

letter NEWS

APR / 2024



BALLARAT
MECHANICS'
INSTITUTE

BMI Fundraiser

SHINDIG

Saturday 13 April
at 7.30pm

Ballaratmi.org.au/event/shindig



Surf Shadows



The Hideaways



The Harmonies

From the Chair

It is hard to believe that April is here and Easter is upon us, I hope you all have a safe and restful break at this time. There is so much activity at the BMI, as you will see as you read through the newsletter. I would just like to highlight a few things.

Our updated significance assessment of the **Heritage Listed Collection**, will be completed before the end of May and will then enable us to apply for more grant funding through the **National Library of Australia** for the next step which could be an updated Conservation Management Plan. This would be so useful in assisting us to preserve, promote and share our remarkable collection with the wider world!

We were very fortunate to have a visit from **State Library Victoria (SLV)** representatives mid March, in Christine Christian (Chair Library Board SLV) and Monika Szunejko Director - Collections SLV. We were able to share our beautiful and valuable collection, its challenges and potential, discuss strategic partnership opportunities and explore ways we could work together in the future. Stay tuned.

More inside...

Around the BMI



From front page Paula Nicholson

We can also announce a brand new Strategic Partnership with the incredibly talented team from **Hotel Vera**. The group will be working together with the BMI to promote and highlight our Heritage Building through special dining events and exposure to a brand new audience. The group are working with the **City of Ballarat** and a wider network to highlight Ballarat as a tourism destination and we are very fortunate to be in the mix.

As you will see below, we are hosting a variety of events throughout the **National Heritage Festival** (April 18 - May 18) in conjunction with the National Trust and participating in the **Ballarat Heritage Festival** (May 17 - May 26) with support from the **City of Ballarat**. We look forward to welcoming you to the programs!

And don't forget you can still send the BMI a gift in the way of a donation for our **165th birthday appeal!**

Paula Nicholson

Australian Heritage Festival

The BMI are proud to announce our involvement within the festival will feature our Twilight Talks program for Season 2 as follows:

Twilight Talks | Season 2 Sessions 1-4

Wednesdays 24 April - 15 May
5pm for 5.30pm start - 6.30pm
Not the Last Picture Show

This special edition of our regular Twilight Talks series will feature speakers and film based presentations highlighting the history of cinema and performance spaces in Ballarat and Melbourne titled, *Not the Last Picture Show*. The full program is

still being finalised. The final session will be presented as part of the Ballarat Heritage Festival. Detailed further in the newsletter.

Ballarat Heritage Festival

Exhibition | *Not the Last Picture Show*
Friday 17 May - Sunday 26 May
10:30am - 4pm | Hugh Williamson Foyer

Just a year after the Lumière brothers invented the cinematograph in 1895, the first screenings of this new technology of 'moving pictures' were held at the Mechanics' Institute.

By the 1970's, cinema's death was being heralded after the devastating impact of television and the attraction of the drive-in, making the BMI's *Vegas 70* for a brief time Ballarat's only indoor cinema.

Our latest photographic exhibition *Not the Last Picture Show* traces the history of cinemas in Ballarat, from the spectacular nitrate film-fuelled conflagration of the 4,000 seat *Coliseum Picture Palace*, (now a supermarket car park), to the *Skyline Drive-in*, now a housing estate with a 'Bogart Avenue'.

The exhibition will be held in the Williamson Foyer space, which formerly hosted the candy bar of the cinema, with an additional exhibition in our beautiful Heritage Reading Room.

Cost: Free | ballaratmi.org.au/events

Exhibition | *Not the Last Picture Show: From the Archives* | Friday 17 May - Sunday 26 May
10:30am - 4pm | Heritage Reading Room

This Heritage Reading Room (the original Mining Exchange in Ballarat) houses a fascinating and authentic representation of a Mechanics' Institute library from early last century, and visitors will be delighted at the opportunity to touch, feel and read some of more than 16,000

Around the BMI



historic books and other publications that make up the registered collection, for a small entry fee.



MH 94 | Coliseum Grenville Street Ballarat

Visitors will also be able to access a continuation of the themed exhibition within this magnificent room, focusing on the history of Ballarat's community spaces dedicated to entertainment and the importance of those in strengthening a cohesive and inclusive community.

Cost: Free BMI members \$5 general admission
ballaratmi.org.au/events

Minerva's Secrets - Night Tours
Friday 17 May & Tuesday 21 May
7.30pm - 8.30pm & 9pm - 10pm

Explore tales of the weird and supernatural – the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute at night. Looking for a unique way to explore Ballarat's rich history and culture? Look no further than the Ballarat Mechanics Institute's Night Tours!



Actors: Katrina Hill & Tim Harris | Photo Jess Schroeter

This beautiful heritage building dates back to the 1860s and boasts a fascinating history that is just waiting to be explored. During these tours, you'll have the opportunity to immerse yourself in the history of the Ballarat Mechanics Institute, exploring the library's impressive collection of rare books and manuscripts, and learn about the building's original purpose as a hub for scientific and technological education. And make sure to check out the basement, which is steeped in mystery and intrigue – you never know what secrets you might uncover!

Cost: \$27.50 | ballaratmi.org.au/events

The Vegas Returns
to Ballarat: One night only

Saturday 18 May | 7pm - 11.30pm

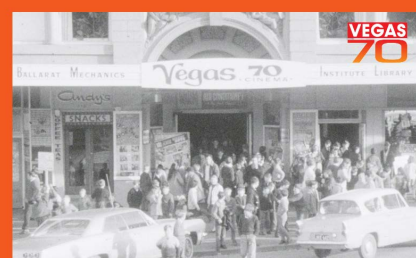
The *Vegas 70* was once the most popular cinema in Ballarat. The Ballarat Mechanics' Institute and Showbiz Cinemas have collaborated to bring back the Vegas for the Ballarat Heritage Festival.

The first moving pictures (called cinematograph) in Ballarat were shown at the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute in 1896!

In 1909 the first bioscope pictures were shown in the main hall (now the Minerva Space) at the BMI. Later, in 1917, the hall was leased to the Austral Photoplay Co. for showing silent pictures. Then in 1919, a syndicate, including Messrs J. Clemens, C. Gemmola and F.S. Jelbart opened the Britannia Picture Theatre in the same space.

The Vegas 70 is returning to Ballarat for one night only.

Saturday 18th May 2024



Around the BMI



The Britannia was later followed by the *Odeon Cinema*, and then *Vegas 70* theatre in 1966. *The Vegas* was a staple in the Ballarat film scene for 15 years. *The Vegas* was closed in 1981, after which the *Sturt Cinema* opened in 1994.

We invite you to revisit the old *Vegas Cinema* for a night of 70s blockbusters!

7.00pm – *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*
1971 | G | 1h 40m

9.30pm – *Saturday Night Fever*
1977 | MA15+ | 1h 58m

Popcorn, snacks, and choctops will be available from the refreshment stand.

The bar will be open for *Saturday Night Fever* screening only – beer and wine will be available.

Cost: \$20 per session or \$30 for 2 sessions
ballaratmi.org.au/events

Twilight Talks Season 2 Session 5

Wednesday 22 May
5pm for 5.30pm start -
6.30pm

Not the Last Picture Show



This special edition of our regular Twilight Talks series will feature speakers discussing the history of cinema in Ballarat, complimenting our free exhibition. Just a year after the Lumière brothers invented the cinematograph in 1895, the first screenings were held at the Mechanics' Institute, meaning many had their first ever experience of 'moving pictures' in our beautiful Minerva Theatre.

Since then, thousands of movies have been screened in the theatre through its many iterations, including at the *Vegas 70* theatre which is being reactivated for this year's Ballarat Heritage Festival. Come along from 5.30pm to grab a drink and wander through

the photographic exhibition in the Hugh Williamson Foyer, the former candy bar of the cinema, before the talk.

The BMI's Twilight Talks series has been a forum for sharing fascinating history and radical futures since 2001, check out our website for upcoming talks.

Cost: \$8 BMI members \$12 general admission
ballaratmi.org.au/events

From the Curator

This month we are featuring the old Ballarat Courier building on Sturt Street from our image collection.



MH 1363 | The Courier Office, Sturt Street, Ballarat

The Courier was established by Robert Clark and Edward J. Bateman in 1867.

Bateman was born in London in 1832 and migrated to Australia during the early years of the gold rush. Robert Clark was born in Dunfermline, Scotland, in 1826. He was apprenticed as a bookbinder with his father at just ten years old.

Clark worked as a compositor in Glasgow, Belfast and London before venturing to Australia aboard the *Black Ball* clipper *Champion of the Seas*.

Journalist Thomas Bury, or 'Tom Touchstone', who

Around the BMI

contributed his 'cornerisms' column to *The Courier* from 1882 to 1900, was a fellow passenger.

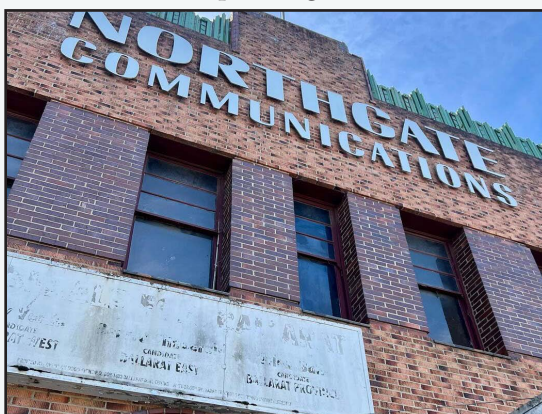
Clark worked at *The Argus* before the prospect of striking it rich lured him to the goldfields. Failing as a digger, Clark had a stint at both the *Ballarat Times* and the *Ballarat Star* before starting his own paper in Talbot, the *Back Creek Register*.



He abandoned the *Register* for *The Northwestern Chronicle*, later renamed the *Talbot Leader*, becoming a part proprietor with Bateman. He also served as the Mayor of Talbot.

Clark returned to Ballarat in 1865, managing the *Ballarat Sun* before starting *The Courier* with Bateman in 1867.

In 1871, *The Courier* relocated to 24 Sturt Street. Despite its art deco-ish features, the current building is made up of two Victorian buildings, the business later expanding into number 26.



Photos: Ellen Becker

In 1889, Bateman left the business and Clark became the sole proprietor. Bateman died in 1893. Clark died in 1902, aged 75. He left behind his wife, six sons and three daughters. Clark's son Norman became manager of *The Ballarat Courier*, and three other sons were working at the paper at the time of his death.

The Ballarat Courier relocated to Creswick Road in 1982, ending 111 years at 24 Sturt Street.

The building has subsequently been occupied by the Liberal Party and Northgate Communications, both of which have left their marks in ghost signs on this now unoccupied building.

Did you know we have a close to complete collection of *The Ballarat Courier*? For research enquiries chat to our lovely librarian Rosemary.

If you would like to view more images and the comments on this article from our social media post go to:

ballaratmi.org.au/the-ballarat-courier/

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.

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

Group tours by arrangement

(03) 5331 3042 | tim@ballaratmi.org.au
ballaratmi.org.au/tours | bookings essential

**Heath Franklin's Chopper:
Not Here To F*ck Spiders**

Sunday 7 April | 7pm - 8pm
Minerva Space

Australia's most wanted comedian is back

After three years off... and he's not here to f*ck spiders!

That's right. Not even if they're dressed in a sexy spider nurse outfit. He just hasn't got the time. And neither do you.

Cost: \$36-40 per person
ballaratmi.org.au/events



Free: Light refreshment provided. Bookings are necessary for catering purposes.

ballaratmi.org.au/events

**BMI Fundraiser
Shindig**

Saturday 13 April | 7.30pm - 10pm
Minerva Space

Take part in this important BMI fundraiser
Featuring three fabulous bands:

The Hideaways, The Harmonies & Surf Shadows

The music will be predominantly retro rock & surf sounds from the 60's & 70's.

There will be dancing and a 2 course dinner provided by Malcolm Roberts and a free drink on arrival.

Cost: \$120 per person general admittance | \$110 per person for BMI members

ballaratmi.org.au/events



**Leah Kaminsky & Kylie Ladd
in conversation**

Thursday 11 April | 6pm - 8pm
Lending Library



Leah is a physician and award-winning writer. Her debut novel, *The Waiting Room*, won the Voss Literary Prize.

Kylie Ladd's sixth novel *I'll Leave You*

With This was published this year by Penguin Random House in Australia and Hodder and Stoughton in the UK and US.

Cost: \$10 per person | ballaratmi.org.au/events

**Ballart Film Society
The Goose Lake**

Thursday 11 April
7.30pm - 9pm
Minerva Space

Chinese Neo-noir Crime Thriller

Become a member:
ballaratmi.org.au/events



Songs for Suzanne: The Music & Poetry of Leonard Cohen

Sunday 14 April
5pm - 6.30pm
Minerva Space

The fascinatingly enigmatic Leonard Cohen's first clutch of classic albums saw him become one of the leading proponents of folk.

Cost: \$64.90 per person: ballaratmi.org.au/events



Dervla McTiernan: What Happened to Nina | The Wheeler Centre

Sunday 23 April | 7pm - 8pm
Minerva Space

Dervla McTiernan is the critically acclaimed author of five novels, including *The Murder Rule*, which was a New York Times thriller of the year. She has won multiple prizes, including a Ned Kelly Award, Davitt Awards, a Barry Award, and an International Thriller Writers Award. She is also the author of four novellas, and her audio novella,

The Sisters, was a four-week number one bestseller in the United States.

This event is brought to you by **The Wheeler Centre** and **Ballarat Libraries**. Books by **Collins Booksellers on Lydiard**

Free: Bookings are essential

ballaratmi.org.au/events



**Twilight Talks
2024 | Season 2**

Wednesdays 24 April - 22 May
5.30pm - 6.30pm | Humffray Room

Proudly supported by
Community Bank Buninyong

Cost: \$9 BMI Members \$12 General Admittance
events.humanitix.com/twilight-talks-1-2024

**Still Kickin'
Blake Pavey**

Friday 26 April
7.30pm - 8.40pm
Minerva Space



After a sold-out debut tour in 2023, Blake Pavey's plan of dying early didn't exactly pan out. To celebrate him Still Kickin'... he's decided to hit the road again with a brand-new show.

Cost: \$46.40 per person:
ballaratmi.org.au/events

**Garry Disher
in conversation**

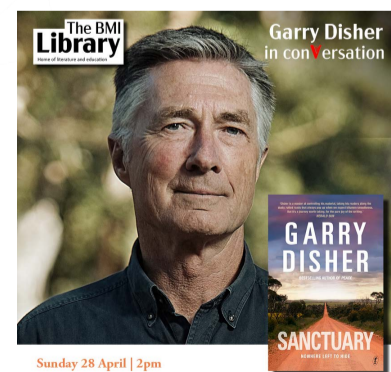
Sunday 28 April
2pm - 4pm

Garry Disher was born in 1949 and grew up on his parents' farm in South Australia.

Garry will be speaking about his new book *Sanctuary*.

Cost: \$20 per person includes an afternoon tea of jam scones & cream.

ballaratmi.org.au/events



**Rita McInnes | Book Launch
in conversation**

Friday 12 April 6pm - 8pm | Humffray Room

Jane Harper (The Dry) meets Nick Cave in backroad noir and beyond.

Rita McInnes in conversation with Chris Ashmore and Ruby Carter.



BALLARAT MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

WHAT'S ON April



The Wheeler Centre
Books Writing Ideas

Tuesday 23 April | 7pm - 8pm

The BMI Library
Home of literature and education

Garry Disher
in conversation

Sunday 28 April | 2pm

OPENING HOURS

Library: Mon, Wed & Fri, 10am-4pm
Tue & Thu, 10am-3pm
Sat 9.30am-12noon
Sun Closed

Holiday closures

Easter Mon 1 April
ANZAC Day 25 April

School holidays

29 Mar - 14 Apr 2024
29 Jun - 14 Jul 2024
21 Sep - 6 Oct 2024
21 Dec - 28 Jan 2025

Important Dates

Australian Heritage Festival 18 Apr-18 May
Ballarat Heritage Festival 17-26 May
White Night 1 Jun
Victorian Seniors Festival 1 - 31 Oct



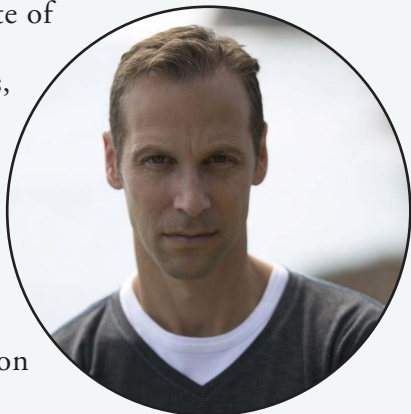
	Tue 2 Apr	Wed 3 Apr	Thu 4 Apr	Fri 5 Apr	Sat 6 Apr	Sun 7 Apr
	10am-3pm Library 2pm- 3pm BMI Tours	10am-4pm Library 7pm-8.30pm Kadampa Meditation Dealing with Difficult People	10am-3pm Library 6.30pm Ballarat Chess Club 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	10am-4pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	10.00am-2pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	Closed Library 7pm-8pm Heath Franklin's Chopper
Mon 8 Apr	Tue 9 Apr	Wed 10 Apr	Thu 11 Apr	Fri 12 Apr	Sat 13 Apr	Sun 14 Apr
10am-4pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	10am-3pm Library 2pm- 3pm BMI Tours	10am-4pm Library 7pm-8.30pm Kadampa Meditation Dealing with Difficult People	10am-3pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables 6.30pm Ballarat Chess Club 6pm-8pm Leah Kaminsky & Kylie Ladd 7.30pm-9pm Ballarat Film Society	10am-4pm Library 6pm-8pm In-conversation with Rita McInnes 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	9.30am-12noon Library 7pm-10pm BMI Fundraiser: Shindig	Closed Library 5pm-6.30pm The music & poetry of Leonard Cohen
Mon 15 Apr	Tue 16 Apr	Wed 17 Apr	Thu 18 Apr	Fri 19 Apr	Sat 20 Apr	Sun 21 Apr
10am-4pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	10am-3pm Library 2pm- 3pm BMI Tours	10am-4pm Library 7pm-8.30pm Kadampa Meditation Dealing with Difficult People	10am-3pm Library 6.30pm Ballarat Chess Club 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	10am-4pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	9.30am-12noon Library	Closed Library
Mon 22 Apr	Tue 23 Apr	Wed 24 Apr	Thu 25 Apr	Fri 26 Apr	Sat 27 Apr	Sun 28 Apr
10am-4pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	10am-3pm Library 2pm- 3pm BMI Tours 7pm-8pm Dervla McTiernan: What Happened to Nina? The Wheeler Centre & Ballarat Libraries	10am-4pm Library 5.30pm Twilight Talks Season 2 - Session 1 7pm-8.30pm Kadampa Meditation Dealing with Difficult People	Closed ANZAC DAY 6.30pm Ballarat Chess Club	10am-4pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables 7.30pm-8.40pm Still Kickin' Blake Paley	9.30am-12noon Library	Closed Library 6pm-8pm In-conversation with Garry Disher
Mon 29 Apr	Tue 30 Apr	Wed 1 May	Thu 2 May	Fri 3 May	Sat 4 May	Sun 5 May
10am-4pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	10am-3pm Library 10.30am-12noon The Reading Room 2pm- 3pm BMI Tours	10am-4pm Library 5.30pm Twilight Talks Season 2 - Session 2	10am-3pm Library 6.30pm Ballarat Chess Club 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	10am-4pm Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	9.30am-12noon Library 11am-3pm Vintage & Collectables	Closed Library

Rosemary recommends

Author of the Month

Gregg Hurwitz

Greg is a graduate of Harvard and Oxford Universities, he lives with his family in California, where he writes screenplays and comics, and produces for the blockbuster television hit *V*.



Books of the Month

Sanctuary by Garry Disher.

Grace is a thief—a good one. But she’s always on the move, always looking over her shoulder, always alone. It’s not the life she wants. Then a run-in with an old associate forces her to lie low in a small rural town, where she happens across an antique shop. The owner Erin is timid but friendly, and has a room to rent. And Grace glimpses a different life, and perhaps a home.

But there are dangerous men watching her, and Grace should now better than to let her guard slip. Because no matter how far she runs, her past is always a few steps behind.

What Happened to Nina?
by Dervla McTiernan.

Nina and Simon are the perfect couple. Young, fun and deeply in love. Until they leave for a weekend at his family’s cabin in Vermont, and only Simon comes home.

Nobody knows. Simon’s explanation about what happened in their last hours together doesn’t add up. Nina’s parents push the police for answers, and Simon’s parents rush to protect him. They hire expensive lawyers and a PR firm that quickly raps up a vicious, nothing-is-off-limits media campaign.

Soon facts are lost in a swirl of accusation and counter-accusation. Everyone chooses a side, and the story goes viral.

Nina’s family is under siege, but they never lose sight of the only thing that really matters – finding their daughter. Out-gunned by Simon’s wealthy, powerful family, Nina’s parents recognize that if playing by the rules won’t get them anywhere, it’s time to break them.

Recommended Reads

Wartime Wishes at Bletchley Park
by Molly Green.

When twenty-one-year old Madeleine Hamilton is asked to smuggle her two young pupils to Berlin, she nervously agrees. But, when they run into trouble on the train, it is Maddie’s turn to be saved by a chance encounter with a handsome man.

A year later, Maddie is undertaking training in Morse code when a familiar face shows up unexpectedly. The attraction between them is as deep as it is instant, but Maddie knows one person holds the potential to harm her country and her heart – and it is her duty to defend both...

A Killing in November by Simon Mason.

Ryan Wilkins grew up on a trailer park, a member of what many people would call the criminal classes. As a young Detective Inspector, he’s lost none of his disgust with privileged elites – or his objectionable manners. But he notices things;

Reserve your copy >

New releases

they stick to his eyes. His professional partner, DI Ray Wilkins, of affluent Nigerian-London heritage, is a smooth-talking graduate of Balliol College, Oxford. You wouldn't think they would get on. They don't. But when a young woman is found strangled at Barnabas Hall, they're forced to...

The Accident by Fiona Lowe.

Freya thought she could relax when Ryan's best mate Jamie got engaged to her best friend Hannah. Two couples, four friends – what could be better than that? But a day before the wedding Freya's torn between keeping the peace or blowing it up.

Hannah's perfect wedding is hours away and she's daydreaming of a honeymoon in Tahiti and starting the family she longs for when she hears the first-responder sirens. It is a grass fire? Worse? And why aren't Ryan or Jamie answering their phones?

When a car veers off the road with devastating consequences, the small wheatbelt town of Garringarup is left reeling, but no one's worlds are more shattered than Hannah's and Freya's.

As disturbing details surrounding the accident emerge and questions pile up, ugly secrets rise to the surface.

Mystery, lies and scandal - it's soon obvious nothing is as it seems in this small town...

Mystery

<i>A Deadly Promise</i>	Rachael Amphlett
<i>Lethal Vengeance</i>	Robert Bryndza
<i>The Last Word</i>	Elly Griffiths
<i>The Dinner Party</i>	Rebecca Heath
<i>Lone Wolf</i>	Gregg Hurwitz
<i>Dark Hearts</i>	D.K.Hood
<i>What Happened to Nina?</i>	Dervla McTiernan
<i>Bad Blood</i>	Angela Marsons
<i>A Killing in November</i>	Simon Mason
<i>Face Her Fear</i>	Lisa Regan
<i>The Good Dog</i>	Simon Rowell
<i>Sweet Little Lies</i>	Bianca Sloane

Australian

<i>Glenrock</i>	Lee Christine
<i>The Other Bridget</i>	Rachel Johns
<i>For Once in My Life</i>	Karly Lane
<i>The Accident</i>	Fiona Lowe
<i>First Born Son</i>	J Mary Masters
<i>Tipping Point</i>	Dinuka McKenzie
<i>Darkness Runs Deep</i>	Claire McNeel
<i>The Eleventh Floor</i>	Kylie Orr
<i>Gone</i>	Glenna Thomson
<i>Sidelines</i>	Karen Viggers

Historical

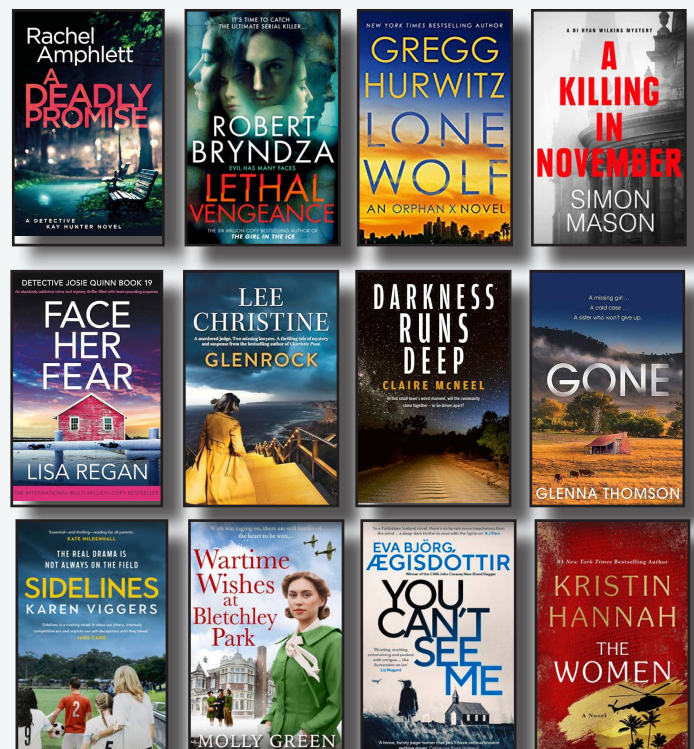
<i>Wartime Wishes at Bletchley Park</i>	Molly Green
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Scandinavian

<i>You Can't See Me</i>	Eva Björg Ægisdóttir
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Novel

<i>The Women</i>	Kristin Hannah
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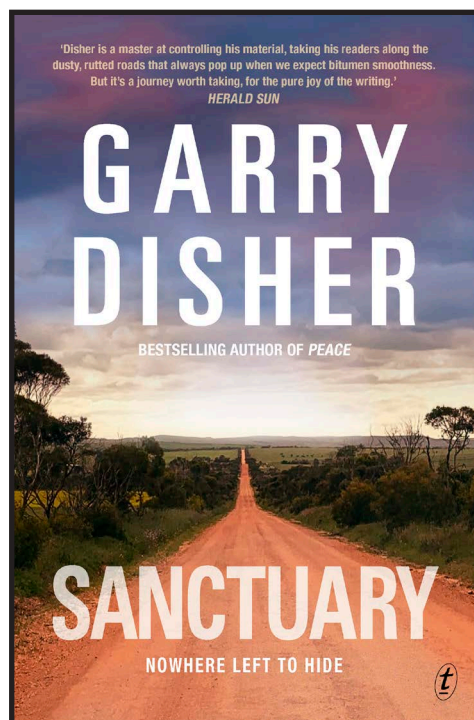
Rosemary's

Books of the week

Library Operating hours

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10am - 4pm

Tuesday & Thursday: 10am - 3pm | Saturday: 9.30am - 12 noon



We acknowledge the support of our valued Supporters & Partners

Supporters & Partners

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Rotary Club Ballarat South | Hugh D. Williamson Trust | Commonwealth Bank

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G Gay & Co Mitre 10 | Federation University

Find out how you can become involved.
ballaratmi.org.au/about-us/supporters-partners

Ballarat Mechanics' Institute
117 – 119 Sturt Street, Ballarat VIC 3350
ballaratmi.org.au
library@ballaratmi.org.au
(03) 5331 3042



Library Hours
Mon, Wed & Fri 10am – 4pm
Tue & Thu 10am-3pm
Saturday 9.30am – Noon
Venue Hire Enquiries
venue@ballaratmi.org.au
0419 677 713