



The Ballarat Mechanics' Institute Newsletter

December, 2020

SEASON'S GREETINGS

FROM YOUR TEAM
AT THE BMI

As I reflected on 2020, it became clear to me early in the year that it was likely that I would become BMI President. But who could have foreseen the year we have had? The great news is that we are unified and stronger as a community and the BMI is healthy and looking forward to welcoming all our members and supporters back at the BMI.

We have a busy year planned for 2021 however Parents with small Children will be ill advised to attempt to stay overnight at the BMI this Christmas eve. The work which is about to start on the basement fireplace

Updates to BMI events and news are published regularly on the BMI website and on social media.

@bmiballarat



website



chimneys will make chimney access by elderly portly men impossible. In addition there are significant WHS issues which should deter Mr Claus from attempting to scale such heights. In any event it is unlikely he will be able to figure out how to operate the parking meter to which he would tether his reindeer. Neither will Mr Claus be comfortable with the new online ordering system with postal delivery for presents. Such is the price of change.

To all members and particularly to all volunteers, staff and my fellow Board members, who are assisting in driving the BMI into the 21st century, thank you.

Happy, safe and COVID free Christmas all.

Mike Stephens
President

AUTHOR OF THE MONTH

Fleur McDonald

Fleur grew up among the farming communities of Orroroo in SA and now lives east at Esperance, on 8,000 acres. Here she helps her husband care for two children and a menagerie of dogs, cattle, sheep and a bit of crop, not to mention tractors and other machinery.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Mary's Last Dance by Mary Li

The untold story of the Wife of Mao's Last Dancer.

Growing up in a rambunctious family in Rockhampton, Mary discovered an extraordinary early passion for ballet. It saw her move to London at the age of sixteen, to study at the Royal Ballet School and dance at the London Festival Ballet with the likes of Rudolf Nureyev, and to Houston Ballet, where as principal dancer she fell in love with the acclaimed dancer Li Cunxin. The couple became the darlings of the dance world and were happier than they could have imagined at the arrival of their firstborn daughter, Sophie.

Then right at the height of her international career, Mary seemingly disappeared from view. What could have happened to cause a woman so committed, so talented, to give it all away in a heartbeat? Now, almost twenty years on, we learn what unfolded next for this inspiring family and why it is Mary's turn to tell a truly remarkable tale.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman

In a peaceful retirement village, four unlikely friends meet weekly in the Jigsaw Room to discuss unsolved crimes; together they call themselves The Thursday Murder Club. When a developer is found dead with a mysterious photograph left next to the body, the Thursday Murder Club suddenly find themselves in the middle of their first live case.

The Good Sister by Sally Hepworth

Fern Castle works at her local library. She has dinner with her twin sister, Rose, three nights a week. And she avoids crowds, bright lights and loud noises as much as possible. Fern has a carefully structured life and disrupting her routine can be... dangerous.

When Rose discovers that she cannot fall pregnant, Fern sees her chance to pay her sister back for everything Rose has done for her. Fern can have a baby for Rose. She just needs to find a father. Simple.

Fern's mission will shake the foundations of the life she has carefully built for herself and stir up dark secrets from the past, in this quirky, rich and shocking story of unexpected love.

The Girl In The Ice by Lotte and Soren Hammer

Under the endless blue vault of Greenland's arctic sky the body of a girl is discovered. Half-naked and bound, her mouth smeared with red lipstick, she has lain alone, frozen in the ice, undisturbed for twenty-five years.

When Det Chief Konrad Simonsen is flown in from Copenhagen to investigate, the details of her icy grave trigger a dark memory. Back in Denmark, long buried evidence surfaces revealing truths that some would rather stayed forgotten. Simonsen has just one certainty to go on: the victims have features that are uncannily similar.

NEW RELEASES FOR DECEMBER

Mystery

Her Final Hour	Rachel Amphlett
Daylight	David Baldacci
Shadow Sands	Robert Bryndza
The Sentinel	Lee Child
The Law of Innocence	Michael Connelly
You Betrayed Me	Lisa Jackson
Shadows in Death	J D Robb
American Blood	Ben Sanders
Don't Look In	Tom Saric

Novel

Hidden in Plain Sight	Jeffrey Archer
It's That Time of Year	Roisin Meaney
The Great Escape from Woodlands Nursing Home	Joanna Nell
The Man I think I Know	Mike Gayle
The Thursday Murder Club	Richard Osman

Australian

The Girl in the Painting	Tea Cooper
Consolation	Garry Disher
Death in Daylesford	Kerry Greenwood
The Dressmaker's Secret	Rosalie Ham
The Good Sister	Sally Hepworth
Flying the Nest	Rachael Johns
Before the Storm	Di Morrissey
The Shearer's Wife	Fleur McDonald
The Champagne War	Fiona McIntosh
The Queen's Captain	Peter Watt

Scandinavian

The Girl in the Ice	Lotte & Soren Hammer
A House in Norway	Vigdis Hjorth
The Mist	Ragnar Jonasson
Where Have All The Young Girls Gone	Leena Lehtolainen
The Root of Evil	Hakan Nesser
The Ice Star	Christoffer Petersen
The Treacherous Net	Helene Tursten

PSYCHOLOGICAL

To Tell You The Truth	Gilly Macmillan
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Non Fiction

Olive Mabel & Me	Andrew Cotter
Mary's Last Dance	May Li

Twilight Talks



Thursday December 10 at 5.30 pm

Dr Nicola Cousen

Dr James Stewart and the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute

Ballarat's pioneers contributed greatly to the establishment of the city and its institutions. Dr James Stewart was one of these pioneers who significantly advanced the needs of the Goldfields community through his medical, civic and philanthropic activities. His name can be found in the history of many of the city's nineteenth century institutions as patron, trustee, committee member and chairman. This talk delves into some of his involvement in Ballarat including the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute where he was a trustee and a supporter of its work throughout his life.

Dr Nicola Cousen is a historian and consultant to the UNESCO Memory of the World program. Her research involves the history of Ballarat and medical care available during the city's first two decades, particularly in relation to the life of Irish doctor and philanthropist, Dr James Stewart.



Online only

\$5 BMI members

Email events@ballaratmi.org.au
for discount code

\$8 Non-members

All prices exclude fees



Thursday December 17 at 5.30 pm

Warrick Davison

Uniting Ballarat's Acting Senior Manager for Housing and Homelessness

Jen Wright

Program Coordinator

Breezeway Meals Program - Ballarat

Supporting people experiencing homelessness in Ballarat

Warrick will be talking about the current state of homelessness in Australia to frame the conversation, and then go onto Victoria and Ballarat and surrounds specifically.

He will outline what programs Uniting currently provide to support people experiencing homelessness in Ballarat (including Breezeway), and what we need. Warrick will also give a brief overview of the government's new announcement regarding investment in social housing.

Jen Wright will be attending this session also and will follow up with Breezeway specific information including how Breezeway is approaching Christmas in 2020.

Online

Venue audience (max 50)

\$5 BMI members

Email events@ballaratmi.org.au for discount code

\$8 Non-members

All prices exclude fees



Around the BMI

We're back! Well, not completely, but it's very exciting to have bookings and events happening here at the BMI once again!

It has been amazing to be able to start producing gigs, even if they are small and with a very little audience. Just to see people enjoying our spaces after over eight months of being in shut-down almost brings a tear to my eyes.

Speaking of events, we have some great things going on!

Twilight Talks

We have two nights left! During our first Talk for December, we heard from Peter Hiscock who spoke on the first 30 years of Sovereign Hill.

Ballarat Christmas Emporium

First three Fridays in December - 5.30pm-7.30pm. Live music will be playing in the doors of the BMI while the shops along the front of the building have extended opening hours. Come by to pick up some great gifts before it's too late.

Looking back on the Bushfire Appeal concert

Next week we will be presenting a 50 minute highlight reel of Ballarat's Best for Bushfire Relief in the front foyer of the BMI. It will start at 11am and 2pm each day. The clip goes for 50 minutes and is packed full of the best music from the night!

BOOK SALE! TWO DAYS ONLY

We have so many books we have filled up a whole room! 18th and 19th December from 10am to 4pm.

We also have some very exciting developments! The BMI has been able to hire some new staff that we will be properly featuring on our social media in the coming weeks. We have Katrina who is our new Arts and Events Officer. Her role is to help come up with new and fresh ideas for events and community productions that the BMI can produce or partner with others to help create art! We have Mark who is our Cultural Development and Services Manager. His role is to create cultural activities that help raise money and liaise with the library and

collections teams to bring people through our doors. We also have Nick and Sam (yes, this could get confusing) who are our brand new Venue Technicians. Their roles are to assist the BMI with the tech and production side of things. They will predominantly be assisting venue hirers and other community groups with all of our equipment and gigs.

Make sure that you keep an eye on our social media and emails for future events at the BMI!

Sam McColl
Venue and Events Manager
sam@ballaratmi.org.au

BMI Book Sale and 2020 Fundraisers

Whilst we have been able to provide limited services to members during the Covid-19 restrictions we haven't been able to run events in the building since our initial lockdown back in March. As you can imagine this has had a major impact on our finances.

We have several activities planned to raise funds before the end of this year.

We are planning for our Annual Book Sale, on the 18th and 19th of December, to be a bigger event than usual. If you have any books that you would like to donate for the sale please drop them in or let us know and we can pick them up.


We will also be running a \$5 and \$10 raffle to raise funds.

You can make a donation to our Giving Appeal 2020 - www.givenow.com.au/bmiappeal2020.

We would like to thank all members for your continued support.

2020 FUNDRAISER RAFFLE

Win 2 magnificent
framed prints from the
BMI Max Harris Collection
Drawn 26 January 2021


Purchase Tickets
Online



Purchase Your Christmas
Raffle Tickets Online

**You don't need to try your
luck in the Fundraiser Raffle.
Prints and Framed Prints are
available for purchase HERE**



Yes, thank you, we are still accepting donations for our Annual Book Sale. Please drop your books with Rosemary in the BMI Library.

What's On at the BMI

Ballarat Christmas Emporium

4th, 11th, 18th December

5.30pm-7.30pm
117-125 Sturt Street

Line-up:

4th: SoundCheck Studios Artists

11th: The Mary Gardens

18th: Amie Brûlée & Geoff McArthur

Homeground | Playing in | Sothis Books | Mechanics'
Cafe & Bakery | the Attic | & Sartorial | Pop-up Shop

BALLARAT'S BEST FOR BUSHFIRE RELIEF

7TH - 11TH DEC

BALLARAT MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
11AM and 2PM EACH DAY - 50MIN DURATION

RELIVE THE MUSIC FROM ONE OF BALLARAT'S LARGEST LIVE MUSIC EVENTS IN 2020!

WATCH THE HIGHLIGHT CLIPS PLAYING IN THE FRONT FOYER OF THE MECHANICS'

**MOTOR CITY SOUNDS · VONDA BOUYS · BCMA
MICK TREMBATH · BALLARAT SKA UNION
ANNA BILBROUGH · BALLARAT UKULELE GROUP**



ESTD 1859



BMI BIG BOOK SALE

Don't miss our Library Fundraiser

18 - 19 December 2020

10am - 4pm



The BMI's Vintage & Pre-loved Shop

Fridays (4, 11 & 18 December) from 11am to 3pm and 5.30 to 7.30pm

Saturdays (5, 12, 19 December) from 11am to 1pm

Library Holiday Closure

The Library will be closing at 4pm Wednesday 23rd December

Reopening Monday 4th January

The Ballarat Mechanics' Institute acknowledges the support of the Ballarat City Council.

CITY OF
BALLARAT

Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute Inc.

117 Sturt Street Ballarat VIC 3350

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@bmiballarat



Library Hours

Monday to Friday 10 am to 4 pm

Saturday 9.30 am to Noon

Venue Hire Enquires

venue@ballaratmi.org.au

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