



**BALLARAT
MECHANICS'
INSTITUTE**

2021/22 ANNUAL REPORT

For the financial year ending 30 April 2022



To be presented for adoption at the 163rd Annual General Meeting

To be held at the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute
on Monday 3rd October 2022 at 4.00 pm

President: Dr Mike Stephens

Vice President: Jane Valpied

Secretary: Ross Furness

Treasurer: Paulene Barton

Other Members of the Board of Directors September 2021 - October 2022:

Paula Nicholson, Prue Bentley

Executive Manager:

Colin Jackson OAM

Patrons:

Mayor of Ballarat, Councillor Daniel Moloney

Dr Phil Roberts OAM

Auditors:

CountPro Audit Pty Ltd

Cover image: The Minerva Space ready to welcome folks of all ages for the 2022 'The Push' All-Ages event, presented by the City of Ballarat Youth Services team. Taken by Sam McColl.

President's Report

Overview

It is very rewarding to have the support of our members and the local community for our programs and events as we emerge from the lockdowns and restrictions of the Covid pandemic.

Our members and volunteers are the heart of the BMI, and it is this strong and committed base that provides the essential foundation for all that we do. I'd like to thank members and volunteers for their support and commitment during the past 12 months.

Highlights for the year include:

- The Board and staff have continued to review operations and explore opportunities to ensure that the BMI continues to be a vibrant hub of community engagement,
- We successfully held workshops to explore opportunities for the use of the building including the renovated basement,
- Conducted an internal review of all space within our building to ensure we maximise the use of space and income,
- Relaunched our Twilight Talks and building tour programs,
- We successfully participated in the Heritage Festival,
- Hosted our first exhibition in our renovated basement – the Ballarat Foto biennale “The Michael Gudinski exhibition had more than 3,000 visitors, and
- The BMI 2022 annual fundraising appeal raised \$42,524.

I would like to acknowledge the valuable financial support we have received from the State and Commonwealth Governments via Job Keeper, Business support packages, and the significant grants from DELWP and Creative Victoria. Without this support, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic would have had a much more severe impact on the viability of the BMI.

We have continued to develop a valuable relationship with the City of Ballarat and thank them for their support via our City of Ballarat Strategic Partnership program.

Board

I would like to thank the BMI Board for their hard work, diligence, professional expertise, and generosity of their time. In addition to quarterly Board meetings, each Board member also provides their energy and time to working groups and committees which meet on a regular basis.

As at 30th June 2022, the Committee structure was:

Note - President is Ex-officio on each committee.

Building and Assets

Jane Valpied (Chair), Ross Furness, Barry Hughes

Staff: Venue & Events Manager (Ex-officio), Executive Manager (Ex-officio)

Finance, Risk & Audit

Paulene Barton (Chair), Grantley Hastings

Staff: Finance Officer (Ex-officio), Executive Manager (Ex-officio)

Membership & Fundraising

Paula Nicholson (Chair)

Staff: Librarian (Ex-officio), Executive Manager (Ex-officio)

Events

Prue Bentley (Chair)

Staff: Executive Manager (Ex-officio), Venue & Events Manager (Ex-officio), Cultural and Community Programs Officer (Ex-officio), Volunteer Coordinator (Ex-officio)

Collections Management

Mike Stephens (Chair)

Nominations, Selection & Remuneration

Paulene Barton (Chair)

BMI Staff

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our staff. Our staff are to be commended for their dedication to the needs of the BMI, our Board, members and volunteers. In particular, I note the contributions of Colin Jackson (Executive Manager), Sam McColl (Venue Manager), Rosemary McInerney (Librarian) and Kevin Murnane (Finance Manager, Mark Potter (Cultural Development), and Katrina Hill (Events and Programs). We also acknowledge the contribution of our technicians, and our contractors (especially those from Troop Events).

In mentioning our management team, I do want to include Marilyn Furness as our Volunteer Coordinator, who attends to her very important tasks with enormous generosity, goodwill and efficiency.

Volunteers

We are indebted to the many volunteers who contribute so much to the BMI. The danger is in mentioning individuals, so collectively I want to acknowledge the wonderful support and assistance provided through the Pop Up Shop, the Library and Collections, archives, building tours, and those who help with the bar, hospitality and venue readiness, and building maintenance.

A particular thanks to Ross Furness, Neil Leckie, and Barry Hughes for their hard work assisting with the building maintenance program over an extended period of time.

BMI continues to be built on the hard work of our dedicated volunteers. Thank you indeed to all our volunteers.

Building Improvements

Special thanks to Wendy Jacobs, our Architect and Heritage Consultant and Peter Broadhead our builder for their commitment and assistance to the BMI Building.

Major achievements during the year include:

- Completion of Basement repairs and installation of ventilation system - completed in August 2021.
- Upgrade of Heating System in the heritage library - completed May 2022
- Upgrade of floor hatch to basement stairs - completed July 2021

We also thank the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning for their financial support to enable us to undertake much-needed repair and restoration work in the basement.

Member Communications

This year we continue to provide our members' newsletter that focuses on events and activities being held in the Building, whilst also providing links to our lending library and historic resources and collections. We now produce the newsletter in-house and I would like to thank Mark Potter for his work in producing the newsletter each month.

BMI Events and Functions

This year has been another busy one for the BMI and our events team.

Throughout the past 12 months, we hosted a number of weddings, birthday parties, meetings, comedy events, live music gigs, and film recordings. We also donated the use of our space to community organisations including Anything for a Mate (raising funds for the National Breast Cancer Foundation). We also provided discounts throughout the year to local and not-for-profit organisations.

We continue to build on our partnership with The Wheeler Centre this year, hosting a conversation between Wendy McCarthy and Tierney Khan. This was a riveting intergenerational discussion about the importance of finding your own voice and listening to it. The BMI also created a new partnership between the BMI Library and the City of Ballarat Library where we hosted a book launch event with Ann Cleeves, in discussion with Jock Serong.

While we were still heavily impacted by the COVID-19 lockdowns towards the end of 2021, this past year we were proud to host some major events for our city, these include:

- Charlie Wilde - release of his EP Allihies (January 2022),
- The Push All Ages Tour - with Mallrat and Ninajirachi (February 2022),
- Bartlett's Book Launch event (February 2022),
- Melbourne International Comedy Festival - Outta Town (February 2022),
- Melbourne International Comedy Festival - Class Clowns (March 2022),
- Commerce Ballarat - Ballarat Business Excellence Awards Launch (March 2022),
- Ballarat Italian Association - Joe Avati (April 2022),
- Luke Kidgell comedy show - Sold out, two shows (May 2022),
- 13 Moons Collective, Honour a Woman - Dr Elizabeth Hartnell Young (May 2022),
- Victorian Pin-Up Pageant (May 2022),
- LaNCE TV - Live in Concert (June 2022),
- Fanny Lumsden - Deep in the Fallow tour (June 2022),

During the year we continued to be supported by our long-term hirers including Kadampa Meditation, Ballarat Chess Club, and Ballarat Film Society.

As mentioned, we also presented another series of Twilight Talks and we continue to develop a number of cultural-based activities (thanks to Mark and volunteers) including the Makers and Community Markets, as well as workshops on painting and other creative arts.

In conclusion

We have had a very busy year and I thank all staff and members for their valuable contributions and commitment to ensuring that the BMI continues to make a meaningful contribution to the economic and cultural wellbeing of the people of Ballarat and surrounding districts.

I look forward to the future with confidence.

Dr Mike Stephens | President
Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute
September 2021

Treasurer's Report

It is my pleasure to present the annual Audited Financial Statements for the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute for the financial year ending 30 April 2022.

I am pleased to report that, again, the audit report is unqualified.

INCOME

Total income in 2022 was \$223,840 compared to \$408,770 in 2021 but that must be looked at in line with the assistance BMI received to compensate for the COVID-19 lockdowns via job keeper in 2021.

Our rental role income remained strong during 2022 with all shops tenanted and the Sutton Room leased. This is an outstanding result given the difficult trading challenges that small businesses faced post COVID-19. Room Hire fees made a recovery from COVID-19 as people booked functions and this resulted in \$58,762 income. In total the rental income for 2022 was \$122,519 compared to \$85,135 in 2021

The Library Income in 2022 was \$26,108 compared to \$30,936 in 2021 and we thank our loyal library scribes for their continued patronage. Our librarian Rosemary and her volunteers worked tirelessly to maintain the existing books for our library members while continuing to purchase new releases.

Fundraising - BMI is in its second year of fundraising with \$42,524 raised in donations during the year compared to \$35,784 in 2021. Fundraising is important to enabling BMI to meet its operational costs.

Other Income in 2021 was \$256,815 compared with \$32,689 in 2022 a significant decrease due primarily to COVID-19 incentives being phased out

EXPENDITURE

Insurance is one of the biggest expenses of BMI amounting to \$26,748 in 2022 and is a result of owning a restored historic building.

Business-as-usual expenses such as gas and electricity, cleaning, telephone, fire protection, catering and bar purchases and artists for functions increased in line with increased building use and opening hours post COVID-19.

Staff Remuneration - BMI employs one full-time staff member and five permanent part-time staff and a number of rotating casual staff members to assist with running events. In 2022 BMI spent \$228,868 on staff costs.

Repairs and maintenance cost BMI \$18,743 in 2022 compared with \$26,742 last year as BMI maintains the building to house our patrons.

The 2022 report shows an operating deficit of \$146,317 this year compared to a surplus of \$30,643 last year and this is a result of the loss of the Covid-19 funding received last year.

The 2022 net surplus after depreciation and capital items for the year ended 30 April 2022 was \$21,929 compared to a deficit of \$63,941 last year.

Looking forward to this current 2022/23 year:

- BMI has a full rental role, with all long-term spaces occupied,
- BMI continues to partner with the City of Ballarat to assist with staffing costs and this is \$45,000 each year,
- BMI has been successful in renewing the insurance at a cost of \$28,000 in September 2022,
- BMI has successfully launched a fundraising committee and held its first function
- BMI has agreed to take on the responsibility of managing the BMI Foundation
- BMI is again committed to an annual June 2023 appeal to assist in defraying the operational costs.

Paulene Barton | Treasurer
Ballaarat Mechanics' Institute
September 2022

I recommend that the 2022 Annual Report and Financial Statements be adopted by the meeting.



**BALLAARAT
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THE
MINERVA
BALLAARAT

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