Honour Committee was formed in 1931 to care, maintain, enhance and protect the Arch and Avenue. Edward was the founding president, with Bruce joining the

committee in 1972 and becoming president in 1980.

The Arch of Victory precinct will be the site of a special commemoration to mark a century since the end of World War 1 on 11 November.

After 30,000 people attended the ANZAC Day Dawn Service in 2015, which marked 100 years since the landing at Gallipoli, large crowds are expected to attend Ballarat's Remembrance Day service, pausing to reflect with a minute's silence.

"It's great because it shows that somewhere in their own personal feelings, the citizens of Ballarat recognise what their men and women did for them in World War 1. They weren't conscripts, they were volunteers," Bruce says.

"The service should be a fine tribute to Ballarat's 3,801 service men and



A place for reflection: The Garden of the Grieving Mother overlooks the Arch of Victory.

women honoured by the trees along the Avenue of Honour.”

Bruce says the Garden of the Grieving Mother has also struck a chord with many Ballarat residents.

“Now, with the Garden of the Grieving Mother, we are remembering and paying tribute to those back home who suffered anxiety and grief because their family members were away at war.”

- Bruce Price

“She’s a grieving mother, that’s what the statue is, but she represents all who were involved in that situation – the fathers, relatives, friends, everybody, and from every war and wars to be.

“I think the number of floral tributes that were laid on Mother’s Day

also indicates that people who are anxious and grieving for other reasons, not war necessarily, gained some solace from being able to pay tribute there and rest up for a moment or two and reflect – it’s a garden that’s got wide implications.”

Bruce says the committee is working hard to achieve a National Heritage listing for the Arch of Victory and Avenue of Honour.

“That would be marvellous and something Ballarat could be very proud of,” he says.

“To be kept in excellent order is another achievement in which a lot of people are involved, including the City of Ballarat.

“A lot of avenues have disappeared because they haven’t been looked after and maintained, loved and developed.”



Want to know more?

The Ballarat Remembrance Day service will be held at the Arch of Victory at 10.15am on Sunday, 11 November. The City of Ballarat, the Arch of Victory/Avenue of Honour Committee, both the Ballarat and Sebastopol RSL and Legacy are working together to create a respectful event with a connection to the local community, to commemorate 100 years since the end of World War 1.

The Buninyong RSL will also host a Remembrance Day commemorative service. Assembly at 10.30am with the service to commence at 10.45am in the Buninyong RSL Memorial Park.

BOAA at the Art Gallery of Ballarat: Artist Gerwyn Davies.



September event calendar



1	Bridge Mall Farmers Market 9am–1pm bridgemallmarket.com.au
	Louiseann King: solis exhibition opens Runs until 11 November Art Gallery of Ballarat artgalleryofballarat.com.au
1–30	Royal South Street Eisteddfod Runs until 3 November royalsouthstreet.com.au
8	Ballarat Farmers Market Lake Wendouree, 9am–1pm Facebook @ballaratfarmers
21	Biennale of Australian Art (BOAA) begins Runs until 6 November Various locations boaa.net.au
22	BOAA at the Art Gallery of Ballarat Runs until 6 November Entry with BOAA ticket artgalleryofballarat.com.au boaa.net.au
	Brown Hill Market Brown Hill Hall, 9am–1pm Facebook @brownhillmarket
23–26	23rd Victorian Teachers' Games Various locations education.vic.gov.au
29	Pride and Prejudice opens Runs until 6 October Presented by Ballarat National Theatre The Courthouse, corner Armstrong and Grant Streets bnt.org.au

October event calendar

1–31

Ballarat Seniors Festival

Various locations
ballarat.vic.gov.au
seniorsonline.vic.gov.au

6

Pop Con 2018 (Ballarat Pop Culture Convention)

Eastwood Leisure Centre
 Facebook @ballaratyouthservices

Bridge Mall Farmers Market

9am–1pm
bridgemallmarket.com.au

13

Ballarat Farmers Market

Lake Wendouree, 9am–1pm
 Facebook @ballaratfarmers

13–14

Victorian Masters Cycling Championships

vic.cycling.org.au
cyclingballarat.com.au

NAIDOC Football and Netball Carnival Ballarat

Mars Stadium
 Find us on Facebook

14

Ballarat Eureka Stamps and Coins Fair

Ballarat Specialist School,
 Farm Campus
 800 Norman Street,
 Invermay Park
ballaratstampclub.com.au

19–21

Ballarat Orchid Club's Annual Orchid Show

Federation University,
 Gillies Street Campus
 Corner Gillies and Gregory
 Streets, Wendouree
 Facebook @ballaratorchidclub

19–28

National Children's Week 2018

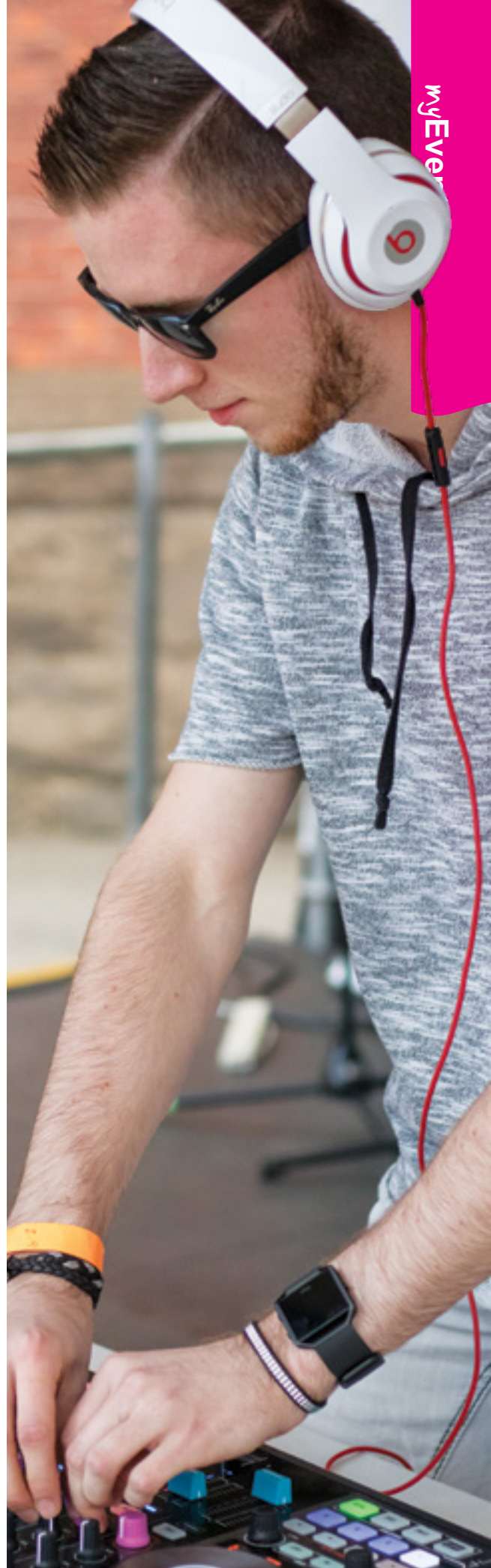
Various locations
ballarat.vic.gov.au

Pop culture: Get your fill of comics, gaming, books and movies at Pop Con 2018.

November event calendar

3	Bridge Mall Farmers Market 9am–1pm bridgemallmarket.com.au
9–11	Ballarat Show Various locations ballaratshow.org.au
10–11	Creswick Garden Lovers Weekend Ballarat Showgrounds creswick.net/events
10	FReeZA Silent Disco Featuring local DJs The Ballarat Show Facebook @ballaratyouthservices
	Ballarat Farmers Market Lake Wendouree, 9am–1pm Facebook @ballaratfarmers
11	Ballarat Remembrance Day Services 10.15am at the Arch of Victory 10.30am at the Buninyong RSL Memorial Park
17	Locals Rule Exhibition of local artists Art Gallery of Ballarat artgalleryofballarat.com.au
24	Ballarat Cup Ballarat Turf Club Gates open at 11am Facebook @ballarat.turfclub
	Brown Hill Market Brown Hill Hall, 9am–1pm Facebook @brownhillmarket
25	Springfest Market Sunday Lake Wendouree ballarat.springfest.com.au

Mixing it up: Local DJs will take centre stage at the FReeZA Silent Disco.





The Ballarat renaissance: From left to right, Ballarat artists Kim Anderson, Mary van den Broek, Stephen Pleban, BOAA Artistic Director Julie Collins and artist Angela Robinson at the George Farmer & Co building.

the rise and rise of Ballarat as a creative city

The Biennale of Australian Art (BOAA) will be the largest ever showcase of living Australian artists. This six-week event spanning September to November will transform Ballarat into one large gallery.

The derelict George Farmer & Co building in Eureka Street, a former bacon factory, is being brought back to life as one of the multiple sites across Ballarat set to host BOAA.

Spanning two floors, the building will feature 26 solo exhibitions, showcasing the work of artists from right across Australia, including home-grown talent with artists Gordon Monro and Tiffany Titshall, graphic designer and illustrator Jay Rankine, and photographer Michelle Dunn.

The site will be one of about 20 venues and locations, including three heritage buildings and historic locations, hosting 65 curated solo exhibitions from 21 September to 6 November.

BOAA Artistic Director Julie Collins says the event will elevate Ballarat artists through a new platform, enabling them to showcase their art alongside leading Australian artists, while delivering a great city-wide exhibition for audiences.

"As an artist myself, I have seen a lot of the big exhibitions give the same artists opportunities again and again, and I just knew that there was so much diversity out there," Julie says.

"I have always had a vision of an exhibition showcasing the diversity of Australian art, one that allows Australian artists to tell our stories.

"When I first moved to Ballarat 15 years ago, I immediately realised that the city was the perfect scale for a European-style biennale event, something that would take over the whole city."

BOAA will feature a sculpture walk around Lake Wendouree, projects through the Ballarat Botanical Gardens, solo exhibitions and street art installations throughout Sturt Street and the CBD.

"Then we move up towards what I call the Eureka Village, which is the old convent site which is now the Ballarat Welcome Centre, the Eureka Centre and this building here - the George Farmer building," Julie says.

"BOAA is a big operation - we are fabricating 200-plus metres of temporary exhibition walls to line a lot of these spaces to activate.

"Through BOAA, I think people will see how easily we can adapt our heritage buildings and this might encourage more events and exhibitions within our more traditional spaces."
- Julie Collins

BOAA is much more than an exhibition. It will also feature pop-up cafes, talks, forums, educational programs and musical performances, all helping to revive Ballarat as a cultural centre.

The event is also attracting artists to live and create in Ballarat.

Julie says two artists who have visited Ballarat to inspect their BOAA exhibition sites have since relocated to Ballarat, while another two artists have purchased properties with plans to move here.

"Who actually knows - maybe after the six weeks of BOAA there will be a boom of arts and cultural people moving here? I think it will be fabulous for the city."

Ballarat painter Stephen Pleban, who will exhibit at St Andrew's Hall, and drawer Kim Anderson, one of 11 artists exhibiting at the Art Gallery of Ballarat, are looking forward to the event.

Kim, who works mostly with charcoal and ink pen, will explore themes of ecological grief through her exhibition, *To Live Alone in a World of Wounds*.

"BOAA is a great opportunity - it is definitely difficult as a regional artist to really get your name out there, and I think this is going to be exciting for Ballarat."

With a collection, *In Search*, for BOAA that includes large oil paintings and explores human interaction with the natural environment, Stephen agrees.

"Having the opportunity to show with other Ballarat artists is great and also being able to show work with artists from all over Australia, people that you know and respect, is really important."

The City of Ballarat is developing a Creative City Strategy, including a master plan for the development of the creative precinct in the CBD. For more information visit mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au/creative-city

Visit boaa.net.au

2018-19 Budget



The City of Ballarat is investing \$10.7 million in events and the arts this financial year, including Her Majesty's Ballarat, the Art Gallery of Ballarat, Eureka Centre - Home of the Eureka Flag, and all other events such as supporting BOAA.



a work of art

Indigenous elder Aunty Marlene Gilson first picked up a paintbrush a little more than a decade ago. Now an established artist, Marlene has been preparing for a solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ballarat, as part of the Biennale of Australian Art (BOAA).

Marlene doesn't need to look far to find inspiration for her paintings.

The Wathaurung/Wadawarrung elder, who lives on country at Gordon, uses her talented brush strokes to tell the stories of Aboriginal people on the goldfields.

As a descendant of Indigenous tribal leader King Billy and his wife Queen Mary, who lived during the Eureka Stockade, Marlene is passionate about showcasing these largely untold stories on canvas.

What makes her story even more remarkable, is that Marlene is a self-taught artist who came to painting later in life, turning to art after completing treatment for cancer.

"I started to read the stories of my people and found that they were minding some of the miners' children in the bush," she says.

"I remember my grandmother told me this story too, that when the battle was on in the Stockade that some of them (the miners) had run to the bush Aboriginal camp." - Marlene Gilson

Since becoming an artist, Marlene has exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ballarat with her daughter Deanne Gilson, who is also a painter, and her work has also been shown at Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Melbourne Museum and the Koorie Heritage Trust.

In 2015, Marlene won the People's Choice Award at the 2015 Victorian Indigenous Art Awards and earlier this year had a solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, as part of the prestigious 21st Biennale of Sydney.

Her work hangs on the walls of the National Gallery of Victoria, the City of Melbourne and the Australian Catholic University.

Marlene will also have a solo show at Sydney's Martin Browne Contemporary Gallery next year, while three of her paintings have been sold to a private collector who

plans to donate them to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Marlene says one of the main highlights of her art career was when her painting, *Mount Warrenheip and the Eureka Stockade*, was purchased by the Art Gallery of Ballarat to form part of its permanent collection.

"I was blown away by that - that was unbelievable. That was a real big highlight," she says.

Marlene is now returning with eight new paintings to the Art Gallery of Ballarat, where she will be one of 11 artists exhibiting as part of BOAA.

Art Gallery of Ballarat Director Louise Tegart says Marlene's solo exhibition will be a fantastic addition to the Gallery.

"We're really excited to be a major venue for the inaugural Biennale of Australian Art," Louise says.

"We've got a whole range of artists, but I think it's really great for the Art Gallery of Ballarat to be showcasing local artists - and Marlene has had such fantastic success.

"It's probably time for her to have another exhibition at the Gallery and, of course, it's within our remit to be telling local stories and, I think, particularly Indigenous stories."



Canvassing art: Aunty Marlene Gilson shows Art Gallery of Ballarat Director Louise Tegart a painting in progress at her Gordon studio.

growing our garden city

The Ballarat Botanical Gardens were first reserved for a public garden in 1857. Today, the Gardens are renowned as one of Australia's most attractive cool climate gardens. The City of Ballarat's Gardens team is proud to get its hands dirty, maintaining and growing our beautiful and historic Gardens.

Peter Marquand has the best office in the city.

The Parks and Nursery Curator oversees the operations of 40 hectares of spectacular leafy gardens and avenues at the Ballarat Botanical Gardens.

"It is the best place to work in Ballarat."
- Peter Marquand

"Sometimes it's really nice to be able to talk to different people about the Gardens – I like people's family connections and stories about the Gardens as well.

"People might be in their 70s but they can tell us stories about when they came to the Gardens as little kids, their grandparents brought them here or they came to the zoo."

Peter has worked at the City of Ballarat for almost 30 years. A gardener with the former Shire of Buninyong, Peter then became the Sturt Street gardener before moving to the Ballarat Botanical Gardens 15 years ago.

The Gardens, which celebrated 160 years in 2017, is home to a team of about 19 staff, including

two apprentices, from qualified horticulturalists to administration and education staff.

Peter says its collection of exotic conifer, deciduous and native trees, which contribute to the charm and character of the Gardens, is exceptional.

The Gardens has 52 mature trees listed on the National Trust Significant Trees Register.

"Some are trees that were planted in the late 1800s and into the early 1900s," Peter says.

"The Gardens are typical of a garden of this age – there are not a lot of Australian native plants, although we do have a few more now.

"We've invested a lot of time to be able to keep those trees," he says.



"One of the bunyas here developed a crack in it a few years ago and we investigated a whole range of things we could look at to keep that tree.

"In the end, we put a big support collar around the base of the tree and it holds the tree together.

"Otherwise we would have lost the tree – it would have been a huge loss but it's still there."

The Ballarat Botanical Gardens is also renowned for its begonias.

The Gardens is home to two collections of begonias – 240 tuberous and 300 non-tuberous varieties, both registered with the Garden Plant Conservation Association of Australia.

The Gardens team was recently recognised with a 2018 Ballarat

Heritage Award for Excellence in Heritage Skills for its maintenance of rare tuberous begonias.

Peter says the Gardens has been growing tuberous begonias since the late 1800s.

"We found out early this year that of the more than 200 begonias in our tuberous collection, 140 of those were imported from United Kingdom nursery Blackmore and Langdons," Peter says.

"Of that 140, we have 80 that they no longer have. It came to us as a little bit of a surprise.

"It's a nursery that's been going since the early 1900s – it went through all those things like the Blitz and we have more of their begonias than perhaps they do," he says.

"That not only recognises the skills of the team working here now but it also probably acknowledges the skills of the teams here that have gone before us."

- Peter Marquand

2018–19 Budget



The City of Ballarat will invest \$13.1 million into the municipality's parks and gardens, including the Ballarat Botanical Garden, this financial year.

Our green custodians: The City of Ballarat's Gardens team



planting for the future

A group of green-thumbed volunteers are cultivating a love for Ballarat's indigenous plants. The Ballarat Community Indigenous Nursery produces about 12,000 plants a year, which green the municipality's lakes, gardens, parks and wetland areas.

Tucked away in a small corner of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens, a group of volunteers are sowing seeds, weeding, grading and maintaining plants and preparing plants for orders, almost oblivious to the cold, wet conditions.

One day each week, this group of up to 10 volunteers work at the City of Ballarat's Community Indigenous Nursery to grow indigenous plants - plants that have evolved within a 40km radius of Ballarat over thousands of years and grow naturally in our area.

Together, they produce thousands of trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers across 70 species, including wattles, eucalypts, bottlebrush, banksia, hakea, she-oaks, tea trees, wildflowers, native grasses and sedges.

Nursery Manager Roger Thomas, a field naturalist and bird observer,

says indigenous plants have a range of benefits – they are hardy in local conditions, provide food for native birds and they are often culturally significant.

"The plants that are grown here come from seed that's collected locally, so they are all adapted to the local area – they can stand the harsh conditions like the frost and the drought," he says.

"They grow well under the soil and climate and we are really trying to promote putting them in urban gardens with the broader benefits - the water saving benefits and their hardiness from being used to the climate."

- Roger Thomas

Roger says it's rewarding work that creates a greener tomorrow.

"Some of our volunteers are retired, some are still working, and some are unemployed – they all enjoy being here and enjoy each other's company," he says.

"I enjoy growing plants and I like to think that what we're doing is good for the environment.

"Over the 13 years I've been doing it, we have provided thousands of trees for the local environment, so that's very satisfying."

The nursery does not sell plants. The plants are used to green the City of Ballarat municipality and are also used by Landcare groups for revegetation projects. Tea trees, banksias and bottlebrushes are also presented to about 20 new citizens each month at the City of Ballarat's citizenship ceremonies.

As part of the Ballarat Begonia Festival earlier this year, for the first time, the nursery gave away about 6,000 small indigenous plants.

2018–19 Budget



The City of Ballarat has increased spending on repairing and maintaining roads, drains and footpaths across the municipality, taking the overall investment to \$31 million this financial year.





Don't waste our waste: City of Ballarat waste collection truck driver Chris Spark.

Kicking contamination to the kerb

About 10 per cent of materials placed into Victoria's yellow-lidded recycling bins simply don't belong there. Let's not waste our chance to recycle right. After all, our future depends on it.

Chris Spark understands how 'contamination' - the wrong items placed in the recycling bin - impacts our recycling efforts.

As one of the City of Ballarat's recycling collection truck drivers, each morning Chris views a monitor within the cabin of the truck, that shows him exactly what ends up being emptied from recycling bins into the back of the vehicle.

Non-recyclable items, such as plastic bags, nappies and grass, are often emptied into the back of the vehicle, which then contaminates the recycling, such as milk cartons, drink cans, glass bottles, newspapers and cardboard.

"It's disappointing to see contamination end up in the back of the truck," Chris says.

"Recycling is not difficult – it really makes a big difference just taking the time to think about what you're putting in to your recycling bin." - Chris Spark

Recycling reduces the amount of natural resources we need to dig up for our daily lives. It also stops our landfills filling up with resources that may never break down.

There's no doubt Ballarat residents are enthusiastic recyclers.

The City of Ballarat's four recycling trucks collect an average of 10.8kg of recyclables from each household, every fortnight.

However, common mistakes can include using plastic bags to contain and bin recyclables and placing disposable coffee cups, old clothing, green waste and general rubbish in the recycling.

Also, electronic waste, or eWaste, is not able to be recycled in the yellow-lidded recycling bin. Instead, it can be recycled for free at the Ballarat Transfer Station.

The Ballarat municipality's recycling is manually sorted by contractor SKM Recycling in Geelong. Contamination causes difficulties during the sorting of recyclables and can also prevent items from being recycled into new products.

Sometimes, even just a few contaminated bins can prevent an entire truckload of recyclables from being reused.

2018–19 Budget



The net cost of delivering waste services, including the Gillies Street Transfer Station, waste collection and managing the Smythesdale landfill, will be \$17.6 million this financial year.





Waste not, want not: Ben, Andrew and Matthew.

turning broken bins into new products

Each year, about 1,300 broken City of Ballarat bins are diverted from landfill. Not-for-profit organisation Ballarat Regional Industries recycles the bins, which are then transformed into a range of new products.

It takes just five seconds to shred a bin, and the benefits can last for more than a lifetime.

For the past five years, Ballarat Regional Industries' (BRI) Wendouree site has recycled the plastic, wheels and axles from the City of Ballarat's broken recycling, waste and green waste bins.

BRI delivers the City of Ballarat's new and replacement bins to residents and collects residents' broken bins.

BRI Recycling and Manufacturing Manager Andrew Clarke says once shredded, the plastic then passes through a state-of-the-art granulator, where it's further reduced to pieces the size of rice.

The plastic is then sold in 700kg bags to Pacific Plastic Recyclers in Geelong, where it's washed, heated and melted into pellets. Then, it's sold to plastic moulding companies, which mould the pellets into milk and bread crates, pot plant containers - and even more bins.

"It is a good, flexible but strong material to be used in various products. It's not going into landfill – that's the big thing."
- Andrew Clarke

"Those materials can keep being recycled until the compounds start to fall apart."

BRI recycles more than bins. It recycles paper, cardboard and a range of other plastics. BRI is also investigating the potential to recycle plastics placed in the skip bins at the Ballarat Transfer Station.

What's more, this home-grown organisation also employs more than 200 people, including 145 people with disabilities.

"Recycling creates an income for BRI and that gives people with disabilities employment," Andrew says.

"By employing people with disabilities, we also give employment to able-bodied people. There's a lot of benefits to the whole scenario."



Want to know more?

Do you need a bin or need a damaged bin replaced? Contact the City of Ballarat's Customer Service on 5320 5500 or visit eservices.ballarat.vic.gov.au.



NORTH

CENTRAL

SOUTH

The Ballarat municipality is divided into three wards – Central, North and South - with three elected Councillors representing each ward. The City of Ballarat Council is made up of a dynamic group of people, led by Mayor Cr Samantha McIntosh.

Council encourages community participation at its Ordinary Meetings, which are open to the public and held at the Ballarat Town Hall every three weeks, on a Wednesday, from 7pm.

Upcoming meetings will be held on 3 and 24 October, 21 November and 12 December.

CENTRAL WARD

- Ballarat East • Eureka • Black Hill • Soldiers Hill • Redan
- Newington • most of Mount Pleasant and Brown Hill
- part of Alfredton

NORTH WARD

- Ballarat North • Invermay Park • Wendouree • Lucas
- Cardigan • Miners Rest • Learmonth • Burrumbeet
- most of Alfredton and part of Brown Hill.

SOUTH WARD

- Delacombe • Sebastopol • Canadian • Mount Clear
- Mount Helen • Buninyong and part of Mount Pleasant.

CENTRAL WARD



Mayor Cr Samantha McIntosh

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Cr Belinda Coates

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NORTH WARD



Deputy Mayor Cr Daniel Moloney

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Cr Amy Johnson

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Cr Grant Tillett

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