



# THE BALLAARAT MECHANICS' INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2015



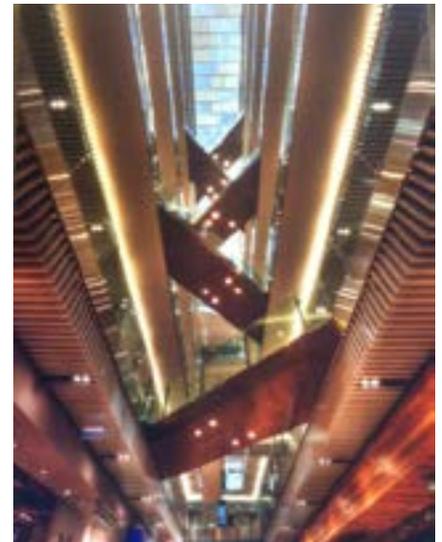
The Mechanics' needs you! Yes, every member who is a volunteer, all Board members, staff, and assistants need to attend a special meeting on the 21st of September at 4.15pm in the Humffray Room.

The meeting is about "Governance today", the need for compliance and the regulatory environment that all not-for-profit organisations are required to follow. The benefits will be optimum use of resources, improved morale and increased productivity for all persons interested in furthering BMI activities.

There will be light refreshments and drinks and a tour of facilities to members who are new to the organisation. I ask for all to attend and familiarise yourself with the BMI. Please make a note in your diary.

this fascinating dwarf planet so very far away. According to NASA online, the New Horizons mission will help us understand the worlds at the edge of our solar system. New Horizons will venture deep into the Kuiper Belt, which will tell us more about our solar system planets as they've come to be today.

Astronomy expert Saeed Salimpour has great knowledge and will be encouraging the audience to ask questions. Please bring your children and grandchildren to this family-friendly event. Tickets can be purchased through the events section on our website and at the library. This is a fundraiser event.



Details inside of John Tozer's exhibit.

## "New Horizons" Twilight Talk: Seeing Pluto on the Big Screen

**Date and Place:** Sep 27, Minerva Space

**Time:** 3.30pm

**Adults:** \$15 **Students:** \$10 **Families:** \$35

**Children under 15:** Free

**Tea, coffee and fruit juice provided. Tickets through [ballaratmi.org.au](http://ballaratmi.org.au).**

On the topic of fundraising, I'd like to congratulate the Friends of Minerva for hosting a successful film and luncheon that was enjoyed by 60 people last month, and Twilight Talk attendance is going well.



FoSM finished up on the 30th of August and brought many people to the BMI.

The Board have arranged for William Whiteside our HR consultant to brief all on the new Handbook of Policy and a Code of Conduct that BMI will expect into the future. And now to the fun stuff!

The BMI is arranging a Special Twilight Talk on Sunday

the 27th of Sept at 4pm about the Space exploration of Pluto by the NASA mission, "New Horizons". This is in collaboration with The Ballarat Observatory and included in the cost is a free visit to the observatory at a time of your choosing. This is not to be missed as we all view Pluto on the big screen in the Minerva Space to learn about



**Graham Gooding,**  
President

PS: Handbooks and the Code of Conduct will be emailed and available from Rosemary.

Image credit: NASA online

In this month's newsletter: Re-discovering the first Annual Reports, Story Box with Amy Tsilemanis, an interview with art photographer John Tozer, library news and events at the Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute.

## THE FRIENDS OF MINERVA PRESENTS THE NEXT FILM AND LUNCHEON

After the last, sold out event where the Friends of Minerva and guests watched the film, Last Cab to Darwin, another film and luncheon event has been booked in! Starring talented Kate Winslet, The Dressmaker is an adaptation of the famous Australian novel of the same name by Rosalie Ham. The novel was published in the year 2000 and is written in the Gothic Fiction style. If you haven't read it yet, you might have time to do so before you see the film! We have The Dressmaker and two more of Rosalie Ham's books in the Lending Library.

**Date:** Wednesday Nov 4

**Cost:** \$20

**Includes:** Film and lunch at the Ballarat Regent Theatre





## LIBRARY NEWS AUTHOR OF THE MONTH

Pam Jenoff

Pam was born in Maryland. She received her master's in history from Cambridge. In 1998 she attended law school. Pam is now employed as an attorney in Philadelphia where she also does pro bono & civil work focusing on at-risk, youth, hunger relief and homelessness. Her novels are romances with a war theme.

### RECOMMENDED READING

*Lasseter's Gold* by Warren Brown

When Harold Bell Lasseter disappeared in late 1930 it could have been the end of a mystery. Thirty three years earlier he had staggered out of the desert, almost dead, his pockets bulging with gold, claiming to have found a 15 kilometre gold reef. The mystery deepened. In Lasseter's Gold, Warren Brown vividly recreates the drama of the search.

### NEW BMI MEMBERS

**Congratulations and welcome, new BMI members. We hope you will always feel welcome and make good use of the Lending Library and other facilities. We certainly hope this will be first of many enjoyable years' involvement with this wonderful, iconic organisation.**

Lorraine Yeomans, Ross Squire, Laurie O'Donnel, Luke Pitman, Ross Squire, Yolanda Pilepich, Mary Darcy and Julie Hill.

**And a big thank you goes to the person who donated Downton Abbey DVD's to the Library!**



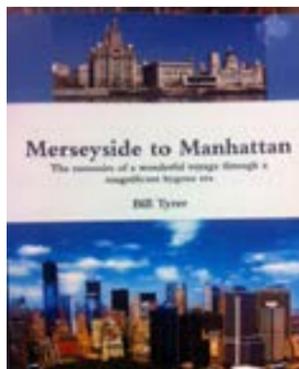
## BOOK OF THE MONTH

*Falling In Love* by Donna Leon



As an opera superstar, Flavia is well acquainted with attention from adoring fans and aspiring singers. But when one anonymous admirer inundates her with bouquets of yellow roses – on stage, in her dressing room and even inside her locked apartment – it becomes clear that this fan has become a potentially dangerous stalker.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE TWILIGHT TALK LAST SERIES WHEN BILL TRYER TALKED ABOUT HIS ADVENTURES FROM MERSEYSIDE TO MANHATTAN? FIONA WATSON WROTE A LOVELY PIECE ABOUT THE TALK FOR OUR WEBSITE. THE LIBRARY IS NOW SELLING HIS BOOK FOR \$24.95. IT WOULD BE A LOVELY GIFT, OR MIGHT WELL BE A SUITABLE ADDITION TO YOUR HOME BOOK COLLECTION.



## STORY BOX BY AMY T THE CURRENTS OF TECHNOLOGY

This month, with our first Social Media classes running for members in mind, I reflect on technological changes within the Institute.

It is interesting to think that throughout the BMI's history, the community has come in to read and access the most up to date information, and share new knowledge and ideas. Today, through a variety of means including the Institute being hooked up to the NBN this year (fast broadband, connected through fibre optic cable), members can utilise this connection, alongside the valuable knowledge and expertise of librarians and archivists. I had a chat to Rosemary McNerney who has been with the library for a quarter century, and has seen a few changes along the way! Rosemary remembers the early days where she had to use a typewriter. But then computers came along and changed everything.

"Technology has certainly improved within the library...For borrowing we used the Browns system, which was done by hand. With computers and the internet, this certainly changed for us. Especially the knowledge that you could get from the internet regarding new books, information on authors and our loans going over to computer."



Image from "The Space Between" exhibition, Amy Tsilemanis, 2013

Social Media can be a great way of connecting with like-minded people near and far, and also for sharing the story and activities of great cultural hubs like the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute. Funds raised through the workshops will go towards a library Ipad so that Rosemary and other members can use their new skills to share the BMI with the world!

As a postscript, I have fond memories of those yellow envelopes used for loaning out books and incorporated them into an artwork in 2013. People were invited to write down their favourite books and reading memories that were then inserted into the envelopes and hung as part of an installation celebrating the joys of reading. And now there are even more ways to celebrate the joys of reading too, like tweeting and interacting with your favorite authors using social media.

## COME INSIDE AND VISIT "OUTSIDE IN", AN EXHIBITION IN THE BMI FOYER



**John Tozer's exhibition, 'Outside In', is a series of paired photographs capturing the interior and exterior of**

**wondrous architectural structures in Australia and overseas. Since taking up photography in 2001, Tozer has won awards and exhibited works in Russia. The BMI spoke with him and found out how painstakingly hard it can be to take a good shot.**

**How do you feel when you're taking a photo? What's going through your head in that moment?**

Look, a lot of things are going through your head. One, you're trying to get positioned so that you get a properly balanced photo. In a lot of cases like inside buildings, I try to make them symmetrical. While it might feel symmetrical at first, when you're looking through a lens and standing in a funny position so you're not getting bumped over by tourists, it's often quite difficult to get that symmetry. For example, in some places like St Petersburg, you can take photos, but not allowed to use tripods! So you have to act as your own tripod and be as careful as you can. But it tends to have a bigger impact on the viewer of the photo when the image is symmetrical.

**What makes the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute the right place for you to hold the exhibition?**

Well, firstly I love old buildings! I live in a 150-year-old stone house in Castlemaine. The [Ballarat Mechanics'] Institute is an integral part of Ballarat. When I'm in the Fringe Festival Bienalle, I'm looking for a space where people can take their time, unlike

a café where you're looking over people eating. I think it's a nice space to exhibit here.

**What do you think of the way taking photos in general for social media sites like Instagram, Pinterest and Flickr is now the norm? Do you think everyone can take a good photo now?**

Look, I'm very happy it's happening. I think the more literate, if you like, people are with photography, the better it is. I see Iphone photography as being more documentary, by capturing people's moments. I don't see it, as the sort of thing people would want to hang on their wall. It's sort of "now", and typically not well constructed. Professional photos on the other hand consider lighting, shadows, colours and use quality lens to get the shot. Both types of photos are very different.



**John Tozer's fringe exhibition, "Outside In", for the Ballarat International Foto Biennale, will be showing in the BMI foyer until September 20. You can also visit his website at [www.imageinsight.com.au](http://www.imageinsight.com.au).**

## HISTORICAL SNIPPETS: DIGGING UP THE HISTORY OF THE BALLARAT MECHANICS' INSTITUTE. VOLUNTEER ARCHIVIST, JANET WALSH, WRITES ON THE VERY FIRST BMI ANNUAL REPORTS.

**The earliest Annual Report preserved: 1913**

Income from subscriptions exceeded that of the previous year, and other sources of income had also increased. The Institute was able to splurge on exciting new additions to its rooms, such as a piano organ for the concert hall, a pneumatic appliance for lighting the gas over the billiard tables, and redecorate the Billiard Room. On top of this, over nine hundred new books were added to the Library.

**Annual Report: 1914**

The following year, the "massive cedar board" that still stands today was installed on the wall near the entrance to the library. It proudly lists all the names of Past Presidents. The death of Walter Withers in July was recorded, and W. T. Gill retired for business reasons.

Meetings of the Debating Society were fairly well attended, and revenue from the Billiard Room was at its highest. Noted was the "good feeling and gentlemanly demeanour of those frequenting the room".

But The First World War changed life in Ballarat during the next few years. We shall fast track now to 1920...

**Annual Report: 1920**

May 1920 brings the 61st Annual Report. On the cover is a lovely photograph of the building's façade. During the year the hall was provided with a Bioscope Room and 375 new theatre seats. The floor of the Gallery was re-laid to improve the view of the stage. The hall is now leased, and the rent revenue is justifying the cost of the alterations.

Over 700 new books were added to the Library, including Baron Von Mueller's works on Australian Plants, and The Times "History and Encyclopaedia of the war". Surplus books were presented to the Ballarat Red Cross convalescent home, and a large number of periodicals to the Sailors' Rest and similar institutions.

**Annual Report: 1922**

In May 1922, the 63rd Annual Report from the Library lists some 59,498 books and 13,546 magazines issued to subscribers during the year, with 815 new volumes being added. Rental of the Hall to "Britannia Pictures" is providing a steady and satisfactory income, A contract has been let for new glass doors at the main entrance, and it is hoped that future profits can be put towards the installation of a lift.

**Annual Report: 1925**

Good news continues in the 66th Annual Report. Income improved and nearly 800 new books have been added to the Library, and Mr A. B. Foxcroft of the Melbourne Public Library, is advising the Library Committee on the Dewey Decimal System, and on setting up a card catalogue.

The "Ladies' Home Journal" and The "Sporting Globe" are among the Periodicals being added.

Some 2,000 out of date volumes were discarded from the Library, some being given to the Victoria League and to the Soldiers' Library on the Trawalla Settlement. A chess club was formed, all members were entitled to join this club without further fee. Mr T. Rauch has offered to instruct members anxious to learn the game.

"Tournaments have been arranged for the winter months, and everything points to a revival of the ancient game in Ballarat."

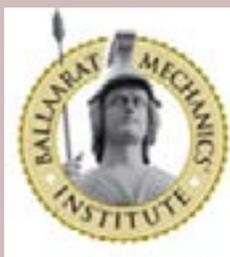
The florist's and confectioner's shops at the entrance have been fitted with new shop fronts, doors and show cases. An expense justified of course by the improved appearance of the main entrance, and the increased rentals.

# Series Three of Twilight Talks

## Fascinating talks on Friday evenings



Academic Mary Ross-Volk discussing terrorism in the last Twilight Talk.



**T**wilight Talks are a series of weekly talks on a Friday evening set in the Humffray Room, as organised by Ann Cato. From

historians, academics, to soldiers' talks, each is unique.

The Twilight Talks are one of the BMI's most cherished events, and we encourage all our members to attend.

### September 4th

#### "From Palace to Desert", a talk by Lynn Heppner

It's very unlikely you will ever have the opportunity to have a job interview with a Prince of Jordan. But that's exactly what happened to Colac resident, Lynn Heppner in 1995. Lynn was approached by the Office of His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to travel to Jordan for the opportunity of a lifetime. And the rest, as they say, is history. Lynn was the Prince's Personal Assistant for International Affairs until she retired and returned home to Colac in 2012. This is one Twilight Talk not to be missed!

### September 11th

#### "The Batavia Story", a talk by Helen Pickers Gill

Library Officer/City of Ballarat will speak of her three visits to the Abrolhos Islands. These islands are 100km due west from Geraldton and are under the jurisdiction of Geraldton. Helen will discuss the "Batavia" story, the story of a shipwreck from 1629, a wreck that divers can still explore.

### September 18th

#### "Town Crying in Australia", a talk by Anne Doggett

Anne will talk about the history of town crying in Australia, with colourful participation by

some of Australia's leading contemporary town criers. During the talk Anne's book *A Far Cry: Town Crying in the Antipodes*, will be launched by Brian Whykes, Town Crier of Ballarat. Look forward to an animated Twilight Talk!

### September 25th

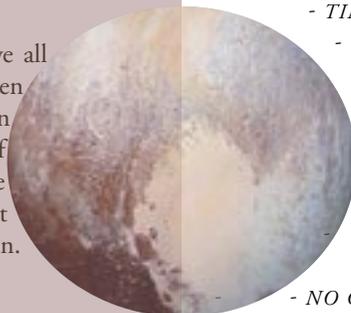
#### "Fifty Golden Years", a talk by Sonja A. Kinnersly

Sonia is a historian and the author of "Ballarat National Theatre Fifty Golden Years". Covering the period of 1938-1988, this Twilight Talk will provide insight into the history of theatre in Ballarat.

### September 27th

#### "Pluto on the Big Screen", a talk by Astronomy expert Saeed Salimpour

This is not to be missed as we all view Pluto on the big screen in the Minerva Space to learn about this fascinating dwarf planet so very far away. Please read News from the President on page 1 for more information.



Twilight Talks commence at 5:30 pm, preceded by Wine and Cheese at 5:00 pm

Members: \$6:00

Non-Members: \$10.00 Time: Arrive in the Humffray Room at 5pm (Prices differ for "Pluto on the Big Screen").

## New Books

- *BROKEN PROMISE* BY LINWOOD BARCLAY
- *I'M TRAVELLING ALONE* BY SAMUEL BJORK
- *THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD* BY STEPHANIE BISHOP
- *LAST CHANCE MUSTANG* BY MITCHELL BORNSTEIN
- *LASSETER'S GOLD* BY WARREN BROWN
- *INTO THE LION'S DEN* BY MARTIN CHIMES
- *DOCTORS ON CALL* BY LUCY CLARK, LEAH MARTYN AND LILIA DARCY
- *EUROPA BLUES* BY ARNE DAHL
- *THE TRUTH ABOUT THE HARRY QUEBERT AFFAIR* BY JOEL DICKER
- *DEVIL'S BRIDGE* BY LINDA FAIRSTEIN
- *NO MERCY* BY JOHN GILSTRAP
- *A CHRISTMAS PROMISE* BY ANNIE GROVES
- *ONLY A MOTHER KNOWS* BY ANNIE GROVES
- *FATAL FROST* BY JAMES HENRY
- *FIRST FROST* BY JAMES HENRY
- *MORNING FROST* BY JAMES HENRY
- *NEVER DIE ALONE* BY LISA JACKSON
- *YOU ARE DEAD* BY PETER JAMES
- *THE LAST SUMMER AT CHELSEA BEACH* BY PAM JENOFF
- *SILENT CREED* BY ALEX KAVA
- *PRETTY BABY* BY MARY KUBICA
- *FALLING IN LOVE* BY DONNA LEON
- *ONLY TO DIE AGAIN* BY PATRICK LEE
- *THE JANSON EQUATION* BY ROBERT LUDLUM
- *WHEN IT RAINS* BY MAGGIE MACKELLAR
- *CHARLIE ANDERSON'S GENERAL THEORY OF LYING* BY RICHARD MCHUGH
- *WHERE THEY FOUND HER* BY KIMBERLY MCCREIGHT
- *THE LIVING AND THE DEAD* IN WINSFORD BY HAKAN NESSER
- *NIGHTS OF AWE* BY HARRI NYKANEN
- *PRIVATE SYDNEY* BY JAMES PATTERSON AND KATHRYN FOX
- *TIME TO RUN* BY J.M PEACE
- *ONLY WE KNOW* BY KAREN PERRY
- *SPEAKING IN BONES* BY KATHY REICHS
- *THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU* BY A.J RICH
- *OPEN SECRET* BY STELLA RIMINGTON
- *NO CURE FOR LOVE* BY PETER ROBINSON
- *CLOSE YOUR EYES* BY MICHAEL ROBOTHAM
- *LEONA* BY JENNY ROGNEBY
- *COUNTY* BY DANIELLE STEEL
- *THE GIRL WITH A CLOCK FOR A HEART* BY PETER SWANSON
- *THE LOST SWIMMER* BY ANN TURNER