

# Newsletter



**BALLARAT  
MECHANICS'  
INSTITUTE**

**JANUARY / 2022**

**BALLARAT  
INTERNATIONAL  
FOTO  
BIENNALE**



Image courtesy Ballarat International Foto Biennale

## **Dear Members**

Every new year is a new beginning. But you probably have to go back to WW2 to find a situation where such a large percentage of the population is eager to put the current year behind them and focus on the year ahead. Such is living with Covid. We will enter the new year having had or being about to have our shot three, booster jab. We can probably look forward to boosters four, five and so on as new variants of Covid 19 emerge.

While as individuals we may be preoccupied with which booster and when as a community of BMI members there are greater issues at play.

A large part of our building has floor space where the use does not change from year to year. The rented spaces for shops and offices, the library and the heritage reading room have been static in relation to use of space. Other areas including the Hooper Room, The Williamson Foyer, The Minerva Space can be

income producing as Covid restrictions allow increasingly large gatherings of people. The BMI management team lead by Colin Jackson and Venue Manager Sam McColl are working tirelessly to ensure that those spaces are used as much as possible so they are income producing. So if you are contemplating staging 'Weddings, Funerals, Anything' think about the advantages of using our own BMI, The rates are competitive, the venue unique and the team extra helpful.

Let's work together to put 2021 behind and make 2022 a financially successful year for the BMI. If you don't want to go to the bother of holding an event you can always donate by popping in to the Library or donate via our website.

**[ballaratmi.org.au/about-us/donations](http://ballaratmi.org.au/about-us/donations)**

**Mike Stephens**

# Library news >

with Rosemary McInerney



## Author of the Month

Simon was born in Adelaide, South Australia. A graduate of both University of South Australia and Flinders University. His previous book *The Echo of Others* was long-listed for the Ned Kelly Award.



Simon Rowell

## Book of the Month

*The Long Game* by Simon Rowell

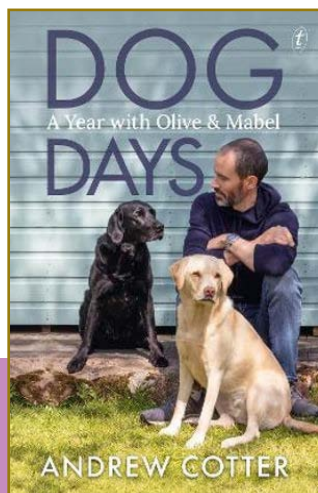
Det. Sergeant Zoe Mayer and her service dog, Harry, were called to the site of a murder on a Sunday afternoon. Zoe had just returned from leave after a particularly traumatic experience and her case worker had deemed her ready for work.

Surfer Ray Carlson has been stabbed in his home not far from the Portsea beach. During the investigation, her partner Charlie was keen to make a quick arrest. But Zoe's intuition said it was too easy, too open and shut. And when Zoe did some leg work of her own – with Harry, she came across some anomalies which could be tied to previous cases.

## Recommended Reads

*In Dog Days: A Year with Olive and Mable*  
by Andrew Cotter

For Olive, Mable and Andrew, the last year has been like no other. With normal work cancelled or scaled back for so long, it has been a time to take stock and share experiences – both the everyday and the decidedly odd. Here Andrew takes a sharply



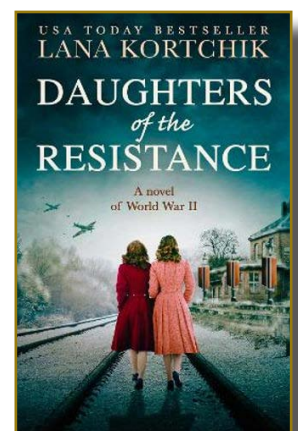
observed and hilarious walk through the strangest of days for all of us, reflecting on how precious our time really is, especially the time we have with our dogs.

*Daughters of the Resistance* by Lana Kortechnik

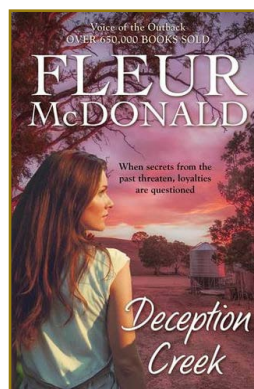
On a train to Germany, Lisa Smirnova is terrified for her life, heading for one of Hitler's labour camps. Taken from everything she holds dear, Lisa wonders if she will ever see her family again.

In Nazi-occupied Kiev, Irina Antonova could be arrested at any moment. Trapped in a job registering the endless deaths around her, she risks her life secretly helping her neighbours, while her husband has joined the resistance, fighting the German advance.

Both women's lives change forever when Lisa's train is intercepted by the resistance. Irina's husband among them. As Irina fights to protect her family, Lisa is forced to confront the horrors of war – and together they must make an impossible decision.



*Deception Creek* by Fleur McDonald



Emma Cameron, a recently divorced farmer and a local in Barker, runs Deception Creek, the farm that three generations of her family have owned before her. Every day Emma pushes herself hard on the land, hoping to make ten-year-old memories of a terrible car accident disappear. And now there are more recent nightmares of an ex-husband who refuses to understand how much the farm means to Emma.

When Joel Hammond is released from jail and heads home to Barker, Det. Dave Burrows and Senior Constable Jack Higgins are on high alert. Joel has a long and sorry history with many of the townsfolk and they are not keen to see him home to stay.

**Annual Book Sale Fundraiser  
Saturday 22 January**



# Library new releases >

All title summaries @ Our Library

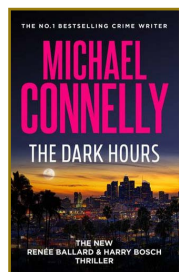
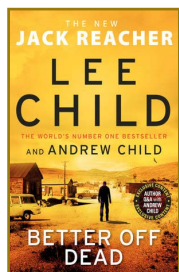


## New Releases for January >

### Mystery

*Vengeance*  
*Better off Dead*  
*The Dark Hours*  
*The Midnight Lock*  
*Thicker than Water*  
*Stolen Ones*  
*Tooth for a Tooth*  
*See Them Run*

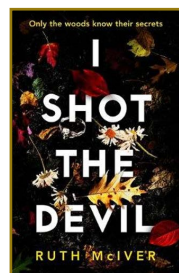
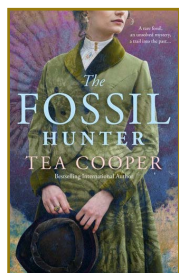
Mark David Abbott  
 Lee Child  
 Michael Connelly  
 Jeffery Deaver  
 J.D. Kirk  
 Angela Marsons  
 T.F. Muir  
 Marion Todd



### Australian

*The Fossil Hunter*  
*The Way It Is Now*  
*Deception Creek*  
*The Spy's Wife*  
*I Shot The Devil*  
*The Long Game*

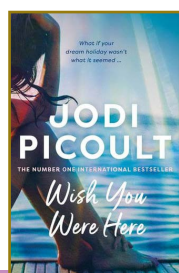
Tea Cooper  
 Garry Disher  
 Fleur McDonald  
 Fiona McIntosh  
 Ruth McIver  
 Simon Rowell



### Romance

*Freckles*

Cecelia Ahern



### Novels

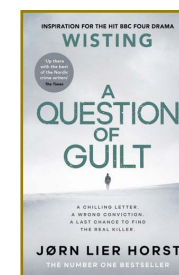
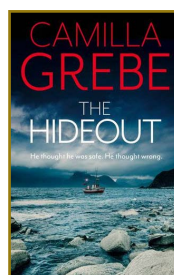
*Wish You Were Here*

Jodi Picoult

### Scandinavian

*The Hideout*  
*A Memory for Murder*  
*A Question of Guilt*

Camilla Grebe  
 A. Holt  
 Jørn Lier Horst

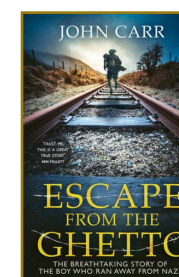
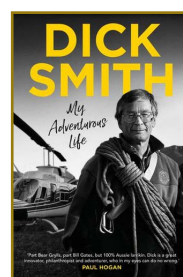


### Non-Fiction

*Escape from the Ghetto*  
*Dog Days (A Year with Olive and Mabel)*  
*My Adventurous Life*

John Carr

Andrew Cotter  
 Dick Smith



### Psychological

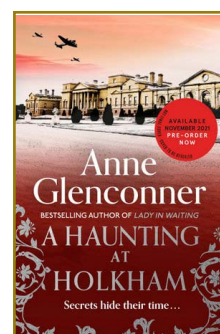
*All for You*

Louise Jensen

### Historical

*A Haunting at Holkham*  
*The Night Train to Berlin*  
*Daughters of the Resistance*

Anne Glenconner  
 Melanie Hudson  
 Lana Kortchik



Summary of each title  
 on Our Library web-page – Reserve your copy >

# What's on >



## Ballarat International Foto Biennale > *Number One* | Gudinski

Thursdays through Sunday, until 9 January  
10am – 4pm | Basement

This exhibition of photography is a tribute to Michael Gudinski, whose passion for music was legendary. The exhibition celebrates his advocacy for the arts and its lasting impact. It features photographs of Elton John, Paul McCartney, Vance Joy, Troye Sivan and many more,



*Wolf Alice* | Corner Hotel,  
25 September 2018 | Photo: Brett Schewitz

**Tickets:** [ballaratfoto.org](http://ballaratfoto.org) >

## Regional Wine Tasting Workshop with Amie Brûlée >

Saturday 8 January | 4pm – 5.30pm  
Heritage Reading Room



Delight your tastebuds and learn about wine in a tasting workshop with Amie Brûlée, Doctor of Wine.

We'll taste and talk about a delicious selection of whites and reds from the local

region – Grampians, Pyrenees and Ballarat. Amie will guide you through the tasting, explaining the similarities and differences, and how the geography influences the way each wine tastes. As well as tasting, you'll learn about the wine making process, the history of wine in Victoria (including some interesting experiments), which grapes the region does best, and how to choose a wine you like.

The perfect way to spend a Saturday afternoon!

**Tickets:** [ballaratmi.org.au/events](http://ballaratmi.org.au/events) >

## BMI Book Sale Fundraiser >

Saturday 22 January | 9am – 2pm | Minerva Space

Our annual fundraising Book Sale.

## Charlie Wilde 'Allihies' Tour >

Saturday 22 January | 7.30pm – 10pm

"Despite his relative youth, Charlie Wilde's music bursts to life with a cinematic feel that will leave you entranced, the raw beauty of his compositions similar to '90s indie heroes Mercury Rev and Ken Stringfellow – Bon Iver for younger readers." - Scenestr

**Tickets:** [ballaratmi.org.au/events](http://ballaratmi.org.au/events) >



## The Three Tenors Ballarat Italian Association >

Sunday 30 January | 2pm – 5pm



The Ballarat Italian Association presents three great voices singing the most noted songs of the century from the ever-popular operatic arias to English, Spanish and

Italian Classics and also modern songs and ballads.

**Tickets:** [ballaratmi.org.au/events](http://ballaratmi.org.au/events) >

## The Push All-Ages Tour >

Sunday 13 February | Doors open 7pm | 1pm – 3.30pm

Taking in the sights and scenery throughout 20 regional and outer-suburban locations across Victoria this September and October, the All-Ages Tour will bring thousands of young music fans to locations across the state, in what are hotly tipped to be some of the biggest and best all-ages events in recent memory.

With the 2019 tour seeing Ruby Fields and Baker Boy take to sold out stages across regional Victoria, the 2021 All-Ages Tour will see Mallrat and Ninajirachi bring their talents to Ballarat... an all-ages experience like never before.

**Tickets:**  
[ballaratmi.org.au/events](http://ballaratmi.org.au/events) >





# Around the BMI



## New Discussion Group

We are currently exploring the initiation of a member lead discussion group and we would like to hear what your discussion, 'hot topic' might be. If you are interested in participating in such a group please complete the on-line expression of interest and we'll keep you updated on where and when such an event might take place. The first of these sessions will be a fortnightly 'Current Affairs' discussion group.

If there are other topics or activities that you as a member, are willing to lead or assist in leading then we would love to hear from you, some ideas that have been floated are:

- Geology fossicking
- Learning a trade or craft
- Walking groups
- History tours

We would also like to know what sort of events would attract you to spending more time at the BMI.

Complete the on-line expression of interest.

[ballaratmi.org.au/arts-and-culture](http://ballaratmi.org.au/arts-and-culture) >

## Research activities

Martin Walter who was born and raised in Ballarat and heads up a mining exploration company in Canada has been a regular visitor to the BMI whilst he has been in the country. His interest is in our collection of gold fields images and heritage prospector maps. He has been assisted in his research endeavors by Wilma & Rex Bridges, Paula Nicholson and Sue McRae.



Martin Walter & Paula Nicholson | Wilma & Rex Bridges with Martin reviewing heritage goldfield maps and images

## Collection conservation

Grimwade Conservation Services have been appointed to manage restoration works of our collection which includes restoration of our heritage books, artworks and collection of Ferdinand von Mueller's botanical specimens. These works are able to be completed due to a Living Heritage Grant from Heritage Victoria with a view to having them not only conserved but having them more accessible for exhibition purposes.



Von Mueller specimen documentation undertaken by Intern, Evie under supervision of Libby Melzer of Grimwade Conservation Services.  
Second image, Richea Procera, order Epacridaceae, Tasmania, Mt Wellington

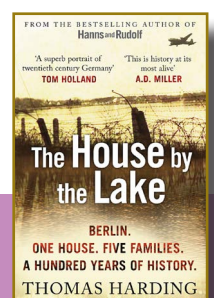


## The Reading Room >

Tuesday 25 January | 2.30pm – 4pm

This book reading and discussion group meet monthly. The next book will be *The House by the Lake* by Thomas Harding. If you would like to be a part of this group please register via our events page.

[ballaratmi.org.au/events](http://ballaratmi.org.au/events) >



# The Reading Room

# Around the BMI



## W.H. Batten | The Batten Room

Two of W.H. Batten's great grand children visited the BMI on 8 December, Geoff Stephensen who is writing a family history, which includes a chapter on Batten. His his cousin Ian Latham and wife Trisha were given a tour by Phil Roberts and Paula Nicholson. They poured over research undertaken by volunteer archivist Sue McRae which included diaries and photographs of Batten and family. They viewed items that were part of Battens office equipment including his desk. "Committee Secretary Batten served as paid Secretary and Librarian for more than 50 years until his death in 1910" (*Under Minerva's Gaze* | Roberts & Blee 47.)

A framed portrait of Batten was gifted to the BMI by Geoff. He had bid for it at auction in 1980 but was out-bid by a collector. When Geoff approached the collector to find out his interest in the portrait, he learned that he only wanted the frame and gave the portrait to Geoff.



Geoff Stephensen, Paula Nicholson, Phil Roberts, Ian & Trisha Latham  
Trisha, Geoff & Ian with the portrait of W.H. Batten

The notation on the back of the portrait. 'This photographic portrait of William Henry Batten was a gift to Henry Cole Batten from his parents on the occasion of his 21st birthday on 19 Nov. 1905'. The portrait hung in Henry Cole's bedroom at 810 Dana Street Ballarat, until his death, 8 October 1980.'

## Life Members Christmas Lunch



Mike Stephens hosted the Life Members Lunch in the Heritage Reading Room on 13 December, as well as a great occasion to catch up it was a particular joy to congratulate and celebrate Rosemary McInerney on her 30 years of involvement with the BMI as Librarian. Rosemary was gifted a well deserved Life Membership.

## Speaking of Librarians

Phyllida Hartley popped into the BMI to visit the library as her mother (Ethel) Alison Taylor was Librarian at the BMI in the 30's. Alison went to Clarendon College where she was Dux of her year, she then went on to the University of Melbourne to complete her studies. Phyllida hopes to return to visit soon as she is keen to do further research on her "interesting" relatives.



Library 1930s | Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute, Max Harris Collection | MH 1392



# BMI Tours



## Explore the BMI

The Ballarat Mechanics' Institute was established in 1859 on the top floor of the Ballarat Fire Station in Barkly Street. It moved to its present location in 1860 with a crowd of 10,000 people attending the ceremony to lay the foundation stone. By 1869 the Institute consisted of four floors, with shops on the ground floor, a grand entrance, a library on the second floor, and a museum on the top floor.

Join a BMI tour to learn about the history and features of Ballarat's oldest cultural institution. Recently restored to its heritage condition, with stunning architecture and a large collection of heritage photographs dating back to the 1850s.



Tours depart each Tuesday at 2pm | \$10per person | 1.5hrs duration

Group tours by arrangement, bookings essential

(03) 5331 3042 | [mark@ballaratmi.org.au](mailto:mark@ballaratmi.org.au) | [ballaratmi.org.au/tours](http://ballaratmi.org.au/tours)

## Annual Book Sale Fundraiser Saturday 22 January

Our annual Book Sale Fundraiser relies on donations of pre-loved 'good-reads', please contact the library if you would like to donate or pop them into the library during our usual business hours. This event is our biggest annual fundraiser.

Tour Bookings  
[ballaratmi.org.au/tours](http://ballaratmi.org.au/tours)

# Rosemary's

## Book of the month

### Ballarat Chess Club

Thursdays at 6.30pm

Tournament games begin 7.30pm and the Junior Chess Club meet 6pm, everyone welcome.

P | 0499 255 240

E | [president@ballaratchess.com](mailto:president@ballaratchess.com)



### BALLARAT FILM SOCIETY

We meet , every 2nd Thursday of the month  
7pm for 7.30pm start.



Check the website for program updates and screenings.

P | (03) 5341 2266  
[ballaratfilmsociety](http://ballaratfilmsociety.com)



BMI Vintage

& Collectables

Thursdays & Fridays  
11am – 2pm | Closed until the beginning of February.

Go to the shop web-page for details on operating hours, how you can be involved in this volunteer lead initiative.

The shop is an important BMI fundraiser.

[ballaratmi.org.au/shop/bmi-vintage-and-collectables](http://ballaratmi.org.au/shop/bmi-vintage-and-collectables) >



## Annual Book Sale Fundraiser Saturday 22 January

Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute  
acknowledges the support of  
Ballarat City Council

CITY OF  
**BALLARAT**

Ballarat Mechanics' Institute Inc.  
117 – 119 Sturt Street, Ballarat VIC 3350  
[ballaratmi.org.au](http://ballaratmi.org.au)  
[library@ballaratmi.org.au](mailto:library@ballaratmi.org.au)  
(03) 5331 3042



Library Hours  
Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm  
Saturday 9.30am – Noon  
Venue Hire Enquiries  
[venue@ballaratmi.org.au](mailto:venue@ballaratmi.org.au)  
0419 677 713